

# BOA Underwater Hockey Operating Guidance Post COVID-19



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**Version 1.1**

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## 1. Introduction

The Cardiff Underwater Hockey Club has been meeting at the Cardiff International Pool for 12 years. Until the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic the club operated under the provisions of Cardiff International Pool's Normal Operating Procedures (NOPs) and the Emergency Operating Procedures (EOPs) together with guidance from the British Octopush Association (BOA) the clubs governing body. This new set of guidelines has been produced to both document how the club operates within the pool environment, as agreed with the Cardiff International Pool's management, with details of the additional requirements as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and to provide club members with additional guidance to keep them safe at this time. The club will operate on the principle of "Get in, train/play, get out" – arrive ready to train.

Phillip Harrington

Club Chairman

### 1.1 Background

This guidance is based on, and accepts, the [Government phased return guidance](#) and [Swim England returning to pools guidance](#) and also acknowledges that the pool NOP and EOP will take precedence.

## 2. COVID-19 General Requirements

The Cardiff Underwater Hockey Club derives its COVID-19 guidance, from our governing body the British Octopush Association (BOA [www.gbuwh.co.uk](http://www.gbuwh.co.uk)), who have in turn shared content from the Sub Aqua Association (SAA). The SAA is the National Federation for Underwater Hockey in GB, CMAS is the International Governing Body (Federation). The document has been compiled using content from the BDSG (British Diver Safety Group) (<https://bdsg.org.uk/>) which is a repository for wide-ranging advice covering all aspects of underwater activities. The BDSG consists of representatives from a broad spectrum of national agencies including the RNLI, HSE, MCA and UKDMC to name just a few.

2.1. The club Chairman has appointed a responsible person, known as the **COVID Coordinator, Jenny Murphy**.

2.2. All participants will be members of the BOA.

2.3. Session(s) times are: Monday 21:00 to 22:00

2.4. To meet COVID-19 requirements at the pool the club Chairman will publish links so that all participants can be familiar with any updates POST Lockdown to the NOP & EOP. During the special arrangements club members will not be allowed into the pool building without prior agreement with the pool management.

## 3. Session Planning

3.1. Participants should be encouraged to only attend their local club session and not travel.

3.2. Before arriving at the pool members will confirm their intention to attend the session to the **COVID Co-ordinator**.

3.3. This must be done at least one hour before the start of the session so that teams can be published before the session where possible.

3.4. In the absence of NHS Track & Trace provided by the facility, a register of actual attendance should be kept by the [COVID Coordinator](#). These details should only be shared by the relevant members of the Club Committee and with the knowledge of the members. This information could be collected via a digital platform, but must adhere to GDPR requirements.

3.5. In the event that contact details need to be accessed - designated club officers can access this information upon request via the BOA database. The Club Chairman is the contact point for accessing any contact information.

3.6. The maximum number of participants in the hired pool area will align with the NOP, where substitutes are used social distancing will be adhered to whilst within the substitution area and they will wear their mask and snorkel.

3.7. Car-pooling is discouraged between members of different households and players travelling via public transport are reminded to follow government advice for public transport.

## 4. Entry to the building

When planning to use the pool, club members:

4.1. MUST NOT attend the pool if they or any member of their household are showing signs of COVID-19 symptoms or are a high health risk (e.g due to age or pre-existing health conditions that are linked to being at higher risk of COVID-19), Symptoms include any one of the following:

- **A high temperature ( $\geq 37.8$  Celsius)** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
- **A new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- **A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

4.2. At all times maintain the required social distance which is in force at the time, including wearing a face covering.

4.3. Before travelling to the pool you should shower at home, this will help with the pool water quality and the water treatment process.

4.4. Travel to the pool wearing their swimwear where practicable.

4.5. Participants must enter the building as indicated in the Pool NOP (as per NOP pool configuration). We will use poolside doors to enter and exit the building.

4.6. The [COVID Coordinator](#) will ensure participants and equipment are allocated space as indicated in the NOP. This could include assigning each team an area around the pool to place their bags that allows social distancing but ensures that the teams do not mix, to reduce the possibility of contact with other members.

## 5. Club session

When in the pool and deck area our participants will adopt the following social distancing rules, particularly:

5.1. Fin swimming - Comply with NOP Guidelines for lane swimming, the pool size will determine these

5.2. Skills/Drills practice - While on the surface and poolside participants will maintain social distance in-line with the NOP. Where required Games and Drills will need to be modified to reduce close contact above the water (Advantage/Equal pucks, Tackling Drills etc.) Any instructions should be given in line with social distancing. While underwater there is no need for social distancing as the virus cannot be transmitted underwater.

5.3. Game play - Unlike waterpolo, which is played on the surface without eye, nose or mouth covering, Underwater hockey is played on the bottom of the pool and with all participants wearing a mask that encloses the eyes and nose, and a snorkel in their mouth - acting as in-water barrier. Playing on the pool bottom, this naturally limits time spent on the surface, each occurrence is on average less than 15 seconds, thus reducing the potential spread of infection as participants surface they will adhere to social distancing, this could include immediate submerging.

## 6. Use of Equipment

Participants should take the following into account:

6.1. Snorkel - The use of forceful clearing of the snorkel above the water carries a risk of virus transmission due to the potential for atomisation of the expired air being capable of being carried further than normal. This method should not be used, instead, the following should be adopted:

6.1.1. As participants ascend and just prior to breaking the surface they should adopt the following method. Remove the snorkel from their mouth and exhale normally underwater, when on the surface, maintaining social distancing then tilt their snorkel backwards to empty any remaining water, before returning it to their mouths and returning to gameplay.

6.1.2. Only if using a snorkel without a purge valve, the displacement method will be used to clear, that is blow the water out of the snorkel while underwater.

6.2. Masks - These act as a barrier for the eyes and nose and should be worn at all times in the water, they must only be treated for fogging with cleaning/clearing products (e.g. Baby Shampoo, Shower gel, Antifog etc.) Spit will not be used to defog at any point.

6.3. Chlorinated pool water is known to kill the virus over a relatively short period of time. This will in effect disinfect kit during a normal session underwater.

6.4. Where communal equipment is available, this should not be used during the same session by more than one person, until it has been sanitised and at least 72hrs has elapsed.

6.5. Where safe to do so, equipment and kit will be stored at the pool, (in line with the NOP) however any items taken away will be thoroughly sanitised. This also ensures the kit will not be around other users of the pool in between sessions.

6.6. Where possible each piece of equipment will only be handled by one person before and one person after being placed in the pool, Full length Goals can be handled by one person at each end, as social distancing can be observed.

## 7. Exit from the building

When leaving the facility participants will:

7.1. Collect their bags with their outer clothing individually whilst maintaining a social distance from other pool users.

7.2. Exit from the facility, as indicated in the NOP (as per NOP pool configuration). We will use poolside exits.

7.3. Under current guidelines swimmers etc. are advised to simply don their clothes and shower when they get home. Where facilities allow the use of their showers due to being able to maintain social distance, participants should avoid gathering in the enclosed areas and clean themselves only, not kit, in a quick and safe manner. This will help to clear the facility quickly.

## 8. Potential case

8.1. If a player experiences symptoms within 14 days of their last attended session, they must report this to NHS Track and Trace/Track, Trace & Protect and follow all their advice. They should inform the Club Chairman of the result of their test.

8.2. In the event of a positive test result, the club Chairman will contact all members of the club and anyone who has attended the session held within 14 days, they must not reveal the name of the person.

8.3. Participants who have also been treated for COVID 19, must seek consent from the BOA medical referee before returning, (email [medical@gbuwh.co.uk](mailto:medical@gbuwh.co.uk))

## 9. Refereeing and Timekeeping duties associated with Competitive games

9.1. This BOA guidance is written for club training sessions and it is NOT intended for any competitive game based situation, additional guidelines will be issued in due course.

9.2. Local “friendlies” between clubs should not take place.

9.3. Training sessions do not require poolside based BOA officials.

9.4. Any water based referee/s who are undertaking this role as part of a normal club training session will adhere to the current social distancing guidelines when providing any verbal feedback to the players in the water/on the surface.

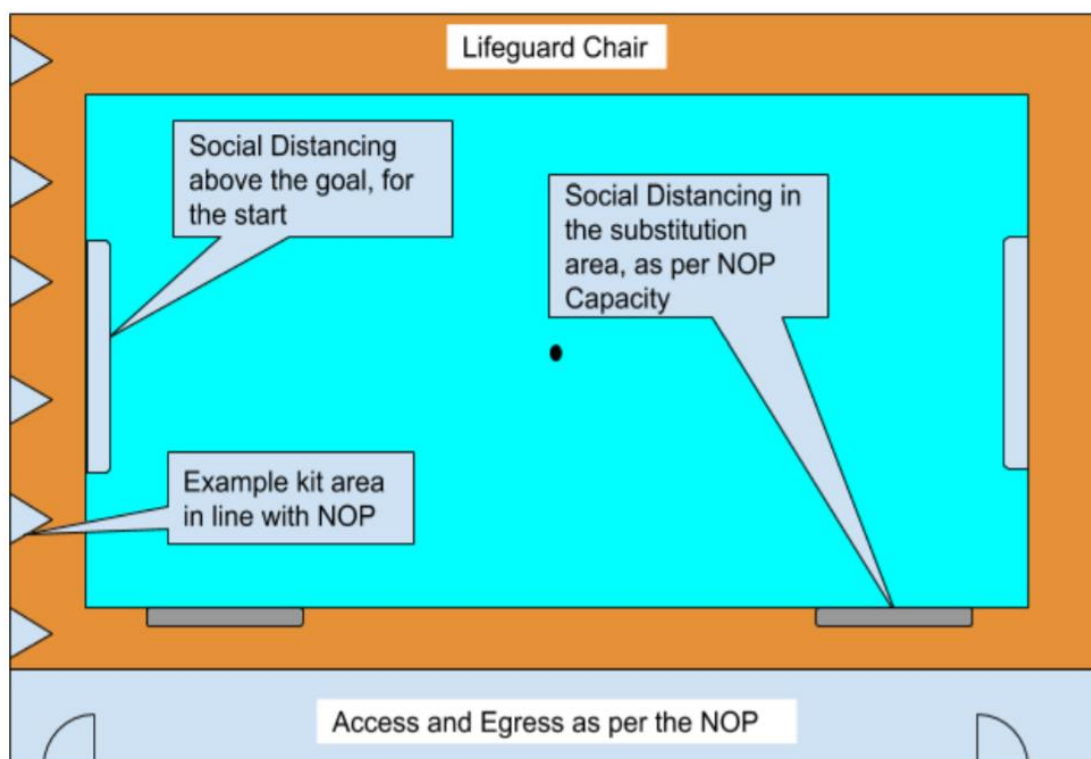
## 10. COVID-19 and Risk Awareness

**All BOA members MUST follow the government's guidelines in relation to returning to the UK from overseas and any quarantine restrictions that apply.**

This guidance should be read in conjunction with [BOA Controlled Risks document](#)

## 11. Pool Configuration Example

### Typical layout 25x12m Pool



## 12. References

[BDSG CVID Guidance](#)

## 13. Appendix

List of clubs and pools where this guidance has been implemented, to be used as a reference:

Club	Pool	Provider	Re-Start Date
Xarifa (juniors)	Denton Wellness Centre	Active Tameside	28-07-20
Sussex	Arun Leisure Centre	Freedom Leisure	06-08-20
Ipswich	Crown & Fore Street Pool	Ipswich Borough Council	Aug 2020
Southport	Ormskirk Pool	West Lancashire Community Leisure	Aug 2020
St. Albans	Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre	Everyone Active	Aug 2020
Isle of Wight	Waterside Pool	Waterside Community Trust	Aug 2020
Plymouth	Mount Kelly school		Aug 2020
Inverness	Inverness Leisure	High Life Highland	Sept 2020
Yorkshire	John Charles	Leeds City Council	11-09-2020

## 14. Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
BOA	British Octopush Association
BDSG	British Diver Safety Group
EOP	Emergency Operating Procedure
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
NOP	Normal Operating Procedure
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institution
SAA	Sub Aqua Association
UKDMC	UK Diving Medical Committee