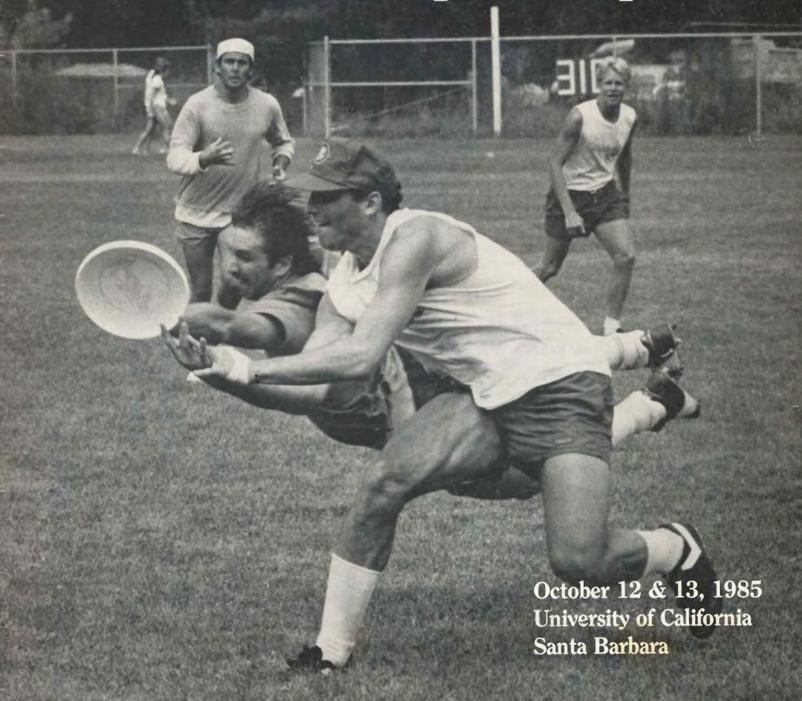
1985 LITE Beer/UPA Western Regional Ultimate Championships



Great Taste... Less Filling



Contents

Welcome		3
Women Condors: What took so long?		5
Flying Circus		7
K-9 Tournament		9
Schedule of Events	•	10-11
History of Women's Ultimate		
Road Warrior		. 14
The Way it Flies		. 15
The Elements of Ultimate		. 16

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Welcome to the 1985 **Ultimate** Western Regionals

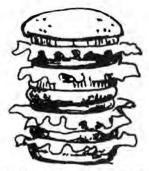
TE warmly welcome players and spectators alike to Santa Barbara for the 1985 Lite Beer/UPA Western Regional Ultimate Championships. Teams have traveled here from six states (Washington, Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California) after qualifying for this tournament through four sectional tournaments. From this tournament, two men's and one women's team will advance to the National Championships in Washington D.C. October 25-27.

This year we are proud to host over five teams with National Championship experience. In addition, we we will have the largest gathering of K-9 contestants ever on the California Central Coast.

As you flip through the program, you'll find articles like the definitive history of women's Ultimate, and looks at last year's regional men and women champs, the Flying Circus and women's Condors.

We hope you enjoy the 1985 Lite Beer/Western Regional Ultimate Championships. And remember—the most important element of any Ultimate tournament is FUN!





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October 1985

Women Condors— What Took You So Long?

THE Santa Barbara Condors women's team are the current National Women's Ultimate champions. The 1984 Nationals, held last November in Santa Barbara, was the first time in four years that the Condors represented the Western Region. They were frustratingly close to attending the Nationals three years in a row. At the Western Regionals from 1981-83, the Condors lost the singularly most important game of each season-the finals, the game that determines the regional representative. Each time they were defeated by the same team, their classic rivals in the region for three years, the Eugene, Oregon, Dark Star, Although the end result of these losses, exclusion from the Nationals, was well defined, the elements that contributed to these crucial defeats were not. In retrospect it is apparent that these frustrations and defeats have shaped the style, strategies and character of the current national champions.

At the 1981 Western Regionals, the first officially sanctioned women's tournament, the Condor team was a mix of experienced and very new players. A core of five or six players had been playing co-ed Ultimate for up to five years, having had only a few rare opportunities to play other women's teams. With only six weeks until the Regionals, these players solicited other interested athletes and pulled together the team that would end up in the finals with Dark Star (then called Synergy). At that time, Synergy was a conglomeration of experienced players from Eugene, Portland, Seattle, and Humboldt, California. Neither team had "records" to compare and both had experienced Players with good skills but no one could have predicted the outcome of what looked like an even matchup. In the final game, Synergy's consolidated numbers, superior depth and athletic ability outscored the Condor team. Either team could have won this first game of what would become the rival match-up in the West. Although the Condors knew their region would be well represented by the team that beat them, they, like Dark Star, were already looking ahead to the full season of tournaments which would allow them to explore their position as dominants in the West.

In March, at the first tournament of the 1982 season, Dark Star and the Condors met again in the finals of the small April Fools Tournament. Again, the Condors were defeated making them more determined to use their talents and experience in future games with Dark Star. In April the Condors went undefeated to win the California State Championships against the six other California teams. In June the Condors traveled to Eugene to meet the Dark Star on their home turf at the Solstice tournament. After losing the preliminary game yet again to Dark Star,



the Condors rallied and applied their frustration to psych up for the finals. The Condors emerged victorious—the first defeat of their competitive rival. For the Condors the victory was especially sweet since they'd beaten Dark Star at home. By this time it was expected (and would be true for a long time to come) that at any tournament at which Dark Star and the Condors were in attendance, they would end up in the finals together.

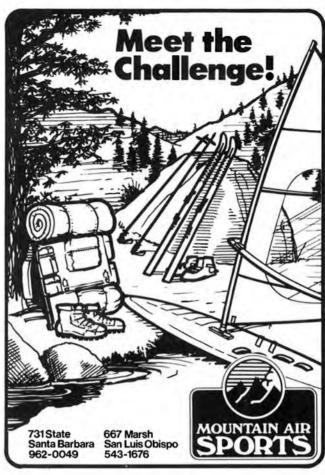
In August, at the Worlds in Santa Cruz, they met again. The Condors felt strong and confident. The players who joined the team in 1981 had gained experience and skill which was much needed against the physically and mentally strong Dark Star. For the first time the Condors dominated and won decisively. Their chances at the Regionals looked good.

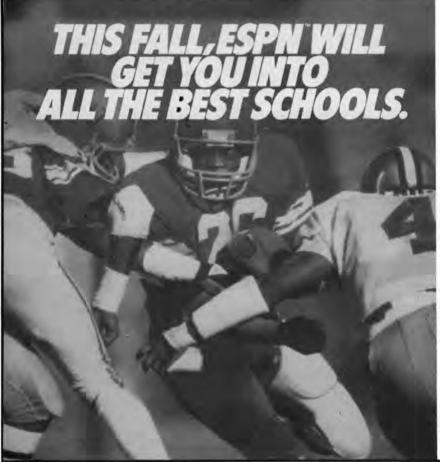
The Condors went undefeated in their sectional, as did Dark Star in theirs. Although the Santa Cruz team presented challenging games to both Dark Star and the Condors, most expected the inevitable match-up in the Regional finals. This time the Condors entered with the upper hand in the head-to-head record. Their many meetings allowed both teams close familiarity with each others players, strategies and personalities. In no way would the Condors dare to think that this game would be anything less than intense. Some felt that the surprise and disappointment of the news that the Condor men's team had just lost in the quarterfinals of the men's division playoff. affected the outcome of the game. Others did not. That matter is disputable and something that even the women who played that day would not agree upon. What is not disputable is the fact that Dark Star was mentally psyched. typically unified, and had clearer sights set on the Nationals than did the Condors in the moments before the start of the finals. In a decisive victory, Dark Star had won the single most important game in the Condors' winning season. For the Condors disappointment and frustration flourished-confidence and unity faltered.

Entering the 1983 season, the Condors knew they had no choice but to "get over it." While the core of the team were willing to examine the loss and move on in skills, strategies and especially the crucial element against Dark Star, psych, others remained under the cloud of faltered confidence and disappointment. Ultimately, unity suffered. The Condors chalked up their first loss against any team

(Continued on page 18)







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The Flying Circus

THE FLYING CIRCUS, from the San Francisco Bay Area, comes into this tournament as the defending champions of the Western Region. Also highlighting a particularly successful year for the Circus are back to back wins at the World Disc Championships held in Santa Cruz every August, a win in June in New York at the prestigious Eastern Championships, and a close second place finish at the National Championships in 1984.

The Circus was born in the fall of 1979, evolving from the old Berkeley team. At a tournament at Humboldt State College, the then-unnamed squad first donned colorful streaks of face paints. The Ultimate world was somewhat shocked by this introduction to Mardi Gras-inspired painting. At first there was some question about the spirit of the "war" paint worn by the clowns, but as the paint evolved in design and included wigs, glitter, satin warmups, and shorts and shirts of varying circus-like colors and patterns, it became clear the paint was not in the nature of war, but more of fun. And other teams recognized the efforts of the Circus to keep fun, silly and zany, intrinsic to Ultimate.

Which is not to say they were not good Ultimate players. For at this same costuming time, the Circus was playing highly competitive Frisbee. They came to the 1980 Western Championships not only with high hopes, but also with a big circus tent, balloons, and costumes to rival Barnum & Bailey. However, they lost unexpectedly and thus the reign of the costume began to fade. After a couple of years of painting faces and frequenting thrift stores for

wild costumes, the Circus drifted into more drab apparel. Not without some circus spirit, the next two to three years saw consistently tough play in occasional new shirts of interesting design, with face paint making infrequent appearances.

Throughout this time the Circus was a solid second best in the West. They may have out-funned, but they couldn't outplay the best, the Santa Barbara Condors. About a year ago that changed. With the addition of a few players from Stanford who came with an innovative offensive system, the Circus has managed to beat the Condors consistently.

And it is with this system that the Circus feels it is helping move the sport from its infancy, of chaotic, random flow of the disc toward the goal, to one of more patterned movements that provide for more efficient use of energy to score. This difference in offensive strategy can clearly be seen on the field as the Circus repeatedly sets up its players in specific positions for best approaching the man with the disc. Flawless it is not, and as a system it too has a lot of developing to do. But the teams have taken notice.

Now, as the Circus tries to repeat as Western champs, and aims to win the National Championships, you will observe a team of raggedy-looking players, rarely more than two or three of them wearing the same shirt. Do not dismiss them as second-rate performers, but as aging clowns in their latest metamorphosis.

-Danny Weiss









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K-9 Frisbee

T'S HALFTIME at the Western National Ultimate Championships. And there's a dog on the field. In fact, three of them. Three four-legged athletes leaping, twisting and catching Frisbees with the same abandon as the two-legged stars. After three rounds of scoring, these three pooches are competing for the title in Santa Barbara's first rendition of an event that occurs annually in cities throughout the nation — the Gaines Ashley Whippet Invitational.

There is something peculiarly American about dogs catching Frisbees, definitely a slice of the American pie. But it may surprise you to know that the world of flying disc has formally crowned a world champion since 1977, when the great Ashley Whippet soared to the title. Ashley, whose death earlier this year stirred considerable media coverage, was generally considered the father of the concept—dogs catching Frisbees. To quote the director of the national championships, Ashley "flashed across the sky like a meteor in 1974, when he and his owner, Alex Stein, dashed onto the field, impromptu, at a nationally televised Dodger game." For that escapade, Alex was tossed in jail (overnight). But the nation had watched. And they loved it.

Today's local competition is a part of that legacy. The four rounds of competition begin at 9:00 a.m. with Free-flight, a sort of K-9 freestyle, in which the dogs are judged

on showmanship and teamwork, leaping ability and grace, and difficulty. Top scorers from this round advance to the compulsories, a test of consistency. In the compulsories each team is allowed six throws, but only the top five catches count: catches under 17 yards are one point; over 17 yards are two points; over 17 yards, all four paws in the air, three points.

For the third event, distance, held between the men's and women's Ultimate finals, the dogs move inside Harder Stadium. Though not a traditional part of the Invitational format, distance is a tremendous crowd pleaser and, perhaps more than any other event, tests the ability of the thrower as well as the dog. The world record in this event, held by Martha Faye, an eleven-year-old Lab who recently moved to Santa Barbara (to enjoy her golden years), is an astounding 334 feet, 8 inches, starting behind the thrower at the time the disc is released. Today's event will be scored with one point for catches over thirty yards, two points over forty, with an additional point for each ten yards over forty.

It's halftime. The men's Ultimate championship is on the line, and with one more round of freestyle, so is the K-9. Enjoy it. And give these beasts a hand. They've earned it.

—John Pickerill





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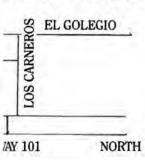
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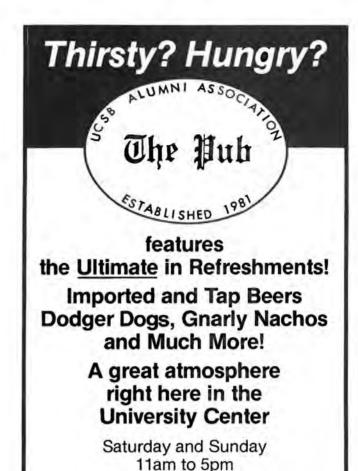
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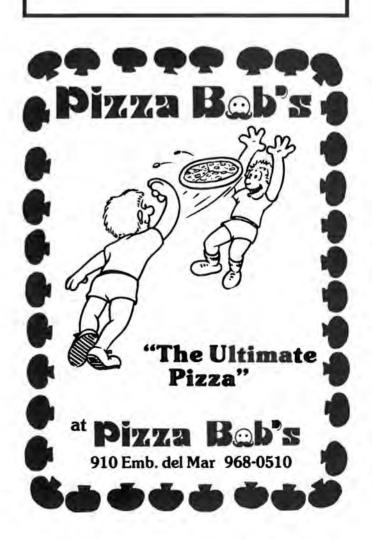
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Women's Ultimate: Back to the Future

THE roots of Ultimate lie in a schoolyard in New Jersey, where two high school students, Joel Silver and Buzzy Hellring, devised the game in the late 1960s. As the sport became more organized, and men's teams were starting up everywhere, a few women's teams began to form.

By 1977, there were several women's teams scattered across the country, looking for other teams to play. Sometimes these so-called teams weren't actually formed until all the women who showed up at a men's tournament got together and split up into two or more teams. For the most part, those women who were interested in Ultimate found themselves practicing with and playing on the men's team—generally having to struggle for playing time in tournaments. The sport was different from most other sports in that the men respected and encouraged women to come out and play, but physical differences usually kept women sidelined during most of the big games. Needless to say, it was discouraging for all of these women, who really enjoyed the sport and practiced hard to get better, to be able to compete at the level they wanted.

It was out of these frustrations that the women's division was formed. The women who played on teams promoted the sport and got new players to come out. Those women who played on the men's teams decided to start their own teams, often with help from the men with whom they had competed.

In 1981 it was decided by a couple of real pioneers, Michelle Pezooli and Suzanne Fields, that it was time for the women to venture out and start up their own division. "Why not have a women's division at Nationals this year?" they asked. But Regionals were to be held in only eight weeks and it seemed almost impossible to organize in such a short time. Somehow they pulled it off and a women's division was held. That year there were an average of seven teams per region that competed to get a chance to represent their region in the 1981 Nationals in Austin, Texas. The teams that made it included Glasboro (New Jersey) State College (Mid-Atlantic Region), Michigan State Women's Ultiamte (Central Region), Wild & Ready from Atlanta, Georgia (Southern Region), Synergy from the Pacific Northwest (Western Region), and Boston Ladies' Ultimate (BLU, Northeast Region). BLU beat Synergy in the finals, 7-6.

At that point, women's Ultimate in general was lacking in technical skills. Except for those few women who had been playing for years, most of the players were quite green. Throws, along with strategies, were very basic. Most players could throw only their backhand well and had little or no forehand. Those players with two solid throws were considered the best players, and were constantly handling the disc. BLU was the only team that really called plays. They had several experienced players with a good concept of the game. Michigan State had a

structured offense, but they were a bit young to execute it well, having only one experienced player on the team. Glasboro played a zone defense, which was a good strategy since most teams hadn't ever played against a zone before. All in all, the tournament was a success and the women's division was off to a good start.

The following year, more teams were sprouting up and skills were improving. It is amazing what a difference one year can make. Starting from a beginning level, teams could get relatively good very fast. Such a rapid progression of skills made the sport exciting and very attractive to new players. Probably the most successful team in 1982 was Mighican State Women's Ultimate, known as the Fisheads. These women played a structured "swing" offense with three disc handlers, two middles or swings, and two deeps (or rovers), patterned after their men's team.

Teams on the West Coast were also advancing at this time. Both the Santa Barbara Condors and Dark Star from Eugene, Oregon, showed good skills and raw athletic abilities. More so than anywhere else in the country, the players in teh West were generally in better shape and considered real athletes.

A women's division of the UPA Nationals series was held again in the fall of 1982. This time teams had more time to prepare and better understood what it meant to make it to the Nationals. The number of teams had grow significantly over the year and about twice as many teams competed in the Regionals in 1982. The teams that won their regionals in 1982 were the University of Virginia (Mid-Atlantic), Fisheads (Central), Georgia Airwaves (Southern), Dark Star (Western), and the University of Massachusetts Zulu (Northeast). The Nationals were held over Thanksgiving weekend, once again in Austin, Texas. Zulu beat the Fisheads in a major upset in the finals.

And thus, another season had gone by. Women's Ultimate was just over one year old, as far as the UPA (Ultimate Players Association) was concerned, and had held its second National Championship. Skills had progressed exponentially in that year, but there was a lot more to learn. We began to see better throwing skills, smoother offenses, and tougher defenses in the women's division.

With an ultimate goal of reaching Nationals, the spring season was used to get new players, form new teams, learn new skills, and feel out the competition. Both the East and West coasts hold several highly competitive major tournaments in the spring, with almost the prestige of Nationals. The spring of 1983 produced some interesting developments.

The Boston area had always had a relatively large number of players and a lot of veterans. Since BLU in 1981, these players had split up and formed new teams and gotten more players interested in the game. In 1983, some of the best players decided to get together and try to bring the National title back to Boston.

The Midwest Region stayed pretty much the same, no longer growing in number of players or teams, and the Fisheads continued to dominate.

The Southern Region struggled more so than any other region, for both players and competition. Their skills were still very basic, simply because they had no chance to learn from the better teams since they didn't compete against them. Another factor contributing to the lack of progress in the South was that the men's teams in those areas were generally less sophisticated in their skills. Women's teams developed far faster and better if they had men's teams from which to learn. The Mid-Atlantic region was quietly coming into their own during the spring of 1983. The region was expanding in the number of players and interest was high.

The Western Region was expanding also. More teams and more players made this region highly competitive, by far the most competitive of all regions. Dark Star and the Condors were definitely on top in this region and simply had better skills and more experience.

The 1983 Nationals were held in New Orleans over Thanksgiving weekend. This year's tournament saw the return of the Fisheads (Central) and Dark Star (Western) joined by Gainesville (Southern), the Spinsters (Northeast), and Andromeda from Washington D.C. (Mid-Atlantic). Dark Star, the Spinsters and the Fisheads were the three best teams with the most experience and best skills. After tough battles between these top three teams, it was the Spinsters and the Fisheads in the Finals. The Fisheads emerged victorious in a come-from-behind fight. It was evidence in pool play in New Orleands that women's Ultimate was getting better overall. Better throws, fewer turnovers and tougher defense made the game a lot more exciting to watch.

Throughout the tournament, but especially in the finals, the zone defense was a big factor in New Orleans. Coupled with a strong wind, zone defense could completely stifle a team. Women didn't have the throwing skills necessary to beat it. Generally, the zone took a team out of their game offensively. Players were used to making hard running cuts and then swinging the disc up the sideline, each member having her position in the flow. When a zone was set up, the same cuts weren't successful. The weather in New Orleans Prompted most of the teams to play zone, and teams responded quite well. Although the throwing skills weren't good enough to go over the zones, the experienced teams adapted well by "dumping and swinging" the disc to go around the zone.

The spring of 1984 saw few new teams formed. The existing players continued to work on their skills, but as far as expansion of the sport, there really was none.

The Santa Barbara Condors were really the only team that showed much evidence of preparing for the Nationals in 1984. Much of the reason for this was the fact that they had never made it out of their region onto Nationals, always have been stopped by Dark Star. Another reason (Continued on page 17)

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The Road Warrior

HERE are a variety of thrills and adventures to the job of being a Road Warrior, and this job is something that we Ulti-players and old Mad Max have in common. But unlike Max, who must travel, survive, and compete for his very existence, we roadies travel the highways and biways of this vast country seeking and engaging a foe on a rectangular battlefield of grass or dirt, in which we hope to derive an agreeable emotion of pleasure from the encounter. We seek this foe and pleasure in any type of weather Ma Nature throws at us; be it under a blazing sun, in typhoon windstorms, or beneath a sweltering monsoon downpour, the Warriors take the field. We do this to extract joviality and mirth while playing in dead earnest and concentrated seriousness. It boils down to the word "fun," and the Warriors of both sexes will travel thousands of miles to have this so-called fun. We are the Road Warriors of today.

The road is one of the best friends we roadies have. She can give us insurmountable tales and experiences to expound upon, she can spur us on to new heights and new acquaintances, and she may provide a treasure chest of rich memories unattainable at any price. Ms. Road asks very little in return-a little time, a little gas, and maybe a little confusion or frustration-but she can give us the freedom of the open road and the freedom to ponder between pit stops. Sometimes she's tough, boring, bumpy, hilly, or unpredictable; yet, around each new bend, there might be a new adventure ready and ripe for exploration.

The roadies will hit the road at dawn or dusk, after an all-night blowout or work night, drive hundreds of miles through endless stretches of countryside, or struggle through rush-hour traffic for those few precious moments of glory. These roadies are willing to spend hours, even days, sitting upon lumpy backseats crammed between other roadies, just waiting for those minutes on the battlefield. They are willing to spend money (unlike other professionals who have others spend money on them) to get down the road (how does that old saying go? "Wish I had a dollar for every mile..."), and the roadies will sleep anywhere, in any position (floor of a gym, underneath a





canopy of redwood, on a back-breaking couch, back seat of a Volkswagen, Mom and Dad's) to restore the energy for the next battle.

Roadies carry a vast array of equipment to prepare and participate with. Whereas the only support on the battlefield is a pair of cleats and one's conditioning, there is a multitude of paraphernalia accompanying the warrior. Survival kits include: beach chairs, Ben-Gay, ice chests, tape jobs, sleeping bags, beer, backpacks, more beer, tape decks, dogs, munchies, and sunglasses. The tools of the Road Warrior not only make them feel more comfortable, but sharpen the mind and direct heavy doses of concentration onto the battle scene.

Poor Old Max had only the wasteland to view and explore, but the Road Warrior of this land is lucky, for it displays diversity, charm, and character at each separate battle site. These contact sites have surrounding environments that the Roadies sometimes take advantage of. We of the west have placed our fields amidst some of the lovelies spots mankind can offer mankind. Washington and Oregon are blessed with the Cascades and the color green: California has its beaches, and San Francisco, Colorado, and New Mexico can boast about eagles and High Country. In the Midwest, a tired Roadie can soak their feet in Old Man River, or dance the night away on a street call Bourbon. In the East, the road can lead to skyscraper and a view of the power and magnitude of a New York, or the quaintness of a New Englander's Boston town. The Road Warrior's eyes are open to new sights and new pleasures. This year's prize is the capital and its statues, monuments, and history (herstory) of bygone days. It is the reason Road Warriors from all sections of this land gather and do battle.

So we're on the road, Jack. We may be sore, or we may be mad, or we may be counting the stars overhead, or we may be watching the gas gauge slide toward that big Erelax, look around, you're on the road, Jack. These four lanes will take us anyplace—for we are the Road Warriors.

-Daniel Shradermeier

The Way It Flies

What is this new sport?
I was just told 'You'll love it'
'79 intramurals, no problem, it's simple
You just throw and catch it how could I know
I'd be playing it still, even as I grow old
So much joint pain and brain drain all for the plastic
Why don't I just stick to something less dramatic?

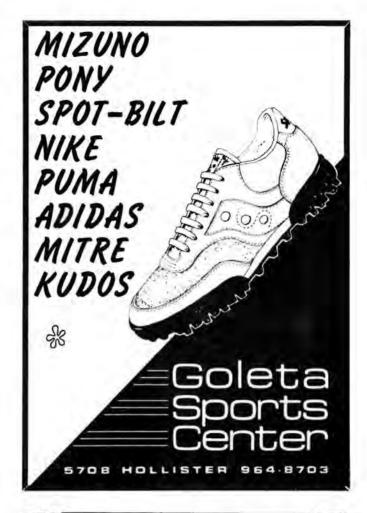
It could be the people, I've made many friends here Some enemies too, until the next beer Something new every day, a mistake is a lesson It slips into dreams, it's become an obsession Laughter and tears, a life of its own A million decisions whenever it's thrown Knowing your teammates will appear as you turn Hoping they'll cover because you've been burned Leaving your feet time slowing all motion What's with this sport and all its emotion?

You practice 1000 times but it will never be mastered 'Cause so many throws still turn to disaster You're always complaining, but still you want more Why am I hooked, will I always be poor?

Twenty years I've been throwing so it's not just the game I'm addicted to something; something's to blame Wherever we are, it catches our eyes

That's it! That damn Frisbee and the way that it flies

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Elements of Ultimate

ITH any sport, there are certain keys to watch, things that players do or don't do that determine the flow of the game. Let's look at some of the elements of Ultimate that will influence the game.

A stiff wind blowing the length of the field creates an *uphill-downhill* effect, with the majority of goals scored on this downwind goal. Teams score, then on the switch must defend the downwind goal. Should a team score into the wind, they have the advantage of throwing off with the wind at their back. The defensive advantage often results in a turnover and score. Thus the upwind goal creates a *two goal* advantage.

The wind also determines the type of defense teams will play. A strong head wind in the offense's face limits the range of passes available. A zone defense takes advantage of this. By filling in the short passing lanes the defense forces the offense to go up and over. The wind will then hold up the pass until the defense can get to it.

The wind also influences the "Defense of the 80s," the side line. The sideline defense uses the wind and the sideline of the field. When the disc approaches the sideline, the marker (man covering the disc) allows a pass straight downfield, but stops a pass back to the middle. This leaves a corridor down the sideline open for the thrower. The rest of the defense shades their person on the side of this corridor. The coordination of marker stopping passes to the middle and receiver defenders jamming the sideline forces the offense to try to force a pass into the defense or up in the wind.

So how does the offense ever score? This key to defeat either zone or man-to-man side line is to swing the disc from sideline to sideline. Against the zone teams swing to go around the zone or to stretch the zone, opening seams for a pass downfield. The swing against in sideline breaks the trap, once the disc moves away from the sideline. The defense is caught at shading the wrong side of the flow of the disc, receivers can spring away from their defense person.

Since it is the marker's responsibility to stop passes to the middle, the play between marker and man with the disc becomes a critical point of play.

In past years, the marker has become increasingly physical in an effort to stop the swing. Under the rules the thrower and marker must mutually maintain the diameter of a disc between them and the marker cannot stradle the thrower's pivot foot. The key is *mutually* maintain a disc's diameter. When the offense gets the disc, it naturally looks downfield, the marker moves in to stop the pass to the middle. When the thrower tries to pivot back to the swing, he runs into the marker. Increasingly, the thrower has become more aggressive in establishing his space.

-Greg Sharp

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(Continued from page 13)

they pushed so hard was due to the great respect and almost fear they had acquired for teams in the East and Midwest. Knowing that these teams had a lot of seasoned players with sharp skills, they wanted to be ready. All their hard work paid off and they beat a very tough San Diego team and the Dark Star team to qualify for the Nationals.

The 1984 Nationals were held in Santa Barbara, California. Except for the Condors, all the teams were repeats from 1983 (the Fisheads, the Spinsters, Andromeda and Gainesville). All their training proved to be worthwhile as the Condors won the 1984 National title, beating the Fisheads in the finals.

So now we are getting ready for the 1985 fall season. The teams that are preparing for this year's competition realize that the skills at this level of play have increased greatly. Teams need to be preapred to play against various defenses, including the side-trap and the zone, as well as the traditional straight-up one-on-one defense. Certain offensive strategies such as the "Stanford O," which was designed to beat a side-trap defense, the traditional 3-2-2 offense, and modifications of this, are being practiced. These offensive strategies combined with better and more complicated throws will be used to beat the defense. Players need to know how to throw not only their forehand and backhand, but also overheads, knifes, insideouts, gags, and push-passes. No longer are women limited by going around the zone. Now they will attempt to go over it.

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across from Perry's Pizza — 881 Embarcadero del Mar 968-8700 Another aspect that has this year's competitors training hard is the realization that players need to be in shape. The sport is just as strnuous and gruelling for women as it is for men, and it requires just as much physical effort and preparation. The game is more physically demanding today than it was a few years ago, when teams could get by on good throws alone. Defense has become a lot tougher and in turn placed more pressure on the offense.

In the last five years, we've seen the sport progress in certain aspects, and regress in others. We have stagnated in the sense of the number of players. The number of teams have remained constant, or have increased only by splitting up the existing teams into two or three smaller teams. The skills are better than they were in the past, and it's harder for a rookie to join in and feel comfortable as quickly as they could in the past. But women's Ultiamte needs these rookies to keep the sport alive. Unlike most other sports, we must create our own competition. And we need competition to make things like a National Championship title mean anything.

A majority of the players realize the situation women's Ultimate is in, and are willing to accommodate the new players. Individuals and teams have devised different ways to expand the sport in their areas. Whatever the plan, it is going to take some work and a lot of time but in the long run it will be worth it. I am optimistic that the women Ultimate players today are willing to put out this effort to produce a better skilled more competitive division of women's Ultimate.

-Ann Cohan



(Continued from page 5)

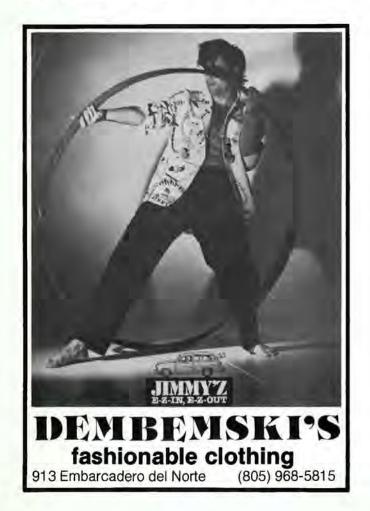
other than Dark Star, losing in the prelims to the Ultimates (now Windjammers) of San Diego at the Cal States. The April Fools Tournament found them in third place. The Santa Barbara Classic, a new but large tournament, found the Condors more united and equally skilled but not enough to outlast the intense "sisterhood" of Dark Star. The competitive frustration began to have a bitter taste. The nine-person Condor squad which traveled to the Eugene Solstice Tournament felt a resurgence of unity. played well, and went undefeated to the finals. The Solstice title regained by Dark Star added another second place to the 1983 record. The Worlds in August pitted a strong, well practiced team against a Midwest/Eastern conglomerate team who dominted in the semifinals with a zone defense-something for which the Condors were not prepared. The defending champions of the World tournament dropped to third place. What is going on?

Although the Condors again went undefeated through their sectionals, they knew they had to be tough in the throes of the Dark Star momentum. They proceeded undefeated to the Regional finals against, of course, Dark Star. The game was a well played, athletic game, but for the third year in a row the Condors stayed at home and Dark Star boarded the plane for the Nationals. The resounding question was "Why can't this team, with this talent and experience, win the Regionals?" Individually, leaving the scene of defeat, each player was answering that question for herself.

Back to the drawing board. Those whose commitment lacked and whose frustration was too great left the team. It was obvious that new strategies were needed, especially zone. One or two more experienced players wouldn't hurt. But above all, those with the most commitment knew that as a team the Condors needed to foster unity and psych. Four new players came to the team with experience and skill. The Condors had had many new players join and learn to play the game with the team, but never before had they had the luxury of adding experience of this calibre. The new players brought with them strategies the Condors needed and the confidence of having been National competitors-the one thing that had eluded the Condors for three years. Much practice, difficult transitions in individual roles and team strategies and an earnest effort to build unity yielded the deepest, most skilled team to compete in the 1984 season. The Dark Star vs. Condor match-up at the Regionals was as competitive as ever. This time, though, it was the Condors whose sights, set intensely on the Nationals, were unwavering. Finally, they would be the ones boarding the plane—"Wait, the Regionals are in Santa Barbara!"-oh well! The history was just as sweet.

The first women's team to go undefeated at the Nationals, the Condors had earned their way to the 1984 Women's National Championship title. Now at the Westerns, like all the teams here, they bring the culmination of this experience with hopes of again representing the West.

—Michele Pezzoli







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