

## Minutes of the 2012 Congress

of

## the World Flying Disc Federation

Saturday July 14 – 8:00 to 11:00 a.m.  
Sunday July 15 – 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon  
Sakai, Japan

### Online Votes taken by members between Congress Meeting 2011 (Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy) and Congress Meeting 2012 (Sakai, Japan)

**Board of Directors Election Results** (December 2011). 37 of 37 members in good standing casting ballots. Total of 105 votes cast.

Secretary: Thomas Griesbaum (GER) – 103, Abstain – 2  
Treasurer: Sandie Hammerly (USA) – 100, Abstain – 5  
Ultimate Committee Chair: Simon Hill (GBR) – 104, Abstain – 1  
Board member at-Large: Kate Bergeron (USA) – (17) – 25 votes needed – 32.66 adjusted votes  
Board member at-Large: Brian Gisel (CAN) – 37 – 25 votes needed – directly elected  
Board member at-Large: Michael Hu (TPE) – 26 – 25 votes needed – directly elected

**Positions on the Ultimate Committee – Election Results** (December 2011): 37 of 37 members in good standing casting ballots. Total of 105 votes cast.

Ultimate Committee Deputy Chair: Will Deaver (USA) (one year term) – 98, Abstain – 7  
Championships Subcommittee Chair: Brian Gisel (CAN) (one year term) – 100, Abstain – 5  
Events Subcommittee Chair: Piers Truter (AUS) (two year term) – 103, Abstain – 2  
Rules Subcommittee Chair: Rueben Berg (AUS) (one year term) – 103, Abstain – 2  
SOTG Subcommittee Chair: Patrick van der Valk (POR) (two year term) – 101, Abstain – 4

**Proposal 2011.5 - To approve Panama as a provisional member of WFDF.** Approved January 2012. Members in good standing available to vote - 37, voting 29. Total votes available – 105. Approve - 85, disapprove - 0, abstain - 0. Votes required for passage = 54

**To approve the Minutes of Congress 2011.** Approved January 2012. Members in good standing available to vote - 38, voting 27. Total votes available – 108. Yes – 67, no – 0, abstain – 12. Votes required for passage = 55

**Do you approve the following changes to the WFDF Bylaws (approved by the WFDF Board of Directors 11 March 2012) as distributed to you via email from WFDF Executive Director Volker Bernardi on 27 March 2012.**

**1. Technical revisions to “Article IV – Directors” of the Bylaws, to:**

a) Change the number of board members from a fixed number of 11 to “President, Secretary, Treasurer, the current chairs of each Disc Sport Committee, along with at least three at-large directors, as elected by the Congress.”

b) Adjust the quorum calculation to reflect the potential for a different number of board members, and delete the requirement of a Required Majority affirmative vote, replacing it with a more standard proxy provision

c) Introduce the concept of proxies for a board vote.

d) Change the provision for a volunteer audit committee to our actual current practice of selection of a professional Auditor.

**2. Revise “Article X of the Bylaws – Dispute Resolution,” to use the Court of Arbitration for Sport as a final appeal process**

**3. Conforming changes including a CAS appeal in the Conduct Policy**

APPROVED 2 May 2012. Total number of members voting: 37 (33 approve/4 abstain), quorum = 20. Total number of votes received: 104 (95 yes/9 abstain). Votes required for passage = 56.

**The WFDF Board of Directors recommends that the Ultimate Association of China (UAC) be approved by Congress as a National Member of WFDF (previously approved by Congress as a provisional member in 2010). The Board certifies that UAC has met the additional membership requirements cited in the WFDF Bylaws. APPROVED 2 May**

2012. Total number of members voting: 37 (35 approve/1 no/1 abstain), quorum = 20. Total number of votes received: 106 (99 yes/3 no/4 abstain). Votes required for passage = 56.

**The WFDF Board of Directors recommends that the Israel Flying Disc Association (FLOW) be approved by Congress as a National Member of WFDF (previously approved by Congress as a provisional member in 2006). The Board certifies that FLOW has met the additional membership requirements cited in the WFDF Bylaws. APPROVED 2 May 2012.** Total number of members voting: 37 (37 approve), quorum = 20. Total number of votes received: 106 (106 yes). Votes required for passage = 56.

**The WFDF Board of Directors recommends that the Asociacion de Ultimate Frisbee de Panama (AUPF) be approved by Congress as a National Member of WFDF (previously approved by Congress as a provisional member in 2011). The Board certifies that AUPF has met the additional membership requirements cited in the WFDF Bylaws. APPROVED 2 May 2012.** Total number of members voting: 37 (37 approve), quorum = 20. Total number of votes received: 106 (106 yes). Votes required for passage = 56

## July 14, 2012

### The meeting was called to order by WFDF President Robert Rauch at 8:03 a.m.

Attendees introduced themselves and their positions within their respective organizations.

### Attendance

**Regular members in attendance July 14:** **Australia** (5 votes) John Hemple, Thomas Watson; **Canada** (5 votes) Danny Saunders; **China** (2) Ken Su; **Chinese Taipei** (3) Michael Hu; **Finland** (3) Jarna Kalpala; **France** (5) Franck Benghanem; **Hong Kong** (1) Apple Chapman; **Japan** (5) Makoto Ohi, Fumio Morooka; **Mexico** (2) Angel Alvarez Marcen, Mariel Huicochea, Vanessa Rincones; **Philippines** (3) Jasper Peng Manlapaz; **Singapore** (4) Loke Teng Chung; **South Africa** (2) James Moolenschoot; **Spain** (3) Nicholas Chauveau; **Sweden** (3) Peter Lundmark, Paul Eriksson; **United Kingdom** (5) Simon Hill, Barry O'Kane; **US Guts Players Association** (1) Ryan Scott; **United States of America** (5) Tom Crawford.

**Provisional members in attendance:** none

**WFDF Board members/staff in attendance:** Robert Rauch (president); Sandie Hammerly (treasurer), Simon Hill (Ultimate chair), Michael Hu (at large), Fumio Morooka (at large), Ryan Scott (Guts Chair); Volker Bernardi (executive director)

**Other in attendance:** **South Korea** (2) Choi Seung Un, Kim Dong Jim, Choi Chang, Hee; Mario O'Brien (producer, RISE UP).

### Approval of WFDF Congress Minutes 2011.

President Robert Rauch called attention to the Minutes of Congress 2011 as approved by Congress via online vote in January 2012 (see above)

He also called attention to results of online decisions (see above).

### Report by the President – Robert Rauch

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Since the August 2011 Congress Rauch reported that much of WFDF's focus has been on strengthening the governance infrastructure of WFDF and positioning WFDF for recognition within the Olympic movement. He noted a number of accomplishments:

1) Obtained full compliance with WADA anti-doping requirements including presentation to and acceptance of a three year plan by WADA including: 1) establishment of required committees to oversee WFDF anti-doping programs, 2) initiation of both out-of-competition and in-competition testing and 3) launch of the WFDF registered testing pool. As a result WFDF was deemed fully compliant by the World Anti-doping Association in November.

2) Submitted application for official recognition by IOC in April 2012. Rauch and Bernardi met with representatives of the Sports Department of IOC at Sport Accord; they expressed familiarity with flying disc and we have not received any negative responses to date. Rauch reported that the WFDF application should be voted on late in 2012. If recognition is received it does not mean that disc sports will be in the Olympic Games, but that WFDF will receive access to the global sports community. Acceptance will be an important step for national associations looking to obtain national recognition by their NOCS and other sports governing bodies.

3) Launched new web site using the Joomla content management system. Much of the content from the old site has been transferred as it was and we plan to review and revise all content over the next year to ensure that it is updated. Phase 2 of the upgrade to be completed this year will include the WFDF Office, an internal system for managing files and documents, videos and other media. The third and final phase will consist of improvements/revisions to current content and adding functionalities for member associations.

4) Restructure of the Ultimate Committee effort to institutionalize the operating structure and to improve representation.

5) In the area of development, WFDF supported the activities of Ultimate Peace by serving as fiscal sponsor and enabling UP to receive more than \$100,000 in contributions in support of UP programs. In addition, WFDF provided a \$5000 grant to Ultimate Peace, part of a three year effort by WFDF to support the development of disc sports in Colombia, leading up to the 2013 World Games in Cali.

6) WFDF Board proposed and Congress approved a variety of technical changes to the Bylaws and Conduct Policy to bring them into compliance with IOC standards and to reflect current operating policies of WFDF. In addition, Risk Management and Whistleblower Policies were adopted.

7) WFDF membership grew to 56 member associations in 54 countries, representing close to 100,000 active athletes.

Rauch also announced his priorities for 2012-13:

1) Better event organization, including establishing the WFDF event calendar well in advance as well as finalizing bid documents so that organizers know exactly what is expected and WFDF and organizers can work effectively together to deliver high quality events for all participants.

2) Continue improved communications, including implementation of Phase 2 of web site improvements.

- 3) Development of a merchandising policy and preliminary work on plans for broadcasting and sponsorship.
- 4) Institutionalization of efforts in new countries and support of junior and university programs in areas where demographically we are experiencing our greatest growth.
- 5) Development of WFDF strategic plan as primary focus of face-to-face Board meeting during 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2012.
- 6) Continued emphasis on SOTG as an essential component of Ultimate and all flying disc sports.

### **Report by the Executive Director – Volker Bernardi**

Volker Bernardi provided a brief overview of what happens in the office on a daily basis. He emphasized how important it is for members to be actively involved and to work consistently within their respective countries to develop the sport. We need your help to make WFDF work effectively and for flying disc sports to grow. He encouraged members to stay in ongoing communications with the WFDF.

### **Financial Report – Sandie Hammerly, WFDF Treasurer**

#### **2011 Financials**

Hammerly provided an overview of WFDF financials for the year ended 2011. Attention was called to the 2011 WFDF Audit as completed by outside auditor Jon Blomberg. She noted that for 2011 WFDF exceeded revenue projections by approximately \$4000 primarily based on membership growth and the success of WCBU. Based on careful management of expenses, WFDF also came in significantly under budget on a number of expenses in the areas of anti-doping, travel to meetings related to WFDF's official memberships, Congress expenses, and overall administration. She noted that by far one of WFDF's most valuable expenditures in 2011 related to work with the outside contractor to develop the new WFDF web site.

In December 2011, WFDF successfully completed its fiscal sponsorship relationship with Ultimate Peace through which more than \$100,000 USD of contributions were received by WFDF and passed through to UP. Ultimate Peace received approval for its US IRS 501(c)3 status in November. WFDF received approximately \$5700 in admin fees in return for providing this administrative service, which we turned around and committed in support of UP activities in Colombia in November as part of a long term development effort leading up to the 2013 World Games.

Hammerly noted that the 2011 WFDF Audit will be posted on the WFDF website shortly.

#### **2012 Year to date financials**

Hammerly called attention to the WFDF Profit and Loss vs Actual report included in the Board Briefing Materials. She noted that 2012 revenues and expenses are proceeding according to budget. She expressed appreciation to all members for prompt payment of 2012 dues. She noted that WFDF has again budgeted \$5000 for development and that a proposal has not yet been received for distribution of these funds. She encouraged those with an idea to contact the WFDF executive committee.

#### **2013 Proposed Budget**

Treasurer Hammerly presented the 2013 Proposed Budget to the members present for their approval. The budget presented anticipates a net loss for the year of approximately \$18,000 compared to a budgeted loss of almost \$30,000 in 2009 (comparable year in the WFDF event cycle). She noted that this can primarily be attributed to work by WFDF to schedule WFDF events over each year of the quadrennial cycle. In 2009 the only disc sports major event was the World Games. In 2013 WFDF plans include the World Games in Cali, Colombia; WU23 in Toronto; and Pan American and Asia Oceanic Regional Club Events (PAUCC and OAUCC).

It was noted that event sanctioning fees for 2013 events will remain the same, with the exception that the WFDF Board has proposed a \$100 fee for each of the 13 players from each of the six countries sending teams to the World Games.

Hammerly explained to those present that guidelines established by Congress in 2008 for capping votes/dues were only in affect through end of 2012. With approval of 2013 budget, the Board is asking Congress to extend the policy for at least one more year.

Based on the 2008 policy, Congress agreed to cap the number of athletes at 3200 per member, therefore establishing a maximum of five votes to be cast by any one WFDF member. It was agreed that this cap would also be applied for the purposes of calculating dues to be paid by members. With dues currently set at \$1.50 per athlete, the maximum dues to be paid by any member organization is \$4800. Minimum dues are currently set at \$300.

John Hempel (Australia) inquired why WFDF was only seeking a one year extension of the vote cap/dues structure. Hammerly noted that while the Board currently had no concerns about continuing the policy, it was felt that it was better to hold on a long term decision until after the Board had completed its strategic planning discussions later this year.

It was reported that the 2013 Budget does not include revenue from sanctioning of European Beach Ultimate Championships which the WFDF Board has tentatively approved subject to execution of written agreement.

**Motion by Danny Saunders (Canada) to approve the 2013 WFDF Budget as presented. Second James Moolenschooft (South Africa). Approved unanimously.**

In keeping with revised Bylaws, Hammerly asked for Congress appointment of Jon Blomberg as auditor of the 2012 WFDF Financials. Blomberg conducted WFDF's first external audit in 2010, and had developed a strong working knowledge of WFDF and its accounting procedures.

**Motion by John Hempel (Australia) to accept Jon Blomberg as 2012 auditor. Second Tom Crawford (USA). Approved unanimously.**

## **Ultimate Committee Update – Simon Hill, Ultimate Chair**

Hill reported that the Rules Committee continues its efforts to bring the WFDF Rules and USA Ultimate Rules closer together and that real conversations are underway. Efforts at Rules education via the website continue to get stronger, and efforts are underway to obtain instructional video relating to rules. The SOTG committee has updated the score sheet, and review and improvement is ongoing including research into ways that technology can be used to obtain scores. WFDF is now proactively communicating with teams that are receiving low

scores with the hope that, by making teams aware of their poor scores, future behavior will improve.

John Hempel (Australia) inquired whether teams are provided guidelines on how to use the SOTG score sheet. Hill reported that the committee did create an instruction sheet which focuses on the need for the form to be completed as a team, and explaining how scores should be used (2 is a baseline score). A representative of the SOTG committee conducted a training session at the WUGC Captains meeting.

Hill reported that despite the restructuring, the Ultimate Committee is still not as productive as he hopes it will be. The Ultimate Committee has spent a lot of time in the last year managing events. It is hoped that the announcement of the site and dates of the 2014 WUCC will occur soon. It appears that as many as 160 teams may be able to participate and WFDF will still be able to maintain appropriate quality and safety standards.

Danny Saunders (Canada) asked if the WFDF is still considering splitting the WUCC into two events (Open/Women's and Mixed/Masters). Hill reported that the Ultimate Committee invited bids with either format (single event or two) but there appeared to be no interest in submitting a bid for a split event.

Saunders also asked if Minutes are being taken for Ultimate Committee meetings. Hill stated that it was not occurring yet as committees were still not functioning quite the way they need to.

Barry O'Kane (Great Britain) asked whether when WFDF applied for IOC recognition with the IOC, did we just apply for Ultimate or all disc sports. Bernardi reported that WFDF applied for all disc sports. This is the preference of the IOC as they consider Ultimate, disc golf, freestyle, guts, etc., as "disciplines" under the over-arching area of flying disc sports, not dissimilar to the way skiing events are handled, for example.

## **WFDF Anti-Doping Program & WADA Compliance – Volker Bernardi**

WFDF executive director Volker Bernardi provided a progress report on WFDF anti-doping activities, reporting that educational materials had been sent to all member associations and posted on the web site. Materials are available in English, French and Spanish. The WFDF Board approved members of WFDF's two anti-doping committees as follows: Medical and Anti-Doping Committee: Jamie Nuwer, M.D. (USA) as chair, Florian Beiglboeck, Dr. med. (AUT), and Jascha Wiechelt, Dr.med. (GER); and Doping Control Panel: Volker Bernardi, Ass. Jur. (GER) as chair, Don McKenzie, M.D., Ph.D. (CAN), and Koki Yamashita (JPN).

As directed by WADA, WFDF has established its Registered Testing Pool (RTP) with athletes chosen based on current world rankings. WFDF has gained access to the ADAMS system (online whereabouts reporting system) and Bernardi said it is being used successfully by athletes who comprise the WFDF RTP.

Both out-of-competition and in competition testing occurred in conjunction with the Asia Oceanic Regional Championships in December 2011. All results were negative. Testing at WUGC 2012 will be conducted by the Japan Anti-Doping Agency on behalf of WFDF and the TOC.

Based on information shared with him by the Canadian Coaching Association, Danny Saunders (Canada) asked if WFDF was aware of proposed changes to the WADA 2015 guidelines that

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suggest that marijuana may no longer be considered as a performance enhancing drug. Bernardi reported that the proposed changes are still in the comments stage, and that information has been shared with the WFDF MADC in order to obtain feedback on the proposed changes.

## **Review of 2012 Annual Census Results**

President Rauch called attention to the 2012 Census Results as submitted by WFDF's 56 member associations. Information has been posted on the WFDF website: (<http://www.wfdf.org/about/wfdf-members/member-census-information>)

## **Review of 2012 Member Association Survey**

President Rauch called attention to the 2012 WFDF Member Association Opinion Survey results and the attached Executive Summary. A complete copy of the Report can be found on the WFDF web site. <http://www.wfdf.org/about/wfdf-members/member-census-information>.

In 2012, 39 of 42 regular members and 7 of 14 provisional members participated in the survey.

## **Annual Risk Assessment**

President Rauch called attention to the WFDF Board's annual assessment of areas of risk for the Association. The following are listed as areas of greatest risk:

- Risk Area 1: Sustaining or improving the quality and consistency in the delivery of all our events
- Risk Area 2: Ensuring safety for participants, coaches, officials, spectators and volunteers
- Risk Area 3: Maintaining and increasing membership and participation
- Risk Area 4: Sustaining and improving financial viability
- Risk Area 5: WFDF's ability to recruit/attract sufficient volunteers
- Risk Area 6: Protecting or improving public image and reputation with stakeholders, regulators, potential sponsors, and media
- Risk Area 7: Maintaining Spirit of the Game (SOTG) as an essential component of flying disc sports
- Risk Area 8: Applying good corporate governance principles including compliance with regulatory requirements

He noted that the report is prepared for the WFDF Board on an annual basis to provide an overview of the areas of greatest risk for WFDF, and to assess WFDF's plan for managing or mitigating the identified risk areas.

## **Discussion Topic 1: Observers, Referees, and the AUDL: Is it Ultimate without the Spirit of the Game?**

In light of the recent introduction of a "professional" Ultimate league in the USA which uses referees (the American Ultimate Disc League) WFDF felt it appropriate to have a discussion regarding the topic of referees, observers and Spirit of the Game. As the AUDL has gotten some interesting media attention in the USA, and they have introduced referees as a part of their game rules, it seemed appropriate to revisit the issue and discuss it in frank and candid manner.

In opening the discussion, President Rauch stated that Spirit of the Game remains a core aspect of Ultimate for most players. He highlighted that being a self-officiated sport is an important element in most people's definition of SOTG but it is not the only element. He went on to present data gathered as part of the 2012 WFDF Member Association Opinion Survey. When asked to share their thoughts on AUDL, while close to half of WFDF members agreed that the introduction of AUDL is good for Ultimate; more than 60% appeared to prefer that AUDL remain true to the existing rules of Ultimate. More than 3/4ths of respondents agree that Ultimate is not Ultimate without Spirit of the Game, and that being self-officiated is a great branding opportunity for Ultimate.

Rauch noted that despite the level of concern about the purity of the original principles of Ultimate, the founders at Columbia High School fully expected that referees would be used if Ultimate took off. The original rules stated the following: "A referee or referees may officiate, and, if so, their decision must be final. If no referee is available, the two teams play on an honor system, settling disputes by flipping a coin or by some other such method."

As reported in **ULTIMATE--The First Four Decades**: "Though they were permitted, officials were not present in the early games of Ultimate played at Columbia. "We didn't have referees," Silver said. "There wasn't a referee around that late at night at the parking lot there at Columbia High School. So we had to play a game that was on an honor system, and we had to play a game that was gentlemanly."

In 1978, the 7th Edition Rules of Ultimate were introduced. The rewrite was done by Kalb, Kennedy and Roddick under the aegis of the new Ultimate Players Committee. This edition was printed by Wham-O as an IFA brochure in 1978. It was the first edition to drop the Wham-O Master Tournament model as the official disc of play, replacing it with the Wham-O 165-G. It also was the first edition to formally incorporate the spirit of sportsmanship as written by Roddick, in the preface to the rules:

"Ultimate has traditionally been considered an alternative athletic activity," the rules stated. "Highly competitive play is encouraged but never at the expense of the bond of mutual respect between players or the basic joy of play. Protection of these vital elements eliminates some behavior from the ultimate field. Such actions as taunting of opposition players, dangerous aggression, intentional fouling or other 'win at all costs' behavior are fouls against the Spirit of the Game and should be discouraged by all players."

Rauch noted that while observers are used at the top levels of competition in North America, the vast majority of games are still played without observers.

He then shared select responses provided by representatives of member associations as part of the 2012 WFDF Member Association Opinion Survey on their personal definition of Spirit of the Game:

- "Being fair and honest at all times, and standing up for that when called for"
- "Spirit of the game is the essential of Ultimate."
- "...for me it's about trust. Do you trust yourself enough to trust your opponent? IMO people who do not trust their opponents (at least without any direct personal evidence) are making a pretty clear statement about how they view themselves."

- “Spirit of the game is the embodiment of Ultimate and requires simultaneously honesty, respect, honour, comradere, teamwork, openness, diligence, commitment, and consideration for others while competing at the highest levels. It is fundamental to the name 'Ultimate' and the sport of Ultimate. It is paragraph and rule #1 for a critical reason.”
- “Do the right thing, know and respect the rules of Ultimate. Preserve your fellow players and do not try to take advantage at any cost.”
- “It's a special part of the sport, not just on the field but also outside of it. But what we players mean with the 'spirit of the game' is hard to understand for those who are not involved with the sport.”
- “Sportsmanship. Respect of fellow players and rules. For youths, SOTG is great for character building.”
- “A 'behavioral contract' between athletes to play fair, and with mutual respect while honoring the game”
- “Respect for the other player's integrity, professionalism, and safety. Knowing and applying the rules to one's best ability, and continually trying to improve one's knowledge and expertise at applying the rules”

Written comments from Josh Moore, AUDL League Founder were shared with the group: “By shifting Ultimate to a professional level geared towards the spectator, the AUDL implemented some changes to how the sport has been traditionally played. The biggest change is the use of officials to make the calls, rather than the players. This has allowed players to focus on playing and eliminating the element of player disagreements around calls that often times slow down the sport. Sportsmanship and integrity are still an integral part of the sport, as the AUDL implemented an integrity rule to help foster the continuation of the spirit of the game. The integrity rule allows a player to overturn an official's call if it will be to the benefit of their opponent.”

Moore continues: “[There is] sportsmanship that can happen beyond spirit of the game. With officials you cut out the debate between players and eliminate a lot of the downtime and arguments. This in turn allows the players to focus on playing and in our opinion improves sportsmanship overall. We also have the integrity rule which allows players to overturn an official's call if it's in the other team's favor. This allows the players some level of control similar to spirit of the game and we hope sportsmanship in general will be higher than the sport has experienced previously.”

Rauch noted that Moore also agreed to provide access to a few players/head coaches to allow WFDF to obtain some direct comments. A sampling of responses was presented:

What is the best thing about having referees?

- “...keep(s) the game moving (not spending 2+ minutes debating calls)...provide the disc to move fluidly without calls being made that in no way effect the outcome of the play...make(s) the sport more fan-friendly as well (especially when the referees announce the infraction like they do here in Detroit)”
- “Referees provide a, hopefully, unbiased perspective and help to avoid direct conflict between the players”

- "... being able to focus all my mental and physical energy on my play on the field and my team's play. Not having to worry about calls or debates or discussions, and being able to concentrate on strategy..."
- "It legitimizes the sport"

What is the worst thing about having referees?

- "As somewhat of an Ultimate purist, I feel as though the game is a bit more aggressive, physical, and less spirited with referees. The fact that they miss some calls, allows players to play differently than they would if there was self-officiating. However, if the refs are properly trained, it is a wonderful experience..."
- "The sense of personal responsibility that we have hoped to see in self-officiated games can be eroded by introducing the referees."
- "As refs have some leeway with what constitutes a foul, and perhaps some inexperience to properly recognize marking fouls, players are less capable of throwing through fouls or getting the insurance of calling a foul when throwing. Fouls which cause bad throws that would normally come back to the thrower; instead I've seen a lot of gesturing and posturing to the refs, usually followed by complaining, or at the very least, an instinctive and loud "foul" call from the thrower.
- "They do not enforce rules consistently"
- "There isn't anything bad about it".

Have you seen other players trying to get away with cheating when the referee wasn't looking? If so, what was the most typical infraction?

- "I'm not sure if I would call it cheating necessarily. I think players begin to play as many players do in basketball. It is a "non-contact" sport, but when refs get involved, I tend to see a lot more holding of limbs, waists and jerseys. Handler defense as well as down-field Defense gets much more hands on. However, I would have to say that I have seen a lot more contact on the mark than before."
- "I have. I have discouraged it when it was from teammates, and I have attempted to alert the refs to what I was seeing when it was from the opposing team. Picks don't seem to be called well, and I believe some players have begun to take advantage of that."
- "Players cannot tell if the refs are watching or not because there are 4 refs and it would be impossible to look around fast enough to hide an infraction from all refs and still be involved in a play. That said, the most typical form of cheating is excessive downfield contact."
- "I think that the tendencies for players to try to get away with cheating is similar between the AUDL and USAU styles of Ultimate. In my experience in the AUDL, the referees on the field cannot simultaneously watch every one of the players, and the players don't have to curb their behavior based on the referee's attention--so the fact that the players are trying to get away with cheating has nothing to do with whether the referee is looking. Similarly in USAU, players continually try to get away with cheating until the opposition is willing to call the infraction... As the players seek to find the balancing point between the letter of the rules and the interpretation that will suffice for a particular contest, there's cheating back and forth and the two teams often decide to draw a line at which that cheating will be tolerated."
- "Yes. Typically excessive hand checking by defenders on your cuts."
- "Yes, but what sport doesn't? Also I have been watching a lot of the footage from the WFDF and 90% of all pulls are offsides. Thus, almost every point is started with a team cheating"

Are the yardage penalties for infractions sufficient to discourage such infractions?

- "I think so. I don't think teams have yet realized how detrimental these yardage penalties can be, but I think they are at the right distances I hesitate to make them any longer due to accidental contact vs. intentional contact."
- "I believe that the concept is sound. The actual yardage assessed could use some fine tuning and at this point the penalties are not as consistent game-to-game as I would like, but if properly defined, and enforced, I think the yardage penalties should function just fine."

- "Yardage penalties and spirit of the game seem to keep most players from cheating or causing infractions."
- "Yes, but the refs either aren't trained enough or there's not enough of them to watch cutters."

Do the referees usually have a better perspective than the players themselves in getting a call correctly?

- "I would say in some cases yes, but in some cases no. I think when it comes to marking fouls, the referees have very little perspective...I think on receiving fouls, they do indeed have much better perspective. Since referees can more clearly see if contact occurred prior or after contact with the disc, I think it's very beneficial to have referees making the calls. I think many times picks are missed due to referees not being well trained enough to watch the field, and I think a fair amount of handler and down-field fouls that occur off the disc are missed."
- "Referees do seem to have better perspective in most situations. The weak link in the chain right now is that it is nearly impossible to see contact on throws...I believe that as time goes on, more qualified referees may be able to dramatically improve on accuracy. But yes, overall, refs have a better perspective on in vs. out-of-bounds, travels, most fouls and strips, and reliability of stall count speed."
- "Often they do, and the times when they do not are usually because they were not well positioned or could not simultaneously be well positioned for all aspects of a given play. The only aspect that referees seem to miss that the players could have called correctly are marking violations, especially in the act of throwing...If each game had more referees, then I think most of these issues would go away"
- "Depends on the call. Receiver fouls generally yes, though hand on hand they cannot see. Marking fouls yes. Travels yes. Picks no. Up/Down no. In/Out yes if they're in position."

Do you feel like something is "lost" by introducing referees into Ultimate?

- "I think it would be naive of any player to think that absolutely nothing is lost in the game of Ultimate with the addition of referees. I think it is clear that spirit of the game is lost to a certain extent. Losing SOTG could very easily be a snowball effect and lead Ultimate players to stray away from their fun-loving nature which drew me to the sport in the first place...This is a huge aspect that drew me to the sport. There must be some sort of ground that can be reached where Ultimate does not lose these kinds of personalities."
- "Of course. I have been playing for over 18 years, and have certainly enjoyed the self-officiated nature of the sport. I have also watched teams deliberately cheat and have seen experienced players teach new players to cheat..."
- "I would say yes. Ultimate has been the only sport played at its highest level while maintaining self-officiation. So, 'uniqueness' is lost. I do not believe uniqueness is worth much."
- "No, not at all. To me, the notion of Spirit of the Game has often been misinterpreted. I understand Spirit of the Game to be a code whereby players are expected to know the rules and to never intentionally break the rules. In that sense, it is very feasible for a refereed game of ultimate to adhere to the code of Spirit of the Game. I do not think that Spirit of the Game prevents cheating in USAU at the highest levels...the level of cheating in any game of ultimate will always come down to the players on the field, not the system of the structure under which the game is played."

Do you think referees are required for there to be a professional sport or, based on your previous experience, can self-refereeing also be effective?

- "For so many years I have loved that Ultimate is self-refereed. With that being said, I think in order for Ultimate to be appealing to the masses, it must be refereed. I think the idea of self-refereeing will continue to be popular with Ultimate players and a very small population of the general public...While SOTG is a wonderful thing, players have been known to take advantage of the system, which can result in cheating."

- "I do not believe that the sport is sustainable on a professional level without refs. The system of self-officiation is simply too slow...If our sport's own players become frustrated by watching infraction resolution, how much more demanding is it for non-players?"
- "I think the jury is out still. For paying fans, it's a much easier sell. Complete self-refereeing will never work at a pro level, but observers still could be better than full refs. Neither system (observing or refereeing) in my opinion has yet been well implemented"
- "Self-refereeing will never work for any professional sport. You need to have refs. #1 requirement."

#### Any other comments?

- "Playing with referees has had some ups and downs. I think if they are properly trained they can be great! It's exciting to see our sport grow and I think in order for the general public to respect the sport, referees are a necessity. It's just a matter of determining what level(s) need officiating."
- "I love Ultimate. I like playing in the USAU club scene and playing with 11th Edition Rules. I think the constant micro-evolution of rules is great. Self officiation makes a lot of sense to me as it helps the sport grow by keeping play inexpensive. It also does set the sport apart from others. But when it really comes down to it, I prefer playing with refs....The AUDL rules are not perfect. They will need to be modified. However, the format does offer a very watchable version of the game. That is what fans care about. That is what I believe is necessary for Ultimate to thrive professionally."
- "I'm also on the USAU Observing Committee, and have played at WFDF events, so I've seen all sides of this for a long time. The biggest issue with observing and refereeing is training and consistency, but then that's a huge issue with self-refereeing as well. However, PROPERLY TRAINED refs could both cut down on this and continue to emphasize sportsmanship/SOTG to players...It is definitely a worthwhile experiment/idea to explore. 10+ years of observing hasn't convinced me that observers are definitely the answer. Complete self-refereeing without either is definitely not the answer. Even at low levels of ultimate I am frustrated by everyone's lack of rules knowledge and lack of ability to make intelligent calls."

Tom Crawford, CEO of USA Ultimate provided comments on behalf of Ultimate games played with "observers", as it is at the highest levels of competition in North America. He emphasized that USA Ultimate does not have any affiliation with AUDL and that AUDL has indicated no interest in working with USA Ultimate.

He affirmed that USAU Ultimate is totally committed to SOTG. SOTG is highlighted as one of six goals in USAU's new six year strategic plan with emphasis on making SOTG "real" for athletes. USAU believes that the Observer system is actually a major tool for achieving SOTG and for ensuring that the game is spectator-friendly and appropriate for television.

According to Crawford, as part of the recent US Open, teams from Colombia were introduced to the use of Observers and left with the mindset that observers should be introduced into matches in their home country.

Simon Hill, UK Ultimate, presented comments on behalf of the WFDF Spirit of the Game Committee which firmly believes that disc sports should be self-referred for practical reasons. It is hard to find sufficient personnel to serve as observers/referees. Schools love the fact that the sport is self-officiated as it allows them to teach the game while not having to also control behavior on the field. He suggests that making the interactions between the players public (mike them up) can and should be a key piece for marketing/broadcasting. Hill suggests that self-officiating provides Ultimate with something that is truly unique at the highest level of athletic competition, and if we let it go then we are really just like any other sport.

Rauch asked whether we were looking at a paradigm shift of emphasis from a player focused to a spectator focused sport. Crawford stated that USAU wants to stay focused on the player, but also focus a lot more on the fans as well, and that this is a major part of the new six year USA

Ultimate strategic plan, with a focus on exposure through broadcast mediums and new sponsors. Crawford went on to explain USA Ultimate's experience with youth athletes and that it's hard to communicate the values of SOTG values to younger people which is USAU's primary target for growth. USAU feels it is essential to engage children as they are not only future players but are also potential fans for adult competition. One experiment that USA Ultimate considered with CBS Sports was to make the observers and have them stand close to the athlete discussions. Not only would it be entertaining, but the behavior of the players might change if they knew people were hearing what they were saying.

Hill stated that clearly USA Ultimate is at a very different place than just about any other country especially as it relates to its access to TV. We need to be careful not to force change on the rest of the world based on the issues that the USA is encountering.

Crawford responded that while Ultimate is growing, it is not growing at the same rate as sports like lacrosse and ice hockey within the USA. USAU's new strategic plan will focus on two areas for growth: 1) exposure and 2) empowering leagues to organize dynamic youth programs so that kids in local communities have a place to play once they are introduced to sports via television and other media sources. The exposure component will include a Club regular season with mandatory competitive events for the top teams throughout the summer that USA Ultimate hopes to broadcast nationally.

Crawford went on to say that USAU wants to make it very clear – that we do not want referees, but do have confidence in the ability of observers to play a significant role in the preservation and growth of self-officiating and to preserve SOTG in the sport of Ultimate.

To Danny Saunders question about the purist's view of linesman, Hill responded that strong SOTG supporters feel that line calls can be addressed without them.

What about an accreditation process for rules? Hill reported that the Ultimate Rules committee is looking at a process where there is at least one player on each team who has passed a rules accreditation test prior to competing in major competition. Hempel stated that Australia has test marketed this approach and it has made a significant improvement in understanding of rules within the teams. An accredited player serves as resource to players on each team by knowing what is going on. Next year they are hoping to have ALL players take the test.

Australia voiced concern that they introduce Ultimate in schools and then there is nowhere for players to go (no leagues). Canada reports that they have local school boards that are starting leagues ...not the local Ultimate League organizations.

Meeting adjourns for the day.

## **July 15 2012**

The meeting was called to order by President Robert Rauch at 9:10 a.m.

### **Attendance**

**Regular members in attendance July 15: Australia** (5 votes) John Hempel; **Canada** (5 votes) Danny Saunders; **Chinese Taipei** (3) Michael Hu; **Colombia** (4) Diego Afanador, Luis Rodriguez; **Hong Kong** (1) Apple Chapman; **Japan** (5) Masa Honda, Fumio Morooka; **Mexico** (2) Angel

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Alvarez Marcen, Mariel Huicochea; **Spain** (3) Nicholas Chauveau; **Sweden** (3) Peter Lundmark, Paul Eriksson; **US Guts Players Association** (1) Ryan Scott; **United States of America** (5) Tom Crawford.

**Provisional members in attendance:** none

**WFDF Board members/staff in attendance:** Robert Rauch (president); Sandie Hammerly (treasurer), Michael Hu (at large), Fumio Morooka (at large), Ryan Scott (Guts Chair); Volker Bernardi (executive director).

**Other in attendance: South Korea** (2) Choi Seung Un, Kim Dong Jim, Choi Chang, Hee; Mario O'Brien (producer, RISE UP); Bryan Jones, Elliot Trotter, Liam Rosen (SKYD magazine); Nick Fothergill (Ulticards).

## **Continuation of SOTG discussion**

President Rauch reopened the discussion by posing the question of whether it should be a goal to establish a succinct definition of Spirit of the Game that would be adopted by all players. He stated that everyone has their own definition and it means different things to different people. While that has worked pretty well, as the sport grows it gets more difficult to maintain the same culture.

John Hempel: SOTG is such a big thing to try and put it in words.

Danny Saunders: Ultimate is not unique in its claim to have spirit, other sports have similar claims...

Peter Lundmark: It does not seem to be a problem to get young kids to understand the idea/culture of spirit...the problem comes when kids are older.

Really need to come up with a pithy definition for SOTG that is "real."

Rauch: The original rules did allow referees and the first college games had referees. Important to keep in mind that conscious choices were made NOT to rely on referees and to place responsibility for rules on players. WFDF feels that SOTG is an important part of the branding of the sport...but if the problem is long discussions are boring for spectators, then, how do we make it more spectator friendly?

Tom Crawford: USA Ultimate Board/staff spent two days trying to clarify SOTG – and were never able to settle on the language

Paul Eriksson: Adding the third party into the competition diminishes the incentive for players to take responsibility. Feels there is more to be done...

Rauch: What do people think about the idea of requiring players to be "certified" in the rules...should we make players take a quiz to verify that they know the rules?

Hempel: This year every team going to Australian Nationals had to have at least one player certified in the rules; next year we will be requiring a minimum percentage of players on a team to be certified.

Crawford: USAU also requires a test, but think it's too much to expect every player to take the test. Especially with our emphasis on youth and kids playing...need to make sure that emphasis remains on "fun," not on "knowing the rules". Our membership gets younger and younger every year, and kids play sports to have fun...not for more "responsibility" in their lives. Have to remember the future is about youth...not adults.

Hempel: Definitely agrees that they don't want to reach the point where everyone is required to take a rules test – need to have different expectations for different levels of play.

Eriksson: Key is finding the balance, making sure that part of the fun is the fact that players take responsibility for fair play, not just that they know how to throw and catch.

Crawford: Reaffirms that the intent of observers is NOT to take away player responsibility. Part of the intent of the US Open is to enable players around the world to have the opportunity to be introduced to competing with observers. Colombia experienced it at the Open and left with the opinion that they wanted to introduce observers into their events

Saunders: Conflict resolution is a huge asset that makes Ultimate more attractive to parents who are making decisions about what sport their child will play; without it Ultimate is just like soccer or rugby or any other team sport except that it is played with disc rather than a ball.

Lundmark: Teachers like the fact that with Ultimate they can focus on teaching the sport...and don't have to also enforce the rules.

Fumio Morooka: Long term, JFDA has concluded that observers as used in North America work quite effectively and should be introduced internationally. Masa Honda added that they should also be considered in order to assist spectators in understanding what is going on when there is a stoppage of play."

Hempel: Do we feel that referees will be an important consideration in application to IOC?  
Rauch responded that WFDF's application focused on self-officiating/SOTG and promoted them as a key branding strength of disc sports. Our application states clearly that referees are not part of the sport.

## **Third Party Presentations and Miscellaneous**

1. Mario O'Brien, producer/creative director of Rise Up, was invited to make a presentation to WFDF members in order to assess interest in the Rise Up product and to explore ways in which the organization might partner with WFDF in support of member organizations and growth of the sport.

According to O'Brien, **Rise Up** is the sport of Ultimate's first professional instructional video series designed to improve the level of play of Ultimate teams and players through the creation of engaging instructional videos created by experts. The goal of this for-profit organization is to create useful teaching tools that empower players at any level to improve their game.

Each video will contain an explanation of why a skill is important, game footage that shows high level players using the skill, a step-by-step explanation of how to perform the skill, a drill to help a player practice and an explanation of how to coach the skill, and information on how to evaluate success using the skill. According to O'Brien, videos will be grouped into seasons of 10 –

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12 videos at a cost of \$20 per season. Each video will be 3-12 minutes long with videos released online on a weekly basis.

Paul Erickson: Likes what they are talking about. Something like this could be a great tool for smaller federations who simply don't have the resources to create something like this. Would be great if there was a way that national organizations could introduce some of their own "country-specific" footage.

O'Brien: \$10,000 fundraising goal has been achieved and will allow them to produce the first two seasons

Rauch asked whether they had a business plan? O'Brien indicated that they did and would send a copy to the WFDF executive committee.

2. Brief Comments by Luiz Rodriguez, Director of Colombia Open regarding his involvement with Peace and Sport, a Monaco based NGO that works in numerous countries with youngsters. Since 2003 has been active in various communities in Colombia using Ultimate as a peace building tool. His goal is to introduce Ultimate in Peace & Sport programs. Rauch noted that WFDF signed a memorandum of understanding with Peace and Sport in May 2011 and asked Luis to coordinate with WFDF to develop program for Cali for later this year and next.

3. Nick Fothergill, co-founder of Ulticards, provided a brief overview of Ulticards, a collection of strategies, skills, drills and techniques for teaching the game of Ultimate. The cards are designed by top club players with over 30 years of experience playing and coaching Ultimate. The organization has recently announced a new deck, "Tips from the Masters," featuring Women playing in the inaugural WUGC Women's Masters Division. \$5 from the sale of each deck will go to support Ultimate Peace, an organization which builds bridges of understanding and friendship between youth who live in communities divided by conflict, using the character building sport of Ultimate Frisbee.

4. Ryan Scott, WFDF Board member and Guts chair, requested the support of member associations in developing the sport of Guts within their countries.

Hempel: Part of the challenge is that there is limited information available in how to teach/instruct the game.

Why does WFDF host the Guts tournament in conjunction with WUC? Rauch: It was originally partnered with Ultimate at the first WUGC in 1983 in Sweden and we have continued the format to provide visibility for Guts. It is also appropriate because Guts is also a team sport (as opposed to an individual sport like freestyle, golf, etc.).

Ericsson: Supports the idea of combining the events – but suggests that key is to get more youth involved and to develop ways for introducing the sport to younger players. Definitely supports the idea of having youth championship events combining a variety of disc sport disciplines.

Saunders: Based on Ultimate Canada Bylaws they cannot take on additional sports, but they would be willing to provide information through their existing communication channels.

5. Rauch shared with the group that WFDF is currently working on reactivating the dialogue and relationship with PDGA in an effort to grow disc golf internationally. Also the Freestyle Players Association has indicated they will be reapplying for membership

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6. Michel Hu presented information on the Asian Flying Disc Federation. Members are regular and provisional members of WFDF. Goal of the organization is to develop flying disc sports in Asia and to make Flying Disc Sports an Asian Games Sport. Region is currently seeking a host for the 2013 WFDF Asia Oceanic Regional Club Championships

7. Tom Crawford strongly encouraged that as part of its strategic planning WFDF give serious thought to how it can help national associations to grow the sport within their respective borders. Efforts should focus on youth, rather than how to host more World Championships/large events.

Saunders supports the idea that the focus needs to be on youth, and how we can make the sport more fun for kids than any other sport.

As part of its new six year strategic plan, USAU will be focusing its efforts on partnering with local communities to develop the sport across the United States emphasizing that it will be impossible to grow the sport from a national level without a strong local infrastructure. As part of this effort, USA Ultimate will challenge local communities to meet a list of programs standards (for example: must have a youth program; clubs teams, recreational leagues, high school teams, etc., must work together - rather than separately - to grow the sport in their community) and in return USAU will provide access to additional resources (such as grants) that will enable the organization to "develop an economy around the sport" and aid in establishing a sustainable organization that survives changes in volunteer leadership.

Saunders noted that in Canada the hiring of staff at the local level was the key to the growth they have experienced.

At 12 noon, the meeting was adjourned by the President, Robert Rauch.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandie Hammerly  
Treasurer, WFDF Board of Directors  
Acting Secretary