

Hi OW,

This is a quick overview of some points to consider for Spirit of the Game (SOTG) and how we would like to address this as a club.

For some of our newer players, spirit is perhaps a strange concept as it is unique to the game of ultimate. It is important to point out that it is actually the *first* rule of ultimate and it therefore functions as the guiding principle for how we play this game. It is particularly important as ultimate is self-refereed and there is an overarching agreement of good faith in a lot of situations.

Officially, you can find the rule on spirit here: <https://rules.wfdf.org/rules/2021/73-spirit-of-the-game>

Spirit is not necessarily just about being 'positive' and a 'good sport', though these things are natural outcomes of having 'good spirit'. It is also not a deterrent to playing high-intensity sport but rather to maintain the respect, safety and joy between players. It is important to point out that maintaining high performance and good spirit takes experience and skills, but it is something we should be constantly working toward as a club.

We don't believe that anyone in OW will actively portray bad spirit, nor is it something that shouldn't come naturally to people. A lot of 'good spirit' is just common sense, however there are often factors that can cloud our judgement and prevent us from demonstrating and upholding good spirit.

Some points to consider for having good spirit:

1. Actually wanting to demonstrate good spirit: This may seem a little silly. But we should be motivated by the respect for the game and for our opponents. Our actions should not be motivated by 'toeing the line' and seeing how far we can get away with things.
  - a. Some examples: instead of trying to sneak in fouls/contacts, we should be actively avoiding contact where possible. Nor should we think that just 'checking in' with our opponents after contact will mean we can 'get away' with more fouls.
2. Knowing the rules: this makes sure that everyone on the pitch is on the same page about what is and isn't allowed. It also avoids situations where you might do something wrong because you don't know the rules but to the other team it is interpreted as you trying to 'cheat'. Rules can be found here: <https://rules.wfdf.org/>
3. Calm communication: yes, even if you are faced with not-so-calm people
4. Listen to your opponents: yes, even if you disagree
5. Always be alert to the game: even if you're on the sideline. The flip side is, if you don't feel like you had a good perspective of a call, then maybe don't participate in that discussion.
6. Don't be afraid to make calls, contest them and/or retract calls: this again relates to having good communications. If you feel that something is not right, speak up, allow that discussion so we can understand what is happening.

We are a part of this club because we want to play good, fun, well-spirited frisbee. The improvement in our spirit performance between mixed indoor regionals and men's indoor regionals is a great first step to us building up to be a great-spirited club. Again, it's important to reiterate that there are no doubts that we will be well-spirited, but there are always things we can improve on!

If anything is unclear, please come speak to the captains, spirit officer or any of the more experienced OW players. You can also contact the welfare officers if you want your communications to be anonymised.

We should agree on what is 'good spirit' as a team, not just what the captains say, so let's keep this discussion going both at trainings and in future tournaments. We want Oxford to be known (as we always have) as a well-spirited team, and to be proud of our good spirit.

Let's go OW!

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