

Conflict Management in the VUL

Disagreements vs. Disputes

In an ultimate game, we expect disagreements to occur. A simple example is "foul" and "contest". Everyone will not always have the same point of view. However, we do not expect or want extended arguments, heated disputes, verbal abuse, taunting, or unsafe play.

As a captain, your role in partnership with the other team's captain is to ensure disagreements are resolved before they become disputes or worse. Ensuring your players are familiar with the rules (maybe with guidance from the Rules Guru), and reminding them to ask questions will help them resolve issues on their own. In the cases where your involvement is necessary, you should still support players to reach a resolution themselves, if possible. This may include listening to their perspectives, involving the Rule Gurus, explaining the relevant rules, and using them to reach a resolution.

Spirit of the Game should be a guiding principle in all dispute resolution. Try and follow the course of action that will allow the game to continue in a fun and fair manner.

Resolving Conflicts

If there are any disputes, we ask Captains to follow 3 steps:

1. First discuss with the players and other Captain at the field.
2. If it's not resolved at the field, follow up by phone or email later
3. If it still remains unresolved, contact the League Manager.

For all disputes, "resolved" means you are confident that future games with that team will go well.

If disputes between players do escalate beyond a simple disagreement, here are some ways you can help resolve the situation at the field:

- Have the disc go back to the thrower. If there is no agreement that can be made between the players on the field, the disc should go back and play should re-start.
- If that isn't done in a timely manner, coordinate a time-out with the other captain to allow emotions to calm down, if necessary.
- If that still doesn't work (their emotions are too high and/or they are too invested in a particular outcome), pull the players involved off the field, substitute others in their place, and separate the players for a few minutes to calm down.

As soon as reasonably possible (after the point has completed or when the players are calm if they've been subbed off), discuss the dispute to attempt to come to a resolution.

- While remaining as objective and calm as you can, ask each player what they think happened (individually at first if necessary).
- Explain back to them what happened from your understanding, if appropriate. Even if you completely agree with one person, emphasize that it is possible that both are right from their perspectives.

- Remind the players that this is a recreational sport and the most important thing is that we are all enjoying ourselves. The outcome of one point or the game (even if it's playoffs) should be kept in perspective.
- If you managed to do all this and remained calm throughout, chances are very high that your players have now calmed down as well. If possible, have them shake hands.
- Bonus: go for a beer together after the game!

In your game report, you can summarize serious disputes that arose in the game

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If you would like to know more about handling specific situations, check out our [Rules FAQ page](#) or [Contact Us](#) for more information.