

York's Octopush take the plunge to host Nationals

Ever popular under-water club heads up tournament

By [Anna Coughlan](#), News Editor (2016/17)

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Octopush is a non-contact underwater sport based on hockey that made its way to York in 2006. The University of York Octopush club has steadily grown since competing in the Student Nationals for the first time in 2008.

The Student Nationals understandably play a major role in asserting the status of a team and so is a key event in the Octopush sporting calendar.

This year York had the honour of holding the event. Teams from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland came together to compete for title and trophy. Octopush at York therefore understandably spent many months training and planning in preparation for the event.

Vice-President Freya Phillips expressed her excitement at being the hosting team as "playing in the Octopush Student Nationals last week was a great experience".

Even in her time she noted how she has "seen us grow and improve over the last year and a half to become a team able to compete with the top student players around the country".

The team really wanted to give themselves the best chance possible when competing in this tournament.

Training continued right up until the day before competition, with the team heading to Leeds on the Friday night for one last training session.

York was made up of two University teams, one being that of returning students and the other of current.

Phillips explained that they had "the opportunity to invite along the Heidelberg team from Germany, started by ex members of our own club, highlighting our links with new international teams".

This adds to the establishment of the Octopush club as even hosting places the teams in a "prominent position" in the landscape of an "ever growing sport".

Games began on Saturday morning at nine AM sharp and as the hosting team, York was ready and waiting as early as seven.

Before lunch there were five games of twelve minutes each. The three York teams comfortably settled into a rhythm winning eleven out of the possible fifteen games.

Later on in the day it became apparent that one of the York teams had ranked in the top six at the event, the other two teams finding themselves suitably settled in the second league.

At this point the number of games increased and the teams had played five each, which as expected increased the intensity of play and strain on the teams.

Despite this the first York team qualified for the fifth and sixth play off, the second winning their league and finishing seventh.

Those returning to play won three out of their five games and performed exceptionally well, beating most other teams in their league, but were unable to place considering they were no longer students.

The final results of the event therefore put the two teams in sixth and seventh place overall. This was a great success for the team as it is the highest ranking ever for the freshers' team.

As well as being the highest average score across both teams, Phillips closed by emphasising how she is "so proud of both our teams". Although they did not come first she felt they "hosted a very successful tournament, leaving our club as one of the leading names within student Octopush".

Plymouth continued to be the leading team in terms of scoring though, continuing a seven year winning streak. They beat every team and so Stirling came second and Warwick third.

In relation to the club's success at Roses they beat Lancaster 8-0, instilling in the team the right attitude when approaching this event. We can hopefully expect therefore for York to do well in Octopush at the event.



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