

2025

SAFE SPORT

Ottawa - Carleton



Ultimate Association

# WHAT IS SAFE SPORT? //

Safe Sport is the belief that:

- **Everyone has the right to enjoy a sport at whatever level or position they participate**
- All participants (athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers) have the right to participate in a safe and inclusive training and competitive environment that is free of abuse, harassment or discrimination.
- The welfare of everyone involved in the sport is a foremost consideration and in particular the protection of children/athletes in the sport is the responsibility of each individual and member.



# SAFETY AS A TOP PRIORITY

- Over the years, rules regarding fouls and dangerous play have evolved to place a greater emphasis on physical safety.
- In addition, OCUA is increasing its emphasis on mental health and wellbeing.
- Some players are likely to only register for leagues where they feel safe from injury, aggressive play, harassment and discrimination.
- Feeling safe encourages players to come back the following season, helping overall league retention.





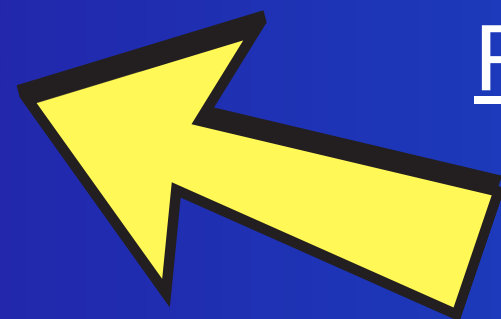


# HOW TO PRIORITIZE SAFE SPORT

**Be familiar with the following:**

- The Rules; especially the sections about dangerous plays and fouls
- Policy on Gender Identity and Gender Equity
- Policy on Non-Discrimination
- Policy on Clean Air
- Policy on Harassment and Sexual Harassment
- Concussion Recognition and Management Protocol

**Ensure your  
teammates conduct  
themselves in  
accordance with  
OCUA's rules and  
policies**



**PHYSICAL**  
**SAFETY**



# ELEMENTS OF PHYSICAL SAFETY

**Be  
prepared  
to play**

**Spatial awareness**

**Self control**





# 1 - BE PREPARED TO PLAY



- wear appropriate clothing and footwear
- remove jewelry or other items that may cause injury
- warm up and stretch
- know and understand the rules, especially arounds fouls and dangerous play





## 2 - SPATIAL AWARENESS



Being aware of your surroundings, **especially the location of other players**, is an important element of safety







# SPATIAL AWARENESS



**What else  
should we be  
aware of when  
playing?**





# POSSIBLE DANGEROUS ELEMENTS

- goal posts
- sprinkler heads
- nets
- gopher holes
- disc
- irrigation holes
- heavy mud
- pollution (air quality)



- sports equipment
- ticks
- bleachers
- wild life
- lightning
- extreme weather
- extreme heat
- equipment failure





## 3 - SELF CONTROL



Self control is essentially about making positive choices in the face of temptation and restraining oneself from acting on impulses.

In addition, **movement self control** is the ability to manage how our body moves and when.

For our purpose, movement self control means recognizing when the temptation to make a play on a disc may cause a dangerous play and the ability to restrain yourself from making that play.







# REVIEWING FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS





# FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS



Actions  
demonstrating  
reckless disregard for the  
safety of, or posing a  
significant risk of injury to,  
fellow players, or other  
dangerously aggressive  
behaviour are considered  
“dangerous play” and  
**are treated as a  
foul**





# FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS //

**Dangerous play is  
considered a foul  
regardless of whether or  
when the disc arrives or  
contact occurs**



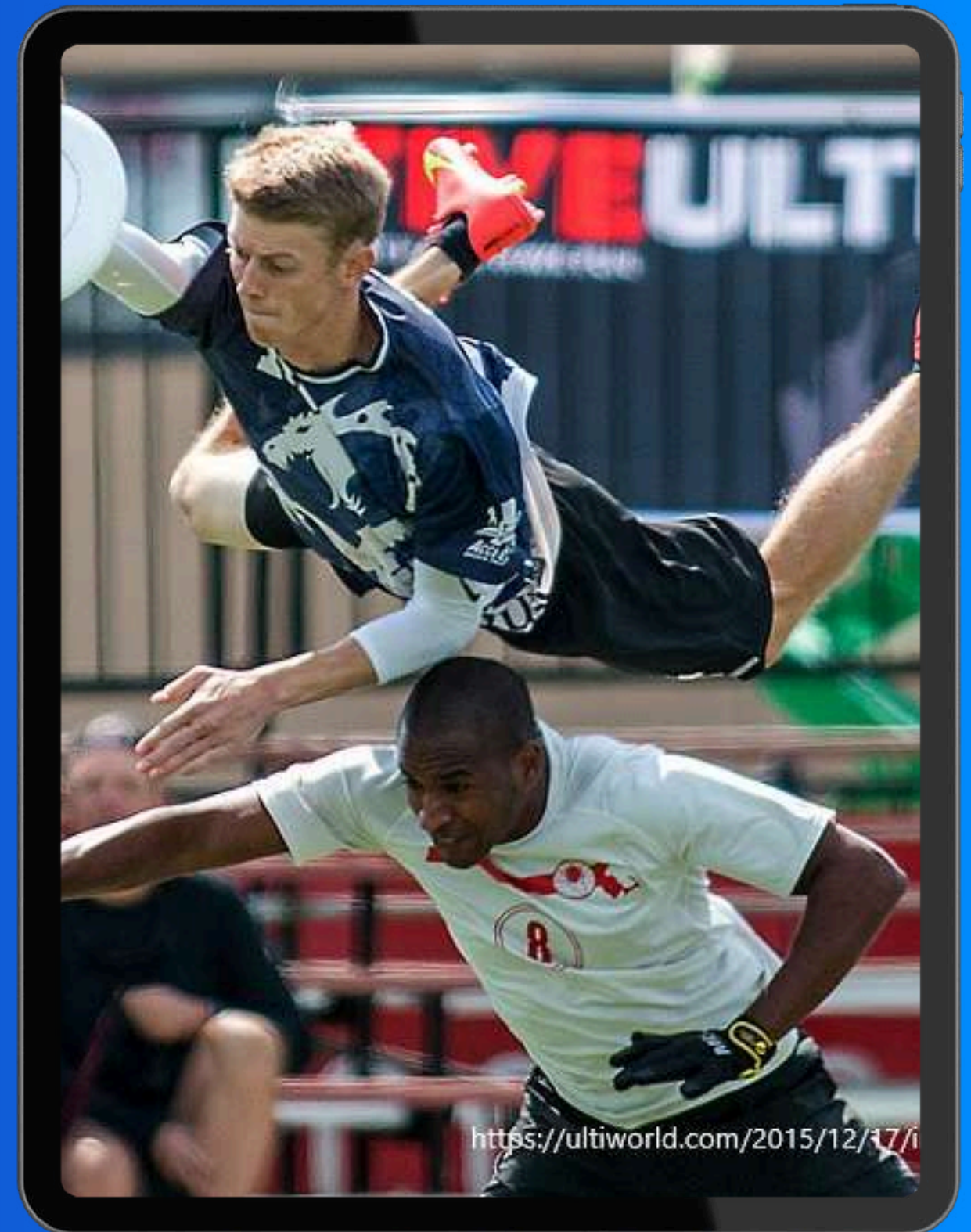
*Image taken by Derek Hodgson Photography //*





# FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS //

**Contact is not required for a player to invoke this rule where there is reasonable certainty that contact would have occurred had the player not taken steps to avoid contact**





# FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAY



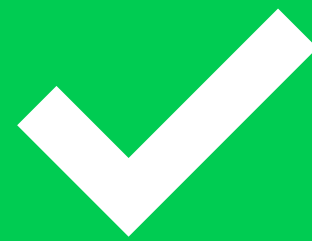
Video





# FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS //

Can you  
contest a  
dangerous  
play call?



Yes



No







# FOULS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS //



Can you  
contest a  
dangerous  
play call?

**If a player believes a dangerous play call was incorrect, they can contest it, and the call will be treated as any other contested foul**





# PSYCHO-SOCIAL SAFETY





**Being part of a team and  
engaging in regular physical  
activity are good for your  
mental well-being.**





## Interesting stats:

- 90% of female CEO's played a sport as children
- 1 in 3 girls drop out of sport when they reach adolescence compared to 1 in 10 boys
- women 19 to 31 participate in sport at half the rate of men





## **Psycho-Social Barriers for women and diversity groups**

## **INCLUSION IN SPORT**



- quality of the sport experience
- low confidence
- negative body image
- perceived lack of skill
- not feeling welcomed or included in play
- lack of representation/role models
- abuse, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination
- being put in uncomfortable situations, even if minor







# INCLUSION IN SPORT



**How can we help foster an  
environment where every  
member feels safe to  
participate in our mixed  
leagues?**







# INCLUSION IN SPORT



- **foster** a welcoming and inclusive environment
- **respect** a WN2 players cutting space
- ensure you have a **WN2 captain** on your team
- help **teach** new captains the roles and responsibilities
- immediate **intervention** when there is even a hint of abuse, harassment, or sexual harassment.
- **report** events that go against our policies
- **use inclusive language** such as "match" instead of "man"





# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE



Match Defence or Match D

Instead of Man Defence or Man D

**"Let's play Match D instead of Zone"**

Melt or Match Up

Instead of Man! *[when switching from Zone Defence to Match Defence on the fly]*

**"Melt and point to the person you're defending!"**

Mixed Gender Leagues

Instead of Guys, Girls, Gals, Ladies, Men

**"Hey Team! How are you all doing?"**

Folks, team, people,  
everyone

Instead of Guys, Girls, Gals, Ladies, Men *[especially if you are unsure]*

**"Are you signing up for mixed?"**





# INCLUSION IN SPORT



**All mixed teams are  
required to have  
a WN2 captain**







**Why is it  
important to  
have an active  
WN2 captain ?**

## WOMEN IN SPORT



- Some players may feel more comfortable reporting concerns like harassment, inappropriate behavior, or even basic discomfort to a female captain
- They have a greater awareness of WN2 issues
- They provide advocacy and a voice for fair treatment and equal access
- They provide a more equitable balance of power which makes for a more respectful, inclusive and safer environment
- They provide mentorship and guidance to younger or less experienced players that supports emotional and physical safety







# INCLUSION IN SPORT



In short:

WN2 captains are not just a symbol.

They can be a **safeguard** by providing broader representation in the leadership of your mixed team





**Prioritize safety above **ALL ELSE**.**

**The goal is for everyone to feel safe  
on and off the field and for everyone to be able  
to come back for another day of Ultimate!**





# SAFE SPORT HOTLINE

abuse-free  
**SPORT**  
sans abus

**HELPLINE**

**VICTIM OR WITNESS OF HARASSMENT,  
ABUSE OR DISCRIMINATION IN SPORT?**

→ Contact the **ABUSE-FREE SPORT HELPLINE** to share  
your concerns and be referred to the appropriate resources.

8 a.m. – 8 p.m. EDT • 7 days a week

**ANONYMOUS • CONFIDENTIAL  
INDEPENDENT • BILINGUAL**

☎ 1-888-83SPORT (77678)  
✉ [info@abuse-free-sport.ca](mailto:info@abuse-free-sport.ca)  
🌐 [abuse-free-sport.ca](http://abuse-free-sport.ca)

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Program | **Canada**



# **The Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport**

**calls for sporting environments to be free from physical, sexual and psychological abuse.**

**It is the responsibility of all OCUA members to make decisions that promote athletes' physical and mental wellbeing.**





# Thank you

for taking to the time to **educate yourself and your team** on how we can improve player safety and retention.