

Candidate Statement

It is my intention to run for the WFDF Board as the Overall Committee Chair.

I have been involved in flying disc sports as a player for 17 years, and as an organizer for 15 years. I am one of a select few current players who have played all of the sports recognized by the WFDF, so I have a unique perspective through my connections to every disc sport community both through my work online and also as a competitor.

Jack Cooksey, the Tournament Director of the WOC 2019 in Richmond, introduced me to Overall in 2011 after seeing one of my MTA videos on Youtube. He invited me to the 2011 WFDF WOC in Fort Collins, CO where I was fortunate enough to meet some of the greats including Dan Roddick, Jim Palmeri, Snap Conger, John Kirkland, Tita Ugalde, Harvey Brandt, Beth Verish, and Mark & Susie Horn. I heard stories about the World Frisbee Championships at the Rose Bowl, the first college ultimate game, the origins of Spirit of the Game, the history of disc golf, and the history of frisbee itself, and I discovered the incredible possibilities that exist with frisbee.

Since then, I've competed in every World Overall Championship (2013 & 2015 in Sweden, and 2017 in Basingstoke), US Open (2012, 2014, 2016, 2018), VA State Frisbee Tournament (2012-2018), and two Minnesota State Overall Championships.

Overall is my favourite sporting event. My background in track & field and swim meets gave me the experience of a multi discipline sporting event, and the passion and desire to be a multi sport athlete. Since first finding out about the Overall in 2011, I have dedicated myself to teaching others what is possible with frisbee and in the last 5 years, I have visited more than 250 schools, ran more than 3,500 workshops, and taught more than 100,000 kids about the possibilities that exist with frisbee, including teaching them about Overall.

Although I have many big plans for frisbee, I also realize the importance of establishing near-term goals which can help build towards more long-term goals. They are:

1. **WFDF WOC 2019** – Since the TD, Jack Cooksey, is a close friend, we have already been discussing the WOC 2019 for more than a year. I stayed with Jack in April for a few days and he gave me a site tour where the events are going to be held. We have been talking about ways to get more players into the overall since 2011, and in particular, how to create a few events leading up to the WOC in order to attract new players to frisbee and the Overall. As I have competed and helped coordinate ultimate, disc golf, and Overall competitions over the last 15 years, I will be doing as much as I can to help Jack and the rest of the team with the planning and running of the WOC 2019.
2. **Growing the Overall** – Something that I have been interested in since first getting into frisbee is showing, teaching, and providing opportunities for people of all ages to play frisbee – whether it's ultimate, disc golf, or just playing catch. Jack introduced me to the term "Ageless Game" which is what I have been referring to the sport of frisbee ever since (over 7 years now). I even created www.agelessgame.com which is a website dedicated to the possibilities that exist with frisbee including the disc sports recognized by WFDF and a list of frisbee games, which is constantly being updated as more games are added. I believe the path to growing the sport of frisbee is quite simple. Showing what's possible, teaching people to throw & catch, and providing opportunities to play and watch. I am heavily involved in disc golf and the work the disc golf community is going to grow the sport of disc golf is inspiring. I will lean on the work they're doing to help grow the sport of Overall and borrow ideas and share resources which will ultimately help all of the disc sport communities. I will also work closely with the WFDF member associations to find out their needs, help provide support, create and provide resources, help establish Overall events (mini or full Overall competitions) to help show their ultimate and disc golf communities about what is possible with frisbee, and work to grow the global participation number of not only

Overall, but frisbee in general. I know first hand from starting off as an ultimate player how easy it is to get caught up and laser focused on one discipline, so I understand the WFDF member federations who are hesitant to include, support, or work to grow the Overall. I will work closely with them to ensure they have the support they need and develop a trusting, working relationship so they will give us a chance to introduce the other disciplines into their country and to their members. One of the first steps is to identify those countries who already have strong disc sport communities (Finland and Estonia for disc golf, Berlin for freestyle and disc golf, China for beach ultimate), and also countries who have very vocally expressed resistance to disc sports outside of ultimate and disc golf, as they are prime for support and initiatives to introduce and grow the other disc sports.

3. **Throwing Certification** – A few years ago, I built www.throwto.me as part of one of the Overall committee initiatives. Although that project has stalled, the website is very close to being completed, and I will work to launch that project. The project is based very closely on the IFA Proficiency test from 40 years ago, and I believe that it's a great way to introduce frisbee to teachers, kids, families, and those who haven't heard of disc sports. The low hanging fruit are those people who buy a disc but don't know about the community, or don't have a community near them. By connecting them with a program such as the Throwing Certification, it can open their minds to what is possible with frisbee, inspire them to join or create a community, and become a part of the frisbee family like so many of us have already. Although frisbee is one of many sports, it's such a broad sport because of what's possible with a frisbee, so it's important that we work to educate schools, teachers, parents, and kids about the possibilities. Through that work, we will be able to grow the community, and raise the profile of the sport.
4. **Networking of Disc Sports** – one of the strengths that I bring to the board is my involvement both as a player, an ambassador, and a person to the other disc sport communities. I have many friends in every single disc sport, and keep in touch with those friends regularly. I know what's important to every disc sport community, and I know that I can reach out to work closely with those people who are not only players, but also organizers. I'm very close with Skippy, Charlie, Brian, and Steve, so I would make sure that we keep each other updated on the work we're doing to ensure that we can take advantage of collaborative opportunities for promoting and growing the various disc sports together.
5. **Gender Equity** – Over the last 5 years, I have introduced and taught frisbee to more than 50,000 girls from the ages of 4-18, not including all of the girls I've reached through my social media networks in my role as Frisbee Rob and Ultimate Rob. I have been very proactive in my efforts to provide opportunities for girls and in the last 5 years, I have been able to help 5 women set a combined 6 World Records, 3 Canadian National Records, and 8 Israeli National Records. I also helped Melissa Witmer get started as she first wrote for the Ultimate Rob website before creating her companies (Ultimate Results, Ultimate Athlete Project). I have seen first hand the impact of showing, teaching, and then letting girls try frisbee. It's something I have been passionate about since I first started teaching and coaching sports more than 25 years ago, and something that I will continue to do in my various roles as a frisbee ambassador.
6. **World and National Record Efforts** – something that I have realized incredible potential with is attempting world & national records – both on my own, and by creating opportunities for others. I currently have 15 WFDF World Records so I have a lot of experience both as a record holder, and by being a witness to many more world records first hand. I will work with WFDF members to help establish and update their national record databases, and link to the world records for those players who show the desire and ability in the pursuit of world records. This is not only a great goal for kids and athletes, but it's also something that is unique in frisbee compared to more other sports and pursuits. Because of the many possibilities that exist in frisbee, there are also many types of records that exist, including many age protected world records. I have worked with Dan Roddick on many records already and will continue to work with him on the establishment, creation, attempting, and verification of world and national records.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit my statement to the WFDF nominating committee and look forward to answering any questions that may come up, or providing additional information/documentation if so required.