



ultimatum2006

annual UK ultimate magazine





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chairwoman's bit

I would like to use this space, not to summarise the year - you can read about that in the following pages - but to extend some thanks. Thank you to all the volunteers, both on the UKUA Board and in other areas, who give up varying amounts of their free time to this sport. Without you we have no chance of meeting the ever increasing demands and expectations of the members. Thank you also to all the players who have put so much effort in to raising the standard of British Ultimate in all divisions.

I'm sure 2007 will continue to reap the rewards.

Laura Pearce

EUC 2007

July 28 to August 4 2007

Put it in your diary. Book time off. Tell your family that you can't go on holiday that week. EUC2007 is coming to Southampton. At the last European Ultimate Championships in France in 2003, Great Britain won three golds and two silvers, appearing in all five finals. The success of the event will depend on hundreds of volunteer staff - and with eight titles up for grabs, GB is counting on you to come along and support the teams. All the info for players, staff, sponsors and spectators can be found at www.euc2007.org

Simon Williams

editor's note

I kind of feel that I should justify why I decided to quit as editor, then one year later offered to take it up again. But then again I believe that trying to justify anything one has done is a sign of weakness or guilt, so I'll just move swiftly on.

Thanks again to everybody that helped - there would be no Ultimatum without a lot of hard work by people who presumably enjoy writing articles or carrying their large expensive camera around in the rain. I only had to blackmail one person this year; I was going to publish a photo of a certain female player asleep wearing yellow clogs. It's kind of a shame, but she produced the required article just minutes before we went to press.

There are now four recognised ways to try to get your photo in Ultimatum:

1. Be a great player
2. Write an article
3. Be the editor
4. Go out with the editor

None of these methods are guaranteed, and all require a lot of dedication, a strong stomach, and some natural ability that not everybody is born with. You might feel this it is a price too high to pay, but fame is priceless...

Jack Goolden

If you'd like to help with Ultimatum2007, please email: jack@ukultimate.com

EUCS

What is it?

The European Ultimate [Club] Championship Series (EUCS) is played throughout Europe over the course of the year. The EUCS was setup by the European Flying Disc Federation (EFDF) to improve the quality of Ultimate across Europe with an aim to close the gap in standard with the American teams. The competition itself is split up into four regions (North East, Central East, South West and West), with each region allocated spots for the finals depending on regional strength. The competition itself is currently only setup for Open and Women's divisions.

Why do we need it?

Currently we are very lucky in the UK to have such a great competition in the shape of our Tour. But unfortunately this is not really the case in the rest of Europe. Due to the four year cycle of Europeans, Worlds, European Clubs and World Clubs, teams in Europe weren't playing each other enough to keep up with the North Americans. The Champions League previously setup was seen by many teams as too elitist and didn't offer much opportunity for up and coming clubs a chance to compete. In addition some extremely good clubs refused to travel more than once a season.

How does my team qualify?

The competition itself is split up into four regions, our region consist of just the UK and Ireland, and that is down to the strength of the UK Tour. For 2006 the West region was allocated 4 spots for the Open competition, and 3 for the Women's. This meant that you would have to finish top 4 in the tour for Open Tour and top 3 in the Women's tour to guarantee qualification for the finals.

Is it working?

On the whole yes it is, many of the strongest teams travelled to Florence for the 3 day finals and competed to a very good standard. Next year should be even stronger since teams will be more prepared, plus won't have the added problems (cost and holiday) that World Clubs presented.

Where can I find out more?

www.euks.efdf.org
www.eucf2006.org

Paul 'voodoo' Waite



ru Callahan?

We now have 'Callahan' goals (14.1: If [on 'D'] you intercept and catch a disc in the endzone you're attacking it's an immediate goal). Ultimatum is proud to offer a prize to the first player to score a Callahan goal in the UK! It must be in a Tour or Nationals in any division.

Simply inform the editor (or the TD if you can't find me). You will be expected to provide a witness, preferably from the other team!

COVER PHOTO: FUSION PULL, TOUR 1
PHOTO © RICHARD SHORTRIDGE, 2006
www.shortyultimateimages.blogspot.com

LTD RELEASE PREPARE TO PLAY
PHOTO © SOL NEELMAN, 2006
www.tarasol.com

OLLIE BENJAMIN (CLAPHAM) MARKS DAVID O'BRIEN (FIRE),
TOUR 3. PHOTO © GRAHAM BAILEY, 2006
www.grahambaileyphotography.com

ULTIMATUM 2006 WAS DESIGNED, COLLATED
AND EDITED BY JACK MALAGO GOLDEN
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paganello pleasure principle

I'm sitting here at work gently reflecting on what a wonderful Easter weekend I've just spent playing Beach Ultimate on the beaches of Rimini at the 16th edition of Paganello. My colleagues have politely asked why I seem so happy and sun kissed; whenever I try to explain how amazing Paganello is I fail and the best clue I can provide is the smile which spreads as I replay the memories.

If you've never been then just for one moment consider the size and spectacle of the thing: 103 teams across 4 divisions (Open, Women, Mixed and for the first time Juniors), playing who knows how many games on 15 beautiful sandy beaches under sunny skies. How good does that sound?!

I remembered when I bumped in to Patrick van der Valk playing for SeXXXpensive against Catch 22 on pitch 11 in our teams' final power pool game on Sunday morning. They gave us a fairly good stuffing under the only cloudy skies of the whole weekend. No matter- both teams were already through to the quarters but our loss meant we faced the upcoming Freespeed whilst the SeXXX boys went on to lose their quarter to the Swedish Stinks. Catch 22 managed to just squeeze past the young and quick Freespeed, due in no small part to a defensive mack which a Freespeed player managed to get without getting the D in the sudden death point which decided the game.

This brought us to our semi on the beach arena against the impressive No Tsu Oh from Houston, USA. Paganello's own daily news sheet The Talking Fish (which does an ace job of covering multiple games per day) simply described this match as 'a thing of beauty'. Despite needing a turnover at sudden death, Houston managed to sneak out as 12-11 victors in a hugely entertaining high quality game with only 2 turnovers per team. Special mention should go to the twin broad sword combo of the Simons Hill and Weeks. In the game's stand-out moment the former threw a big hammer to the latter for a seriously impressive low level layout one handed goal which drew gasps of astonishment from the packed stands. This was your correspondent's first Paga semi but some of our team's fourth loss at this stage- despite how comfortable we felt playing at this level

we are in danger of becoming known as perennial bridesmaids unless we close out the deal by winning the whole thing some time soon. Whilst some of our opponents lost no time in spicing their condolences with this observation, the fickle nature of success at Paga is perhaps best underlined by the fates of last years open finalists: local boys Cota Rica, and Collard Greens over from Atlanta, who despite playing good disc finished 11th and 9th respectively.

Rocky from SeXXXpensive was heard to remark that whilst any team that wins Paga must be good they should also be lucky. In fact the overall level of play in all divisions seems to be improving year on year. JuPiter from Russia took Houston to sudden death in early pool play whilst Catch had a very hard game against the relatively lowly placed Salutami (16th). Just walking round between games there was often no need to cherry pick good spectating: witness the Sublime (UK 15th place) - Peyote Power (Belgium 33rd place) game in round one which was a great example of a game between two young teams showing spectacular D and precise long huck offence.

Another thing that struck a few of us whilst wandering along the beach was the wildly differing Paganello experiences of each team. Whilst some of the top teams gunning for glory would only truly let their hair down once they were knocked out (Stinks, Catch) other top teams had a more relaxed approach to their pursuit of sandy success (Scandal, SeXXXpensive, Horned Melons, and Carbomb). One only needed to pop your head into one of the parties to see that not all the action was beach based. The opening beach party with "volcanic pasta", copious red wine and stunning fireworks is always a delight- meeting old friends and making new ones; a fitting prelude to the next day's on pitch action. The Friday night party in the big top on the beach featured some truly stunning freestyle routines and some memorable costumes befitting the "National Stereotypes" theme. The Tyrolean lederhosen and Indian Saris were nicely set off against some (un)intentional sunburnt drunken Englishmen and a solitary Gandhi.

I can't quite remember which night I got lost walking home from the party but I can recall what great fun watching the finals was. Ranging across two pitch



length 15 deep stands and packed 4 to 5 deep at each end zone, the crowd must have numbered over 2,000. An enthusiastic mix of tired Frisbee players and Italians resplendent in their Easter Monday finery were treated to some great Ultimate with spectacular D, precise offence and inexplicable drops (yes even the best players make some howlers). An oompah band warmed the crowd up with some tunes as they wandered among the throngs many of whom were now relaxing with cold beers and fine pizza. The varied styles of Ultimate across the three main finals show that there is more than one way to skin a cat or indeed to win an Ultimate game. Some preferred low risk short play, working the disc to and fro whilst waiting for the chance to make a clinical score. The main style on show was that of deeps working in tandem off the handlers with one player coming short to receive the disk who would then make a long flat pass to a long legged deep running into the zone for a score. This is a spectacular crowd pleaser and was certainly encouraged by the warm conditions with relatively light winds. Another feature that was noticeable was the huge pulls, especially from Houston, which often allowed the defensive players to run up field under the disc and to mark up the handlers before the offensive play really got going.

In the Mixed final two-time winners Horned Melons sneaked through in sudden death against Paga favourites Huck Finn and celebrated their victory by making a raucous full team bundle on the score catcher. The Womens' final saw 6 time winners Bliss take on Paga virgins Ayers Frocks, from Australia with a healthy smattering of Brits spicing the Aussie mix. Both teams played some fine disc but to our little section of the crowd it looked as if the Aussie girls wanted the victory that little bit more.

Some great D and point blocks from the Bliss girls were not enough to prevent Ayers Frocks from playing some intense Ultimate in pulling off a surprisingly comfortable 13-8 win. Could it be that the pressure of performing to their reputation got to some of the Bliss squad? That may be speculation but whatever the case due respect should be given to Ayers Frocks for winning on their first attempt.

In the Open final No Tsu Oh did not seem to be at their spectacular best in beating the Swedish Stinks who probably felt they were up against it with only 7 fit men and one team mate in plaster prowlng the sideline. For a while it looked as if Houston's big men would run away with the title but Stinks put up brave resistance to avoid their score being doubled. One should not deny Houston the recognition of their 5th Paga victory but maybe the main point to note is that perhaps Swedish Ultimate has finally woken up to the pleasure of playing disc and partying on the beaches of Paganello. At the very least we should expect more strong Swedish and Scandinavian teams in all divisions over the coming years.

Perhaps the final word should go to Houston who in thanking Jumpi described Paganello as "the best Ultimate Tournament in the world". If you've not been yet why don't you find out for yourself whether this is true or not? I'll see you there.

Will Halliday

📍 NOSTUH, THE OPEN FINAL, PAGANELLO

📍 MEL KUNZ (BLISS) MARKING VIV STETTNER (AYER'S FROCK), THE GIRLY FINAL, PAGANELLO
PHOTOS © www.paganello.com

📍 THAT IS THE ONE AND ONLY ED BLOCKLEY OR AS WE CALL HIM, 'TEDY', DOUBLE HARD B, BEACHFEST

📍 PETE 'RODDERS' WRIGHT, HUCK & SEA, BEACHFEST
PHOTOS © [SIMON WILLIAMS](http://www.simonwilliams.com), 2006

sand sun sea

Last September saw the fourth edition of the Burla Beach Cup take place on the beach of Viareggio, near Pisa in Italy.

This tournament has been growing in numbers each year, with 70 teams taking part this year, in 3 divisions. It's easy to understand why: you're 'guaranteed' 3 days of good weather, perfect beaches, great accommodation and a good party atmosphere. All this comes with an Italian style and with the cheap-and-easy travel options from the UK to Pisa it's probably about half the cost of Rimini!

A combination of some Scottish and Sheffield talent formed by Norman Patterson (ex Sneekies), Serotonin deserved a lot of credit. These guys and girls walked away with the Rocky Horror Costume Prize, having taken the party by storm. They even managed to beat The Warwick Bears' Uni reunion team in sudden death on the final day, possibly due to their opposition being distracted by 'the lady in red' and the rest of the team's gold spandex hotpants. Jez Bird had been nominated MVP for his late-night sightseeing and mixing with the locals.

The spirit prize in the second division went to Jesters, who had an impressive final game come-back, losing on sudden death having been 7 points

behind. The third division was dominated by UK teams, with a new generation of Mohawks winning the final against Psychedelic Rhinos (Ed Blockley's team from from Stourport out West), and La Mandria Tonante (Thundering Herd in eyetie disguise) coming in third. Mohawks were a Mixed team of four girls and nine guys with an average playing experience of under two years, which shows what you can do if you train together 3-5 times a week.

It's a pity there weren't any UK teams in the first division. However, Will Halliday (Catch 22, Sharks, BPF) did us proud in the Div 1 final, getting some point blocks for the International team Sexxxpensive, who won a close match 12-10 against their Paganello rivals Cota Rica from Rimini.

If you've never played on a beach, you're missing out. There's plenty of Beach Ultimate tournaments within easy reach, or a short plane ride away, in fact, you don't even have to leave the island - Beach Fest in Poole, 'Le Tournoi' in Bournemouth and C.U.B.E. in Aberdeen are hopefully the first of many beach tournaments to spring up in the UK. For more info on Beach Ultimate around the world (including the next World Beach Championships in Brazil!) check out www.beachultimate.org

Mike Palmer



outdoor student women's nationals 2006



This year saw the Women's Outdoor Nationals split from the Div 1/ Div 2 Nationals to become its own individual event. Leeds Jedi hosted the 11 team tournament, with the weather making sure that thermals, sun cream and waterproofs were all needed!

Finishing third last year, WOW! started the weekend strong beating the 2005 champions Jedi in sudden death to take them top of pool A. Meanwhile in pool B, Flaze (Random Fling and Haze combined) upset second seeds Skunks to top their pool, leaving Skunks with a hotly contested semi final against Jedi.

Elsewhere in the tournament, a very ably led Ju-Bears (Jesters, UBU and Bears) destroyed London United (Brunel, Holloway, UCL, Kings, Reading and

Disc Doctors) with some amazing layout scores from Leicester Jester's Francesca Scarampi. Too Many Pies fought hard beating London United comfortably, but the strength of the pool eventually led to them joining London United and Phat'eds in a three way round robin at the bottom of the tournament.

The semi finals started strong with WOW! playing off against FLAZE and Skunks versus Jedi scrapping it out on the pitch next door. FLAZE quickly started to pull away, utilising a good bit of trash defence to great effect. WOW! struggled to put the points in initially, gradually pulling together a few. Well deserved score at the end. Skunks and Jedi put on an amazing show for all those who braved the rain. Some

notable layout blocks coming from Lucy OHM, and great offensive determination from Emily Kingston (as you could see from the now mud coloured playing shirt!). In the end though, the strong Jedi offence pulled through, giving us a Jedi versus FLAZE 2006 final.

In the middle table play-offs, Strange-Hawk-Eye (Strange Blue, Mohawks and Aye-Aye) succumbed to the strong handling skills of the Sublime ladies, creating an exciting plate final between Sublime and Team Shimmy. Shimmy showed why there the team to beat next year, defeating Sublime and taking the plate.

The final proved to be an exciting fight between the rising stars of university women's ultimate. Some great layout catches from both teams (and one

random one from the sideline) gave the crowd something to cheer about on a rainy and cold Saturday. Overall though, it was Jedi's unstoppable midfield offence that pulled through, giving the Leeds lasses a well deserved win. MVP was won by Jedi's Fiona Anderson, and Team Shimmy walked away with some very nice Lookfly sponsored Spirit visors.

This year has been a great year to be a member of the university women's division. We've seen two great national finals, some awesome blocks, great teams and immense spirit. For those of you who are still students in 2007 all I can say is, you lucky bast*rd!

Gemma Taylor

brighton ultimate

The idea behind this was an article on 'how to take a bunch of deranged misfits and make them into a top 8 team' - or at least that's what Jack asked me to write.

To the observer this may seem a little harsh, but after playing down here for a couple of years the words "deranged misfits" doesn't seem that out of place. The success of my previous teams (Hombres, Shotgun, UTI & Clapham to name a few) is well documented, and is explainable using terms like 'training', 'commitment', 'determination' and 'athleticism'. But can the same reasoning be applied to Brighton?

Here a bunch of the factors involved in Brighton's rise this season:

1) Regular floodlit winter practices.

Brighton train at least twice a week, all year round. The winter season gets us used to playing in the worst of conditions, so summer tournies can throw any weather at us and we know we've seen and played in worse. During the summer we have two midweek practices. We have a fun Tuesday where anything goes and everyone is welcome, this is when people are encouraged to try things out. On Thursdays we have serious practices, where we work on specifics of the game and people's individual skills.

2) Working with The Mohawks (the local student team) (mohawks.co.uk).

They are an excellent source of new talent - without them we'd really struggle. Having played for over 20 years it always amazes me how fast

players pick up the game, with a little bit of instruction. Back in the day it would take 5 years to get to the level that a lot of our 1st year Mohawks are at already. The increase in quality and numbers of students could well have a lot to do with Mohawks playing more games than any other team in last years ladder league.

3) Playing with people who've played together lots.

The Brighton teams have changed a lot over two years, but there is a core of players that have played together for years now on teams like Smash & Grab or Shocker.

4) Anything goes.

Everyone is encouraged play to his or her maximum, and think out of the box, which makes D against us either very difficult (when it works) or very easy (when it doesn't).

5) Everyone has a voice.

When it's not working, or when things start to go wrong, advice from any player is appreciated. It just happens to be the case that my voice is louder than everybody else's. Although we also have Tom White on D; he talks more than anybody else. And don't forget Waggle. Just ask Clapham; he had some things to say when we got into sudden death with them at Eastbourne.

6) We have fun.

From deliberate ass-slapping to ridiculous chants, from silly tantrums to 'stuck-in-the-mud' warm-ups, from wild hucks to JC scores, we enjoy playing, and sometimes even smile on the pitch.

This season we took two teams to every Open and Mixed Tour and both Nationals. A few guys even played a

bit of Indoors (oh and they won shmindoor Nationals). 3rd at Mixed Nationals was a great result, a real reward for the hard training over the winter. The Open Tour was tough, and we almost played very consistently to take 6th place (and even worried a few of my old team-mates along the way). Nationals put us just outside the top 4, which is our target for next year.

We've got sponsorship for our kit form a local company (fourcornersprint.co.uk) who are pleased with the way things are going. We've got a large committee working on ways of making the club bigger and better (I've heard rumours of running a beach tournament beside the pier amongst other things). We held our first ever tournament: Brighton Beyond (brightonultimate.co.uk), which we hope will become a regular event. We're even heading to Italy for European Ultimate Club Finals 2006 (eucf2006.org), as Leeds & Chevy declined their spots - not a bad way to end the season!

So by the time you read this Brighton may well be a top 8 team, but somehow I don't think Jack meant a top 8 European team. All we need to do is to beat a couple of the old guard of Euro Ultimate (Skogs, Mir San Zamperl & Freespeed) and if not we face a potential playoff game for the top 8 with Clapham. Whatever happens in Florence it will make our team stronger. There are at least 5 players of our 15 man squad that have never got the chance to play in the 1st team this



season, let alone played in the A Tour, the experience will be priceless.

We remain a team that is open to all, of any age and any ability. If you'd like to play with us and you're in the area, look us up (brightonultimate.co.uk). Of course you can also play against us in Ladder League (regionalultimate.co.uk), which could be the next big thing.

Dougie Milne



ISABELLA BURKE, BRISTOL VS. LTD RELEASE PHOTO © SOL NEELMAN, 2006 www.tarasol.com

FEELING LUCKY, PUNK? FELIX SHARDLOW BRIGHTON VS CHEVRON, TOUR 3

ALIZE 'BOB' CLOUGH WEARING HER KIT, BLUE VS DISCUITS, TOUR 3

WILL DAVIES-JENKINS GETS A WARM WELCOME TO THE TOP 16 FROM DOUGIE MILNE, BRISTOL VS BRIGHTON, TOUR 3

PHOTOS © ROLAND TOMLINSON, 2006 www.snowspeeder.co.uk/ultimate



junior worlds: boston 2006

This year's GB Juniors headed out to Boston feeling optimistic about having a successful tournament with a team full of talented players and a strong team bond.

This bond was tested early on; due to a large scale terrorist threat the day before we travelled, we were forced to sit on our plane for 3hrs on the runway with no hand luggage and very little to occupy us.

Following a night of recovering in the forests of Massachusetts, we arrived at the tournament and checked into a newly built and very plush 4* hotel. It was at this point I made an attempt to give the juniors a little history of our sport, in preparation for some of the people they would be meeting during the week. Sadly it fell on deaf ears with the team focussing on other players at the opening ceremony, mainly those in the Women's section ("check out #14, she's well fit!"). Some also seemed a little unimpressed with the opening guest speaker, Steve Mooney ("this guy's a hippy") until I mentioned his 7 National championships and 4 World Championships, which somehow got everyone's attention!

Our schedule meant we had the top and bottom seeded teams on the first day. After the nightly team meeting everyone felt really positive about our chances against USA - this lasted until 3 points in, when Team USA put away another point without a turn over. In our second match the team started to find a much better rhythm and were able to create better scoring opportunities, resulting in a solid win.

We knew the second day we knew would be our toughest, as we were playing two teams who, over the years, have always been at a very similar standard to GB; Sweden and Australia. As everyone will know there's nothing worse than having two tight games and losing them both, which is exactly what we did. In Finland, GB had beaten Australia in the last game and they hadn't forgot it, in fact the chance to beat GB was "the only reason the team came to the tournament!" However, it wasn't all negatives; we threw our hat into the ring for our 'play of the week' with a huge zone breaking knife from the back of our endzone to find 'Yeah Rob' who turned and threw a canon forehand huck into the endzone to score.

That night's show match was between

the two top seeds: USA vs Canada, and both teams put on an incredible show for the spectators. To help get over a disappointing day we tactically positioned ourselves next to the Ultivillage cameraman and spent the game trying to get on the video by talking in loud voices.

The dining tent was already becoming a ground for large amounts of cross-team banter and after Yeah Rob won the day's MVP the Aussies had found their new hero with shouts of "Yeah Rob" continuing for the rest of the week every time they saw the big man - which was quite often being the size he is!

With the losses of the previous day we knew that a semi-final spot was out of our grasp, but that wasn't going to stop us playing our part in one of the most exciting games of the tournament: The show game against Finland. With both teams playing their best Ultimate of the week it turned into another close game. In the first half we put huge amounts of pressure on their offence with little reward, but we knew that if we kept it up the D's would come, and didn't they just! 13-9 down we started getting the blocks that just were just out of our reach earlier, and took the game to 13-15. But it wasn't over yet and with the game tied 16-16 we showed just how much we had learnt from the two close defeats the day before by taking it 18-16.

After a game like that it felt great to sit and relax watching DoG play Twisted Metal in an exhibition game. Both teams had seen our game and were full of praise for the way the juniors had got the win as well as the spirit they had shown during the game.

Our team focus now shifted. Although we were here to play Ultimate, back at home students around the country were receiving A-Level results. Jacko's mum wasn't going to let a 5hr time difference stop her from giving him his results as soon as they were out - much to the disgust of the other people in his room when his phone went off in the middle of the night. The team awoke in the morning to find that all those expecting results had been successful, and were off to their chosen Universities.

We finished the week on a big high, with a comfortable win against Sweden in the final game, showing some real class scoring our first 5 offensive points without turning over. This meant we had finished 5th and were the highest placed



European team at the tournament, something we were all very satisfied with, and with so many of the team young enough for another year of juniors we are all really hopeful about the forthcoming season as well.

Nick 'stato' Sampson

NATHAN MARSHALL ARRIVES IN STYLE, GB JUNIORS CELEBRATING THEIR WIN AGAINST FINLAND IN THE SHOW GAME

SION REGAN ON 'D' AGAINST FINLAND

PHOTOS © JOSH SEAMON, 2006
www.aultimate.com



junior ultimate: a brief overview of the last 15 years.

15 years ago I popped up to Colchester to see the European Ultimate Championships and some memories from then will stick in my mind forever: Jon Schofield catching a bullet pass one handed in the endzone and screaming "Who wants it?" to fire up all of GB: Emily Pountney (GB Women) almost taking a Swedish woman's head off with a disc when she called Emily a second time for travelling; and Pete Harvey (GB Juniors) hanging 10 feet back from his guy knowing that he could layout to intercept any pass he wanted [he still trails his mark by at least 10', but he doesn't layout any more - ed]. Despite having played for two years, I knew then that I was never going to be as good as some of these juniors, who were not only faster, taller and fitter, but they also had a five year head-start on me. I tried not to get bitter and twisted about not having played Ultimate at school, but instead decided to approach Pat Moore (GB Junior Coach) to see what I could do to give more kids the opportunity to hear about Ultimate. Patrick's eyes lit up as he saw an opportunity to step back from the years of work that he'd put in.

Within the year I found myself taking over from Pat and quickly discovered that apart from Bunkoffs and Berkhamsted School, there really were very few Junior teams in the country, especially as all the Bad Company and Rapid Intake lads were now too old. Two new teams, St. Philomenas (Carshalton) and Lemmings (Plymouth) slightly helped the annual hunt for enough juniors to scrape together a GB team but this was not going to help us build a squad capable of taking on the mighty Swedish juniors. By 1993, 5 new school teams sprang up in Exeter, Gosport, Newport, Colchester and North London thanks mainly to a handful of dedicated Ultimate players becoming teachers or youth workers. Some of these Junior teams were competing in the student competitions, but by 1994, there was enough demand for the first ever Junior Indoor Nationals where 10 teams competed and 'Oxy 5', an iron-man team centred around Wigsy, claimed the inaugural title.

Growth of Junior Ultimate continued throughout the 90s with the number of Junior teams doubling year on year until 1997 when we had around 30 Junior teams on paper, but still no more than around 10 teams were competing in the Junior Nationals. This was the first year

we actually managed to select a GB Junior team based on ability rather than finding 15 juniors that might be able to afford to play. Sponsorship for the squad was still sporadic from Sonic T-shirts in 1992, to the Druids paying for team kit in 1998 once Patch had taken over as GB Junior Coach.

Each year would see the standard improve to the point where first the GB Juniors were turned away from Student Nationals (paying the price for beating a rather hung-over Catch 22 on the way to the semis), and then in 1997 having all Junior club teams no longer invited to play in 'Uni Ultimate'. Still, there was always The Tour (is it really coming up to its 10th anniversary in 2007?). The GB Juniors have used this series of tournaments for essential training, selection and team gelling, and once managed to finish 10th in the country.

In 1999, the wheels seemed to fall off Junior Ultimate. Most of the Junior teams 'graduated' and the teachers of school teams that could bring new juniors in each year all seemed to change schools, have a baby, emigrate, or just take a sabbatical from Ultimate. 1999 was the only year since 1988 when there wasn't an international tournament for GB Juniors to compete in. All National Junior tournaments seemed to be suspended until 2004 except for one great year in 2001 when 13 teams competed in the Junior Indoors. Despite this, juniors competed each year in the tour, and internationally in Germany in 2000 (coached by myself and Loopy), Prague in 2001 (Stig), Latvia in 2002 (Ben Ravilious), Estonia and France 2003 (Stig again) and Finland 2004 (Rosh). 2003 also saw the first outing for GB Junior Women, thanks to a lot of hard work from Cath Moore.

2004 was the turning point for Junior Ultimate. A one day Junior tournament in Stroubridge run by Tom Bolstridge attracted 14 teams, and was swiftly followed up by the relaunch of the National Junior Indoors two months later at the same location. The birth of The Junior Committee spearheaded by the enthusiastic Alia brought together far more people interested in developing Junior Ultimate and gave us direction. A National Outdoors and a Christmas one day tournament took the year's tally to 4 Junior tournaments which was totally unprecedented. Three years without a Junior tournament and then 4 in the same year! 2005 was determined not to

be outdone with another 4 Junior tournaments, and thanks to great work from Paul Eriksson, the birth of another international Junior division, the U17s. In 2005 we took 4 squads out to Sweden and our U16s took the inaugural gold while the other squads cleaned up the spirit awards. Coaching was now a real team effort from Gemma Taylor, LD, Frank Legge and myself

2006 and the growth of Junior Ultimate had reached a much younger audience. The first ever U17s tournament saw 11 teams compete and the first ever U13s match. National Junior Indoors had now grown to 18 teams and the National Junior Outdoors attracted a record 15 teams (7 of those teams being U17s). Internationally, the Junior Open team went off to Boston (coached by Stato) to claim 5th place (highest European team) in the Worlds while GBJW (coached by Tom Howard and Mara), GB U17s and GB2 all flew out to Latvia to compete in the now annual European Championships. This year saw the first ever Junior Women's tournament with an impressive 5 teams represented and with 16 teams competing in a Junior development tournament that took the year's tally of domestic Junior tournaments to five.

And so to the future, and more changes are coming: A more professional approach is starting to evolve. Coaching schemes and school packs are now in place, and child protection policies and training are essential if we are to be taken seriously. Obviously we want good practice to be in place, but these days we can't even get any form of insurance without CRB checks, good policies and rigorous procedures. Gone are the days when we could stick 15 juniors on a boat to Holland (I can't believe we did that) or just turn up at a tournament without health and consent forms, risk assessments, etc.

2007 should see the continuation of these now annual events like Junior National Indoors, Outdoors, U17s Indoors and Junior Women's Indoors, but also see the launch of an U17s Outdoors, Junior Women's Outdoors and even some Junior girls (U17s) events. Sweden and Finland both managed to get U17s girl's squads this year and we have committed ourselves to the same in 2007 (to be coached by James Hall). Starting from a player base of around 5 girls in January, we have grown to around 60 girls playing now.

This has been helped by a number of schools allowing Ultimate to be taught on the PE curriculum. St Peters in Exeter and St Vincent's in Gosport have had this for some years but now Bishop Heber in Cheshire, Bishops in Chester and other schools are seeing how well the ethos of Ultimate fits within the Government's 'Citizenship across the Curriculum' and how the sport seems to teach so much more to children than certain traditional sports. With around 40 Junior teams and 500 juniors playing Ultimate in this country, we now need to convert those players into UKUA members, and set an ambitious target of 1000 juniors by this time next year. With more and more schools requesting help in setting up teams, imagine what we could do if we actually targeted schools?

Thanks to everyone that has ever encouraged Junior Ultimate. Sorry I can't mention everyone but off the top of my head, thanks to the coaches like Connor Davies, Scott, Rowena, Rob, John Purdie, Paul Marfleet, Derek France, Les Bryant, Jennie McLaren, Sarah Fergus, Vaughan Williams, Jack Rushton, Charlie Ben-Nathan, Rodders, Paul Ruff, Jane Eastwood, Vaughnie, Claire, Tom Candlin, Emily & Mark, Tom Rainbow, Tara & Jon, Phil Cain, Jim McDonnell, Paul & David Unwin, etc. and those that played for GB juniors and either carried Junior Ultimate or practically ran their Junior teams, most of whom are still playing; players like Harry, Jeff, Dougie, RV, Si Hall, Wigsy, Mal, Gaz, Jolyon, Voodoo, Milky, Chris Berry, Stan, Ali, Si Weeks, Dave Barnard, Trigger, Steve Vaughan, Scando, Rich Hims, James Metcalfe and Pudds (both sadly now deceased), Beavan, Si Dathan, Raj, LD, Colin, Max, Timmy, Dale, Giacomo, Adam, GI, Sally, Scott, Liam and on and on... - we love you guys and we wouldn't be where we are today without you!

Check out the Junior web pages at ukultimate.com/juniors/info.aspx for GB Junior results since 1986 and an interactive map of all Junior teams in the UK. If you have some time and experience to help develop Junior Ultimate, then email us at juniors@ukultimate.com and get involved in getting the next generation hooked on this great sport.

Kevin Lowe



the mixed season 2006: better than the world cup!

We had everything this year: a new format (everything before July), one less tour, every type of weather you can imagine, five teams contesting four finals, and six Mixed teams trying out new stuff before setting out to the World Club Championships in November.

Tour 1, York

The Saturday of Mixed Tour 1 saw Leeds, who had split their worlds team into two, come out firing in their groups and would be playing two semis; one against As If (one of the two new Icen Fire combination teams), the other against Mixed Tour finalist regulars; Rampant X.

Elsewhere Brighton kept Locomotiv Leeds from a chance to go to top 8, before getting knocked out themselves. Locomotiv held High Altitude out of the top half. Elsewhere various new teams with new faces; Newcastle's 'The Brown' and Norwich's 'Mustard' were bravely discovering just how high the standard the of UK Mixed Tour is.

As I was leaving on Saturday, I wandered past Sheffield Steal (who

were on their fourth of five back to back games) vs Thundering herd – two teams who would also be representing GB at Worlds in Perth. It was windy. Apparently there were free bananas. Pete Harvey wound up a huge upwind huck which ended up behind him. I laughed – and went to get warm.

The semis (complete with hailstorm) saw As IF and Rampant X progress to the final and the two Leeds teams fight it out for third places (in front of BBC cameras). Big performances by MVPs Charmeyne McCollins and Dave Barnyard saw As If claim the first Mixed Tour of 2006.

Tour 2, Mottingham, London

On a mission on Saturday, Locomotiv Leeds came 1 point short of a shot at semis before being knocked out of the top 8 by Brighton on Sunday morning – who stormed their way to a highest possible finish of 5th. Locomotiv had to settle for 10th, as High Altitude's young athletic stars took 9th. Long term Mixed rivals BAF and Bristol fought out another 7v8 playoff – with Bristol claiming another 7th place.

The Leeds Worlds team was competing as one team this tour and beat Rampant X (no doubt suffering a few hangovers from Mrs Rebecca Solomon's wedding) for the first time ever in their semi to set up a final with What IF who had just beaten As If in the other semi.

And then it rained and we left them to it, trying to catch the occasional glimpse of zone defence and patient handling – from the bar. The Icen/Fire combination proved their depth, with wins at Tour 1 + 2, for each of their teams. Thankfully the sun came out during the presentation (MVPs prizes awarded to handlers Anja and Chaff) and it was time to nurse my hangover, negotiate the M25 and get to bed, hopefully in time to be sane at work on Monday.

Tour 3, Peterborough

New venue, new TD and beautiful weather forecast- I had no idea what to expect from Mixed Tour 3. It started better than expected as despite my car's uncanny ability to get lost on the way to tournaments we arrived without a single wrong turn...

Saturday started hard in the top 8 with

Ping dominating their pool, and sealing their first semi finals appearance. We took a well scheduled break for the disappointing first game of England's mission to go out of the World Cup on penalties. But afterwards, back on in the heat were Rampant X and the defensive half of Leeds' Worlds Mixed team. Leeds' D team went down 8-2 before orchestrating an inspiring display of pure graft to beat Rampant X and seal a place in a semi final against the impressive Ping. The other semi was going to be the big one though, featuring What If and Leeds' Offense team – whoever won this game were going to be Mixed Tour Champions (courtesy of Leeds D's win putting Rampant on the wrong side of a 3 way tie and out of semis)

The whole of the Mixed tour appeared to take the TD's advice and stay at the camp ground by the lake, be fed by the organised barbeque and be shamelessly entertained by a 'talent show' – I think it probably summed up what was so great about Mixed Ultimate this year – lots of smiling, sunburnt faces watching ABH's accordion-wielding folk ensemble belt out



Bonjovi's 'Shot Through the Heart'. Genius. I should also mention; Gabor's Caveman and 2 Brighton players doing an oddly well-choreographed 'Full Monty'.

Sunday saw some of our Mixed teams that are to represent us at Worlds demonstrating the strength and depth of the Mixed tour; Limited Release - grabbing the plate from High Altitude, Bristol - finishing 7th (again) and Sheffield Steal - who beat BAF in their final game to take 11th.

So, the game of the Mixed Tour: Leeds Offense vs What If in the semi, which was close fought with What if coming out victorious. The other semi saw Ping beat Leeds' D team to face a stronger What If in the final. Leeds played their 3 vs 4 game - at football. Sunburnt, I was sad to leave Peterborough, and hoped we'd all be back for another tour in the future.

Mixed Nationals, Southampton

I was slightly horrified by how much money Steve Shipley had made during the France vs South Korea game, and

then even more disturbed to learn that the matching kit rules meant he had to wear Ellie's small spare girly shorts. More good weather and superb organising graced the 24 teams that turned up for the competition.

Only 24 teams (after 36 at Tour 1!) meant the top teams started at a sociable hour, and only played two games - no upsets this day and the closest (and noisiest) quarter final in the Locomotiv vs Bristol match - unfortunately for us going to Bristol.

I managed to sleep through the party to discover I had missed (more) Beer or No Beer. I wasn't disappointed. On the Sunday, Sheffield Steal claimed the plate in a sudden death win over Thundering Herd. Limited Release proved they've got their stuff together for worlds finishing a season's best of 5th, beating Locomotiv surprisingly comfortably after being down 7-2. Bristol and Brighton fought hard in their semis before having to battle each other for 3rd.

And although it was disappointing not to have the Icen/Fire combo teams at

Nationals (due to Fire having a training weekend) - it was the game that National finals deserved- Rampant X vs Leedsleedsleeds - who had set winning Nationals as their pre-season goal. Rampant relied on their handlers; Hussey and female MVP Taz, who worked the back confidently, Sally Fraser tore her PCL taking a ridiculous catch for a score and male MVP Wiggy was huge. The game had sudden death written all over it, but with Leeds up 12-11, game to 13 - Rampant turned over cheaply. Watching Mark Fulford run down Joe 'Sox' Graves' huck for the win made me secretly happy that I had watched a great game rather than a bad first half of England vs Ecuador like everyone else.

Jill van der Meulen, Locomotiv Leeds

SOPHIE WATSON, LEEDS VS RAMPANT X MIXED NATIONALS FINAL, SOUTHAMPTON PHOTO © PAUL HURT, 2006 <http://pope.smugmug.com>

ELLIE DAWKINS BREAKS THE FORCE

NICK 'SICKO' CURZON - APPARENTLY HE'S NOT AMERICAN, BUT HE SURE SHOUTS LIKE ONE!

IAN THACKRAH PASSES TO STEPHANIE COHEN

LEEDS VS. LTD RELEASE, LEEDS' WORLDS WARM UP PHOTOS © SOL NEELMAN, 2006 www.tarasol.com



lighting the fuse: the rise and rise of fusion

With the end of the year, and hogmanay in particular in mind, Jack asked me to put together a few paragraphs about the colourful rise of Fusion this year. So here's the inside word from the Fusion firework factory...

Firstly you've got to start with the right ingredients. This is a complex bit of chemistry, and you can't go chucking any old things into it. You need players with a lot of fizz, and the power to keep going and going even when other teams expect us to burn out. You've got to have enough velocity to get off the ground, then hold that pace, to get high enough that everybody can see the display.

So that's the beginnings; use the right stuff. But you've also got to follow the instructions carefully, we wanted a team to go off with a bang this year, but that doesn't come without preparation. There were an infernal number of long sessions in the wintry environment of Inverleith Park during the first few months of 2006. And it didn't always look pretty, the tactic this year was to be ambitious, take the first chance, and put the disc in to score. During the off-season this was hard - to do and sometimes to watch. Passes sailed over people, turnovers were too common and it just didn't look like working. But Fusion has had strong leadership this year, and we were simply told to keep doing it, and trust that it would come together. We did, and gradually the cutters learnt to go early and keep looking, and the throwers learnt where to put the long discs. We were starting to look better, but how would it work against other teams; firecrackers or damp squibs?

A couple of friendly games against Leeds, one of GB's genuine powerbases of Ultimate, gave us cause for hope as the aggressive, high octane play put the disc in point after point. Early on in the Tour we got close, but were knocked out of the top spots by Clapham and (ironically for my rapidly-tiring pyrotechnics analogy) Fire. Later in the season it really did start to come together, and frankly it did look good. At T3 we were proud to join a very exclusive club: teams who have beaten Clapham. Sadly this didn't turn into winning a Tour, which I think was a disappointment to all of us, and at Nationals Fire put us out again, with a brilliant second half comeback.

However, we did qualify for Europe, where we held the eventual winners, Skogshydann, to within 2 points for half a game. We also finally got the better of Fire in a game which decided who went into the top eight, and who went down. Eventually we took sixth place, which out of all the top teams in the continent isn't bad, and although we could probably have beaten semi-finalists Big EZ had the draw given us the chance, there were also some high quality teams left below us. The thing is, you never know when a good fireworks display will finish. We'll be lighting the blue touch-paper again next season, so make sure you back away to a safe distance, and watch the show.

Mark 'KC' Taylor



SAMUEL T LORD (RUMOUR HAS IT THE 'T'
STANDS FOR 'THE') FUSION VS FIRE

KEITH HODGSON, AKA TROLL GUY

PHOTOS © GRAHAM BAILEY, 2006
www.grahambaileyphotography.com

BARRY O'KANE WIELDS THE FINGER OF POWER.
FUSION VS. EMO, TOUR 2
PHOTO © TOM STYLES, 2006
www.tom-styles.co.uk

the coaching culture

“Most sports are run by fat old men – where are ours?!” So said Barry O’Kane after a UKUA coaching course last year.

Admittedly he was joking, but there is a serious point here, which is that Ultimate in Britain is a young sport, and lacks a generation of ex-players who have stayed involved. Particularly on the coaching side of things, we are a sport that has always had to drag itself up by our own bootstraps. As a result we don’t have an existing culture of either coaching or being coached.

Our sport has changed greatly in recent years, particularly in Britain, with a big growth in the player base, and a move towards a regional club structure. The level of play, and the demands on the players, also seem (at least to me) to be increasing yearly, and the separation into divisions and regions has made it less likely that information and ideas percolate naturally from team to team just through attending the same tournaments. It is therefore more important than ever that beginning players and teams have access to the information and coaching expertise that will help them to improve as rapidly as possible, rather than being forced to reinvent the wheel.

As I hope you’re all aware by now, the UKUA now has a coaching structure in place, albeit in the early stages. The long-term vision is for five levels of qualification, starting with The Level 1 Assistant Coach Award, which we’ve already run three times. Over the coming off-season a further six course dates are in the pipeline.

Although this is a step in the right direction, it actually represents a small part of the coaching that is currently done, in the sense that every team that practices or plays regularly is already being coached – if only to the extent of someone having to decide what to practise and when. Everyone who has ever captained an Ultimate team has in effect already set themselves up, willingly or not, as a coach.

To all those people I say this: embrace your new role, and do your best to equip yourself with the necessary tools to do the job. Coaching is most easily classified as a process rather than a set of knowledge, by which I mean that an understanding of the coaching process is more important than having all the answers all the time (useful though that

is too!). In its simplest form, the process can be represented by three stages:

- 1) **Plan:** figure out what you’re trying to achieve with a session;
- 2) **Do:** organize and implement the learning methods or drills to build towards the session goals;
- 3) **Review:** figure out what went well, what didn’t, how to do it better next time. And write it down so you don’t forget!

It’s not necessary to be the best player on a team to be the de facto coach; pure ability alone does not a coach make. In some ways, the best players don’t always make the best coaches, as they haven’t always had to think through the technical details of what they’re doing, because it comes so naturally to them. The best teacher isn’t the one who knows the most, it’s the one who can get the most across to pupils.

Sometimes the most basic coaching is also the most effective. For instance, young sportspeople will often make incredible progress just by observation and imitation; as a coach, you might need to do no more than identify an appropriate role model and point them out. Get them to watch, learn and copy, and they’ll commonly figure out the rest themselves.

Ultimate as a whole needs to look to other sports for inspiration, as well as for good coaching information and positive role models. Every sport develops its own coaching culture (with plenty of room for variation – consider the different styles of Arsene Wenger and Alex Ferguson for instance), and as a coach you’ll have your own personality and approach too. Are you a specialist or a generalist? A motivator or an educator? An instructor or a facilitator? Wherever your natural tendencies lie, see if there’s a coaching role model out there who you can learn from.

The flip side of the coin is that a culture of coaching isn’t dependent only on the folks who end up in charge of team practices; it also needs a shift in attitude from the rest of the team. If you’re new to coaching, it can be pretty tough to get your ideas across at the best of times, doubly so if there is perceived resistance to those ideas on the grounds that “we’ve always done it this way.” To use the analogy with teaching again, you can’t force people to learn if they’re not open to new ideas. Almost

all teams have a wide range of abilities, and no training session will be ideal for everyone, so the attitude of the experienced players in particular is crucial to the ‘coachability’ of a group of players.

If the level of Ultimate in this country is to progress as rapidly as possible, it’s up to all of us to help create a positive coaching culture, whether we’re coaches or players. At the Worlds in 1996, the Boston team DOG wore umpire’s outfits (complete with red and yellow cards in the pocket!), to make the point that every Ultimate player is also a referee when they’re playing.

Here’s my hope: that every Ultimate player in Britain also finds the opportunity – at least now and then – to act as a coach too.

Jeff Jackson trainer@ukultimate.com



women's 2006: an iceni PoV

The 2006 season has been the best for Icenis so far. Preparation started last October with two practices a week throughout most of the winter and spring.

I must say that hiring a floodlit pitch in London for weeknight practice has been of enormous benefit, not to mention a very rare find. And even though it's October again, our season isn't over yet (as I write, I'm about to get on a plane to Worlds in Perth). So although I can't tell you exactly how our season is going to finish, I'll fill you in on the domestic bit of it.

Our Tour roster consisted of 35-40 players. Bizarrely, most of the team is either short and fiery, or tall and ginger (and embarrassingly, both types can beat me at wrestling). We set out this season to get both Icenis 1 and Icenis 2 into the top 4 of the Tour. This is the story of how we got there:

Tour 1

Birmingham of the lush green fields – or was it? Not this year. But never mind that. The biggest game of this Tour for Icenis wasn't actually the final, but was the Icenis 2 v Nice Bristol's pool game. I think people often forget that sometimes it's not playing better Ultimate that makes a team improve – sometimes it's a mental change and that's what happened to Icenis 2 in this game. It was a very evenly balanced game with a noisy sideline consisting of rowdy Icenis 1 players trying to drown out the Bristol Open squad (mostly foghorn Adam Batchelor). Icenis 2 took the game by a few points and cherished that win as an example for the rest of the season on how to win hard games against quality opposition. The other big game at Tour 1 was the sudden death semi-final between Bliss and a very strong-looking Leeds 1. It was the only Tour where Leeds fielded two teams and it's a shame they never managed the same numbers at any of the other Tours. Unfortunately, I can't remember a single funny or notable thing that Icenis 1 did at Tour 1 other than win the final in a fairly windy and uninteresting game.

Tour 2

Well, I'll talk about Icenis 2 again because not only was Icenis 1 horribly boring again at Tour 2 but we didn't even win this time, losing to Bliss in sudden death. Icenis 2 wanted desperately to

get into the Top 4 and came out looking for a fight. They found what they were looking for in Swift, a team which has defined itself as one of the next big things in Women's Ultimate. In what turned out to be a marathon game on Saturday evening, Icenis 2 and Swift locked horns for a spot in the semi-finals. I swear the game was 3 hours long due largely to a huge comeback from Icenis 2 from 10-14 down to win 15-14. A big shout must go out to Swift who has also entertained us all season both on and off the pitch, particularly with their selection of risqué playing pants during one memorable call. Who said the Scots don't have a sense of humour... and nice underwear? Worth checking the Fusion boys next time you see them to see if they share the same fashion sense.

Tour 3

Well, Icenis 1 won Tour 3 and the Tour title in Cardiff against Bliss in an epic showdown. The final itself was probably the most exciting Women's game ever played in the UK, in the last five years. This was probably because both teams were wearing matching kit this time (take note, UKUA), although we did play some pretty sweet Ultimate as well. We traded points for most of the game with the lead switching several times but then Icenis pulled away late on to win 15-11 or so.

While winning the Tour was great, I enjoyed the run-up to the final even more since I spent most of my time relaxing and being waited on hand and foot by my teammates. They'd secretly decided that the captains deserved a bit



of pampering for putting up with all the expected neuroses and paranoia that is associated with a group of 40 women. So I drank Pimms out of a special captain's coolbox all weekend and got calf massages on demand. All in all, a really excellent weekend.

Nationals

Nationals was pretty exciting too, as there were close battles all the way through the division. I didn't see many games except for my own because the weather was so crap but I hear that MU, the new Midlands team, played great. We figured we had the final in the bag after going up 8-1 against Bliss by shutting down the long game they'd used so effectively against Leeds in their semi. Someone smartly reminded us at half-time not to get complacent though, and related the story of Clapham losing quite badly until similar circumstances a few years ago. We all had a good laugh. That is, until the score was suddenly 10-9. However, let it not be said that we

threw the final away like our Clapham brothers of yore – instead we buckled down and grinded out the win for our second National title.

And that was the Women's season in a nutshell (barring a few of the soap opera dramatics that keep the actual Women's Tour far more exciting than I can relate to a general audience; if you want to know what really goes on behind the scenes in the Women's division, then I suggest you join in, or do some coaching if you're a bloke!)

From an Icenis perspective, it's been an incredible year. From layout clinics on a slip'n'slide mid-winter (see www.iceniultimate.com), to undertaking an eight week mental toughness course, and of course regular Tuesday night summer evenings in the local pub, we've done everything we could to make our season a great one. That's the beauty of being an Icenis player and I feel privileged to be a part of it.

Aura Mackenzie



the open tour

This year saw the first outing of the new 'split' Tour format. The idea was that three Tours played in rapid succession would decrease the time to change tactics and styles during the season and would conversely increase the importance of pre-season preparation. Hitting the ground running early in the tour would put teams in commanding positions and winning points early in the season would pile the pressure onto their rivals.

The year kicked off with LLeeds aiming to regain their Tour 1 title. The lack of driving rain and freezing winds, which suits the northern teams, seemed to catch LLeeds off guard as they found themselves out classed by Clapham in the Tour 1 final. Clapham had found the key to pre-season training. Heading across the pond to Boston, they set themselves up as a force to be reckoned with in North America as well as on the European Scene.

The tone was set for the rest of the season, Clapham ran away with three Tour wins, to see them return to the form to which they have become accustomed. Games in all brackets were closer fought as the A Tour became more competitive across the board.

While the number one spot remained in safe hands, the remainder of the top four was a little less stable: Each Tour final saw a different team finish second, and the overall Tour standings for second, third and fourth place came down to the final games of the final Tour. Fire put in another solid season, failing to regain their previous year's title but

proving that London is a force to be reckoned with as the only club to qualify two teams for the A Tour. Leeds's season, which got off to a flying start, went from bad to worse as their developing team struggled to maintain their Tour 1 success, moving slowly down the rankings.

New to the top 4 scene this year, replacing Chevron (still the longest running Open team in the UK) saw the rise of Fusion to the form that has been eluding them for the last few years. Abandoning their safe Ultimate tactic, the shock of fast scrappy play with an aggressive deep game saw Fusion work their way through from fourth at Tour 1 to a well deserved final showing at Tour 3.

Outside the Top 4 saw an unnerved Chevron battling for fifth. However, a solid Nationals performance showed that they would continue to be our oldest active team for a little longer. Brighton have taken a leap up from last year consistently pressuring the top 4 teams throughout the season but were unable to turn their development into a semi-final placing. They will be a team to watch in the coming years.

Paddy Murphy put up a good show throughout the tour to see them improve on their 2005 Tour ranking by 6 places. However, this year's Cinderella story has to go to the Mild Mannered Janitors who proved that training and youth isn't really all it's made out to be. Despite missing a Tour due to an inconveniently scheduled wedding, the what can only be described as a veteran team worked hard throughout the season to increase their Tour finishing by 9 places.



The Tour format remains unchanged for next year and promises to be even more exciting with more teams queuing up to get in on a piece of the action.

- AURA MACKENZIE, ICENI VS BRISTOL
- JILL VAN DER MEULEN, LEEDS VS. BLISS
- RICH HIMMS CUTS DEEP FOR CHRISTIAN 'WIGSY'
PHOTOS © GRAHAM BAILEY, 2006
www.grahambaileyphotography.com
- NASSER M'BAE CLAPHAM VS. FIRE, NATIONALS
PHOTO © TOM STYLES, 2006
www.tom-styles.co.uk

Iain Thackrah



| | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Clapham | ↕ | 3 |
| Fire | ↕ | 1 |
| Fusion | ↕ | 2 |
| Leeds | ↕ | 2 |
| Chevron | ↕ | 2 |
| Brighton | ↕ | 3 |
| EMO | ↕ | 1 |
| Discuits | ↕ | 4 |
| Paddy Murphey | ↕ | 6 |
| Blue Arse Flies | ↕ | 3 |
| Fire 2 | ↕ | 8 |
| Plastic Factory | ↕ | 4 |
| Ltd Release | ↕ | 4 |
| Devon Ultimate | ↕ | 4 |
| Sheffield Steal | ↕ | 4 |
| Strange Blue | ↕ | 6 |

● Tour results compared to last year

stepping up, falling down

Lessons for the A tour novice...

2006 was my 5th tour in all but it was my first season in the A tour, my first in the top 16. Though I had enjoyed the B tour, I felt it was time to prove myself at a higher level, and having the opportunity to play against the best teams and players in the UK was something I had really looked forward to. However, as I walked away from the last game of the season my feelings were, at best, mixed. The whole tour had in truth been hugely disappointing for my team. From one tour to the next we had been subjected to comprehensive and humiliating defeats. If we had won two or three of the tighter games, perhaps we could have put a different complexion on it. However, when all was said and done we lacked the consistency to deserve anything more.

In light of these traumatic events, I could be forgiven for wanting to forget the whole thing had ever happened. And yet I was barely 100 yards from the pitches before the Editor had blocked my escape and requested this article; something on my "experiences of the A-



tour". Thinking about it now, to even ask such a thing was an act of pure (and typical) sadism towards both author and reader (he only really cares about the pretty pictures); to agree was an act of equal masochism. Alas, my brain, addled with a cocktail of calorie deficiency and Deep Heat poisoning failed to put up a reasonable defence. I only hope that in this resulting post-mortem I can find some kind of closure, and that the lessons I have learned along the way will have at least some benefit for the A-tour pretenders of 2007.

As most of Ultimatum's university-educated readership will acknowledge, being awarded a first class degree requires immense dedication, intelligence and the ability to convey original intellectual thought. But after having spent 3 years on the sofa avoiding sunlight and watching Neighbours, most students are more than satisfied with a 2:1; a mark which requires a little less long-term endeavour, but is nevertheless a distinguished reward for the skilled plagiarist. Fortunately this skill has not abandoned me yet, and as I scanned my club's message board, my eye was drawn to a particular message. I instantly realised that it was both a relevant and time-saving structure for this article. The fact that the message was posted by the Editor himself made it an even more satisfying substitute for originality. Referring to a game we had lost the day before, it approximately read:

"Confidence is good, but complacency will lose us games we should win. Intensity is also good, but panic is infectious and will lose us games we could win. When we arrived yesterday we were complacent and then, (realising this was poorly founded), we panicked"

In terms of the season as a whole I would not say that we were unduly complacent at the start but I would say that we placed too much confidence in the potential of key players. I feel we ignored some fundamental weaknesses, and when the cracks began to appear on that first day in Birmingham, the team crumpled in a fit of epileptic insanity: we had been afflicted by collective, heat-defying brain-freeze that was not to thaw until September.

Though I had never played in the A-tour before last season, my impression both

from the sidelines and on the pitch was that the general standard is improving rapidly and that UK Ultimate as a whole is in a very healthy state. The divide within the A-tour seems to have grown smaller, with more teams competing on a more even basis and show casing a greater depth of talent than ever before. Perhaps we, as a club, had not expected this level of competition in our opposition? Though relatively young and inexperienced, clubs such as EMO impressed, and showed what good organisation and a healthy competition for places can achieve. At the opposite end of the spectrum, nay universe, Brighton showed what can be achieved with a play book of only dubious logic, and that when you do something just a little bit crazy, you can actually go out and enjoy playing Ultimate! Without being too contrary, I firmly believe that they were the most frustrating but enjoyable team to play on tour.

What surprised me the most, however, was the experience of playing the very top teams. When you play them you are not really blown away by individual skill, or by moments of game-winning brilliance. Of course they are capable of such things; the top clubs attract the top players. What is crucial, however, is that they do not rely on these individual moments. You line up against players, some of whom you know to be in a different league, but many of whom you know are not. As a team, though, they are consistently able to control games, to do what is required and they simply do not make mistakes. They are able to both accommodate and encourage younger and less experienced players, but in doing so they always focus on protecting the result, the reason why they play; to win. At their core are a group of highly skilled and experienced players, around whom the younger but significant talents emerge, and no doubt, will one-day become the core themselves. Having such a balance gives the younger players a confidence to go out and perform, to do their job within a well-prescribed team structure. Whilst it may be tempting to become slightly complacent in this situation, self-belief is matched by a hunger to achieve. This hunger prevents complacency and means that the top teams enjoy beating any opposition, and can get results, even when some players are performing below their best. Winning is a habit they do not like to break. I see the enjoyment that some

other teams get out of tight games and of seeing their players pull out some outrageous trickery. In truth, though, this counts for little if you end up on the losing side. In the top teams the commitment of every single player, both on the pitch and on the sideline is absolute, and they rightly take a very visible, vocal and unparalleled satisfaction in the rewards of the work, tour after tour.

So what lessons can I draw from the season? Well I think I'll approach the next season with more realistic expectations. Last year our pre-season was very positive, especially marked by a significant influx of young players showing good potential. However, it was on these players that the club eventually came to rely, as one by one the core of marginally geriatric 'play-makers' fell to injury and apathy. In this context, we started to lose matches we thought we could have won. With no realistic substitutes, especially of handlers, we were slightly lost. But whereas we could have ground out results, displayed some heart and intensity, we panicked. Inexplicable individual errors plagued almost every minute of our season. People felt pressure to perform outside their percentage game, and our structure broke down as a result.

It is a squad that creates the opportunity, not individuals. Reasonable players have the potential to achieve far more within a well-gelled squad. If teams are to challenge the likes of Clapham and Fire, they must be prepared to develop individuals within a structure over the longer term and make every attempt to retain them. Players must be convinced that the club is moving in the right direction. It will take time, but the top teams only achieve success year in year out because they are prepared to put in ever more work to beat an improving opposition. It's a tough task but teams in our position could do themselves a huge favour by remembering few simple rules: keep a simple structure, don't make errors, get the sideline involved, enjoy achieving realistic goals as a squad, and be prepared to use to your advantage the kind of hunger, intensity and 'gamesmanship' that the top teams will undoubtedly display in return.

Oh, and my experiences of the A-tour? Well, pants obviously.

Will Davies-Jenkins

wwwu (why work, watch ultimate)

I started playing Ultimate in 1993. To some of you, that will seem like The Olden Days and you'll be wondering how we managed to dodge the dinosaurs long enough to string two passes together. To others, well, there are plenty of old dinosaurs out there who've been slogging away much longer than I have. Hi guys.

1993 is so long ago that we were still using video recorders around the home, and as a fledgling Ultimate player desperate to prove to family and friends that this was a real sport played by real people (some things never change) there was only one weapon in my armoury: a battered old VHS tape that one of our fellow players had managed to copy from some secretive under-the-counter source. It was a professionally made film of the 1991 UPA Nationals Final between New York New York and Big Brother from Boston. It was a great game, featuring 'The Dobbins Catch' (ask someone over 35), Lenny Engels rushing around wearing devil horns, two layouts (amazing to us) and at least one fight. We clung to it as lasting proof that somewhere in the world our sport was taken seriously. I also clung to it as evidence that a grumpy five-footer (Dobbins) could out-jump the best defenders in the country, not something another grumpy five-footer (me) has been able to prove subsequently.

Since then, VHS has gone the way of betamax and cine film and even DVD is starting to look distinctly like 20th century technology. Thanks to the internet, clips of Ultimate abound and proving to your mates that it really is a sport is no more difficult than sending them a URL. Persuading them to stop taking the mickey is harder, but it was ever thus.

Search YouTube for "ultimate frisbee" and you'll find all sorts of stuff from the deeply boring to the inspirational via the dangerous and the plain irritating. If ever you needed proof that all around the world there are groups of nine or ten people getting together on a regular basis to practice in the rain and the mud, and that they are capable of pointing a camcorder at it, then here it is. www.youtube.com has plentiful evidence that most teams are as random and inept as your own. 'UPE' showcase just the kind of thing in a training highlights package where the show-stopper is a completed pass. Elsewhere you can see the University of

Iceland team practicing Indoors, using what looks like a freebie disc and wearing, to a certain extent, Arsenal shirts. See also clips like 'Ultimate Frisbee Layout Clinic' demonstrating that at some stage all players go to the park and practice laying-out extremely badly, and that it's almost as amusing watching complete strangers do it as watching your team-mates.

If you want to see real layouts, they're here. Sweetest is 'The Greatest', a clip from the 'Above and Beyond' DVD which, if you haven't seen it, is a ludicrous and fantastic fingertip greatest play. Thanks to YouTube you can watch agog and then read the comments left by delusional players. "I'm gonna have to try that sometime." Yeah, right..

If you do want to learn new skills and drills, there are plenty of folks demonstrating them. Be warned however, they're not always what they seem. You may wish to visit video.google.com and check out the 'Ambidextrous Frisbee Throwing Video', 'Chicken Wing Scoober', 'Back Pivot Drill' or even the dodgy-sounding 'Back Hand Lift Penetration Video'. These all demonstrate potentially useful skills, but beware. Read the accompanying descriptions and you'll discover that these clips are posted by embittered ex-Ultimate players who are hell-bent on spreading a new sport called 'DiscHoops'. Fortunately they have also posted clips of themselves playing 'DiscHoops', so we can all see just how fricking silly it is.

As an aside, I will give a shiny new five pound note to the first reader to:

1. Watch the aforementioned 'Back Hand Lift Penetration Video'
2. Read the self-righteous accompanying description then..
3. E-mail Frank Huguenard saying, "Dude, you travelled in that clip."
4. Get a genuine reply.

Elsewhere, well, there's loads of random flotsam and bizarre jetsam. If you thought it was only YOUR local news that occasionally ran rubbish items about the sport, check out 'Ultimate Frisbee on local news, South Korea (sic)'. They do it there too. If you want to check out the latest trailers from Pushpass, they're on Google Video. If you want to see someone called Wendy getting knocked flat, check out 'Ultimate frisbee collision'.



Final mentions must be made of the two best of the best, one of which is sadly no longer with us. First up is 'Beautarted'. Quite simply it's a clip of one guy jumping over another guys head to catch a disc... WITHOUT EVEN NOTICING. It's fairly startling, quite funny, and also half an inch either side of a trip to intensive care (see the previously mentioned clip of Wendy getting clattered).

Last, but by no means least, is 'Floating Free', an Oscar-nominated short film made in 1977, produced by one Jerry Butts. It's an eleven-minute short, capturing the World Frisbee Championships in the Rose Bowl, Pasadena. Alongside some surprisingly adventurous and hurly-burly Ultimate, there is Guts, Freestyle and even a little dog action, all in front of a jaw-dropping crowd of more than 70,000 people. It's a fantastic watch for the action, the music, the hair and the shorts and especially for those of us who yearn for the day that Ultimate will look like a proper sport. The bad news is that for copyright reasons it's recently been taken down by YouTube. For now it resides in the 'Ultimate's Greatest Lost Clips' file, along with 'The Dobbins Catch'.

Some of the YouTube clips mentioned above are collected at <http://snipurl.com/ultimateclips> For others, check out video.google.com.

Rob Mitchell



1. JAMES STANLEY GOES UP AGAINST FAISSOIL M'BAE CHEVRON VS. CLAPHAM NATIONALS PHOTOS © GRAHAM BAILEY 2006 www.grahambaileyphotography.com

2. ROB ALPEN, CLAPHAM VS. FIRE, TOUR 2 FINAL PHOTOS © PAUL HURT, 2006 <http://pope.smugmug.com>

YOUTUBE:

1. BEAUTARTED.
2. FRANK HUGUENARD AND HIS SON WIGSY.
3. SEARCH 'GB JUNIORS 1996' TO SEE WIGSY, CHRIS BERRY, JOLYON AND VODOO IN THEIR PRIME.

nationals

The Nationals, Open and Women's, were held under the changeable skies of Mansfield in September. Clapham took their sixth title beating Fire of London, and Iceni their second with a defeat over Bliss. After the games our man on the ground, "voice of UK Ultimate" Tom Styles joined some key players from all four teams.



John 'Jay Jay' Howell (Clapham)

TS: Jay Jay, this is your second year with Clapham, what's it like as a young player playing with all the established players on the team?

JJ: Well at first it was pretty daunting, and last year I didn't really feel as much part of the team as I do now. I've made some really close friends here, I feel like I've really gelled with the squad and now feel part of the team, which is different from last year when I was a new face.

TS: As a learning experience when you are playing with Clapham, which are the players that you've benefited from the most?

JJ: Well I think Rob [Alpen] as the Captain is the one everyone respects, he's helped my game so much this year, he's the one that's taken me to one side and personally congratulated me when I've done something well, and told me about my mistakes and how I can improve. Alex [Bowers] is a great help as well, but Rob's leadership is what motivates everyone, and inspires everyone, not just as a team but personally as well. The other thing is just watching the other players on the team, when someone like Nas, makes a big grab or something that really pumps you up and gets you going.



Rob Alpen (Clapham)

TS: Rob that's a fantastic final and a sixth Nationals title.

RA: My fifth, I wasn't playing for Clapham in the first year.

TS: It's a great result for Clapham. Is this the pinnacle of your season or do you have plenty more to push for?

RA: Plenty more; we've got the European Championships in Florence which is the first year we're doing it at the end of season, we're really looking forward to it. It's going to bridge the gap between Europe and the States. We are building towards that and then we are building towards [the World Club Championships] Perth. Normally we just trot off as Champions after this, but we have to keep our heads screwed on this year.

TS: Over the course of the season you've had some really close games, and Fire in particular have pushed you hard, do you think their game has improved this year and that has pushed you further?

RA: Yeah, it comes down the training, a lot. We always see each other coming out of the tube at the same time on Tuesday nights, they're going to one side of the common we're going to the other. We know they're gonna be working hard and that's an incentive for us to work hard. The other team that have to be mentioned are Fusion, they have solidified all the potential that they have shown for years, they're the only team to beat us in the UK this year. And that's not a fluke, they played great, they've made the step up from a team that will push you hard to a team that can win big games.

TS: So looking ahead to Europeans next year are you going to be involved in the GB bid to retain our Champions of Europe status?

RA: Well I never know where I'm going to be year to year, but most likely I'll be around and most likely I'll be involved. And GB's going to be a great project, it's a great chance to bring in a lot of young players. The university system has bred a host of very very good players, teams like ourselves and Fire are bringing up these guys, so I think we have a lot of potential.

Pete 'Rodders' Wright (Fire)

TS: Pipped at the post for another year Rodders?

PW: Yeah, probably not our best performance this year, but they're pretty strong. It was a windy game and when it was wet at the beginning we struggled to score upwind, they got a good start, it was pretty tough after that, we played well in places and got a few points on the trot, but we were always down by a bit.

TS: You guys [Fire and Clapham] train on the same pitch on Clapham Common. When you see them on a Tuesday night do you think 'that's going to be the opposition'?

PW: I park my car near where they play, and I always think 'that's the opposition', we're all out there every Tuesday, which is quite nice, and it's a bit weird to travel this far and play them again. It's good to have two teams from London that are both doing so well.

TS: Obviously Fire have improved year on year, but what are the things you need to change as a team to take that next step up. What are the difference between Clapham and Fire?

PW: We've talked about it a lot, and I still think that belief is a big thing, there's still players in there that play the game not sure whether we are going to win it or not. We need to have the attitude that we will win. The time when we did that last year and had that kind of attitude is when we won. You can see it in people's eye's sometimes, so we need to get a bit more of that belief, but that takes time as a team you can't make that happen over night. We've built over seasons and we are now doing consistently well, we just need to take that step up. There's nothing in it skills wise or in individual desire, but as a whole team we've just got to believe a bit more.

PHOTO © PETER 'RODDERS' WRIGHT, FIRE VS FUSION SEMI FINAL PHOTO © RICHARD SHORTRIDGE, 2006
www.shortyultimateimages.blogspot.com

CLAPHAM SHOUTS MORE:
BACK ROW: OLLIE BENJAMIN (3), FAISSOL M'BAE (28), MARC GULIBERT (4), ROB MCGOWAN (84), SI WEEKS (6), FINN HUGHES (42), NICK BILDNER (18), CHRIS BROWN (36), OLLY GRAY (21), ADAM MARVEL (32), COLIN SHAW (73), ADAM HOLT (44), JOHN HOWELL (11), KEI YOKOO (8)
FRONT ROW: ALLY DRAY (12), DANIEL FURNELL(40), ROB ALPEN (43), PAUL WAITE(7), NASSER M'BAE (27), RIK ATKINS (2), ALEX BOWERS (26), PETER HARVEY (20), JOLYON THOMPSON (10)

PHOTO © TOM STYLES, 2006
www.tom-styles.co.uk



Anna Nelson (Bliss)

TS: *Over the course of the season Bliss and Iceni have had some great games, what have been the key moments?*

AN: All four finals this year have been between the two of us, so we've had close games throughout and there's never been more than a few points between us at the end of each game. In this game the weather played a big part, during the rain in the first half we were incredibly bad and we were 8-1 down at the half. We had a great semi against Leeds and scored nearly all of our upwind points, so we assumed we could just keep doing that, but better opposition and an increase in wind seemed to stop our progress, plus Iceni really picked it up; they were getting a lot of spin on the disc, making fantastic upwind throws, and coming down with a lot more than we did. Then we came back in the second half and started to believe in ourselves again, we scored six points in a row, and were getting ourselves fired up again but it was a bit too late. This year has been great for both our teams, we've both improved immensely, and it's the same with Leeds, they've had a fantastic show this tournament.

TS: *You're off to Perth this November, what's your target out there?*

AN: It's an interesting line up, with a few of the strong American teams not going out there, it's much more of a chance for the European teams to show what they are made of. So we could really do some damage out there and it's quite fun to think about, obviously we'd like to take home Gold.

TS: *Do you think these guys [Iceni] will get in your way?*

AN: Oh yeah, and they'll make a good job of it too.

Diana Worman (Iceni)

TS: *A really tight game there, they [Bliss] really came back in that second half and gave you a fright.*

DW: Yep definitely.

TS: *Did you think for a minute that you might not start scoring again?*

DW: The thought that it was possible for us to have a massive choke did cross my mind, yes, we knew when we took the half 8-1 that they would come back, because they are a very professional team, so we knew it was on the cards. But we held it together, we've been doing lots of sessions on mental toughness, in preparation for worlds, where we've talked specifically about this kind of event happening, the game always ebbs and flows. I think our mental toughness helped us win the game.

TS: *What's the record between yourself and Bliss over the season?*

DW: They beat us at Copenhagen, but we won the tournament, we won Tour 1, they beat us at Tour 2, we won Tour 3, we've had one friendly and we've just won Nationals.

TS: *So Iceni take all the trophies this year..*

DW: We did, but Bliss took the Tour last year. They've had a few major changes in personnel and they're building their team up.

TS: *So what preparations are you making for Perth now?*

DW: Well, we're going to have Tuesday off and go to the pub instead! Then we have two sessions a week including a floodlit session, so Monday nights and Saturdays, and then we do a spirits session on Thursdays. We all do individual fitness as well as that. So we're really cranking it up.

TS: *And the target is?*

DW: Semis, I'd like to see us in the semis.

TS: *Semis and then anything can happen..*

DW: Anything can happen, I expect us to do well, but it's going to be really close, because there are no super stacked teams and there are no obvious weak teams. Everyone seems very well matched.

TS: *Well the very best of luck to you over there.*

DW: Thanks Tom.



DAVE PICHLER (CHEVRON) MISSES
A-D' ON SI WEEKS (CLAPHAM)
PHOTO © GRAHAM BAILEY, 2006
www.grahambaileyphotography.com

ADRIANO VITALI, FLYGHT CLUB VS. SUBLIME
PHOTO © TOM STYLES, 2006
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celebrity interview

Just in case anybody out there does not know what a legend you are, what are the main highlights from your CV?

The first highlights were being UK Overall Individual Frisbee Champion in 1978, 1979, 1981. It was quite a big deal at the time, and I got expenses paid trips to the States to play in the World Championships.

From 1979 to 1997 I played Ultimate for Warwick Bears, Tennants, STAN, GB Open and GB Masters and won National Indoor and Outdoor titles with both Tennants and STAN. Then on to disc golf and National Open titles in Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland and Britain. I also took the Masters Division in the European DG Championships in 2003. In 2004 I was very proud to be the first European to be inducted to the Disc Golf Hall of Fame.

How many discs do you own?

Plastic discs pervade my house, garage, car, course and even the desk at work. The Quarry Park/Del's Discs retail and mail-order operation has just doubled it's stock and accounts for over 1000 discs. I don't know how many non-stock discs I have accumulated over the years, but I guess there must be more than 300. Let's say fourteen hundred and twelfty. Oh yes, and there's probably as many mini discs too!

Other than your hair, what was better about Ultimate in the 70's compared to Ultimate now?

There were some differences: the stall count was 15 and was generally only started if somebody had been holding the disc for at least 10 seconds! Zone defence was unheard of, although we did leave the big guy at the back to cover "long bombs" There was still quite a hippy influence, and I remember a match at Warwick in '79 where we had a half time break and had difficulty getting our opponents to line up for the second half after they discovered magic mushrooms on the pitch. Being such a small sport, you knew everybody who played and felt like a pioneer, but there was a worry that the sport would die out. I am chuffed to bits that Ultimate is so much stronger now and commands respect for it's athleticism whilst still retaining spirit, and sociability while catering for all levels of ability. I was really worried that Warwick Bears might fold in the 80's but 30 years after it started, the club is stronger than ever.

What has been your best Ultimate related experience, and was it better than meeting Danni Minogue on the Big Breakfast? (Editors note: Del met Danni in the early 90s during one of his many forays into the national media - a photo of her holding his Midnight Flyer had pride of place on his mantelpiece for well over a decade).

Must have been that time back in 1994 when I skyed a young Harry Golby to score the winning point in a crucial match. In reality, any time we beat Hombres was sweet, and we did so in Bristol at the Samurai Fiesta with the help of a young Golby.

I think my favourite off-pitch recollection epitomised the boundless unrealistic optimism of youth. There were 10 of us pushing 4 or 5 shopping trolleys of alcohol through the Paris suburb of Creteil. As a budding accountant I tallied up our purchases and concluded that we had 732 bottles of booze, which meant 73 bottles per person. When I presented this fact to the group, Phil Tattersall fixed me in the eye with a worried look and in a broad Scouse accent said "Christ, do you think we've got enough?"

What about bad experiences - has anything coming close to making you feel as sick in your stomach as when you answer the phone and hear those dreaded 4 words 'Hi Del, its Bud....'?

Well yes, I often felt that sick, but that was entirely due to my inability to absorb anything more than 3 pints of bitter and a lager shandy.

Who would make your all time GB starting 7?

3 STAN players: Jim Edwards, Sam Neilson, Harry Golby; 2 Lurkers: Simon Harry, Andy Bateson; Si Hill (Catch 22), Bill Digby (Samurai)

You are very old and it must be a bit of a struggle for you to remember the good old days, can you think of any ways the the British Ultimate community should record its early years?

I really hope that we can record the history of the game in the UK. The Modern Records Centre at Warwick University have indicated that they would be willing to catalogue and hold the official archives of the BUF/UKUA, the Warwick Bears, and possibly other



important Ultimate archives. If someone has those old records or is prepared to try and gather them and bring them to Warwick, that would be great.

Is Disc Golf for fat blokes who can't catch?

I think you are forgetting people with dodgy ankles and knees, and failing lungs. Actually I get loads of kids playing disc golf at Quarry Park, and not

just fat ones! It is a lifetime sport, so do bear it in mind when Ultimate gets too tough for your body! Oh and be thankful that you are human, and can enjoy years of disc golf after your prime Ultimate playing years, it's so much better than being an old Zebra on the plains of the Serengeti.

Dereck Robins interviewed by Harry Golby

psyched to win!

Mental skills to improve your physical performance

Robert M Nideffer (1992)

Mental skills are as important as physical ones

You can be taught to think, and you can practice thinking the right way, just like you practice throwing, marking, cutting and all the other skills. Dr Nideffer advises top class sportspeople about the psychological aspects of performance. Here are a few of his key points.

Locating the problem

If you're having problems during a competition situation, and the obvious technical solution doesn't work, focus instead on gaining control over concentration and arousal. If you can focus your mind on the task in hand (i.e. play 'in the zone'), you will play better.

Your problem is probably psychological if:

- You're satisfied with your skill level when you play well
- Mistakes tend to occur more frequently when you are under pressure
- You have lots of negative thoughts or feelings during a game
- A breakdown in one area (e.g. catching) leads to other problems

Better internal distractions = better focus on the game.

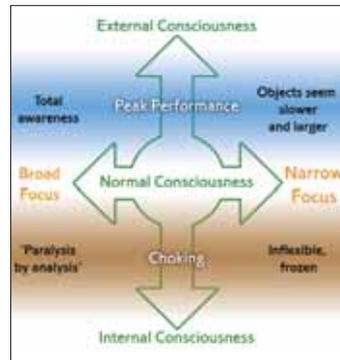
Sounds simple! When athletes become immersed in their own thought processes, e.g. when they become anxious about their performance, they stop attending to environmental cues and time seems to speed up, leading to panic and further degeneration in their game.

Dimensions of consciousness

In normal consciousness, we switch between internal and external foci very frequently. We flick between thinking about what our bodies are doing and what's going on in the game.

Teaching yourself to have an external focus should enable you to shut out the internal thoughts and 'get into the zone', optimising your performance in game situations.

This diagram illustrates the different dimensions of consciousness that you can experience while playing a high-level sport such as Ultimate.



External consciousness can lead to 2 types of peak performance:

Narrow focus => things happen slower; objects appear larger – you feel more in control

Broader view => a feeling of 'total awareness' – knowing what will happen before it occurs

If players are 'in the zone' for some time, their focus will swing between broad and narrow, generally depending on where the disc or their marker is: e.g. narrow focus when receiving a disc, or marking a thrower; broad focus when playing zone D or looking to make a cut. All of this is external to them as an individual.

Internal consciousness can lead to the following problems:

Narrow focus => you become rigid and frozen, fail to respond to 'task-relevant cues' and are unable to think analytically, becoming negative and self-defeating. To the outside observer, you look as if you are not reacting at all to the game, or are repeating the same mistakes without being able to adjust.

Broad view => you are more likely to appear flustered and feel rushed, afraid or angry. You are distracted by your own thoughts and feelings and are unable to react in an organised way to what's happening around you.

Choking occurs when attention becomes focused internally; you lose the ability to shift to the external and to attend to performance-relevant tasks.

This means you are unable to pay sufficient attention to your opponent (or the disc): time speeds up, pressure builds, objects do not appear so clearly, and your ability to anticipate decreases dramatically. According to Dr Nideffer, negative thoughts can literally cause your muscles to tighten up!

The solution to choking is to focus on the external. Put the internal worries to one side. Immerse yourself in the competition.

It's you and the opposition – focus on the task in hand.

Increased physical skill decreases internal distractions:

Practice the physical skills you need until you do them automatically. Once you no longer need to consciously think about internal factors (e.g. no longer need to 'talk yourself through' a throw), you will be free to concentrate on any aspect of the game situation (external) because you won't have to think about what your body is doing.

Primed to Win?

Here are some tips to take into a game, to ensure the success of your team and help you play at the best of your ability.

Firing up your game can enable you to 'get in the zone', and perform at your peak. Contributing factors include:

- Physical fitness.
- Being mentally ready for the challenge.
- Full preparation beforehand: practice, practice and more practice!
- High confidence in yourself and your team.
- Being well rested.
- Putting mistakes to one side: not allowing them to damage your concentration.
- Support from coaches.
- External focus during the game.

By comparison, if you are worried about choking, look out for the following elements and try to eliminate them:

- Lack of physical / mental preparation.
- Self-doubt (more on this later).
- Tiredness.
- Poor communication with team.
- Lack of confidence in other team members.
- Perception that others lack confidence in you.

- Feeling unsupported by coaches.
- Overly high expectations of your own performance.
- Excessive attention to previous errors.

Self-belief and faith in your own game.

Belief and faith are not the same thing. It is easy to believe that you are a good player if you do something great on the pitch, but it can be less easy to maintain that belief over the longer term if you have an off-day or a bad week. That's where faith comes in: learn to build your self-belief into a stronger, long-lasting faith in your own abilities. Dr Nideffer says, "faith is believing, in the absence of success... Many players believe in their ultimate potential [no pun intended], but very few have the faith that allows them to set aside negative thinking when things aren't going according to plan."

Perfectionism is one of the biggest barriers to faith in your own ability. In striving for perfection you are setting yourself up to fail. Failing to live up to unrealistic expectations destroys confidence and feelings of self-worth. You blame other people, things or events for your problems instead of taking responsibility for your own game. You either get angry at your 'failure' or you become convinced that you are no good. These internal distractions only do further damage to your performance. The only way to remove the fears and doubts that keep you from playing your best is to remove the pressure to be perfect. Once you've done this, your inner turmoil will die down and you will find it easier to focus.

Conclusions

It is your responsibility to do the very best you can with the tools you have – to play to the very best of your ability. Behave as if you believe that you are in control of your performance at all times, whether or not you actually feel that way. There will be times when everything around you suggests that you are out of control. These times will test your ability to play with confidence and will test the strength of your belief that you can take control. But think of the Green Bay Packers coach, who would insist that 'they didn't lose the game – they just ran out of time for a comeback'!

Jillian Hastings



☛ DON'T YOU LOVE THE ENGLISH WEATHER? SUE PIOLI WAITING TO PULL - NICE BRISTOLS! NATIONALS, MANSFIELD. PHOTO © TOM STYLES, 2006 www.tom-styles.co.uk

☛ ANGUS KEENAN HAS A THOUGHT PHOTO © JAMES MCKENZIE, 2006 www.massiveimageworks.com

☛ NOT MANY PEOPLE CAN TOAST BRITNEY, CLAPHAM VS. BUZZ BULLETS. SIDELINE SUPPORT FROM FIRE AND EMO. PHOTO © VIRU GAJANAYAKE, 2006. www.flycatchers.net

☛ WHAT CAN YOU DO AGAINST THAT? SATORU SAMESHIMA, BUZZ BULLETS ON 'D' PHOTO © NEIL GARDENER, 2006 www.nzsnaps.com

☛ JAPANESE CHARACTERS MEANING 'ULTIMATE FRISBEE'

☛ SOME EVENING ENTERTAINMENT. PHOTO © NEIL GARDENER, 2006. www.nzsnaps.com

growing pains or growing gains?

Player numbers are growing! There are at least 5000 ultimate players in the UK. Approx 1500 are paying members of the UKUA. More than 50 universities are playing competitive uni ultimate; 70 teams have already registered for the Ladder League; there are 500+ junior players; and increasing numbers of schools are contacting us to get help starting up.

I believe we should be supporting the growth of the game (not everyone does). Here are some simple reasons why:

- Easy access to playing more ultimate – at the right level, and locally.
- Choice of competitive formats to suit lifestyle – e.g. regular one-off games in a “local league” or weekend tournaments.
- More choice of team-mates so it's easier to build a team of players with similar goals and potential.
- More variety in opponents: top players in the UK are frustrated at the frequency with which they have to play against the same opponents.
- Improved recognition of the sport, which in turn improves our chances of attracting outside investment in the form of sponsors, advertising and grants.

The biggest down side of growth is the risk to spirit of the game. However, there is no doubt that schools in particular are going to start playing ultimate whether existing players are involved or not. Surely our best approach to this problem is to get involved with schools and new teams to make sure we demonstrate the value of retaining this particularly unique aspect of our game.

With these things in mind I would like to see the following areas get the most attention in the coming year or so:

The most important thing is playing ultimate, so it makes sense to start with competition:

The competition structure is a segmentation problem. We need to start to recognise that different parts of our competition structure are targeted at different types of player – and not try to please everyone with each type of competition. The diagram (I took the basic picture and terms from Clive Woodward's book “Winning!”) is attempting to highlight how I think we should be trying to match different competition segments to different player groups over the coming few years.

We have a great structure for the top 30+ teams with the Tour and Nationals. We could improve things here or there, but that would miss the point: There are two really important new threads of competition happening – and that's where we should focus our efforts: EUCS (European Ultimate Club series) and Ladder League.

The most important thing is playing ultimate, so it makes sense to help people improve:

We can do much more to help players improve. We have a coaching scheme now – and by April we will have doubled the number of people that have been through the Level 1 award. My goal is to make sure someone from every club/team has opportunities to have access to the Level 1 coach award.

Existing ultimate clubs and players are going to teach new people about the



game – as has always been the case. By getting better organised with e.g. the coaching scheme we can make this easier, more fun, and more successful.

The most important thing is playing ultimate, so we need a systematic approach to supporting schools and youth groups:

A polished schools pack that can be delivered and followed up when schools ask for help. We have plenty of raw materials for this thanks to loads of hard work from a number of tireless individuals. We just need to finish the job – and we will do in the New Year.

Training courses to help non-ultimate players understand the game (especially SOTG) and get into a position to teach children. We have a first version of the “Leader Award” and will be running our first official course in Feb 2007.

We need to support people that are willing and happy to help by making sure they have the right checks, insurance, training, etc.

The most important thing is playing ultimate, but we do need to do a few things to make sure good things can be repeated and scaled up. The UKUA will need to go through some gradual changes to meet the requirements of bodies such as UK Sport:

This is necessary to give e.g. schools and potential sponsors the confidence to deal with us, and involves such things as CRB checks as noted above for working with children; or being able to demonstrate we have the right financial practices.

And it will also mean that over time the UKUA will employ more than a part-time administrator. Well I would say that wouldn't I !?

Does any of this really matter? Yes I think so – and here's why:

- The Tour is choking growth because we provide nothing else. The Ladder League is a great response to this problem.
- EUCS is crucial to providing a regular, higher level competition. We should take advantage of the close proximity of strong opponents.
- It is our responsibility to protect SOTG. A structured coaching scheme is critical to this problem.
- Introducing players to the game at an earlier age with proper coaching over many years will inevitably produce stronger players and teams.
- Longer term, international players are going to need financial support to have any hope of doing enough training!

Simon Hill



chasing the buzz

Watching the World Club Championship finals, I was reminded of the European Championships 2003. There was a British squad in every final and we felt unbeatable – we could do no wrong! Everywhere you looked there was a euphoric Brit with a big grin and a medal. Except this time it wasn't us; it was the Japanese.

They rocked every division from start to finish, and personally I felt nothing but respect for them. In my experience they made no calls, they played fair and they were all smiling. I heard a rumour that in Japan they play with referees, that they have developed an unbreakable 'D' structure that involves hardly any running, and that children are made to practise jumping every day at school. Whatever their secret, there was no doubt of their success: For a team with only one player over 6 foot tall (Buzz

Bullets) to beat a team with only one player under 6 foot tall (Thong) is pretty good, for the score to be 17-8 is amazing. No wonder Clapham are learning a new D structure this winter, known simply as Buzz 'D'.

The tournament itself was incredibly well organised, the food was amazing, the pitches were perfect (and all in one place), and there was even wireless internet connection around the fields. OK, so the wireless connection crashed on day two, but there was still a hut full of computers on-line, well OK, they were only on-line for about three days, after which there was just a load of people sat around looking wistfully at computers but not actually doing anything, it was just like being at work. Oh yes, and the evening entertainment was great – just had to mention it to justify that photo.

One last thing I would like to say; the Spirit. It was amazing throughout the tournament. I have sat through plenty of international finals, merrily wagering beer or money on the amount of calls and stoppages. In the World Ultimate Open Final 2004 (USA vs. Canada) the count passed eighty. This was not the case in Perth; in the Open Final (Japan vs. Australia) there were literally just three calls! Obviously the crowd all booted until the poor guy making the call backed down and play resumed. Incredible. You can draw your own conclusions about the reasons for the difference in attitude between this and other tournaments, but I challenge you to find another sport where the audience (made up of players) gets to referee the match.

Jack Goolden





world clubs: the open division

Perth 2006 saw a smaller than expected Open division. Participants were sparse due to some big American tournament being scheduled the week before, which was way more important to them than worlds – whatever! This coupled with the fact that Perth is fricking far and flights were a tad on the pricey side meant many teams were unable to field both an Open team and a Women's, so opted for Mixed instead. It also meant that there were loads of Aussie teams although some were pretty lame.

First seeds at the start of the tourney and one of the two US teams that bothered to show up were Sub Zero, but sending a sub standard team didn't help their cause and they lost their first seed to Thong, in probably one of the most entertaining games during the early stages of the tournament. The Aussies were a bunch of arrogant, noisy fellows who got Tuesdayed up by doing team press-ups before each game. Thong (or Flip-flop) played a "mongrel" offence (a bit frantic, not very structured and a lot of "jacking it" – chucking it long) that Sub Zero couldn't live with, that coupled with some full-on D meant that Prancer (the main handler for sub-zero, who had a tendency prance around in the dump position), Oopah-loopah (a very small, balding fellow, with a shock of fiery hair circling his wee bonce) and their team of Americans eventually lost 15-10.

Clapham's start to the tourney went to plan, with Si Weeks at the reigns and a few extra players adding to their already sizeable white army. They dished out a bagel to Redbacks and then had a couple of more challenging games against Tibets from Japan, then Magon from New Zealand but in both cases ended up winning by comfortable margins: 17-10 and 17-9.

'Tuesday' eased into the tourney with an easy win against Hot Chilly (17-9) but lost their first game of the second day to Buzz Bullets (Japan), which set-up a crucial crunch game against Deathstar to let one team climb into the top half. It was a hard match but in the end it wasn't that tight, with Tuesday stepping up and playing up to their potential, for once, and winning with a comfortable 17-10 margin. Setting us up three Aussie teams as opponents... well, go to Australia play Australians, I guess.

EMO didn't have a great first pool, going down to Nomadic Tribe, Ultimate Vibrators and Chilly. The Aussie vs. Aussie contests were the weirdest, with Thong losing to Chilly 17-3 in the second round, then beating them in the semi's 17-11, Fakulti beating Chilly 17-15 but ending up 6th - it made no sense unless you took weather into the equation. Each day was gloriously sunny but with dramatically different wind conditions, which brought out various different zone defences.



“HEY DUDE, GIVE US A KISS? NOBODY'S LOOKING.”
SI WEEKS, CLAPHAM VS MEPHISTO
PHOTO © RICHARD SHORTRIDGE, 2006
www.shortyultimateimages.blogspot.com

PAUL 'VOODOO' WAITE CUTS FOR TOMAS VESELY,
CLAPHAM VS MEPHISTO. PHOTO © NEIL GARDENER, 2006
www.nzsnaps.com

TOM 'BUDDHA' HAYDON, EMO VS, NOMADIC TRIBE
PHOTO © ALBRECHT TIEFENBACHER, 2006
www.ultimateimageshop.com



Buzz Bullets looked like the team to beat from the start, their very different style of offence, very quick handling, small cuts, lots of breaks and the occasional huck, kept teams guessing, and made it hard for any defence to be effective against them. They also had a very loose zone, which relied on the opposition not making any headway and eventually turning over after bad pass selection. Tuesday ended up being the team that took the most points off them, and that was only 11.

In the second round Clapham had a hiccup and did something they ain't accustomed too - they lost three in a row - first to Doublewide - some pretty noisy Americans, 12-10, then to Sub Zero, which set them up with a semi against Chilly, where they lost 15-12.

Tuesday struggled in the second pool. It was down to various players suffering from bouts of "brain farts" which resulted in a few wayward discs and Tuesday's offence struggling to get free. Tuesday lost to Thong (17-6), Chilly (17-12) and Fakulti (17-14) but improved with each game. This led to a final chance to get into the top 8 with a final pool game against Mephisto. Or should that be Me-Fist-yo. T'was a bad tempered affair, which included one of the French Canadians (who was also a kick-boxer) pushing a Tuesday player and threatening a "smackdown". As the sole reps of Canada, I think they thought they had something to prove. Mephisto

came out on top and Tuesday were gutted (see photo).

Clapham bounced back on their final day of play by getting revenge on Doublewide beating them in the 5th-8th group to get into the 5th-6th playoff where they dispatched Fakulti 15-11 and nabbed 5th spot. When interviewed about Clapham's tournament, stand in captain Si Weeks was unusually quiet and remarked that it was "average" (you normally can't shut him up). When asked if he would like to add anything further he said "no". (Maybe it's just my skills at being a roving reporter that are lacking).

Tuesday's Thursday was a pretty low-key affair. The morning commenced by getting mentally attuned for the game - by playing mini golf and going swimming in the ocean, to play some Japanese folk who couldn't string 3 passes together in the wind in the first half. Having already had a game you would've thought that they would be used to the conditions. Tuesday (or Fire, because the symbol on our shirts means both in Japanese) lost a bit of concentration in the second half. Needless to say, Tuesday players got grumpy (quell surprise) but the opposition was seen off in the end with not too much of a problem. Maybe it was mental exhaustion, maybe it was the hot sun, or maybe it was three games with eight thirty starts but something must have been getting to



ABRA GARFIELD LAYS OUT.
THONG VS. BUZZ BULLETS, THE OPEN FINAL
PHOTO © JAMES MCKENZIE, 2006
www.massiveimageworks.com

WAYNE WRECKER SQUEEZES A PASS
THROUGH THE 'D', TUESDAY VS. CHILLY
PHOTO © DAVE SANDERS, 2006.
www.nzsnaps.com

FIRE DANGER TODAY: LOW.

the Tuesday vice captain Jo Bolton as he attempted to give an inspirational speech to raise his troops, uttering the words "Today is the day that separates yesterday and tomorrow". Thanks Jo, good job mate - now go lie down.

EMO had a better second part to the week being victorious against Too Bad and Redbacks, but then lost against Deathstar and Tibets. Their week ended on a high, beating Chilly to finish up 17th. Special mention must go to Butters though: his real name (answers on a postcard please) is the same as a known felon in Oz and as a result he couldn't get a visa to get into the country, which really sucked, as he had been travelling to Loughborough from London to train most weekends, and got up at 6am to go training most mornings for a number of months. EMO missed you.

The last day for Tuesday was yet another 8:30 start (joy!) against the kiwi team. It was a very close game and a few dodgy calls were made from both sides (folk were grumpy- it was early), but Tuesday eventually won in sudden death, with Dave Rigby making an awesome layout catch while dragging his feet to stay in to clinch the win against his countrymen.

Tuesday's last game was against the second best Japanese team - Nomadic Tribe. They were nowhere near as good as Buzz Bullets and for a bit the game looked like it was in the bag for Tuesday

but a couple of errors cost the game for us. Even though the official score says we won 15-11 and that we held our seeding, we actually came 10th. (Sorry boys, I let it spill.) I reckon the official store-keeper had pi\$ed off to get himself some Little Creatures- nope, not the small furry sort- the frosty, tasty beer sort that is native to Western Australia, mmmmm, beer. Since play was over and after weeks of abstinence (for some players) the Tuesday boys got to know Little Creatures. It was messy.

Well, the only game left was the final: Buzz versus Thong- heckletastic. Buzz were the favourites but Thong were the "home" team. On paper it could've been great, however Buzz steam rolled Thong. It was quite ugly. There was a brief comeback just after half, but Thong never looked like they would take it. Having picked up a few injuries didn't help their cause: a pulled hamstring, an ACL and a shoulder dislocation were amongst their maladies. Buzz opened the scoring account by putting out a few sweet hucks. Thong couldn't play through the opposition's loose zone, so opted for going over the top, which came off but not enough. Flip-flop played bravely, but didn't have the finesse of their opponents who took the game 17-8. It would've been interesting to see how the top North American teams would've fared and skogs too but hey-ho, it was a damn fine tourney anyway. The end.

David 'Dj' Moore



fun fun fun in the sun sun sun

We met this Italian in the airport. Frisbee players - don't they just stick out in a crowd? Be it the bag from Rostock, the old team shirt or just some mad glint in their eye... "Aaah, Bristol, yes so you will be expecting to finish somewhere mid-table then". Blimey, he'd done his homework.

We were one of six British teams who played in the mixed division, which was by far the most popular, having more teams than the open and women's divisions put together. In total there were 40 teams including some impressive competition from around the globe.

Bristol had a blast, which is more than can be said of most of the UK teams. We were unlucky with our initial pool of four, where we lost two matches, which meant we were immediately relegated to the bottom half, this seemed pretty harsh at the time. However this probably contributed in no small part to the fun and success we had thereafter! We played a lot of well-matched, tight games, and only lost to one team once we were out of our pool. And a rare magic occurred, the whole squad simultaneously relaxed, and played our

best ever Ultimate. Individuals who were 'promising' in the run up to Perth really picked up their game and played better than many of us, probably including themselves, had even imagined they could under the fine leadership of Captain Jimmer!

Even our old dogs seemed capable of learning a new trick or two, in particular Adam Batchelor who won his first ever MVP by almost unanimous vote! I should point out that there was some doubt whether or not this was actually the same Fatboy that is known to Ultimate players across the world. He smiled, he didn't upset anyone on the team, he made intelligent and progressive passes, and, most surprising of all, he didn't make any calls - not even "travelling"! What amazed us even more was that he even made a genuinely witty remark or two! During our only unpleasant game, against a team that it turned out had the worst Spirit score in our division (ha!), their most obnoxious player (who at one point squared up to Will Halliday) yelled aggressively *"I've been playing high level Ultimate for ten years, I think I know the rules"*. To which Adam replied, with

a smile and a wink, *"I've been playing for twenty-five years, pup. I wrote the rules."* To which there was no reply.

Perhaps Adam was under the soothing effects of playing alongside some of the lovely Nice Bristols, bringing out a softer side to match his waistline. The point was that after all these angry years, he was a convert to the joys of the mixed game.

In the end I think we were all pretty happy to be the highest placed UK team, as far as Spirit was concerned anyway. We played hard but we had heaps of laughs too. There was singing in the sauna, singing in the spa, singing in the food hall and singing in the spirit tent. We probably drove everyone else bonkers but we were on the bottom of the world; what else are you gonna do?

Elsewhere in the division, Leeds had a great start to the week, coming top of their pool, and after a tough week ended up 15th, which I admit was higher than us if you really want to look at it that way. Ltd Release finished 27th - the same position as they were seeded. Losing a crucial match against German team Woodyds on day two meant that

they could not progress into the top 16.

So we're hanging out in the beautiful white sandy beached Monkey Mia resort, somewhere hours north of Perth, beyond miles and miles of desolate red dusty outback and that Italian guy walks up to us, burnt to a crisp and nissed as a pewt. Amongst the indecipherable ramblings.. *"finished about mid way then Bristol.."* Well yes, precisely, but never before has achieving exactly what we expected to achieve felt like such an achievement. Such is the wonder of Ultimate.

Meander

*This is not actually true.





- 📍 AN INSPIRATION: JAMIE CROSS SPORTS A REAL MAN'S TASH. PHOTO © DAVE SANDERS, 2006. www.nzsnaps.com
- 📍 THUNDERING HERD. PHOTO © JAMES MCKENZIE, 2006. www.massiveimageworks.com
- 📍 SAORI NAKAZAWA, BARBARIANS (JP) VS. WAHINE TOA (NZ). PHOTO © DAVE SANDERS, 2006. www.nzsnaps.com
- 📍 AYUMI SANO, BARBARIANS (JP) VS. ROUGHRIDERS (CANADA). PHOTO © NEIL GARDENER, 2006. www.nzsnaps.com

world clubs: the women's division

It's true. Discs do spin the opposite way south of the equator. The UK women's teams struggled with this but all started throwing with their opposite hands to compensate. No, okay, maybe not really. And it's not true about toilets flushing the other way either.

If there's one thing that can be said of the two mighty UK women's teams that turned up at Perth, it's that they both had cool looking stuff. Bliss had full-on trackie b's and matching handbags, the latest in fashion. They all seemed to be suffering from their red-I flights. Either that or they had sponsored sports lens-wear. Who knows?

Iceni had heard that the North American's liked their kit baggy, so we all ordered ours XXL all round. It was hot. In Perth that is...

All joking aside, while many UK teams spent two years preparing for Worlds, there was one secret-unknown weapon that many hadn't adequately prepared for at this tournament... and it went a little something like this:

"Ichi, Ni, San, Shi, Go, Roku, Shichi, Hachi!" (Laughter! Clapping!)

No matter how cool we looked, nor how ginger we became, we had failed to choreograph beautiful synchronised warm-ups while smiling and laughing like the Japanese. And this was just the beginning. Shortly after this, most Japanese teams then spent an hour and a half playing beautifully synchronised ultimate while smiling and laughing, and totally obliterating their opposition.

Seriously, it's no wonder Japanese teams swept the board in the women's division. I'm sure that our Bliss buds would agree that there was something pretty special about the Japanese women's teams we came across. It was like they had reached the next level of "awareness" in Ultimate since the world last played them at Worlds in 2002. This is what UK teams, particularly the women's teams (where physical size is less of a contributing factor), are going to need to prepare for over these next few years. Forget the North Americans, they've not got anything special on UK teams. Our fitness levels and well thought out tactics can level the playing field versus them.

So then, what was so great about their play? Maybe it was the fact that each

and every one of their players had pinpoint accurate breakforce throws, sharp cuts, great speed, and amazing tenacity on both O and D. Combined with the fact that they rarely, if ever, held on to the disc for longer than 2 seconds – making setting up a D bid a bit of a nightmare as you were never quite sure where the disc was. Oh, and let's not forget that Japan has a 50-60 team women's league and every women's team has an associated University team. Playing in Japan sounds like a dream, doesn't it?

Even though the Japanese women's teams were head and shoulders above our UK representatives (and the rest of the competition for that matter), the UK has a lot to be proud of. It was only two years ago that the full UKUA Women's Ultimate Tour was created after all. From having just one UK women's team in previous world competitions, we sent two UK power-house to Perth and both came home with a few international scalps.

Bliss started off their Worlds campaign with a bit of a stutter that would later prove extremely costly. By losing to the Sydney team Southside by a few points

in the first game, they wound up at the bottom end of a three-way tie at the end of the first round of games and were thereafter limited to not placing higher than 13th, which they did. However, they had a couple of great games in between, notably going to the wire with the lone American team Ozone and beating Melbourne team Ishtar. They also managed to beat a Japanese team (CUJC), a pretty admirable feat.

Iceni had a better start to the tournament than Bliss, beating Wildcard (Aussies), Edmonton (Canada), and Raging Wahine (New Zealand) in the first two days. However day 3 proved tricky as we met two of the eventual semi-finalists – MUD and HUCK (both of Japan). While Iceni have a collective memory block of the HUCK game, we actually gave MUD (the eventual World Champions) a good run for their money and were the only team to score in the double digits against them. Later placement games resulted in a respectable placing of 8th – a bit sad to end on a loss but placing in the Top 8 at Worlds in our second year as a club is a huge accomplishment.

Alia Ayub

my mate: 'true' stories from the legends of british ultimate

1st Place: Dane Barnyard

- European Championships, 2003. As part of the Players pack, everybody received a prototype 'Spirale Ultimate' Frisbee. They were horrible and purple. Dave didn't want his. However, the rest of the GB squad wrote 'Dave Barnard, GB #7' on all their discs and distributed them around the tournament.

Dave got more and more confused as kind hearted people kept seeking him out and giving him 'his' disc: "The funniest (for them, not me) was when we were standing as a squad waiting to collect our medals and a French woman tapped me on the shoulder. Si Hill was standing with me and saw what was happening and started to laugh uncontrollably as a random non Frisbee player said "Are you Dave?" I had to take the disc and say "Thanks very much" out of politeness because as far as she was concerned she was 'returning' my lost disc.

It is true that I may have had a bit of a strop at Nationals, more than a month later, when I was given another disc. They thought they were doing me a favour - I launched it into some nearby trees. However, I will not be doing that again because some kind individual went and fished it out of the trees and gave it back to me the following season.

And yes, I still get them today from a small group of people. I have a pile of them at home.

- Dave had always known what he wanted to do as a career and couldn't have felt more proud when he landed a job as a part-time shop assistant in a corner shop. With the launch of the lottery that year he was keen to be part of the 'team' and joined the corner shop's syndicate without a moments hesitation.

Several months in and the novelty of the lottery had, as with most people, started to wear thin. So when approached to pay two weeks up front due to his imminent holiday he elected to bail out of the syndicate and save his two pounds to spend on his favourite holiday tippie, Special Brew.

Two days later back in the UK, whilst he was doing it large in Benidorm, his syndicate were celebrating a multi million pound win on the lottery. Dave had missed out on an enormous £600,000 pound fortune, how could life get any worse?

Well, you try returning to work the following week and facing all the people who had spent 24 hours plotting how they were spending the jackpot prior to finding out that Dave had pulled out of the syndicate taking his winning numbers with him. In particular, what would you have said when faced with the daughter of one of your colleagues when she said "I was going to get a horse. I hate you!"



2nd Place: Rodders

- Rodders came home from university to have some lunch. He was really hungry. He made up some angel delight mixture, but then realized that it had to be left to chill for an hour, and he only had twenty minutes before he had to get back to his afternoon lecture. At first he was going to put it in the fridge, but he realised that would still take too long. Then he thought of the freezer - also too long. Then he had a brain-wave; he put it in the microwave, and pressed the 'defrost' button. It does have a little snowflake on the button after all!

"The moment of realisation about two minutes in to the de-frosting time was the worst part. Nothing happened!"

- Driving through Wales during the firemen's strike, Dave G comments that there are no Green Goddesses in Wales. Rodders says "Maybe they don't need them because of the dragons", and seems very pleased with his wit. We give it a while to sink in, then ask why the dragons would help. Rodders smugly launches into a sentence about how "the Dragons in Wales could serve the purpose of firemen, because... oh, no, dragons_start_fires."

- Rodders is walking with Barnyard towards his car and begins to sing the praises of the clicky button on his car keys. He can lock/unlock his car before he even gets to it... Brilliant he thinks... What an invention! Rodders is so under the spell of his new toy that he proclaims the actual metal 'key' part of the key as pointless and old hat. Barnyard listens with a smile to Rodders' key epiphany, and awaits Rodders' slow realisation when he goes to start the ignition!

Other Rodderisms: Attempting to open his front door, his tent, even change the TV channel... all with his beloved clicky car key button.

Honourable Mentions:

Larry:

Dialing his own phone number when trying to book a cab.

- Dave turned up in Copenhagen to play Indoor Ultimate for The Fluid Druids (he's obsessed with shmindoors, and hasn't missed Student Indoors since 1995 - even though he hasn't been a student for several years). He was handed his foreign 'pocket' money: "Ah, Kroner, I must be in Denmark."

3rd Place: Ben Silk

- Letting Jacqui go home but forgetting he had the keys. So she tries to climb in the window, only gets half way through and gets stuck. Ben comes home later and goes into the kitchen, but doesn't notice the sleeping Jacqui hanging from the window and just goes to bed, stepping over the loose change that has been scattered across the kitchen floor from Jacqui's pockets.

- Being discovered naked in the airing cupboard at St Andrews '99. There are no more details really. Probably about 4 o'clock in the morning, about two hours after everybody went to bed, Sharma goes for a piss, hears something in the airing cupboard. Sees Silk naked, closes the door and carries on as normal.



AS A SPECIAL PRIZE FOR FIRST PLACE, I HAVE DECIDED TO DONATE MY OWN 'SPIRALE ULTIMATE' DISC TO DAVE. IT HAS BEEN CHEWED BY MY DOG, WHO NEVER TOUCHED ANY OTHER DISC, BUT SHE SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS DISC WAS OK TO EAT. WHO SAID DOG'S DON'T SEE IN COLOUR?

Muppet:

- On a very wet and muddy day in Leeds, Muppet lost his footing after a catch, landing flat on his back and giving out his trademark strained mewl. When somebody pointed out that it was so muddy it couldn't possibly have hurt, he replied "It wasn't the pain, I was thinking about the washing."
- Muppet once Kicked himself in the balls playing hack.
- Muppet missed the Tour 4 final in Edinburgh (2004), due to Carple Tunnel Syndrome in his feet. It turns out the direct cause was that he was so excited about the final he tied his boots too tight and cut off circulation to his feet.

Pappa Sneeky

Pappa Sneeky was cycling around Edinburgh. He stopped at a red light. The car behind him slowly and seemingly deliberately rolled into his back tire. Usually a very laid back guy, Pappa Sneeky suddenly lost his cool. He jumped off his bike, grabbed his D lock and took out both of the car's headlights. The driver of this car was a huge skinhead, and he looked really angry. Pappa Sneeky started to feel very afraid; this guy was absolutely furious. The skinhead opened his car door and was about to get out when a double decker bus came past in the next lane and ripped the car door off its hinges. Pappa took this opportunity to leave.

Guy:

It was Guy's thirtieth birthday. He invited everybody to join him at this really cool nightclub. He was one of the first to arrive, but managed to get himself chucked out of the club within about an hour. People were still arriving, but rather than go elsewhere, they all decided to stay there - it was quite a good nightclub. Being completely wasted, Guy had loads of energy, so decided to walk home. On the way he witnessed a fight, and ended up spending the rest of the night in a police station waiting to be called for an ID parade.

Locks:

It had been a long night out. Locks ended up in some nightclub. He suddenly realised he was going to be sick, and dashed off in search of the gents. By the time he found them he was really in trouble. He pushed open the door of the first cubicle, and let it all out. He did realise at this point that somebody was actually sitting on the loo in this cubicle, but he couldn't stop by then. Once it was all over, he looked at this guy who was trying to wipe his eyes clean and see what was going on, and Locks thought to himself: "If that was me, I'd be really, really angry."

So he punched the guy as hard as he could, and ran away.

Craig "short shorts" at brit open.

Craig was very drunk, and asked this guy back to stay at his flat. The guy somehow ended up sleeping in his bed. In the middle of the night, between the sofa and the bathroom, Craig took a wrong turn and found himself on the landing outside his flat. He was too drunk to work out how to get in, so he ended up sleeping outside his door in just his pants.

Jack (well, it's only fair):

Cycling through town on my way to an interview, I spot two guys who I presume are art students; one is sitting in a shopping trolley filming me with a huge video camera, and the other is pushing him. I thought it would be pretty cool to cycle up to them really fast, and then swerve at the last minute, just avoiding the camera. Which I do, except that when I swerve, my handle bars turn independently from the front wheel and I am dumped, hard, onto the tarmac. My knees, elbows and wrists are cut open, and I have to straighten my front wheel before I can get on my way. They filmed the whole thing, and seemed very grateful.

Another time I was cycling along a country lane in the dark and I had a collision with a deer. Me, my bike and the deer all ended up in a big pile. My head hit tarmac - I saw stars, and still have a scar where my handlebar, which didn't have a rubber stopper on the end, gouged a hole out of my knee. The deer was fine (people always seem more concerned about the deer).

Dan Bater:

Aged 15, Dan got sent a free eye test voucher from Specsaver, along with a letter: "Dear Master Bater, we have reasons to believe that you might have bad eye sight."

Willy D

"Will, it's Dan on the phone for you."

Will (shouted down the phone) "Is that the Master Bater?!"

"No, this is Dan, from your mother's church - is that you William?"



RODDERS: "OH NO, NOT SECOND PLACE AGAIN"
PHOTO © RICHARD SHORTRIDGE, 2006
www.shortyultimateimages.blogspot.com

Caesar:

While at a training weekend in Manchester, Caesar and a select group of friends went to see a few bands play at a local venue. The venue was relatively large and when we arrived a band was going and the crowd were jumping. After the second band had completed their set we went and sat at the back of the venue around a radiator. After about 10 minutes the third band came on and started to introduce themselves. By this time Caesar was visibly uncomfortable and was obviously looking for a way of turning the heat down. Spying a switch under the radiator Caesar reached forward and flicked it off. This happened just as the band launched in to their first song. Suddenly there was silence as the bands instruments and mics powered down. Realising what he had done he quickly switched it back on. This resulted in some horrible feedback and crackling. He had switched off the mixing desk and the amps. While trying to fix the issue the venue manager looked over Caesar's shoulder at the plug, turned around and shouted "Nah, it's still on!"

It took them 30 minutes to sort it out.

Sammy:

Sammy, Dave and Jim were sleeping rough in some woods on the edge of a park in London for a night so that they could play frisbee. "Midway through the night I felt the call of 'Hughie and Ralf' - chunder was seconds away. I quickly freed myself from the sleeping bag, not really knowing where I was ... then staggered what seemed like a safe distance into the surrounding foliage to empty the contents of my stomach (it must have been a bad pint). I re-traced my steps to my sleeping bag and returned to slumber-land. I was awakened by Dave, shortly after daybreak, and we packed in preparation for our hitch back to Bristol. I asked where Jim was and Dave explained that he was down at the duck pond washing his sleeping bag - apparently, although Jim could not remember doing so, he had thrown up on the bottom of his makeshift bed. It was only as the day unfolded that my own recollections of the night before unraveled the mystery of Jim's sickly predicament."

Do you have a story to share?
jack@ukultimate.com

why student ultimate rocks!

I imagine that many of you started your glorious Ultimate career at university, where copious amounts of alcohol fuelled intense weekend tournaments. These traditionally start on a Friday night, at about 6pm when (having just finished watching Neighbours) 'Frizzles' cram into old bangers to embark on a night long journey (plenty of time to prove to your mates that you are better at farting than singing) that will take them to a kitchen floor or dusty loft conversion at the opposite end of the country. Probably in a town you didn't even realise existed - or like me (coming from the South West) just assumed it was some kind of industrial wasteland. Next thing you know, you're stumbling around Loughborough on a Saturday night trying to dance your way home from the Students union in a Parrot costume. Sound familiar?

So what happened this year in Student Ultimate? A whole plethora of great tournaments!

The first events on the student Ultimate calendar are the Fresher's tournaments - a chance for experienced players (over 3 months) to wear silly hats and inspire creative play on impressionable minds. In the South (Plymouth) and the North (Loughborough), great fun was had by all, as always.

Just for the girls, Nottingham fashioned 'Damme Slamme' a hybrid women's warm-up tournament, where an intense one-day tournament is followed by a chilled 2nd day hat tournament. We think this was a great idea (could be used for fresher tournaments), allowing players to mingle and learn something from each other... and we really enjoyed the samosas!



The Results

This year Scotland swept the scoreboards, and deservingly Ro Sham Bo were crowned Student Indoor National champions in both the Mixed and the Open division, all teams hard-working and generally well-spirited. Our Women's team (Mythago) just lost out to Skunks (Southampton), who fought hard to take the title from last years champions.

In a great Outdoor Nationals final, Ro Sham Bo beat Mythago (Bristol) who had moments of brilliance, and some high-quality layout-D action from the MVP of the final: Matthew Beavan, but couldn't match the hard-working, super-gelled Scots. The South West takes 2nd and 3rd place. No Frills (Cardiff) taking silverware opportunities away from last years champions Haze (Loughborough). Flatball (St Andrews) won spirit.

This year Women's Outdoor Nationals, which has grown to 8 teams, was hosted and won by Leeds (Jedi), another admirably well-fused student team, who play hard and are a competitive joy to play against. Flaze (combined team) came 2nd.

Despite its stereotyped 'lack of seriousness' this year Ultimate Frisbee finally joined BUSA (British Universities Sports Association). From Autumn 2006, student Ultimate players will have to be 'respected and financially supported' by their universities. Positioning at Regional and National tournaments will contribute points to the BUSA scheme, which determines how much money the government assigns to each university to spend on sport each year.

Hopefully this will encourage more positive competition between universities and provide a supportive framework for nurturing talent, making it easier to ask for individual funding. Which previously, was like getting blood out of a stone:

"so ahh... can the university help sponsor me to go to the World Championships?", "Ultimate Frisbee? is that even a sport? I mean... does it even have an international organisation?", "yeh, the UKUA and the WFDF" - "well its not one of our focus sports like Lacrosse or Fencing (I'm only the Director of sport) so I really can't give you anything... go and ask the AU..."

The trick to keeping Ultimate different from all other BUSA sports will be to try and preserve the 'spirit' of Ultimate and its universal appeal for as long as possible!

A wee ramble on Spirit

The general consensus is that spirit in International Frisbee tournaments is declining. With the call for referees and observers looming ever closer, one place where spirit remains strong and games remain competitive is between UK universities.

Captains that play hard and enjoy the competition; play by the rules, keep the game alive and trust each other to make 'the right calls'. You are the inspiration for your team-mates.

Currently most university teams consist of just a handful of experienced student players who form the backbone of the team, such as those who play on The Tour, or previously played for GB Juniors. In the future the number of experienced Junior players coming to university will also increase. Nurture the new generation!

And finally..... I love playing student Ultimate. Uni teams are diverse, students come from various backgrounds; Northerners and Southerners, athletes and enthusiasts. In student Ultimate bravado is encouraged; why pass to an open player, when you can throw a hammer 40 yards, Cross-pitch, into the wind, over the stack, and make your team-mate layout? Amazing! Good disk reading ability is rare; and strangely Alkaselzers don't make seeing the disc any easier, but youthfulness, and a loose grip on reality helps.

Respect is given to those who generally make the most effort: the best three-pint challenge time, best costumes, the loudest, longest and silliest calls, on and off the pitch. But above all else, team players are rewarded.

And I would like to take this opportunity to be 'soppy' on behalf of all us 'studenty types' to say thank you to everyone who puts time into Student Ultimate, be it; putting us up in your houses, making us porridge and samosas, trying to work out seedings and cross-over that everyone is happy with, taking pictures and taking part.

Isabella Burke

life after ultimate

It all ended for me in the Autumn of 2002. There I was in Bologna, playing in their first ever Women's tournament. It was a steamy, lazy kind of Autumn, that hadn't quite left summer behind but just nippy enough in the evenings to warrant something fleece-lined. Like all Italian tournaments, our hosts behaved with impeccable grace, with great food and a reasonable array of evening 'distractions' to keep both the most puritan and the hardiest night owls more or less happy.

It should have been the time of my life. But it wasn't. I was sluggish on the pitch. My brain fuddled the most basic instructions: "Which way are we forcing?" "Which plays that again?" After some just criticism from one of my team mates, I simply wanted to sit down on the pitch and cry. In fact, I'm pretty sure I did this on the sidelines later on.

I'm sure as players, we all have moments like this. And for the most part, they're just blips. We pick up again at the next game or tournament, train a little harder, or even take a break and come back with renewed motivation and confidence.

But this was different. Sitting on the sidelines between points in the Italian sunshine, I suddenly started asking myself, when exactly did this stop being fun? When did this thing, that had absorbed so much of my energy, cease to have any meaning for me? How had the Ultimate stress-buster somehow become the most stressful part of my life?

It was time for a change. It was time to see if there really was such a thing as life after Ultimate. I'd heard about it, joked about the players that give up and then disappear off everyone's radar into the land of free weekends, babies, careers, non-ultimate based 'friendships' and even 'relationships'. But really, this prospect scared the shit out of me: What would I do without the structure of training to divide up my life? Did I have any friends that didn't play Ultimate? Would I get fat?

That was exactly four years ago, and while it's not exactly true to say I've never looked back, it's one of the most important decisions I've made in my life.

So what happened? At first, not very much: I discovered I did have friends. I didn't balloon out of all proportion the

moment I put the disc down. I didn't go mad from boredom. But then, something very big happened. One Saturday afternoon, that normally would have been spent churning around in the mud on Clapham Common, I sat down at my kitchen table and decided what I wanted to do with my life.

Ever since I could hold a pen, I'd wanted to be a writer. In fact, I'd been something of a closet poet and satirist for years. But I was scared of being too ambitious. And I was scared of failing. So I did what all scared people do. I convinced myself I didn't have the time, and that no one would want to read what I had to say anyway. Far easier to train really hard to be a reliable-but-hardly-spectacular Ultimate player than to actually work on the one ability I prized above all others. Far easier to invest so much time in the one sphere of my life in which I never have time to stop and think. Far easier to spend my weekends consumed by a bizarre cocktail of energy drinks, alcohol, adrenaline and whatever mood-enhancing substances might be on offer.

So I straightened out my act. The time I used to spend training and drinking, I devoted to writing. The money I blew on weekend accommodation, flights and kit went towards a laptop. I started enjoying London – going to poetry events, gigs, plays. I met new people. I visited my brothers and sisters. Hell, I even did an MA.

About a year after my unofficial retirement, shaking like a leaf, I found myself in the Poetry Café before a microphone, reading one of my own poems. To my surprise (or perhaps good fortune – I read the poem again recently, and man, it sucks), people didn't jeer. In fact, they rather liked it. So I wrote more and I read more. Soon I was headlining gigs and getting bits and pieces published here and there. I couldn't (indeed still can't) believe it.

Since then, things have snowballed. I've achieved one of my most important immediate ambitions to become a fulltime writer. Somehow, my reputation as a poet secured me a job as staff writer at a government department, writing press articles. I've since graduated to working as speech writer for a senior politician. I also write regularly for a lifestyle magazine that's distributed with a leading Canadian



newspaper. I still haven't written my novel, nor been appointed fashion editor of the Guardian, but who knows what a few more years of sitting on my ass will lead to?

And I can truly say that none of this would have happened if I hadn't stopped playing Ultimate. That doesn't mean to say I don't miss playing. I do – I even dream about it sometimes. But my all-or-nothing mentality about these things means it's best I stay away. At least until the mid-thirties weight gain starts to burden me in a few years' time.

I know it's not like this for everyone. Not all of you take things to such extreme. And unlike me, most of you are truly gifted athletes, for whom not playing Ultimate is probably a bit like not breathing. I get that. But get this too: If ever you find yourself close to tears because a game isn't going your way or you just can't nail that inside-out backhand that's served you so well for years, just stop for a moment. Take a deep breath and think... if this pitch, these players, and this disc were to disappear into the mist, what would I be left with?

Sarah Gibbons

“THAT'S MY GIRLFRIEND!” ONE OF THE MANY UK STUDENTS WHO PLAYED IN PERTH.

ONE OF OUR BENEVOLENT STATESMEN, WHO HELPED AFORE MENTIONED STUDENT GETTING TO PERTH: “IT'S NICE TO BE ABLE TO HELP, AND OF COURSE THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS TO HAVING YOUNGER PLAYERS ON THE TEAM.”

BRISTOL VS PERTH RENEGADES WORLD ULTIMATE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS, PERTH PHOTOS © JAMES MCKENZIE, 2006 www.massiveimageworks.com

BACK COVER: SIX WEEKS BEATS JOHN SANDAHL TO THE DISC, CLAPHAM VS. SUB ZERO PHOTO © NEIL GARDENER, 2006 www.nzsnaps.com





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