

Introduction

Hosting an Ultimate Frisbee tournament can be very enjoyable and rewarding. It can also be rewarding financially for you and/or your club. However careful planning is vital for a successful event. This guide is an ideal place to start if you are organising your first tournament and is a useful aid for experienced Tournament Directors (TD's).

This guide is primarily aimed at weekend tournaments in the UK. Some of the information in the guide may not be relevant for smaller, more local or one day events.

In this guide we have attempted to identify the elements that are required for any tournament as well as the extras that will make your tournament stand out.

UK Ultimate Events

UK Ultimate sanctioned events include:

UKU National Indoor Championships

UKU Ultim8 Tour Events

UKU Mixed Tour Events

UKU National Mixed Championships

UKU National Outdoor Championships

UKU National Women's Championships

UKU National Junior Championships

UK Ultimate sanctioned tournaments all have minimum required standards and *mandatory* Health and Safety standards. These may differ from year to year.

Tournament Directors must bid to run official UKU events. If you are interested in running any of the above events please contact

the Director of Competitions (DoC) doc@ukultimate.com or

the UKU Administrator: admin@ukultimate.com for information on how to place a bid.

Bids are usually requested in October of the preceding year, following the publication of the calendar. This is being changed to May to give more notice to alternative TD's and participants.

Use this guide together with UKU Minimum Standards when completing the UKU Tournament Bid Proforma.

Other Tournaments

There is plenty of scope for tournaments outside of the official UK Ultimate events. Local, social and alternative tournaments can be as rewarding and more fun to organise.

Always refer to the UKU Events Diary at www.ukultimate.com well in advance to reduce the likelihood of a clash with another, similar event. To get your tournament advertised in the UK Ultimate calendar, add an event at the same page.

UK Ultimate imposes no minimum standards for these tournaments.

Who to Contact

The Director of Competitions (DoC) and their team are responsible for all UK Ultimate sanctioned events. They can also provide advice on dates and all aspect of tournaments organisation.

UK Ultimate: W: www.ukultimate.com T: 0845 1202897

It is especially important to contact UK Ultimate when planning the Health and Safety of your tournament.

Planning

A well-planned tournament is a good tournament. Start planning well in advance (some venues need 12 months or more notice for a booking). The more professionally planned your tournament is the smoother it will run and the more fun for everybody involved!

Tournament Committee and Staff

For most tournaments it is too much for all the work to fall to one individual. Typical roles for an organisational committee and staff might include:

Tournament Director

Health and Safety Coordinator (First Aid)

Social Coordinator

Public Relations Coordinator

Fields/Schedule Coordinator

Accommodation/Transport Coordinator

Scorers/Timekeepers

Other volunteers (food, water etc)

Bids for UKU Events need to show that there is a sufficiently large team to enable the TD to meet the UKU Minimum Standards.

Financial Advice

There are various rules of thumb that will allow you to budget successfully for your tournament.

Pitches: Be prepared to pay £50 per marked pitch per day

Pitch Marking: Be careful to get the pitches marked within the £50 per pitch price guide. Some venues outsource the pitch marking and will charge for this separately. If you are to pay for this separately, bear in mind that for a 12+ pitch event the marking will take 2 people all day.

Changing Facilities and Showers: Some venues will include this in the pitch hire, but if you have paid for pitches only, be prepared to have to pay £300 - £400 for access to facilities for the weekend. Try to talk to the staff who will be running the 'pavilion / showers' prior to the weekend, if they have trouble keeping the showers hot then, try to work out a strategy, or find another local club that you can hire the showers off for the peek times (such as a swimming pools / sports halls etc).

Medical Expertise: The cost of medics for the weekend will depend upon the level of expertise. Do not drive too hard a bargain otherwise, they will just not turn up! Be prepared to pay

£250 for a physiotherapist,

£160 for a sports therapist or nurse,

£120 for a masseur for the weekend.

If your medics have had to travel you should also pay their expenses (BnB, food etc..) Therefore there is an inherent advantage to hiring local medical expertise. Also be aware that a physio will use up medical supplies over the weekend. Be prepared to pay £150 for expenses (all inclusive).

First Aid: The hire of St Johns Ambulance or similar Ambulance based service will cost around £200 for a weekend

Marquee Hire: Rigid Marquees are more expensive than traditional marquees. A 25m sq marquee is large enough to house a medical team and pitchside tournament administration will cost around £200-400 for the weekend. Remember to take out extra insurance if your site is not secure, as you will be liable for the damage to this stuff. Large tents can be bought 9m x 3m from places like argos / internet for around £99.00. **DON'T EXPECT THIS TO LAST MORE THAN ONE TOURNAMENT.**

Radio Hire: Radio/Walkie Talkies with rechargers and a base station should cost around £100, or ask around, people may be willing to let you borrow / rent theirs.

Prizes: Traditional trophies tend to be over priced, so the more imaginative you can be, the more value you will be able to get. Set aside a minimum of £200 to purchase prizes.

DJ/Disco: Expect to pay around £200 for a DJ for the party

Horn/Hooter: A horn with spare gas canister will cost under £15

Security: Be prepared to pay £200 for a security guard for the weekend, more if you wish them to guard the fields at night

Game discs: Game discs are available from Lookfly/Gaia for around £8 each. Or if you are looking for a large qty, make enquiries at www.discraft.com

Do not pay the venue the full amount owing until after the event.

Advertising your Tournament

Before advertising your tournament to the locality, you need to decide if it is wise to have public access to the tournament. The more public the event is, the more you will need to consider security and health and safety. Local schools may be interested in attending to see what the sport is about, but please explain that they will be responsible for their own safety i.e. don't walk across the pitches mid point!

Create a hand book for visitors to the site.

Communicating with Attendees

Ensure that you have postal, telephone and email contacts for each team. Post (or email) the information (directions, schedule, time of captains meeting etc...) they will require well in advance to each team contact. It is also recommended that this information is sent to the Britdisc mailing list and any other relevant email list (see www.ukultimate.com for details of the lists). It is advisable to set an entry date with rewards for entering before a set deadline and penalties for entering late.

Information that should be made available for the participants should be :-

1. Accommodation options and distances to the venue. (hotels/youth hostels/BnB's/camping)
2. What is going on in the area of your tournament (ie fairs / local tours)

3. Directions to the venue
4. Local restaurants (inc any that have special deals on)
5. List of useful numbers (ie TD number, taxi numbers)

Scheduling and Seeding

Seeding and scheduling for UK Ultimate events is done by the Director of Competitions (DoC). The TD will need to:-

- Supply a list of successful entrants and confirm the number of pitches to the DoC
- For the DoC to complete the seedings and to schedule the event. The DoC will supply the Schedule to the TD for communication to teams at least 1 week before the event. This is as long as teams do not drop out, teams dropping out late will get NO REFUND (for Tour and National events see relevant section of the rules)

The formats for UKU sanctioned events vary.

If you are scheduling your own event these resources may help:

http://www1.upa.org/files/Format%20Manual%20Version%204.0%208.17.05_.pdf

<http://www.cs.rochester.edu/u/ferguson/ultimate/upa-formats/>

Health and Safety

The health and safety of the competitors, staff and spectators at any Tournaments is of paramount importance. UK Ultimate sanctioned events have a required minimum level of medical cover and Health and Safety standards. Contact UK Ultimate for details of these and other advice. See also "Further Information".

Health and Safety Officer

It is recommended that every tournament have an appointed Health and Safety officer whose sole duty is to deal with all matters related to Health and Safety. He/she would need a further team of helpers, especially for larger events.

A health and safety accident file should be kept and maintained throughout the tournament. A copy of this should be handed to the DOC at the end of the tournament.

Medical Services

A site should be provided for medical facilities, as near to and central to the pitches. Reasonably sized tents are sufficient. Medical staff should be equipped with tables, chairs, an examination couch, and access to ice.

UKU has details of medics with relevant experience.

Securing Medical Expertise for an event

Supplying sufficient medical cover is a minimum standard for UKU events. It will take time to secure the services of sufficiently qualified personnel, so the search should start as soon as a date is confirmed for the tournament.

The following have relevant experience:

Sports Therapists

Physiotherapists

A&E Nurses

General Practitioners

Your search will be more successful if you utilise personal contacts (who are aware that you play Ultimate). If this is not fruitful, you should contact local hospitals, GP practices, physiotherapy clinics, Sports clubs, Private Health Clinics for suitably qualified staff.

The best value medical cover can be sought from a local FE/Tertiary college offering Sports Therapy courses. You should be able to find current students or recent graduates/diplomats in very much need for cash!

Ambulance and Hospital Transfer

Identify the nearest A and E dept. and have the emergency phone numbers available to all members of the tournament staff. Each staff member should understand the set emergency procedure, the calling of an ambulance, how to call the senior medical person on site and reporting of injuries.

There must be clear ambulance access to the playing areas. It is the responsibility of both the TD and the Health and Safety Officer to ensure access is maintained.

Every team captain should have clear instructions on how to summon help in case of injury.

St Johns ambulance are experienced at providing medical cover for non sporting events so will be able to treat basic injuries. They will also be able to transport any injured to hospital.

Not all injuries require an ambulance. It is recommended that at least 2 cars with named drivers be on duty to transport injured players to hospital. These drivers should be on constant standby with phone or 'walkie talkie'. Teams may, of course, take their player in their own cars if they wish, but should inform the H and S officer what they are doing. In this way, at the end of the tournament the H and S officer will be the one person who has a clear record of serious injuries. DIRECTIONS should be readily available from HQ.

Communications

Set up good communications across the whole of the playing area by mobile phone or preferably by 'walkie talkie', to enable rapid summoning of aid to any part of the event area.

Every injury (big or small) should be reported to the H and S officer (not necessarily names, if confidentiality is an issue) THIS NEEDS TO BE LOGGED. If you require a sample form contact the DOC. This information should be passed to UK Ultimate to help with future planning.

Injured players requiring transfer to hospital should be 'cleared' through the tournament H and S officer.

Inspection

The H and S officer should be responsible for ensuring that showers are adequate, with clean areas, hot water etc. Toilet facilities should be regularly inspected with litterbins, enough toilet paper etc. If facilities are inadequate from the start, this raises questions about the suitability of the chosen location.

Before each day's play the H and S officer, with a team of helpers should inspect each pitch to ensure there are no dangerous potholes, obstacles, posts etc.

Pitches should be clear of dog/animal faeces.

Organising a Tournament

Below is a checklist of all the most important elements of a good tournament and some recommendations:

Location

1. Where exactly will the event be held?
 - Identify the exact address for the tournament. This will help people to find the location. (Multimap link is recommended)
2. Is it easily accessible by public transport?
 - Junior and student players are more likely to want to get to your tournament via public transport. You need to ensure your event is easy to get to. So give details of the nearest train/bus station early.
3. Is there sufficient parking?
 - Most players will drive to the event so there will be a need for a large area for car parking. If over flow parking is needed, then contact the local council, as they may be able to give you more info.
4. Is the venue available for the dates you require?
 - Dates for events are fixed up to a year in advance. You will need to contact the venue as soon as the dates are announced to identify its availability. It is best to keep in touch every couple of months to avoid them 'double booking' the fields.
5. Will all the facilities be available to you?
 - As well as availability of pitches for the weekend you will need to ensure other important facilities (showers, toilets etc. . .) will be available for the date.

It is important to maintain regular contact with the venue owner/staff and to double check before the event that no complications have arisen and that all preparations have been made (pitches lines, football post removed, changing rooms open, hot water on etc.)

Pitches

What type of facility is used (football fields, rugby fields etc.)?

The best pitches are usually those used for a similar team sport (i.e. one where studs or cleats are worn).

Other types of Pitches

If there is enough room at venues –

Look into marking out other types of fields e.g. gutts or DDC. This gives people other things to do! If you do this provide rules in the team packs. Or laminated near the field!

Pitch Quality

It is recommended that pitches:

1. Be a flat, well trimmed grass surface
2. Have no, hills, hollows, holes, bare patches or other obstacles (e.g. drains, cricket squares)
3. Have a minimum of 5m between perimeter lines and adjacent pitches or other obstacles.
4. Should be clear of dog/animal faeces.

The H and S officer should be involved in decisions regarding venue suitability e.g. state of the surface (too hard? Too rutted? Pot-holes?)

How many pitches?

The number of pitches you require is dependant on the number of teams attending and on your format (see Appendix I). For UK Ultimate sanctioned events a recommended minimum is 1 pitch for every 2 or 3 teams depending on the event.

Lines, Cones & Pitch Equipment

All lines shall be marked with a non-caustic material and shall be between 5 cm and 10 cm wide.

ALL pitches should have 8No. small cones, 1No. scoreboard and 1No. water container as a minimum. These are called pitch kits and are available to rent from the UKUA for a small fee. Additional water containers will also be available to rent from the UKUA for venues that would like to make water refills easier, these will also cost a small fee per additional bottle. Please contact doc@ukultimate.com

Facilities

Changing Rooms and Showers

Changing facilities should be easily accessible from the fields. Adequate, clean changing and showers for both male and females should be available. Showers should have hot water.

Toilets

Adequate toilets for both male and females should be available and easily accessible from the pitches. Toilet facilities should be regularly inspected with litterbins, enough toilet paper etc.

Drinking Water

There should be a plentiful supply of clean drinking water for all players, preferably pitch side.

Water containers - this is always an issue. Best solution is to plan a strategy. I.e. draw a square on the ground near the easiest access endzone. Inform the teams that if the bottle is in the square it will be refilled ASAP. This makes it easier to identify the empty bottles.

Another solution is to have 2 water containers per pitch and once one is emptied the other is used as a replacement while the first is refilled. This will often require TD's to PERCHASE their own set of water bottles.

Food

It is recommended that players be offered different options for food during the Tournament:

on site snacks (fruit, bars, sports drinks, etc...)

on site food (hot food, rolls etc...)

It may be possible to include some food in the tournament fees (e.g. fruit and bread for Sunday morning breakfast).

If you are providing food yourself it is recommended that you obtain advice regarding insurance as regards food poisoning etc. Also remember that any friendly 'home' barbeques will need to conform to H and S standards. It is also worth remembering that if you are making food yourself then it will take a lot of effort and time! You can't do it all in one day.

In addition Team captains should be made aware of the location of the nearest supermarket or other food store and a range of options for evening meals.

Shelter

Some form of shelter from the elements (rain, sun) should be made available to teams. If at all possible this should be next to the pitches.

Most sites benefit from having some services: such as scoring and medical, centrally located on the fields. A Marquee allows you to site the most important services centrally on the fields.

Every effort should be made to secure access to buildings that can be used by players for shelter from extreme weather.

Additional extras

Look into the costs of other things at your tournaments.

1. Such as pitch side spas, bouncy castles, assault courses etc... these may only be possible with a secure site. However bear in mind that you may not get your deposit back.
2. Free prizes for every team. Such as team MVP shirts.

Tournament Support

Onsite Headquarters

A central location is required to act as the tournament headquarters, to be used for the Captains Meeting, results collection and posting etc. A tent or other simple shelter is adequate, but the TD should have a contingency if poor weather is forecast..

Medical Headquarters

See Health and Safety.

Timing Games

Ensure that you have a reliable method of signalling the start and end of games. The recommended method is to have an airhorn (plus a spare, as they have a habit of breaking) that can be heard on every field. It is ideal to have a watch/clock with a countdown alarm to

remind whoever is responsible for signalling. If possible also arrange timers/scorekeepers for each game.

Signage

Ensure that all locations are well signposted and labelled. Signs should include:

Signs from main road to venue	
Car Park	
No Parking Areas	
Entrance	
No Entry	Food
Exit	Water
No Exit	Medical Facilities
Male Toilets	Tournament HQ
Male Changing Rooms	
Female Toilets	
Female Changing Rooms	

Make sure signs are bold and can be read easily from a distance. Signs should also be wind and rain proof.

Team/Player "Packs"

Every team captain should be provided with written details of all aspects of the tournament. This would include Health and Safety communication, pool, schedule and game information, a pitch map, location of water, food, toilets, showers and all other relevant information (including water, food, toilets and shower locations).

Many tournaments also provide a free gift to each team/player (for example a disc).

Reporting Scores

UKU Tour events require teams to report the results of their own games to the Tournament Director. TDs must use the "Score Reporting Proforma" where team captains sign that a score is agreed. (Goal difference is used to decide tied pools so accurate reporting of scores is important)

Reporting Spirit Votes

- Spirit forms will be given in the tournament packs. You will need to fill this in and hand to the TD at the end of Saturday and again on Sunday.
- Teams who fail to submit Spirit score will not be eligible to win a spirit award.
- Overall Tour Spirit results will be give for each Tour series. The top 16 finishing teams at the end of the tour will be included in the A tour, all others in the B tour. All spirit marks obtained in either series will be included in the calculation of the final result.

Trophies and Awards

It is recommended that you provide a trophy for the winners, runners up and Spirit of the Game (SOTG). In addition it is good to provide a trophy for the winner of each subsequent division. For example 32 team tournament may be divided into top 16 (1-16), and bottom 16 (17-32). Sometimes an award is also provided for the Most Valuable Player (MVP) either of the final or the tournament.

To obtain trophies find a local trophy shop (usually advertised in press or yellow pages) and obtain a catalogue. Ensure that you order your trophies well in advance. Provide instructions for engraving in writing to avoid any embarrassing spelling errors. Please be aware that it is much more expensive to engrave glass trophies bought in shops rather than trophy stores, but the quality of trophy is usually higher.

Accommodation

Hotels/B&B's

Contact local tourist information well in advance to obtain a list of accommodation. Calculate distances from each to the venue and then publish name, contact details (telephone, website) and facilities of each establishment.

Camping

Where camping is not available on site contact local tourist information and provide a list of commercial campsites nearby. Negotiate an agreement with a local campsite. £5 per tent per night is average.

If camping is arranged on site the following list of recommendations apply:

1. The camping area should be reasonably well draining and flat with grass cut short. The area should be clear of dog/animal faeces, as well as rubbish (especially broken glass or cut cans.) There should be clear vehicular access both for campers and emergency vehicles as well as sufficient camping.
2. Identify the camping area clearly (e.g. with ropes)
3. Provide adequate, 24hr access to toilets (male and female) and drinking water. If possible these should be well lit. Remember to ensure that these are checked regularly and provision is made for cleaning/unblocking. If these are not available look in your local phone book and hire portaloos!
4. Provide clear signs identifying the camping area, toilets, water and off limit or no camping areas.
5. Provide for late night arrivals with signs, stewards and security if possible.
6. Provide walkways across the camping area that should be kept clear of pegs/guys.
7. Provide information on cooking and fire limitations (open fires are not recommended).
8. Provide information on how to react to emergency or fire (who to call, first aid, escape routes etc.)
9. Camping areas should be as far as possible from local residents.
10. It may be advantageous to separate a quiet or family camping area away from music and parties.

Discounted Accommodation

If there is a large hotel chain nearby, contact them and explain the numbers of people likely to be attending the event. You will usually be able to offer a special discounted rate for an allocation of rooms that will be held until shortly before the tournament. This will be very popular, especially for larger events.

Social

The social side of any tournament is, of course, very important. It is usual for a meeting point to be arranged for the Friday night before the tournament, and a Saturday night party. Consider your tournament cliental. Tour A participants usually prefer something a bit tamer than a disco till 2 with beer. So look into bands or other options. Ie discounted meal at a local restaurant.

Party

Check out party venues well in advance of the tournament (some venues require 6-12 months notice). Although it is often difficult to arrange at the tournament location itself; it is recommended that you choose somewhere within easy access of the main accommodation (e.g. walking distance from the campsite). Ensure that the venue has the capacity to hold all the tournament attendees (and make sure the staff are prepared for these potential numbers). If possible arrange some form of entertainment (a very cheesy DJ). Also, if necessary, ask the licensee to obtain a late licence so that the fun isn't stopped early. Allow about £200.

Travel

Teams and individuals attending your tournament need to be able to find the tournament venue, accommodation and the party venue(s). It is recommended that you provide directions to and between these venues.

Car

Drive the route yourself from the nearest major (motorway) junction and make notes en route. Compile thorough directions, but avoid over complications (it is a good idea to ask one or more other people to test them). Publish these directions well before the event.

Other Transport

Provide clear, accurate directions to the nearest train and bus stations (and possibly airport). If possible indicate where to find timetables and prices. It may also be necessary to provide details of the public transport between the accommodation and the fields and/or the party venue. Also provide telephone numbers for local Taxi firms.

Further Reading

The Event Safety Guide, Health & Safety Executive, HSE Books 1999, ISBN 0 7176 2453 6

Event Management – Lynn Van Der Wagen, Brenda Carlos (paperback Dec2004)

The Event Managers Bible – Des Conway (2004)

