

Indoor AIUCs 2019 Review

Owen Binchy - IFDA Club Competitions Director 2019

This is a review of the Indoor AIUC events run by the IFDA in 2019, which includes the results from the surveys sent out to the players at the events.

Quick Overview & Links

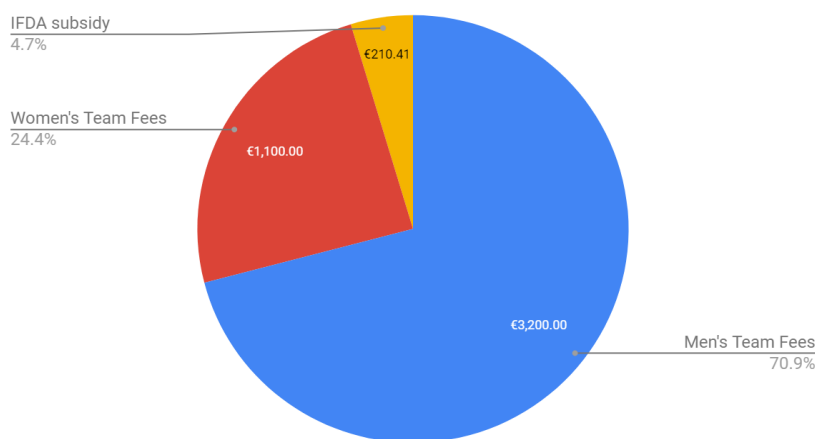
Division	Men's	Women's
Date(s)	26th-27th January	17th February
Location	Kingfisher NUIG, Galway	Mardyke UCC, Cork
Teams	20	11
Event Page	https://www.irishultimate.com/e/mens-indoor-champions-hip-2019	https://www.irishultimate.com/e/womens-indoor-championship-2019
Schedule	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1sSbRxDGI2DywZ8OiWd8VK3hdK6n7Q73Y-NeghFVBMDo	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1O_PJ7kTK7RxIBZdwlhN3qIbmTP9UX0mZu0wPGCfome4
Spirit	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tYLaUarvGF5WjXMK8iH4TMQ_1u_CAhbVffFrceW5ruU	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qf64T3oDKQqvDli7hDSr-hJCIVWbM-ZKFI-Gnkt5FkY/
Facebook Event	www.facebook.com/events/580192349106557/	https://www.facebook.com/events/1173146346183647
Video footage of final	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpzoGQNb_yg	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOTIhoeox5g
Medics	St. John's Mayo	Order of Malta
Awards	1st & 2nd place medals. "MVP of Final" plaque. "Spirit of the Game" glass plaque.	1st & 2nd place medals. "MVP of Final" plaque. "Spirit of the Game" glass plaque.

Budget

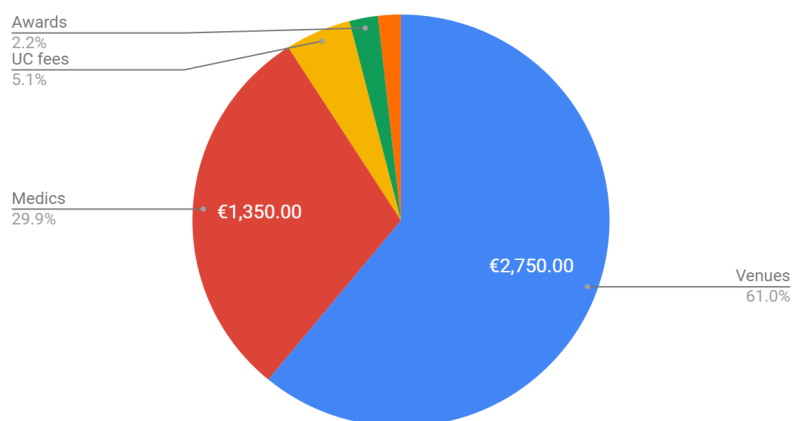
Revenue	Men's Team Fees	Women's Team Fees	IFDA subsidy	Total
Total	€3,200.00	€1,100.00	€210.41	€4,505.41

Expenditure	Venues	Medics	UC fees (website)	Awards	Misc.	Total
Men's	€2,000.00	€900.00	€166.61	€50.00	€40.00	€3,154.11
Women's	€750.00	€450.00	€63.80	€50.00	€40.00	€1,351.30
Total	€2,750.00	€1,350.00	€230.41	€100.00	€80.00	€4,505.41

Total Income



Total Expenditure - €4510.41



We unfortunately went over our proposed budget. Two main causes for this were that we thought we would host a few more teams, and that the paramedics costs came in slightly higher than we expected. As such, we completely slashed the budget we had set aside for media (photographer/videographer), reduced the awards to the bare minimum, and received some subsidy from the IFDA to cover the remaining deficit. Thankfully we still managed to film both finals for free, and had some wonderful photographers at both events taking pictures on their own initiatives.

Not tracked by these figures is the membership revenue driven by the events, nor the insurance cost from the IFDA's policies which covered the event, along with some IFDA discs which were donated as pitch discs (and subsequently lost).

Attendees

Final Placing	Men's	Women's
1	Rebel 1	Blade
2	PELT 1	Gravity 1
3	XVI 1	Rebel 1
4	Tribe 2	Rebel Exiles
5	Tribe 1	Rebel 2
6	Gonzaga 1	Tribe
7	Derezzed	Gravity 2
8	XVI 2	PELT
9	PELT 2	Uproar
10	Masterclass	Rebel 3
11	Rebel 2	Gravity 3
12	Bumblebees 1	
13	Belfast	
14	PELT 3	
15	Bumblebees 2	
16	Rebel 4	
17	Uproar	
18	Gonzaga 2	
19	Rebel 3	
20	Tribe 3	

Trends over the years

Teams	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Women's	None	8	8	9	12	10	10	11	11
Men's	?	16	18	20	24	24	24	20	20
Total	?	24	26	29	36	34	34	31	31

This year saw the exact same number of teams in both divisions as their previous events in 2018. We haven't quite managed the same number of men's teams since the events went standalone in 2018 and moved out of Limerick; women's seems less affected by the change, although it also has been a 1-day event since then.

Players	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Women's	84	76	81	94	91
Men's	188-199	187	189	180	168
Total	272-283	263	270	274	259

Member attendance numbers are based on rostered players with paid IFDA membership. These numbers can be a bit fuzzy, as at some events a club will roster plenty of players who do not end up playing, and at some events a handful of players manage to play without paying membership. We also don't have much reliable data pre-2018 (before all our events went through ultimate-central), but it is something we are working on to try and help us see the larger trends over the years.

Women's Development Workshop

The IFDA ran a women's development workshop alongside games at women's indoors. This was rather well attended, and we learnt a lot about both the subject matter and how these types of events can be run well. The results of this workshop will be published at a later date.

Surveys

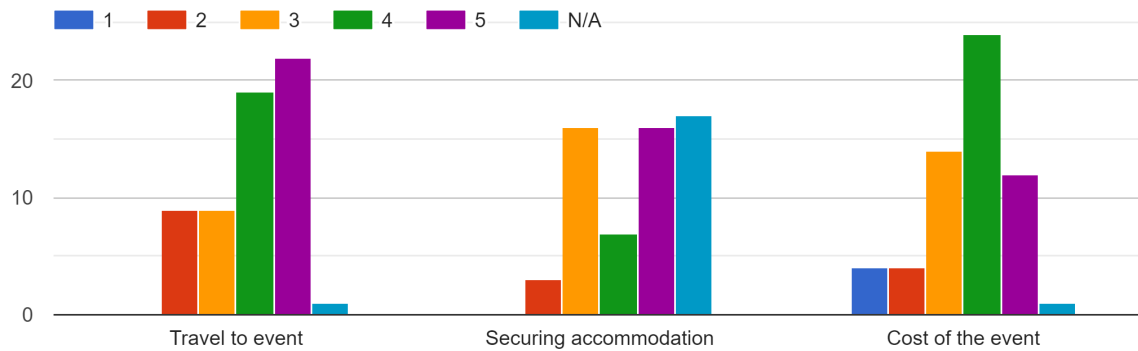
We received a phenomenal response to the survey (about 30% of players filled it in). I've left out many of the questions, and simplified many of the responses down in an effort to make it presentable to everyone. Myself and many of the committee have read every single response, and they have been invaluable to us so I really want to thank everyone who filled out either survey. I've tried to summarise and give a few of my thoughts on the surveys conducted, but do keep in mind the selection bias that is occurring with a survey like this.

The remainder of this document is discussing the surveys.

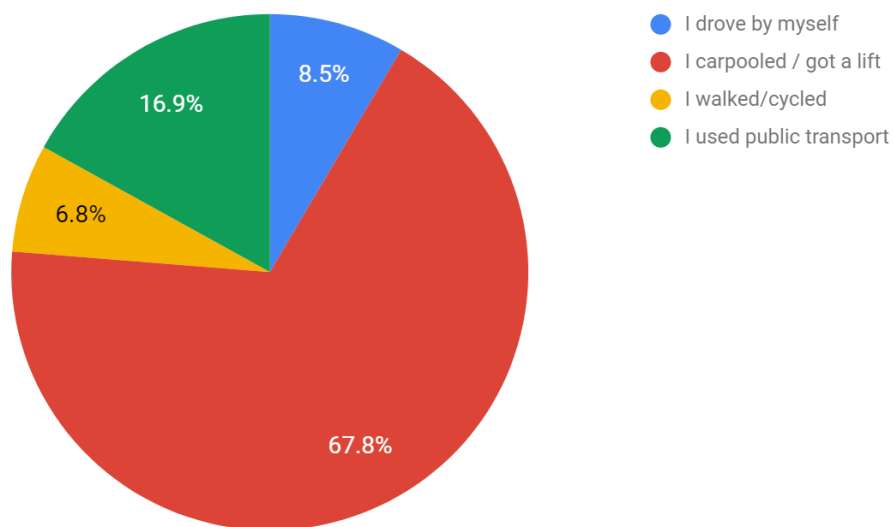
Men's

Attending

How easy did you find it to attend the event?



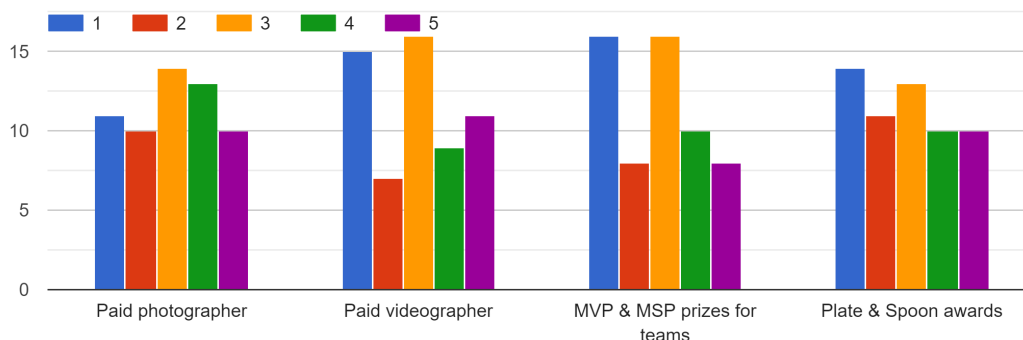
How did you get there?



Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of our players (who responded) travelled to the event by car.

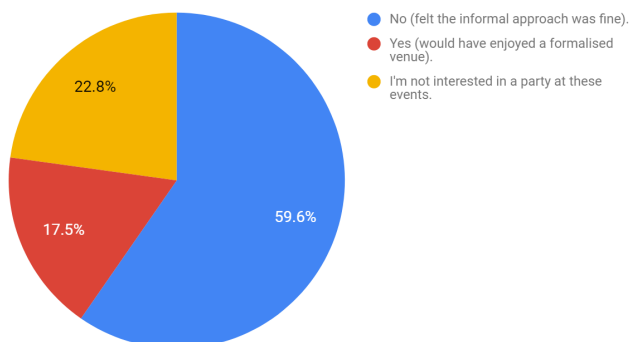
Extras

How much would you be interested in the following for future events?



Such an even spread in opinions, it seems that the best approach would be to take a tentative approach ensuring we get good bang for our buck with any extras.

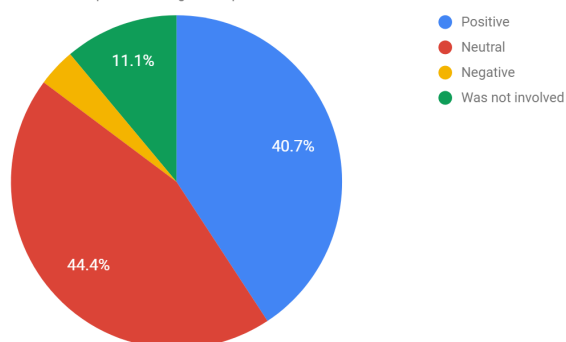
Are you disappointed that there was no organised party?



Party

We'll probably keep the same approach here for the future, although it was pointed out that Galway may be particularly accommodating for an informal approach.

We tried out running a players' WhatsApp group chat during the event. If you were involved in this, do you think it was an overall positive or negative experience?

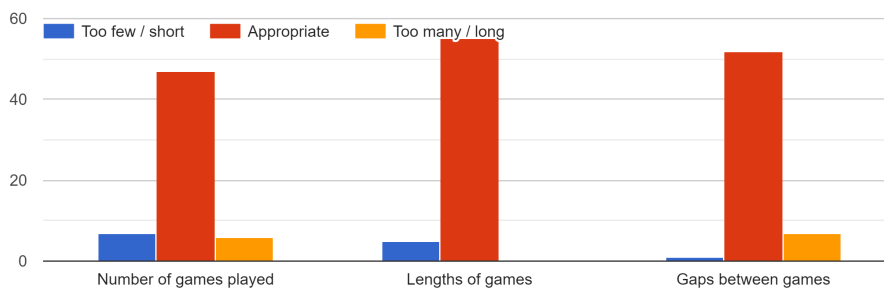


Whatsapp Group

I think that people had different expectations of the group, which lead to a little friction over the weekend. We will probably try something similar in the future, but something like a whatsapp group may just need a little moderation to ensure no one is getting victimised or coming away with a negative experience.

Schedule

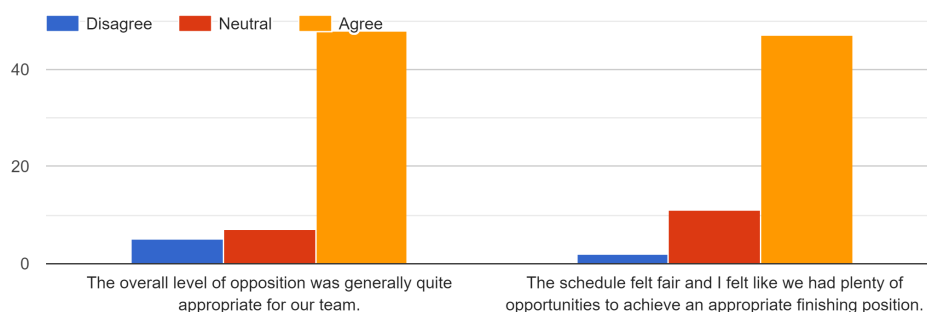
How did you find each of the following?



I think the 25 minute games in 30 minute slots is still probably the best format for these events. A handful of games did run over time (despite the 3-point rule), but we were never significantly delayed. 3 courts between 20 teams means that a team on average would play in 30% of the time-slots, so an average of 1 game on to 2.3 games off. There isn't really any way to give more / longer games with fewer gaps unless we acquire a larger venue or reduce the teams attending. I'm generally happy with the response here.

The schedule did perhaps push a few teams who were under-seeded into a few too many games. These were the exception, but we will try to avoid this in the future if possible.

How much do you agree with the following statements?

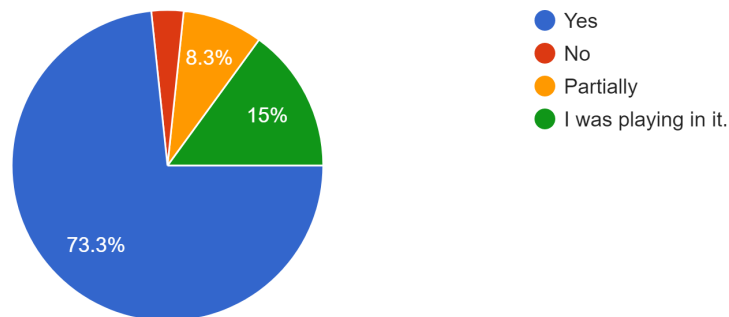


In terms of the overall format (multiple power-pools), I think it was quite appropriate for the event. It gives decent games to teams against peers, while still granting relatively good opportunity to progress. We will most likely keep this format if we don't run regionals, yet it was fortunate to have 20 teams (a multiple of 4).

Final

Did you stay to watch the final?

60 responses



Interestingly it seems that a huge portion of our players (who replied) remained to watch the final. When people are asked, they typically think that the finals aren't well attended, but this seems to indicate otherwise. I suspect there is probably a significant selection bias occurring here.

In terms of ways to improve the viewer experience, the most common response revolved around the discussions on calls that happened in the final which dulled the atmosphere a little, particularly when the discussions could not be heard by the crowd. Without changing the rules of ultimate, I think there are two ways we could potentially address this.

1. Encourage teams to learn and become more proficient with the rules, so discussions can be as quick as possible.
2. Provide observers/timekeepers of some form. These could have roles as minimal as relaying the discussions to the crowd, or helping players stick to time limits in calls / between points. I personally wouldn't be a fan of letting them be involved directly in calls, but perhaps being there in the most minimal of contexts could help speed things up.

In terms of which games people wish were given more of a showcase, by far the most common response was the semi-finals. In the future we will try to offset these if possible (so they aren't on concurrently), and ensure they are on the best pitch for spectators to view.

Player Safety

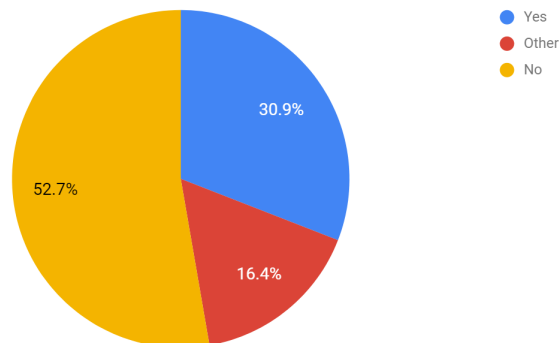
Most people agreed that the level of cover was appropriate, and the medics were kept busy throughout the weekend.

It was mentioned often prior to the event that the sideline areas were to be kept as clear as possible, but this rule was often ignored. This can be a difficult rule to enforce as it requires constant monitoring (and moving people's personal belongings), but we can do better and help provide players alternative safe locations to keep their belongings, or to view matches from.

The most suggested action was to initiate more education around what constitutes dangerous play, when to call it, and to develop some method of dealing with repeat offenders. In particular clarification around "jumping-in" is needed. It will be difficult to develop a fair system of dealing with serial offenders (we do have a [disciplinary policy](#) & [grievance policy](#) for extreme cases), but spirit education is something that we can probably help teams with relatively easily, and we will definitely look into good ways to do this.

Standalone event

Would you like the event to be held in conjunction with women's, even if this limits capacity further?



I think I did not ask this question in a very good way, as there are really two parts to it. Some people were answering "would you like this event alongside women's", while some were answering "would you like capacity for this event decreased". I decided to include this graph here, but would advise against people drawing too much from it. We will continue to do what is most practical given the many factors involved in a decision like this.

Oversubscription

It seems we haven't seen the sort of explosive growth in the indoors scene that we were expecting a few years ago when the idea of regionals for qualification first came about. We did want to run indoor regionals this year, but when we tried to practically go about it they just seemed unfeasible to run while maintaining the minimum standard people expect from an IFDA event. [Relevant blog post.](#)

Since we haven't been able to hold down a 4-court venue for a suitable weekend in the last two years, splitting the event into two separate events by division has been received relatively well. It also pushes our capacity problems down the road a little bit, with a 3-court venue over 2 days we can accommodate perhaps up to 24 or 28 teams in a single division before we really start compromising on the quality of the event. 4-courts can push us a little further towards maybe 32 teams, but the scheduling becomes increasingly difficult to balance for both quality and fairness. Men's is still only a stone's throw away from hitting one of these limits, so having a solution ready for when we get there is still important.

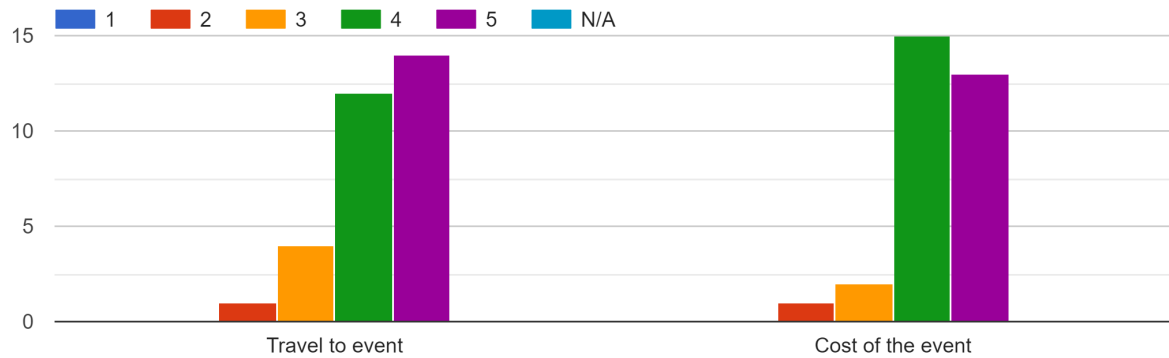
We don't want to jump the gun here, but if we can implement regionals in a way that is practical and affordable, we probably will, and it seems that is what most people agree with. Multiple divisions seems to be the next best option, but the devil is in the details here. We are introducing more events aimed at a younger audience which may also relieve a little bit of the strain on this event in the short term, but these players are definitely capable of competing at this level already.

A lot of people suggested some sort of limit on 2nd teams, or how many teams a club can enter. While I don't necessarily agree with this, I also think it would be very impractical to implement. There is nothing to stop a 2nd or 3rd team just calling itself something different, and we get into very tricky territory when we start enforcing tougher restrictions on what classifies as a club. In the end, we want as many people playing as possible, and we don't want to dictate how a group of players should seek to organise themselves.

Women's

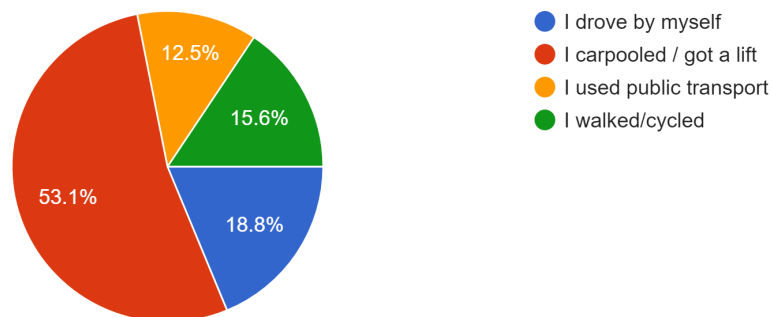
Attending

How easy did you find it to attend the event?



How did you travel to the event?

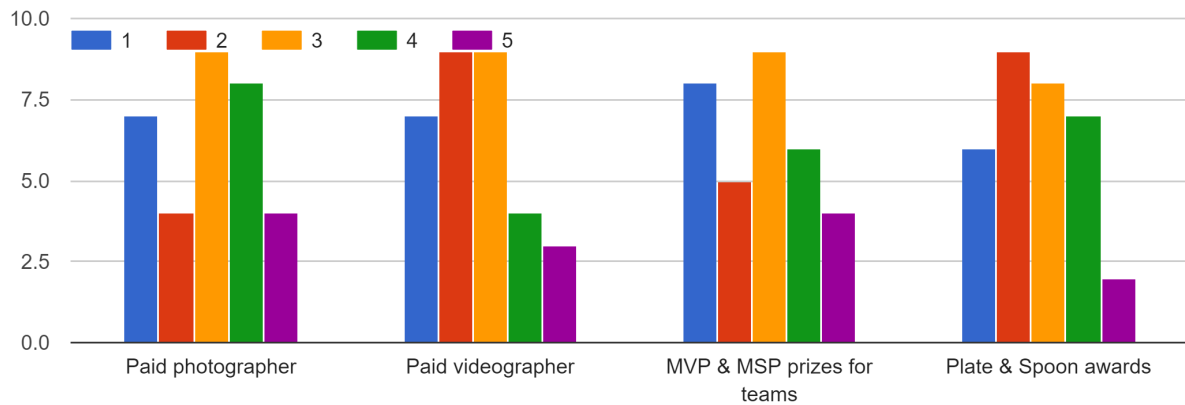
32 responses



Slightly fewer people drove to women's than men's. This is probably due to a larger percentage of the players living in the city of the event (3/11 teams based in Cork, compared to 2/20 based in Galway for men's). Still a lot of drivers, and a lot of people driving just themselves.

Extras

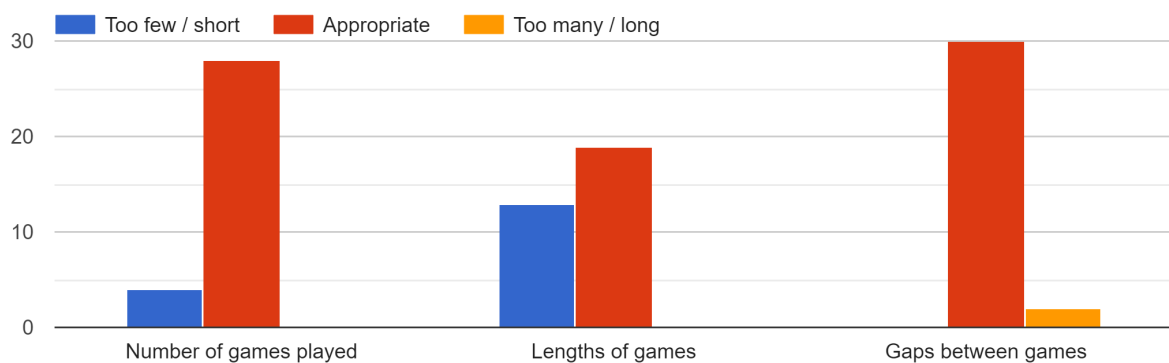
How much would you be interested in the following for future events?



As with men's, there is no clear trend with regards to what extras people want. It seems that the best approach would be to take a tentative approach ensuring we get good bang for our buck with any extras.

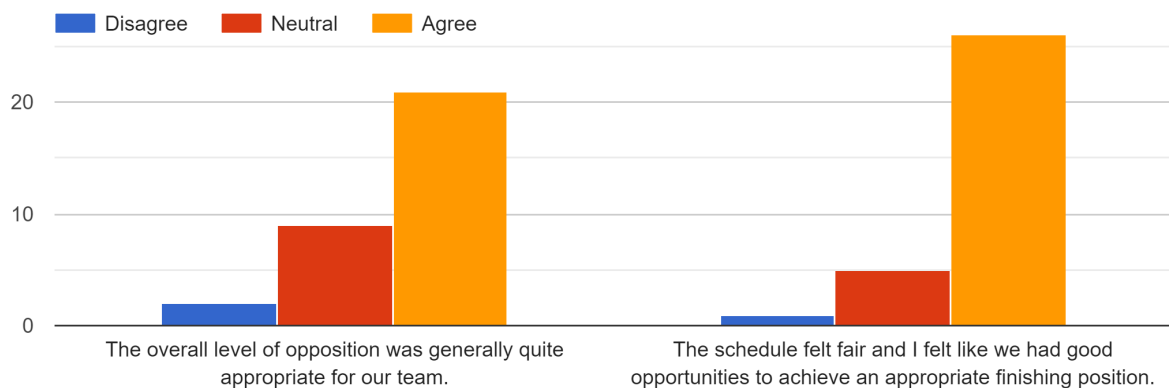
Schedule

How did you find each of the following?



The 20 minute games seem to clearly be considered short. We did need to squeeze the schedule down in order to both fit in the venue over 1 day and to try not to over-exert players, but clearly this is a pain point. We probably need more pitches or more time to really make people happy here. Interestingly no one thought they played too many games, despite some teams playing 6 (albeit 20 minute) games in the one day.

How much do you agree with the following statements?



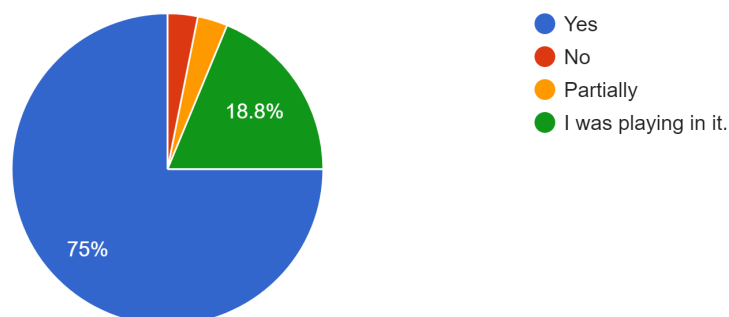
Power pools weren't used for this event, and a few teams were drastically underseeded, so overall I'm happy with how people felt about the fairness of the schedule and the level of their opposition.

With regards to the seeding (and underseeded teams), the general consensus was that it couldn't really be done any fairer and that it didn't really affect the final results too much, just a few "unexpected" initial group results. Some people suggested a common sense approach to seedings, which I'm quite wary to touch. Full disclosure, the type of schedule I chose (power-pools, crossovers etc.) is normally taking into account that some of these teams may be seeded very poorly (so the common sense comes in here in a way).

Final

Did you stay to watch the final?

32 responses



We actually had quite a number of non-players come out to the event to watch (not just for the final too), which was really great to see. Some people mentioned the atmosphere was a little quiet, which I think was in part due to the participants in the final considering the location. I think it should be easy enough to try and get some sort of commentator or "cheer-leader" to keep the crowd invested (air horns for points scored...).

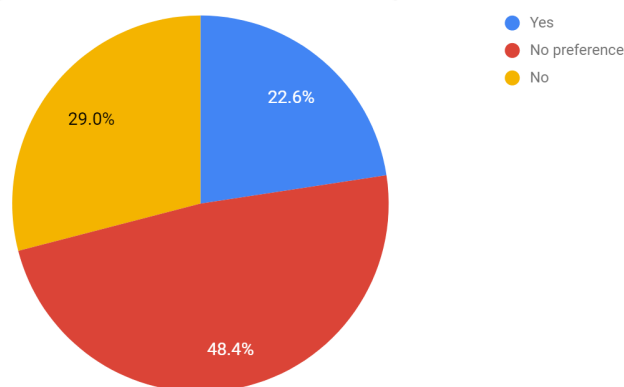
Again when asked which games should be given more of a showcase, by far the most common response from players was the semi-finals. I managed to watch the majority of both of these from between the curtains, and definitely agree that these were very entertaining matches. In the future we will try to offset these if possible (so they aren't on concurrently), and ensure they are on the best pitch for spectators to view.

Player Safety

People in general agreed that they thought the level of cover was appropriate for the event. It seems players didn't think there were any major glaring issues that could be easily addressed (without changing the rules), but more education on the dangerous play rule and "jumping-in" would probably be good, and more enforcing of clear sidelines. We will look into ways to do this.

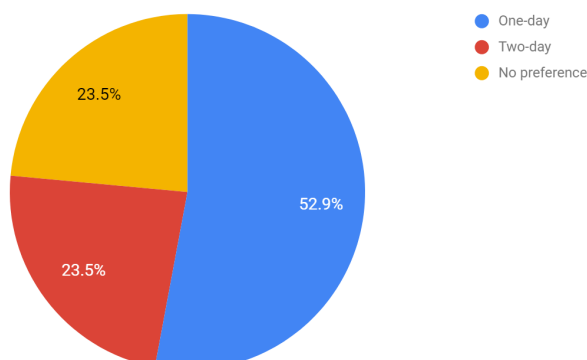
Standalone Event, One or Two Days

Would you like to see this event held in conjunction with Men's?



Fairly split here, with the largest group of people having no real preference. People mentioned they enjoyed the atmosphere and social aspects of the combined events, but also people enjoyed the division being focused as a standalone event. We will try to remain practical in the future, but until some form of regionals are implemented for men's, it is unlikely that these events can be held together.

Do you prefer this event as a one or two day affair?



People generally seemed to prefer the event being 1-day for the number of teams attending, and maybe more importantly for the number of competitive games they can get. Again we will remain practical here, but we recognise that dragging this event over two days may leave many players disinterested. With 3 full courts and a full day I think we could fit just about up to 16 teams at a stretch, but really if we are expecting over 14 teams I think it should be two days for practicality.