

Spirit of the Game

Definition of Spirit of the Game

Spirit of the Game is one of the core elements in flying disc sports. It is similar to fair play and sportsmanship, but there is a much higher emphasis put on it in Ultimate. It is summarised in this preamble to the rules of play:

"All players are responsible for administering and adhering to the rules. Ultimate relies upon a Spirit of the Game that places the responsibility for fair play on every player. It is trusted that no player will intentionally break the rules; thus there are no harsh penalties for breaches, but rather a method for resuming play in a manner which simulates what would most likely have occurred had there been no breach.

Highly competitive play is encouraged, but should never sacrifice the mutual respect between players, adherence to the agreed-upon rules of the game, or the basic joy of play."

Actions such as intentional fouling, cheating, dangerous plays, disrespectful conversations, and other 'win at all costs' behaviour are contrary to the Spirit of the Game. Often a player is in a position where it is to his/her advantage to foul or commit some violation, but that player is morally bound to abide by the rules. The integrity of the sport depends on each player's responsibility to uphold Spirit of the Game, and this responsibility should not be taken lightly.

As Ultimate is a self-refereed sport, maintaining Spirit of the Game is essential. Players must know the rules, be fair-minded and truthful, explain their viewpoint clearly and briefly, allow opponents a reasonable chance to speak and resolve disputes as quickly as possible, using respectful language.

Examples of Good Spirit

- Informing a team-mate if you think they have made a wrong or unnecessary call or caused a foul or violation
- Retracting a call when you no longer believe the call was necessary
- Complimenting an opponent for good play or spirit
- Introducing yourself to your opponent
- Reacting calmly towards disagreement or provocation

Spirit Rules & Scoring

In a self-refereed sport such as Ultimate it is important to continuously teach and measure Spirit of the Game. For this reason a Spirit Scoring system was developed. Directly after a game, players rate the other team, as well as their own team, on **the five fundamentals** of the sport:

1. Did they know and abide by the rules?
2. Did they avoid body contact?
3. Were they fair-minded?
4. Did they show self-control and a positive attitude?
5. Did they communicate properly and respectfully?

Scoring is done from 0-4 for each category.

An example of the WFDF Spirit of the Game Scoring Sheet is included as an appendix to this manual.

How does Spirit scoring and management work?

Spirit Scoring is especially recommended for leagues and larger tournaments. In these events a team's [Spirit Captain](#) should be responsible for collecting Spirit Scores and giving them to the Spirit Director. The [Spirit Director](#) reviews the scores for possible issues and determines what team has the highest score to be awarded the Spirit of the Game prize.

Video Examples of Spirit of the Game

The World Flying Disc Federation have created example videos demonstrating implementation of Spirit of the Game during high level play.

Spirit of the Game, Be Fair-minded:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btPa0EsRHf8&list=PLsPmgUCeVgQF-9c1eTh5CusoHbFXIBBf9&index=1>

Spirit of the Game, Communicate respectfully:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HG1Q3NezDnM&list=PLsPmgUCeVgQF-9c1eTh5CusoHbFXIBBf9&index=2>

Spirit of the Game resources

Many Spirit of the Game resources are available from the World Flying Disc Federation website.

The following links will be useful for you to further your understanding of Spirit of the Game:

<http://www.wfdf.org/sotg/about-sotg>

<http://www.wfdf.org/sotg/spirit-rules-a-scoring>

<http://www.wfdf.org/sotg/sotg-downloads>