



Frisbee flingers find their Ultimate sport

1,600-plus play in world-known Eastside tourney

By ANNIKA WALLEND AHL
Contributing writer

Fourteen players, two teams, one flying disc. Think running, sweating, endurance and tricky throws. That's the game of Ultimate.

"It's a real sport. People take it very seriously," said William Bartram, executive director of DiscNW, a nonprofit organization that promotes Ultimate play in the Northwest.

Sometimes the sport is called Frisbee football or Ultimate Frisbee, but its official name is just plain Ultimate.

The DiscNW Web site (www.discnw.org) calls Ultimate an "exciting, non-contact team sport that mixes sports such as soccer, basketball and American football into one high-energy game."

The game is played on a field 70 yards long and 40 yards wide. Each end zone extends an additional 25 yards on each long end of the field.

Bartram estimates there are 2,500 to 3,000 people that currently play Ultimate in the greater Seattle area, including the Eastside, where pickup games are common and an annual tournament with a worldwide reputation drew 1,600-plus competitors this month.

Teams that compete on a national and international level are called club teams, Bartram said. Seattle is home to two of the country's best Ultimate club

teams — the women's Riot and the men's Sockeye. In 2005, the Riot placed first in the Club Championships and Sockeye finished second. The succession of talented local players looks promising.

Ultimate is taught in physical-education classes in middle schools and high schools. DiscNW offers youth camps in the summer for players to improve their dischandling skills and to learn offensive and defensive plays.

If you want to try it, the equipment investment is min-

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Fumiko Yarita / For the Reporter
Oliver Lee, left, of Safety Third jumps to make a catch during an Ultimate Frisbee game in Redmond. The sport is gaining in popularity in the Puget Sound region.



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