

VULS Annual General Meeting November 4, 2015

Executive Director's Report

Craig Woods

People

Many talented and hard-working individuals contributed to the VUL in 2015.

Board of Directors

The Directors worked hard to ensure the society was well-managed and headed in the right direction. As always, we are blessed to have a professional Board of Directors.

Staff & Coordinators

The VUL's core staff continued to be passionate and engaged in their roles this year:

- Troe Weston as our new League Manager
- Craig Kulyk as our Marketing Manager
- William Arlotta as our part-time Youth Coordinator.

It is a pleasure for me to work with all of them on a daily basis.

Other coordinators and volunteers played key roles with our various programs:

- Coaching Coordinator: Mauro Ortiz
- Clinic Coordinator: Mike Fleury
- Misfit Coordinators: Jon Hayduk, Mimi Pann, Ted Chu, and newcomer Alex Lam
- Touring Coordinator: Lindsay Earle
- Rules Coordinator: Bobo Eyrich
- Tournaments: Jeremy Quan
- VFSF Delegate: Wendy Lebreton

Countless others contributed their time and energy as mentors, clinic instructors, and event volunteers. A special thank you also goes to all captains for organizing their teams and doing their best to ensure games go smoothly. Without engaged captains our leagues couldn't function.

Thank you to everyone who helped the VUL to continue to be the amazing community that it is.

Strategy

The attached *Strategic Plan Summary* describes the special activities we pursued to advance the Strategic Plan, and the metrics we achieved for this year.

We saw continued growth towards our target metrics:

- The number of registered VUL members grew to 5003, up 3% over last year.
- The estimated number of players in Metro Vancouver grew to 7215, up 2% over last year's estimate. This includes:
 - 2% drop in the number of adult players. Last year's estimate was slightly high, so the updated number reflects a more accurate estimate.
 - 12% increase in the number of youth players. Ultimate continues to grow in schools.

Programs & Services

League Growth

The table below summarizes the size of our leagues (# of teams).

League	2015	2014	2013	2012
Winter Indoor	12	8	8	8
Winter Turf	80	68	58	48
Winter Juniors	3	3	pickup	pickup
Winter Hat	8	8	10	10
Summer	236 + camp	238 + camp	234 + camp	236
Summer Juniors	12	10	12	12
Fall Grass	58	62	70	62
Fall Women's	8	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fall Turf	62	52	42	28
Fall Juniors	10	10	6	6

Highlights include:

- Winter Turf grew by 12 teams (18%), even more than the past 2 years.
- Summer and Fall Grass remained relatively constant.
- The new Women's League was a big success with 8 teams. We also monitored the M:F balance in other Fall leagues, and were pleased to see little, if any, negative impact.
- We added a third night for Fall Turf (Tuesday), and the league grew by 19% over last year.

Adult Leagues & Services

Turf leagues continue to be popular. We hit capacity this past Winter for the first time, but two new fields at Empire bowl in Hastings Park will give us more room to grow.

Summer ultimate continues to be strong and healthy in Vancouver. Thursday has been overly popular in recent years, so to ease pressure on fields, we moved the Single-Header option from Thursday to Wednesday. That seemed to help -- Monday was the largest night this year. Overall the league ran well with few serious incidents.

We had fewer fields than normal in the summer due to a few factors, including construction at UBC, Oak Meadows maintenance, and Trillium for Women's World Cup. This put pressure on league play and touring practices in May and June. More fields opened up in July, although many were quite dry then due to the lack of water. We do not expect similar field shortages next summer, especially as a new Turf field has opened at Hastings Park.

Some highlights from the Summer Survey:

- Members continue to be very satisfied with their overall experience playing Summer League. More than 94% said they are playing "satisfying ultimate", essentially the same as last year.
- Dissatisfaction with game start times decreased from 22% to 15%, so our focus on start times seemed to have the intended effect.
- Concern about Spirit increased, however: 37% feel it needs improvement (vs. 31% last year).
- Website experience was higher, with 81% saying it was Excellent or Good (vs. 71% last year)

Youth Programs & Services

Our 3 Junior leagues ran well again. We added a new option this fall at Empire fields on the east side – it focuses on skills development like the Winter league.

In the summer, we offered Family Pickup for the first time. There weren't many participants, but those who attended really liked it. We also launched a new Summer Camp program. We hosted two 1-week camps at Memorial Park at the end of July. The focus this year was on kids between 9-14 years old.

The Misfit club-team program was successful with 12 teams and a drop-in option. Managing 300+ kids and 35 coaches through weekly practices and multiple tournaments is no small undertaking, so we took extra time this year to ensure solid procedures and plans were in place to ensure a successful season.

We offered more services and support to Vancouver schools, including equipment and help finding qualified coaches. We've talked to the School Board this year about supporting the launch of a new elementary league, but no set date has been set for that yet.

Events

Our events went smoothly overall. Highlights include:

- The 2014 Christmas Party theme was "Christmas Morning", with photos and a fun gift exchange.
- Ultimate Day was very well attended again. It was at Van Tech Secondary this year.
- Nighthawks games, Riptide games, and Canucks games were fun social events for members.
- For the Captains Wingding, many joined us for Nighthawks game in the evening, but attendance at the daytime activities was lower than desired. We will revisit this event next year.
- Vancouver's classic mid-summer tournament, Babes'n'Hats, went well with 12 teams at Winona.
- The Beach tournament was very popular, selling out a month in advance. We will look into expanding next year, if possible.
- Attendance at the Summer Party was down. We'll review this for next year.
- The Turkey Tourney was unfortunately cancelled due to a storm, so the 15 teams stayed dry, but will have to work a little harder during Fall leagues to burn off that turkey...

Annual Awards

Congratulations to all of our annual award winners!

- Individual Spirit: Jeffery Roy and Shannon Seid
- Team Spirit: Random Fling, Robot Love, Local Pint and Hand of Chal
- Team Carbon Flip: Absolute Chaos
- Coaches of the Year (new): Karen Wright and Myles Lu
- Volunteers of the Year: Diana Hunter and Cody Hubbard

Touring Teams

We supported 26 different club teams with practice fields:

- 3 Women: Traffic, Zephyr, Wendigo
- 5 Open: Nighthawks, Furious, Riptide, Blackfish, Refinery
- 2 Masters: Legion, Muriqui
- 4 College: UBC Men and Women
- 12 Youth: 10 with Misfit and 2 from BC Ultimate

For various Championships:

- Traffic placed 1st at CUC in Winnipeg, and 5th at USAU Championships
- Furious placed 2nd at CUC
- TFP placed 3rd at CUC
- Blackfish placed 8th at CUC
- Zephyr placed 5th at CUC
- Muriqui placed 2nd at CUC
- Boys: Misfit placed 5th, Mischief and Rolling Thunder from 9th-12th (placement games not played)
- Girls: Misfit placed 4th and Mischief 9th

IT Systems

We continue to invest in our IT systems, including the public and admin features of the website. Our website is a critical asset for the society – it runs our all our operations and supports their management.

Development proceeded at a steady pace this year. Progress was not as fast as planned due to some

internal and external factors. Our website vendor underwent some structural changes that affected their capacity. In addition, while we hired a new Web Coordinator, he was unable to commit the time required and resigned a short time later. We subsequently chose to put new contractors on hold while we reviewed our overall approach. The ED and Board are reviewing options this fall and expect to have a new plan in place by the end of the year.

This change in plans meant we invested less than budgeted on IT systems so far this year, but we expect to spend more in the next few months. Those details will be covered further in the Financial Report.

At the last AGM, a motion was passed to permit an expenditure of up to \$40,000 from the Capital Fund over 24 months to support the development of new features related to youth and schedules. One feature was completed: we can now gather "parental consent" for youth online. This saves significant time for players, parents, and staff. A second feature was "schedule generation" for staff: that item was planned for 2015, but has been postponed to 2016. As we were under budget, we did not use any Capital Funds for the parental consent feature.

Overall the website continues to meet the essential needs of members and staff. We look forward to enhancing it even further in the future.

Community

Field Partners

We continue to have good relationships with the Park Board, School Board, and UBC. Thank you to all captains for being skilled ambassadors on behalf of the VUL when dealing with others at fields we use. We also continued to participate in the Vancouver Field Sports Federation, where I also sit as President, advocating to the Park Board and City Council for more and better fields for all sports.

Sponsors

We maintained or expanded our relationships with multiple sponsors while adding 2 new ones to the mix:

- We started a new partnership with *Red Truck Brewing* for spirit awards and other prizes including beer and team tours at the brewery.
- We renewed our partnership with *Oddball Workshop* for VUL gear, and they continued to sponsor the annual Team Spirit Awards (winning teams received \$500 gift certificates).
- We continued our retail partnership with *Rackets & Runners*. R&R is happy with sales from VUL members, and we're happy with sales of over \$4000 in the past year. We also received over \$1200 in gift certificates to use as prizes for members.
- We continue partnerships with two athletic therapy partners: *Insync* and *Jointworks*. They provided gift-certificates, well-read articles for the website, and services at our tournaments.
- We recently partnered with *Evo Car Share* for the Carbon Flip. An announcement is coming soon.
- We gave away many free *Comedy Mix* tickets captains and volunteers again.

Professional Ultimate

Two pro teams continue to co-exist in Vancouver – the Nighthawks and the Riptide – and we renewed our partnerships with both. Pro ulti offers unique opportunities to increase awareness about our sport.

BC Ultimate

We met with BC Ultimate regularly to discuss various topics related to growing ultimate in BC, from events and programs to long-term strategy.

Ultimate Canada

We submitted a bid to host the 2016 Ultimate Canada conference next November. If awarded, that event will provide a great opportunity for league organizers from around BC to connect and learn from each other, and other leagues across the country.