



Team Tree Program

Team Startup Guide

For College Students

Early Edition
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Chapter 1 – Introduction

“All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual.” - Albert Einstein

I - The Seed

A seed without water is a tree without vision. Isolated in the cold earth, it is powerless to experience the light of the world above. It does not hold the strength to grow on its own, so it will spread its roots in search for help. By providing the seed water and care, it soon finds inspiration to become something greater. It breaks the surface to find the sunlight calling it higher. Roots spread to find more sustenance, and its journey is accelerated. A widening foundation, thickening stem, expanding branches, all allow the seed to increase its vision of the new world it has discovered. This seed is now a tree, bringing a breath of fresh air into its surroundings and creating new seeds of its own. The cycle will repeat for these new seeds, each with the dream to become something just as great. As simple as this process sounds, it is a metaphor for something that hasn't been happening in the Ultimate community, but something to change in the near future.

A captain without knowledge is a team without perspective. Too often, new or existing Ultimate teams struggle to find their foundation in a world that may still misunderstand the sport. Passionate captains will try their best through standard recruitment and club sport structuring, but often there is something missing. This something is hard to come across until the captain identifies solutions, but that point may not come soon enough before they are discouraged from the many challenges. Starting and sustaining a team isn't easy, but it can be done as many teams provide the example. However, if growing the sport is something we are passionate about why should a founding captain walk their journey alone? We know the Ultimate community is more expansive and connected than ever before in today's age of technology and expansion. With this in mind, we would like to plant a new seed to create something amazing. A team tree.

Aero Ultimate's Team Tree Program has been created to help new and existing Ultimate teams in their startup and growth processes by providing vision, guidance, and networking to truly build sustainable organizations and strong Ultimate leaders. Team Tree provides a plan with three components: A team startup guide, mentoring service, and leadership network, allowing teams access to a variety of ideas, knowledge, and experienced individuals. Creating an Ultimate team can be the most rewarding experience a young player can have, and as a growing sport, there is a lot of opportunity to do so. Aero Ultimate continues to support this endeavor and has developed resources while aligned personnel to help captains and teams create a strong foundation. As our sport becomes more mainstream, it will be more important than ever to have an expansive playing opportunity for young players, and provide the values and concepts that keep our sport spirited and enjoyable for everyone.

II - The Roots

So where did Team Tree begin? As a reflection of the program's support in young leadership, it started from a player who was just 18 when he started his Ultimate journey. Ken Kaminski, a Michigan resident, set out to start a college Ultimate team at Kettering University with only a little experience from his Rochester High Ultimate Club. In the Fall of 2009 he showed up to campus not knowing more than a few drills or vocabulary and soon realized he needed to do some research. Ken spent endless hours searching the internet for anything about Ultimate, narrow to The Huddle and other small websites at the time. With limited resources, this forced Ken to develop new ideas as well, essentially creating an unconventional method to starting his team.

In the beginning, Ken focused on organization and professionalism of the team with the vision of creating a program that could be supported by the university both financially and motivationally. After establishing a team image, leadership structure, business plan, and season schedule, a 20-page proposal was submitted to Kettering staff and student government requesting additional funding and recognition as a sports team. Such a concept was considered to be impossible at a D-III school with a section-split student body, so the proposal was not entirely accepted right away. After 2 years of evaluation and continuous improvement, the team was finally granted varsity status and full funding in the Fall of 2011, growing to a budget of \$18,000 for up to 40 players by the end of 2012. With lots of thought and hard work, Ken and his teammates had started a team in the most difficult setting imaginable. By going above and beyond typical organization and structure, presenting the team in a professional manner, they quickly gained the support of their school and are now one of the most well-known organizations on campus.

Over time, Ken took on more responsibility in the Ultimate community. With his position as USAU College Great Lakes Regional Director, he noticed many other teams struggling or missing from series registration. There were small clubs that couldn't muster enough players to participate in tournaments or did not have funding to compete in the USA Ultimate College Series. It troubled him to see over 20 teams, just in his region alone, that were not consistent enough to provide an outstanding team experience for their players. This became a situation Ken wanted to help change for the benefit of many players, but he wasn't sure how.

In the Summer of 2012, long after the establishment of Kettering's team, Ken was contacted by two students that were looking to start a team at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). They were simply looking for information on USA Ultimate procedures and general guidelines, but discussions grew as they learned how Ken went through the same journey that they were just starting. Ken continued to give them advice on starting a team while identifying unique approaches tailored to their different campus environment. This saved them a lot of time on research and experimenting, putting them on the right path to give their team the most potential in its first year. IUPUI assembled a 20-player roster in their first season and started to build relationships with their university for a great start in team funding.

After working with Jacob for a month or two, Ken realized the potential for a program that could offer standard advice and networking based on his experienced starting Kettering's team. After taking the time to apply for a USA Ultimate Innovation Grant in the Fall of 2012, the idea was well received by USAU, but it was too big to be properly sustained by the grant program. After further discussions about Ken's vision, they invited Ken to develop it as a program directly associated under USA Ultimate. Ken was excited to see the idea be given the opportunity to reach its full potential with the resources and network of USA Ultimate.

Over the Spring and Summer of 2013, Ken put in countless hours to create the Team Tree vision, structure, and foundation of resources that are available and actively building today. The most fundamental concept of the program is to create strong leaders through guided team-building experiences, essentially making them experts over time as well. With a pay-it-forward mentoring structure, graduated captains will be able to join the Team Tree staff and help more teams grow. By passing on knowledge and positive reinforcement, a tree of teams can be created, growing Ultimate playing opportunity at an exponential rate with quality atmospheres and financial support.

Due to unknown reasons, USA Ultimate made adjustments to their focus and there was no longer a regular contact for Ken to be in touch with. The project's release was delayed. With broken ties and the college season already approaching, Ken wanted to get the information out while it was ready to start helping new teams. Team Tree was positioned under Aero Ultimate, an Ultimate innovation company, which partnered with Skyd Magazine to help get the word out. The transition was quick and clean so teams could be given the help they needed beginning in September 2013. Team Tree now accepts all teams with their variety of needs and starting points, providing the guide and mentoring service with more program developments in the near future.

III - The First Branch

IUPUI Ultimate founding captain, Jacob Phillips, wrote about his experience receiving mentorship in his first year and how knowledge and positive reinforcement helped their program get a head start in many areas.

“This past year was my freshman year at IUPUI. After graduating high school and finishing my fifth year of playing ultimate as back to back high school state champions, my high school co-captain and I were looking forward to college ultimate more than ever before. After considering many different options for where to go to school, the school that made the most sense for us to go to was the same, and to our great disappointment, without an ultimate team. At first we considered different ways we could still play ultimate, which included focusing just on club or even playing only for small, unsanctioned college teams, but we realized quickly that neither of those options would bring the same fulfillment as being a part of a real, tight-knit, competitive, college team would.

Shortly after discussing all the grand, albeit naive, possibilities of starting our own team by ourselves, we reached out to USAU’s Great Lakes College Regional director, Ken Kaminski, for guidance and got more than we ever expected. It turned out that Ken was approaching the last years of playing with his very own college team that he himself had founded only a few years before. And what originally we intended to be only a few quick questions, developed into much more, as he explained his desire to guide us on a larger scale. Being a few years ahead of us, Ken knew exactly what we were going through, what struggles we would face, and what methods could be used to overcome them.

His experience founding his own team, and then pouring that knowledge and experience into us, allowed us to stay one step ahead of the challenges that come when starting your own ultimate program. Everything from how to deal with the school and meet their standards when forming a club, how to manage large groups of people with different personalities while inspiring them to play and improve, how to advertise effectively on campus, fundraise, and how to run successful practices so that we can compete against much more established teams were all things we worked on together. Consistently Ken and I would meet to discuss broad ideas as well as the minute ins and outs of running a team, and his advice and experience was constantly employed with our team, greatly improving how smoothly things ran, and how often we found ourselves being successful. On top of the sheer amount of knowledge that Ken

offered to us and our consistent meetings via webcam, we were able to email him at any time when we needed guidance. The vision, confidence, and support he provided to us was absolutely invaluable for making our program a reality. Ken had become our own personal consultant, with years of experience in founding, leading, and growing a successful ultimate program, and was dedicated to helping us replicate the results he has had at Kettering. The personal lessons learned from him taught us financial skills, administrative skills, social management skills, as well as ultimate specific skills including how to plan practices and a season of tournaments. Beyond that we received guidance on how to be professional, which has allowed us to develop a strong relationship with our school, as well as early partnerships with a handful of local, or ultimate related sponsors.

With this incredible amount of resources, our grand visions for “Jaguar Ultimate” didn’t seem so naive anymore, and for the next several months we worked closely with Ken to make them a reality. As our partnership developed, what began as continued personal consulting had developed into the foundation of Team Tree. The ideas and models proven to work by Kettering’s success are now being used at IUPUI, and yielding similar results. And finally those ideas have been put into a program, accessible to any young player or leader who finds themselves in a situation similar to what I had found myself in my freshmen year of school, or to any player who wants to take their team to the next level. The materials in this guide are tested and proven to be extremely effective in creating an ultimate program you can be proud of, one that has a large impact on the sport, and your community, and one that will create empowered leaders for the sport. If you are interested in founding a team, or taking your current team to the next level, if you have a real passion for the sport and want to do your part, or are just starting to get into it and are in need of guidance, I absolutely recommend that you make use of this resource. It will allow you to completely avoid many of the problems most young teams would otherwise suffer from, and allows you to reach a higher level of excellence and success than you ever would have dreamed of.”

IV - A Letter from Ken

Dear Reader,

I wish to speak with you a little more personally about where we are as a sport and community. Ultimate is growing faster than ever before. We are more and more excited about entering the mainstream to finally get looked at from a new perspective. With all of this growth happening, we need to understand there will be growing pains as well. Growing pains that if not properly addressed may result in the fading of the culture that has kept Ultimate focused on a deeper meaning of sportsmanship for so long. We have very optimistic goals for a sport that currently struggles to find enough volunteers or coaches to sustain current endeavors. I have witnessed these issues firsthand as a regional director, and it is one of my career goals to create a solution.

Ultimate is a very fun and exciting sport to play. I hope many of us can say it is the sport they want to share with friends and family. In today's world, we can't wait for that opportunity to come without putting in the time and effort to organize Ultimate teams in a professional manner. This doesn't mean getting rid of the fun parts and making all teams super serious or nationals-caliber. It means improving the organization and consistency to help players have the tools and resources to spread their passion. Too often I have seen teams struggling in leadership or funding, simply from their unprincipled methods without thinking about positive representation or sustainability systems. Teams can still have fun while putting in effort to align relationships with their schools or gaining student body support. If Ultimate hopes to have extensive outreach in the future, High School and Colligate Ultimate teams should be trying to become highly acclaimed organizations to eliminate the perceptions that hold the sport back from greater opportunities.

I created Team Tree to provide a guided path for teams to get involved with the growth of Ultimate in an effective and meaningful way. I have a vision of Ultimate teams at every college and high school in the nation, creating a fun experience of exercise and personal growth for every player. I am simply one passionate thinker though, and from experience I know I can't do something like this on my own. If you share this dream as well, I would like your help whether you are a player, captain, coach, alumni, parent, or any type of Ultimate supporter. If supporting the sport is something you truly wish to do, I encourage you to take steps to become more involved in growing the sport in the most fundamental levels through structured team opportunities. More generations of players are on the way. Let's get working on providing them meaningful team experiences, because as a national community, we can really make a positive change in this sport of humanity.

Sincerely,

Ken Kaminski
Team Tree Program Director
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V - Team Tree Today

Mission

To prepare the sport of Ultimate for the mainstream by providing an opportunity of knowledge, vision, and collaboration for College and High School Ultimate teams, growing players and leaders with the deep understanding of the roots of Ultimate in “culture”, “athletics”, and “business” for the ideal future of the sport where spirit of the game sustained and cherished while more players enjoy the unique and rewarding experience.

Vision

To have Ultimate teams at every College and High School in the nation as a low-cost team sport opportunity, teaching players the values of teamwork, respect, and sportsmanship, while creating strong volunteers and leaders to support local Ultimate communities, as well as honorable athletes to demonstrate the true spirit of Ultimate at its highest levels of competition.

Team Tree Components

Team Tree provides a service with three components: A team startup guide, mentoring service, and leadership network, providing captains and teams access to many ideas, knowledge, and experienced individuals.

A. Startup Guide

This startup guide was created to provide players with a variety of ideas to help start or grow their program. Many of these thoughts and concepts have been refined over years of experimentation to discover the highest achievements possible. Team Tree’s vision for team support is not complete by only using the advice of the startup guide. While ideas from this guide can be easily applied, every school, campus, and environment is different, and it is best to receive tailored advice through the mentoring service to help a program reach its highest potential. Overall, this guide was not meant to be a single resource used on its own, but as a collection of ideas to be a strong component in a team’s path to success.

B. Mentoring Service

The mentoring service connects new teams with advisors that have experience and background in starting teams at their level and environments. Teams no longer have to go through trial and error in their beginning years to eventually gain a foundation in recruitment and processes. The mentor is also a friendly and personable motivator to provide encouragement and guidance through roadblocks a team might face. Mentors are selected on high standards in professionalism and sociability, so teams are always getting the best advice possible in a comforting setting. Communication can be done through e-mail, phone, or video chat, so location is never an issue if a team needs help. Teams can choose different startup schedules or

check-in points to get help when they need it, and still have the freedom and experience to create something their own. After a captain graduates, creating a well-established program, they will have the opportunity to become a Team Tree mentor to pay-it-forward and use their experience to help other teams that are starting just as they were. Having more teams come from a strong and universal mindset will help keep the roots and aspects of Ultimate that make the sport special to everyone that plays it.

C. Leadership Network

Community is one of the strongest elements in the sport of Ultimate. Team Tree utilizes this by providing digital profiles and groups of experienced players, captains and coaches who are available to support a team's development. This network is open and expansive so teams can find someone in their local area, while also using modern communication technology to interact with others from a distance. Bringing more people together towards a common goal will help build the sport's leadership and progress as it continues to enter the mainstream.

Team Aspects

As a core philosophy adopted by Team Tree, an organized Ultimate team has been identified to have three main aspects that each build into its success. Culture, Athletics, and Business are all aspects a team must actively pursue and support. The majority of this guide is shaped around these three branches.

Culture

Culture represents the social and sportsmanship aspects of the team. A team needs to feel like a group of friends or family in a way for players to truly feel connected to vision and goals. *Chapter 4 - Culture Guide* explores the ways a team can interact and bond to become more of a unified group for the enjoyment of the team and community.

Athletics

Athletics represents the fundamental skills of Ultimate, training, and the overall physical aspects of playing the sport. It is important to recognize that the team does play a sport, so smart diet and training choices should be made to prepare in the healthiest way possible. *Chapter 5 - Athletics Guide* discusses the importance of training physically and mentally for the health and safety of players, as well as taking competitiveness to the highest level while keeping integrity.

Business

Business represents the underling structure and organization of the team for achieving larger vision, goals, and opportunity. Teams that put in more focus in this category gain better funding and support through their academic affiliate. *Chapter 6 - Business Guide* explains the need to build a team in a professional matter to open more doors and gain resources for the sustainability of the program.

VI - Reading Assistant

Seeing an 80+ page document can be a little overwhelming, but exciting at the same time with so much knowledge and ideas in one document. Keep in mind that the length of this document represents the amount of detail and support offered and not necessarily the complexity or difficulty of starting a new team. A lot of lessons learned and refined systems are provided here to give you confidence and make your experience as stress-free as possible. To assist those who wish to read the full document at a steady pace, this 15-day reading breakdown organizes content into reading portions while also taking appropriate steps into deeper concepts of a team. By allowing breaks in between reading, it will better allow you to have time to digest content and think about how to apply it to your personal situation or campus environment.

Week 1

Day 1: All of *Chapter 1 - Introduction*

Day 2: Introduction/Outline & Sections I-III of *Chapter 2 - Starting a Team*

Day 3: Sections IV-VII of *Chapter 2 - Starting a Team*, and Introduction/Outline of *Chapter 3 - Growing a Team*

Day 4: Sections I-V of *Chapter 3 - Growing a Team*

Day 5: Introduction/Outline of *Chapters 4, 5 & 6*

Week 2

(First Edition Coming Soon)

Day 6: Section I of *Chapters 4, 5 & 6*

Day 6: Section II of *Chapters 4, 5 & 6*

Day 8: Section III of *Chapters 4, 5 & 6*

Day 9: Sections IV-VI of *Chapter 4 - Culture Guide*

Day 10: Sections VII-X of *Chapter 4 - Culture Guide*

Week 3

Day 11: Sections IV-VII of *Chapter 5 - Athletics Guide*

Day 12: Sections VIII-X of *Chapter 5 - Athletics Guide*

Day 13: Sections IV-V of *Chapter 6 - Business Guide*

Day 14: Section VI-VIII of *Chapter 6 - Business Guide*

Day 15: Section IX-X of *Chapter 6 - Business Guide*

Chapter 2 – Starting a Team

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

- Henry Ford

Introduction

Starting a team may be very challenging, but it is one of the most rewarding experiences you can find at a young age. The amount of time and effort you put in is not only an investment in the team, but also an investment in yourself. By the end of your journey, you will be a better leader and organizer than you thought possible. In contrast, it is important to identify how the team will benefit the other players as well. If they choose to take the opportunity and support achieving team goals, they will also receive benefits in personal development through relationships and hard work. Be kind and helpful when new players come to practice and take to the field for the first time, you were a rookie too at some point! As a team, understand the concept of progress. There may be frustration because of a strong desire to become better, but some things just need to happen over time. Be sure the team is ready to take bigger steps together, as players will be at various levels throughout the building process. Work together as much as possible in your organization to start achieving the vision of being valued and supported on your campus. In these early years, let your dreams be a driving force to create something great in the short term to prepare for the long term.

Outline

I - First Semester (Page 14)

Start Open - Start Easy - Start Teaching

- In the first semester it will be important to build your confidence to do the best work you can do.
- Be welcoming to all types of players, encourage bringing guests, and make sure everyone feels included.
- New players will not be outstanding right out of the gate. Work on the basics and watch them grow.
- Be knowledgeable, teach with clarity and confidence, and be friendly when mentoring new players.

II - First Season (Page 16)

Be Patient - Be Flexible - Be Positive

- The first competitive season is about building team skills and creating a foundation for the years to come.
- The team will not meet your long-term vision in its first year. Always understand it is a gradual process.
- If something is not going according to plan, consider whether an adjustment needs to be made.
- Demonstrate a positive outlook as a role model so more players will be encouraged to learn and improve.

III - First Year (Page 16)

Create a Foundation - Create a Vision - Create Expectations

- The first year will be all about outlining goals, discovering what works, and setting up more steps for growth.
- Identify key concepts, knowledge, processes and individuals to establish the team's future framework.
- Give meaning to being a member of the team so players are truly motivated to help develop it.
- Communicate what commitment levels are expected to help the team reach a higher level.

IV - Second Year (Page 18)

Grow in Numbers - Grow in Funding - Grow in Experience

- Your second year is the time to refine processes and develop more resources to accelerate team growth.
- With a firm foundation in returning players, expand with recruitment efforts to generate more excitement.
- Align business structure with plans to seek funding through fundraising or school provided budget.
- Have returning players take their game to the next level while helping new players in the basics.

V - Starting Culture (Page 19)

Build Friendships - Build Chemistry - Build Spirit

- New culture can be difficult to control, so it is best to create the opportunity for the desired atmosphere.
- Players need to feel connected to the team before they put in the work. Create opportunities to socialize.
- Make sure players truly make progress in working together as a team, instead of focusing on key individuals.
- Require good sportsmanship from the beginning to create an atmosphere that supports and respects others.

VI - Starting Athletics (Page 20)

Learn Fundamentals - Learn Strategy - Learn Conditioning

- There will be a variety of players on the team in the beginning, and a need to tailor activities appropriately.
- Master the basics as a team to best prepare returning players to mentor new players year after year.
- Getting organized on the field is key to helping players develop field awareness and communication skills.
- Training the right way is important to build athletes at a steady pace and reduce susceptibility to injuries.

VII - Starting Business (Page 21)

Get Help - Get Organized - Get Working

- Conducting the team in a professional manner should be a top priority when beginning to form a reputation.
- Seek assistance from other players to help with operations of the team.
- Create details on what the team wants to achieve, how to do it, and communicate the plan to others.
- Never stop building the team's vision and plans if you truly wish to attain a higher status in school funding.

I - First Semester

So here we go! The first few months of a challenging and rewarding journey. Starting a new team can definitely stir up a lot of thoughts and emotions. Before letting second thoughts get the best of you, understand that this is a very doable venture and is something that all great teams had to go through. Motivate yourself to have the confidence and positivity to do something great. Often times it is difficult to do this with other environment or personal factors that take their toll. It is important to not take this journey alone, and to have someone you can tag-team with or give you support. They can be as simple as friends and family who believe in you, fellow players who will help out with tasks, and especially Team Tree mentors who have the knowledge and insight to give you the best advice in the exact area you need it. There will be plenty to do such as finding field space, figuring out how to work with your school board, and creating the foundation for your team's first season at recruitment practices. While you may also be excited about this new venture, it is important to start out safely. You may want to do a lot, and when others push back it may lead to frustration. Understand that all good things happen with time, and you should plan steps that are simple for both you and your teammates in the beginning. Make sure the base of your organization is on the same page so you may all take this first step towards a greater future together.

Start Open

A college campus contains a diverse group of students with a variety of talents and interests. Ultimate provides an opportunity for many different minds and bodies to come together and make something unique. Welcoming all types of players is important to building opportunity for your organization. You will not be able to tell whether or not a player will be “good” in the future in just the first few practices. There are always diamonds in the rough, so it is important to maintain an open environment to allow time for discovering the gems. Encourage players to bring friends. They will most likely bring the ones who would be interested in learning new things and physical activity, so do not worry about getting too many players that are rough around the edges. That's the whole idea! Make sure your core group understands this concept as well, so there are less internal frustrations or perceptions that some players are holding the team back. Everyone has a starting point, and focusing on negatives will only lead to a practice environment that doesn't help players develop in a positive way.

Start Easy

When bringing players together for the first time, you can expect to have a lot of beginners. You may have a few players who have previous team experience, but not everyone will entirely have knowledge about being a part of a team. If you want everyone to work together, you will need to make sure everyone has the same knowledge from which to build their individual skills. Create simple practices that offer a lot of opportunity for players to learn new skills and develop them. Even though it may seem like you are simplifying material, players will be getting the fundamental building blocks they need to see skills come together and spark deeper

thought. While there will be variance in how players develop, you can still add challenges to have them always thinking about the next step to become better. Players can always do things outside of practice if they want to accelerate their development. For the first semester, let practice be an opportunity to build as a team.

Start Teaching

Based on your previous experiences, you may or may not be comfortable planning practices or teaching players. The most important thing to understand is that a lot of your players will be learning things for the first time, and almost any helpful tips will be useful for them to get started. Don't think you need to be an expert on Ultimate to start teaching a new team. As your players are developing, be sure to take time to develop your own skills and knowledge by researching, talking to experienced players, or having experiment practices with a few friends. By being just a few steps ahead of your players in skill and knowledge, it will help you set an example of the type of play they are building towards and you will have the confidence to teach them how to get there.

Take the time to develop simplified practice curriculum and lesson plans. For every hour of practice, spend about 20-30 minutes preparing an outline and rehearsing instruction for the lessons and drills. The more prepared you are, the smoother things will go, the more your players will be informed and focused, and the bigger confidence boost you will get. In contrast, developing a practice that is too intricate can have its downfalls as well. Creating practices with many monologs that go too deep will detract from the opportunity the team gets to digest or practice what they learned. Try to keep things simple with analogies and quick tips and focus on using time together as a team for application. Players who wish to know about something in more detail should be encouraged to ask you on the side. Getting the same question more than once will identify it as something the team may be curious about or ready for as a whole. Being friendly and helpful is a good way to make sure those questions do get asked.

Maintaining excellent communication habits with your teammates both at practice and outside of practice will help foster more dedicated players and team bonding. It will also aid in tailoring your approach. Although you may have a specific teaching method, understanding the players' different learning methods is what will be most important when communicating. When providing feedback, a safe universal way to do it is the sandwich method: Positive, critical, positive. You may have players who want to learn more at an accelerated rate, but you may not necessarily have the time to dedicate exclusively to them. Learn to point them toward materials or give a range of tips they can work on in their free time. Overall, using this new experience to evaluate and develop your own teaching skills can be a big confidence boost for yourself and a major drive for continuing to develop your program.

II - First Season

Compared to future seasons, your first season may be unconventional as you enter the competition environment for the first time. Make sure you are preparing ahead of time to complete your registration for tournaments or college series events before the deadlines pass. Tournaments are important events to gauge your performance as a team, so it is ideal to make sure everyone is physically and mentally prepared. There can be long road trips, crazy weather, and unique tournament format issues. As a leader, you'll need to be ready for anything and have the ability to make decisions quickly with a calm attitude. In your first season, come to an understanding that your biggest focus as a team is to build, not to win. You can use winning or game scores as an evaluation method, but dig deeper into other things that can motivate your team.

Be Patient

With all the excitement that can build from starting a new team and seeing players making progress, it is important to understand that the team will not likely meet your long-term vision in its first year. Your biggest drive may be in trying to build the team to its highest level so you are on the team when it makes its debut at Nationals. This is not necessarily the best underlying source of motivation as a leader. If you truly have the right mindset, you will want to see your team grow into a consistent regional or national contender over a course longer than your college eligibility alone. If you do things right during your time as a captain, you will build a legacy for your team to uphold in the future. After you graduate, you could even become a paid coach!

Be Flexible

When performing on the field as a team at practice or tournaments, players are bound to make mistakes, or things may not be turning out as planned. These are natural problems, and a great opportunity to practice problem solving and decision making. If something isn't working, don't keep trying to force it to work. Think about the problem and what alternative approach could have a better outcome. Some situations may even call for immediate changes, so it is a good idea to prepare a back-up plan if you think something might have difficulty working right away. Being flexible will give your team more opportunity to grow and will reduce frustrations.

Be Positive

To keep players motivated, you'll need to maintain a positive outlook as your team encounters many challenges for the first time. Encourage your teammates often and always give recognition when they do something right, even if it is a small detail. Do not use your own positive performance as an example of what to do, as it can come across as boasting if the approach isn't right. Highlight positive actions of other teammates as examples. This will motivate both individuals and the team as a whole. Be a role model for your team with positivity without drawing attention to yourself and you will earn their respect and their best efforts to strive for the common team goal.

III - First Year

In your first year you will deal with a lot of unknowns when starting a team and going through different kinds of procedures. You should find this opportunity as a challenge to explore what you're capable of and spark a passion for leadership and organization. Don't be afraid of failing or become hesitant to take a challenge. By being proactive in thought and effort, you can find more confidence when you're prepared, motivating you to invent new things for your team. Being fully invested as a player and captain will let you see the maximum personal reward in skill and character development. After your first year you will begin to discover a brand new you.

Create a Foundation

Bring together a key group of players or supporters and meet on a regular basis to brainstorm, plan, and delegate tasks. Having a few people who are all on the same page and work well together will make the effort more enjoyable and less stressful to get done. Become structured as soon as you can, make adjustments if needed, and be sure to stay in communication so everyone knows the plan. Try to avoid complicating procedures or plans, as some things just need to be straight forward to get done. Keep in mind you will always be able to refine processes over time as you discover what works best for your team.

Create a Vision

You will want your team to be motivated throughout the entire year, which comes from a sense of purpose or goal to achieve. Work as a team to create goals and steps to get there to show a path of higher achievement. These goals could be over a few months or even a few years. Communicating the vision in the first year is key to get players sticking to the program if there are still a lot of unknowns in the future. Share this vision with others, even beyond the team. The more you talk about it, the more energy you build into the delivery, getting others to support your endeavor in any way they can. This passion can lead to great connections of partners and mentors if you actively build your network.

Create Expectations

While players can be motivated from a vision alone, you will want to create clear expectations of what each player is responsible for to help achieve team goals. Creating an environment that lets players come and go as they please will only flourish for the first few weeks. It is important to start having personal discussions with players to see where they stand and how you can help them by addressing their concerns. Sometimes the most committed player can be better for the team than the most talented player. They will put in the energy and hard work that will eventually spread to other teammates by example, in return seeing accelerated growth in themselves personally. Make sure players understand that the team is an opportunity. The more time they put into the team, the more they will get for themselves character development and other great skills. Setting expectations along with that concept will motivate players to go above and beyond the call.

IV - Second Year

The second year brings a routine of tasks and events with the opportunity of refinement from lessons learned in the first year. Your organization, practice environment, and team unity will all evolve as returning players continue to become more involved in more like recruitment and teaching. To gear up for the second year, take some time to pre-plan changes during the late summer to introduce them right away to give the team a fresh new look and make things exciting. It is still important to stay flexible as well, as your team may build into a different position than expected with player commitment or funding variables. You want to find the balance of keeping a routine while creating new idea to help build towards the next level of experience.

Grow in Numbers

With a strong base, you should have a greater opportunity to attract more players with an environment that feels like a good group of friends getting together. Gaining new players each year is extremely important in the long term consistency of your team. At times you may feel like you are a full team with many upperclassman who are all on the same level and can make a good run in competition. What happens when they all graduate though? Did you recruit enough players from other years? Have the foresight to make sure you are always taking the time to develop the future roster, possibly through a developmental roster or beginner practices. You should always have a consistent amount of players coming in to the organization and identify an important role for each one of them.

Grow in Funding

If the first year's competition went well with the team, you may desire to do more tournaments and activities, essentially costing more money. It may seem like a difficult challenge to find funding for a growing team while players still have various commitment levels. In the second year you can start to develop a mix of fundraising events and team dues to support the team budget while you are working towards school budgeting. Work with your university in a professional manner to see what is possible in partial funding. Talk about your vision for the team and the benefits it has for the players and community to gain more support. The more time and meaning you put into the relationship with your university, the more benefits you will receive.

Grow in Experience

You will be getting new players early in the season, but this does not mean you will have to keep practices extremely basic for them to get started. As your team evolves, so will your approach. Returning players can pair up with new players to help them with the basics, even outside of practice. Time together as a team focusing on team skills can incorporate a lot of individual skills as well. Always be working on refining your practice curriculum to keep returners interested and advancing, while also assisting in the development of beginners.

V - Starting Culture

Culture is the key element of a team that provides players a sense of belonging with social interactions. Without it, a team can feel like it is just going through motions on the field and meaning is lost without the opportunity to grow as people. A culture of team cannot exactly be forced a certain way. It is more difficult to control with many players each with different types of personalities, backgrounds, or reasons for being on the team. You can do many things to set up and promote a healthy culture, but it will still depend on the types of players you have and what their interactions are like. Identifying traditions, rituals, mottos, or team values can help players make the team their own and contribute to the way of life when together as a team. Without organizing a guided path, you may risk the possibility of the team feeling like a secondary group of friends or creating an atmosphere where everyone just plays the sport. Setting up opportunity to bond as a team is important to be able to reach a higher sense of value.

Build Friendships

For most players to put in time and work into the team, they need to feel like they are connected to their teammates like a friend. Obviously if you are going to spend a lot of time with each other, it is more enjoyable to get to know everyone and have regular conversations. Identifying social time before, after, or during a break of practice is important to allow this opportunity, while also keeping the focus during drills or scrimmage. Maybe not everyone on the team will become the best of friends, but you always want to make sure the opportunity is there to build the friendships that can be there.

Build Chemistry

Tying culture into the performance on the field can be a tricky but highly rewarding effort if done right. Although everyone will have their better friends on the team, feeling like a solid group of players is important for communication and connectivity. Make sure no one feels left out, underutilized, or underappreciated. As a leader, it is a big responsibility of yours to have frequent discussions with players. Make sure they are happy with their role and how it helps the team just like every other. You may have star players or player combinations, but making them do all the work is going to limit your ability to develop players. Aim to provide a more unified approach to team chemistry for building the core of future success.

Build Spirit

For the benefit of the sport, it is ideal to have teams with great sportsmanship that play by the rules and treat opponents with respect. When creating a team, simply teaching spirit of the game is important to get all players on the same page on the way they should conduct themselves on the field. Being a high-spirited team, you will open up more doors when networking with other teams, and overall make your games more enjoyable. Start high sportsmanship from the beginning to create a team atmosphere that is always about personal improvement and joy of competition.

VI - Starting Athletics

Athletics should be a popular aspect to a team, as you want to make sure you are prepared to perform and endure the physical demands of a game or tournament. Even though 'Frisbee' may seem easy enough being considered an 'alternative sport', it should be played with proper nutrition and fitness preparation. Players will come in all shapes, sizes, and athletics backgrounds. This is okay, but it is something to be very aware of. With multiple starting blocks, you will have to take some time to tailor activities to the athletic performance of the team as a whole, while also giving more one on one time to those who need it. The simplest way to do this is to make sure players understand that they are playing a real sport. If they wish to avoid injury, soreness or heavy fatigue, they must take care of their bodies in multiple ways. With resources available, players will be able to take a personal journey to improve their health for the benefit of themselves and the team.

Learn Fundamentals

To set up everyone for success on the field, they will need a firm understanding of basic skills such as catching, throwing, cutting, marking, etc. Building practice lesson plans can be a great method to teaching these skills in an engaging way while also make sure nothing is missing. Mastering the basics as soon as possible will create more opportunity to focus on the execution as a team year after year. You are building pieces of a greater structure, and the stronger every piece is, the stronger the structure will be.

Learn Strategy

How you put those pieces together is another factor on how strong the structure will be. Getting organized on the field is crucial to help players develop field awareness and team communication skills to strengthen gameplay. Vertical and horizontal stacks are common approaches to an offense, but you can also think about which player abilities or connections are going to make the system work better in tougher points. Being flexible or having multiple variations will help you make adjustments on the field without too much risk involved. Spend a lot of time within scrimmage using offense and defense systems to get players use to certain cuts, chains, and communication. The more time you put in to prepare as a team, the more confident you will be when it is time to perform in competition.

Learn Conditioning

Before jumping on the internet and finding the latest fad in fitness, put in the effort to do expansive research. Think about your players' current conditions and what you are trying to improve in athletics or health. You will find common health recommendations like no junk food before practice or run every other day, but sometimes it just takes a personal discussion with an experienced trainer to truly make something click. Preparing the right way is important to build athletes at a steady pace and reduce susceptibility to injuries. Get educated, and do what truly makes sense for your team's current position and future goals.

VII - Starting Business

Business is a concept not often associated with Ultimate teams because of the free-spirited culture that is pursued or passed on. However, it can easily be incorporated into a team without the loss of what makes the team or Ultimate enjoyable. Processes that make the team functional in the background can be totally separate from the team atmosphere at events. Odds are that when your campus hears that there is a new 'Frisbee team' starting, they may automatically think it is a bunch of unfit hippies throwing around a disc. How do you get around that perception to help your program advance? You will need to present yourself in a professional manner and prepare things very carefully when working with unfamiliar individuals. Take the time to draft plans, create resources, and go above and beyond what you think you will need to do. With the correct approach, you will open up a lot more doors along your journey, attracting more athletes, funding, and campus support.

Get Help

You may already feel overwhelmed from your responsibilities as a leader and role model at practice, how can you expect to get all the business work done by yourself too? Doing things alone can lead to a very stressful lifestyle so it is important to seek assistance from other players or friends before you get started. Even if you hold a lot of the ideas and vision for the team, it is your job to communicate them to others to spark their motivation and passion to help in any way possible. Having multiple people involved in the business of the team even helps develop new ideas that are critical for growth. When you come across a roadblock, you easily have enough minds and man power to create a solution and execute on it. Make sure your players know about the opportunity to help the team in business areas, as some may be interested for resume building experience or simply helping out the team. You will discover some of them may have specific talents in areas like graphic design, documentation, or management systems. Harness these abilities and you will find your staff to be more productive while enjoying the experience.

Get Organized

Create plans for what the team wants to achieve, how to do it, and communicate the plan to others. Having everything in a documented and shareable form can make things easier to explain. Creating segments or phases of tasks is a good way to make the full scope of things less intimidating, focusing on one part at a time. Simply put, a loose method at getting things done will not allow your organization to achieve goals, the ones needed for better school budget and support opportunities. It's a good idea to have regular meetings with your business staff to review plans, tasks, and brainstorm more ideas or problem solutions. The biggest step you can take to get organized is making good use of technology. There are many great digital collaboration systems like Facebook, Google Drive, and Skype to do a lot of communication and working together online. Just remember, technology can become a burden as well if procedures get too complex for executing a small task. Keep things simple and straight forward in any approach and things will come together very well.

Get Working

When you have staff and processes in place, it's time to get things done and make strides in building your program. There is virtually no limit in what you can achieve with enough deep thought, time, and hard work. Hopefully, one of your biggest goals is to attain high recognition and budget from the university that you represent in the Ultimate community. Never stop building the team's vision and plans if you truly wish to achieve something beyond club sports status. It is possible in any campus environment; it just takes a lot of dedication and brainstorming to achieve. As you build your program in culture and athletics, take bigger strides in the business aspect if you want your program to be sustained years after you may graduate. You may go to the extent of drafting a business plan each year, or start working on a detailed proposal and presentation to give to the school board. The ideas and approaches will come with time, so remember that building is your key focus when starting the team, but you can proactively think of ideas to take the team to the next level. If you do things right, your team can be fully funded by the time you graduate and you could be hired as a paid coach to continue your involvement.

Chapter 3 – Growing a Team

“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.” - Benjamin Franklin

Introduction

After a year of starting your team and a year of refinement, your organization will have more of a yearly routine making it easy to go through the motions and stay on a basic level. However, year after year, a routine can get boring. Returning players enjoy something new about practices or the team culture here and there to keep their interest or take their development further. With a strong foundation, your organization will easily be able to set goals higher and push the team to the next level. If recruitment has gone well and you have a lot of players, you can now start to focus on making those player relationships deeper. If a lot of your players have their fundamental skills mastered, you can get into advanced gameplay or strategies. If you have been building a strong relationship with your university, you can start to align your proposal for more recognition and budget. As you can see, there is still a lot that can be done, and it will add to the experience of creating something great. Over the growing phase of your team, you can start locking in team traditions that build into your team image. Having alumni later down the road who are familiar with mottos and traditions can be a huge impact in the future depth of the team. Keep creating new ideas for the sport though drills, strategies, and systems, there is still opportunity to discover the next big thing. In the long run overall, the biggest focus you want to have is creating a very good relationship with your university and start creating a campus culture that respects your sport and respects your team. Varsity status or full funding is a very powerful way to do just that. By the end of seven years, you should have a program that has enough structure, meaning, budget, and human resources to help build Ultimate in the community and grow the sport even faster.

Outline

I - Years 3-4 (Page 25)

Keep Refining – Keep Expanding – Keep Innovating

- With a strong base, you can continue pushing the boundaries of aspects without compromising results.
- Start each year with a planning session even if most operations have become a routine.
- Make additions to your program with developmental roster splits or business staff improvement.
- Create new practice ideas and gameplay material to keep things fresh and interesting for returners.

II - Years 5-7 (Page 26)

Start Finalizing – Start Branching – Start Sharing

- With many team aspects starting to become more concrete, you can take larger steps to make an impact.
- Keep what works and document routines for the simplicity of leadership transition and execution.
- Create strong primary and developmental roster programs to tailor towards different incoming players.
- Take initiatives to reach out to the local community through clinics or forms of mentorship.

III - Growing Culture (Page 27)

Extend Friendships – Extend Chemistry – Extend Spirit

- Continue to build the social aspects of the team while still be open to newcomers.
- Make sure players are socializing with various others and not sticking to their favorites too much.
- Include new players into the game plan year after year to give them an opportunity to build.
- Incorporate spirit lessons at practice and keep sportsmanship as a strong team value.

IV - Growing Athletics (Page 28)

Master Fundamentals – Master Strategy – Master Conditioning

- As you become a team more experienced in the basics, take next steps to build a deeper skill arsenal.
- Reduce focus on fundamentals by letting returners mentor rookies, allowing more gameplay opportunity.
- Be able to teach and execute basic strategies with ease to take the next step towards variations.
- Provide health and fitness information as an integral part of your curriculum.

V - Growing Business (Page 29)

Make Connections – Make Systems – Make an Impact

- With two years under the belt, it is time to take the meaning of business to a whole new level.
- Strengthen relationships with your student government and university staff to open new doors.
- Create methods to streamline processes and allow for more focus on the task at hand.
- Use the opportunity you have been given to make a difference in people's lives or in your local community.

I - Years 3-4

With two years in the past, building experience and organization, you will have a lot figured out. You may have a simple program that is now only partly student funded to compete in tournaments and enjoy the environment of the Ultimate community. While you have the ability to put things in cruise control, there is a lot more that can be done though to give your players an experience they will never forget. In your first growing phase, you can start to challenge the team by developing new ideas or aspects of the team. Believe it or not, players will actually appreciate something different to avoid a boring routine and give excitement to the new year. As you start to see better competitive results, make sure you understand that your team is still building in many areas. Keep the focus on filling in the gaps to make a well-rounded organization that will be solid for the long term.

Keep Refining

Even if some things have become a routine, start each year with a summer planning session. Identifying which areas of the team you want to improve beforehand will allow for more time to get things ready. After two years, there will be fewer adjustments that need to be made, so there definitely is time to brainstorm what big thing the team could do next. Use more returners to help with recruitment events and freshman pairing. Teach team spirit in more detail and associate with the team's values and mottos while taking next steps to improve the health and athletics of players. You can even create other sources of income through fundraising events or campaigns. Without progress, things can get dull for returners. You always want the experience to be engaging and exciting for players to be motivated to get better in skill and commitment.

Keep Expanding

As you may take the team in higher directions, creating a structure to sustain a foundation is important. If your program is starting to boast large numbers at practices, you can start to think about creating separate rookie or advanced practices while still keeping returners involved with each for full scrimmaging. If your business staff is starting to multitask and take big steps in advertising or events, start identifying specific positions for responsibilities to be condensed and clear. Structuring and expanding can be a supporting factor to show that students enjoy the program because it is getting larger. It would be a great benefit for the university to assist in funding and support, giving this valuable experience to more students in the future.

Keep Innovating

Ultimate is still quite a young sport and many of the big developments have only happened in the past few years. Even the biggest of ideas come from the smallest yet passionate players. Teams are a great opportunity to come up with something new for the sport and make it fun with a lot of friends to brainstorm together. Create new drills, scrimmage rules, or strategies to keep things fresh and interesting for returners while developing your regular curriculum for the future. Most people have a desire to be creative, and Ultimate provides a large opportunity to do just that and discover new ideas.

II - Years 5-7

With much foundation, refinement, expansion, and consistent funding, your program will soon enter its legacy era. Team traditions, training methods, and general task routines will become more permanent. You will most likely go through a leadership transition, but will have enough experience and systems to prepare new captains who can hit the ground running. If things have gone according to plan, you may just as well be in a coach or advisor position to help nurture the program as it takes its final steps to full sustainability, competitive success, and outreach. Use your knowledge and experience to build new leaders of the team. Inspire more players to put in the commitment with honored alumni players as examples. With many team aspects well established and perfected, you can start to take make an impact in bigger ways.

Start Finalizing

Over the years you may have tried a lot of variations of recruitment, practice content, and team bonding experiences. To start building team traditions for the distant future, keep what works or spend a lot of time coming up with key concepts that will give the team a deeper meaning through the legacy that has been created. You will easily be able to structure practices and workouts off of the top of your head, yet throwing things together for players is not exactly ideal. Use this experience to create detailed lesson plans that can be handed down to future captains to keep the team's core skills strong and consistent each year. Business tasks will become second nature for those who have helped out on staff, but make sure procedures are well documented to give new members simple steps to learn the ins and outs of a staff position.

Start Branching

If yearly recruitment efforts create large turnouts and player retainment is high, you may really be ready to make clear structuring of primary and developmental rosters. The most important thing to look at before making that branch is making sure there are enough leaders and mentors that can sustain both programs to their fullest potential. You will still want interaction between the rosters, because an organization as a whole should stick together in its common goals. Players may go from roster to roster, so it is important to make sure both types are comfortable with each other and work together in development.

Start Sharing

Having an expansive amount of structure and diligent players will develop many ideas and experience that can benefit other teams and Ultimate programs. You don't have to share cutting-edge secrets, but sharing basic information about structure, skills or strategies can really help motivate other teams and create great networking relationships. Take initiatives to reach out to the local community through clinics, showcase games, or youth leadership. Imagine if every college team mentored a high school team and what it could do for the sport. Athletes can develop earlier, with the deep understanding of the importance of spirit of the game and how their college Ultimate experience can develop them further as a person.

III - Growing Culture

After two years, the culture of your team has started to head into a direction due from the natural types of players and the opportunity of social engagement that was given. If done correctly, things are not too far off from the goal of creating a team with deeper meaning. If the culture is very far off from the target, there are still ways to make corrections year after year, but you may see players drop if they didn't see the value other than playing the sport. Players who have been accustomed to a certain culture, sometimes loose, may not react well to an abrupt change. You will need to rely on new players to invest themselves into the philosophies and concepts of the team to become the core of passion and motivation. Be sure to put in a lot of time to make things deep and clear so every player has something to grasp and work towards. A less than ideal option may be to accept the natural culture of the team as it fluctuates with each incoming class. As long as it does not have a negative impact on athletics and business aspects, the team can be enjoyable in any way preferred.

Extend Friendships

When a foundation of a team becomes more comfortable with each other and deeper friendships are made, it can start to feel like a family, brotherhood or sisterhood. This is great for the bonding of the team, but you want to be aware of negative effects that are possible if it starts to become too exclusive. When new players come to practice where returners make inside jokes or mess with each other during scrimmage, it can alienate those players who are unfamiliar with the team culture. Make sure returners are reaching out to new players to build multiple friendships and prepare a new team year after year.

Extend Chemistry

The family effect can also happen on the field when making line decisions. While your program may not have a development roster, is important to let rookies play with returners to continue building a more unified team. Key players and connections may be great for using in important points, but doing that all the time can be risky. Putting the entire load on a couple players will make your team predictable or even take away from developing future season's key players. Give the new players clear roles on the field so they can understand how to become better for the benefit of the team and add more variety to strategy.

Extend Spirit

As your team develops and starts seeing better results in competition, players may get a little hungry for a higher level of completion when their excited about the progress their making. This can result in an overactive intensity to increase team energy, sometimes through negative reinforcement. It is important to teach and reinforce the concept of spirit of the game. Don't let the thrill of winning detract from improving as people, playing fairly, and respecting opponents. Incorporate special spirit drills that encourage making good calls, dealing with fouls calmly, and keep things lighthearted. Players can play with intensity, but they should learn how to set a good example or make temper adjustments when discussing foul calls.

IV - Growing Athletics

As your team continues to develop in athletics, skillsets, and strategy, you will be able to widen the spectrum and teach deeper content. With many examples of developed players on the team, new players will be motivated to learn with a level to strive for. Use this willingness to present more detail or unique thoughts on practice topics. Do more to help returners grow while showing new players tips and secrets to accelerate their progress. As players become more aware of their limits, spend more time in health education for stronger building blocks. The average college diet and lifestyle may not always be ideal, but it is important to prepare for practices or tournament in ways more than just a good night's sleep. Generally, you will start to understand your teams' specific needs as individuals or as a whole. Tailor your practice curriculum to spend more time on weaknesses while summarizing strengths.

Master Fundamentals

With new players joining every year, you will start to have a wider range of talent and experience on the team. Learning the fundamentals is still an important part of a player's development, but you can begin to teach them in a way that builds other aspects of the team as well. Introducing a mentorship system is a great way for returning players to stay busy perfecting their skills while teaching newer players how to develop them as well. This mentorship can happen outside of practices and should even be encouraged. When everyone is together at practice, it is best to use that environment for building team skills like strategy and communication. New players will still be able to work on their fundamental skills as they use them in drills or scrimmage while benefiting from their mentor's assistance.

Master Strategy

With more practice time used for team building, your team will be able to take larger strides in strategy and working together within systems. Creating a playbook that outlines specific systems is a great way to make things clear for everyone and fill in the gaps if they missed something. You will have many standard variations of offenses and defenses, but you can also get into details of what player roles and connections to use. Take time to gauge the team's strengths and weaknesses before setting strategy in stone. Make the best use of practice time by simulating real gameplay scenarios through drills and playbook run-throughs.

Master Conditioning

When your team spends more time on basics individually, this provides a drive for individual training as well. Use simple workouts to build players at their core in balance, flexibility, and strength before focusing on speed, agility, and power. Standardizing a health and fitness plan for players can provide them appropriate steps to increase performance without injury. Sometimes college players just need a plan laid out for them with a little motivation to show them they can easily do it. Training hard does not always work as well as training smart. Get educated, do what makes sense, tailor to individuals, and promote unified commitment.

V - Growing Business

After two years, your team will become more of a reality than a concept, especially to those outside of your organization. If you have done great work in advertising, recruitment, and relationship building, you can begin to enter a phase that brings your program to the eyes of campus at large. Start getting serious about preparing your team for the long run by creating a proposal or business plan to gain more support from the university. Even if there doesn't seem to be a way to get full funding through the school's structure, there is always a way if you put in enough thought, time, and effort while focusing on the team's story of providing personal growth. Make sure your players are on their best behavior and truly representing the type of higher organization you wish to grow into. The university staff or student government may require an evaluation period before granting more funding, so promote the good things your program does for students year round. Keep working towards a higher goal and your team will be sustained and thrive.

Make Connections

Before walking into any office and dropping a proposal on their desk, get to know the people that make things happen for your school and team to begin with. Meet with your student government and tell them what you have going on or what you're trying to do. A story has more of a positive personal appeal compared to jumping into business. Keep working your way through the universities athletics, media, or marketing departments and see if they would like to help you promote your program. Building a wide range of relationships will give you more support and confidence when taking bigger steps with the university.

Make Systems

As you start larger projects to take your team to the next level, make sure all standard processes are streamlined to make things easy and efficient. Use digital systems effectively and create some of your own that make the most sense for the type of routine tasks your business staff does. Have the ability to execute on a critical task with enough staff to delegate parts to or a fast process to get it done in stages. If you enjoy doing things for the team, the more free time you use to build things, the better you'll be prepared or even ahead of the game if issues or delays arise.

Make an Impact

As your program becomes more established, it will have the opportunity to reach out to students and the local community. The things you do as a team can benefit the players while creating something that has a positive impact on other people. Pursue community service opportunities or put together a fun fundraiser that is open to campus. Contact grade schools in the area and discuss gym class demonstrations or fun day demos. Even starting to mentor a high school team can have a positive effect in your local Ultimate community, possibly aligning your team with more talent in the future.

Chapter 4 – Culture Guide

“No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive.” - Mahatma Gandhi

Introduction

The word “culture” was created to describe a process of cultivation or improvement beginning in 18th and 19th centuries. In the 19th century, the term developed to refer to the betterment or refinement of an individual through education. Later on it described the fulfillment of national objectives or ideals. In general, we understand that culture is the way we behave and interact with others for a variety of outcomes and ever-changing future. Culture even shifted the meaning of the word itself, it’s no wonder our world is always changing!

Being a part of a team provides some of the most powerful culture available. You are partnering with people you had not known before and you are building a team to achieve a higher goal. The aspects of humanity in this process are amazing when you think about it. So many different personalities and experiences can find a common ground, bonding and teaching each other new things to grow collectively.

In Ultimate, culture could be considered to be even deeper than in other sports. We have a phrase to represent a higher caliber of sportsmanship: Spirit of the Game. We get together at large tournaments and interact with other teams beyond playing a sport. We are a growing sport in the information era and use the internet and social media to coordinate endeavors or promote our voice for the sport. Culture has deep roots in the sport of Ultimate, but it also has a wide spectrum of variance.

It is well established that there are many types of players and many types of teams. Some will play for fun, some will play to win, some will play to get better. Whatever the team dynamic may be, it revolves around playing the sport, and always playing it with teammates. Even by the design of Ultimate, you need a teammate to throw to you in order to score. Think about other sports and you will find it easier to be a ball hog or lone wolf. Knowing the common factor in an Ultimate team’s culture is teammates, we should strive to develop those connections and friendships that can truly make the team special to us.

It’s more than about playing a sport, it’s about learning the fundamental life skills of teamwork, understanding, communication, trust, confidence, and so on. Build meaning into your team that revolves around teammates and you will strengthen your team’s motivation and performance in a valuable way.

Outline

I - Team Foundation & Philosophy

Fun – Winning – Development

- A team's foundation goals and philosophies can have a major effect in the way team culture evolves.
- Silliness and shenanigans can create a fun team atmosphere, but can sometimes take away opportunities.
- The desire to win can be dangerous if taken too far, but it is a simple motivator for working harder.
- A well-rounded approach can be achieved by putting focus on developing the team and individuals.

II - Team Culture Structures

Unit Structure – Levels Structure – Small Group Structure

- The size of a team effects how players interact and what cultural aspects change over time.
- For smaller teams, the group can be closer and have more regular social activities to feel connected.
- If there isn't enough mingling during recruitment, students in the same class may stick closer together.
- As a team grows larger than 12-15 players, social interactions will branch into smaller groups.

III - Spirit of the Game

Philosophy Origin – Why it Matters – How to use it

- Spirit of the Game is a concept that represents ideal sportsmanship between players and teams.
- The original philosophy sparked from the absence of game officials and aimed to create deeper meaning.
- With strong culture and values, Ultimate has the potential to make positive changes in the world.
- Approaching every foul call respectfully and calmly can improve the outcome and game atmosphere.

IV - Recruitment

The Bait – The Hook – The Capture

- Recruitment is something a team must take seriously being the biggest factor in future sustainability.
- Find club expo opportunities to meet new students, give them information, and invite them to practice.
- When players come to practice for the first time, get to know them and demonstrate the joy of the sport.
- Once students are coming to play the sport, introduce deeper concepts to make joining the team meaningful.

V - Social Events

Hangouts – Meals – Parties

- Providing social opportunities outside of practice can be a good way to strengthen team bonding.
- Getting together as friends occasionally is a good social activity to promote personal communication.
- Team meals before tournaments will let players eat healthy and get ready for the weekend with their team.
- Bases on activities, larger gatherings with teammates and friends can create or reduce team support.

VI - Teammate Interactions

Team Bonding – Conflict Resolution – Harnessing Connections

- The way teammates interact with each other correlates to how they perform as a team.
- Providing opportunity and education about the need for bonding will strengthen the team in many areas.
- When problems arise, it is best to solve them right away before things get out of hand.
- As player connections grow wider, certain teammates may become in sync on the field for positive results.

VII - Team Traditions

Recruitment Activities – Competition Rituals – Special Events

- Create team traditions for the players to make the experience fun, unique, and meaningful.
- In the early school term, creating fun events and practices can help show the culture of the team.
- When the team is established, using deeper rituals can increase focus and energy of the players.
- To create valued memories for the players, hosting large end of season events can help summarize the year.

VIII - Team Networking

Communication – Scrimmaging – Sharing

- Interacting with other teams in your area or region is a great way to promote culture and unity in the sport.
- Communicate adequately and professionally through email or other channels to create acquaintances.
- Coordinate regular scrimmages with teams in your area for something small the team can look forward to.
- Trade ideas or mentor new teams to build more depth and help the sport grow.

IX - Alumni Involvement

Homecoming Weekends – Coaching Assistance – Scholarships/Hall of Fame

- Keeping alumni involved can increase meaning of the team through history and examples.
- Create get-together events where past and present players of the team can meet and scrimmage.
- Talk to your committed players after they graduate for primary or developmental roster coaching.
- Honor the teammates who showed outstanding commitment throughout their Ultimate career.

X - Community

Volunteer Work – High School Team – Youth Clinics

- Spread the meaning and joy of Ultimate to the local community and create outstanding sustainability.
- Reach out to your school or charitable organizations to see if they need volunteer assistance.
- Approach a high school with a plan to create and mentor a youth team to teach life skills and compete.
- Create a boost in your Ultimate community by providing the youth an opportunity to learn and play.

Chapter 5 – Athletics Guide

“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success.” - Babe Ruth

Introduction

As humans, it is in our nature to become physically prepared and active for survival and wellbeing. Times have changed and while we have drifted from our primitive roots of hunting and gathering, we developed sports for the same type of activity and achievements. We were always meant to stay healthy, and sports create a fun and engaging way to do so.

As sport sciences develop, there is more and more content presented that take human abilities to new levels. Some performance enhancements are done through education and training, and some can be artificially created or supplemented. It is important to become well educated in proper diet and exercise. The way we treat our bodies determines what we will be able to accomplish, or not accomplish, in our lives. Markets and culture today have skewed this focus purely for profit gain with many “filling” diets or “accelerated” training plans. Health and athleticism is a long term progression and commitment, something that a team can help motivate an athlete for.

Being part of a team provides a unique experience in contrast with single-player sports. Being a single component of a group of players makes you part of something bigger, a force that is stronger than someone alone. There is a lot of positive energy that can come from interacting with teammates and working together towards a common goal. This will increase motivation to train and perform with the encouragement of your teammates. Along the journey you will be able to make many friendships around a common experience that can reinforce the importance of health and fitness in the next chapter of your life.

Specifically in Ultimate, there is an opportunity to take team companionship to a higher level through values and unique competition environments. With tournament road trips and Spirit of the Game, Ultimate gives players the chance to connect with teammates, and even opponents. The sport also encourages intensive competition through speed, agility, and power while revolving around constant decision making and unique disc flight possibilities.

As a growing sport, there is a lot of variety of player background and athletic abilities. Yet there is nothing too concrete in how to train for the sport in any “perfect” way. There continues to be many innovations and improvements to the sport’s skills and athletic curriculum, which makes it very exciting and fresh for the players that are involved. Overall, it is important to become educated in general health and fitness. By doing this, players are able to find a path of conditioning that makes them the best that they can be in a way that is safe and effective. With teammates at your side, you can find the strength to become a whole new you.

Outline

I - Team Drive & Mentality

Fitness – Focus – Teamwork

- A team's approach to playing Ultimate can vary in principles based on their overall talents.
- Conditioning and positive health can allow a team to use intensity and endurance to their advantage.
- When many intelligent or experienced player act as a core, strategy and mental game can be most valued.
- Simply working together can be a winning formula if players are well connected on the field.

II - Team Athletic Structures

Standard Structure – Development Structure – Personal Structure

- The way a team trains and prepares athletically can depend on the goals or values of the team.
- Practices, tryouts, workouts, and tournaments are a standard way to train the team for competition.
- When a team has many players trying out, a developmental roster can help develop rookies in more depth.
- If the team has limited time together, each player can work on personal skills outside of practice.

III - Ultimate

Origin – Athletic Concerns – Sport Evolution

- Ultimate is a fast-paced and unique sport that continues to change in athletic demands and tactics.
- The sport was created for recreational purposes, based around the disc and popular field sport attributes.
- From the perceptions created by Ultimate's past, athletics are sometimes thought to be unnecessary to play.
- As the sport continues to grow, competition will toughen, creating the need for smarter and safer training.

IV - Player State of Mind

Respect Leadership – Take Every Opportunity – Be Consistent

- As a player, it is important to recognize you are just one part of a much larger team.
- Captains and coaches put in a lot of time to prepare you as a player, so welcome their wisdom kindly.
- Show passion and understand that putting in time for the team will increase your personal growth as well.
- Become an asset for the team by showing what you are able to do with self-control and reliability.

V - Captain State of Mind

Balance Authority – Dedicate Time – Be a Role Model

- As a captain, you must be able to play your best while looking out for your teammates as well.
- It is difficult to balance leadership and friendship roles, but establishing actions in different settings can help.
- If planning practices or other activities, put in time to make it the best experience possible for your team.
- Providing a consistent example of positive attitude, focus, and sportsmanship can help others do the same.

VI - Coach State of Mind

Establish the Role – Prepare Details – Be Proactive

- As a coach, your time and energy is purely dedicated to the education and development of players.
- Tell the team what you will be helping with but what they will need to help themselves with as well.
- Plan practices to themed concepts for ease and application while preparing in detail to answer questions.
- Be aware and responsive to issues and make solutions to guide the team along a better path.

VII - Practices

Curriculum Building – Lesson Planning – Drill & Play Design

- Practices are the primary opportunity to learn as a team, so their organization and productivity is important.
- It is preferable to outline weekly practice topics and gradually build difficulty, especially during recruitment.
- Creating detailed lesson plans can boost preparation, confidence, and productivity of each practice.
- Designing new drills or strategies can make fresh and exciting experiences for the team.

VIII - Tryouts

Disc Games Format – Development Format – Combine Format

- The environment and format of tryouts can differ based on the needs or structure of the team.
- When growing culture, a format that has medal events and challenges can be fun for new players.
- Without rejecting players, teams can provide opportunity for testing skills and offer different statuses.
- If a team is focused on performance, athletic events with higher stakes will attract and identify the best.

IX - Fitness & Conditioning

Standard Health – Physical Training – Mental Training

- Just as important as practicing disc and team skills, individual preparation of the body must be highly valued.
- Proper nutrition, hydration and rest are vital to perform your best in any physical activity.
- Smart and safe workouts should be done to increase performance and resistance to injury.
- Developing the mind to have a keen focus during gameplay can result in amazing abilities and consistency.

X - Competition

Preparation – Execution – Reflection

- For best results in competition, focus should be given at all moments before, during, and after.
- Create and practice lines, strategies, and communication systems to best prepare your team.
- Stick to a foundation plan but be flexible to the environment and opponent changes.
- Identify successes, failures, strengths and weaknesses to create a new plan of preparation.

Chapter 6 – Business Guide

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”

- Thomas Edison

Introduction

Optimization and efficiency have become popular themes ever since the industrial revolution. Technological advancements have allowed us to fulfill our want and needs with ease, while at the same time creating more. We now live in an information age where anything we would like to know is just a click away through the internet or social media. This wasn't always the natural way of life, but it brings more opportunity to choose what kind of life we would like, if we choose to work for it. With modern technology, ideas can be amplified and work can be simplified to make businesses more able to thrive.

Business is not normally a concept one would associate with sports teams right away, but it is something in the background of many. Every team must be organized in some way to make progress in recruitment, training, or competition registration. While these may seem like simple tasks, approaching them in a professional manner with optimization and efficiency can provide greater results. While it may sound strange, operating parts of a team like a company can benefit both those involved and those that it serves. The further a team goes in conducting itself professionally, the more opportunities it will find.

In Ultimate, business has been a concept that is pushed away by certain individuals with the fear of losing fun aspects. As the sport grew popular with the hippie crowd in the 70's and 80's, it formed in contrast to other sports. As mainstream sports were growing and turning profits through professional leagues, Ultimate chose to remain exclusive to simple recreation or competition with little money involved. However, as the sport has grown, many have started seeing the importance of organization to legitimize the sport. Ultimate has many positive aspects that players want to share, and there is a key to provide a large opportunity to do so.

By thinking about a team like a business, it opens up opportunity to reach a higher level of recognition and funding. Your university likes student groups it can be proud of, and will actively support them if they are consistent and show structure. Over time, a focused team can strengthen its case to create a team proposal to gain an official varsity or team sport status. In all cases, a business approach will always mean there is work to be done. Think about it positively and understand the immense benefits that are possible. No longer would students have to pay hundreds or thousands of dollars to play a club sport. Staff members could accelerate business experience by coordinating events or promotion campaigns and have fun doing it for the team. Not only will you provide more for your players, but you will also have the ability impact the local community. If helping the sport grow is a top priority, becoming organized and professional is the way to do it.

Outline

I - Team Professionalism & Conduct

Excellence – Experience – Impact

- Approaching team operations diligently and respectfully can create benefits internally and externally.
- By focusing on perfecting organization, the team will have more time for competition preparation.
- A long-term commitment to team responsibilities can promote skillsets and résumé building.
- When a team is well established, it can bring positive experiences to the university and local community.

II - Team Business Structures

Hierarchy – Team Board – Group Effort

- A team's ideal staff structure depends on the size of the team and scale of regular projects.
- President, Vice President, and general staff are positions in a simple structure to establish power and roles.
- When there is a larger core of the team, leveling power and positions makes collaboration more enjoyable.
- Small teams with moderate activity can delegate tasks to the whole group for simplicity.

III - Team Image

Theme – Logo – Gear

- A team's branding is more important than ever as Ultimate begins to go mainstream.
- Common themes can create a vibrant team image while becoming building blocks for traditions or rituals.
- The team logo should be simple, recognizable, and possibly represent something about the team's values.
- Uniforms and apparel provide a yearly opportunity to establish a team image on the field.

IV - Digital Systems

Website – Social Media – Collaboration Tools

- Modern technology allows for more productivity, organization, and simplicity if used the right way.
- A team website can serve as a central point for public viewing of the team's values, schedule, and story.
- Social media can keep friends and family informed while managing the team through instant communication.
- Cloud applications and video calling provide an efficient collaborative process for any team project.

V - Campus Advertising

Digital – Temporary – Permanent

- Making your organization known on campus is the biggest first step to successful recruitment and impact.
- Schools often have online announcement systems that provide a good opportunity to release information.
- Posting flyers or posters around campus can help promote your team image and spark interest.
- Banners and trophy cases can be the finishing touch of being well known and highly acclaimed on campus.

VI - Campus Involvement

HS Student Visits – Campus Events – Club Collaborations

- Being active on campus shows you care about the wellbeing of the university and students.
- If given, take the opportunity to promote to high school students when they visit campus.
- Socialize with all types of students at campus events and you may even find a new recruit.
- Collaborating with other clubs can be a valuable social experience and even create fundraising opportunities.

VII - University Relations

Student Government – Student Life/Campus Media – Athletics Department

- Building relationships with authority can open more doors and make a team proposal more successful.
- Attend required meetings and interact with student government to gain better budget and flexibility.
- Meet and work with general campus staff to promote events and gain support.
- Invest time with the school's athletics department to align the team for greater opportunities.

VIII - Team Finances

Fundraising – Budgeting – Spending

- The team's income and budget is important to manage both professionally and honorably.
- Lower player costs through fundraiser events or campaigns if school funding might be low.
- Track income and projected expenses to make a plan for how money should be spent.
- Stick to the budget as much as possible while looking for smart solutions to save money.

IX - Event Hosting

Planning – Preparing – Running

- Hosting events has social, athletic, and business benefits and should be actively pursued each year.
- Create goals and structure for the event and identify what costs are associated.
- Outline tasks and delegate them to team staff members to make preparation straight forward and enjoyable.
- Create an operations plan and align enough volunteers to make sure the event runs smoothly.

X - Yearly Scheduling

Recruitment Events – Performance Activities – Social Activities

- Creating a general timeline each year can present a clear image of team progression to the players.
- Focus on timing of recruitment efforts to create excitement and build momentum towards tryouts.
- Schedule practices often enough to keep players hooked while looking forward to upcoming tournaments.
- Provide a wide spread of opportunities for team bonding and celebrating team achievements

First Edition Coming Soon

Additions/Updates in progress

- *Chapter 1 – Introduction* : Light revisions
- *Chapter 2 – Starting a Team* : Light revisions
- *Chapter 3 – Growing a Team* : Light revisions
- *Chapter 4 – Culture Guide* : Section revisions
- *Chapter 5 – Athletics Guide* : Section revisions
- *Chapter 6 – Business Guide* : Section content and revisions
- *Chapter 7 – Resources* : Content

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