



Edmonton Ultimate Players Association

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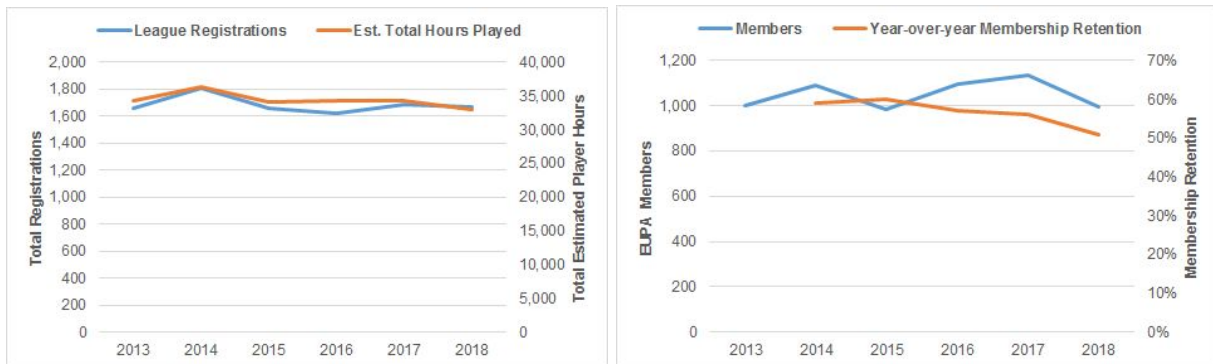
Changes to Tuesday Summer League

February 2019

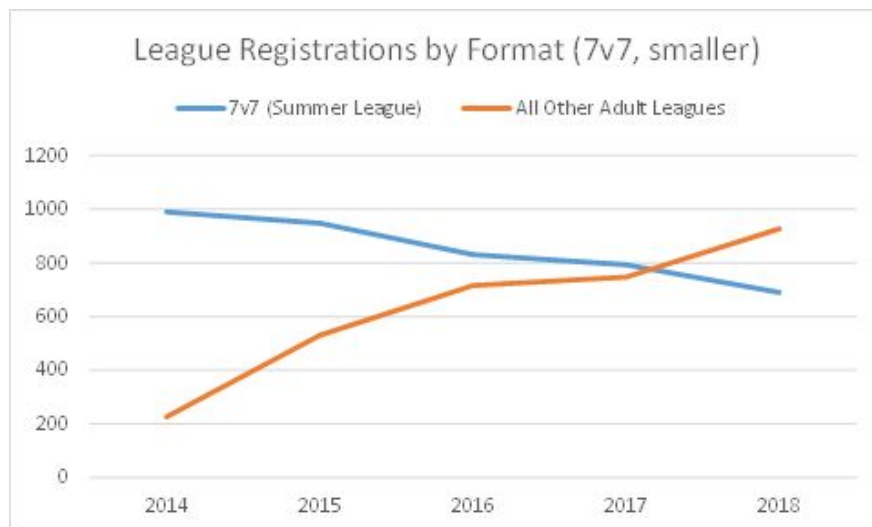
Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their thoughts and feedback through our Tuesday 5-on-5 survey and by email. We'd like to take this opportunity to respond to some of the comments requesting additional context surrounding the decision, and insight into the procedure that was followed for board approval.

Context on the decision

The key area of focus coming out of EUPA's strategic planning process for 2017-2022 was Growth. We benchmarked ourselves against other cities and found that EUPA membership per-capita is roughly *half* the size of other Canadian cities (on average). Moreover, EUPA membership involvement seemingly peaked around 2013/2014, and has been net flat or in decline since then. Over that same time period, the average age of EUPA members has been slowly rising.



Unfortunately EUPA's status quo has failed to sufficiently attract new members and/or retain existing ones to fuel the growth of Edmonton Ultimate. That being said, an important underlying trend was discovered when digging deeper into the data: while our traditional 7v7 leagues have been declining (especially Tuesday), our smaller formats have actually been on the rise.



This observation seems consistent with broader national patterns, as smaller versions of Ultimate have been on the rise at both recreational & competitive levels, both indoors & outdoors. There was even a dedicated presentation on this trend at the Ultimate Canada Conference '17, in which the Montreal organization found smaller structures' popularity outstripping 7v7 (in addition to enabling more games for more members in a given field space).

EUPA also conducted a survey of former members that have *not* returned, and one of the common pieces of feedback was difficulty forming and/or joining teams. Another barrier was achieving adequate and consistent attendance throughout the season, especially with female identifying players.

The interpretation of all this information led the board to the conclusion that a change in structure to a smaller 5v5 format presents an opportunity to enable our existing community to more easily participate and additionally grow and share the sport with more newcomers.

Approval process

1. The Growth & Development committee (GDC) reviewed membership data to identify trends and conducted outreach surveys with past members,
2. The GDC recommended that EUPA try converting one of its two 7v7 summer leagues to 5v5 in order to address the macro trends it had identified,
3. The EUPA Board reviewed the proposal and approved a 2-year trial to start summer 2019,
4. The EUPA Board presented these plans in its 2018 Annual Report and at its 2018 AGM,
5. EUPA recently sent out a membership-wide email asking for feedback (see below),
6. EUPA will work with membership to roll out the change, solicit ongoing feedback, and iterate throughout the process

Looking Forward

As we enter into this 2 year trial, we are expecting a few immediate benefits to the registration process:

- Smaller teams make it easier for captains of newer or struggling teams to fill a roster
- Smaller teams enable a more effective placement program for players signing up as individuals or small groups
- Existing teams can share the sport with more friends without going over roster limits by splitting into two teams (though we do recognize splitting / reshuffling can bring challenges as well)

On field, we look forward to an enhanced and more balanced playing experience:

- Fewer players results in more opportunities with the disc for all those on the field.
- Reduced field size facilitates an easier understanding of timing and spacing on the field for newer players,
- Reduced field size creates a new challenge for experienced players to refine their skills in an alternate game format

One of the biggest potential benefits of shrinking the format is the prospect of hosting the entire community together at the same location every week. We are really excited about some of the related possibilities that could accompany an emphasized community environment: food trucks, field-side childcare, and other community-building ideas are in the mix (send us yours!).

While big changes are always scary, we firmly believe this is a big step forward for the growth of Ultimate within the Capital Region, and are committed to working with our membership to make as smooth and successful as possible.

Additional rules updates based on survey feedback (94 responses so far)

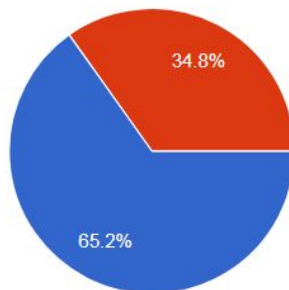
The outcome:

1. One timed game per night (instead of double-headers)
2. Pull play (instead of Continuous or “Speed Point”)
3. Stalls to 10 (instead of 8 or 6)

The survey data:

Would you prefer one game per night or a weekly double header?

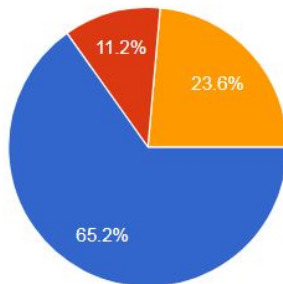
89 responses



- One 90-minute game per night.
- Two 45-minute games per night. Both games would take place at the same field location but would require one team to move which field they are playing on.

What is your preferred style of play?

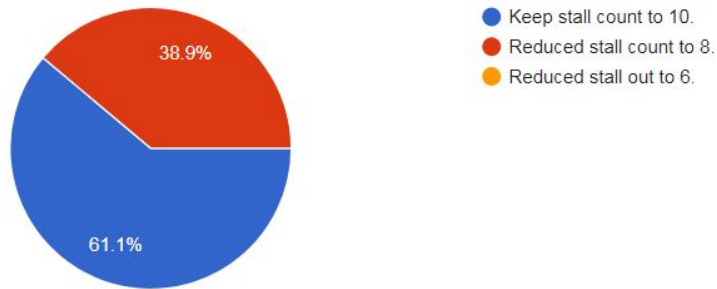
89 responses



- Pull play - Same as traditional Ultimate with a pull to start each point, and subs between points.
- Speed point - Only 2 pulls per game, one to start the game and one to start the 2nd half. After a point is scored the disc should be placed on the ground.
- Continuous play - Only 2 pulls per game, one to start the game and one to start the 2nd half. No stoppage between points, when a team scores.

What is your preference for stall count?

90 responses



Please do keep sending in your thoughts - we'll continue to watch the survey [\[link\]](#), conduct in-person surveys at the fields, and use follow-up surveys during the outdoor months to see how things are going. The GDC and EUPA Board will be using this feedback to continue to examining and adjust our leagues to generate the growth and interest in Ultimate we are all working for.