

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAMS

## **ULTIMATE RULES**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **Description**

Ultimate is a non –contact sport played by two seven-player teams. The object of the game is to score goals. The disc may only be move by passing, as the thrower is not allowed to take any steps. Any time a pass is incomplete, intercepted, knocked-down, or contacts an out of bounds area, a turnover occurs, resulting in an immediate change of possession of the disc. A goal is scored when a player successfully passes the disc to a teammate in the end zone which that team is attacking.

#### **Spirit of the Game**

1. 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 of opposing players, dangerous aggression, intentional fouling, or "win-at-all-costs" behavior are contrary to the spirit of the game and must be avoided by all players. The integrity of Ultimate depends on each player's responsibility to uphold the spirit of the game.
2. These rules have been adapted from the Ultimate Players Association rules.

### **II. Number of Players**

A team consists of seven Players. A team may add additional players to their official roster (in the IMA programs office) that may enter in succeeding games prior to the second game. **Five players are required by game time to prevent a forfeit. (Co-Rec two women need to be on the field at all times and minimum of 5 participants is required to avoid a forfeit).**

#### **IMA Membership**

No player may participate in any Intramural contest without prior purchase of an IMA membership.

### **CLARIFYING STATEMENTS**

1. Phrases.
  - A. A *player* is any of the persons who are actually participating in the game at any one time.
  - B. To *put the disc into play* means that the thrower establishes a pivot foot and is ready to throw.
  - C. *Where the disc stops* refers to the location where the disc is caught, comes to rest naturally, or where it is stopped from rolling or sliding.
2. There are no scrimmage lines or off-sides (except on throw-offs) in ultimate.
3. The disc may be passed in any direction.
4. The rolling or sliding disc may be stopped by any player, but it may not be purposefully advanced in any direction. Possession is gained where the disc stops.
5. No defensive player may ever pick up the disc.

### **III. EQUIPMENT**

1. Any flying disc may be used as long as it is acceptable to both team captains.
2. Individual players may wear any soft protective clothing as long as it does not endanger the safety of any other player.
3. Shoes must be worn by all players. Shoes with metal cleats or cleats that screw onto a post on the shoe are not allowed.

### **IV. LENGTH OF GAME**

1. The game shall consist of two 24 minute halves.
  - A. The clock shall run continuously except for the last 2 minutes of the game.
  - B. During the final 2 minutes of the game, the clock shall be stopped after each goal.
  - C. The clock starts when an offensive player gains possession of a throw-off or the thrower puts the disc into play after it has been out of bounds.
  - D. There shall be a one minute time limit for the throw-off. Both teams must be prepared for the throw-off within one minute after a score. Failure to release the disc within one minute shall result in the receiving team gaining possession of the disc at mid-field.
2. Halftime shall be 4 minutes.
3. At the end of the game, **No playing through the point**, the team with the most goals is declared the winner
4. If the score is tied at the end of regulation time, and time allows before one hour is up, the overtime period will be sudden victory (the first team to score, wins).

## V. TIME-OUTS

1. Each team is permitted one time-out per half, and one per overtime.
2. Each time-out lasts up to one minute.
3. A time-out may be called by either team **after a goal and before the ensuing accepted throw-off**.
4. Injury time-out.
  - A. An injury time-out can be called by any player.
  - B. If a player had possession when an injury time-out was called, play is restarted by a check back to the thrower who was in possession at the time of the injury.
  - C. If the disc was in the air, play continues until possession is gained.
  - D. An injury time-out is not charged to either team.
5. When play resumes after a time-out taken during play, the following rules apply:
  - A. The player who had possession puts the disc into play. If the player calling the time-out leaves the field due to injury, the player replacing him/her puts the disc into play.
  - B. The disc is put into play at the location where the disc was when the time-out was called.
  - C. The play is resumed through the use of a check.

## VI. SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Substitutions can be made only:
  - A. After a goal and before the ensuing accepted throw-off.
  - B. Before the beginning of a period of play.
  - C. To replace an injured player(s).
2. If a team replaces an injured player(s), the opposing team has the option of substituting a like number of, or fewer, players.
3. Substitutions other than injury substitutions cannot be made during a time-out taken during play.

## VII. STARTING AND RESTARTING PLAY

1. **Start of periods of play.**
  - A. The captains of the two teams each flip a disc. The captain of one team calls same or different while the discs are in the air. The team winning the flip has the choice of:
    - 1) Receiving the initial throw-off or pull; or
    - 2) Selecting which goal they wish to defend initially.
  - B. The team losing the flip is given the remaining choice.
  - C. The second half begins with an automatic reversal of the first choice of the options.
2. **Throw-off. “Pull”**
  - A. Positioning prior to the throw-off. “Pull”
    - 1) The players on the throwing team are free to move anywhere in their defending end zone, but may not cross the goal line until the disc is released.

- 2) The players on the receiving team must stand with one foot on their defending goal line without changing position relative to one another.
- B. If a member of the receiving team catches the throw-off on the playing field, that player must put the disc into play from that spot.
- C. If a member of the receiving team touches the disc during flight of the throw-off (whether in- or out-of-bounds) and the receiving team fails to catch it, the team which threw-off gains possession of the disc where it stops.
- D. If the receiving team allows the throw-off to fall untouched to the ground, and the disc initially lands in-bounds, the receiving team gains possession of the disc where it stops.
- E. If the throw-off lands out-of-bounds, the receiving team, before touching the disc, makes a choice of:
  - 1) Putting the disc into play at the point where it crossed the perimeter line (in the center of the field); or
  - 2) Requesting a re-throw. To request a re-throw, any member of the receiving team must fully extend one hand above the head and call "over". Once this re-throw signal is given, that throw-off can no longer be put into play.
- 3. The Check.
  - A. When play stops, the player who was in possession retains possession.
  - B. All players must come to a stop as quickly as possible when play is halted, and remain in their respective locations until play is restarted,
  - C. The marker restarts play by handing the disc to the thrower.

## VIII. OUT-OF-BOUNDS

1. Any area not on the playing field is out-of-bounds. The perimeter lines themselves are out-of-bounds.
2. A disc is out-of-bounds when it first contacts an out-of-bounds area or contacts anything which is out-of-bounds.
3. The disc may fly outside a perimeter line and return to the playing field, and defensive players may go out-of-bounds in order to make a play on the disc.
4. A player is out-of-bounds when he/she is contacting an out-of-bounds area. When a player is in the air, his/her in- or out-of-bounds status is determined by where he/she last contacted the ground.
5. For a receiver to be considered in-bounds after gaining possession of the disc, the first point of contact with the ground must be completely in-bounds.
6. Should the momentum of a player carry him/her out-of-bounds after making a catch and landing in-bounds, the player is considered in-bounds. The player carries the disc to the point where he/she went out-of-bounds and puts the disc into play at that point.
7. To restart play after the disc has gone out-of-bounds, a member of the team gaining possession of the disc must carry the disc to the point on the playing field where the disc went out-of-bounds, and put the disc into play at that point.
8. The thrower may pivot in- and out-of-bounds, providing that some part of the pivot foot contacts the playing field.

## IX. END ZONES

1. If a team gains possession in the end zone which it is defending:
  - A. The player taking possession must make the immediate decision to either:
    - 1) Put the disc into play from that spot; or
    - 2) Carry it directly to the closest point on the goal line and put it into play from there. If this option is chosen, the player taking possession may not throw a pass during the approach.
  - B. To fake or pause after gaining possession commits the player to put the disc into play from that point.
2. If, as a result of a pass from a teammate, a player receives the disc in the end zone which they are defending, that player does not have a choice of advancing the disc to the goal line.
3. If a team gains possession in the end zone which it is attacking, the player taking possession must carry the disc directly to the closest point on the goal line and put the disc into play from there.

## X. SCORING

1. In order for the receiver to be considered in the end zone after gaining possession of the disc, his/her first point of contact with the ground must be completely in the end zone.
2. A player cannot score by running into the end zone with the disc. Should a receiver's momentum carry him/her into the end zone after gaining possession, he/she must carry the disc back to the closest point on the goal line and put the disc into play from there.

## XI. TURNOVERS

1. An incomplete, intercepted, knocked-down or out-of-bounds pass results in a loss of possession.
2. The following actions result in a loss of possession and a check:
  - A. If the marker's count reaches the maximum number; and
  - B. If the disc is handed from player to player.

## XII. THE MARKER

1. Only one defensive player may guard the thrower at any one time; that player is the marker.
2. The marker may not straddle (i.e. place his/her foot on either side of) the pivot foot of the thrower.
3. There must be at least one disc's diameter between the upper bodies of the thrower and the marker at all times. It is the mutual responsibility of both players to respect each other's position and not encroach into this area once it has been established.
4. The marker cannot position his/her arms in such a manner as to restrict the thrower from pivoting.
5. Stalling.
  - A. Once a marker has established a set guarding stance on the thrower, he/she may initiate a count.
  - B. The count consists of the marker calling "Stalling" or "Counting" and counting at one-second intervals from one to ten loudly enough for the thrower to hear.
  - C. If the thrower has not released the disc at the first utterance of the word "Ten", a turnover and a check result.
  - D. If the defense decides to switch markers, and if the new marker wishes to initiate a stalling count, he/she must start again from one.

## XIII. THE RECEIVER

1. After catching a pass, the receiver is only allowed the fewest number of steps required to come to a stop and establish a pivot foot.
2. If the disc is caught simultaneously by offensive and defensive players, the offense retains possession.
3. If a pass arrives in such a manner that it is unclear whether a catch was made before the disc contacted the ground (grass is considered part of the ground), the player(s) with the best perspective makes the call (usually the receiver).
4. If it is ever unclear whether a receiver was in- or out-of-bounds at the point of making a catch, the player(s) with the best perspective makes the call.

## XIV. FOULS

1. Fouls are the result of physical contact between opposing players. A foul can only be called by the player who has been fouled and must be announced by calling out the word "Foul!" loudly immediately after the foul has occurred.
2. Throwing Fouls.
  - A. Contact occurring during the follow-through (after the disc has been released) is not sufficient grounds for a foul, but should still be avoided whenever possible.
  - B. When a foul is committed by the thrower or the marker, play stops and possession reverts back to the thrower after a check.
  - C. If the thrower is fouled in the act of throwing and the pass is completed, the foul is automatically declined and play continues without interruption.

3. Catching Fouls.
  - A. A catching foul may be called when there is contact between opposing players in the process of attempting a catch, interception, or knock-down. A certain amount of incidental contact during or immediately after the catching attempt is often unavoidable and is not a foul.
  - B. If a catching foul occurs and is contested, the player fouled gains possession at the point of the infraction. If the call is disputed, the disc goes back to the thrower.

## XV. VIOLATIONS

1. Traveling.
  - A. The thrower must keep all or part of the pivot foot in contact with a single spot on the field. Should the thrower lose contact with that spot, the thrower has traveled.
  - B. If the receiver obviously takes more steps than are required to stop after catching a pass, that player has traveled.
  - C. If a receiver, after receiving a pass on the run, releases a pass after the third ground contact and before coming to a complete stop, that receiver has traveled.
2. Strip.
  - A. No defensive player may touch the disc while it is in the hands of the thrower. If a defensive player does so, causing the thrower to drop the disc, the thrower calls "Strip".
  - B. The thrower then picks up the disc and play continues until unhalted from the point where the thrower regained possession.
3. Double-Team.
  - A. Only one marker is permitted to guard the thrower.
  - B. No other defensive player may establish a position within three meters of the pivot foot of the thrower, unless he/she is guarding another offensive player in that area.
  - C. Should the thrower recognize a double-team situation, he/she first calls "Double-teaming" as a warning. If the defensive team continues to double-team, the thrower calls "Double-teaming" again, and it is a violation.

## XVI. POSITIONING

1. Picks.
  - A. No player may establish a position, or move in such a manner, so as to obstruct the movement of any player on the opposing team; to do so is considered a "pick".
  - B. In the event of a pick, the obstructed player must immediately call "Pick" loudly; play stops and is resumed after a check.
2. When the disc is in the air, players must play the disc, not the opponent.
3. The Principle of Verticality: All players have the right to the space immediately above them. Thus, a player cannot prevent an opponent from making an attempt on a pass by placing his/her arms above an opponent. Should contact occur, the player restricting the vertical area is responsible.
4. A player who has jumped is entitled to land at the same spot without hindrance by opponents. He/she may also land at another spot provided the landing spot was not already occupied at the time of take-off and that the direct path between the take-off and landing spot was not already occupied.

## XVII. CLARIFYING STATEMENTS OF FOULS, VIOLATIONS AND PICKS

1. Cardinal Rule: Whenever an infringement of the rules or a time-out occurs, play is halted and the disc is put back into play at the point of the last possession before play was stopped. (Note exceptions under Turnovers (XI), Catching Foul (XIV.3) and Strip (XV.2)).
2. Play On Rule:
  - A. If a foul, violation, or pick is called while the disc is in the air, the play is always completed.
  - B. If the team which made the call gains possession as a result of that pass (e.g. an incomplete pass following a traveling violation, or offensive foul), play continues unhalted.
  - C. It is the responsibility of the player who made the call to call out "Play on" to indicate that this rule has been invoked.
3. If there is ever a failure to come to an agreement over any call, the disc reverts back to the thrower after a check.

## XVIII. ETIQUETTE

1. If a foul is committed and not called, the player who commits the foul should inform the infraction player of the foul.
2. It is the responsibility of both teams to minimize the time taken between each goal and the ensuing take-off.
3. If the receiving team wishes to have an out-of-bounds throw-off re-thrown, they should give the re-throw signal as soon as possible.
4. It is a violation against the spirit of the game for a defensive player to call for a pass from the thrower.
5. Should a dispute or confusion arise on the field, it should be common practice to stop play, and resume play when the matter is resolved.
6. In the case where a novice player commits a violation out of sincere ignorance of the rules, it is common practice to stop play and explain the violation.

3/08