

Coaching Manual – Ultimate

Introductory/Developmental Coaching

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1 ROLE OF THE COACH

The role of a coach in Ultimate in many ways is no different than that of any coach. The coach must develop the ability to not only teach skills and techniques but to analyze and correct difficulties that may arise. A coach needs to organize individual practices and drills, and progress those drills and practices over a season to realize progress in the athletes on the team. The coach must teach teamwork, team concepts, sportsmanship, and peer interaction. However, there are certain elements a coach will face which are unique to the sport of Ultimate. Because Ultimate has less public exposure than more traditional team sports, athletes are often playing the sport without the example of televised higher-level competition or instructional videos. For example, a coach may need to instruct athletes in the concept of the "flow" of the game without a concrete example to demonstrate to the team members.

The concept of "Spirit of the Game" referred to in the section titled "The Ultimate Experience" is fairly unique to the sport of Ultimate. As a result, the coach must teach and instill this concept to the athletes to ensure that the Spirit of the Game is observed. Also fairly unique to Ultimate is the absence of referees, umpires, or other officials. It is therefore important that players have a good knowledge of the rules as they, their teammates, and opponents will be officiating the game. Without adequate knowledge of the rules, players will be less able to enjoy fair, spirited, and safe Ultimate matches.

Finally, and most importantly, a coach must be able to do all these things outlined here and still make playing Ultimate an enjoyable and satisfying experience for the young athlete.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Ultimate Experience

What is Ultimate?

Ultimate is a high-energy sport combining the best aspects of sport. Players try to outrun, jump, throw, catch and out think their opponents while maintaining a healthy respect for the spirit of sportsmanship.

Ultimate is a non-contact field sport played by two teams of seven players each. The object of the game is to score goals or points by passing the disc from teammate to teammate until a catch is made in the opposing team's end zone. Running with the disc is not allowed. Once a catch is made the player must stop running and establish a pivot foot before attempting another pass. The thrower then has ten seconds to throw the disc, in any direction to a teammate. Meanwhile potential receivers are making cuts towards and away from the thrower to get open for a pass (often in specific, established patterns).

The defensive team tries to prevent the offense from completing passes and scoring by guarding the thrower and all potential receivers. Whenever a pass is intercepted, incomplete, knocked down, falls out of bounds or is held by the thrower for more than ten seconds, a turnover occurs, and possession of the disc changes immediately.

A throw-off of the disc by the defensive team takes place at the beginning of each half and after each point. A game ends when an agreed upon time or score has been reached.

Ultimate is unique in the sports world as the games are played without external referees or officials. The players themselves control the game based on an honor system when calling fouls and other violations.

2.2 History of Ultimate

Ultimate was first developed at Columbia High School in Maplewood, New Jersey in 1968. It was set-up as an alternative to football and the first game was played between the student council and the newspaper staff. It spread to other local schools and via graduates to other colleges and universities. The first intercollegiate game was held in 1972. By 1974, 24 teams held the first intercollegiate championships in the United States. The first Canadian National Championships were in 1986. Today, it is played in over 42 countries by over 100,000 people.

2.3 The Spirit of the Game

From the Ninth Edition, UPA Rules of Ultimate:

Spirit of the Game

Ultimate has traditionally relied upon a spirit of sportsmanship, which places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged but never at the expense of the bond of mutual respect between players, adherence to the agreed upon rules of the game, or the basic joy of play. Protection of these vital elements serves to eliminate adverse conduct from the Ultimate field. Such actions as taunting opposing players, dangerous aggression, intentional fouling, or other “win at all costs” behaviour are contrary to the spirit of the game and must be avoided by all players.

The key to this is respect. Respect for yourself, your opponents, teammates and the game itself are essential. Since there are no officials, fouls cannot be hidden from referees, so the game depends upon a spirited, respectful communication between players to self officiate the game.

It is not uncommon at all in Ultimate to see players applaud and congratulate an opponent for a good catch or a nice play. In fact this behaviour defines the sport.

2.4 Cheering

One of the most unique aspects of Ultimate is the post-game cheer. It is reminiscent of “three cheers for (our opponents) hip-hip-hoorah”, but is taken to an entirely different level. This is commonly done after Ultimate games around the world, from sandlot games to World Championships alike. Although the basic concept of a salute, thank-you, gesture of friendship and camaraderie to the opposing team, is the same, the actual practice varies widely. Friendship circles form after games to discuss play and bond. Rhymes, limericks and songs are made up and performed to the other team, the content of which is based on the game just played.

Although this is a new concept for many players, it adds to the fun, camaraderie and especially the Spirit of the Game.

This is not a mandatory part of the game but it is highly encouraged as a post-game celebration at all levels.

3 RULES OF ULTIMATE

3.1 Introduction

“No set of rules can replace player’s respect for one another and for good spirit.” UPA Rules of Ultimate, Ninth Edition.

Before reading this section, it is important to understand that this is only a summary of the rules of Ultimate. It is not intended to be a substitute for the entire rules of the sport. It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that each player is familiar with the rules of Ultimate. In keeping with the Spirit of the Game, and with the unique nature of the sport of Ultimate in its absence of officials, each player is responsible to govern their own play. Only by being fluent in the rules can a team be assured that play will be fair to all players on the field.

The coach should not assume the role of referee at any time.

This section will enable the coach to:

- Have a reference point for researching the rules.
- Clarify some reasons to stop play.
- Clarify instances of stall count resetting.

The following summary is adapted from the Ultimate Players Association Rules of Ultimate, Tenth edition, (© 1970 CHS Varsity Frisbee Team, Buzzy Hellring, © 1982 Irv Kalb (Chair of Rules Committee), © 1989 - 2002 Ultimate Players Association). The rules of Ultimate are continually evolving, and some rules may change over the years. It is best to keep up-to-date on new versions of the rules.

3.2 Ultimate in ten simple rules

- 1) **The Field** – Rectangular field 64 meters long by 37 meters wide, with two end zones 23 meters long by 37 meters wide.

- 2) **Initiate Play** – Each point begins with both teams lining up on the front of their respective end zone line. The defense throws (“pulls”) the disc to the offense. A regulation game has seven players per team.
 - 3) **Scoring** – Each time the offense completes a pass in the opponent’s end zone, the offense scores a point. Play is initiated after each score.
 - 4) **Movement of the Disc** – The disc may be thrown in any direction to complete a pass to a teammate. Players may not run with the disc. The person with the disc (“thrower/handler”) has ten seconds to throw the disc. The defender guarding the thrower (“marker”) counts the stall count loudly enough for the thrower to hear. Any player may stop a rolling or sliding disc.
 - 5) **Change of Possession** – When a pass is not completed (e.g., out of bounds, dropped, blocked, intercepted), defense immediately takes possession of the disc and becomes offense.
 - 6) **Substitutions** – Players not in the game may replace players in the game only after a point is scored or for an injury when an injury time-out is called.
 - 7) **Non-contact** – No physical contact is allowed between players. Picks and screens are also prohibited. A foul occurs when contact is made.
 - 8) **Fouls** – When a player initiates contact on another player, a foul occurs. When a foul disrupts possession, the play resumes as if the possession was retained. If the player committing the foul disagrees with the foul call, this is termed a **contest** and the play is redone.
- Note: Dangerous, aggressive behaviour or reckless disregard for the safety of fellow players is always a foul.**
- 9) **Self-Officiating** – Players are responsible for their own foul and line calls. Players resolve their own disputes.
 - 10) **Spirit of the Game** – Ultimate stresses sportsmanship and fair play. Competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of respect between players, adherence to the rules, and the basic joy of play.

3.3 Clarification of Fouls

Contact made between two opposing players is considered a foul (when a foul is called, play stops and all players should hold their positions).

3.3.1 Defensive fouls:

- Straddling the pivot foot of the thrower
- Being closer than one disc width away from the thrower
- Contact with any part of the thrower
- Running into an offensive player during that player's attempt to catch the disc
- Colliding into an offensive player while making a play on the disc if the offensive player had established a stable position

Uncontested throwing fouls: The stall count reverts to zero. If the pass is complete, the player retains possession and play continues. If the pass is incomplete, the disc returns to the thrower and is re-thrown.

Uncontested catching fouls: Offense retains possession; if this occurs in the end zone, the disc is brought to the closest point on the end zone line and put into play.

3.3.2 Offensive fouls:

- Pivoting into the marker to throw or fake a throw
- Pushing the marker away with the disc or his/her body
- Pushing off a defender to make a cut
- Colliding into a defender while making a play on the disc if the defender had established a stable position

If the foul is committed during a throw and the pass is incomplete, play continues (i.e., turnover); if the pass is complete, the disc is returned to the thrower at the same stall count.

Incidental contact made during or after a catch is often unavoidable and is not a foul. Contact during the follow-through after the disc is released is not

sufficient grounds for a foul. However, both instances should still be avoided whenever possible.

3.4 Clarification of Other Rule Violations

3.4.1 Travelling

Travelling occurs if...

- The thrower lifts or drags the pivot foot before releasing the disc,
- The receiver speeds up, changes direction, or obviously takes more steps than are required to stop after catching a pass, or
- A receiver throws the disc on the run (note: an exception is made if the receiver can make the throw within three steps of catching the disc).

3.4.2 Strip

- A strip occurs if a defender knocks the disc out of the controlled grasp of the offensive player.
- The stall count reverts to zero once offense regains possession.
- A contested strip is returned to the thrower.
- An uncontested strip in the end zone is a goal.

3.4.3 Double Team

Only one defender can guard the thrower within three meters of the pivot foot. However, if another offensive player is in that area, the associated defender may also be within the thrower's area.

The thrower should call "Double-team" as a warning. On the first warning, the stall count is dropped by two. On the second warning within the same ten seconds, play stops. The disc is checked in and the stall count is reset to zero.

3.4.4 Picks

No player may cause the obstruction of movement of any player on the opposing team. A pick may be intentional or unintentional - in either case it is a violation (as with fouls, there should never be intentional picks as this is against the Spirit of the Game).

Examples of picks are:

- An offensive player cutting around any other player to lose the defensive mark.
- Converging players cutting through the same area, which causes the defense to have to slow down or stop.

The player who was affected by the pick must be within three meters of the mark. “Pick” should be called loudly and immediately. Play is stopped, then the disc is checked into play after the defensive player marks up on his/her check.

If the disc is thrown during or after the pick call is made:

- Players may still make a play on the disc,
- If the pass is complete, the disc is returned to the thrower,
- If the pass is incomplete, play continues and a turnover occurs.

3.4.5 Fast Count

If the marker counts too fast, the thrower may call “Fast count”. Each stall count is one second in duration.

- First “fast count” warning: subtract 2 from the stall count.
- Second “fast count” warning: play stops and is resumed after a check with the count reset to 0.

3.4.6 Continuation Rule

Disc in the air:

- If a call is made while the disc is in the air, always complete the play on the disc.
- If the team which made the call gains possession as a result of that pass (e.g., there is a turnover), play continues, and players call “Play on”.
- If the pass is completed, but the attempt at defense was affected by the pick, foul, or violation, the pass does not count. The disc is returned to the thrower to be checked into play.

Disc not in the air:

If a call is made before the disc is thrown, but the thrower attempts a pass:

- Pass incomplete: it is a turnover.
- Pass complete: the pass does not count and the disc is returned to the thrower to be checked into play.

If there are two calls made on the same play by offense and defense, the disc reverts back to the thrower to be checked into play.

3.5 Stall Count Clarifications

If the marker’s count is interrupted by the call of a foul, violation, pick, time-out, the count is resumed with the word “stalling” followed by the number listed below after a one second interval:

a) Defensive Foul/Strip Uncontested	one
b) Defensive Foul/Strip Contested	count reached plus one or 6 if over 5
c) Offensive Foul Uncontested	count reached plus one
d) Offensive Foul Contested	count reached plus one or 6 if over 5
e) Violations By Offense	count reached plus one or 6 if over 5
f) Violations By Defense	one
g) Fast Count/Double Team	
(1) First Call	count reached minus one
(2) Second Call	one
h) Contested Stall	nine
i) Offsetting Calls	count reached plus one or 6 if over 5
j) Unresolved Calls	count reached plus one or 6 if over 5

4 EQUIPMENT

As far as a sport is concerned, few team sports require as little equipment as Ultimate. The specifics are as follows:

4.1 The Field

Although it can be played anywhere, on any sized field (dependent upon available space, weather conditions, and number of players) the official layout includes:

- A flat, obstruction free space
- 37 meters (40 yards) in width, 64 meters (70 yards) in length for the field proper, and 23 meter (25 yard) end zones (see Figure 1).
 - The diagram includes the “Brick Mark.” This will not be discussed in this manual.
- Lined fields are not always available or necessary but cones should be used as markers.
- One cone should be placed at each corner and half-way along the sideline, as well as two adjacent cones marking the beginning of each end zone for a total of 14 cones.
- Cones should be small – 12 to 14 inches tall maximum and made from material that is flexible (no wood or metal), and should be a bright color so they can be easily seen.

4.2 The Disc

Any disc may be used as long as it is acceptable to both captains. If one is not agreeable, the current official disc of the Ultimate Players Association (UPA), a Discraft “Ultrastar” 175g disc, is to be used (preferably white and in good condition).

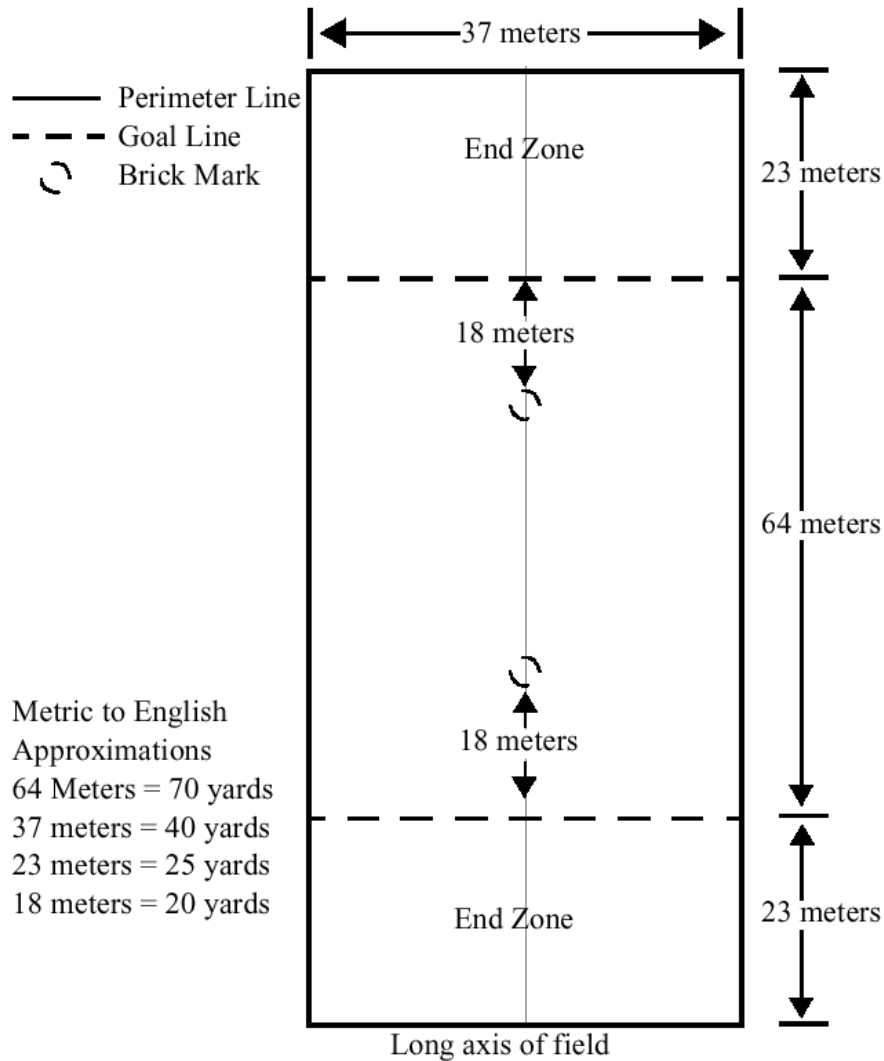


Figure 1: Schematic of Ultimate Field Dimensions

4.3 Footwear

For indoor play, there are no standards set, but basketball or court shoes that are well fitted are good options. Running shoes are not advisable, as they do not stand up well to lateral stresses and can predispose players to an ankle injury.

For outdoor play the UPA standard states, “Cleats with any dangerous parts are not allowed. This includes metallic baseball cleats, track spikes, and worn or broken studs with sharp edges.” Typically soccer, rugby or football

cleats are used depending upon the athlete's preference. Baseball cleats are not advisable since the plastic cleats are hard and have a thin profile, which could easily break the skin, or cause significant injury during incidental or accidental contact.

4.4 Anything Else?

The UPA states, "Individual players may wear any soft protective clothing as long as it does not endanger the safety of any other player". Knee, ankle and wrist braces may be worn, but they should be padded if they have metal or hard plastic pieces.

Uniforms should be such that a team can be identifiable (the same color/style).

5 PASSING AND RECEIVING

5.1 Introduction

Throwing and catching are the fundamental offensive skills in Ultimate. After working through this chapter, you will be better prepared to teach your players the following:

- Backhand throw
- Forehand throw
- Two-handed catch

Teaching point: Although throwing and catching are two separate skills and are treated in different sections of this chapter, it is suggested that coaches teach these skills in the same session. It is important to emphasize throwing and catching in all drills and games.

5.2 Throwing

Throwing is the only way to move the disc and is one of the two most important fundamental skills in offensive play in Ultimate. The purpose of throwing is to move the disc up the field into the opposing team's end zone.

Two throws will be discussed: backhand and forehand. There are many other throws, like the overhand (also known as the "Hammer"), but will not be dealt with in this manual.

A successful pass involves two players: the thrower (also known as the handler) and the receiver. The thrower has the following responsibilities:

- To maintain a balanced position so that a pass can be made before the stall count has elapsed.
- To anticipate movement of teammates.
- To use peripheral vision to keep at least two potential pass receivers in view at all times.
- To throw the pass as the receiver breaks to an open area of the field.
- To use good pass fakes to beat the mark.

- To lead a pass to a receiver so they do not have to accelerate/decelerate or change direction to receive the pass.
- To use proper technique to throw crisp, accurate passes.

This section introduces three types of throws: the backhand, the forehand, and the overhand. As well, it will review the offensive-ready position for the thrower.

5.2.1 Offensive-Ready Position

Figure 2 shows an example of the offensive-ready position for a thrower.

- Feet shoulder width apart.
- Player facing upfield to fully view offensive strategy.
- Weight distributed evenly on both feet, primarily on the balls of the feet.
- Slightly flex the ankles, knees, and hips.
- Back straight, head upright.
- Disc held firmly in the throwing hand or in both hands. The player can elect to prepare the grip for a specific throw, in order that he/she may more readily pass the throw to a specific cut.



Figure 2: Photo of the Offensive Ready Position

5.2.2 The Backhand Throw

The backhand is the most common type of throw for a flying disc. The backhand is useful for passing to cuts to the side of the field that is opposite to the throwing hand. The backhand is extremely versatile. Long distance throws are usually first mastered with a backhand throw, but the backhand is also useful for shorter passes as well as dump passes.

Grip: A “fist” grip is used with the thumb on top and the fingers under the rim (Figure 3a), and is used for long distance throws (power throws). For more control, the index finger may be aligned along the outer edge of the rim (Figure 3b). Adjust the fingers so there is a firm yet comfortable grip, with the fingertips in control. This is critical to determine the accuracy of the throw.



5a: “Fist” grip

5b: Control grip

Figure 3: Examples of Backhand Grips

Body Position: The thrower should pivot on the opposite foot to adjust the body position to be perpendicular to the target (e.g., pivot with left foot if right-handed). The throw is initiated by simultaneously shifting weight onto the pivot foot and rotating toward it slightly with the torso, while swinging the arm across the chest away from the target. Upper body rotation toward the target, forward arm swing, and cocking the wrist into flexion occur just as the weight is shifted to the non-pivot foot. Body rotation is initiated by first turning the hips, then the shoulders toward the target. The arm should swing forward in a smooth, continuous movement. The throw is completed with a quick snap of the wrist into extension then flexion while the grip is released. Throughout the forward arm swing and release, the palm of the throwing hand should remain perpendicular to the ground. This maintains a straight flight path of the disc. Figure 4 shows an example of the backhand throw.



6a: Wind-Up

6b: Mid-Throw

6c: Release

Figure 4: Example of Backhand Throw: Wind-Up, Mid-Throw, Release

5.2.3 The Forehand Throw

Players who can throw a forehand pass quickly learn the advantages of mastering this throw. The forehand is useful for passing to cuts on the same side of the field as the throwing hand. The forehand requires a lot of spin to fly smoothly through the air, which is achieved through a quick flick of the wrist (and so this throw is known as the “flick”).

Grip: A “two-finger” grip is commonly used. Grasp the disc in the throwing hand with the thumb on top so that the rim of the disc makes

contact with the web between the thumb and the index finger. While maintaining contact with the web, rotate the disc clockwise until the pad of the middle finger makes full contact with the inside of the rim. It is the middle finger that causes the spin of the disc during the release and it must be held firmly in extension.

Place the index finger along side the middle finger for support (Figure 5a). The index finger may also point to the middle of the disc for a more balanced grip (Figure 5b). Pinch the disc with the thumb for a firm yet comfortable grip. The top of the disc may bend slightly under the pressure of the thumb, but it should not interfere with the throw (Figure 5c). The forearm should be positioned such that the palm of the hand faces upward.



7a



7b



7c

Figure 5: Examples of Forehand Grips

Body Position: The thrower should maintain the offense ready position. Draw the arm back away from the target and lunge to the side with the non-pivot foot. Forward upper body rotation, forward arm swing, and cocking back the wrist occur at the same time. Body rotation is initiated by turning the hips and then the shoulders toward the pivot side. The right shoulder is lowered as the forward arm swing begins. The arm is bent, and the elbow should remain close to the body. The arm should not pass the plane of the body until the disc is released. A brisk snap of the wrist into flexion occurs as the disc is released. Figure 6 shows an example of the forehand throw.



8a: Wind-Up

8b: Mid-Throw

8c: Release

Figure 6: Example of Forehand Throw: Wind-Up, Mid-Throw, Release

5.3 Analyzing and Improving Throws

The flight of the disc depends on many variables, including wind velocity, spin of the disc, and the angle of release. Errant throws are common for novice players, and coaches may help their athletes through the learning process by recognizing and correcting some common errors.

5.3.1 Forehand Throws

Passing the disc by a forehand throw usually is the most difficult skill to master. Throwing with one hand while keeping the opposite foot stationary is contrary to the more natural motion of moving the arms and legs reciprocally. This style is unique to the sport of Ultimate and can be a source of frustration for new players.

5.3.1.1 Flight path is not straight

Correcting unintentionally arced, curved, or grounded throws depends on identifying the cause. One of the most common causes of discs that will not fly straight is the angle of the disc while it is being released. If the disc is released on an angle, the disc will usually follow that angle instead of flying straight. Although the disc is round, think of the disc as having a “front edge” and an “outer edge”. The front edge is the edge facing the target. The outer edge is the edge farthest from the thrower.

- If the front edge is angled down, the disc will fly toward the ground.
- If the front edge is angled up, the disc will fly upward
- If the outer edge is angled up, the disc will fly on an angle away from the thrower and then curve back inside (outside-in).

The wind can exaggerate the above errors. Throwers must be taught to throw the disc from a very low position that will decrease the chance of the wind lifting the disc (and also aid in throwing underneath the mark).

Coach players to throw the disc straight:

- Assess the grip of the disc: is it a loosely held grip; is the middle finger at the rim; the outer edge of the disc should be angled downward (even as much as 45 degrees can make the disc level off to 0 degrees).
- Ensure a release of the disc with a palm-up follow-through (leading the throw with the small finger).
- Ensure a release of the disc is at a point lower than waist level (novice players will excessively bend the elbow and hold the disc at or near shoulder level upon release).

Note: At times, intentionally curved throws will be a necessary part of offensive strategy. However, these curved throws will not be covered in this manual.

5.3.1.2 “Throwing” the disc

Often, a thrower will attempt to “throw” the disc with his/her arm, like it is a ball. This is usually a result of using shoulder action without flicking the wrist. Have players stand closer together when practicing the forehand to decrease the force needed to throw. Initially, teach players to throw the forehand while keeping the throwing elbow at his/her side. This will isolate the flick of the wrist during release and can eliminate excessive use of the arm when first learning the forehand throw. The most common phrase heard when teaching the forehand is: “Use less arm and more wrist”. As players progress, the arm can extend farther sideways to reach past the mark.

5.3.1.3 Wobbly discs

Discs that wobble while flying can be caused by insufficient spin of the disc. Coach your players to increase the amount of spin during the flick. When teaching the forehand, focus on the “roll” of the disc off the middle finger. A forehand flick can be achieved just by rolling the disc off the middle finger without any of the cocking back or forward arm motion. Assess and correct the grip the player is using. Encourage more wrist motion than arm motion. Keep the disc flat when drawing the arm backward. Complete the follow-through by pointing the throwing hand at the target.

5.3.1.4 Inaccurate throws

Correctly judging the timing to lead a pass for a cut comes with experience. Coaches should include drills which practice throws to a moving target. This will also enable players to recognize the speed of each teammate and will allow the thrower to adapt the amount of lead for each teammate. Players should be taught to throw the disc several feet in front of the intended receiver; the distance is dependant on the receiver, his/her speed and the angle of the cut (note: the receivers must also be taught to “run through” the pass. The receivers are responsible for maintaining the acceleration into a cut to allow the thrower to accurately time the pass. If a receiver slows while cutting, the thrower’s throw will usually be too far ahead of the receiver).

5.3.2 Backhand Throws

Errors in throwing backhand throws can result from the same causes as errors in throwing forehand throws.

5.3.2.1 Flight path is not straight

The coach must first identify the cause of the problem. Assess the grip, angle of release, and body position.

- Assess the grip: is it a loosely held grip; should the thrower place his/her index finger along the outer edge of the disc (if the thrower chooses to place the index finger along the rim of the disc, the disc will fly in the direction in which the finger is pointing); is the

player releasing the disc at the right moment (if the disc is released too late, it will fly sharply to the side instead of forward).

- Assess the angle of release: is the disc being held level with the ground (if the disc is angled up, down, or an angle it will fly up, down or fly on an angle away from the thrower and curve back inside).
- Assess body position: Is the player lunging low enough during the release (this will aid in keeping the disc at a level to cut underneath the wind and to get underneath a defender).

5.3.2.2 Wobbly discs

Again, this may be a result of insufficient spin of the disc. Increasing the amount of spin during release should correct this fault. Coaches should instruct players to snap the wrist sharply when throwing the backhand. One method of teaching this is to snap a towel in a whip-like fashion. Another common error a thrower may make is facing the receiver straight on instead of positioning his/her body perpendicular to the target. This restricts the amount of backswing the arm may make. As a result, the throw will rely solely on wrist motion and the pass will not be crisp.

5.3.2.3 Inaccurate throws

Incorrect timing of the pass while a player makes a cut can be corrected as previously explained.

5.4 Catching

Catching is the second most important fundamental skill in Ultimate. Catching the disc allows the offense to not only retain possession of the disc but to also score a goal. The receiver has the following responsibilities:

- To keep the disc in view from the time it is thrown until it is safely in his/her possession.
- To reduce the distance between him/herself and the disc as quickly as possible.
- To remain in motion until the disc is in his/her possession.

- To maintain possession of the disc once it is caught (a disc is considered caught when the receiver is in possession of a non-spinning disc).

There is no specific offensive ready position for catching. This is due to the fact that the players should be in motion while attempting to catch the disc. It may be difficult for the thrower to lead a pass to a moving target, but the receiver must never expect to be thrown a pass if he/she is standing still. A stationary target is extremely easy to defend against.

This section introduces two types of catches: the two-handed catch and the one-handed.

5.4.1 The Two-Handed Catch

The two-handed catch (“pancake”) is the most secure catch in Ultimate (Figure 7). The disc is trapped between the hands as they are held flat approximately 4 to 6 inches apart in the same plane as the disc while it flies. The receiver should extend his/her arms forward toward the disc and pull the disc in toward the torso. If necessary, the receiver should adjust his/her position so that the torso is at the same level as the disc in flight (e.g., jump up or crouch low). This will allow the receiver to maintain the best control of the disc. There are at least two added benefits to the two-handed catch. First, if the wind causes sudden up or down surges of the disc, there is greater room for still making the catch. Secondly, if a catch at the chest is missed it may strike a player’s chest, bounce off, and create a second catch opportunity.

A variation of the two-handed catch is the “C-Catch” (Figure 8). The hands are held open with the thumbs on the bottom and the fingers on the top. The disc is trapped between the fingers and thumbs at the sides of the disc or the edge closest to the receiver. This catch is far less secure than the “pancake” catch and should be discouraged by coaches because it leaves less room for error.



Figure 7: Example of Pancake Catch



Figure 8: Example of Two-Handed C-Catch

6 OFFENSE

6.1 Introduction

The knowledge of offensive skills and theory is very important in Ultimate. After reviewing this chapter, a coach should be able to teach athletes:

- The basic offensive flow of Ultimate.
- The ideas of the "V" and stacking.
- Cutting techniques and theory.
- Throwing techniques and theory.
- The roles of throwers and cutters in offensive strategies.

Prior to discussing specifics regarding the offensive side of Ultimate, it is important to first outline the basic idea of the offense.

Play starts with two teams of seven lining up at the front of their respective end zones. The team that will play defense “pulls” to the other team (makes a long throw, like a kick-off). At this point the team on offense starts by a) catching the disc and starting play, b) letting the disc drop to the ground, picking it up and commencing play from there, or c) if the disc is thrown out of bounds, they can assume play from where the disc went out of bounds on the sideline or by calling middle before the disc lands, take the disc to the middle of the field in line with where it went out of bounds. Once this player or any player catches or picks up the disc to put it into play, they must stop running and establish a pivot foot like in basketball. From this point the offensive team attempts to move the disc upfield into the opposing team’s end zone. Passes may be thrown forward, sideways, backwards, long, or short; there is no offside. Once an inbounds catch is made, that player stops, establishes a pivot foot and play continues. A catch made in the opposing team’s end zone is a point and the team that scored would “pull” to the other team once they were back in position on the other end zone line. Turnovers result when:

- a) A pass is not completed
- b) The disc is intercepted or knocked down by an opposing player
- c) The disc is caught out of bounds
- d) The disc touches the ground

This results in an immediate change of possession, and the other team becomes offense. While players are on offense and trying to get open for a catch, they may run or cut in any direction or pattern. However, this depends on how a team plays defense on them. The two basic defenses are person-to-person and zone. During level one we will primarily deal with offense versus defense. As stated, any pattern of cuts and running is allowed, but the most popular, especially with younger players, is the “Stack”. Where this stack is set-up and where cuts are made depends upon the defense. Therefore, before we discuss the stack, we will discuss something called the “V”.

6.2 The “V”

Imagine two lines running at 45 degrees downfield on either side of the thrower. The area between these two lines is called the “V”. Due to the position of the marker (the player playing defense on the thrower) passes into the “V” are very difficult to make. The marker determines the position of the “V” depending upon their position and the direction they are forcing the throw. See Figure 9.

In these three examples, any high percentage pass will be made in the receiving area. Although some passes will be successful into the cutting area, they have a lower percentage of success, especially with less experienced players.

Re-refer to these “V” diagrams during the discussion on stack.

6.3 Stack – Stacking

The stack is an offensive formation that is the basis of many offenses, especially those of younger, less experienced teams. The idea behind stacking is to have players that are not actively cutting for the disc to be out of the receiving area to maximize the use of the small space in which to throw. (See the “V”). The more offensive players you have in the receiving area, the more defensive players you place in the same area.

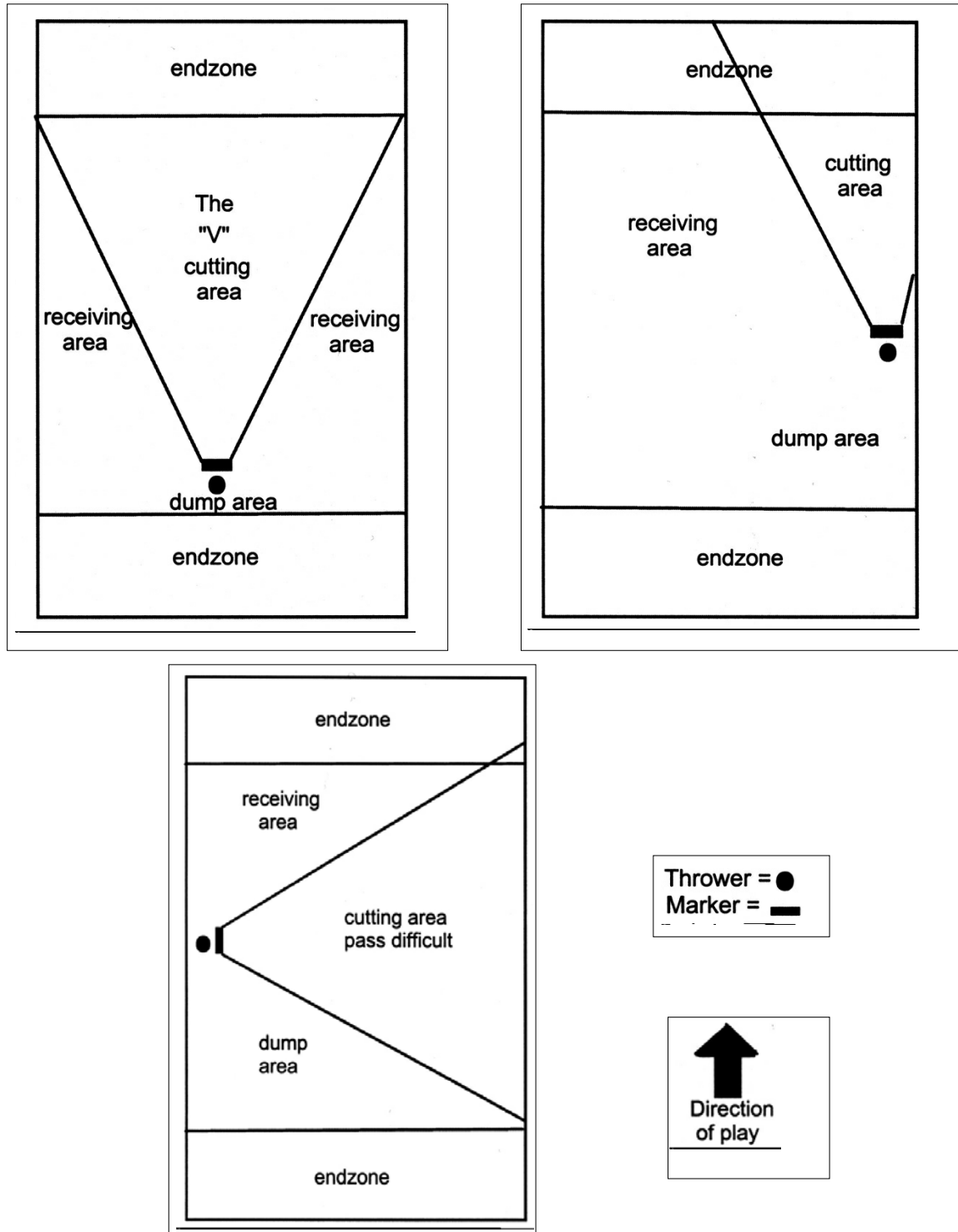


Figure 9: Examples of the “V”

Figure 10a shows the initial placement of the offensive players in a stack. As you can see, the stack sets up in the “V” or cutting area, therefore the highest concentration of players and defenders is essentially out of play. Cuts (which will be explained better later) come out into the open receiving area to attempt to receive a pass (Figure 10b).

Although less experienced and younger teams usually starts cuts from the closest person to the thrower, then the next person, etc., this is not a rule. Middle or deep cuts (coming from the middle and back of the stack) can be very effective. As a game progresses the stack can tend to fall apart and/or not happen. The main reason for this is because cutters do not cycle back into the stack. Once a cut is made, the player should run/jog, not walk, back to the back of the stack. This not only gets players out of the receiving area so new cuts can come in, but it also replenishes the stack. This movement of players is often called an “egg beater” due to the way it looks on paper (Figure 11).

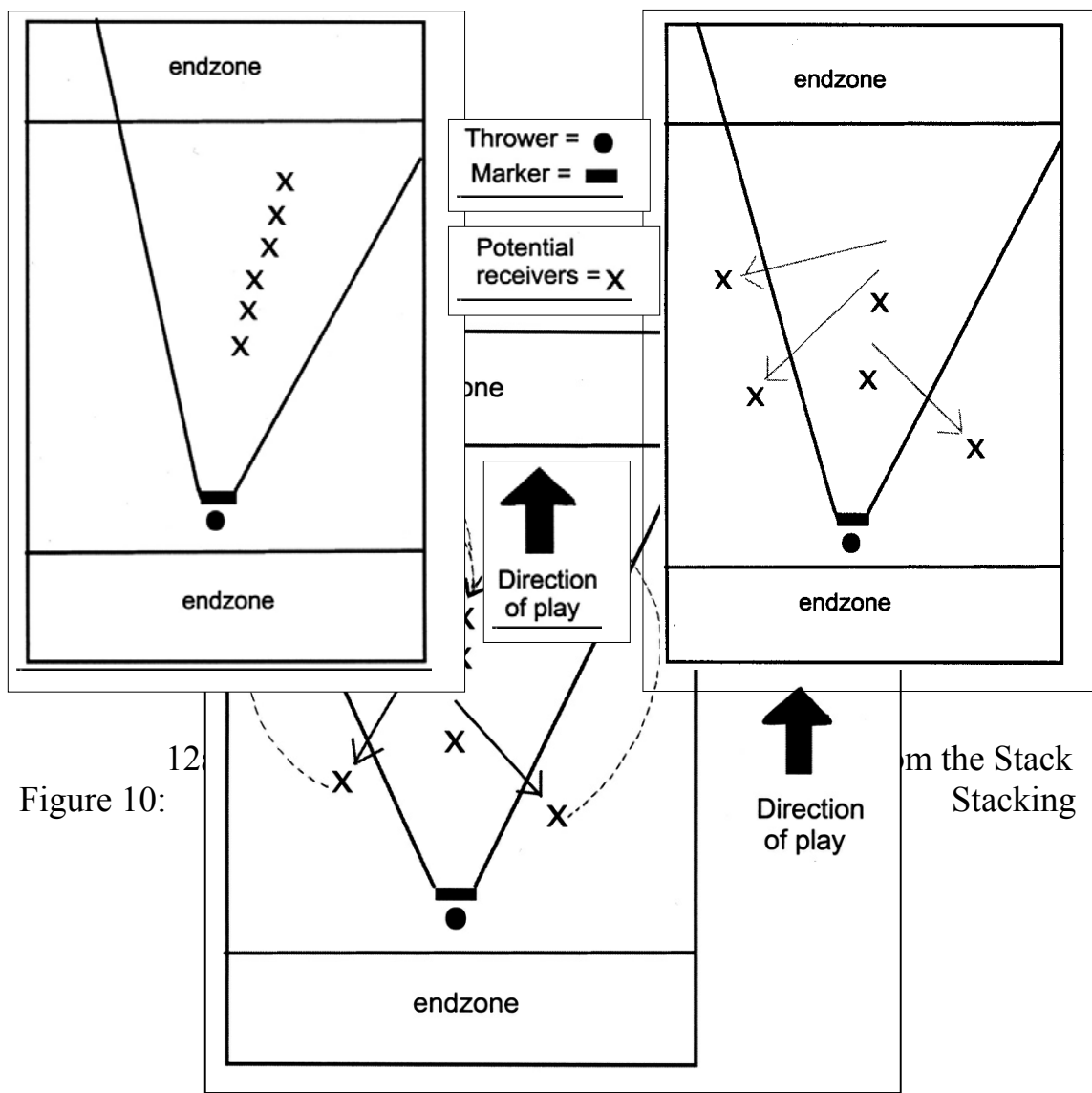


Figure 10:

Figure 11: Diagram of “Egg Beater” Movement

Depending upon where the thrower is and how the marker sets up, a stack’s position and angle can both vary. However a few things remain standard:

- If you can visualize the cutting area, the stack tends to be within it
- The stack will be between the thrower and the end zone in which you want to score
- Players should be in a straight line with 2 to 5 meters between them to avoid collisions while cutting
- Depending upon the wind and thrower’s skills, the stack can start 15 to 30 meters from the thrower

6.4 Cutting – Cuts

The cutters are the most important part of the offense. Even the best throwers can’t do their job unless they have open receivers to throw to. In most offenses, every player will become a cutter, even once the thrower passes the disc, s/he must cut again to get the disc back.

A cut is a simple maneuver, but one often poorly or ineffectively executed. Cuts should be made from the cutting area, into the receiving area (see the “V”), there should be only one or two players within one receiving area at a time.

A cut is sometimes known as a V-cut in other sports, and it can be executed in at least two different ways.

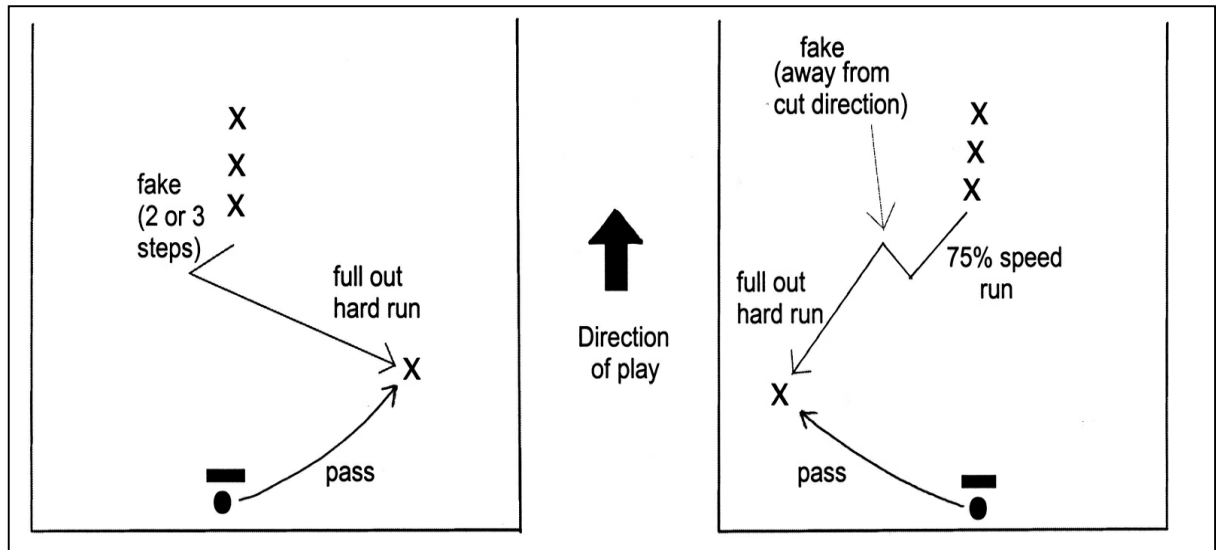
1. Fake – then run – while standing in the stack the cutter can strongly fake in one direction, hopefully drawing their defender in that direction, then run hard – full out in the other direction (Figure 12a).

N.B. – cuts are normally made at approximately a 45 degree angle to the line of the stack, although direct cuts right at the thrower or at 90 degrees from the stack are used, they are not as effective with less experienced teams.

2. Run – then fake – a cutter may start running in one direction at 75% full then suddenly fake in one direction and accelerate into another direction (Figure 12b).

Of course more than one fake can be used but too many will confuse the thrower, other cutters and waste precious time. A cutter’s biggest advantage is s/he knows where and when they are faking and cutting. The slower fakes and cuts are made the more easily a defender can catch up, reducing, or eliminating any advantage. Once a cut has been committed to, direction changes may only confuse the thrower. Finish cuts by going nearly to the sideline.

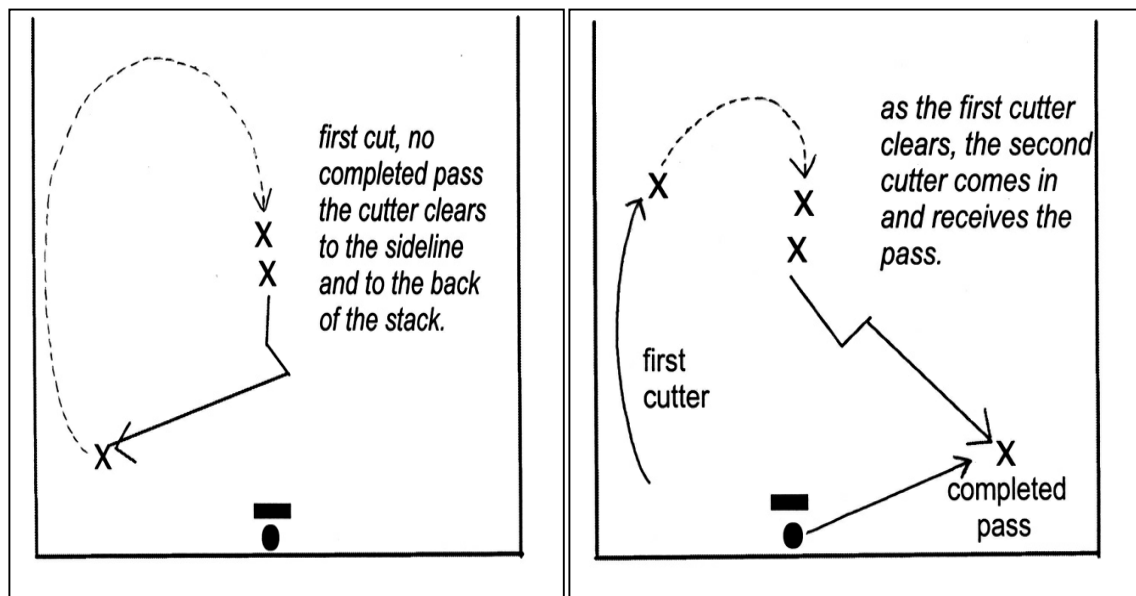
If a cutter is not thrown to they must clear out by turning back upfield and run/jog, not walk to the back of the stack (Figure 13a). A second cut should then follow as the first cut is being completed, to the same or opposite receiving area (Figure 13b).



14a: Fake - then run

14b: Run - then fake

Figure 12: Examples of Cuts



15a: Clearing Out

15b: Second Cut

Figure 13: Examples Clearing Out and the Second Cut

If the second pass is not completed the process continues but hurry, there are only 10 seconds in which to complete a pass. A cutter won't always get the disc, despite a strong cut. They should not get discouraged and realize the stronger a cut, the more likely they will get the disc. It should be

emphasized that the thrower may not be ready or in a position to make a throw to an open receiver, no matter how good the cut.

If the count on the thrower (see defense – stall count) is getting beyond 6 or 7, then a cut should go to a dump position. Often one of the earlier cutters can go for a dump and be there if needed (see dumps – under thrower offense) (see Figure 14).

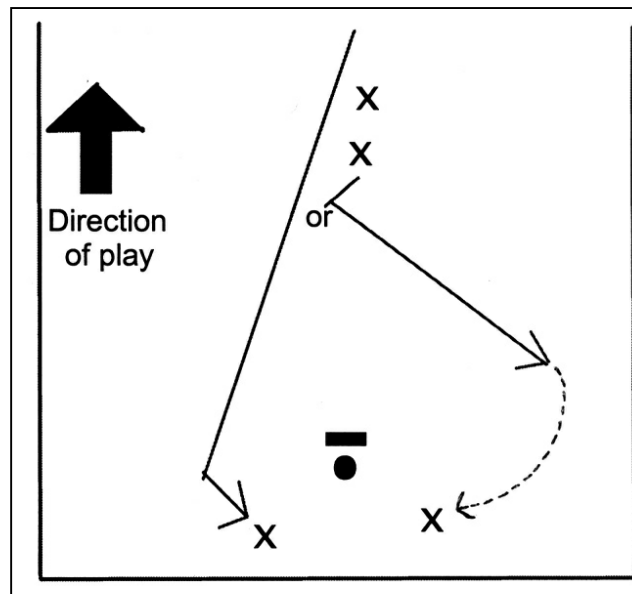


Figure 14: Example of a Cut to the Dump Position

For more details regarding the importance of the dump, see Offense - thrower. However, dumps can allow the disc to be reset to another count of 10 without a high-risk throw, allowing something else to come open.

A few final thoughts about cuts:

- In Ultimate, players that are standing still rarely receive the disc as their defender is right there.
- A curving, half speed cut (a “banana” cut) is not very effective, as it is easy to defend.

- More than one cut to one receiving area only clogs the area with too many players. If you see a second cut happening as you cut, stop and allow it to happen.
- When a cutter is finishing their cut and turning to cycle back into the stack, look back at the thrower. If your defender eases off on defense you may be open for a long throw.
- Don't only watch the disc but the marker on the thrower that may demonstrate where a good area to receive a pass may be. Also watch your defender, if they look away it can be a good time to cut.
- There is a tendency for a receiver to stop once a throw is coming towards them. The receiver should always continue to charge the disc, otherwise the defender may get to the disc first.

6.5 Clogging

If a cutter does not clear out of the cutting zone, he and his defender make passes into that area more difficult. This is termed clogging. Clogging can occur anywhere where cuts or passes are to be made. Simply, if this occurs someone should yell or announce for people to “Clear out, you’re clogging”, or something of that sort. Again, finishing a cut and returning to the back of the stack will stop this from occurring frequently.

6.6 Thrower – Handler

Depending upon a team’s skill or competitive level, age, and philosophy, they may use all players throwing equally or there may be primary throwers, who are often referred to as handlers. A primary handler is like a football quarterback, basketball guard, or volleyball setter. They run the offense and actually touch/handle or have possession of the ball or disc more often than the other players. A handler should have good throwing skill, experience, and knowledge of the game, and the ability to see a large portion of the field at once. However, as any player catches the disc, they at least temporarily become the thrower or handler.

Once a player catches or picks up the disc they must establish a pivot foot. As discussed in Throwing – Catching, the pivot foot should be the opposite of the throwing hand to maximize the area to be covered during pivoting to

make throwing around a player easier. As well, care should be taken to not pick-up or drag the pivot foot until the disc is thrown (this would be a “travel”).

The thrower must then scan the field for an optimal open receiver while also pivoting from forehand to backhand throws and trying to “fake out” the defender. Although you can pivot towards and away from the defender, it is best not to frequently turn away from the upfield stack. Faking throws will help avoid having a throw blocked. Turning away from the stack results in losing sight of the receivers.

The thrower should scan the field attempting to find a high percentage pass to make. Forcing a throw that is not there, telegraphing a pass, and allowing themselves to be rushed or intimidated may all lead to turnovers.

Once a throw is decided upon the thrower should lead the receiver. How a player is led depends upon which direction they are running, where their defender is and how fast or slow a player is moving. Leading throws is a tough skill and may take time to develop. But try to encourage imagining another player a few yards in front of a cutter or where the thrower will be when the disc arrives. Optimally players should not have to speed up or slow down for a catch.

When the stall count gets to 5 (see defense) a thrower should shout out what the count is at, e.g., yell.....5—6—7 “I need a cut (or dump)” to inform the other players on your team of your status.

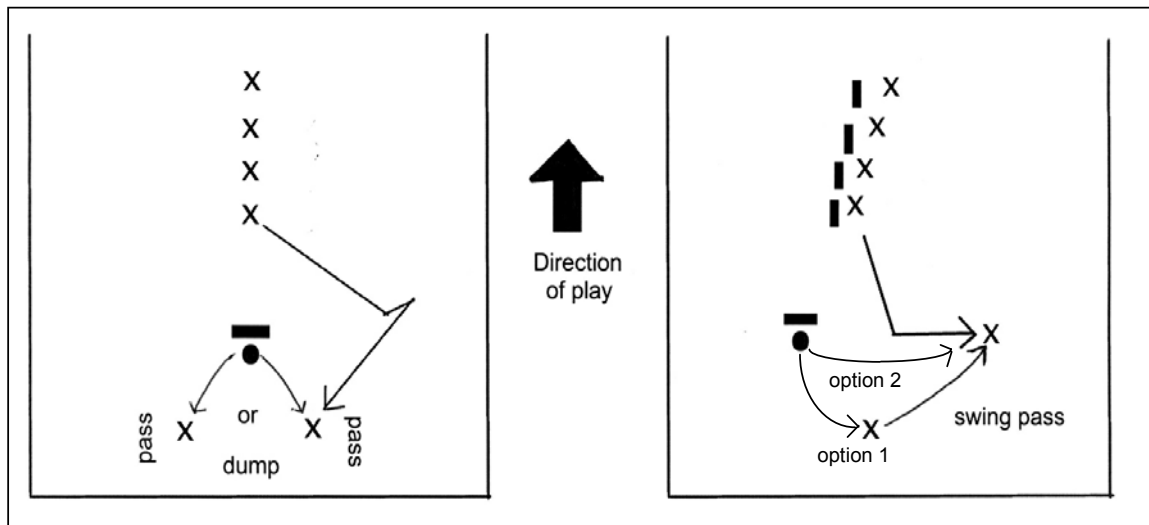
6.7 Direction of throw

Many players feel that only long, spectacular, upfield passes should be made. However, along with upfield passes (long or short) come two other very effective passes:

- i) Dump pass – a dump is a pass made backwards away from the stack and the thrower’s marker. It should not be seen as a last resort but as resetting the stall count or giving an easier pass for the thrower, especially an inexperienced one. Just as any other throw, the thrower should pivot and face towards the dump for a safe effective pass. A dump can also be a way for a primary handler to

get the disc back from a weaker thrower. The dump receiver cannot simply stand and wait for the throw, they must cut towards the thrower. If the thrower waits too long, the dump may not remain open (Figure 15a)

- ii) Swing pass – a swing pass is usually made from a dump (e.g., dump, then swing). By moving the disc laterally on the field, the hope is to catch the persons defending the cutters off guard and on the wrong side of their players to open up the field. In the least, it results in resetting the disc and supplying the thrower with a fresh stall count (Figure 15b, option 1). The swing pass can also be made from the initial throwers position (Figure 15b, option 2).



17a: Dump Pass

17b: Swing Pass

Figure 15: Dump and Swing Passes

Some important final points for throwers/handlers:

- The defender has a right to their position. While pivoting to seek an open throw, do not foul.
- Remember, shorter passes can be a safer course of action, especially during inclement weather.
- Don't be afraid to dump or to point to where a cutter would be effective.

- If it is apparent that a pass will not be able to be made before “Stall 10”, rather than giving up possession there, try a long upfield pass (punt).

6.8 Pivoting

Pivoting is a process in which the thrower attempts to maximize her reach around the marker. The pivot allows the thrower to move into ready positions for both forehand and backhand throws rapidly. The player should always keep the pivot foot opposite to the throwing hand.

For a forehand throw, the pivot foot (the foot opposite the throwing hand) holds a stable position while the non-pivot leg lunges laterally (away from the pivot foot) and slightly forward (upfield). The resultant position is a lunged position with the chest facing in the direction of the throw to be made (Figure 16a).

For a backhand throw, the thrower pivots across their pivot foot (either in front or behind). The non-pivot leg lunges laterally and slightly forward. The resultant position is a lunged position with the back facing the direction of the throw (or at least the back of the throwing shoulder) (Figure 16b).



18a: Pivot for Forehand Throw



18b: Pivot for Backhand Throw

Figure 16: Pivoting

The pivot tries to get the throwing hand (and therefore the disc) as far away from the pivot foot as possible, thus increasing their reach.

However, too wide of a pivot will throw off the thrower's balance, but too narrow will limit their reach around the marker. Try faking out the marker by changing between these two positions rapidly.

7 DEFENSE

7.1 Introduction

The knowledge of defensive skills and theories is very important in Ultimate. After reviewing this chapter, a coach should be better prepared to teach athletes:

- The defensive ready position.
- Techniques to defend against the thrower and the cutter.
- When and how to implement a "force".
- How to react to an established "force".
- The use of the stall count while defending the thrower.

Successful defense in Ultimate depends on each player's learning and execution of a set of fundamental skills to defensive play. Regardless of the type of team defense used, coaches can expect little success if their players do not have the individual skills needed to defend a thrower and receiver.

Players are usually less motivated to develop their defensive skills as compared to their offensive skills. As a result, coaches must make an extra effort to encourage and reinforce the acquisition of defensive skills.

Important with all defense is that Ultimate is a non-contact sport. Running into, pushing, or hitting the player on offense are all fouls and should be called as such. Even while defending a thrower, contact with the disc, hand, or arm of the thrower is not allowed. A disc may only be successfully knocked down when it is not in the hand of the thrower or receiver, otherwise it is a "strip", and the disc returns to the player on offense (see the section on rules for full details).

It is also important to be aware that offensive players are allowed a regulated amount of space within which to play. A defender cannot be closer to a thrower than one disc space (the diameter of one disc). A thrower must also have room available to pivot, and a defender cannot restrict this.

There are 2 aspects of defense:

- 1) Marking on the thrower
- 2) Marking on the receiver

Once a player makes a catch, he/she becomes the thrower. Therefore, each defender must be able to defend throwers and receivers.

7.2 Marking on the thrower

Each player must know and understand how to defend against a thrower. The marker must perform many tasks while defending the thrower. They must maintain the defensive ready position, anticipating the throw and attempting to block the disc, and hold a force (see below) while counting the stall counts.

7.2.1 Defensive Ready Position

The marker will assume the defensive ready positioning every time the player they are defending has the disc. Assuming the defensive position enables the marker to maintain a position between the thrower and the receivers, and able to react to the marker's movement and throws.

It is recommended that players assume the defensive position as follows:

- Position the feet shoulder width apart
- Knees bent
- Keep the head up
- Distribute the weight evenly on the balls of the feet
- Extend the arms out with hands open, palms facing the thrower

7.2.2 Choosing a force

The force is a direction that the marker is “forcing” the thrower to throw to. By giving the thrower a direction to throw to, the marker is taking away a portion of the field that the thrower can throw to by placing the marker's body in between the thrower and that direction. The thrower cannot pivot into or throw through the marker. Therefore the marker will make it easier for their teammates to defend the receivers by knowing in which direction a throw will probably be made. The defender must not let the thrower throw

in the opposite direction of the force (this is called “holding the force”). If the thrower succeeds in throwing past the force, that player is “breaking the force”. If the force is broken, the defender should yell “Broken” so his/her teammates are aware. The marker must communicate with teammates to ensure that the team knows the force. Many teams choose a single force that each player will keep through an entire point, which can enhance defensive strategy.

The marker will choose a force, directing the thrower in a direction, depending on:

- Ability of the thrower (forcing the thrower to throw their weakest throw)
- Weather conditions (forcing the thrower to throw into the wind)
- Abilities of the opposing team (whether the team always throws long, etc...)
- Position of the play (if the thrower is near the sideline, a sideline trap may be used)

Examples of forehand and backhand forces are shown in Figure 16.

7.2.3 Stall Count

When defending a thrower, the defender can (and should) commence a stall count once they are within 3 meters of the thrower. A stall count is a ten-second count, said out loud by the defender so the thrower may hear it.

This is done by stating, “Stall 1, Stall 2, Stall 3”.....etc. to a count of 10. The thrower must release the disc before the “T” in ten is uttered. If they do not, the disc is put down and a turnover results. If a new defender takes over the stall count before it is completed, the count starts again from zero. Refer to the section on Rule Clarification for detail.

7.3 Defending the thrower

The principle goal of defending the thrower is to keep the force, call the stall counts and prevent the thrower from making an easy throw (or even blocking the throw entirely). Blocking the throw is a lofty goal, but the defender (marker) should not concentrate on this aspect too much as it could

cause you to lose position and allow the thrower to make an easy throw. The technique recommended is follows:

- Select a force (call out the force so all defenders can hear it, call out if it changes).
- Assume the defensive position.
- Move quickly to a position one disc space away from the thrower in an upfield position.
- Start counting the stalls.
- Watch the throwers eyes and mirror the disc with hands.
- Shuffle feet as the thrower pivots. The marker should move with the thrower as to always pressure the throw but to not give up the force. The defender should not lunge out as this throws you off balance, allowing an easy throw in the other direction.
- The marker should use an audible call such as “Up” to notify teammates when the disc is thrown.

While defending a thrower, the defender should be aware of the fact that most successful throws (except hammers) will be made between the levels of the thrower's chest to their knees. As a result that is the area in which the defenders arms/hands should remain. A basketball-like stance with hands above the head is poor defensive strategy and can be easily thrown past.

7.3.1 Marking on the receiver

The other defenders are the six players on defense who are covering receivers. Each player must know and understand how to defend against a receiver. The defender must stop the receiver from catching the disc either by intercepting the disc or knocking it down. There are two different ways to defend a player: facing the receiver, and following the receiver. If a receiver does not receive a pass, he/she will most likely turn back upfield and return to the stack. This can be an opening for a long throw upfield if the defender is not attentive.

7.3.2 Marking facing the receiver

When marking by facing the receiver, the defender is placed in between the thrower and the receiver. The defender can react better to the receiver by watching the eyes (to get in front and prevent the player from being open).

The defender will be on the same side that the marker is forcing, knowing that the other side should not be open for passing. The defender must rely on the marker to communicate when the disc is thrown. Then and only then, the defender will face the thrower to attempt to prevent the disc from being caught. Defenders should not be afraid to dive out to knock a disc down; as long as there is no contact with the receiver or it does not endanger other players, it is perfectly legal.

This type of defense will stop many short throws but is not good for defending if the receiver runs long.

7.3.3 Marking following the receiver

When marking following the receiver, the defender should compare his/her speed (quickness) and agility with the receiver and play accordingly. Stay on the down field side of the receiver, forming a ninety degree angle on the forcing side between the thrower and receiver, and stay in constant visual contact with both the thrower and receiver. The visual focus should be on the thrower to anticipate where the thrower is going to throw. By viewing the entire field, the defender may be able to react and help another defender. This type of defense is best to stop the long receptions but is difficult to make interceptions for short throws. Anticipation is key.

If a receiver moves behind the thrower for a dump pass, the defender should assume a position between the thrower and receiver, monitoring each one's position simultaneously. Do not allow the dump pass.

As players and coaches gain experience, defenses will probably change. Positioning of defenders may change depending upon skills of individual players, his/her speed, or mind-sets. Zone defenses are also played in Ultimate but will not be discussed in this manual.

8 DRILLS AND OTHER DISC GAMES

The following drills are a starting point to assist coaches in forming practice strategies and season plans. Each drill will be footnoted by drill number to stress which drills emphasize which skills. This should help coaches practice particular skills effectively. By no means are these the only drills in existence; other manuals, textbooks and, in particular, websites have many more. When creating new drills, coaches should take the following points into account:

- Involve the maximum number of players possible
- Players will have more contact with the disc working in smaller groups
- Cardiovascular conditioning can be combined with practicing particular skills
- A drill that is complex will not be effective if it is poorly understood or executed
- Remember: Practice does not make Perfect, Perfect Practice makes Perfect

8.1 Drills

8.1.1 2 player catch

Number of players: Unlimited pairs of players, one disc per pair.

Skills emphasized: Throwing, catching, pivoting

Description: Two players stand 10 meters apart and throw the disc to each other, using the appropriate pivot and throwing technique. Accuracy is important and receivers should not have to move to catch the disc.

Suggestions:

- If there is a wind, the players should intermittently change positions to throw in different wind directions.
- Set a certain number of successful forehand throws, then backhand, etc., to facilitate learning.

- The drill can be varied by using two discs at a time (this is good skill development for throwing without thinking as you must concentrate on catching the disc that is thrown to you at the same time you are throwing the disc to your partner).

8.1.2 Triangle drill

Number of players: Unlimited groups of three, one disc per group.

Skills emphasized: Throwing, catching, pivoting

Description: The same as Drill #1 except there are 3 players in a triangle, 10 meters apart.

Suggestion: Same as Drill #1; also change direction of the throws from clockwise to counter clockwise

8.1.3 Three cornered square

Number of players: Unlimited groups of three, one disc and four corner markers per group (visible markers such as cones, discs, etc.)

Skills emphasized: Throwing, catching, pivoting, faking, making lead passes, catching on the run, and conditioning.

Description: Make a square 15 meters on each side. Mark each corner. One player stands at each of 3 of the 4 markers. The player adjacent to the free corner (1) starts with the disc. A fake is made to the corner occupied by a teammate (2) then pivot and throw to the free corner as the third player (3) cuts to that corner (Figure 17a). Ideally, the receiver will catch the disc just before the corner and come to a stop at the corner. Once set, player 3 fakes to player 1, pivots and throws to the open corner for a catch by player 2 (Figure 17b). Player 2 now has the disc, fakes and throws to player 1 who is cutting to the open corner. The cycle then repeats itself.

Suggestion: Work one direction and use only one type of throw for several minutes. Then switch directions, and use the opposite throw.

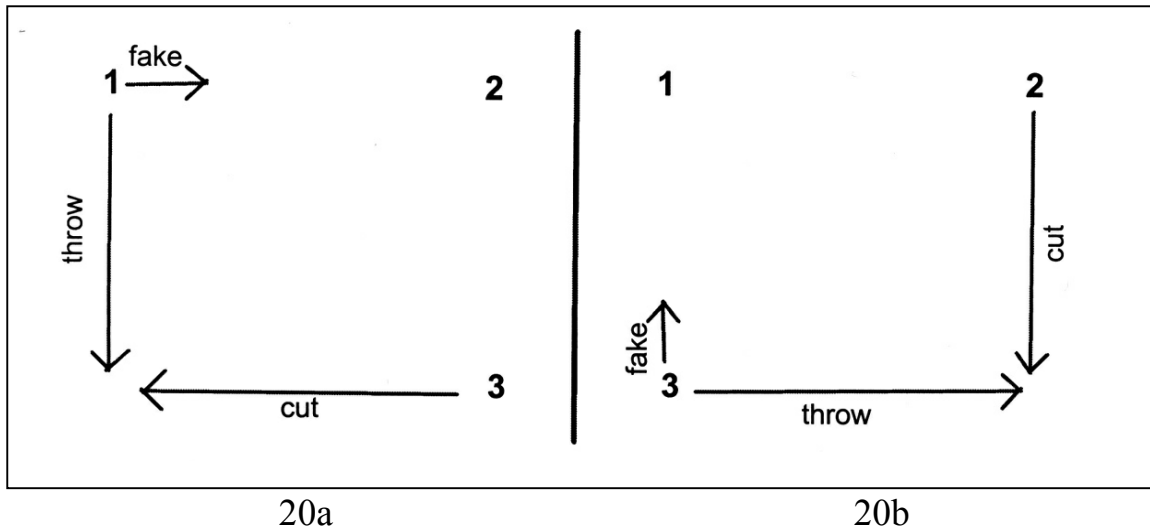


Figure 17: Three Cornered Drill

8.1.4 Give and Go

Number of players: Unlimited pairs of players, one disc per pair.

Skills emphasized: Throwing, leading a pass, catching on the run, quick release of throw, conditioning.

Description: 2 players, 5 meters apart, jog downfield making soft lead passes. Proceed downfield then back. Players either release the disc before their third step, or quickly establish a pivot foot and then throw. Have players catch and release quickly.

8.1.5 Three person weave

Number of players: Unlimited groups of three, one disc per group.

Skills emphasized: Throwing, leading a pass, conditioning, catching on the run, quick release.

Description: 3 players start on the end zone approximately 5 to 7 meters apart. The middle player (B) starts with the disc and makes a throw to one of the outside players (C) (Figure 18a). B runs behind C and upfield towards the middle. Meanwhile player C has thrown upfield to player A (Figure 18b) and follows the throw to cut behind player A (Figure 18c). The disc is

thrown mostly upfield (not entirely side to side) as the weave proceeds upfield.

Suggestions: Make sure players do not travel but stop completely prior to throwing. Ensure players do not spread themselves more than 10 meters apart, which can decrease the accuracy of the lead passes.

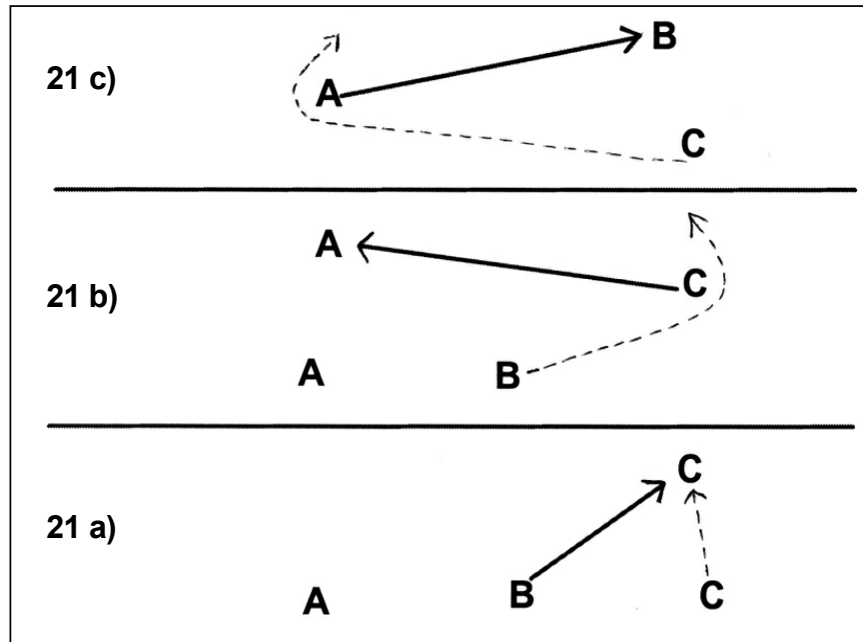


Figure 18: Three-Person Weave Drill

8.1.6 Mark and Run

Number of players: Unlimited groups of three, one disc per group.

Skills emphasized: Defense on a thrower, marking the disc, attempting hand blocks, throwing against a mark, pivoting, faking passes, conditioning.

Description: 2 players stand facing each other 10 to 15 meters apart. The defender plays defense on the player with the disc. The thrower tries to make a throw to the other player past the marker. Once the throw is made, the marker calls “Up” then runs to mark the other thrower. The variation on

this is to have the thrower run once the throw is made to become the marker. This emphasizes the give/go mentality.

Note: overhand throws are not allowed

Suggestions: Ensure the throws are accurate. This is a fatiguing drill. If you use the first variation, rotate the players through the positions frequently. Limit the stall count to five or seven to increase the pressure on the thrower.

8.1.7 Charge the disc

Number of players: Unlimited pairs of players, one disc per pair.

Skills emphasized: Throws, coming to the disc, conditioning.

Description: 2 players start 25 to 30 meters apart. The player with the disc remains stationary and throws the disc straight to the other player. As soon as the disc is released the receiver runs forward and catches the disc on the run. Once the disc is caught, the player stops. He/she throws the disc to the stationary player and the process is repeated. The final catch is made when the players are less than 5 meters apart. The thrower then makes a lead pass and the receiver chases down to the starting position. The receiver becomes the thrower and the drill continues.

Suggestions: Ensure the receiver does not run until the throw is released.

8.1.8 Stack drill

Number of players: Unlimited, all the discs.

Skills emphasized: Cutting, catching, leading a pass (for 1 player at a time), defending a cutter (with the variation).

Description: One thrower starts with all the discs. 1 or 2 players are behind him/her to retrieve the discs (shaggers). A stack sets up 15 to 20 meters away. Each player in turn makes a hard cut and receives a pass from the thrower. The receiver throws the disc to the shaggers and returns to the stack. A variation on this is to have players in the stack in pairs, one as a

cutter the other as a defender. Roles should change during each rotation through the stack.

Suggestions: Rotate the throwers and shaggers into the stack and vice-versa. Clogging can be avoided if alternating cuts go to opposite sides. If downtime is too long while players wait in the stack, set up a second drill.

8.1.9 Stack and Cut

Number of players: Unlimited number of players, all the discs.

Skills emphasized: Pivoting, leading a pass, throwing past a marker, cutting, catching, conditioning, defense on a thrower (with variation).

Description: 2 stacks facing each other 15 to 20 meters apart. All the discs should be towards the front of each stack. The front player in stack A does not have a disc. S/he makes a fake and cuts to one side and receives a pass from the front player in stack B. The receiver goes to the rear of stack B, and the front person in stack B (who just threw) now cuts and the throw is made by the front person in stack A. The drill then continues repeatedly. A variation would be to have the thrower become a defender on the next thrower. After the throw the defender then cuts and the drill continues.

8.1.10 Shuttle Run

Number of players: Unlimited groups of three, one disc and two cones each.

Skills emphasized: Throwing, pivoting, catching on the run, leading/timing throws, conditioning.

Description: A triangle 5 meters on each side has 2 corners marked by cones. A thrower and marker are at the third corner. The marker plays a very loose mark on the thrower. The third player runs back and forth between the 2 cones receiving a pass near one cone, throwing back to the thrower then catching at the other cone. After 2 to 3 minutes rotate all player positions.

Suggestions: The defender should mark straight up and not pressure the thrower.

8.2 Other Disc Games

Practicing skills with activities other than Ultimate or Ultimate related drills is also important. The following are some disc games commonly used: Remember you are only limited by your imagination.

8.2.1 Mini-Ultimate

This is simply playing a game of Ultimate with reduced team numbers: 5 on 5, 4 on 4, etc. It is suggested that field size and the stall count be reduced. Also, keep playing time shorter since fewer players must run more.

8.2.2 Traffic Jam or Box

Two teams of 3 or 4 players each. Mark two squares, one 3 by 3 meters in the center of a 20 by 20 meter box.

A point is scored when a disc is caught inside the small box. Offense and defense is similar to Ultimate but the stall count is only 7.

Play starts by passing the disc into the area from outside the larger box. Passes continue until the disc is caught in the small box or a turnover occurs (e.g., dropped disc, throw away, knocked down, interception). When the defense takes possession of the disc, a pass must be made to the outside of the large box before trying to score.

Note: Players cannot defend around the small box unless their checks are in the area (no goaltending).

8.2.3 Goaltimate

The game is played on a circular field, with a diameter of 60 yards. PVC tubing is spiked into the ground at both ends, making a semi circle that projects upwards. The plastic piping is 11' high at the center, and the semicircle's diameter is 18' wide. Passing the disc through the hoop to a player on your team scores a goal. Most rules are derived from Ultimate.

Goaltimate differs from Ultimate in that there are only 7 players on a team, and only 4 on the field at one time. Changes are made on the fly. And of course, having to score through the goal brings about the name.

8.2.4 3 passes

Two equally sized teams of any number start on opposite ends of a field or court. A disc is tossed to the middle and both teams sprint for it. Once a team takes possession, the rules are as per Ultimate except points are scored only when three consecutive passes are completed. Throws may be in any direction, anywhere on the field within the boundaries. Players defend opposing players; no zone defenses are allowed. The disc is turned over to the other team on an interception, a dropped or missed pass, a knock down or stall count of 5 to 7. Games are played to a specified score point or a time limit. Any size field or court may be used as long as it is proportional to the number of players.

8.2.5 Frisnock

Two teams of two players, 5 or 6 meters away from each other. A post/pole or chair 1 to 1.5 meters tall is set up in front of each team with an empty plastic bottle or similar object set on top. The object of the game is to knock the bottle onto the ground by hitting it or the pole with the disc. If the bottle hits the ground a point is awarded to the throwing team. If the bottle and disc are both caught the defending team is awarded a point. If only the bottle is caught, no points are scored, but a re-throw is awarded.

While on defense the disc must always be caught unless it is out of reach. If it is not caught, a re-throw is awarded, even if a point was just scored.

Each team takes turns and teammates must alternate. Players must throw from behind a line even with the pole. Games can be played to a specified point value or time limit. If a chair is being used, hitting the chair and knocking off the bottle is not a score.

8.2.6 Double Disc Court

In this game there are two teams of two players each. Each team defends a court (two square areas measuring 13 meters per side, separated by 17 meters) from the attack of their opponents.

To start play, one player from each team has a disc and prepares to serve simultaneously. Teammates must alternate serves.

Single points are scored when:

- one of the two discs is thrown and lands within the opponent's court
- if a disc is thrown out of bounds or in the area between the courts the team that threw the disc gives up a point

Two points are scored when a player or players on the opposing team touch both discs at the same time.

No travelling is allowed. Single points by opposing teams at the same time cancel each other out. Games can be played to a specified score or time limit.

8.2.7 Disc Golf

Disc Golf uses essentially the same rules and concepts as ball golf except with a disc. The Disc Golf course is only limited by imagination. An entire course can be plotted out ahead of time by choosing starting points and holes. Alternately you can make up a course one hole at a time as it is played. The disc should be played from where it lands. The object of the game is to hit the selected target in as few throws as possible.

Pick a safe location away from roads, open water and pedestrians.

Variations can include teams, alternating shots, best-shot doubles or whatever you choose.

9 REFERENCES

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Ultimate Players Association, © 1970 CHS Varsity Frisbee Team, Buzzy
Hellring, © 1982 Irv Kalb (Chair of Rules Committee), © 1989 - 2002
Ultimate Players Association

10 APPENDIX A - GLOSSARY

This section will clarify some of the Ultimate lingo coaches or teams may encounter during competitions. This will hopefully avoid any misunderstandings or untoward reactions to the more colourful language of Ultimate.

Air Bounce: A type of throw that flies downward and then is pushed upward on a cushion of air. It is useful in getting underneath the mark, and in slowing the forward movement of the disc if the pass is intended for a delayed cut.

Away Force: Established by the marker to force the thrower to throw the disc away from the side of the field selected as the defensive team's home base.

Banana Cut: A cut which does not follow a straight line, but rather curves like a banana. This cut is easy to defend against and should be discouraged.

Bid: Any attempt a player makes to catch or block the disc that does not succeed. Usually the attempt is heroic and involves laying out.

Bite: When a defender overplays a faked pass or cut which allows an open pass or cut.

Blade: A disc that flies vertically instead of flat. Usually in reference to a poorly thrown hammer.

Break-force Pass: When a thrower throws a pass to the side of the field which the marker attempted to cover. Usually achieved by throwing an inside-out pass.

Break-side: The side of the field which the marker covers by setting a force. Usually refers to the side toward which a receiver will cut if expecting a break-force pass.

Broken: Called aloud when the thrower has broken the force set by the marker. The marker notifies his/her teammates to increase the ability of the defense to react to cuts to the now undefended side of the field.

C-catch: A one-handed or two-handed catch in which the hand(s) are held in the shape of a “C”.

Check Disc: Called to stop play if the condition of the disc is questioned. Also, the act of putting a disc into play after play has been stopped for any reason. The thrower holds the disc toward the marker to be tapped while the marker calls: “Disc in” or “Disc in play”.

Check Feet: A phrase used by an opposing player to clarify whether the disc was caught in-bounds or out-of-bounds. Defense usually asks the player who caught the disc, assuming they are the player with the best vantage point to know the point of initial contact at the time the disc was caught.

Clear Out: A phrase used to remind offensive players to vacate the cutting zone after making a cut. Often used when players forget to complete the cut by returning to the end of the stack via the sidelines.

Clogging: When the player who has just cut does not clear out of the cutting zone. This causes congestion in the cutting zone (because the receiver usually has a defender with him/her).

Contest: A term used to indicate disagreement on a call made by an opposing player. Contested calls usually revert back to the thrower.

Cut: An offensive play in which a receiver accelerates straight toward an open space with the intent of losing the defender long enough to receive a pass. Most effective if proceeded by faking a movement toward a different direction.

Disc: The flying disc used in the game of Ultimate and in other sports.

Disc Space: The minimum distance allowed between a marker and a thrower (the diameter of the disc used in the game).

Dump: A short pass to a player in the opposite direction of the intended end zone. Used when the thrower is unable to make an upfield pass or to allow the stall count to be reset.

Egg Beater: The motion of the players cycling through the stack and cutting, completed by returning to the back of the stack.

Equipment Time-out: (Also known as “Equipment”) Called to stop play if a player experiences a problem with apparel, footwear, orthotics, etc.

Flick: Another term for a forehand pass. Also: the action of snapping the wrist to increase the spin of the disc.

Flow: The movement of the disc upfield from successive cutter to successive cutter. An ideal situation for the offensive team.

Foot Block: When a marker successfully blocks a disc with his/her foot after the thrower releases it.

Force: When a defender establishes position in such a way as to prevent the thrower from throwing to a section of the field. The thrower is not permitted to pivot into the marker can try to break the force through faking, throwing an inside-out pass, or throwing under the mark.

Force Backhand: The marker forces the thrower to throw a backhand pass. The marker stands on the side of the non-pivot foot.

Force Forehand: The marker forces the thrower to throw a forehand pass. The marker stands on the side of the thrower’s pivot foot.

Foul: An infraction of the rules involving physical contact between an offensive player and a defensive player.

Give and Go: When a thrower passes to a receiver, then cuts and receives the next pass.

Go By: Called to a player on offense suggesting s/he runs past the disc and not pick-up a downed disc. This allows more offensive players to get into position.

Go Ho: The act of diving to catch or defend a pass. Shortened from **Going Horizontal**. This is also known as “lay out”.

Go To: A call made to a receiver to encourage him/her to run toward an in-flight disc and not wait for it to arrive.

Green Space: Any open field space to which the thrower may make a pass.

Hammer: An overhand pass.

Hand Block: When a marker successfully blocks a disc with his/her hand after the thrower releases it.

Handler: The player in possession of the disc. Also, a position established in higher levels of Ultimate play which designates certain players to be the main disc handlers of the team.

Ho-chunks: Visible injuries related to “going ho”.

Home Force: Established by the marker to force the thrower to throw the disc toward the side of the field selected as the defensive team’s home base.

Hospital Play/Throw: A high, floating pass which hangs over a group of players; a dangerous situation that may result in injury.

Huck: A long throw.

Injury Time-out: Called to indicate a stop in play to allow care for an injured player. Also shortened to “Injury”.

Inside-Out: (“I.O.”) When a disc is thrown on an angle to curve across the thrower’s body outward to the field. Usually used to break a force. The technique is not covered in the Level I Coaching Manual.

Lay Out: Diving to catch the disc. Also known as “go ho”.

Leading a Throw/Pass: Throwing the pass in front of the receiver.

Long/Deep: A long pass. Also, a position established in higher levels of Ultimate play that designates offensive players to primarily cut away from the thrower toward the end zone.

MAC: Mid-Altitude Correction - When the disc is touched but not caught; the flight path is altered slightly, allowing another player to catch the disc.

Man-on-Man: A defensive strategy in which players defend one specific opponent throughout an entire point. Defense selects the matches while on their own end zone line before the pull is made.

Mid: A position established in higher levels of Ultimate play which designates offensive players to act as cutters in the middle region of the playing field.

Mirror Cut: A cut made by a second receiver farther upfield, occurring almost simultaneously with the first cut. This allows a second player to be ready for an upfield pass and promote flow.

O.B.: Out of bounds.

Outside-In: (“O.I.”) When a disc is thrown on an angle to curve away from the thrower, then in toward the field. Usually thrown when forced with a side-trap. The technique is not covered in the Level I Coaching Manual.

Pancake: A catch made with two hands: one above the disc, the other below the disc.

Pick: An infraction of the rules in which a marker is prevented from following the path of the receiver because there are players in between the defender and the marker. Called loudly to stop the play. Intended to limit the danger of collisions on the field.

Poach: When a marker does not defend the assigned receiver directly, but rather a loose zone around the area that the receiver is in.

Pull: The throw-off. Used to start play to begin a game and after a point has been scored.

Road Disc: A disc that has been scarred by excessive use on rough terrain.

Scoober: A variation of the hammer in which the disc flies horizontally and inverted, throughout the flight.

Side Trap: Forcing the thrower toward the sideline.

Snack: An authoritative catch.

Spike: Throwing the disc to the ground after a point. Not in keeping with the Spirit of the Game.

Stack: An organized offensive strategy used to establish ordered cuts.

Straight up: When defense marks the thrower face-to-face, usually anticipating a successful hand block by defense.

Strike: A player that is running deep, typically into the endzone.

Swill: A bad throw.

Swing: A pass made laterally across the field.

Taco: A disc that is no longer flat.

Thrower: The player in possession of the disc.

T.O.: Turn over.

Trap: Another term for a side trap.

Turntable: A pass similar to the forehand but rolled off the thumb instead of the middle finger.

Uncontested: A term used by a player when there is no disagreement on a call made against him/her.

Up: The marker's call to indicate that the thrower has passed the disc.

World's Greatest: An offensive play: leaving the ground in-bounds, leaping into the air to catch a disc as it flies out-of-bounds, and throwing the disc to a teammate who remains in-bounds before the feet contact the ground.

Zone: A defensive strategy in which players defend areas rather than individual players. Zone defense is not covered in the Level I Coaching Manual.

11 APPENDIX B - WEB SITES

Listed below are a number of useful Web sites:

<http://www.mods.mb.ca> Manitoba Organization of Disc Sports

<http://www.canadianultimate.ca> Canadian Ultimate Players Association

<http://www.upa.org> Ultimate Players Association

<http://www.ultimatehandbook.com> Excellent handbook

<http://www.playulty.com> Guides, videos, etc.

<http://www.cs.rochester.edu/u/ferguson/ultimate/ultimate-simple.html>

<http://www.menalto.com/EbbAndFlow>

<http://www.sunnybrook.utoronto.ca/~liu/ultimate/strategy/stack.html>

<http://www.ultyplaybook.freesevers.com>