



IFDA Tournament Director Handbook

(Version 1.4)

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1. Aims of this booklet

The idea behind this booklet is simple – to give budding Tournament Directors a helping hand. Also, it is the hope of the IFDA Committee to standardise the way in which tournaments are run across the country. With this achieved, all tournaments will be more enjoyable, easier to run and importantly, safer for the players taking part.

Many thanks to all those who gave their valued opinions, no matter how big or small, and asked for nothing in return for the time and effort given to this cause. Special thanks to Dominick Smyth and Robin Giller whose advice was essential.

Please get back to me if there is anything you disagree with, anything you think could be improved or indeed with any comments about the Handbook you would like to share.

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2. The Basics

The first thing to sort out is the type of tournament you are hoping to run.

Among the many factors to take into consideration are:

Terrain:

- Indoor
- Outdoor
- Beach

Players:

- Beginners
- Experienced
- University
- Club
- National/International
- Any/All of the above

Division(s):

- School
- Junior
- Open
- Women
- Mixed
- Masters
- Any/All of the above

Venue:

At the moment the best venues available to Frisbee sports tend to be those of large Universities, colleges or privately owned sports grounds. However,



due to the work of the coaches and the committees of the past few years, this is slowly changing.

For University and college players, it is well worth approaching your respective Sports Board with a proposal to host an event. When going to such a meeting it is important that you are well prepared – explain how much your club has grown of recent (with membership figures at hand), how your results are constantly improving (in competitions they know of or competitions that are recognised by similar University Boards – Intervarsities (Indoor & Outdoor), UK Nationals etc.) and go on to mention the long-term benefits for the club, and in turn the college, if you were to hold the event.

Approaching sports grounds owned privately is more difficult, given they have the interests of their respective sport as their priority. A larger issue is cost. To use the grounds you will have to rent them and this cost will be reflected in the entry fees – the more expensive the grounds, the higher the entry fee, and in turn, the harder it becomes to attract teams to sign up.

The leg work needed to find a venue can be immense. It takes time, effort, determination and patience. As such, should not be left to one or two people. Get the whole club/team involved and search high and low. Don't underestimate the importance of the right choice of venue.



3. Manpower

The best tournaments aren't a one-man band. They are the work of many hands pulling in the same direction at the same time. Don't think for a second you can throw a tournament together on your own and expect it to run flawlessly. Before you sit down and plan your event try to organise some sort of committee or team to help you. Ideally the club/university/organisation you are a part of will be more than happy to help.

Delegate the work so lots of people are helping around the clock. Give out simple tasks and make sure they get done. In the end it is up to you to check on everything, regardless of how many people you have on board, or of how much you trust them. Write out a task list and make it public to the people involved. Draw up a timeline and set deadlines.

Don't forget to thank them at the end!



4. Timeline

A lot of planning goes into an ultimate tournament and this can start up to a year before the event even takes place. For new tournaments, you've got to decide what type of event you want to run, who your target attendees will be, where it's going to be on, who's going to help organise and loads of other things too. This is a rough timeline you should follow to help make the run up to the tournament as stress-free as possible.

6-12 months before:

This is the time for sorting out the high level features of your tournament

- What are you going to call the tournament (something catchy)?
- What format will it be (open, mixed, hat, etc): is there a gap in the market for what you hope to offer?
- Who is your target team base (national, foreign, pickup) and how many teams do you hope to host?
- When will the event be on (to within a month)?
- Who is going to help out with organisation / doing work for the tournament? It's good to set up a tournament committee of 3-4 people to get ideas going and also a ground staff of 10-20 to help with individual tasks closer to the date.

4-6 months before:

Now we get into more details and start booking venues, etc.

- Finalise the tournament date
- Pitch venue has to be booked. Make sure it's got all the facilities you need (shower blocks, parking, electrical outlets, camping). Give an estimation of the pitch space needed based on the number of teams you hope to host, plus some extra room in case. Also, find out if you can get the pitches lined, ask about insurance, is there a contingency plan in case of heavy rain.



- Book party venues: you will have a lot of people trying to go to the same place, so it has to be booked well in advance. Try to get the venue to give offers on food/drinks, etc. Ask them if costumes are ok, if you plan on having a themed party.
- Look into accommodation for the tournament: find out if any of your team mates are willing to put travelling players up in their house. Enquire about the availability of hostel beds, what price they are, are they likely to be busy when the tournament's on. You can also enquire with hotels about special room rates for large groups. Accommodation is the single most important thing to get right at an early stage so put some time into this.
- Do an estimation of the tournament costs: venue, food, prizes, discs, insurance, miscellaneous. This will help you decide what entry fee you will be charging. Will you be providing food for free or selling it?
- Get in contact with potential sponsors to let them know about the event and when it's on. See what kind of stuff you can get for free: supermarkets can often give some stuff out for free, once you give them lots of notice and ask nicely!
- Begin building the tournament website with basic information on the tournament, dates, locations, travel information, etc. This will be fleshed out a lot more when teams start signing up.

4 months to go:

This is when you let everyone know about the brilliant event you've got planned.

- With the date, venue, budget, accommodation and party information gathered you can announce the tournament to the world: send emails to all your Frisbee contacts and put it up on Ffindr. Include all the information you have in the email (and a link to the website) and make it sound as enticing as you can.
- Announce places available on the pickup team as well.



- As the requests for spots come back, you should update the website with the new teams and send reminder emails out to everyone, saying “tournament almost full” and “just a few spots left”.

1-3 months to go:

Fine details start coming out now and you should let everyone know about them.

- As the teams book their places you have to get information from them. Ask them how many players they are bringing, what the standard of the team is like, whether they would like you to sort out accommodation for them and that sort of thing.
- You should keep the venue updated with how many people you are expecting to show up. Don't be too annoying but you'll have an idea of the amount of pitches needed and you should tell them so they know what they should expect to have to line and what dressing rooms, etc they'll need to provide.
- Keep updating the website with the new teams added and any other information you get from the pitches, party venue, etc. Having a blog or a forum on the website is a great idea to keep banter going for the tournament
- You should ask teams to pay their fees at least 1 month before the tournament so you have enough cash to buy everything you need. It's also much easier than chasing people for it on the day or afterwards.

<1 month to go:

Getting close now and you need to sort out a lot of the on-the-ground stuff.

- Get the prizes sorted out early. Go down to the trophy shop and have a look at what they've got. Get quotes for all cups, medals, spirit prizes and engravings. Leaving this to the last minute is a bad idea if you want something decent to give out at your ceremony.



- If you're planning on playing music or need a PA to announce start/end of games book it well in advance as well.
- Get a design together for the pickup jersey so that it's ready to go when you have finalised numbers for the pickup team.
- If there are any unpaid teams, chase them up now.
- Arrange people to help out with all the menial tasks that will need to be done over the next few weeks. You'll need minions for buying food, cooking food, collecting teams from airports, bringing tables, etc to the pitches, setting cones out, carrying/filling water and many more things like that. It's good to let people know what their responsibilities are going to be in advance so they don't complain as much.
- Make sure you have the team seeding information right, and if you're missing some make sure to get it.
- Get the captains' packs ready with all the information you need (see captains' pack section).
- Get all the cones, pitch discs, water containers, etc needed for the tournament.

1 week to go:

Since you've sorted stuff out good and early, this week won't be as panicky as it could be.

- Write tournament schedule and send to captains, post on website.
- Send out captains' pack at least 5 days before the tournament.
- Get pitches lined by the ground staff at the venue.
- Buy all the food the day before the tournament and bring it to the venue to be stored somewhere cold and secure.
- Pick up the pickup jerseys.
- Meet the teams on the night before the tournament to make sure everyone arrived and is taken care of for accommodation.
- Turn up, mark out the pitches, set up the HQ, have the captains' meeting, start the games, enjoy 😊



5. Equipment & Amenities

The equipment you need is influenced by the type and quality of event you want to run, not to mention the budget. The following should be viewed as essential:

- Cones (of the collapsible variety)
- Pitch Discs
- A timer of some sort
- Hooter/Bell/Horn
- Water Supply

Given the physical demands of an ultimate tournament, it is important to have a ready supply of water. If there's no running water at the venue be sure to have organised a lot of bottled water. Failure to do this puts the safety of all competitors at risk.

To run a high quality event the pitches should be clearly marked. This can be arranged with the groundskeeper. Before getting the pitches lined ensure that you have permission to do so and that the groundskeeper is sure of the exact measurements. If you're hosting a Beach tourney, there's special pitch strapping you can buy online (e.g. - <http://www.port-a-field.com/links/ultimate-europe.html>). Alternatively, you could use rope of some variety but remember people will be standing/landing/falling on it.

Scoreboards are very helpful and can be paid for/provided by your University. They aren't cheap but are the type of thing you can include in a grant application. And, if it's an annual tournament they are certainly worth the investment.



Music – again, the type of event you are running and the budget you have to play with will determine whether or not you can afford a P.A. System to entertain the masses. It's a nice, but relatively expensive, touch. Also, you'll need to make sure you have permission from the venue.

IFDA Tournament Bag. This is a bag of equipment aimed at small to medium-sized tournaments that has everything a TD could need - cones, scoreboards, large water bottles and even a set of the latest rules, all for only €50. Full details can be found here:

http://www.irishultimate.com/players/tournament_bag.php

From an Amenities perspective it is vital that there are at least toilets at the venue. Changing rooms with showers (hot or cold) are important too, but not vital. Often players can shower, change etc. after the event wherever they are staying. All players will need a shop at some stage in the day, be it for a chocolate boost or something more serious – plaster etc. You should try and know the nearest hospital too (First Aid is addressed later in the Handbook).



6. Scheduling & Seeding

The main functions of a schedule are:

1. To provide teams with the correct information on when, where & against whom they play.
2. To ensure each team has a fair chance of winning.
3. To ensure all games start and end on time.
4. To provide ample opportunity for all teams to eat, rest and play.

A fair draw

The schedule and the seeding are intertwined. Before you start planning your schedule make sure you have the seedings correct. The most straight forward way to seed a tournament is to use the final standings from the previous year. Winners last year are first seeds this year, etc.

If this is the first year of your tournament, you can base the seedings on the results of recent events featuring the same teams (league, intervarsities, other tournament). If you don't have this information for certain teams, because it's their first time at your tournament or their players have changed, you should ask them to tell you about themselves, maybe in relation to a team you know near them, or ask them for some recent results of their own. Ask the Team Captains to detail what strength team they are bringing to your tournament. There's no point in seeding a team high based on their reputation, only for them to send beginners (or only 7 players) and ruin the entire draw.

It is important to get the seedings right and they require some time to perfect. Another good idea is to run your seedings past an experienced tournament director or player, who might be able to suggest some alterations, if any are needed.



Format

Once the seeding is complete, there are a number of formats the schedule can take: open draw, peer pooled, Swiss draw, league, etc. The format you choose should suit the number of teams at your tournament, the equality of standard and your own personal preference. A description of these formats is given below:

League:

- Suitable for tournaments of < 8 teams
- All teams play each other once in the league
- After all pool games, finals consist of 1st v 2nd, 3rd v 4th, etc

Open Draw:

- Suitable for 8-16 teams of relatively equal standard
- All teams have equal opportunity of winning tournament
- 2 to 4 pools of teams should be made, distributing high and low seeded teams evenly throughout the pools. For a 16 team tournament the pools will look something like:

Pool A: 1, 7, 9, 15

Pool B: 2, 8, 10, 16

Pool C: 3, 5, 11, 13

Pool D: 4, 6, 12, 14

- Each team will play each other team in the pool
- First place teams from the pools will advance directly to quarter finals
- 2nd and 3rd placed teams in pools will cross over to fill remaining 4 quarter final positions (see crossovers below)
- Following crossovers, the teams are split into two divisions (cup and plate) and a knockout format decides the winners of each division (see knockout below)



Peer pooled:

- Suitable for 16-24 teams of mixed standard
- Getting the seeding correct is very important for a peer pooled format, as the higher seeded teams have a somewhat easier path to the final, in that they have to play less games to get there, although the games are against tougher opposition
- The top 8 teams could be split into two pools as follows:

Pool A: 1, 3, 5, 7

Pool B: 2, 4, 6, 8

- The remaining teams are split into pools with an open draw format
- Following pool play, crossovers can be arranged between any of the teams from the top section and an equal number of high finishing teams from the lower section. ie:
 - 1st and 2nd placed teams in the peer pools (top 8) following pool play advance directly to quarter finals
 - 3rd and 4th place teams in peer pools cross over against the four next highest seeds to determine who advances to quarter finals
 - Winners of these crossovers go to quarter finals of cup division, losers go to quarter finals of plate division
- Remaining teams may cross over for further plate quarter final places or advance directly depending on number of teams
- See Cork Open 2008 schedule in appendix for example of this format

Swiss draw:

- Best suited for > 24 teams
- In the Swiss draw format, a team's seeding changes based on the result of their previous game and the number of "victory points" they were awarded for that game



- Teams with a similar amount of victory points will play each other in each round, with the purpose being to have each game be played by teams of roughly equal standard
- It is quite a complicated format and more information can be found by checking out the Windmill Windup schedule:
www.windmillwindup.com

Crossovers:

- Crossover games can be used to correct unfair pooling of teams (eg some pools may be “stronger” than others)
- Following pool play, teams finishing low in one pool play teams that finished high in another pool. ie: 4th v 1st, 2nd v 3rd. The winners of the crossover game “take” the higher seeding of the two teams playing
- From the open draw pools given above, crossovers would be as follows:

5 v 12, 6 v 11, 7 v 10, 8 v 9

Knockout:

- Following pool play and crossovers, the teams should be divided into divisions of 8 and knockout games go like:

<u>Quarters</u>	<u>Semis</u>	<u>Final</u>
1 vs. 8		
	1 vs. 4	
4 vs. 5		
		1 vs. 2
3 vs. 6		
	2 vs. 3	
2 vs. 7		



The best way to ensure a tournament runs smoothly is to aim to host a multiple of 4 in terms of teams. 8/12/16/20/24 – this kind of format is easy to schedule for, as we've seen above. Of course that is much easier said than done and it is often the case that a tournament will attract 15 teams or 22 teams or any sort of awkward number. These aren't too difficult to work around; you just have to be creative with the format. For example, with 13 teams, you could setup a pool of 4 and three pools of 3 to start. You could have crossovers afterwards, as before, and a knockout for teams 1-8, with a league to decide final positions for teams 9-13. No matter how many teams you've got at your tournament, another tournament has been run with that same number, so you can always find someone to help out.

Scheduling and Timing

The time keeping is entirely your responsibility as TD. You cannot expect teams involved in games to keep time. Be clear in your Captain's Pack as to exactly how long games will be and as to exactly what happens when the time is over. Be sure to let them know what to listen for (a jingle, a horn, a bell etc.) and when it will be sounded – will you give a 5-minute warning and if so will it be different from the End of Game sound? What will happen when it is sounded? E.g. – 'Hooter goes, finish point and add 2 to the highest score' or maybe 'Hooter goes = game over as soon as the point ends – if it's a draw play a final point'. Give examples and be clear. These are simple details that you can decide weeks in advance. Just be prepared.

Part and parcel of the schedule's timing is that there is ample time between games for games to run over (as they tend to), or for teams to get to the next pitch, or for players to get food/water on board. For example, if the games are 50mins long, allow 10-20mins before the start of the next game.



Provisions should be made to allow teams time to eat during your tournament. Options include a lunch break, a game off or simply a longer gap between games. The length and type of break can be dependent on the type of tournament and the level of competitors attending.

The number and length of games, the break between games and any need to have back to back games should be appropriate to the level of competitors attending. While beginner teams may prefer numerous short games with big breaks, experienced teams may want less games of a longer length and may not have a problem with back to back games. Publicising your schedule well in advance of the tournament will give all teams the opportunity to comment and say if they are unhappy with the form and game structure.

The more pitches you have at your venue, the easier it is to schedule the games, and keep the pitch surfaces intact for as long as possible. A general rule of thumb is 2 pitches per 5 teams entered and otherwise, the more the better!

Where? When? Against Whom?

Make the schedule easy to read with the time, opponent and pitch number obvious. If you have lots of pitches, or if they are laid out/numbered in an unusual manner, provide a map. Similarly, the pitches need to be numbered clearly – either spray the number onto the corner of the end zone, or number them using posts with numbers attached to the posts. Whatever you choose, be sure to let teams know.

If there are any changes to your schedule as the day goes on, inform everyone as soon as you can. If needs be you can always hold an Emergency Captain's Meeting.



A Master Schedule is an easy and effective way of keeping everyone up to date. Stick it up on the wall and get teams to tell you their results as games finish. As the scores come in, write them up and then it's easy to follow for you and for the players - everybody's happy.

It's also a good idea to bring a list of the first games on Sunday morning to the party on Saturday night, to make sure everyone knows to turn up on time. Also, maintaining a list of the next round of fixtures (semi-finals, crossovers, etc), where they're on and at what time, at tournament HQ is a helpful way to remove any confusion over the schedule.



7. Food & the Party

Food

Budget, budget, budget! Depending on your projected cash flow you need to decide long in advance what you plan to provide in the way of food. Cheap options are simple and keep most players happy. More expensive options are reflected in what you charge in terms of player & team fees. As well as your budget, you need to think of the *style* of event you are running – is there something you want to convey - a sense of style/generosity perhaps? Or are you simply focusing on providing the venue and letting the teams feed themselves?

Even the most basic of tournaments offer fruit and water by the side of the pitch. This can be bought on the morning of the event.

Breakfast –best to keep it simple - fruit, cereal, bread & condiments. If you feel like going further, porridge, tea and coffee are an option too. Lunch – more expensive again unless you cook vats of food the night before.

Sandwiches are an easy option too. Depending on the tournament size, it's a good idea to stagger lunch so 20 teams aren't ravenously rooting through everything at the same time. Dinner – very few tournaments provide dinner due to its cost. One company/restaurant providing all the food for everyone can bring the cost down.

Party

How many parties are you going to have? Friday night Welcome Party, big Saturday night party and maybe even Sunday night farewell. Book venues early, make sure everyone brings ID, rent a DJ/Band, decorate the venue, provide directions/themes as early as you can and keep in contact with the venue. Be aware that few venues will expect exactly what an ultimate party will bring so be prepared to give them some warning.



8. Accommodation

Always offer as many options as you can. It sounds obvious but make a list catering for people who want to stay in comfort – Hostels, B&Bs, Hotels, and for those who have very little money – hosting teams on player's floors, camping. If people are hosting a team/a few players make sure both the host and the new arrivals have the address, a meeting point and contact details. It may be helpful to organise before hand if the hosts are going to provide breakfast. If they are, that may be something you could help out with using the funds from the tournament.



9. Website

A website is the easiest way to communicate all of the above – its easy to access, it can be updated quickly and it can set the theme for the whole tournament. Before the tournament begins it's a great way of advertising the event. Once the teams are registered it's a great tool for communication and, when the dust has settled, it's a perfect platform from which to reminisce – photos, results, stories and most importantly, the date for next year's event!

Maps and Directions can also be included on your website. NB - If your tournament is a particularly large event, maps of the playing fields will be needed to be provided on the day as well.

Over the past 3 months FFindr has become an essential tool for TDs. In addition to being a site where you can advertise your tournament, team and post results, you can now use it as a site that teams/players can register through. More info at <http://www.ffindr.com>



10. Feasibility

A question that should be asked as early as possible is: "Is this tournament feasible?" There's no point in working yourself, and others, to the bone only to end up out of pocket and frustrated. So, before you begin, ask yourself the following:

Is the event possible?

Can it be run at a profit, or at least break even?

Is it a risk worth taking?

Do you have the time, energy, support to make it happen?

If the answer is no to any of these, then shelve the plan until later in the year or until next season, when you might have the means to pull it off.



11. Publicity

Publicising your tournament is vital to its success. Many of the common methods can be quite costly. That said, websites, emails and word of mouth are easily organised for free and often attract the most attention. Possibilities include:

- o Website
- o Emails (Mailing Lists: Pookas, Euro Disc, Brit Disc)
- o Word of mouth
- o Posters
- o Flyers (hand out at other tournaments)
- o Banner (put up when abroad at other events)
- o Local Newspapers



12. Sponsorship

In Ireland few tournaments have been sponsored and it is an area ready for the sport in my opinion. If you are going to aggressively look for a sponsor make sure your application:

- Looks professional and is thorough
- Is well laid out
- Gives the potential sponsor options (i.e. they can give a range of amounts of money, not just one amount)

So far the following have proven most open to sponsorship (often by way of product donation):

- o Red Bull
- o Local amenities



13. Safety

First Aid cannot be ignored. It is better for you as a TD, and for all participants in your event, if you presume there will be at least one or two injuries per day.

If you have large funds at your disposal, you can supply on site ambulance care from one of the following (amongst others!):

- St Johns Ambulance: <http://www.stjohnambulance.ie/>
- Irish Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.ie/>
- Sustain First Aid: <http://www.sustainfirstaid.com/eventcover.html>
- Civil Defence: <http://www.civildefence.ie>

If your budget is tighter, you should have a fully equipped First Aid Kit and easy access to ice. You might also consider having a designated person available to drive any injured players to hospital.

NB – Players' safety is YOUR issue. You need to be aware of anything that happens, as soon as it happens and be ready to react quickly. Ideally have a plan of action prepared for all eventualities. This plan should include the often overlooked but integral detail – where is the nearest hospital?

The IFDA Emergency Fund is an initiative implemented in April, 2009 by the IFDA Committee. The fund was started to help support any player injured at an IFDA-affiliated tournament. Full details can be found here:

<http://www.irishultimate.com/ifda/emergency.php>

It should be noted that this fund is for all players in Ireland and needs to be contributed to as often as possible. When you're totting up the finances for your event please consider making a donation to the fund. If every TD donated €50-€100 the fund would soon be able to offer improving financial aid to a larger amount of the playing population in our community.



14. Insurance

Insurance is a tricky area. The current IFDA policy is one of Public Liability Insurance which basically saves the Association from being sued by an injured third party. For the IFDA to get a multi-location, multi-purpose, all-covering insurance policy we would need to pay more than the total of everything we have ever had in our bank account. In other words, it is not feasible.



15. Finances & Accountability

From an organisational point of view, budgeting for your tournament can help it run smoothly. How much do you expect to come in from team and player fees in comparison to how much is going out on venue rental, party facilities, first aid crew or anything else you are providing. Having a budget will enable you to ensure nothing ends up costing too much, thus ensuring you are able to make a profit off the tournament.

Making a profit from running a tournament is perfectly acceptable. Given the amount of work that goes in to organising one, the organisers deserve to be compensated. Hosting a tournament is not, however, a way to finance your club or yourself for the following year.

All tournament directors are encouraged to publicise the accounts from their tournament. This is an easy way to show the rest of the community what their money was used for and how much profit was made. This allows teams the best opportunity to decide for themselves if the tournament was worth the price.

Any tournament that can confidently say the level their entrance fee is justified should have no problem publishing their accounts. Concern that these accounts may reflect badly on the tournament should cause the entrance fee to be re-evaluated or the set up of the tournament to be examined.



16. The Captain's Pack

The Captains Pack should be sent as early as possible (at least one week before the tournament) and ideally should have the schedule with it. It must include **all information** about your tournament especially the fundamentals:

- TRAVEL: How to get to city and in turn the venue, by public & private transport. Google Maps, Bus/Train timetables & directions for cars.
- ACCOMMODATION: Where to stay, costs, how to find the hostels/B 'n' Bs etc. NB – this info should be available months in advance, what you're sending in the captains pack is more phone numbers & directions than anything else.
- FOOD: Lists of takeaways, restaurants and shops near the tournament are vital and save captains a huge amount of pressure/hassle.

Remember, this is your final chance to convey any important updates to ALL the captains and, in turn, to all the players. Make sure you read through the captain's pack thoroughly before sending it out.



17. Spirit of the Game

Decide on your system early and make sure it's included in the captains pack. Make sure instructions are clear as to how it will work and if possible publish Spirit scores after the tournament.

For the latest WFDF/BULA Spirit Sheet go here:

<http://www.wfdf.org/index.php?page=rules/spirit.htm>



18. After the tournament

A great way to wrap up your tournament is to provide a report, both to the teams involved and to the community as a whole. This can help people who weren't there know what they missed and what they can expect if they attend next year.

This report can include the final standings and may also include the final spirit rankings, a lost and found list and is a chance for the organisers to say anything they may have forgotten during the closing ceremony.



19. Advice/Thoughts from other TDs

Roger Beatty:

- Maps: It's almost certain that when you're at the pitches and ready to get the tournament under way, you will get a phone call asking how to get to the pitches. Knowledge of the area and how to get to the destination is crucial. Street maps are probably the best to have.

When sending out the captain's pack you should try and include a google map making it very easy to read and including all the new features.

Peter Gaston:

One point I'd be keen to emphasise is that tournaments need not be that elaborate. One of my fears of putting all this information together is that people look at it and think: "Agh! I don't have insurance (or whatever), so it's probably best that I don't run anything." The scale of the tournament is a consideration. So a small competition with your mate's teams should be able to navigate past larger obstacles (though if he turns out at every practice it's near impossible!).

So our first tournaments were small affairs for friends to invite other friends to. Schedule was just a round-robin, no catering needed as they were so small, the only costs were the trophies, didn't publicise/insure/accommodate/party etc. But was it worthwhile? Yes! And those small informal tournaments were key to any success we now enjoy.

And not only this but it's important that these tournaments don't graduate into bigger, grander affairs. Up here in the North (and I think everywhere else) we need to have informal opportunities to play. In my opinion, the bigger the tournament / occasion the less likely beginners are willing to participate. So we need to retain our small, informal tournaments as well as create bigger platforms to play on.



Mark Earley:

Be prepared for things to go wrong. Anything can happen on the day so try and have a Plan B for nearly all parts of the tournament - a back-up schedule, other plans for a party – just try and cover your back just in case!

Be flexible. Sometimes things need to be changed last minute - a team might pull out, a pitch might be unplayable. Captains (and their teams) will understand that it wasn't your fault. Listen to other people's advice, work with your team or organisers and move on. So long as people know you're trying to do your best for them they will not complain.

Put pen to paper before you present the awards! You'll always forget someone important if you don't and you'll regret it. Before you make any speeches think of what you want to say.



20. Appendix

In the Appendix you will find attachments of sample player/captain packs, sample schedules, sample receipts (should you need them) and even sample 'To Do' lists. Please note, these examples are provided as written by the TDs themselves. All credit should go to the various people who have supplied them.

Sample Captain/Player Packs

DUB 2009

Belfast Easter Special 2009

Open Intervarsities - Outdoors 2009

Siege of Limerick 2009

Cork Open 2005

Sample Schedules

DUB 2009

Open Intervarsities Outdoors 2009

Sample schedule and costing 2009

Sample Receipts

Receipt to team for Intervarsities 2009

To team for development tournament 2009

To Do Lists

- General on the day
- From Podge