Welcome Letter

This year, like every year of our five-year-old, rapidly developing organization, has been a year of growth and change. Between our founding as a nonprofit in 2010 and today, our annual budget has grown from $68,000 to over $400,000. We’ve transitioned from being an all-volunteer organization to being led by paid employees. We’ve also transitioned from being the International Quidditch Association to US Quidditch.

In the 2014-2015 season, 148 teams participated in our nine events, which brought an economic impact of over $1.5 million total to the cities that hosted them. We served over 4,000 people and certified over 400 officials, coaches, and tournament directors.

This year, we were able to accomplish more than any previous year. Although our numbers of official teams and players held steady, we increased or improved services in a number of additional areas:

- We created a tournament director certification program that ensured every official game was run by someone with a baseline understanding of tournament planning and USQ policies.
- We expanded our referee training program, creating eight new resources and rolling out a longer-term plan to create an additional paid quidditch official.
- As part of a year-long focus on safety, we required a certified EMT or athletic trainer to be present at every official game, and we embarked on a tackle development project with the help of an expert from rugby to assess the safety of physical contact in quidditch and recommend improvements.

In July we released USQ’s first strategic plan (see pages 8-9), which lays out USQ’s goals and priorities for growing quidditch and the organization over the next three years.

Like Alex, I’ll always be so grateful for the eight years I’ve spent playing, volunteering, and working for US Quidditch. I’ll shortly be transitioning out of the organization, but asking a lot of questions and coming from a position of clear understanding will enable you to make the best decisions and earn the respect of others—even if they disagree.

3) Don’t use electronic communications when you are angry. You will inevitably fail to get your point across effectively. Cool down and come back to it later. Approach people directly and privately, and always try to speak over the phone or in-person to people you disagree with—internet spats are almost always counterproductive. By the same token, don’t be afraid to be yourself, speak up, and speak your mind…but you will always have a more receptive audience if you do those things respectfully.

While I will remain involved with USQ as a non-voting Board Member Emeritus, this is my last annual report as CEO and Commissioner. I thought it would be appropriate to sign off by sharing the seven most important things I have learned during my time with the league. I believe these are applicable to any leader, including team captains and coaches. So without further ado:

1) Never forget to have fun! If you’re not having fun playing or organizing quidditch, you’re not doing it right. It won’t always be fun, but it should be most of the time. Sometimes in the grueling work of organizing a league or a team, you can get too wrapped up in the responsibility and stress. You’ve got to strive to keep things light-hearted and humorous whenever you can to the best of your ability. You and everyone around you will be much happier.

2) Listening is one of the most vital responsibilities that any leader (and perhaps even any person) has. It is impossible to follow all of the advice you hear, but asking lots of questions and coming from a position of clear understanding will enable you to make the best decisions and earn the respect of others—even if they disagree.

4) Take every opportunity to learn how things (products, organizations, businesses, objects) are made. And when you can, try your hand at doing it yourself. It will expand your mind and give you a much greater respect for all things that other people have built, and the people who built them.

5) Try not to be offended by other people’s anger. They are just trying to express themselves, and you may be able to learn from them. And it’s hard to do this in the internet age, but remember that you are not required to publicly state your opinion about everything.

6) When leading a team, always try to show up first and leave last. Provide direction and clear expectations, but listen to their opinions and allow them plenty of space to do their thing. Make their wellbeing your priority and they will give that back tenfold.

7) Above all, remember that quidditch was made in the spirit of fun and exploration of the human imagination! It is up to you to define what that means and how to realize that dream, and I hope that the sport and league never truly separates from those ideals.

Thank you all again, from the bottom of my heart, for being part of US Quidditch. It is your efforts, your convictions, and your inclusive spirit that have made our First World Cup a reality. Thank you for another wonderful year for our sport, and for the past ten years since quidditch sprung up at Middlebury College. I have been so lucky to be part of this crazy since it began, and so fortunate to be joined by so many amazing people over the years.

Alicia Radford
Acting Executive Director

From the Founder

Thank you for another wonderful year for our sport, and for the past ten years since quidditch sprung up at Middlebury College. I have been so lucky to be part of this craziness since it began, and so fortunate to be joined by so many amazing people over the years. We took it from a handful of teenagers on a field in Vermont to a fully-fledged league with thousands of members—not to mention dozens of leagues taking off around the world! That is an amazing accomplishment, and something I will always be proud to have been a part of.

Alex Benepe
Co-Founder & Board Member Emeritus
About US Quidditch

OUR MISSION
US Quidditch is the national governing body for the sport of quidditch. USQ advances the sport by organizing events and programs that build community and empower all genders to compete together.

OUR VISION
We envision a future where every person in the United States is aware of quidditch as a sport and has opportunities to play and engage at all levels.

OUR VALUES
• We establish the foundation for long-term sustainability through regulations, innovation, and expansion.
• We provide competitive opportunities for every level of athlete.
• We build a safe, inclusive, and respectful community.
• We strive to be a leader in gender inclusivity for all age groups.
• We create meaningful community partnerships.
• We develop and empower future leaders.

Founded in 2010, we serve over 4,000 athletes on almost 200 teams nationwide and provide a range of services, from hosting nine major tournaments and supervising regular season competition, to training and certifying referees, snitches, and tournament directors, offering grants, and working to expand the sport into younger age groups through outreach programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

“Quidditch is different. SO different. I love the full contact, I love the co-ed, I love the different player positions, I love the people on my team, I love being a part of something big, I love the whole quidditch atmosphere. Quidditch changed my life. I lost 50 pounds my first season, I became much healthier, I made friends, I found something that made my life so much happier. I love the fact that even after I graduate, I can join a community team and still play the thing in life that makes me happiest. I’ve played softball, football, volleyball, soccer, basketball, etc, but I have never fallen so deeply in love with another sport like I have with quidditch.”

— An Allendale, MI player
I love that women can be physical. It’s not something you find and coming from a background of four years of water polo, I am glad I don’t have to give the physicality up.”

— A Santa Barbara, CA player

Quidditch is the first place I’ve been able to really express my gender identity without judgment.”

— A South Region player

“I love that I can play with and against a group of people who are open minded, caring, and who play quidditch for the love of the game. I also love it because I can be open about my true gender and still participate in a sport I love.”

— An East Lansing, MI player

My favorite things about quidditch are the people, and snitching. And the fact that, as a co-ed sport, it gives female athletes a place where they can distinguish themselves alongside male athletes, as opposed to the separation that exists in most sports.”

— A Denton, TX player
INTRODUCTION

In October 2014, USQ’s board of directors empowered a strategic planning committee to create a plan determining US Quidditch’s strategic priorities for the next three years. This process became even more important when founder and CEO Alex Benepe and COO Alicia Radford announced their departures from the organization in April 2015. This strategic plan will give USQ’s new executive a roadmap, and allow for a smooth transition to the new leadership.

PURPOSE

This strategic plan lays out USQ’s strategic priorities and goals for the next three fiscal years and will guide decision-making, resource allocation, and prioritization of work. USQ’s fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30, and this plan encompasses July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018.

To achieve the goals and outcomes detailed on the following page, we will be working from a detailed internal operations plan encompassing specific strategies and action items for each goal. Every spring, the US Quidditch staff will draft the following year’s operations plan, to make sure implementation is taking into account the most recent data and experiences available as well as the current situation on the ground.

PROCESS

This plan was developed over the course of ten months, and takes into account the feedback of multiple stakeholder groups:
• 85 people filled out a 44-question survey that asked questions about USQ’s mission and values, strengths and weaknesses, external environment, constituents, and challenges and trends.
• 93 people participated in 33 focus groups on 11 different topics, ranging from “the Competitive Structure of Quidditch” to “Expanding Quidditch to Different Age Groups,” and “External Communications.”
• USQ staff talked to six representatives from cities across the country who have hosted regionals or nationals.
• The first draft of this plan was workshopped with seven groups of USQ volunteers, and the first and second drafts were also presented for feedback and discussion in two different all-volunteer meetings.

Because USQ is currently in the midst of an executive transition and search, we also worked with our executive search and transition consultants at Loveall Price & Associates to make sure that this strategic plan is consistent with the results of their organizational assessment of USQ and complements the 18-month transition and operations plan that they are helping us draft to guide our new leader.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following three strategic priorities and goals will guide USQ’s decision making, resource allocation, and prioritization of work over the next three fiscal years. Each priority is interrelated, and success in one builds on the success of the others.

Shape and grow the sport of quidditch.

2016-2018 GOALS
• Grow the sport of quidditch, as well as league opportunities, for those under the age of 18.
• Make quidditch and USQ’s events more accessible and meaningful to non-players.
• Expand competitive opportunities at a variety of playing levels.
• Make the sport of quidditch safer for all of those involved.
• Further develop training, recruitment, and assessment of officials.

Strengthen trust in, and identification with, the US Quidditch brand.

2016-2018 GOALS
• Sustain high levels of transparency and consistency in communications.
• Improve internal organizational communication.
• Improve external communication, both to members and fans.
• Increase social media engagement.

Ensure US Quidditch is organizationally and financially sustainable.

2016-2018 GOALS
• Diversify revenue streams through traditional nonprofit fundraising methods.
• Develop partnerships with organizations that have a competitive stake in growing quidditch and events.
• Facilitate a positive working environment for employees, board members, and volunteers.
• Regularly evaluate organizational development and programmatic sustainability.
Membership

US Quidditch offers two types of memberships: team memberships for university, secondary school, or community team registration, and individual membership for players, coaches, referees, and fans. Memberships expire on June 30, regardless of when they were purchased, and are not transferable or refundable. All individual memberships come with the following benefits:

ABILITY TO JOIN AN OFFICIAL TEAM
USQ members are eligible to join an official team as a player, coach, or referee.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE COVERAGE
USQ provides accident coverage during sanctioned USQ events. This coverage is what is called “excess coverage,” which means USQ insurance assists in covering costs that extend beyond what individual health insurance plans provide.

FREE REGIONALS REGISTRATION
All member teams receive free registration to regional championships.

ID CARD
This photo ID is used for checking in at tournaments, and is the key to accessing membership benefits.

LEAGUE-WIDE POLLING
Several times a year USQ conducts polls and surveys on all kinds of policy and preference questions.

MEMBER PATCH
Members can collect these patches each year!

Additionally, non-playing coaches receive a paperback copy of the rulebook, and all coaches receive access to Positive Coaching Alliance workshops and training. Referee members are eligible to be field tested to become certified head referees, who then earn $20 per game they officiate.

“I was on the founding team at Lock Haven University and it was amazing to see what we turned into. We started from nothing and became a World Cup qualifying team. It’s so fun and different from anything I ever did before.”

— A Lock Haven, PA player

BY THE NUMBERS

The 2014-2015 season was the first year that we operated as US Quidditch. In prior years, USQ was called the International Quidditch Association, and focused on quidditch governance worldwide. In July 2014, we rebranded as US Quidditch to focus resources on fulfilling our mission in the United States.

In the first year after our transition, membership growth remained steady despite losing international teams: the number of US official teams decreased by 4%, but individual membership increased slightly.
“My favorite thing about quidditch is my teammates. Quidditch brings together a wide array of people that normally I wouldn’t be friends with, but now some of them are my closest friends.”

— A Mid-Atlantic player

**MEMBERSHIP AWARDS**

Each year, USQ recognizes teams for their excellence in six categories, along with rewarding teams that host the best events in three categories. All of the award winners were nominated and voted on by their peers.

**TEAM AWARDS**

**USQ SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD**

For a demonstration of fair play, generosity, and integrity

George Mason University

**USQ SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD**

For a demonstration of fair play, generosity, and integrity

WWU Wyverns

**FIRST YEAR SURVIVAL AWARD**

For the most impressive accomplishments of a first year member team

The Warriors

**SERVICE AWARD**

For the most impressive eagerness to give back to their community, and willingness to use quidditch to effect change

Hofstra Flying Dutchmen

**XANDER MANSHEL AWARD**

For furthering USQ’s mission of building community

Portland Augureys

**#SWAG AWARD**

For the most powerful visual and physical presence

TC Frost

**BRAND EXCELLENCE AWARD**

For the team with the strongest sense of brand

Lost Boys Quidditch Club

**EVENT AWARDS**

**COMPETITION AWARD**

For the most successful quidditch tournament run by a team or group of teams

University of Maryland’s “Turtle Cup IV”

This event helped to spread the growth of quidditch throughout the DC area. Advertised heavily on campus, the event was well attended by student spectators and allowed for growth of Maryland Quidditch’s individual team, as well as spreading the fact that quidditch is a sport—and a competitive one. Fifteen teams attended.

**COMMUNITY AWARD**

For the most successful quidditch community social event of the year run by a team or group of teams

Syracuse Quidditch’s “King’s Cup Charity Fantasy Tournament”

This event was featured on the local news, creating awareness for both quidditch as a sport and for the Syracuse team. Over $2,000 was donated to local charities as a direct result of the tournament. Syracuse is centrally located for a number of teams in its area, and with momentum for the event’s second year the tournament grew in size, and players registered from as far away as California. All together, 150 players participated.

**FUNDRAISING AWARD**

For the most creative and successful fundraiser

Long Beach Funky Quaffles’ “Funky Horror Picture Show”

The Funky Quaffles spent weeks preparing for the show, and the result was a really well put-together show with props, costumes, and choreography. The place was packed with audience members, and there were opening performances, raffles, and baked goods and alcohol for sale. The event raised $2,000 and brought the team together.

**EQUIPMENT GRANT**

Each year, USQ awards a “starter kit” equipment grant to one first-year USQ member team. Equipment provided includes a full set of hoops, one quaffle, three bludgers, one set of snitch shorts, two full sets of USQ headbands, two sets of practice pinnies, one set of short practice cones, and an athletic first aid kit.

The 2014-2015 winner was the Portland Augureys.

“In five years, I see the Augureys as being beloved by Portland,” said Benji B’Shalom, team captain. “As we grow, we continuously find that this city is perfectly suited to support quidditch, and it’s just a matter of starting and getting it to the public. I expect us to be a contender in the Northwest region and a team with a reputation for being kind, fair, sportsmanlike, and supportive of the entire community.”
“Quidditch brings people together in a way that other sports can’t. It’s also far more fascinating, and requires an unprecedented level of athleticism balanced with mental acuity, which is a mixture that the rest of the sports world just can’t match.” — A Burlington, VT player

Events

In the 2014-2015 season, USQ hosted nine events that served 148 teams, were watched by 4,290 people, and brought in an economic impact to their host cities of over $1.5 million total. USQ’s events program focuses on hosting high-quality tournaments that are a good competitive experience for our players and showcase the sport to new and existing audiences.

EVENT SANCTIONING

USQ also offers an event sanctioning program to standardize tournament play and provide a higher standard of quality and safety for players around the country. For sanctioned events, USQ can provide a certificate of additional insured to cover the event and facility, recruitment assistance for certified head referees and snitches, social media marketing and advertising, planning and administrative assistance, and financial support. In the 2014-2015 season, USQ sanctioned 18 events and disbursed $1,300 in support.

2014-2015 SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd Annual Diamond Cup</td>
<td>San Marcos, TX</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Annual Wolf Pack Classic</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alamo Cup</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowboy Cup IV</td>
<td>Stillwater, OK</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Hanson Invitational II</td>
<td>Peoria, AZ</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gotta Train Em All 2</td>
<td>Elkins Park, PA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keystone Cup</td>
<td>Haverford, PA</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest Fantasy: Pre-Split Edition</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest Winter Fantasy II</td>
<td>Holt, MI</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Best West 2</td>
<td>Goleta, CA</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northeast Classic</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oktoberfest Invitational</td>
<td>Hempstead, NY</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renegade Cup</td>
<td>Tallahassee, FL</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Highland Games</td>
<td>Winter Springs, FL</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow Cup V</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, UT</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bay Spookfest</td>
<td>San Jose, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>The LA Open</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Fantasy 2015</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
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### July 19, 2014 • Burnaby, British Columbia • Champion: Team USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nations</th>
<th>Snitches</th>
<th>Spectators</th>
<th>Players</th>
<th>Event planning volunteers</th>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Head referees</th>
<th>On-site volunteers</th>
<th>Minutes played</th>
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<tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
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### November 8-9, 2014 • Champion: Ohio State University

<table>
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<th>Spectators</th>
<th>Players</th>
<th>Event planning volunteers</th>
<th>Games</th>
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<th>Economic impact</th>
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<td>584</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1,774</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Grand Valley State University and USQ did a great job hosting the Midwest Regional by creating an exciting event for the fans, officials, and most importantly, the participants. The West Michigan Sports Commission was happy to work on bringing in such a unique event as quidditch.”

—Jamie Schlagel, West Michigan Sports Commission

### November 1-2, 2014 • Champion: University of Maryland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teams</th>
<th>Snitches</th>
<th>Spectators</th>
<th>Players</th>
<th>Event planning volunteers</th>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Head referees</th>
<th>On-site volunteers</th>
<th>Minutes played</th>
<th>Economic impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1,371</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“It’s a sport that’s outside of the box. We wanted to fill our fields, especially on the off season. It’s bringing something new and exciting and there’s a lot of buzz around this event.”

—Keith Brown, Sports Tourism Coordinator for Henrico County Recreation and Park

### November 15-16, 2014 • Champion: Tufts University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teams</th>
<th>Snitches</th>
<th>Spectators</th>
<th>Players</th>
<th>Event planning volunteers</th>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Head referees</th>
<th>On-site volunteers</th>
<th>Minutes played</th>
<th>Economic impact</th>
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<td>175</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1,635</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FEBRUARY 14-15, 2015 • CHAMPION: LOS ANGELES GAMBITS
22 Teams 20 Snitches 350 Spectators
434 Players 5 Event planning volunteers 64 Games
13 Head referees 90 On-site volunteers 1,345 Minutes played

FEBRUARY 21-22, 2015 • CHAMPION: LONESTAR Q.C.
24 Teams 12 Snitches 100 Spectators
504 Players 10 Event planning volunteers 60 Games
13 Head referees 34 On-site volunteers 1,317 Minutes played

FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 1, 2015 • CHAMPION: FLORIDA'S FINEST
14 Teams 18 Snitches 100 Spectators
255 Players 5 Event planning volunteers 26 Games
6 Head referees 60 On-site volunteers 560 Minutes played

MARCH 7, 2015 • CHAMPION: BOISE STATE ABRAXANS
7 Teams 12 Snitches 50 Spectators
109 Players 10 Event planning volunteers 18 Games
4 Head referees 50 On-site volunteers 431 Minutes played
APRIL 11-12, 2015 • CHAMPION: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

80 Teams
1,737 Players, coaches & team staff
52 Head referees

63 Snitches
26 Event planning volunteers
997 On-site volunteers

$917,520 Economic impact

2,315 Ticketed spectators
223 Games
5,001 Minutes played

“Hosting the 2015 Quidditch World Cup was simply an experience I will never forget. The passion and the sheer magnitude that this event brought not only in the United States, but internationally as well is quite simply too large to calculate. Quidditch World Cup 8 was by and large—not just hands down, but ‘brooms down’—one of the best sports events to fly into Rock Hill, York County and the State of South Carolina.”

—J. Auvil Cole, President, South Carolina Sports Alliance; Sports Sales Manager, Rock Hill/York County Convention & Visitor’s Bureau

MEDIA IMPACT

- Website Hits: 1,187,284
- World Cup Stories Published: 49
- Average website visit duration: 6m 48s
- Social Media Impressions: 747.2 million

- Unique Social Users Reached: 26.5 million
- New Social Media Followers Generated: 3,487
- Traditional Media Impressions: 19.9 million
- Livestream Webcast Views: 33,544
Education and Training

In addition to hosting events, USQ is dedicated to offering education, certification, and training programs that develop future leaders and make the sport safer and sustainable.

OFFICIALS PROGRAM

As a fast-paced sport with many different moving parts, quidditch requires several officials. Every match is officiated by six referees: a head referee, two assistant referees, a snitch referee, and two goal referees. These referees work together to ensure that each game is run safely and effectively.

USQ’s referee training program aims to certify referees to ensure the highest standards nationwide. Referee certification is an ongoing process, consisting first of a written and practical test, and supplemented by referee training programs, online resources, and a system to continually review referee performance.

In the 2014-2015 season, USQ certified 72 head referees.

NEW TIERED REFEREE STRUCTURE

In March USQ announced a longer-term plan to increase the quality of quidditch officiating. The plan will be phased in during the 2015-2016 season, and involves the introduction of a second certified and paid official, the Lead Assistant Referee, as well as a tiered certification system that allows the most highly performing officials to continue their jobs without needing to seek out a live re-certification opportunity. The new structure also allows less-experienced individuals to receive additional practice and training opportunities, while enhancing fair play and safety on the playing field.

RESOURCES CREATED

- Guide: Referee Protocol and Procedures
- Calling Advantage
- Clarification on Charging
- Commonly Misinterpreted Rules
- Enforcing the Gender Maximum
- Referee Payment Procedures
- Reversing a Call
- Working with Assistant Referees

USQ TIERED REFEREE SYSTEM

Tier 1 — Head Referee

- Complete all Tier 1 requirements
- Register as a USQ Referee Member
- Officiate (as a head referee) at least 12 games over at least 3 events in one season
- Receive a written recommendation from a member of the USQ Officials Team

Tier 2 — Lead Assistant Referee

- Complete all Tier 1 requirements
- Register as a Head Referee

Tier 3 — Snitch Referee

- Complete all Tier 1 requirements
- Register as a Snitch Referee
- Pay $100 for snitch referee training

Tier 4 — Assistant Referee

- Complete all Tier 1 requirements
- Register as an Assistant Referee

Tier 5 — Referee

- Complete all Tier 1 requirements
- Register as a Referee

For more information, contact the membership director at membership@usquidditch.org, or visit: usquidditch.org/get-involved/referee-resources

“What I’ve found most useful about tournament director certification is figuring out planning timelines for tournaments. When you’re a player, all you’ve got to do is show up, but this program has helped me figure out things like gameplay schedules and brackets, which in turn allowed me to release important information to teams quickly and efficiently.”

— Katrina Bynum
The program is free, and consists of a one-hour training session, a brief online assessment, and continued access to resources, training opportunities, and a community of other TDs and USQ staff to answer ongoing questions.

“I think the most useful part about TD certification was the fundraising and media sections,” said Jackie Ross, a certified tournament director and USQ volunteer. “I had already been running tournaments and knew the basics, but having a place to ask questions about different parts of tournament planning I had less experience in was very helpful. I think that the program is beneficial because it can help both new TDs and TDs with experience.”

This season, USQ introduced a tournament director certification program. The goal of the program is to ensure that every official game meets league standards, and that event managers are aware of resources available to them and understand league policies.

“To be the first referee to win Referee of the Year is very significant for me and my growth as a referee. I am beyond honored and humbled, and words cannot even describe how overjoyed I am to be the inaugural recipient. It solidifies in my mind what I have been doing all year: reffing the highest quality matches I possibly can.”

— Alex Scheer

COACH CERTIFICATION

Every US Quidditch team is required to have a coach. This person may also be a player, but must attend regionals and nationals with their team and must complete USQ’s coach certification prior to their team competing in any official games. The goal of coach certification is to ensure that all teams are familiar with USQ policies and procedures, understand the symptoms and risks for concussions, and have a leader who understands the basic tenets of coaching.

The purpose of the USQ coaching development and training program will teach coaches to coach, not to play the game. Coaches will learn to teach the game in a positive way by choosing effective drills and fostering an environment inclusive to all USQ members. Coaches will gain credibility with their teams, as well as with their schools and community administrators. The program is designed to introduce leaders to the responsibilities and philosophies of coaching. The program demonstrates how to provide a safe and athlete-centered environment that emphasizes positive growth and sportsmanship.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Register as a current coach member
- Complete a Positive Coaching Alliance webinar
- Complete a concussion webinar
- Complete a USQ policy quiz

REFEE OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

This year, USQ implemented a Referee of the Month program to reward and celebrate the best referees in our sport. At the end of the year, the best referee was selected from the monthly winners to receive the Referee of the Year award, to win a plaque and free lodging and travel to referee at the World Cup.

REFEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Referee of the Year Award winner was determined based on the number of officiated games in the head referee and assistant referee positions; feedback from coaches, peer referees, and event directors; and additional contributions to the sport as a referee ambassador.

As Referee of the Year, Scheer received a plaque and a travel stipend for USQ World Cup 8; because, however, he played for Blue Mountain Quidditch Club in addition to refereeing at World Cup, he was not able to accept the $1,000 stipend. The stipend went to Referee of the Year runner-up Michael Clark-Polner, who accepted that award.

Scheer started playing quidditch three years ago when he founded Toledo Quidditch, which is perhaps best known for playing in the first-ever televised quidditch match against Bowling Green State University. He currently lives in Toledo, Ohio where he plays for Blue Mountain Quidditch Club. Scheer has refereed games both in the Northeast and in the Midwest, which he says has helped him learn more about the game.

REFEE OF THE MONTH WINNERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Referee Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2014</td>
<td>Martin Pyne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2014</td>
<td>Jayke Archibald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2014</td>
<td>Alex Scheer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2014</td>
<td>Amanda Nagy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>Michael Clark-Polner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>Hayden Applebee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR CERTIFICATION

This year, USQ certified 166 tournament directors and held 57 certification sessions.

RESOURCES CREATED

- Basic Budget Template
- Itemized Budget Template
- Player Packing Checklist
- Tournament Setup Checklist
- Post-Event Checklist
- Field Manager Guide
- Referee Evaluation Guide Card Template

This year USQ certified 166 tournament directors and held 57 certification sessions.
Initiatives

FOCUS ON SAFETY

This year, USQ implemented several different requirements with the aim of increasing the safety of the game. The impact of these changes were shown by World Cup 8 having the fewest major injuries of any prior World Cup.

EMT/ATHLETIC TRAINERS REQUIRED AT ALL OFFICIAL GAMES

This year, EMTs or athletic trainers were required to be present for all official games.

CONCUSSION EDUCATION

As part of coach certification, all coaches were required to learn about the identification of concussions.

RETURN TO PLAY POLICY

For World Cup 8, USQ implemented a comprehensive Return to Play policy, ensuring that any players with suspected concussions or other injuries would not be allowed to play again until cleared by an athletic trainer or primary care physician.

MOUTHGUARDS REQUIRED FOR THE 2015-2016 SEASON

The USQ-published ninth edition of the rulebook makes mouthguards a required piece of equipment, following research and the recommendation of World Cup 8 athletic trainers and tackle consultant Augustin Brajeux.

TACKLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

This year, USQ embarked on a process to research the current state of quidditch tackling and physical contact, and explore opportunities for improving safety, efficiency, form, and training processes. The process is being spearheaded by an outside consultant, Augustin Brajeux (on the left in the picture above), a USA Rugby certified coach, Play Rugby instructor, and veteran Parisian rugby player.

During the first phase of the project, Brajeux watched game footage from across the country and attended scrimmages and tournaments in the LA area as well as World Cup 8, where he interviewed players, captains, and USQ staff to learn about current tackling and physical contact techniques. Based on this research, he made several recommendations for adjustments to training and rules that will be explored and tested in the 2015-2016 season.

The project is being funded by a generous donation from the Karpoff family, the league’s largest family donor. In honor of their gift, US Quidditch will be naming its tackle style at the end of the project after Sgt. James C. Clark, grandfather of Dawn Karpoff. Clark was an innovative, loving family man, and a decorated World War II veteran. Improving safety in a sport through research is something that Clark would have strongly supported. He struggled with a severe head injury as a young child, and he would have been quite fond of quidditch as he worked for a time with a broom manufacturer as a young man. He had a knack for tinkering and improving concepts: after the war he used an early computer to revolutionize workflow in the steel mill where he was a foreman. We are honored to have such an accomplished and appropriate namesake for the project, and we are grateful to the Karpoff family for their support. Without their help, this research would not be possible.

YOUTH QUIDDITCH

Increasing competitive quidditch opportunities for children under the age of 18 is one of USQ’s strategic priorities for the next three years. In the 2014-2015 season, children had the opportunity to play at several regional championships, World Cup 8, and the Scottish Highland Games.
Board of Directors

JACOB ADLIS
Commercial Metals Company

MATT HAYDEN
Positive Coaching Alliance

DAN HANSON
Netflix

ALISON O’NEIL
Pike Place Market Foundation

Volunteers

In the 2014-2015 season, over 100 hardworking and dedicated individuals gave their time to USQ, some as year-round volunteers helping with administration, communications, and program management, and others helping make our events run. USQ couldn’t do it without you—thank you!
Donors

This year, USQ was generously supported by a variety of city partners, organizations, and individual donors. We are grateful for the support that helps us host high-quality events and support regular season competition that spreads awareness and appreciation for our unique sport. Every dollar we raise ensures that we can continue delivering quality events, programs, and initiatives while keeping membership fees low.

**MAJOR DONORS**

Dawn & Gary Karpoff

**INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

Norman Acker
Kimberly Belcher
Margaret Christopher
Susan Coleman
Ryan Flynn
Susan Freund
Kelda Gehrig
Kathy Hatch
Ryan Hicks
Ann Hollenbach
Scott Huffmon
Rachel Isbell
Jonathan Jewell
Ryan Liming
Charles Nasta
Faith Pannell
Jordan Rigsby
Phyllis Rohnke
Joseph Roth
Thomas Whipple
Jason Widstrom

**IN-KIND SUPPORTERS**

Alivan’s
City of Burnaby
City of Rock Hill
Flagler County Chamber of Commerce
Grand Valley State University
Henrico County Recreation and Parks
Joan Todd
Peterson’s Broomsticks
Placer Valley Tourism
KIND Snacks
KT Tape
Monroe County Sports Commission
Richmond Region Tourism
Rock Hill / York County CVB
San Marcos Convention and Visitor Bureau
South Paw
Texas State University
Tourism Burnaby
West Michigan Sports Commission

“Quidditch is a unique and dynamic sport, and comes with a community that is built around important concepts like inclusivity and progressiveness, along with fair play, safety, and sportsmanship. Quidditch is also still small enough, and growing at a quick enough pace, that being involved at this stage offers a rare opportunity to shape how the sport develops.”

— A Portland, OR player
**Profit and Loss**

For July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

**REVENUE**
- Donations $3,108.32
- Events $127,963.67
- Membership $220,397.71
- Merchandise $80,413.26
- Total Revenue $431,882.96

**EXPENSES**
- Administrative $12,646.41
- Referees, EMTs & Other Contractors $80,928.37
- Insurance $40,695.97
- Payroll $147,593.02
- Membership Goods $11,828.61
- Professional & Legal Services $2,691.91
- Facility & Equipment Rental $20,679.52
- Event Equipment & Supplies $24,900.72
- Travel $17,737.21
- Marketing $8,198.56
- Merchandise COGs $55,443.72
- Total Expenses $423,344.02
- Net Income $8,538.94

**Functional Allocation**

For July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

- Program $283,485.10
- Fundraising $27,318.32
- Admin $112,540.60
- Total Expenses $423,344.00

Photos in this report by Alex Gates, Isabella Gong, Nicole Harrig, Tasha Kiri, Jessica Lang, Samantha Medney, Will Michels, Paulina Pascual, Caroline Pitt, Nikki Smith, and Sofia de la Vega.