



ULTIMATE FRISBEE CHAMPIONSHIPS

HOSTED IN HALIFAX FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS SUMMER

By Laura Graham

'Ultimate', can be as basic as two teams trying to throw a disc into an endzone and as complicated as figuring out the various ways to throw or "huck" the frisbee to your teammate. It combines the speed and endurance of soccer and basketball with the excitement and spectacular catches of football. And in most leagues, men and women play on the same team.

Developed in New Jersey nearly forty years ago, it is now played in nearly 50 countries around the world. This year, our country's Ultimate championships will be played in Halifax.

The Canadian Ultimate Championships will take place August 17-20. As many as one thousand players are expected to descend on the fields of Halifax and Dartmouth. This will be the first time the championship will be held in the Maritimes since it began in 1987.

The tournament director, Roy de Vries, says the tournament will benefit the sport locally, but it is also expected to benefit



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The Halifax Ultimate Recreational League, or HURL, will host the championship in August. HURL has been around since 1992 and has grown from four teams in the league to 45 teams. The sport has grown so much that there is now an indoor winter league and a fall league.

There are also leagues in New Brunswick and the numbers across Canada are growing every year. Anyone can join, by paying a league fee for the season. There are different levels to accommodate various abilities and it is often considered very good conditioning for other sports.

It helps to know how to throw and catch a frisbee well, but those skills develop quickly with practice. Because it involves a lot of running, players should be prepared to push their endurance levels. But it can be less tiring with more players on a team to make substitutions.

Generally, Ultimate leagues encourage good sportsmanship and fun as much as competitive play. At the end of many games, each team takes about five minutes to make up a song or a game for the other team. After sharing a few laughs, it is common for the players to socialize after the game.

To find out more information on the national championship and on the Halifax Ultimate league, check out the website at www.halifaxultimate.ca

Photos: Michael McAllister