

# Nova Scotia Disc Sport Society (DiscNS) Annual Report

Reporting for 2020-2021

DiscNS acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. This territory is covered by the treaties of Peace and Friendship, which Mi'kmaq and Maliseet people first signed in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Maliseet title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

DiscNS also gratefully acknowledge the support of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage in Nova Scotia in supporting the Society through the year.

## Overview in relation with Covid-19

The entire 2020-2021 year saw restrictions in the province due to Covid-19. Play ranged from a complete shut-down in ultimate and only casual household bubble play in disc golf to league-level competition with limited numbers of players.

Consequently, much of the DiscNS plan for the year could not move forward. Instead, most of the time and effort were devoted to managing the return to play and clarifying and communicating provincial public health requirements to the affiliate organizations. As a provincial sport organization (PSO), we were to be the body that determined what "regular" play was for of all disc sports in the province, whether affiliated with DiscNS directly or not, to inform the provincial regulations that allowed regular competition. We do not regulate private businesses that run disc sports.

The following covid-related items were of significance for the year:

- We received \$3,000 of sport relief funding, which was unexpected.
- The Board chose to not collect DiscNS membership fees to ease the pressures on individuals and on affiliate organizations.
- We reduced the number of individuals covered by our liability insurance to reflect the play restrictions, which resulted in an insurance rebate and in a lower than budgeted fee for the current year...until we inform the insurance company that our number of players has once again increased.

## Governance

In terms of overall management, we

- Adopted the PDGA return-to-play guidelines for disc golf and created a return to play guideline from information from Ultimate Canada and other PSOs.
- Received \$3,000 in covid funding for sport and \$1,184 in rebates for decreasing our insurable players for the year, matching the sport lockdowns.

- With the grants, we waived all DiscNS membership fees for the year.
- Increased our communications with affiliated leagues and other interested disc sport organizations to relay provincial health updates.

## Competition

Competitive play in the province hit its highest point with an ability for leagues to play with a limited number of players. Consequently, there were no special activities on the competitive scene for the year.

When sport re-opened in November 2020, DiscNS worked with Halifax Ultimate to look at re-engaging some league play. We also made the offer to Pictou Ultimate.

DiscNS continued to provide insurance coverage to the local ultimate tournaments throughout the year.

## Youth

We were unable to offer the annual indoor 4v4 high school provincials and the outdoor 7v7 high school provincial tournaments due to the covid closures.

During the sport opening in November 2020, DiscNS booked fields to offer learn-to-play clinics for youth. Attendance was low, to the point where we chose to discontinue the clinics rather than have youth become disillusioned with the sport since there weren't enough players to engage in even a small scrimmage. Nonetheless, we recognize and thank Tanis Trainor, Travis Foster, and Luke Dyer for engaging with those youth who did show up and thank Gavin Gray for his behind-the-scenes advice.

We maintained hope that we might return to some youth play in the summer of 2021. However, public health conditions showed that it would be unlikely, which led the Board to deciding to not hire summer staff for youth activities for summer 2021.

## Coaching

Nova Scotia has one of the three trained Learner Facilitators (LFs) for online ultimate courses in Canada. Our LF co-delivered one of the two national competition development coach training sessions in the year.

The coaching course material, particularly for competition introduction, has a significant hands-on element that requires face-to-face interaction. That interaction was not possible in this past year to allow us to offer a competition introduction course. Ultimate Canada has been revising the course material to find alternatives to the face-to-face interaction.

Although we had set aside funds to help support individuals for NCCP courses, the courses were placed online and the cost was removed by the province during the shutdown. The free courses are expected to continue until the end of 2021.

## Observers

With competitive Ultimate shut down, there has not been opportunity for Observers to work. We have had opportunity for to participate in a number of Zoom sessions called “Observer University” where highly experienced observers lead discussions around calls, positioning and play, and other aspects of working a game.

Halifax Ultimate was willing to have Observers come to league games in the Fall, and we thank them for the opportunity. On the nights offered, nobody was able to make it out to work the games.

## Disc Golf

Where Covid has been quite disruptive to competitive play, as it was for many sports, Disc Golf participation has had enviable growth. The numbers of people coming out the courses around the province have increased by orders of magnitude (500% regionally). This year saw the opening of a second *Brick and Mortar* store in HRM, providing greater access to equipment for local players.

Several tournaments were able to move forward with Covid protocols in place. Nationals had been slated to occur again in PEI, run by members of the MDGA. Unfortunately, it needed to be modified due to Covid. Players from within the Atlantic Bubble competed for the title of Atlantic Canadian Champion.

Looking forward, courses around the province continue to report increased use as disc golf is viewed as a ‘Covid Friendly’ activity. Some competition has gone forward already this year. Members are hopeful for a full touring season, with events scheduled most weekends from May through October.

Two local players, Tanis Trainor and Lara Kesteloo, worked to organize Parbeque for May 8, 2021 at the Hammonds Plains Disc Golf course. This event was to be the first ever Nova Scotian iteration of the PDGA Women’s Global Event. Unfortunately, this event needed to be cancelled due to the onset of the third wave of Covid. Not to be thwarted, Lara and Tanis have resolved to run a women’s specific league over the summer to further grow the sport in a currently underrepresented population within the region.