



World Flying Disc Federation Strategic Plan 2015-2018





Background and Objectives of this Strategic Plan

Flying Disc (aka Frisbee™) sports were developed after the introduction of the first plastic flying discs in the 1950s. Guts was developed in 1958, Ultimate in 1968, and Disc Golf and Freestyle in the early 1970s.

WFDF's organizing Congress was held in Helsingborg Sweden in July 1985 where the first set of statutes was adopted and a board of directors was elected. The original written proposal submitted by Charlie Mead of the UK, who became the first WFDF President, outlined the general governance framework for the new International Federation.

The first strategic restructuring took place in 1992-1994. Under President Robert "Nob" Rauch, a new set of Bylaws was adopted, the federation was legally incorporated in the state of Colorado, USA and it obtained its 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status. The applications for membership in the International World Games Association and GAISF (now SportAccord) were submitted and subsequently approved in 1995.

The next pivotal strategic dialogue took place in 2002 under President Bill Wright, as three alternatives were considered: (a) a devolution of the organization towards the individual disc disciplines; (b) an increase in WFDF's resources and organization to better serve all disc sports; or (c) a lower level of continuing service by WFDF that would preserve some of its benefits while reducing the required expenses and workload. This was a frank admission by the officers and board of WFDF that the limited financial resources of the federation (that at time had a total budget of only around US\$10,000) was a major obstacle for the further development of disc sports and to WFDF as an International Federation serving its athletes. The outcome of that debate resulted in a consensus to augment WFDF's financial resources by increasing dues and players fees at sanctioned events in order for the organization to have the capacity to fulfill the expectations of the Members and athletes.

Background and Objectives of this Strategic Plan (cont.)

This document is the second formal strategic plan by WFDF. The first was adopted for the period 2012-2014 and was used as a purely internal guide by the Board. It provided a three year roadmap leading up to our quadrennial World Ultimate Club Championship in 2014 with an underlying theme to grow the global Flying Disc Sports family beyond the traditional strongholds while simultaneously pursuing recognition by the International Olympic Committee.

This four-year strategic plan was developed by the members of the WFDF board during our November 2014 face-to-face meeting in Toronto, taking into account the input from the 3,400 respondents from around the globe to our questionnaire earlier in 2014. It spells out our vision and values, our core strategies, and the tactics for achieving them. The underlying theme was to work toward encouraging disc sports as a lifetime pastime and a lifestyle, taking advantage of the entire array of disc sports that can be played by people of all ages and abilities. Key elements include continuing to improve the quality of our events and the playing experiences for both elite and grass roots athletes. We also seek to increase the public face of disc sports and make them more entertaining on the world stage. In addition to our aspirations for increased professionalism and recognition within the Olympic sports family, we continue to maintain a commitment to the culture that has made flying disc sports unique and allowed them to grow so rapidly: spirit of the game (personal responsibility and self-officiating), a focus on the athletes, the inclusive nature of our approach, and an element of fun.

The WFDF board and staff will be using this strategic plan to guide our decisions over the next four years. We see it as a document that will help us make explicit decisions about our activities, program investments, and priorities based on strategic considerations within the context of our limited resources. We are hopeful that WFDF and our current Members can continue to flourish and provide the showcase that, in the long term, will benefit everyone in Flying Disc sports.

Robert “Nob” Rauch
WFDF President

Background - Participation

Nearly everyone in the developed world has probably thrown a frisbee in their life.

Per the survey results provided in the 2013 Sports and Fitness Participation Report conducted annually by the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), there were 5.1 million people that played Ultimate in the US in 2012. Core participants, defined as those playing 13 or more times per year, were estimated to be 1.48 million.

This is similar to participation in gymnastics with 5.1 million total participants and 1.86 million core participants and track and field (4.3 million/2.44 million, respectively), and compares favorably to more established team sports in the US such as field hockey (1.2 million/0.66 million), lacrosse (1.6 million/0.82 million), beach volleyball (4.5 million/1.47 million), or rugby (0.89 million/0.36 million).

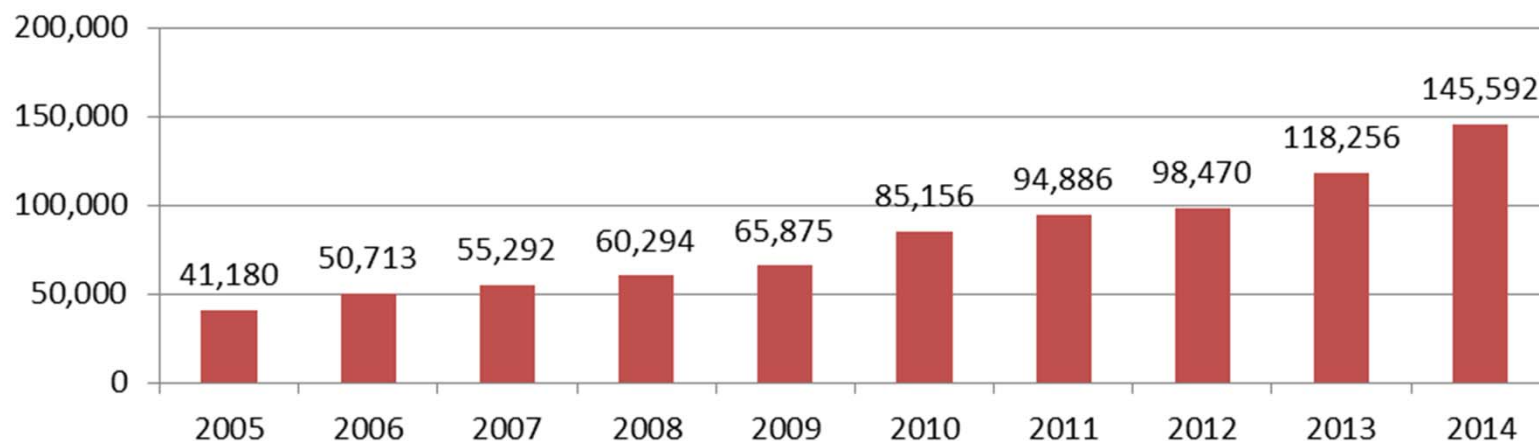
Although there is no similar survey to the SFIA survey conducted on a world-wide basis, WFDF estimates that Ultimate and other flying disc sports are currently played by 7.5 million people world-wide, of which 2.2 million athletes play at least 12 times per year.



Background - Participation

WFDF's Member associations reported that they had 145,592 members in our 2014 annual census. The largest national Member is USA Ultimate, followed by Ultimate Canada, Australia, Germany, Great Britain, and Japan. The Professional Disc Golf Association, an organizational member, is the second largest member overall. Of the total, 29% are women, and 84% of such members are 35 years of age or younger. The most significant growth today is being seen out of Latin America and Eastern Europe, as well as with juniors in the USA.

Number of Athletes Represented by WFDF's Member Associations



Mission Statement

To support and promote the global advancement of disc sports and spirit of the game.

Purposes: The World Flying Disc Federation ("WFDF") seeks to:

- Serve as the international governing body of all flying disc sports, with responsibility for sanctioning world championship and other international flying disc events, establishing uniform rules, setting standards for and recording of world records, and representing them within the Olympic sports movement;
- Promote and protect the “spirit of the game” of flying disc sports play;
- Promote flying disc sports play throughout the world and foster the establishment of new national flying disc sports associations, advising them on all flying disc sports activities and general management;
- Promote and raise public awareness of and lobby for official recognition of flying disc play as sport; and
- Provide an international forum for discussion of all aspects of flying disc sports play.



Values of the Organization

Disc sports continuum – a lifetime of the disc sports lifestyle:

WFDF believes that Flying Disc sports are accessible over an entire lifetime. Moreover, there is a lifestyle aspect and culture that is embraced by participants.

Spirit of the Game: Flying Disc sports rely upon a Spirit of the Game that places the responsibility for fair play on every player. This concept is at the heart of the rules of each disc discipline and our governance structure and incorporates elements of integrity and respect.

Passion: Flying disc people have a passionate enthusiasm for the Game. Ultimate and our other disciplines generate excitement, emotional attachment and a sense of belonging to the global “Frisbee Family.”

Community: Flying disc provides a unifying spirit that leads to life long friendships, camaraderie, teamwork and loyalty which transcends cultural, geographic, political and religious differences.

Inclusiveness: WFDF requires that its Member associations be open to participation without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or sexual orientation, and that there be a democratic process for governance of such associations. Our featured competition in the World Games is Ultimate played with a mixed gender format.



SWOT Analysis: Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats

Strengths

- Many possible ways for WFDF to support Member associations
- “Spirit of the Game” incorporating personal responsibility, integrity, and conflict resolution (self-officiation)
- Growth of participation, especially with youth
- Inexpensive to play (minimal equipment costs)
- Strong gender balance and mixed gender play in Ultimate
- Recognition by the IOC
- Well-developed international competitions
- Unique flight path of discs make viewing disc sports different from traditional ball and stick sports
- Attractiveness to young people
- Relatively new sport, with a fun and cool image
- Easy to participate at all ages
- Broad familiarity of most people with the frisbee

Weaknesses

- Little commercial effort or public relations presence (sponsors, media)
- Limited financial resources
- Public perception as a hippie sport
- Lack of spectators or viewing audience outside the disc community
- Not all WFDF Members have institutionalized governance
- Struggle to maintain consistent professional management based on limited financial resources
- Disparity of resources between largest and smallest member organizations
- Disparities among disciplines
- Developing nature of member organizations makes it hard to respond to growing need for engaged volunteers at the international level



The World Games
2013 C A L I
Los Juegos Mundiales



WFDF Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018

SWOT Analysis: Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats



Opportunities

- Many possible ways for WFDF to support Member associations
- WFDF's increasing participation in the Olympic movement structure may open up doors and assist in building credibility, especially with the introduction of the Agenda 2020 initiatives
- Commercial aspects of market remain virtually untested
- Position disc sports as an outstanding vehicle for teaching life skills as well as athletic ones
- Highlight recreational aspects of disc sports and make it more accessible
- Growth of participation by both youth as well as more mature athletes

Threats

- Pressure by small internal and external groups to diminish reliance on self-officiating and/or introduce outside officials/referees
- World championship events have gotten so large that it is harder to find venues and TOCs cannot maintain high quality
- Pressures on the time and resources of elite athletes due to conflicts/calendar congestion
- Very competitive market for commercial attention makes it difficult to increase resources





WFDF's Vision of the Future: 2018



- Broad public believes that disc sports are a lifetime pastime and lifestyle across age/geography/skill levels/disciplines
- There are 75+ countries with active disc sports and a stable governance structure
- WFDF participates in the Youth Olympics Games sports lab in 2018 and is in the YOG 2022
- Most disc manufacturers put a WFDF flyer in their disc packaging
- WFDF hosts popular “Frisbee festivals” around the globe
- WFDF maintains a streamlined calendar and successful central registration system
- Disc sports are part of mainstream broadcast media and WFDF has a global sponsor
- After the changes introduced under the IOC Agenda 2020, WFDF is a serious candidate in discussions regarding participation in the IOC Summer Programme of the future

WFDF's Six Strategic Goals

- 1 Put programs in place to encourage disc sports as a lifetime pastime and a lifestyle
- 2 Focus on providing higher quality events
- 3 Support member associations more fully
- 4 Showcase spirit of the game as an essential element of disc sports
- 5 Increase the public face of disc sports and make them more entertaining
- 6 Create a more effective and sustainable organization



WFDF Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018

Strategy 1: Put programs in place to encourage disc sports as a lifetime pastime and a lifestyle

Tactics

- Simplified rule sets – how-to's on frisbee games with link to website/page
- Adjust Ultimate event calendar to be age-customized
- New programs at Ultimate events for non-players
- Introduce different disciplines at other large events
- Launch marketing campaign; PR firm -> videos of old timer all-round
- Figure out parent-kid activities
- Adaptive sports task force established
- Disc Skills Certification Program
- Communication with players directly
- New logo / Corporate identity
- Identify educational materials and push out



WFDF Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018

Strategy 2: Focus on providing higher quality events



Tactics

- Pro-active bid solicitation
 - host database
 - bid package and contract revisions with focus on key elements for players
 - bid archive
 - TD manual revisions
- Evaluate and event cycle for Ultimate (Qualification tournaments? Continentals? Split multiple division events?)
- Tournament Hard Assets Kit
- Review Insurance Alternatives and Recommend
- Develop plan to upgrade media and video presence
- On-site connectivity
- Transition to full-time Event Manager
- Training and building of Game Advisor pool
- Targeted select Multi-Sports Games involvement (YOG, FISU, EAYG, Masters)

Strategy 3: Support Member associations more fully

Tactics

- Obtain permanent IOC recognition and support NOC applications
- Provide guides/templates with governance and fiscal/financial advice on best practices
- Coaches training at US Open
- Establishment of “Sister Member” associations
- Develop available coaches pool and publicize
- Identify key people for disc sports in all countries
- Maintain and further publicize Development Grant Program



Strategy 4: Showcase spirit of the game as an essential element of disc sports



Tactics

- Expand and enhance Game Advisors program
- SOTG Chair to serve all disciplines, not just Ultimate
- Create educational materials (videos and documents)
- Recognize Spirit: Spirit Winners' List, Hall of Fame, annual award, etc.
- Spirit marketing: develop boilerplate language
- “Spirit Ambassadors” – highlight videos on YouTube



Strategy 5: Increase the public face of disc sports and make them more entertaining

Tactics

- Event presentation
 - local language announcers at stadiums
 - daily media coverage
 - video highlights
 - music, halftimes, stoppages
- Revise event contracts to outline requirements on how WFDF is presented on site
- Game management/control (Game Advisors, games start on time, etc.)
- WFDF more directly involved in directing showcase games
- Revamp website
 - content
 - mobile optimization
 - restructure -> lifestyle



Strategy 6: Create a more effective and sustainable organization



Tactics

- Sustainable event management effort introduction (SSET toolkit)
- Position of volunteer media officer/intern
- Increase women's involvement in organization
- Seek non-disc-sport-related sponsor
- Explore licensing possibilities
- Develop volunteer recognition program
- Develop targeted Member growth plan



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The World Flying Disc Federation is the international sports federation responsible for world governance of flying disc (Frisbee™) sports, including Ultimate, Beach Ultimate, Disc Golf, Freestyle, Guts, and Individual Events. WFDF is a federation of member associations which represent flying disc sports and their athletes in more than 58 countries. WFDF is an international federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), a member of ARISF, SportAccord and the International World Games Association, and it is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation in the state of Colorado, USA.

www.wfdf.org