

Proposal WFDF 2010.12: Use Continental Championships as qualifiers for World Championships submitted by Jonathan Potts

A. Background:

Regardless of the outcome of other motions to reshape World Ultimate Championships 2012, the tournament runs a real risk of demand for team allocations exceeding the supply of fields and other infrastructure at the tournament.

Although WUC has never been full, it has been very close to filling up, and a tournament in Europe, given recent growth in WFDF membership numbers, and the popularity of WFDF's 2010 tournaments (WUCC2010, WU23UC2010, WJUC2010 = total possibly 200 teams), would almost certainly not be possible without limiting numbers of teams or finding a venue larger than any one we've ever had.

Very rarely have WFDF venues been able to cater for more than 100 teams.

In parallel with this growth in membership and interest in World Championships, WFDF has attempted to run Continental Championships in Pan-America and Asia-Oceania since 2003, with the following results:

2005 Pan-American Championships held in Sao Paulo attracted very little interest (? how many teams exactly?)

2007 Pan-American (Club?) Championships in Mexico City cancelled due to lack of interest (???)

2007 Asia-Oceania Championships held in Taiwan with only a mixed division = 6 teams

2009 Pan-American Club Championships in Dominican Republic cancelled due to lack of interest

2009 Asia-Oceania Club Championship only successful by merging it with an already existing club tournament, Manila Spirits.

In fact, these events were so insignificant that WFDF does not even list participation on its own register:

http://wfd.org/index.php?page=history/worlds_participation.htm

In 1999, WFDF Congress decided to move from the successful 2 year cycle that had been run since 1988 (alternating Worlds and World Clubs), to a 4 year cycle in order to allow Continental Championships to develop. Unfortunately, this has not been successful outside of Europe, despite many attempts over the past 10 years. Something significant needs to change. That significant change will be making attendance at continental championships a pre-requisite for attending World Championships.

Both Pan-America and Asia-Oceania contain 2 of the top 6 countries worldwide across almost all divisions (USA/Canada and Japan/Australia). In addition, both have countries that could be considered top 16 countries: Venezuela/Colombia and New Zealand/Taiwan/Singapore/The Philippines. Although neither have the geographical and economic advantages of Europe, both Pan-Americans and Asia-Oceania Championships could feature high quality of play and reasonable depth to the tournament.

If played over 2 or 3 days in 2011, they would not be a significant encumbrance on the countries involved, in terms of cost or time taken off work, while delivering a high quality tournament that will help their national teams to develop for Worlds 2012.

European Championships is not run by WFDF. Although WFDF is currently talking with the European Ultimate Federation (EUF) regarding closer cooperation, even if that is not successful, it can be expected that the EUF will be happy for European Championships to be a qualifier for Worlds, even subject to some small requests (such as enforcement of WFDF membership). If not, to be fair to the other continents, it will be difficult to award many bids to Europe if they don't hold a qualifier, and those bids would need to be awarded based on past performance at Worlds..

Teams will qualify based on their final finish at continental championships. Each continent will be awarded a certain number of team spots, based on host nation status, participation at continental championships, and past strength at WUC.

It may be possible to allow countries to field two teams at continental championships. That will allow greater depth at the tournaments, and more development for the stronger countries that can send two teams. Only the top ranked team would be able to secure a spot to WUC.

Further exploration of possible qualification mechanisms is contained in the separately circulated Event Cycle Discussion Paper.

B. Proposal Wording:

That WFDF uses Continental Championships as qualifiers to World Ultimate Championships. If a continent doesn't hold a suitable championship, then an alternative method of selecting teams will be developed that reduces the number of spots that continent is allocated, and uses purely past performance at Worlds to decide which teams get those spots.

C. Pros/Cons:

Pros	Cons
Existing framework of qualifying tournaments, but need to be bolstered by a move like this.	
The top countries that participate will be helping to increase the level of ultimate play on their continent, which will reap dividends far into the future.	Top 2 nations in each continent may not think that participating is worth the costs, and would prefer a qualifying method based on 2008 WUGC results.
Helps to bring EUF closer to WFDF through obvious cooperation.	
Allows more countries to compete at the international elite level.	
Even the top countries will benefit from the competition that their national teams will be exposed to, not too far from home.	
WFDF avoids another round of unsuccessful continental championships.	

D. Financial Implications:

Assuming 30 teams across 3 divisions at both 2011 events, ie 1200 players @ \$20 per player (to be confirmed), revenue to WFDF in 2011 will increase by US\$24,000. Some costs will be incurred to support the events.

E. Conclusion:

It is imperative that WFDF is proactive in limiting the size of World Ultimate Championships. In order to do so, it will need a qualifying process. The obvious choice is to use the continental championships, and a side benefit is that it will help to make those events successful and boost elite ultimate across those continents.

Submitted on May 22 2010 by Jonathan Potts, WFDF President