You could call it the other hockey dispute.

Octopush, also known as underwater hockey, has been a divided sport since 2006, when some adherents of the submarine game broke off to create a new governing body.

After years of confusion and lack of cohesion, it looks like the sport is on the cusp of reunification. The 2013 world championships in Eger, Hungary, will be the test, according to past [Canadian Underwater Games Association](http://www.cuga.org/) president John Harland.

“If this goes without a hitch, there’s a good chance that the split has been mended,” he said in an email.

Octopush is played in a swimming pool. Players in goggles and snorkels plunge down to the bottom to push around a sunken punk with mini hockey sticks.

Harland explains that after the sport was invented in Britain in the 1950s, it gained popularity to the point where a world championship was held in 1980.

That’s when CMAS came into the picture, the umbrella organization that oversees a number of strange pool sports, including octopush, fin swimming and underwater rugby. The organization provided a potential route to recognition by the International Olympic Committee, said Harland, an enticing prospect for many.

But at the 2006 world championships in Sheffield, England, octopush organizers were sanctioned by CMAS for a number of issues — like including the British region of Jersey as a participant country — and grievances with the organization came to a head.

“CMAS representatives create a laundry list of fairly cumbersome and costly requirements,” said Harland.

A chunk of the octopush community broke off to create the World Aquachallenge Association, and began organizing tournaments without CMAS as an overseer.

But the effort fell short, precipitating a slow trickle back to the CMAS fold.

“Many countries’ federations were so linked with CMAS that the athletes would lose a lot of funding if they went to a WAA tournament,” said British Octopush Association chairman Kenneth Kirby. “In the end WAA didn't really take off.”

CMAS also appointed a new president, Thomas de Trébons, to its Underwater Hockey Commission. He has worked to bring the octopush community back under the same roof for the upcoming world championships in Hungary.

If the tournament is as successful as Harland and Kirby suggest, then it looks like de Trébons has done it.