

# WFDF SPIRIT COURSE

## Introduction

- Introductions of teacher(s).
- Present WFDF Ultimate: a non-contact sport, self-refereed (no Observers) sport.
- Spirit is fundamental to being able to play the game as it is self-refereed.
- At the highest international level, the players retain full responsibility.
- Spirit is a big reason the WFDF was accepted into the IOC.
- Spirit is about you/us, not the others.

## Spirit Rule 1: Know the rules

Key message: **Self-refereeing can only work if players know the rules**

Teaching:

- Rule 1.1: All players are responsible for administering and adhering to the rules.
- Rule 1.10: Rules should be interpreted by the players directly involved in the play, or by players who had the best perspective on the play. Non-players, apart from the captain, should refrain from getting involved. However players may seek the perspective of non-players to clarify the rules, and to assist players to make the appropriate call for "down" calls and line calls.
- Making a call is not bad if you believe that a rule has been broken.
- Contesting is fine if you can clearly explain why you contested it.
- Q & A

How to improve knowledge of the rules:

- Read the rules, at least once! Visit: <http://rules.wfdf.org>
- Bring a rule book to every game.
- When a call is contested, if it's not resolved after 30 second the disc goes back to thrower.
- After the game, everyone involved can check rules and decide what should have been done.

## Spirit Rule 2: No physical contact

Key message: **Ultimate is a non-contact sport**

Teaching:

- Rule 12.8. Every player is entitled to occupy any position on the field not occupied by any opposing player, provided that they do not initiate contact in taking such a position.
- Rule 12.9: All players must attempt to avoid contact with other players, and there is no situation where a player may justify initiating contact. "Making a play for the disc" is not a valid excuse for initiating contact with other players.
- Definition of Initiate Contact: Any movement towards a legally positioned opponent (either their stationary position, or their expected position based on their established speed and direction), that results in unavoidable non-incidental contact.
- Rule 12:10. Some incidental contact, not affecting the outcome of the play or safety of players, may

occur as two or more players move towards a single point simultaneously. Incidental contact should be minimized but is not considered a foul.

- Examples of how to avoid body contact.
- Q & A

How to reduce physical contact

- Give slightly more distance in marking. This also stops inside-out throws.
- If there is some initial, but not significant, interfering contact from your defender, mention it nicely once or twice before making a call.
- Learn from calls made against you and your team to see the level of physicality the other team is used to.

## Spirit Rule 3: Fairness

Key message: **For self-refereeing to work, players *need* to be fair-minded**

Teaching:

1. Fair-mindedness and competitive play are not always easy to combine but Ultimate players in general are good examples that it is absolutely possible, at all levels of play.
2. Recognize that two people can have a different vision on what happened while both people are being truthful (example: conflicting witnesses of a crime can both be truthful).
3. Any call can be wrong. Yours too.
4. Recognize that you might not know all the rules perfectly.
5. Retract a call when you no longer believe the call was necessary. It doesn't make you a bad person for calling it.
6. Inform a teammate if they have made a wrong or unnecessary call or caused a foul or violation.
7. Don't make calls in retaliation to an opponent's call.
8. Q & A

How to improve fair-mindedness

- Think about: BE CALM  
    **B**reathe - don't react straight away.  
    **E**xplain - what you think happened.  
    **C**onsider - what they think happened.  
    **A**sk - others for advice on perspective and rules.  
    **L**isten - to what everyone has to say.  
    **M**ake the call - loudly and clearly.

## Spirit Rule 4: Positive attitude and self control

Key message: **This is a game. We all play it because we enjoy it. Take that joy onto the field**

Teaching:

- Introducing yourself to your opponent.
- Complimenting an opponent for good play or spirit.
- No aggressive language, even if it is in own team.
- Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never sacrifice the mutual respect between players.
- No taunting or intimidating opposing players (this includes the sideline).

How to improve positive attitude and self-control

- Take a deep breath and enjoy the moment.

## Spirit Rule 5: Good communication

Key message: **Talk and listen. Communicate.**

Teaching:

- Making a call is not bad if you believe that a rule has been broken.
- Contesting is fine as long as you can clearly explain why you're contesting.
- Always be respectful, even if you strongly disagree.
- Mistakes happen.
- It is okay to disagree. Make sure you listen. An Ultimate player listens.
- Spirit time-outs are a good way to talk about some issues during the game.
- Spirit Circle is also a good way to communicate (both positive and negative).
- If, after 30 seconds, players cannot agree what occurred in a play, the disc shall be returned to the last non-disputed thrower.

How to improve communication

- If your call is contested and you are still sure, ask the player: "Reconsider please".
- Follow Clapham's example where they instigated a 'no contested calls/sending the disc back' rule at training. Either uphold or retract the call (<http://goo.gl/9GYivq>)

## About Spirit Scoring System

Key message:

Teaching

- Three objectives of the SOTG Scoring System are:
  1. Help teach Spirit of the Game to all players.
  2. Help teams to improve specific parts of their Spirit.
  3. Celebrate Spirit of the Game by awarding prize to team with highest score. Note that the winner of this is not necessarily the "best spirited team". The scoring system is more objective but it is not, and never will be, an exact science.
- It is important to score as a team.
- Score each question individually.
- A two (2) is a normal/good score.
- The WFDF recommends that the average Spirit score of each category and a total score is made public after the award has been awarded.
- Spirit Directors and Captains are key roles to fill because they can use the scoring information to teach and help grow Spirit within your team.

## Conclusion

**It is up to us, the players, to play with Spirit of the Game and make sure future players continue to recognize that it is Rule #1 in Ultimate.**