

Potter Quidditch match held in the deepest pool

Posted on November 24, 2026 by Rosy Sandri

PADUA, Veneto — Freedivers wearing the colours of Hogwarts' four houses are playing Quidditch matches five metres underwater at the world's deepest thermal water pool between Halloween and December 25, when HBO's new Harry Potter series also premieres.

The match brooms are fitted with underwater scooters made by Waydoo, an electric watercraft maker, so players could swoop quickly in the depths in the attempts to outpace each other.

The event is attracting people from well beyond Italy's borders. "People love sharing a story, and a themed event like this gives them one," said Golam Choudhury, founder and director of Luxe Ventures, a travel agency in Rochdale, England. "If you're already a fan, it can make you pick one place over another that looks the same on paper," he said of the sporting event held at the Y-40 The Deep Joy thermal pool near Padua.

"I have always been a huge Harry Potter fan, and I never imagined I could one day feel part of that magical world," said Paola Zanaga, the Padua-born deep freediver and Italian national champion who played for Gryffindor. Zanaga, also an opera mezzo-soprano, is facing young promise Maia Motterle, a former synchronised swimmer, who is representing Hufflepuff in the competition.

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Players in the Y-40 tunnel (*Credits: Matt Evans/Deep Altitudes*)

Other team members include Andrea Della Rosa, a Y-40 freediving instructor, who is flying for Ravenclaw, while Giulia Silvestri, a Y-40 freediver who stars in the teaser for the pool's 2026 film festival, is wearing the greens of Slytherin. The match was filmed by Matt Evans, founder of the underwater production team Deep Altitudes, and Federico Palisca, both experienced water-depth videomakers.

"The underwater world, with its almost weightless dimension, offers extraordinary creative possibilities," according to Evans.

A record pool

Y-40 opened on June 5, 2014, beside the Hotel Terme Millepini in Montegrotto Terme, Veneto, and reaches 42.15 metres. Designed by architect Emanuele Boaretto, it was the world's deepest pool when it opened.

Deeper pools have since been built in Dubai and Poland, but Y-40 remains the deepest filled with

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thermal water, kept at 32 to 34 degrees Celsius.

The pool has a habit of seasonal theatre. Last Christmas, Evans filmed Santa Claus practising his dives in its waters, and a year earlier Zanaga donned a mermaid tail for a festive show.

“Who would have thought that by crossing Platform 9¾ you could end up at Y-40,” said Giovanni Boaretto **[TK no official link found, Giovanni Boaretto]**, executive manager of Y-40 **[TK confirm title, not found outside the press release]**.



Hoops at five metres (*Credits: Matt Evans/Deep Altitudes*)

Beyond Hogwarts

Real-world Quidditch, renamed Quadball in 2022, drew 29 national teams to Florence in 2018, the first World Cup held in Italy. Five metres down, the players needed neither magic nor a pitch, only one long breath and the nerve to chase a ball through the blue.

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