

VULS 2020 Extraordinary General Meeting – Dec 8, 2020

Executive Director’s Report

Craig Woods

Introduction

This was year #4 of our current 5-year plan, and what a year it was.

Our response to the pandemic had four stages in 2020:

- Shutdown in March-April, with contingency planning and staff adjustments.
- Extensive “Return to Play” preparations in May-June
- Phase 2 in the summer (physically distanced play).
- Phase 3 in the fall (modified games).

Overall, I’m pleased with how we handled the year:

- We successfully ran modified programs in the Summer and Fall for youth and adults, and there have been no reported cases of COVID-19 in any programs to date.
- We posted a net loss for the year, but made prudent decisions and managed the financial situation well considering what we had to deal with.
- The Board and Staff were highly engaged all year. I can’t thank them enough for their commitment to the VUL and our community.

This report summarizes activity in the Pillars and Foundations of our current Strategic Plan

Pillars – Programs & Services

Youth

Goal: Attract more youth to the sport while ensuring they play fun, spirited, high-quality ultimate.

Led by William Arlotta (Youth Manager), supported by Kristine Salzmann (acting Marketing Manager).

Program stats:

League	Metric	2020	2019	2018	2017
Skills Series (all seasons)	players	414	308	267	141
Day Camps (spring & summer)	players	223	192	156	159
Leagues (summer & fall)	teams	0	15	20	23
Misfit club (Vancouver)	players	89	271	404	343
Vortex club (Surrey & area)	players	0	290	255	185
Reign club (Richmond)	players	68	68	196	~
Total Youth Members		667	1490	1519	1110

Highlights:

- We paused our Leagues in summer and fall, but Skills and Camps were all up compared to 2019.
- Misfit ran winter & summer series, Reign ran a summer program, and Vortex took a break this year.

William spent a lot of time preparing custom training for all youth coaches & instructors to ensure we did our best to keep all players safe from COVID. We had no reported cases from any player through all youth programs in the summer and fall – a great success and strong testament to efforts of the entire team.

Looking ahead, for youth programs we expect:

- Phase 2 or 3 play in the winter season
- Phase 3 in the summer
- Phase 4 (“new normal”) by the fall if projections for vaccine availability are correct.

Adults

Goal: Maximize member satisfaction while maintaining or increasing the number of people involved.

Led by Katie Berezan (League Manager), supported by Kristine Salzman, plus Troë Weston in summer.

Program stats (number of teams):

League	2020	2019	2018	2017
Winter Turf	92	92	94	94
Winter Other (indoor, grass, parity)	22	20	20	22
Winter New West	6	6	6	6
Summer (+ camps & practices)	33	234	230	242
Summer Surrey & Burnaby	~	20	22	~
Fall Grass (+ practices)	18	40	32	40
Fall Turf (mixed, women, open)	46	72	74	72
Fall Surrey	4	4	6	8
Total teams	221 (-55%)	488 (+1%)	484 (- 1%)	490 (+3%)
Total players	2004 (-60%)	4962 (+5%)	4737 (+1%)	4672 (+2%)

Some highlights:

- All Winter leagues were successful, even though they ended slightly early due to COVID.
- Summer Camps and Practices were very appreciated by those who participated.
- Fall Season went quite well, with almost 50% participation compared 2019.

Katie and Kristine prepared and shared a lot of information for captains and teams to ensure everyone followed guidelines. We had no reported cases from any player in adult programs this year – well done to Katie, Kristine, and all captains and players.

With no Awards Banquet and limited play, we chose to not do Team Spirit, Carbon Flip, Coaches, or Hall of Fame awards this year. We are recognizing Volunteers of the Year and Individual Spirit winners, though. They will be announced at the EGM.

Some statistics from our Annual Survey of adult members:

- Of the 760 respondents, 40% played this Summer or Fall. It's a testament our community that many who did not play during the pandemic still took the time to complete the survey.
- Satisfaction was very high:
 - 95% of those who played in summer or fall were Very Satisfied or Satisfied.
 - 97% of captains rated our level of service as Excellent or Good.
- Comfort with Returning or Continuing to Play is understandably mixed:
 - Of all replies, 43% are comfortable, 28% not sure, 29% not comfortable.
 - Those who played in summer or fall: 73% comfortable, 19% not sure, 9% not comfortable.
- Overall inclusivity was high
 - 96% said the VUL was Very Inclusive or Somewhat Inclusive.
 - 1% said Somewhat Not Inclusive or Not inclusive
 - 3% Not Sure.

Looking ahead to 2021, for adult programs we expect:

- Phase 2 or 3 at some point in winter, but adult sport will suspended to start in January.
- Phase 3 in the summer
- Phase 4 ("new normal") by the fall if projections for vaccine availability are correct.

Regional Support

Goal: Develop viable leagues across Metro Vancouver by supporting others or running them ourselves. No new leagues were formed, but we continued to run adult leagues in Surrey, Burnaby, and New West, as well as competitive youth programs in Surrey and Richmond.

Leadership

Goal: Be a leader in our sport and our community. Our activities included:

- Promotion of Bell Let's Talk Day to promote mental health awareness, acceptance and action.
- Statement on Racism to show support for Black members of our community, plus new questions in our Annual Survey to get a better understanding of members' experience with racism.
- One director and two staff attended the online Ultimate Canada Conference in November to exchange knowledge with other leagues.

Foundations – Supporting the Pillars

Spirit

Overall, spirit remained high in Winter and during the modified Summer and Fall seasons.

Facilities

We continue to have good relationships with Park Boards in all cities where we operate, and we continue to participate with the Vancouver Field Sports Federation (where I am President).

Communications

We had a lot to communicate during the pandemic from all parts of the VUL. From our annual survey, it appears we did pretty well: 76% were Very Satisfied or Satisfied with our communication during COVID.

When the pandemic hit, we paused the hiring of a new Marketing Manager to replace Craig Kulyk. Our Regional League Coordinator, Kristine Salzmann, stepped up to become our Acting MM on a part-time basis. Her contributions have been invaluable this year.

Allison Lambert continued her stellar work as our Social Media Coordinator.

Led by Michael Dorsey, the web team continues to enhance our website and league management systems. Some highlights include:

- Many updates to Player and Team profiles to better support parents, coaches, and coordinators.
- Added ability to schedule practices like games, and more easily setup teams for Hat leagues.
- New Playing History in player profiles, and new League History under Games
- Improvements to financial systems as part of the project announced in January: new and improved reports, automated processes, additional payment and refund methods.

Other activities in 2020:

- Continued our Community Spotlight articles to recognize important members of our community.
- Launched an [Online Store with BE Ultimate](#).
- Launched a new [Fund with Sport BC](#) that allows us to provide tax receipts for donations.

Collaboration

Some highlights:

- Co-hosted the third-annual Vancouver Coaching Conference with Elevate Ultimate again.
- Helped BC Ultimate host the second-ever BC Leagues Conference in Kelowna in March.
- Worked closely with BC Ultimate on their provincial Return to Play plans.
- Renewed key partnerships with BE Ultimate, Strange Fellows, Insync, and Jointworks.
- Regularly connected with the "C6" (six largest Canadian leagues) to share how each organization was responding to the pandemic.

HR

I am very grateful to work in an organization with so many passionate, talented, and dedicated individuals.

I'd like to extend a special thank you to all VUL staff and volunteers for their incredible efforts this past year in very challenging circumstances. With reduced hours, additional stress inside and outside of work, frequently changing provincial guidelines, and changes to our programs and our roles, the entire team continued to provide high-quality service to the VUL community. On behalf of the Board and VUL members, thank you to the Senior staff and all other personnel.

- Katie Berezan, League Manager
- William Arlotta, Youth Programs Manager
- Kristine Salzmann, Acting Marketing Manager
- Michael Dorsey, Web Systems Manager
- Allison Lambert, Social Media Coordinator

At the same time, I want to acknowledge the year has taken a toll, and this fall we started paying more attention to burnout. It's important to take time to rest, recharge, and regroup. Building resiliency and improving sustainability will be key themes for 2021.

Lastly, this year we discussed ways to recognize and celebrate Craig Kulyk on an annual basis. We have a few ideas, and plan to announce that initiative at Ultimate Day in the spring.

Governance

Each year when I reflect on working with the Board, one thing that stands out is their dedication and commitment. They usually have perfect attendance at meetings – not always common among non-profits – and all of them are highly engaged in discussions at the board level and in committees. This year they met about twice as often as normal due the pandemic. Please extend your thanks to them whenever you can.

I would like to acknowledge Trisha for taking extra time this year – along with everything else going on – to regularly connect with me to help steer the VUL ship. We had lots to figure out!

Lastly, it's been a real pleasure to work with Christa. Her two year term went very quickly, and her presence on the Board will be greatly missed.

In closing, I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season, even if it's a little simpler this year.

Appendix - Finance

As reference for the Capital Fund request, here are allocations from the past 10 years.

Year	Allocation	Purpose	Used	Purpose
2010	80,000	Fields - Winona South	~	
2011	50,000	Website start	~	
2012	50,000	Website launch	50,000	Fields - Winona South
			22,000	Website start
2013	~		73,000	Website launch
2014	50,000	Field projects (3)	~	Never spent (not needed by VPB)
	40,000	Website upgrades	~	
2015	~		~	
2016	~		40,000	Website upgrades
2017	~		~	
2018	~		~	
2019	30,000	Financial systems	TBD	
Total	300,000		185,000	