

University of Wisconsin-Madison's Ultimate Frisbee Teams (Hodags, Bella Donna, Atropa, Pimpdags)

Gender Equity Forum

(12/11/2016)

*Commas and ellipses were used at times to indicate pause or rephrasing by the speaker. All transcription of this forum is interpreted (and slightly modified for clarity while keeping the intent of the speaker) by Jeff Maskalunas. In some cases, nicknames were used for speakers in the transcription. Not all of the dialogue is included in this transcription.*

*Speakers heard (not representative of everyone present at the forum):*

*Alex Ogren, Anders Shropshire, Andrew "Dirtball" Everts, Anneke Vermaak, Austin Reif, Avery Johnson, Camila "Mila" Flowerman, Carly Siewert, Elizabeth "Lilly" Iverson, Eric "EvK" von Kampen, Graeme Kernick, Jan Szmanda, Jeff Maskalunas, Kaitlynn Roling, Logan Martin, Molly Berkholtz, Nick Ladas, Ross Barker, Sabrina Hoffman, Vanessa "V" Villasenor,*

Avery (00:00): ...uhh, college all-star team, um, because I'd been apart of it in the summer. A bunch of us played in a little exhibition game in the summer, just like that. So the idea came to my mind to do that, so he said that's fine, and then like that day or the next day, I selected ten Radicals and ten college players. And that was pretty much it. I never really even told Tim Debyl, the Radical's owner, until like a week and a half later maybe. And a lot of the whole conversation with the Packer's intern only lasted about two days. It wasn't like a really long drawn out thing. And then Ultiworld contacted Tim after they somehow found out about it, I think. And then that's when all those articles came out and that other stuff. And Tim didn't really know how it all went down either, so that's where a lot of this misinformation came from. But do you want to say anything else about the timeline?

Anneke (01:07): I'll fill in on our side I guess. So, I think what happened was we saw the Ultiworld article posted, and then, we drafted something. But we wanted to make sure that we knew all the details because we didn't want to say something and have it be misinformed. So we contacted Avery and just figured out what happened, and he told us what he just told you guys. And then we drafted a statement and sent it to Avery again just because we didn't want him or any of the Hodags to think that we were attacking you personally. Then, we posted it, and then, a lot of other stuff happened. Any questions, comments?

Anneke (02:09, cont.): A couple weeks ago after one of our practices, our team sat down and had a conversation about it, just to gauge people's thoughts and feelings about the original article but really the whole thing. And, Robyn... Robyn turned to the captains first and was like, "Why did you write this gender equity statement?" And I was like, "Well, I was angry at first. I... I saw it, and I felt let down and..." I don't know. It was a really cool thing, but I really couldn't explain why I was so angry. Over the next few days, I did a lot of reflecting on what kind of lead me to have such strong feelings about this whole thing. Because a lot of people on our team saw the Packer's game and were like, "Oh, that's cool. Guys get to play Frisbee." But I definitely had a very different reaction, like a "What about us?" kind of thing. I think it comes from the fact that I have a very fierce pride for my teammates on Bella. I think it comes at the expense of connecting with you guys as the men's team. This is my fourth year on the team, like I was saying, and as a Freshman especially, the culture was very different then from what it is now. Whenever there were individual conflicts between our teams, it was kind of like, Bellas stand behind our players, and Hodags or Pimpdags stands behind their player; it kind of links this feeling of us versus them. And so instead of us as a program, it was men versus women kind of thing. That's definitely how I would describe it my first year and now I'm here as a fourth year and while there's nothing explicit, like we hang out and we're friends or whatever, but when do we ever hang out as a group. Honestly, there's so few people here I've seen. So when I saw the Packer article, I think this just amplified the feeling of us, as Bella, women, versus you guys as men being able to play. That's where a lot of my strong feelings came from. While it kind of sucks, that's how this awareness happened. I think that this was a really great opportunity to realize that as a micro-community here, we have a lot that we can do to be better as a program and more cohesive than just seeing each other on spring break or Saturday nights or whatever. So, hopefully, we can fix that and play ultimate together and have conversations like this. Does anyone else have any other comments?

Jeff (05:52): Yea, my initial reaction to seeing the statement put out by Bella was initially... you see it as an attack because I didn't really see any precedent to it. I totally agree with the statement, but it was like what you were talking about Anneke: our programs have had such a long divide, and it felt like they were almost asking of the Hodags for this. We were tighter with the Radicals after having the Allstar Game over the summer. Like I said, I completely agree with the ideas behind it, but it was just more kind of the intent, initially for me at least, was kind of coming forward despite lack of relation for the past however many years.

Graeme (06:53): I think part of problem for a lot of Hodags was that we didn't even hear about this until the article Ultiworld came out with as well. I think Avery was keeping this

pretty close to his chest; he wasn't saying much about it. For us, I think a lot of it felt like all these things were coming out of nowhere. All of the sudden, you have this sweet opportunity, and suddenly, people were mad about it. And then, anytime you're reading comments online, and that's your primary source of information and how people feel... you're gonna be upset by some of those people because that's their whole goal is to piss off the other side. Probably the Hodags and Bella experienced some of that... I'm sure, I know we did. I know Bella got called whiners; we got called misogynists. Nobody likes that. I think that definitely exasperated tensions. I don't know how to avoid that. Maybe, if information came out in a different way, it might have helped. But again, Avery is not a pro at statements and releases; he's just a guy trying to make something cool happen.

Avery (08:08): Yea, I wanted to comment about all the stuff that came out; I never knew that was going to be posted anywhere on social media, or that Ultiworld contacted Tim; they never contacted me. I'm assuming they thought Tim had organized it, but they didn't realize that I was the only one who had done anything. It was a surprise to me when I saw the article as well. It was a really tough for that to come out, and I felt really bad for my other friends on the Hodags 'cause it was really tough on them too. It was just a bad situation in its entirety. It all came out really bad. I would've done it a lot differently if I had the opportunity.

Kaitlynn (08:58): I want to say something how we're focusing on those things online when I feel like we should be focusing more on where this came from, why it was put out in a statement, and why some people commented the way they did about our statement. I think we need to focus on the history of men and women mostly because there's this otherness of men and women. As being a male, you have a certain privilege, but you don't have to think about it. So, when these things came out and these opportunities came, of course when I first read the statement, I was like, "Oh, that's awesome. Ultimate is going to be in front of a ton of people; that is awesome." But then, I told some kids I nanny for because they love Ultimate, and they love the Packers. I said, "Hey, are you going to watch the football game?" I'm like, "Hey, just so you know, there's going to be an ultimate game in the halftime." And he's like, "Oh, are you gonna be there?" This is an eleven year old kid's first thought that I was gonna be there playing Ultimate. I was like, "No, actually, it's just the men's team." He just kinda looked at me and asked, "Why?" And then I responded, "I don't know." Younger kids don't have this sense of privilege to them yet; they don't see it. But as you grow up, you lose a sense of it. As women, we identify as women; we are aware of all the things that bring us down from not being male. I want to tell you guys that the reason why this happened was because of the way we were raised... the way all of our history as human kind and

growing up that's created this hierarchy of gender. And that's also what we're talking about, but I could go on about other things. I want to try to get us talking about when we experience privilege, especially in the ultimate community.

Mila (11:19): I think just to add to that, it seems like a lot of the reaction from people with something like, "Well, I get what they're saying, but... this just isn't the right time," or, "Why are they trying to bring this opportunity down for us when we're not sitting here trying to exclude women; we're just enjoying the opportunity that we've been given." I think what's hard for a lot of this is that you don't get those kinds of opportunities. Whether it's ultimate, whether it's in other things, there's a ton of us who are in male-dominated programs, so this a thing we think about and deal with every single day. I can totally understand if you're basing this off of decision-worth, they're asking you to participate in this cool event, the last thing you're going to be thinking about is gender equity 'cause that's not a thing you're used to thinking about; it's just not even present in your mind. But if you think about what the statement was and what was actually said in the statement, all that we're asking for is that you try to bring that to the forefront of your mind. That you work to try to think about the things we're forced to think about daily. I don't think that's so much to ask, but I do know it's weird, and it's hard, and it's not something you're used to. Kaitlyne and I were just talking earlier; there were lots of things we haven't been thinking about enough, that we really need to think more about. This isn't just you guys are terrible people and, I don't think that was ever really the intent. I think if you read the statement closely, that really comes across, and I'm really proud for our captains for wording it the way that they did. But like you guys were saying, that's going to get twisted when it gets put online, and suddenly, you guys are misogynists and all kinds of things when I don't think that's what we're asking. We're just asking that you to start to think about the fact that we come up against this everyday, and we're never going to get the opportunities you guys will unless we advocate for ourselves.

Austin (13:22): Privilege was never really something that I personally thought about in my life because I figured if I wasn't actively being sexist or racist or whatever-ist that I wasn't part of the problem. But I think this whole situation definitely changed the way that I think about it. Like you said, we should start thinking about privilege more and more as we move forward. I know that I've personally and other guys on the team, I'm sure other guys on the Pimpdags too, have this sort of revelation. It's hard to describe privilege, but it's just this weird, I don't want to say power, but we don't know it. We have to realize that, and with that power comes the power to push forward movements like gender equity. I feel like that's where a lot of us are at right now, but we don't really know how. I mean help us... that's kind of a burden to put on you to just tell us what to

do, but we want to move forward. We want the union within the program, but it's not just Bella and Hodags; it's about the union between men's and women's ultimate, between men and women coming together in general.

Anders (14:54): I would agree. I think that sometimes I see that there is the divide, but I'm not exactly sure how I alone can do something, or it's hard, really hard to bring other guys to try to go along. I think this is a really good first step, and I hope that we can continue this into the next semester and the rest of this semester. I think there have been a lot of other teams that have put stuff out like Boston and Duke, and I think that'd be really cool if we could come together and respond to all the animosity that's been given to the program, coming out strong and making a statement.

Kaitlyne (15:31): If we want to be that type of team, we all need to understand that we are all on the same page; we all need to understand why we're doing this; we all understand where these are coming from; and we all understand where all of us stand. We can't just be saying, "Oh yeah, gender equity, that's a thing, cool." And others of us are up here where we actually should be. That's why these conversations need to keep happening. Not just now, but have it within your team, within yourself. Then if you have questions, text one of us, text someone you know, talk with your friends, not just within this situation. My friends give me a hard time because I will bring up racism; I will bring up slavery; I will bring up the Holocaust at impractical times, but that's just what I do to keep the conversation going. You can look up online, and there's lots of things on how to be a good ally; there's lots of things on how to be a good advocate that are all over the place. And it's just like, little things all amount to big things. Just keep asking, we'll help. People will help.

Mila (16:49): Another way is just being receptive. I think it took a lot for our captains and the team as a whole to put ourselves out there and express how we felt and what we thought. One thing that was really hard was putting ourselves out there and having this whole barrage of negative feedback about it, not necessarily from you guys but from the ultimate community at large. That just reinforces that your opinions don't matter, how you feel doesn't matter. Just try to be receptive and try not to give into that feeling of frustration, that feeling of "well why are we doing this, why do we need to talk about this right now." Being more open is a good place to start.

Jeff (17:42): There's definitely a good opportunity for us to kind of simultaneously build these programs together and build our ideas together... to kinda continue with these conversations. I have found on the Hodags that it's very hard to talk to another dude about gender equity. We see that perspective everyday, just playing with the Hodags;

you're just playing with other guys and talking to other guys, and that's all the perspective you get. It would definitely be nice to have tighter programs or have Hodags and Pimpdags that are more comfortable approaching Bella and Atropa, just being able to have these open conversations whenever just because we're all friends.

EvK (18:42): I definitely hear that... this is just what's been on my mind. I feel like relying totally on the women's teams and the Pimpdags and as a program to have conversations like this is a little short-sided on our part. We didn't have a meeting really after. Avery brought us in a huddle before practice, and we talked about it a little bit, but I didn't even know y'all had a meeting to talk about the Lambeau field issue. That would've been something really productive for us to do because I think what's been said is totally true. As a male ultimate player, as a male in general, you do have this privilege, and you have this privilege where you can speak about issues and invoke change, but you also have the privilege to totally ignore it and just go about your workout or go about your practice. Austin had a really good Facebook post about it as well, but I think we could do a lot better as the Hodags of having conversations like this... and really taking it seriously. I've been playing Frisbee for five or six years now, and unfortunately, a lot of the times when you bring up gender equity or you bring up real issues, you can get laughed off. I'm saying it's gotten a lot better recently, but there is a history of sexism in general and especially within sports. And I think we are at a very important crossroads with men and women's ultimate and mixed ultimate. It's fantastic that ESPN shows all of the semi-finals games from each group. But at the same time, I totally hear what you guys are saying: where this opportunity comes along, and you're an afterthought. This is a huge pivotal moment in our sport; I'm guessing this is the most people ultimate has been played in front of in a long time. It just has to feel terrible that you feel like this ship is taking off without you and that this is just another step towards a more male-dominated sport like almost every other sport. We do have a real opportunity to make this sport really integrated and really special. And that starts with us having these conversations, but it's also on us as a men's team to have more conversations within ourselves. I've definitely been thinking about that, and I definitely promise you guys that I can do a better job.

Anders (21:27): I think we should try to start hanging out with each other outside of practice as well. I think Anneke brought that up a little bit. I remember one time I was walking home from class, and I saw Amber Heffernan, V, and Lilly throwing on Bascom, and I got to throw with them, and that was pretty cool. I think it helped me build a relationship with them a little bit and hopefully not to the extent we can expect in the future, but it was cool. It was something that I hadn't done before, and I think that's a

good step to try to make efforts to see each other outside of practice and build more personal relationships that aren't necessarily around Frisbee but as people.

Jan (22:15): This year especially has been real men's focused, but there have been times where I know Anneke has come to our goaltimate sessions. And it's things like that where opening it up to each other, and I don't have a lot of your guys' contact information, and that's really bad on my part. I definitely want to improve on that because a lot of us are looking to do stuff. When I introduce myself, me being a business kid, the people that I know that are even interested in that kind of program or are even thinking about something in that line of profession, we're here as students, you know, beyond ultimate. So, those types of connections are so easy to make. Last night, I was able to talk to V for a while about how she's interested in food science. In previous years, I haven't done that kind of stuff. It does take effort, bit by bit, but I think if we really open up the day to day collaboration, that's going to be one of the biggest things. So, Ders, I couldn't agree with you more.

Anneke (23:25): Yeah, I could just make a giant Frisbee Groupme.

Jan (23:45): I think each of us having a telephone number or an email to send out, "Hey, minis, threes, throwing." It's just stuff like that; it's so simple; and it's so easy for us to get together and connect on such a basic level. It would be such an easy foundation to build, especially when it starts getting warmer out too. Those are my thoughts.

EvK (24:10): Well, especially for you, Jan, and me it's our last year on the team; it's the last year for a lot of the guys on the team. It'd be really cool to get this going in the Spring, and looking forward as a future for our program if we can get that going, it'd be really cool for the Freshmen and Sophomores, and that can just continue. And, then, I don't know, ideally in five six years, people won't even remember a time where the Bellas and the Hodags and the Pimpdags and Atropa weren't all one program. That's the goal.

Jeff (24:35): Kind of to go off what EvK was saying, we have all the Freshmen, all the new people to the program; they're kinda like the babies of the program. They haven't been opened up to the past relations of the Hodags and the Bellas and Atropa and the Pimpdags. If we could build a foundation that we're actually a really cohesive program, we could have them buy into that system, and I think they'd appreciate that more than the past history we've had.

Carly (25:22): With all of this being said, I think we have a lot momentum to start something, and if it is creating a giant Groupme between everybody, we need to get it going now. 'Cause if we don't and we wait 'til after break to start thinking about these things... people, the time is now to act, and even if it is a giant Groupme, we need to do it. And if we move onto other things like emails or even buddies between teams, who knows. But we need to get something going, so we hold ourselves up to this. I don't know if the captains would wanna talk about it or if we want to do it as a community, but we need to get this communication open for when we're not trapped in a room together.

Anders (26:09): Should we start a big Facebook group instead of a Groupme because that's not as limited to a certain number of people. Yeah, a Facebook group might be better for people.

Kaitlynn (26:19): And just add me on Facebook; I share a lot of interesting articles.

Logan (26:40): I'll kill the silence here. Just a little off topic too, this conversation... I'm not the best with words; I just wanted to throw that out there right now. I get really nervous in situations like these because I come from a really small town, like a thousand kids. I never thought about gender pronouns before I came here; that was huge to me, and I get really nervous speaking up or saying things because I might be labeled as sexist or misogynistic, which I actually don't even know what that term means. I think we have to make sure that we don't attack each other; we have to make sure we keep the conversation safe. Sometimes safe spaces may get a bad rep, but I just want to make sure kids are able to have these conversations without the fear that you're like, "Hey, that comment is singling them out." I get really nervous in that sense, so I'm...

Kaitlynn (27:41): Well, that nervousness is natural. That nervousness is extremely natural. When I start talking about black people, half of you are going to go into your shell; it's going to happen; that's a thing. As humans, we strive for being comfortable. But these conversations, none of us should be comfortable in them. That's just how it should be, and a safe space to me is where we can... anyone can share what they want to say, no matter the issues. If I said, "I like blue," and someone said, "I like red," and I was like, "Well, I hate red," that would be okay to share in a safe space for me because in here, I respect all of you as people; I don't even know half of your names, but I respect you. I think the ultimate community is such a good safe space, and the fact that you brought this

up, that you were uncomfortable sometimes talking about these things, that's okay to say that. I'm from a super small town where half the stuff I say makes people really scared. When we have these conversations, it opens it up, and people are always scared to ask questions. But you shouldn't be scared, especially in this community. We will all help you out even if you say something racist or sexist. People will call you out, but they don't mean it in a mean way; they're trying to help you; they're trying to educate you. Things will start clicking in your mind, and then you can start eventually influencing those around you as well.

Mila (29:22): One of the goals here is to have the programs be more cohesive; that's going to help too. You're going to feel a lot more comfortable talking about gender equity with a woman that you know and played Frisbee with and see here and there. It's a lot easier to have that conversation; you can feel comfortable with someone as a friend than trying to have it with complete strangers. So I think that you guys show a really good chance of having both of those things happen together.

Anders (29:53): I think that it would also help me and some of the other players that don't know as many people on the "A" team for the girls and the guys come to the sidelines during byes. At MLC, my car and some other people went over to the Bella game in the morning, and I knew like three Bellas. That was really intimidating to be standing on the sideline not knowing if anybody... well I don't know, it just didn't feel right; it just kind of felt weird. I think if we got to know each other better that would help us integrate more in terms of supporting each other on the field.

Jeff (30:23): Yeah, I think Notre Dame sets a really good precedent with this. Despite how good...

EvK (30:34): We need a sword.

Jeff (30:37): <laughs> Despite how good their men's or programs are, they do make a really active effort to get both their teams on each other's sidelines, men's and women's. That'd be really awesome to see for our programs because obviously, we don't have many spectators. It'd be nice to have fans if we could

generate that within our program. Yeah, that's huge... for both our teams... all our teams.

EvK (31:09): Bellas, do you know what tournaments you're going to in the Spring? Is that all set up?

Anneke (31:14): Probably none of the same ones. QCTU, Centex, Midwest Throwdown...

Ross (31:23): We'll see them at sectionals.

Ladas (31:28): Woah-ho, we'll see you at sectionals.

Sabrina (31:30): I don't know; we weren't at the same sectionals last year.

Ross (31:33): Actually?

Sabrina (31:35): Yeah... maybe, Regionals.

Mila (31:41): Or Nationals, so...

Sabrina (31:44): So, Regionals and Nationals.

Ross (31:50): Is there anything we can actively do as the Hodags during our tournaments to push this gender equity thing forward? I know that's a very broad question, but I want you guys to get these opportunities. I want our programs to see... when I came in, literally, we hated each other, and I didn't know why. I was a Freshman; I was brand new to the sport; I was trying to throw a disc to save my life. Meanwhile in the background, it's like, "No, don't go talk to the Bellas," all because one captain broke up with another captain or something. It was a very hostile relationship that... you kinda come into it, and if you don't know why, it just kinda sticks around. Anneke was talking earlier: the first few years you can like a couple people, but there's still that hidden stigma around it and just makes it awkward. Personally, I really want that to be erased, and 'cause most people on our team who think there's this bad stigma don't even know why. [...] I don't want that to happen, and just 'cause of that main event is why there is this bad relationship. Other than that, personally, I've never had a reason to not like any of you guys. I want to try and get to know you, but I think Kaitlynne said like... I don't know half of your guys' names, and it's kind of weird being a captain too because a lotta people know my name, but I don't know their name. So when I walk by them on the street and they say my name, I'm like, "Oh, hey!" It's not me trying to avoid you; it's just I want to try to get to know you guys better.

Graeme (34:18): I just wanna say real quick on that point, specifically for the Hodags; we have one rookie here right now. So it starts with us. And granted Dirtball has been around the program for a while, so that barely even counts. So, I think Dirtball...

Kaitlynne (34:38): Do you want me to tell you the stigma I feel from the team and from...

Ross (34:48): Yes.

Kaitlynne (34:50): You're not gonna like it.

Graeme (34:51): Let's do it.

Kaitlynne (34:53): You are a bunch of very privileged white boys. That is the stigma. And that is, overall, ultimate's stigma actually. And that happens. When you talk about people [...], my first thought is entitlement. You don't have to be entitled; you don't have repercussions for your actions; you don't get any consequences for them. That is what the stigma around your team is. I don't know what our team is. But that is also just ultimate in itself; that is just how the ultimate community became with that. I think that the first step to help get rid of that stigma is by actually listening about it and recognizing it: you're growing up, where it came from, how it came to by, and then, looking forward to how can I recognize my privileges but still help. Just recognizing them is... you're ten million steps ahead of half the people on this planet.

Graeme (36:10): So do you know why that stigma exists? Is it something that we do? Is there an event?

Ladas (36:22): Playing on the Pimpdags, I hated the Hodags. I'm not gonna lie, and I don't know if part of it was the people who were on the team at the time, but I'm sure every single one of the people that played on the Pimpdags hate the Hodags. And that's half the reason because you feel like they're privileged, and it's really frustrating. For me, it was really difficult, this whole thing, but I'm happy for where it's going. I still remember when I got the call; it was from Avery, and he was like, "Oh hey,"... I missed his call first of all... and then I called him back, and I'm like, "What's up?" And he's like, "Are you free on the fourth of December?" I was like, "I don't know, maybe, probably." And he was like, "Well, 'cause I picked

five other Hodags and keep it on the DL, but you're gonna go play." It was cool, but already at that point, my reaction was, "why do I get to do this?" There's twenty-one other people you could argue were just as good. I remember talking with people and was like, "I don't feel like I deserve this, right?" And then, to have the article released, I was even more like, "Darnit!" Everybody is so upset about this; everybody wants to be there; everybody wants to be apart of it. That was my initial reaction, and it was frustrating to have people think... that are upset about it. I had to realize more of... just admitting that I'm part of the problem, and part of the reason I'm part of the problem is because gender equity is not on my first mind. The first thing that comes to mind isn't, "Hey, how privileged these people are, I need to do something about it." The first thing I think of is, "Wow, this is awesome. I get to be apart of it." And, it's tough to be telling people that, but it's the truth. Unless it's on the front of your mind, you're not going to do anything; you're just part of the problem. That was what I felt like had to take away from it. Moving forward, I feel like the easiest way to bring that about is by building the program into one and building relationships and making it where we don't just see people at UBay. But that's a good place to start because when you go to UBay and meet other people, right? If I'm good friends with Anneke, gender equity is probably going to be something that comes to my mind when I hear these things, right? That's probably gonna be something that I'm thinking about. Another frustration that I had was all the communication that you guys had was over email, right? That's communication, but still, if we're talking about... we're a program; we're an ultimate community that's inclusive, and we're fighting for gender equity and rights for everybody. Like, we're not even talking in real person, you know what I mean? So in my mind, you gotta go that direction to get there. I still remember EvK two or three years ago like, "What's up with the Pimpdags hating the Hodags, the Bellas hate the Hodags, Ultiworld hates the Hodags?" Well, what do we do? I think, it's, like, you are privileged; we are privileged. Every year, I get the chance to potentially be on ESPN... Unfortunately, it hasn't happened.

EvK (40:07): Oh, good thing we just lose in quarters, I mean...

Ladas (40:08): Yeah, I know, it's fine... But regardless, everybody wants to be there, and unless we can recognize the fact that we have the privilege to be there, and I had a couple moments where it's, like, "Holy crap. This is awesome

to be apart of this, but I'm not... not everybody gets to be here." I think it's hard to not come off as a douchebag and an entitled white prick, right? So, I don't know ...those are my thoughts, so I think we should hang out more and have a Christmas cookie party 'cause...

Molly (40:43): I have a tree; I have a tree in my apartment.

Ladas (40:46): You have a tree?

Molly (40:47): I have a tree.

Ross (40:48): Is it real?

Ladas (40:48): Is it real? Oh my gosh.

Jeff (40:52): Yeah, it's ten feet tall.

Sabrina (40:53): That's so tall.

Ladas (40:54): Alright, well, does anybody else have a tree? Well, we're gonna have it at Molly's house.

Mila (41:00): Can I just say one thing to answer your original question about what kinds of things you can do at tournaments? What's your name?

Dirtball (41:08): Uh, Dirtball, Andrew.

Mila (41:14): I just wanna say props for wearing a Bella jersey; that's just one thing where it's like you might not ever think that that would mean something, but immediately, when you walked in and were wearing that, it's dope; like, he's into it; like, I got it. [...] It's pretty badass of you to be like, "I'm gonna support the women's team and wear their jersey." That's a really small, tiny thing that shows to us that, at least in some sense, like... "Yeah, I think it's a cool jersey to wear, and I support their program." Anyway, that was just one example of something. Not that you should wear that at tournaments obviously; you have your own jerseys to wear. But those are just small things and just shows the support that I think mattered.

EvK (42:15): We could get the Hodag and the Bella holding hands on our jersey.

Ross (42:23): ...a Bella riding the Hodag.

Ladas (42:26): With a sword. With a sword.

Austin (42:31): The Pimpdag jersey already has the Bella logo on it.

Sabrina (42:40): I think the question was asked...

Carly (42:42): Isn't it on the cards and the tokens? You're kind of playing poker with the tokens of Bellas.

Jeff (42:59): Yeah, Dirtball's got it on his calf.

Sabrina (43:06): I think the question was to ask, "How do you avoid the stigma of being a douchebag?" And I think the easiest thing you can do is by using your voice. [...] Probably what happened is nobody spoke and said anything to those guys doing that thing. It's really hard, and I know it can sound easy when I'm saying it, but when you're in the situation that your friend is saying something really bad, it's so important for you to actually say, "Hey." They're gonna respect you, and it's gonna be hard, but even saying that one sentence, you're gonna feel better, and you might change your friend's mind, their opinion about saying something really awful. You saying something else like, "Hey, you can't talk like that, and this is why you can't talk like that." That will change perceptions. That's something you can do.

Lilly (44:01): We also talked about how the internet really threw a lot of things out of proportion, but it's also such a great vehicle to show that we were on the same page because when we released the statement, there was nothing; there was radio silence. Like Anneke said, that sometimes that hurts more when there's no acknowledgement that we've put out this statement. These are our feelings, and there's nothing else from the Hodags that came back. Even at tournaments, being like, "Hey, we should wish each other good luck." 'Cause if we show that we're united on that front then... we all have many followers, and people automatically know. It might be like a little thing, but I think we can use social media in a positive way, even if it's intimidating with all the trolls on there, but... I don't know. So I think that's one way. And I think going forward, we have all these things where we're like, "Okay, so we're going to do this; we're going to be

friends." But I think as we walk away from this meeting, we should probably have a concrete meeting; like, we're gonna do this; like, let's volunteer at this food pantry together, and let's do this. We should walk away from this not with all this hypothetical but with a laid out list of where we're gonna move forward. So we need something concrete, help us... I don't know how we're gonna do that.

Anders (45:10): Let's make a Facebook group right now.

Lilly (45:11): Facebook group, alright, let's do it.

Sabrina (45:14): I think we can have the captains come take out their hand, talk about some events we could do as programs together.

Anders (45:30): Someone mentioned inter-team buddy groups, and I think that could potentially be something we could try. I don't know who would necessarily spread out as much as keeping it within the buddy groups, but it would be something that would be worth a shot for second semester maybe.

Carly (45:46): Yeah, I think something someone said just by knowing one woman on Bella really helps open their eyes and feel comfortable talking to them about it. So if we match up a Hodag, a Pimpdag, an Atropa player, and a Bella, then we have all the bases covered, and everybody is kind of accounted for which is really about the buddy system. I don't know if it's feasible, but if the captains would like to talk about it, that could be a really good introduction, just getting to know someone personally from the other side.

Jeff (46:23): So what was proposed was that you have these buddy groups 'cause I know we have buddies on the Hodags, and some of them don't even talk with each other. How do you start conversation or make sure that these people are actually getting to know each other?

Anders (46:39): I'll agree 'cause I feel like we, the Pimpdags, tried a buddy group emplaced this year, and it really was not, to my knowledge, all that successful thus far. I don't know if you guys can attest to that, but my buddy group has really not met together. I don't know if that's just a guy thing that's weirder out of... the girls' team seems to be very successful with them. Maybe there's just a difference in that regard. We'd make it so the buddy group is making sure that it

actually happens and it's not something we just institute, and then, it never goes anywhere.

Alex (47:05): I think it's definitely true that sometimes you have buddy groups that don't click or don't meet. But I can tell you last year that me and Jan and EvK lifted, I wanna say like fifteen times together or something. Even if not all the buddy groups work out, you'll still have some of them working out, and I think in the end, it's worth it.

Anneke (47:31): And that takes initiative. It's like in your relationship; you have to put time and effort into it. So if we decide to do buddy groups and if you're serious about it, that's on you to be like, "Hey, do you want to get dinner? Hey, do you wanna throw?" And it's hard 'cause we all have really, really busy schedules as student athletes, but it's doable, and you can make it happen. I think it's feasible; I think it'd be cool; definitely unprecedented. I think that'd be great, but it's gonna take effort and time.

V (48:11): One thing that, for me, means a lot to changing the culture is so important. I played in high school, and I felt like every single year in the Fall we did mixed; every year the girls had to battle the guys basically. The coaches had to talk to the guys... it was always animosity, and that's what I've always known and feels normal now which is really sad. I feel just having these initiatives is so important and really means a lot. So that's what I'll say.

Carly (48:47): And making sure that your rookies do know these are our expectations now. 'Cause I would also play in high school in Minneapolis, Allina. And my high school South was known for being really good mixed because we took aside our players every Fall, and we talked to them seriously about gender equity and how you have to throw to girls; we got it ingrained in our rookies that just throwing to guys or throwing to the better sex is not okay. Even if you know younger people in ultimate... I talk to my younger brother all the time about if he's throwing to girls. That's something that you can put on yourself, is to reach out to the younger people that you know who are in the sport and make sure that these issues get addressed early. So something like this in college, they don't have to face that.

Anneke (49:54): Alright, let's wrap it up for tonight 'cause I want to respect your guys' time as students. So that being said, thank you all for coming. I know this is kind of in the boonies; you get to campus, and it's snowy. But this is an important first step, and it's clear that there is a lot to do still. That being said, you don't have to wait for that captains to talk about this and collaborate, 'cause we will. But don't wait for it; that starts now.

*End*