



Introduction to the UKUA Coaching Award Scheme

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1. Introduction

Coaching Ultimate is a challenging proposition. Apart from the technical challenges, i.e. team and individual skills and discipline, there is the thornier problem of attitude and tradition to overcome. Ultimate is still a new sport and there is no tradition of coaching, in fact players frequently resent being instructed. For many people, the free flowing and easygoing nature of our sport are part of the allure.

However, developing coaching skills and more of a coaching culture in the Ultimate community does not take away from this. Indeed as the sport expands and the aspirations of teams and individuals continue to grow, coaches will play a vital part in keeping the identity and freshness of our sport alive.

For the coach, watching a team implement a newly learned technique or strategy and not struggle where once it may have faltered or even crumbled is a hugely satisfying and rewarding experience. Given some time, a little application and a bit of hard work any group of players can be transformed into an effective team, and the more players gel as a team the more rewarding and fun the sport becomes.

2. What is an ultimate coach?

The job of a coach is to shape and guide performance by demonstrating, explaining and advising on the myriad techniques, skills, strategies and rules that make Ultimate the great sport it is.

The coach also has a responsibility for not only the safety and well being of the players that they coach but also for safeguarding the spirit and ethos of Ultimate. The 'Spirit of the Game' is absolutely fundamental to the sport and should be frequently reinforced by the coach.

3. Overview: Grades of Award

3.1 Leaders Award – available from early 2007

This is the most basic qualification covering instruction of the basic skills of the game, the rules, the Spirit of the game (SOTG) and how to structure a practice session. It will be aimed at teachers, youth leaders or anyone else who wants to lead a group of players through meaningful practice sessions. These people will not be experienced Ultimate players and the course content will reflect this by focusing on the rules, basic techniques and organisational ideas. It may well be necessary to instruct course attendees in how to throw as well as all the other basic facets of the game.

3.2 Assistant Coach Award (Level 1) – available now

This course gives outline knowledge of Ultimate, basic techniques, a basic tactical awareness of how the game works and strategies for both offence and defence, along with an



introduction to coaching techniques. (For further information see the "Level 1 Coach Award Information Sheet" available from the UKUA.)

3.3 Coach Award (Level 2) – available end 2007

This is the standard level of coaching qualification for coaches with aspirations beyond merely organising training sessions for their local team. The award will give an overview of all aspects of Ultimate and general information about coaching techniques.

3.4 Advanced Awards

Future development of advanced coaching awards will allow coaches to further develop their skills and allow the UKUA to recognise the skills and experience of 'senior' coaches. These will also allow Ultimate coaches to gain NVQ (or equivalent) qualifications.

4. A Network of Ultimate Coaches

It is vital that, after gaining an Award, coaches receive ongoing support, are able to continue to develop their skills and can give help to less experienced coaches. To enable this everyone who gains an Ultimate Coaching Award will become part of an exciting new network within Ultimate. Being part of this network will allow coaches to:

- Access material to further develop their coaching skills (for example "Sports Coach UK" workshops provided via the UKUA)
- Swap stories and advice with other coaches
- Receive advice on safety, legal, insurance, moral and ethical coaching issues

5. Registering Interest

The website should also contain some indication of courses that will be run over the coming months. To register your interest in a UKUA Coaching Course email admin@ukultimate.com.