

Proposal WFDF 2010.14: Create World Under 23 Ultimate Championship

submitted by Jonathan Potts

A. Background:

The World Under 23 World Championships were conceived in July 2009, along with a streamlined process to make it a reality for 2010, which ended up being more drawn out than originally conceived, and the event was approved by the Board in late December 2009 and announced prior to gaining Congress approval, hence this motion at Congress 2010.

The reason for fast-tracking its introduction was to take advantage of the window to hold the event in 2010 without any clash with European Championships or World Championships which would have made it very difficult to succeed, and would have made it less important as a bridging tournament between U19s and the senior divisions. Delaying the event's introduction would have meant waiting till at least 2013, and the current worlds development cycle leading up to 2012 would have been missed.

The event is timed to fit in with the development of national teams. Currently it aligns with the U19 event cycle, so that all players from the previous two U19 national teams will be eligible for the U23 teams, automatically ensuring some team cohesion and history before the team is selected.

It is also placed in 2010 so that young players have a chance to compete at a high international level prior to their Continental Championships in 2011, which will probably be a major selection event for players hoping to play World Championships in 2012.

For example, for the 2010 U23 championships, the following tournaments are relevant steps on the athlete development pathway:

- 2006 World U19 Championships (Boston)
- 2008 World U19 Championships (Vancouver)
- 2010 World U23 Championships (Florence)
- 2011 European, Pan American and Asia Pacific Championships
- 2012 World Championships

Only the USA and possibly Canada have truly strong university/college championships. For all other countries, U23s will represent the highest possible level of play available to athletes in that age group. It will be a mechanism to help the rest of the world catch up with North America in this age group, and lay stronger foundations for their national teams.

Although initially conceived as a 4 yearly event, there has been some early lobbying to make it into a 2 year event. This would require some careful thinking about the event calendar. The current placement works in terms of development of elite national team athletes in the lead-up to WUC. It's not clear whether an U23 event held alongside WUC in 2012 would be successful, if some of the best players had progressed to senior national teams.

The attached Events Cycle Discussion Paper also includes a calendar, which shows how the events would play out.

B. Proposal Wording:

That WFDF recognises a World Under-23 Ultimate Championship commencing with the 2010 event, on either a 2 or 4 year cycle to be determined by the Board at a later date, after consultation with all WFDF Members.

C. Pros/Cons:

Pros	Cons
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Opportunities for U23 players to play at a higher level than national championships. There is huge enthusiasm and support from the players for this event.	
Allows countries to blood their young players at high level international level prior to joining the senior elite teams.	Extra administrative workload for those countries that choose to send teams.
A high quality nationals teams event for promotion of ultimate world-wide.	
Further opportunity for WFDF to test and develop its event management mechanisms.	Extra administrative workload for WFDF, but covered by the revenue generated.
Revenue provides an opportunity to employ more staff hours and improve WFDF's non-event services.	
Mimics similar development pathways in other team sports.	

D. Financial Implications:

The 2010 event has 31 registered teams at the time of writing, 600+ athletes @ \$20, so an extra US\$12,000. Division sizes can be expected to grow to at least 20 teams in the medium term, 60 teams total, 1200 athletes @ \$20, so US\$24,000 on a 4 year cycle, amortised to \$6,000 per year over a 4 year event cycle.

If the player fee were increased in line with senior competitions (WUC or WUCC), or if a 2 year cycle were chosen, then the revenue would be proportionally greater.

E. Conclusion:

This is an extremely important bridging event to help athletes to transition between junior and senior elite competition. It also has the potential to become a marquee event for promotion of the sport worldwide, as the level of competition, skill and athleticism will approach that of the senior ranks. For countries outside of North America there is almost no elite competition aimed at this important age group.

Submitted on May 22 2010 by Jonathan Potts, WFDF President