

**UPA Board of Directors Meeting  
January 16-18, 2010  
Denver, CO**

**Board members present:**

Gwen Ambler	At-Large Representative, Vice President effective 1/17
Ben Banyas	Mid-Atlantic Representative
William Bartram	Northwest Representative
Audrius Barzdukas	Southwest Representative, ExeComm member effective 1/17
Jason Chow	At-Large Representative
Mandy Eckhoff	At-Large Representative
Matt Farrell	At-Large Representative
Seth Grossinger	Central Representative, Treasurer
Peri Kurshan	Northeast Representative, Vice President 1/16, President effective 1/17
Joshua Seamon	At-Large Representative, Secretary
John Terry	South Representative
Henry Thorne	At-Large Representative (partially present)

**Also present:**

Tom Crawford	Chief Executive Officer
Will Deaver	Managing Director, Competition and Athlete Programs
Matthew Bourland	Championship Series Manager
Byron Hicks	Championship Series Manager
Meredith Tosta	Director, Coach and Youth Development
Chuck Menke	Managing Director, Business Development and Communication
Melanie Byrd	Director, Membership and Sport Development
Anna Schott	Membership and Sport Development Manager
Erin Wolter	Office Manager
David Raflo	National Masters Director
Kris Kelley	National Mixed Director
Jeff Kula	National College Director
Deanna Ball	National Womens Director
Adam Goff	National Open Director

President Peri Kurshan called the meeting to order.

Peri thanked everyone for attending and set the expectations for the meeting. Everyone will introduce themselves and Robert's Rules for parliamentary procedure are reviewed. Motions need to be seconded. Information straw polls will be used. Engage everyone in discussion.

Everyone introduced themselves.

Peri reviewed the overview of the day.

Chuck Menke presented a new DVD of material from Club Nationals.

## **Strategic Plan Review**

### **Membership and Outreach - Melanie Byrd**

**College:** We need tools to help college sports administrators. The biggest thing we can do is to help start Intramural level Ultimate. The Club level is done by students and Intramurals by non-players. We need to help people start programs who know nothing about Ultimate. The information will also be helpful to parks and recreational departments. It will help to avoid reinventing the wheel. We should have a relationship with a stable position at a given school since students leave. Ultimate, LAX, and Rugby are the big three club sports. We want to show schools there is a larger organization. This past summer the administrators we reached at past PE conferences gave glowing reviews of Ultimate and the UPA. College sports administrators would like more consistent contact with their teams.

**Women's Leadership:** Got rolled over to 2010 on purpose. We'll develop the leadership training program, do one regional workshop, and work on an assessment system.

**Leagues:** A lot is contingent on our IT system. We will market our offerings at UPA events and place info tents at college and club champs. At the college champs we made a great spectator tent. Sold spectator guides. Lots depends on the affiliate model. League membership vs. individual membership.

**Membership:** We surveyed during the strategic plan to see if the membership liked the cycle we're on. People prefer being a member for a year. There are many different ways to sign up with other organizations -- early, multi-year. There are many different reasons we haven't done that yet. We need a new IT system first.

### **2010 Look Ahead – Melanie Byrd**

#### **General Program Development:**

- League Organizers Conference 2011
- Develop SOTG package for distribution to sanctioned events
- Make changes to grant program- more emphasis innovative projects; create separate support system to provide materials for start-up teams/leagues

#### **College Development:**

- Develop tools to address needs of club sports advisors
- Develop college team advisory panel
- Create timeline and budget for development of additional resources
- Develop plan for maximizing communications with faculty advisors

#### **Women's Leadership:**

- Develop women's leadership training program
- Develop curriculum to train the trainers
- Pilot one workshop
- Create system to assess impact

#### **Leagues/Local Organization Development:**

- Determine goals of affiliate model
- Begin development of a league affiliate model
- Develop additional tools for league organizers

#### **Membership:**

- Market organization's offerings at UPA events (College & Club in 2010)
- Contact parents directly regarding Friends & Family membership (now collecting addresses)
- Hopes with new IT system are to explore:
  - Recommendations for additional membership types
  - Switch to non-calendar membership cycle
  - Early bird-renewal and multiple year membership discounts
  - Electronic subscription

#### **Competition and Athlete Programs - Will Deaver**

**College restructuring:** Accelerated the plans and incrementally attacked pieces of the plan. We expanded nationals to 40 teams, 4 days, and a showcase format. There was more time between games. Turned out to be great changes. Teams like the time off. The asymmetric schedule worked well. We eliminated size wild cards and we're heading towards a new strength wild card system. We supported a D3 tournament. We came up with a proposed plan and got feedback. In 2010 we will have an official regular season. We will be much more involved in the D3 national event. We will have a D3 coordinator.

**Grand Masters and Masters Women's Championship:** Part of the strategic plan. The response was overwhelmingly positive. We maxed out the field site and the event was very successful. There was a ton of positive feedback. We should have the event again and keep it in the summer. With this timing people will be able to play in more than one division in the club champs. ExeComm okay'd another event.

**Club Series Changes:** We're raising the masters anti-wild card limit. Competition-related incentives motivate people. You can gain a team by hosting an event. We added roster limits. The goal is to create more teams and provide more opportunities to play. No timeline yet. Rosters at national events are larger.

**Observer Program:** Ran 7 clinics of 10 that were planned. We're tracking experience and performance. Focused on the national level. The Ultimate Observer Association was created outside of the UPA. Both of the UOA founders are in the UPA observer system. One founder came to the materials revision meeting and contributed. We ran three experimental events in the spring and got feedback. Players voted to incorporate active up and down calls in the open division. Immediate referral for other calls. Seemed

like it worked okay. Instructional Observers are what observers might look like outside the highest level of competition.

### **2010 Look Ahead - Will Deaver**

**College restructuring:** The 2010 season guidelines are in place. The first regular season sanctioned event happened last week. We like to do things really, really well and we want to make sure things are in order. Sometimes people get frustrated with the pace of change. If we go quickly, sometimes things won't go perfectly. The first event was the women's Santa Barbara Invite Qualifier. We have five sanctioned events next weekend. We are estimating 25-30 regular season sanctioned events. Many of the events were not sanctioned before. We are working with Rodney Jacobson to incorporate new features into the Score Reporter system. He has been making other upgrades.

**Grand Masters and Women's Masters Championships:** We have bids in from potential hosts. The decision will be made by the end of the month. We scaled back to a 16 GM and 16 WM event because they liked a two-day event. Cramming 20 teams into a 2-day event is too much and people do not like the format sacrifices. Do we need a qualifier? Further team vetting. The timing of the event is something some people have issues with. Some feel that holding it in the fall at Sarasota would bring more legitimacy. Also, there is an existing set of GM events that extend through the summer and into the fall. We scheduled our champs right in the middle of their short season. However, most GM teams like it just the way it is. We will continue to pay attention and see how it goes this year.

**Masters Division:** We are looking at the age limits. Plan is to increase the anti-wild card again. The goal is to move toward a time when the masters division will have its own sectional events.

**Club restructuring:** We are tackling the regular season, divisions, boundaries, and bids. The process could take more than a year. There are reasons to really jump on top of this. The system will probably be easier with club that colleges since there are no eligibility issue and more continuity between teams. The goal is to bring a proposal to the Board next January.

**Observer Program:** Our goal is to run 10 clinics this year and train more trainers. Will there be tiers to the training? Are we there yet? There is an opportunity with instructional observers, experimental events, and youth events. The head of our observer program trained a set of trainers to use our system in Canada for CUPA. They don't want to reinvent the wheel. We can share observers.

**Rules:** We require a rules quiz as part of the coaching certification process. We want to add a quiz to other events/levels.

**U-23 World Event:** The idea was floated to some people by WFDF. The UPA's response was that it wasn't going to fit into our plan for 2010, given existing resources

and already full slate of plans. We would like to consider participating in the event at some point in the future. WFDF decided to move forward. The official announcement was just released by WFDF. The event has not been approved by their congress. The UPA's position is that we are still not planning to be a part of the 2010 event. Can someone else send a team for the USA? Not according to WFDF or the UPA. Canada said the same thing as us. They agreed with our position. As the National Governing Body, the focus of the strategic plan is advancing the sport of Ultimate in the US. We need to develop a more specific international strategy. Any time we send a team to an event like this it represents the UPA and the US. We need to make sure any team that goes into this event is selected and presented in the right way, so sufficient notification is critical.

### **Coach and Youth Development - Meredith Tosta**

**Youth Promotional Package:** Not slated until 2011. Meredith worked with Rob from UltiVillage on a promo video comprised of footage from YCCs (<http://media.upa.org>). We want to pilot these kits for mass distribution. The pilot states are Ohio and Nebraska. Some of the stages were quick. We're putting the materials together in 2010.

**Review MS/HS curriculum and re-write if necessary:** The material is great for PE teachers but it is pretty dated. It needs to be updated. A task force was created to review and revise. They have an outline and plan. Miranda Roth and Meredith will get together and write the new material. They got 3/4 of the way through in 2009.

**Non-school based play and the YCC structure:** People like non-school based play. There should be a national event. We needed to make it easier for people to be able to participate. We are giving priority to league teams, but we give more support to at-large plans. We provide a plan for when at-large teams apply. The 2010 competition guidelines will be online soon.

**Expand and develop the SYC program, provide state level guidelines for competition:** There are now new Regional Youth Director positions and a Youth Ultimate Resource Manual. It was too much for Meredith to be proactive with 50 states. The RYDs have been great. 11 articles from 8 authors in the Youth resource manual.

**Revamp coaching education:** Level I coaching clinics were morphed into two parts. The ethics section is being run as one part. Could run this portion at Easterns, Westerns, YCCs. 5 new coaching instructors were hired. We're running 23 clinics January through March.

**Resources for girls, identify leaders:** Not too much was done. IT support is needed. 2006 Worlds Juniors footage was taken and made into a girls promo clip. We need more footage of girls playing Ultimate.

### **2010 Look Ahead - Meredith Tosta**

New promo material will be developed. A U-14 model will be formed, and new learning opportunities to coaches will be provided. Develop a best practices manual specific to

girls Ultimate. We recommend but don't require CPR. Looking to expand teaching. We need to modify some systems for younger audiences. Developmental sequences need to be worked on. It was pointed out that there is growth in youth numbers but a drop in the number of states offering a girls division. Meredith made a big push for new girls divisions when she started. Some divisions that formed were small and folded. Some mixed divisions have been formed. We're running skills clinics and targeted ads through Facebook. We want to attract athletes to the UPA and send them to leagues.

### **Technology Platform Challenges - Tom Crawford**

Lengthy update and discussion of current challenges. Will need to make significant investment of time, energy and money into a new technology platform to run the business on.

### **Business Development and Communication - Chuck Menke**

Enhancing women's coverage was rolled over into 2010. Only had one magazine to work with. Brought back the spotlight column which has helped enhance league coverage. Worked on promoting girls ultimate, the college restructure, increasing women's education opportunities, expanding and improving rules resources, and increasing the awareness of UPA league benefits. Impressive mob of people at the club championships merchandise tents.

### **Marketing Plan - Chuck Menke**

**Merchandizing/Licensing:** Create an official UPA merchandise line. This would not a huge money maker. eCommerce Goals: online store, video, photo, mobile, online auctions. We're establishing a licensing program. Example: Five Ultimate is now paying a licensing fee.

**Brand Awareness:** Might have some brand confusion. UPA or USA Ultimate (magazine, international events/teams). Will explore more consistency and continuity

**Corporate Sponsorship:** We need some tools that we don't currently have. In particular we need an Adobe flash presentation. We need to package photos, video, and audio clips all on one DVD that explains exactly what the UPA is as a whole. The big question is what can we sell? What of what we are is most attractive to sponsors? There will be levels of sponsorship.

**Advertising:** We will hire a company on commission to help advertise with us and continue developing the magazine.

**Fundraising:** Our team fundraising partnership with MySportsDreams has launched. The program is for HS and college teams. We sent out a holiday email. More people opened it than our newsletter.

It is a huge process to monetize/provide valuation to our assets.

We need a few rockstars that we can use in marketing. These will be players that represent what we want. Who is our Phelps?

We don't necessarily have to pick one superstar player or superstar team. We could pick teams at the college level and players at the club level.

We could market the superstars to our youth players.

The point was raised that we need to be careful to pick the right person considering we don't have control over players. They could move. They could take a year off. Also, we are trying to sell these rockstars to people outside the sport. It's actually not too important that they currently play. It's very hard to name a sport that doesn't have a face to that sport.

### **Communications Plan - Chuck Menke**

**Media and public relations infrastructure:** Distribution lists are the wrenches, primary tool. We're targeting specific publications and generating talking points for specific items like our decision not to participate in the U-23 WFDF tourney. We're also working on an internship program, and will have our first two this term.

**Website re-launch:** We want the site to be compelling, visually dynamic, full of photos, intuitive, clean, and easy to navigate. The site should contain website feature for news. We want the site to become the place for Ultimate interactivity. There are no less than 5 UPA Facebook groups that have nothing to do with the UPA. There is no embedded video player on our current website. We also want user tools like RSS feeds. Score Reporter will also be a large module. We also need to tackle the idea of hosting a forum. A new site could happen soon.

**USA Ultimate Magazine:** We're trying to tell a story. We need to focus less on results. We can link to media content in the magazine. People like a hard copy magazine. Printed publications sit on coffee tables. The cost of printing is odd and depends on how many multiples of 8 pages are printed. Should the UPA start an online version of the USA Ultimate magazine?

**Broadcast:** We need to develop Ultimate broadcasters. We will have streaming partners.

### **Board Communications Strategy - Peri Kurshan**

The Board blog started last year. The points were raised that we need to balance confidentiality with connecting with the community and also that we need to do a better job at putting a face to the organization. The point was raised that it's allowed for the Board to show some dissent. We should also make sure to engage our audience. Members are not making a connection between elections and governance. Our communications director should help form a cohesive policy. The Board could identify someone to be our blogger. The point was raised that communications means

something different to everyone in the room. We could add a piece to the website asking for questions.

### **Member's Meeting**

Dave Barkhan called in to talk about the organization Ultimate Peace and their plans to start a domestic program. He solicited input on how to make the proposal work. It was decided by the Board that an official proposal, most likely presented at the summer meeting, was the best route.

**President Peri Kurshan adjourned the meeting for the day.**

**Sunday, January 17th**

President Peri Kurshan outlined the day.

### **PROPOSAL 2010.01 - 2010 COLLEGE RESTRUCTURING PLANS**

Submitted by Will Deaver, UPA Managing Director – Competition and Athlete Programs, on behalf of the UPA College Series Staff (Matthew Bourland, Jeff Kula) and College Restructure Planning Committee (Gwen Ambler, Lucy Barnes, Adam Tarr, Kyle Weisbrod)

*Proposal Wording: Starting with the 2011 college season, the UPA will adopt and implement the changes outlined in Appendix 1 of this proposal. Broadly speaking, these changes serve to:*

- Continue to offer a meaningful regular season for college teams each year.
- Continue to ensure eligibility is verified for all games that impact official competition
- Continue to allocate strength-based bids to Regionals and College Championships determined by the current year's results.
- Continue to host both Division I and Division III College Championship events
- Redraw the regional boundaries to include 10 college regions.
- Standardize the size of sections
- Stage regions into one of four phases based on certain team requirements.
- Allow regions in different phases to host various tiered competition structures.

### **Discussion**

The UPA started with a task force of 20 in December of '08 and came up with a list of priorities and many working groups. There was lots of tweaking and tossing around ideas. Two plans came forward -- the conference plan and the super regional. 6-8 months of feedback and planning followed. During the process the UPA had to get ready for the 2010 season. The UPA wouldn't be able to bring either plan into effect for 2010, so the UPA had to phase certain elements in. Lots of quality feedback was collected. The UPA took all the info from those plans and pulled them into an evolutionary plan that allows for different paces of development in different places in the country. The plan needs to be very dynamic with phased implementation. There is still a great deal of detail that needs to be worked out such as the exact mechanics of strength



wild cards. We're going to learn a lot from the upcoming regular season. We're still trying to grow. Half as many women's teams as men's teams. The college competition is all about eligibility. People want to see geographic representation, but not to a fault. This structure builds a separate D3 qualification structure. There will be D3 regionals and 10 college regions instead of 8. We're standardizing the size of sections to keep things under control. In any one year any team can win.

The point was raised that no one plan is going to please everybody. One shortcoming is that the system doesn't showcase the best teams in a structured way before the national championships. Rockstar teams can meet up, but there is no guarantee that will happen. Good teams from small regions may be frustrated early on until strength-based conferences can develop.

Schools that have less than 7,500 students will have access to the D3 pathway. They will make their choice after sectionals. In the NCAA there are many metrics that go into deciding whether a team is in a certain division (e.g. scholarships). Ultimate is a club sport so the same metrics don't apply. The biggest thing in the college division is the number of players you can draw from.

The concern was raised about the possibility of one region's men's and women's divisions growing at different rates. We would like to keep events together, but it's not a huge focus. Also, even if the men's and women's sides of a tournament are in different college divisions doesn't mean we'll have to split the events.

**Straw poll on passing the proposal as written: Result: 22-0-2. (UPA Staff Included)**

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.01 as written: Ambler, seconded Seamon. Approved 11-0-0.**

### **PROPOSAL 2010.02 - COLLEGE ELIGIBILITY AND HIGH SCHOOL/YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

Submitted by UPA Championship Series Staff (Will Deaver, Matthew Bourland, Byron Hicks), Jeff Kula (National College Director), Meredith Tosta (UPA Director of Youth Development), Kyle Weisbrod (UPA Board 2007-09)

*Proposal Wording: The UPA College Eligibility Rules will be rewritten to eliminate any connection between an individual's playing experience while in high school or at youth events and the start of their college eligibility. For individuals who graduate from high school in 2010 or later, the start of their college eligibility window will be based on their first post-high school graduation, non-youth UPA (or other national governing body) sanctioned event. The exact wording of this change to the UPA College Eligibility Rules will be developed by the UPA administrative staff during the annual rules revision process (summer of 2010) and will be approved by the Board of Directors.*

### **Discussion**

The participation aspect of college eligibility has been tricky to work with. Things have changed. It used to be that you started playing Ultimate in college. It's certainly no longer the case. So, we went back and looked at experience. Kyle put forth proposals. There were issues tying the start of the college eligibility clock to HS experience. Non-UPA event pre-HS graduation experience didn't count. The system created a disincentive to sanction in some cases. It's hard to see how people could get really good without playing in at least one UPA event post high school. League participation is a complicating factor. Participation with another NGB is only checked with Canada. It's a bit of "catch 'em if you can" for other NGBs. We have not adopted NCAA rules because they really don't fit us. Why is it necessarily a problem for people to have lots of post HS play before college?

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.02 as written: Seamon, seconded Terry.  
Approved 11-0-0.**

### **2010.02.5 - COLLEGE ELIGIBILITY RULES NON-PROPOSALS**

Presented by Will Deaver

There were a huge number of survey responses.

*Non-Proposal 1: Limit to a specific subset of UPA events, participation that impacts the start of a player's college eligibility window.*

#### **Discussion**

Too many questions remain about how to track events. We're not sure how we'd track the info we'd need to track in the level of detail we'd need. Also, we're not sure how or if the survey data will change with the new college and eventually club regular season. If we were to not count some events, then change our minds, lots of work would have to be undone. The point was raised that we might start by eliminating some outlier events that are at the lower extremes. But then where do you draw the line? Also, The nature of college play is not going to change by league play. It's going to change due to youth experience. College Ultimate is what it is because it's limited.

**Straw Poll on whether you are in favor of trying to come up with a proposal to submit to ExeComm that would deal with getting rid of the bottom levels of eligibility triggers: Approved 16-1-7.**

*Non-Proposal 2: Change # of years of college eligibility from 5 consecutive years to 5 years to play 4 (or other time period)*

#### **Discussion**

We filtered survey results on what kinds of colleges the respondents were coming from. We have something special. We're trying to grow the division. Relatively challenging to implement a 5 in 4 plan. We don't have a red shirt rule but you have 5 years to play.

Many of the participants were from HS and college. The point was raised that it doesn't seem fair that some teams are able to have 5th year players and other are not.

**Straw Poll: Do you believe that the status quo should remain for now, or would you like to see a 4 in 4 or 4 in 5 proposal:**

**1) Status Quo: 13**

**2) Proposal come back with one of the other options: 3**

**3) Abstain: 4**

*Non-Proposal 3: Add additional service exemptions to current "US military service" exemption*

### **Discussion**

So far there have been four requests for military exemptions. We're not quite sure yet on how we're going to work the process of checking. In our polling about what types of service should receive an exemption, US Military had the most support. We could start up an Ultimate league in the military community. This could be a huge opportunity to stimulate our sport in the military. It's up to the Board to decide if it's going to be expanded. It's a philosophical issue. You want to be fair. Membership seems to generally be supportive of including Canadian and Mexican service exemptions.

**Straw Poll: Where should the line be?**

**1) Status Quo: 10**

**2) Under military service: 5**

**3) Further down: 4**

**4) Abstain: 4**

More information will be available in June.

### **PROPOSAL 2010.03 - COLLEGE STEERING COMMITTEE PROPOSAL**

Submitted by Sam Dinning

*Proposal Wording: The UPA, in order to provide greater input to those closely associated with college ultimate, should create a permanent College Steering Committee (CSC). This committee, though permanent, will have limited decision-making authority. The intent of the CSC is to serve as a resource for the UPA staff, Board of Directors, and College Series coordinators as changes are made and implemented in college ultimate.*

*The CSC will be made up of current and recent college ultimate players with attention to diversity in regards to individuals, regions, and ultimate backgrounds. The committee leadership will be appointed annually by the UPA. The leadership will then be responsible for the selection of the remaining members of the committee. To ensure accountability and maximize dialogue, the CSC will receive official guidance from designated individuals of the UPA Board and UPA staff.*

## Discussion

Would this be a standing committee that would be mainly a sounding board to use as a resource? It seems like this is an administrative committee that would give input to decisions. Is this necessary? What are the details? There are financial obligations. The group would have to meet. There is already a college task force. At the core the proposal looks strong. It seems like the proposal is more interested in the voice and not the specifics. The intentions of the proposal seem good. We do have regional coordinators already that we get feedback from. We will be expanding to 20 regional directors in 2010. Any time you add another level of bureaucracy it makes things more difficult for the UPA. We should take pause when giving a steering committee to one segment and not another. In two college seasons we have completely changed the college division based on feedback. Staying on the pulse of what's going on is a good thing. We should check in with him and see what he wants.

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.03 as written: Grossinger, seconded Seamon. Not approved, 0-10-1.**

### **PROPOSAL 2010.04 - CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

Submitted by Colin McIntyre, presented by Will Deaver

*Proposal Wording: It is recommended that changes made to rules governing uniform requirements, eligibility, and the use of the Official Rules, be communicated to members via official UPA channels no less than six (6) months prior to the event for which they are to apply. Changes to these rules will only be made within that six (6) month window in exceptional circumstances and/or where the benefits of the changes are deemed to outweigh the costs of the later notification. In cases where changes are made less than six (6) months prior to the event, special notification will be made via UPA channels to make members aware of the changes and the reasons for them.*

## Discussion

The original idea was too specific so the competition took it and edited it. It's been ready for action for a while.

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.04 as written: Eckhoff, seconded Seamon. Approved 11-0-0.**

### **PROPOSAL 2010.05 - UPA EXPERIMENTAL EVENTS**

Submitted by Will Deaver – Managing Director – Competition and Athlete Services

*Proposal Wording:*

*- The UPA will invest resources and help coordinate at least one event per year in which experimental changes to how the sport is played are tested.*

- *The number of events and allocation of resources will be recommended by the UPA Administration and approved by the Board of Directors through the annual budgeting process.*
- *Decisions regarding specific events, divisions, levels of play or geographic areas to be targeted for experimentation will be made by the UPA Administration. Consideration will be given to the needs and desires of different playing populations, overall UPA goals, and logistical issues surrounding coordination of experimental events.*
- *Experimentation may take place with both the rules of the sport as well as enforcement responsibilities (i.e. officiating) and other logistical or media-related aspects of events (e.g. field setup, crowd control)*
- *UPA involvement in experimental events must include gathering feedback about the experimental changes. UPA involvement may include investment of additional resources to provide personnel or other assistance to independent events, or may include organizing a UPA event with this specific purpose.*

## **Discussion**

The proposal formalizes what was in the strategic plan. We have never had a mechanism for incorporating experimental events. The proposal sets a low bar, but it commits us to something. What are we committing to experimenting with? Lots of possibility for experimentation and then we'd gather feedback. Maybe end up with a line item for experimental events. We didn't want to get tied to something too specific. More than one event could be run. This is the incubator program for innovation. One worry is that we're paying ourselves to experiment. What about others? As we develop the idea it could become great.

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.05 as written: Ambler, seconded Terry.  
Approved 11-0-0.**

### **PROPOSAL 2010.06 – EXPERIMENTAL RULES IMPLEMENTATION FOR UPA COMPETITION**

Submitted by Will Deaver, Managing Director – Competition and Athlete Programs and UPA Competition Committee

#### *Proposal Wording:*

*1) Beginning in 2010, experimental rules (those not contained within the current edition of the UPA Official Rules) or experimental rules enforcement responsibilities (those not authorized in the UPA Observer Policy, Observer Manual or otherwise authorized by the Board of Directors) may only be used for UPA Championship Series events (all championship events, club/college sectionals/regionals, high school states) after approval by the Board of Directors at least 6 months prior to the start of the event for which they are to apply. The process by which this approval will take place is to be determined jointly by the Board and Administration.*

*2) Any experimental rules or rules enforcement responsibilities approved for use in UPA Championships must also be used in events that are part of that championship's direct qualification process.*

*3) Any experimental rules or rules enforcement responsibilities approved for use in UPA Championships must be approved for use in all divisions of any multi-division competition.*

*4) Experimentation with rules or enforcement responsibilities may take place at any time and at any event outside of the Championship Series. Feedback from players regarding experimental changes will be gathered by the UPA in a manner that will inform the Board of Directors about which changes to consider for upcoming UPA championship events.*

*5) For the 2010 College Championships only, an exception will be made to the above requirements. In order to remain consistent with the enforcement responsibilities used in the 2009 College Championships, the following experimental enforcement responsibilities will be utilized, consistent with the vote of the captains of 2009 championship teams:*

- Open Division – Active up/down calls; Immediate Referral travel calls*
- Women's Division – Immediate Referral up/down calls; Immediate Referral travel calls.*

*These rules will not apply to qualifying events (sectionals regionals) of the 2010 College Series. Continued use of these or other experimental changes for the College Series as a whole will be subject to the process and timelines described in sections 1-3 of this proposal.*

## **Discussion**

This is the official process for making new changes found through experimentation. Votes will be taken on a by tournament basis. We can't keep adding features in an ad hoc way. All rules changes must occur at all division at an event. Different rules in different divisions is problematic. No experimentation at series events.

Discussion of 1-4 first: What's the rules relationship with the international federation? Who is driving who is up for debate. We have one person on both rules committees. We've each been influenced by the other. The original rules for the sport are ours. The rules have to be the rules. That's the core reason for this proposal. Cultimate was proposing some changes to the rules and how observers would act. Quick changes we made last year were partly in reaction to Cultimate, based on what the nationals teams wanted. We felt like this was something we could give on. This set a tone of professionalism. If we pass this proposal it would mean we can't make some of the past changes as quickly. This is a structure to allow change in a well-defined way. There is already a difference in how games are run/observed at certain levels. What is the

difference between nuance and changing the rules? There are other groups out there experimenting.

We should be aggressively trying to align ourselves with events that are experimenting. Is it okay if different divisions have different rules?

The women's division has been more content with the status quo. Open division has moved towards more active calls. Should one be able to push/hold back the other? Or be allowed to do different things?

Should any changes be approved by a majority of both divisions?

The rules themselves don't spell out what the officials should do. Observers are not used by 99% of Ultimate games.

We have enough people to add observers to Nationals, but not at any other events. Would have had to rely on less experienced observers.

**Straw poll on if you are in support of #2:**

**Yes: 20**

**Against: 0**

**Abstain: 3**

**Straw poll on if you are in support of #3**

**Yes: 20**

**Against: 0**

**Abstain: 2**

**Straw Poll on #1:**

**Yes: 14**

**Against: 0**

**Abstain: 9**

**Straw Poll on #4:**

**Yes: 16**

**Against: 2**

**Abstain: 4**

We're going to keep the new rules as they were this year. We didn't get feedback on the changes made last year. Keeping the changes from last year is a larger application of last year's vote than planned.

Come up with a ruling for this year that is most defensible.

This has a lot do with organizing events.

How are experimental rules changes communicated to the membership? If it's through lower level coordinators then we need some healthy lead time.

**Straw poll: Generally having a 6 month lead time**

**Yes: 16**

**Against: 4**

**Abstain: 4**

**Straw poll: Get rid of the 6 month requirement for this year in order to make everything the same this coming season:**

**Yes: 20**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 3**

**Motion to amend Proposal 2010.06, item #5, to include a 6 month exception: Ambler, seconded Seamon. Approved 11-0-0.**

*Proposal 2010.06, Amended item #5: For the 2010 College Championships only, an exception will be made to the above 6 month requirement. The decision for which, if any, experimental rules or rules enforcement responsibilities will be used for the 2010 College Series will be made by the Board of Directors prior to the start of the 2010 College Series.*

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.06 as amended: Bartram, seconded Banyas. Approved 9-0-2.**

**Straw poll of if we should make the decision now in order to maximize the lead time we give people OR hand it back to the staff for more info and less lead time.**

**Make decision now: 1**

**Back to HQ: 10**

**Abstain: 9**

## **PROPOSAL 2010.07 - OBSERVER PROGRAM FINANCIAL CHANGES**

By Observer Policy Committee (Greg Connelly, Will Deaver, Peri Kurshan)

### Proposal Wording:

1) The UPA will set a standard per game pay rate for UPA certified Observers. This pay rate will apply to all UPA events and be incorporated into event budgets by UPA event organizers. The specific rate will be recommended by the UPA administrative staff and will be approved by the Board of Directors as part of the annual UPA budget. Per game payment of Observers at UPA events will not preclude covering the costs of travel, lodging, food, etc. for Observers as determined to be necessary in order to adequately staff events.

2) In order to help fund the cost of training Observers, the UPA will set per person fee to attend UPA Observer Clinics. The fee will be recommended by the UPA administrative staff and will be approved by the Board of Directors as part of the annual UPA budget.



## Discussion

The program was started in '04. Clinics began in '05. Observers have been volunteers. The proposal assumed \$20 per game and to set up a fee to attend observer clinics. Once you're able to earn some money as an observer, it makes sense to charge for the training.

It may be a good idea to delay for a year on charging for clinics. It's already hard to get people to come for the weekend and there is another observer organization that could pick up people who are put off by clinics that cost a fee.

Paying officials changes everything. They start becoming their own group. The officials will start organizing themselves. Athletes act differently around officials that are paid and not volunteers. The attitude towards Ultimate will change.

What the officials do is more important than if they are there.

What about paying a stipend like we do to volunteers? A tiered payment system sounds different than per game payments?

**Straw Poll: 1) Paying observers a game by game fee of original proposal in order to make observing more attractive 2) Start paying observers a stipend 3) Continue to stay unpaid volunteers**

- 1) Per game: 1
- 2) Stipend: 9
- 3) No change: 10
- 4) Abstain: 4

Tiering of pay could be linked to things other than the # of games worked. Overall experience and evaluations could be used.

**Straw Poll on if we should charge for our observer clinics:**

- Yes: 0**
- No (subsidized, status quo): 17**
- Abstain: 6**

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.07 as proposed: Eckhoff, seconded Terry. Not approved 0-11-0.**

### **PROPOSAL 2010.08 - REVISED OBSERVER POLICY**

Submitted by Peri Kurshan and Will Deaver

*Proposal Wording: The UPA endorses the use of Observers in Ultimate. Observers are objective third-party arbiters of the game whose role may include: resolving disputes on foul and violation calls, making active calls on objective matters in the rules for which*

*they may have a better perspective than the players involved (including but not limited to time violations and boundary decisions) and actively enforcing rules of conduct. The role of the Observer is also to keep the game moving, and to this end the Observer should not stop play other than in cases of conduct violations. Instead, the Observer should be available to quickly settle a dispute once play has been stopped by the players.*

*Observers have the responsibility to uphold the Spirit of the Game to the players on the field. While Observers can provide a neutral perspective for dispute resolution or calls of an objective nature, the responsibility for the integrity of Ultimate and the Spirit of the Game remains with the players.*

## **Discussion**

We have an observer policy that has been in place since 2003. It distinguishes between subjective vs. objective. Is it clear (semantics)? Also, in the context of the experimental things going on. World soccer: They want the game to be played the same way at every level, even if it would be easy to catch handballs with instant replay. It does not stop active play and keeps the game moving.

Some people want observers to count the stall count. Everyone fast counts. Solution: Observers should count the stall count. However, if the policy is in place we couldn't do that because the observer stops play. Creative solution: Observers makes the count, but the player makes the call. Eliminates a whole reason a stall can be called.

No one should think that having observers will eliminate conflict. It will just shift the conflict.

More discussion will occur later.

## **Officer Elections**

President: Peri Kurshan  
Vice President: Gwen Ambler  
Treasurer: Seth Grossinger  
Secretary: Josh Seamon  
At-Large: Audrius Barzdukas

## **Committee Assignments**

Chair, ..., ..., / HQ Liason

**Finance:** Seth, Mandy, Audrius / Tom  
**Nominating:** John, Ben, Jason / [TBD]  
**Board Development:** Bunny / Tom  
**Conduct:** Gwen, Ben, Jason, Mandy / Will

**Observer Rules Policy:** Peri, Mandy / Will  
**Hall of Fame:** Henry / Anna? Chuck?  
**SOTG:** Dave Barkam, Matt Ferrill, Henry  
**Marketing:** Matt / Tom & Chuck  
**Committee Czar:** Josh

**President Peri Kurshan adjourned the meeting for the day.**

**Monday, January 18th**

President Peri Kurshan led the CEO review.

**2010 Budget Review - Tom Crawford**

Very straight forward. Easy to see where we're increasing revenue and investing in growth. Going to provide a Board level summary and then the Board can ask questions. Also, get a peak at the future. While Tom thinks it's a solid budget, Tom wants to ring a little alarm bell about passing deficit budgets multiple years in a row, and talk about solutions, including the need to investigate the feasibility and acceptability of raising membership dues for the first time in quite a few years. Our recurring costs are increasing and we need to match this with recurring revenue. Management philosophy: The director's own their budget. The possibility of additional revenue streams including raising dues to fair market levels was discussed.

Is money invested the right areas of growth areas? The biggest miss is Youth Coaching. We've significantly under funded the Youth areas.

Our membership shape is a Diamond: Club at the top, college in the middle, then youth at the bottom. Most other sports are pyramids. Example: 95% of USA Swimming is under 17. Youth is our fastest growing area, but it could grow faster.

Approving a 2010 budget in January seems too late. Suggests moving to June meeting.

More older people are continuing to play sports. We have to serve the entire spectrum. Swimming does not own Masters Swimming.

We need to add revenue streams for 2011 or we could deplete our cash reserves. We need to plan for the long term. We can't just go year to year.

Over the course of the strategic plan we talked about what we were going to do. Now we're seeing the financial impact. It's going to cost us a lot of money.

It's not necessarily bad to have a deficit in the short term. Investments need to pay off. Finance committee will develop an investment guiding philosophy for management of our reserves.

**Motion to approve the 2010 budget as stated: Eckhoff, seconded Bartram.  
Approved 11-0-0.**

**Proposed Changes to the Bylaws - Mandy Eckhoff**

No major changes. Title changes, eliminated things that didn't exist and added things that do now exist. We want to keep the bylaws as general as possible to give Board and HQ room. Whenever we make a change we don't want to have to edit the bylaws.

Grievance Policy: We need a process by which grievances can be heard. Right now it's kind of murky. Basic premise: Bylaws and Conduct policy don't totally mesh. Solutions to gaps in the conduct policy.

Several options were discussed

**Straw poll on 1) Limiting the conduct committee to cases that happen at UPA events 2) Broadening the scope to be anything, brought by a member, discretion of the committee**

- 1) 5
- 2) 13

**Straw poll if you are in favor of the process as outlined by Mandy:**

**Yes: 23  
No: 0  
Abstain: 0**

**Straw poll on 1) Getting general info about types and repercussions and choice of PR statements 2) No publication 3) Publish everything one by one**

- 1) 22
  - 2) 0
  - 3) 0
- Abstain: 2**

Mandy will come back with the actual language of the conduct policy which will be sent to ExeComm and then the full Board for a vote.

**Board Communications Discussion**

We have an online posting policy. It's in the handbook and on the website. How does what and when jibe with professional communication? What is just general information? How often? With new technology everyone is their own journalist. Should be some kind of checks and balances.

Tom would like to see us have an organization-wide communications policy. This is the way the organization will communicate internally and externally.

The Board is elected. We do not always agree. Board members need to be re-elected. Board members need to be able to say they don't agree. To what extent is that conversation is allowable?

We should operate on a no surprises rule and have the ability to explain ourselves. A culture of constructive dissent is healthy. The existing policy is pretty good. It lists common sense. Never assume your audience is who you assume it is. Assume the audience is everyone.

The Board sometimes does not seem real since we sometimes don't come out as individuals.

People vote for people they know of. We just need to communicate. We should have a policy that pushes us out there.

No one should ever dissent without also describing why something was passed.

We should make sure we focus on feeding the vast majority of the community that is happy with how things are operating. We don't want to feed the criticism.

### **Continuation of the discussion of PROPOSAL 2010.08 - REVISED OBSERVER POLICY**

We shouldn't write our way out of the future. There might be cases where we want observers to stop play.

We come back looking at what the members want. The majority of our members have been playing for less than 5 years. They don't have a super long view. We need to be careful about the questions we're asking. If we pass this now, the kids won't be able to choose active travel calls.

There is no right answer. It's more about identity, culture, and what the sport is all about than getting it "right".

We need to figure out codification without slipping down the slope away from self officiation. There are tugs from both sides.

It seems possible for observers to be involved without Ultimate losing its heart and soul.

There is a general desire to maintain certain unique elements -- spirit and personal responsibility. At the same time we want fair competition and the ability to sell the sport. We need to show people that we are doing the things that they want. Fear of no specificity is that there is no stop sign.

Need to draw a clear line. Question is fundamental: Do we have a policy or not?

**Straw poll 1) Should there be an observer policy 2) a) See a policy that draws a line in the sand and is specific or b) Something fairly vague, maximized flexibility**  
1) 23/0/1  
2) 14 (a), 6 (b), 4 abstain

**Straw poll on if there is a line drawn, should it be that observers should not be able to stop play. (Basically the status quo, but no active travel, no active stall) Does not change stopping for conduct.**

**Yes: 18**

**Against: 3**

**Abstain: 3**

**Motion to table Proposal 2010.08: Terry, seconded Ambler. Approved 11-0-0.**

**PROPOSAL 2010.09 - MARTY BAKKO MASTERS SOTG**

**Surly:** Russ Adams, Omar Ansari, Eric Enge, Mark "Paco" Enright, John Fenske, Adam Goff, Seth Grossinger, Jimmy Mott, Dan Rydel, and John Sandahl

**New York Masters:** Conrad Aamodt, Bill Baer, John Garb, Matty Jefferson, Matthew Karowe, Sanjeev Khanna, Skip Kuhn, Alexander Peters, Mark Schultz, Kenny Silver, and Eddie Stone.

**Other Masters Players:** Dave Chaiken (Ball & Chain), Johnny Hock (Real Huck), Dan Lieberman (Cynics), Rex O'Quinn (Mileage), Chris Reynolds (Real Huck), Greg Williams (Cynics)

*Proposal Wording: The Masters Division represents an opportunity for an aging Ultimate athlete to continue to play the sport he or she loves. It's less about the glory of our youth, and more about coming to terms with our aging bodies, our diminished stamina, our chronic aches and pains, and for an unfortunate few, our own mortality. We are middle aged and have family and work obligations. Our best days are slightly behind us, and yet, the Masters player perseveres in spite of this because we simply possess an abiding joy and love of the game.*

*Our division should have a Spirit Award that encompasses these disparate qualities, and honors the dignity, good cheer, and hope of one of our members of the community who passed before his time.*

*We respectfully suggest that the UPA consider honoring Marty's memory in one of the following ways:*

*- Create a Spirit of the Game award in Marty's name to be given to one player from the Masters Division each year at Nationals in recognition of a player who embodies the true Spirit of the Game and who has demonstrated other intangible qualities, such as: a long-term love of Ultimate, a reverence for fair play, a wry sense of humor, an appreciation of the larger fellowship of our community, uncommon courage in the face of long odds, and/or a joyful & competitive heart.*

- Or, provide a Spirit of the Game award in Marty's name to the top team in the Spirit rankings of the Masters Division
- Or, consider naming the Masters Division trophy after Marty: perhaps call it the Bakko Trophy.

#### Discussion

He is the embodiment of what we are. The award would be just like the awards for the open and women's divisions. It gives leeway to the staff to come up with what makes most sense.

Should there be a more formal process for determining awards? We don't really have any first hand information.

We should stand by what we stand by. The proposal was done how it was supposed to have been done. Rejecting the proposal since we don't have a good approval system is not a good precedent. We should stand by the process we have.

**Straw poll on 1) Passing it the way it is 2) Put in another step that would allow for more information gathering / community involvement**

**1) 16**

**2) 1**

**Abstain: 7**

**Motion to approve Proposal 2010.09 as written: Grossinger, seconded Seamon. Approved 9-0-2.**

#### **PROPOSAL 2010.10 - VOTES OF DIRECTORS IN BOARD MEETINGS**

Submitted by John Terry

*Proposal Wording: Proposal Wording: The board minutes will show how each director votes, in addition to the vote total, for each action taken by the board and recorded in the minutes.*

#### ***Discussion***

It would better show our records.

Context is everything. We'd need to change much more than just showing how each Board member voted.

We would like to make it work.

This would be a way to prompt the membership into more active communication with the Board.

**Motion to table the discussion and push it to ExeComm: Seamon, seconded Eckhoff. Approves 10-1-1.**

**Being no further business, President Peri Kurshan adjourned the meeting.**