

Governance and management

UK Ultimate Ltd was established on 6th June 2008 under Articles of Association which set out the way in which it is governed and managed.

The Directors who served during the financial year are set out below:

Barry O'Kane (Vice-Chairman), Benji Heywood (Director of Competitions), Edd Carmichael (University Co-ordinator), Georgie Winborn (Without portfolio), Graham Mynott (Chairman), Kev Lowe (Director of Junior Ultimate), Si Hill (CEO), Tom Howard (Without portfolio), Wayne Davey (Treasurer).

UK Ultimate employed four staff during the year to undertake the day to day activities of running the organisation. Their titles and contractual hours of work are set out below:

- Si Hill - CEO/Administrator - full-time
- Liam Kelly - Coaching and Development Manager - four days/week
- Nathan Fowler - London Development Officer - two days/week
- Ruth Flight - GB Junior Programme Manager - average one day/week

Nathan left UKU in August 2012 and the decision was taken not to replace him in the role of London Development Officer initially.

Objectives and activities

The principal activity of the company is that of being the national governing body (NGB) for the sport of Ultimate in the United Kingdom.

Directors and employees are working to priorities agreed in the Strategic Plan 2013-16 – see:

<http://www.ukultimate.com/system/files/UK%20Ultimate%20Strategic%20Plan%20Summary%202013-16.pdf>

Achievements and performance

The Directors would like to highlight the following achievements during the year:

- Our ongoing engagement with the Youth Sport Trust for the Matalan Sporting Promise will support an increase in the amount of Ultimate being played in secondary schools.
- The “Frisbee@school” project to supply low-cost Frisbees into schools continues to help grow the number of schools buying and using discs in their sports provision.
- Internationally our teams continue to do well – but of course the stand-out result was the GB Open team’s silver medal at the World Championships WUGC 2012. GB-Ultimate qualified for The World Games 2013 in Cali, Colombia.
- The organisation continues to get to grips with a more direct involvement with GB-Ultimate. Our ability to support the teams is improving, but continues to be a major burden on Si Hill’s time.
- Level 1 coaching courses continue to be delivered around the UK and are always well received by those attending. At the end of 2012 the first Level 2 workshop was trialled. Further trials are planned for 2013 with the expectation that we will have our first Level 2 qualified coaches by the end of 2013.
- UKU has partnerships with both Discraft (for UKU-event game-discs) and Frisbee (to supply low-cost Frisbees to schools). The combination of these two programmes has provided the UKU with a new (albeit relatively small) revenue stream.
- Aligned the individual membership scheme back to a fixed renewal date at the end of the outdoor season.
- We had a very positive year financially which offset the losses from 2011.

Financial review

The company accounts for 2012 were not finalised at the time of writing this report. Once completed, they will be available from the website www.ukultimate.com.

Nonetheless, the Directors are able to highlight the following:

- Turnover (excluding GB-Ultimate activities) was just under £190k: another increase on the previous year (£120k) – again driven by continued growth in membership and event incomes in particular.
- In particular University Nationals doubled in size in 2012; and UKU directly ran all three Open/Women Tour events.
- GB-Ultimate activities also have a substantial turnover exceeding £100k (excluding travel).
- The financial impact of GB squads 2011-12 ended up being broadly neutral.
- There was a one-off gain relating to membership caused by the decision to move to a fixed renewal date, as membership costs were left fixed for the shortened year. It should be noted that some of this gain offset a similar loss in 2007-8 when we switched to a rolling renewal date.
- Reserves at end of 2012 were approximately £39k.

Progress in 2012

Based on the *UKU* Priorities work done by the board during 2008/9 we continue to view *UKU* activities as being broken into the following areas of focus:

1. Player growth

- Actively support player and membership growth; our next big membership milestone is 5,000 members – but that is not within sight over the coming year.
 - *Membership did not grow noticeably in 2012 and remains at approx 3,000.*
 - *We have no data on the number of non-UKU members that play Ultimate; for the time being we have no plans to address this question.*
- Continue to increase engagement with schools, with fully-working schools affiliation programme, and target 200 schools to be registered on website.
 - *We do not yet have a good model for working with schools that are new to Ultimate – but in 2012 we are launching a Schools National Championships series, and will use this competition to drive communication with and interest within schools across the UK.*
 - *For 2012 the bulk of our available effort in this area was spent on a Matalan-sponsored Youth Sports Trust project called “Matalan Sporting Promise”; the number of schools playing ultimate as a result continues to grow.*
 - *Affiliation and registration of schools is held back by poor processes on the website.*
 - *Frisbee@school: during 2012 this project delivered over 2,000 frisbees to schools that for the most part are new to Ultimate.*

2. Localised competitions

- Introduce UK-Regional Championships (for the outdoor open division) with a view to ensuring they are repeated in 2011 and beyond.
 - *Regional competitions ran again in 2012 – still with mixed levels of success; events are being finalised and advertised earlier each year. Teams and players are becoming used to the model.*
- Ensure continued success of the London Summer League and London Winter League as one model for *UKU* involvement in local competition.
 - *London Leagues continue to operate reasonably well – although things are more stretched since we decided not to employ a replacement London Development Officer when Nathan Fowler left. LWL 2012-13 was hit badly by cancellations due to the weather.*
- Work with newer summer leagues to help them become permanently established.

- *There are small summer leagues happening around the UK. There is still not enough work being done to share experience and successes.*
- *We continue to monitor the opportunity to employ additional regional development staff in other parts of the UK, but this is not yet financially viable outside of the London area.*
- *The UKU Schools Championships Series will encourage local schools to play Ultimate against each other.*

3. Coaching

- Increase the rate of delivering existing courses.
 - *Level 1 to average one session per month; we are close to achieving this rate now.*
 - *Leader Awards to average two sessions per week; Central Government changes to school sport provision has disrupted our progress on teacher-education, while the Matalan Sporting Promise was also affected and didn't really spark an increase in courses during 2011; MSP in particular is now gaining momentum and we are seeing levels of interest in Leader Awards pick up again; however, we do not expect to reach the target of two workshops per week during 2012.*
- Level 2 Coaching Award.
 - *First "trial" workshop went ahead in November 2012 – further trials and refinement to be done in 2013. Progress is slow, but we are nearly there.*

4. Support Elite level players

- 2012 saw ongoing investment in time on the eight GB squads that competed at WUGC and WJUC.
 - *Ruth Flight continues in her part-time role as GB Junior Programme Manager, to help reduce the risks associated with the training sessions and the trip to the annual international event.*
 - *We aim to create a genuine Elite Athlete Development Pathway that supports players' progress from GB Juniors, through the U23 set-up, and on into the Senior squads, over time this will be increasingly connected with the Coaching Scheme and technical skills development work.*
 - *As noted in the 2011 report, GB Ultimate has grown significantly, and the Directors took the view that, since the NGB has a formal responsibility for the national teams, the finances of those teams could no longer sit outside UK Ultimate's accounts; the process of bringing those finances within UKU accounts has been a significant investment in staff time during 2011-12, because, as noted above, it is not unusual for GB squads to have an annual combined turnover exceeding £100k.*
- Continue to work with the EUCS committee to ensure that the Competition structure is appropriate for UK teams.
 - *Our representatives in the EUCS committee have been pushing for the mixed division to be an annual fixture in that competition.*
- Bring international competition to UK Tour events.
 - *London Calling attracted a really strong set of international teams in 2012 driven by their preparations for WUGC 2012. The event is not yet established as a must-attend event for top European teams – they come as part of their preparation for something else.*
 - *We still struggle to attract European teams to Mixed Tour.*
- Si Hill continues to spend some time working on behalf of WFDF in the role of Ultimate Chair.

5. Leadership in Spirit of the Game

- A SOTG Group has been created to provide initial recommendations on ideas for promoting and supporting SOTG as the number of players continues to grow and the sources of those players becomes more varied.
 - *The group made great progress in 2012 setting up a new policy and structure for tracking and reviewing SOTG scores across the season that is being trialled in the UKU Tour 2013.*

The policies include specific steps that will be taken to support teams that appear to be receiving poor feedback from their opponents.

- *Nice Bristols won SOTG at EUCF 2012.*

6. Supporting volunteers, tournament organisers, participants and coaches, to operate legally and to a safe standard

- Appropriate and fully-functioning insurance provision for:
 - Coaches, event organisers through the sanctioning of tournaments by the UKU, and for club committees.
 - *The Coach Registration scheme is in place and we continue to remind coaches of the need to sign-up.*
 - *UKU continues to sanction a small but growing number of events.*
 - *Club affiliation is still in very early stages and clubs will need much more encouragement and support to really take this up.*
- Ensure processes and policies are in place, up to date, appropriate, effective and available to appropriate groups (board, coaches, members, etc), covering the following areas:
 - Health and safety, insurance, employment, and safeguarding, and minimum standards, “how-to” guides and checklists for tournament organisers
 - *UKU policies and structures are relatively well set up in these respects, but there is always opportunity for improvement; the communication of standards and reporting of incidents from tournament directors continues to improve.*
 - *A “Safeguarding for Ultimate Clubs” pack has been available on the website since mid-2010, but we need to do more to encourage clubs to look at this.*
- The formation of broader Medical Team, supporting UKU events, and GB squads.
 - *Georgie Winborn has continued to grow the medical team that supports both GB and our large events.*

7. Sustainable organisation

- UKU Annual Reports to be produced and published
 - *Annual reports are now being produced and published; AGM being held annually.*
- Application to Sport England for recognition of UKU.
 - *This application has been submitted – we await a response from Sport England.*
- Grant applications
 - *MSP grant supported work during 2012 and is being extended in 2013.*
 - *Work in 2012 led to our inclusion in a pilot “Community Clubs” project as part of the MSP which will see a further substantial grant in 2013.*
 - *Supported grant applications are being made by a small but growing number of clubs and/or players around the UK.*
 - *This remains an area where we could do more.*
- Document the organisation’s structure (i.e. the committees and groups with responsibilities for certain aspects of our organisation).
 - Ensure each group appropriately documents its plans, goals, and retention and succession plans.
 - *This is ongoing, but slow and not a high priority.*
 - Introduce face-to-face meetings for UKU Board and other committees where appropriate.
 - *An annual board face-to-face meeting is now well-established.*
 - *In 2012 we introduced a similar meeting for all the relevant individuals involved with GB. This is something we will continue to do.*