



# Silver Water Polo Badge Award

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### Summary

These tests are designed for water polo players typically aged up to 16 who are working their way up the skills ladder. The purpose of the tests is to guide coaches and to recognise and reward achievement of skills by individuals. Some individuals will already have gained the Kent ASA's Mini Polo skills award but others will not. There is no requirement to have gained the Mini Polo award prior to taking the Water Polo Awards although achieving it will considerably assist in the task of building skills.

### Test Set-up

Where required a size 4 water polo ball is to be used. The tests are done in deep water and candidates should complete them without the need for holding onto the side. A short warm up should be held prior to the formal testing. Goggles should not be worn at any stage during the session.

Each award comprises four individual test areas and there are three award levels. All four test areas must be passed for a player to earn the relevant award. Ideally all four tests areas should be attempted in a single testing session but testing can be spread over a number of sessions if this is deemed necessary.

In the event that a candidate fails a test area and there remains sufficient pool time on that day for a re-examination then this can be done. The candidate must, however, take the relevant test twice and pass it both times in order to demonstrate that they are of a sufficient standard to deserve to pass. If there is not time for a re-examination then areas that have been passed can be carried forward and a subsequent re-examination of the failed area can be undertaken. A fee would be charged for such a re-examination.

Candidates should normally have achieved the bronze award before being examined for silver. In exceptional circumstances such as where a player joins a club having already gained some water polo skills elsewhere, they may, with the agreement of the examiner, start directly with the Silver Award.

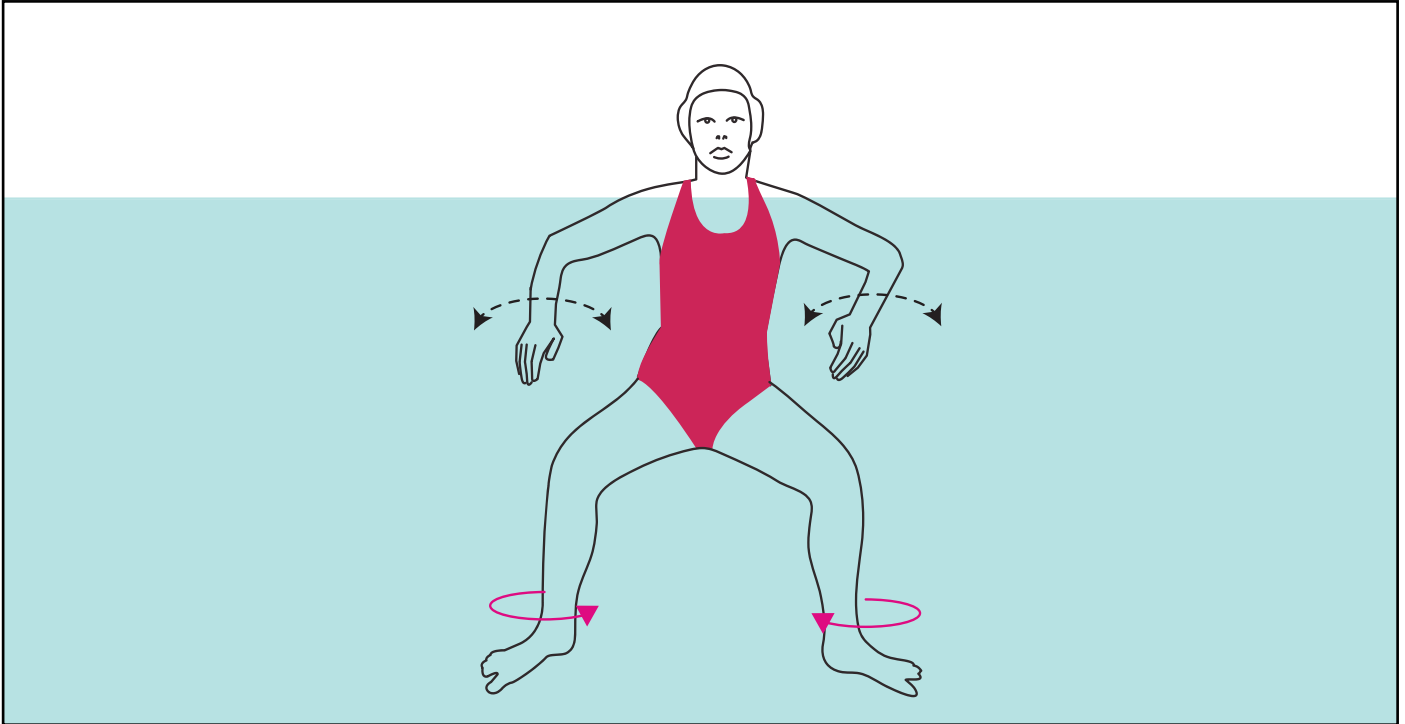
Testing must be undertaken by a coach who has been accredited by Kent ASA's Water Polo Secretary.

A scale of fees will be established. Different rates will be specified for the test and for individual test re-examinations. The rate will also be adjusted to reflect pool hire costs.



### Test Area 1: Eggbeater

*Exercise 1.A Demonstrate the basic “at rest” treading water skill using eggbeater leg kick and with a sculling action with both arms. Hold this position for 60 seconds without appearing to have to apply particular effort.*



### Set-up

The candidate should be positioned in deep water close to where the examiner is standing so that the examiner can see the leg kick action. The examiner tells the candidate to demonstrate the “at rest” treading water skill and then after 60 seconds tells them to stop. Candidates should be examined one at a time so that they are continuously observed.

### Coaching Points

- The body should be erect; knees spread well apart from the hips; thighs close to horizontal; lower legs performing the alternating eggbeater kick.
- Arms should be spread in front with hands moving in a sculling motion. Hands move to and fro with a twist at the end of each arc so that the thumb is up on the inward motion and down on the outward motion. An efficient sculling action should create a whirlpool effect above the hand.
- The overall body position should have the head clear of the water level so that breathing is easy.
- The position should be steady and not bobbing up and down. Note also the exercise should demonstrate eggbeater kick while at rest. If excessive effort is required in order to remain afloat then the kick is, by definition, not at rest and hence fails the test.

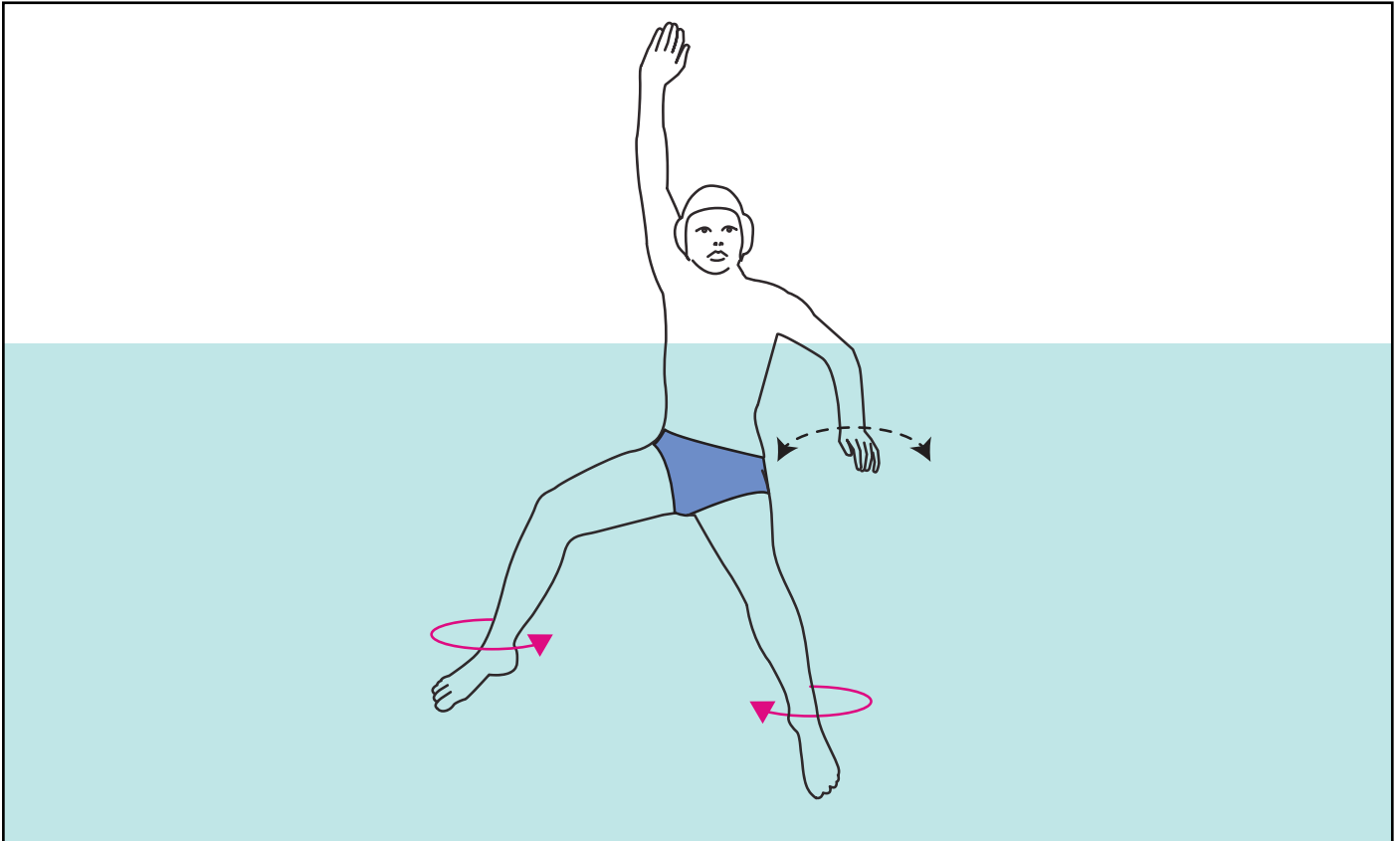
### Test Criteria

The above four coaching points should be met throughout the 60 second test period. High expectations are set regarding stability of body position and ease of application.



### Test Area 1: Eggbeater

*Exercise 1.B: Demonstrate a one arm block position for 30 seconds.*



#### Set-up

The candidate should be positioned in deep water close to and facing the examiner is standing so that the examiner can see the leg kick action. The examiner tells the candidate to demonstrate the one arm block position and then after 30 seconds tells them to stop. Candidates should be examined one at a time so that they are continuously observed.

#### Coaching Points

- Basic eggbeater style as defined for Exercise 1.A above but now with one arm raised and the player working hard in order to support a raised body position.
- The blocking arm should be raised straight; held still; and with the armpit fully clear of the water level.

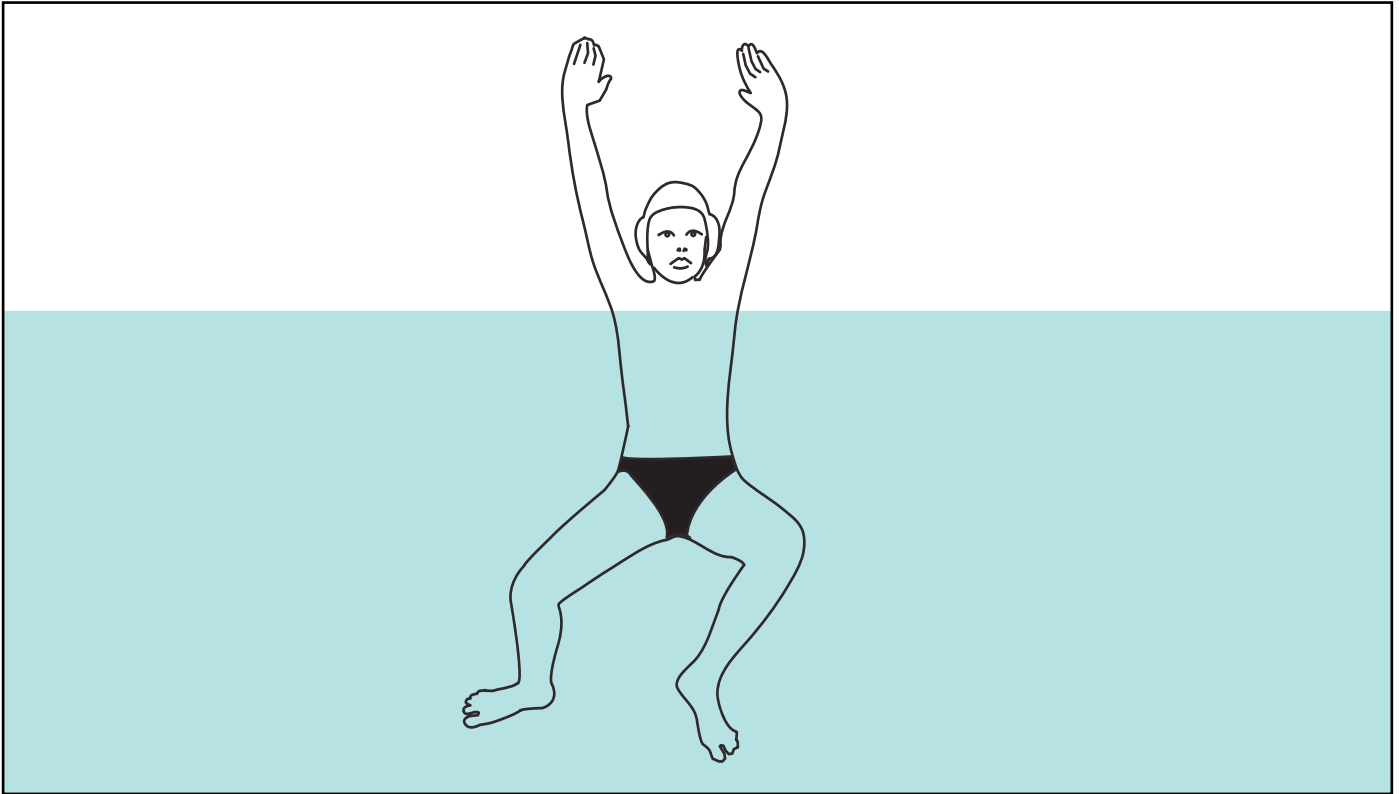
#### Test Criteria

The coaching points must be met for the full 30 second observation period. Note in particular the defined body height and the need for a static raised arm.



### Test Area 2: Eggbeater

*Exercise 1.C Demonstrate a double arm goalkeeper's two arm block for 30 seconds.*



#### Set-up

The candidate should be positioned in deep water close to and facing the examiner so that the examiner can see the leg kick action. The examiner tells the candidate to demonstrate the goalkeeper's two-arm block and then after 30 seconds tells them to stop. Candidates should be examined one at a time so that they are continuously observed.

#### Coaching Points

- Basic eggbeater leg kick as defined for exercise 1.A
- Both arms raised vertically above the body and held straight and still.
- Legs working hard in order to support the arms so that some of each armpit is clear of the water level.

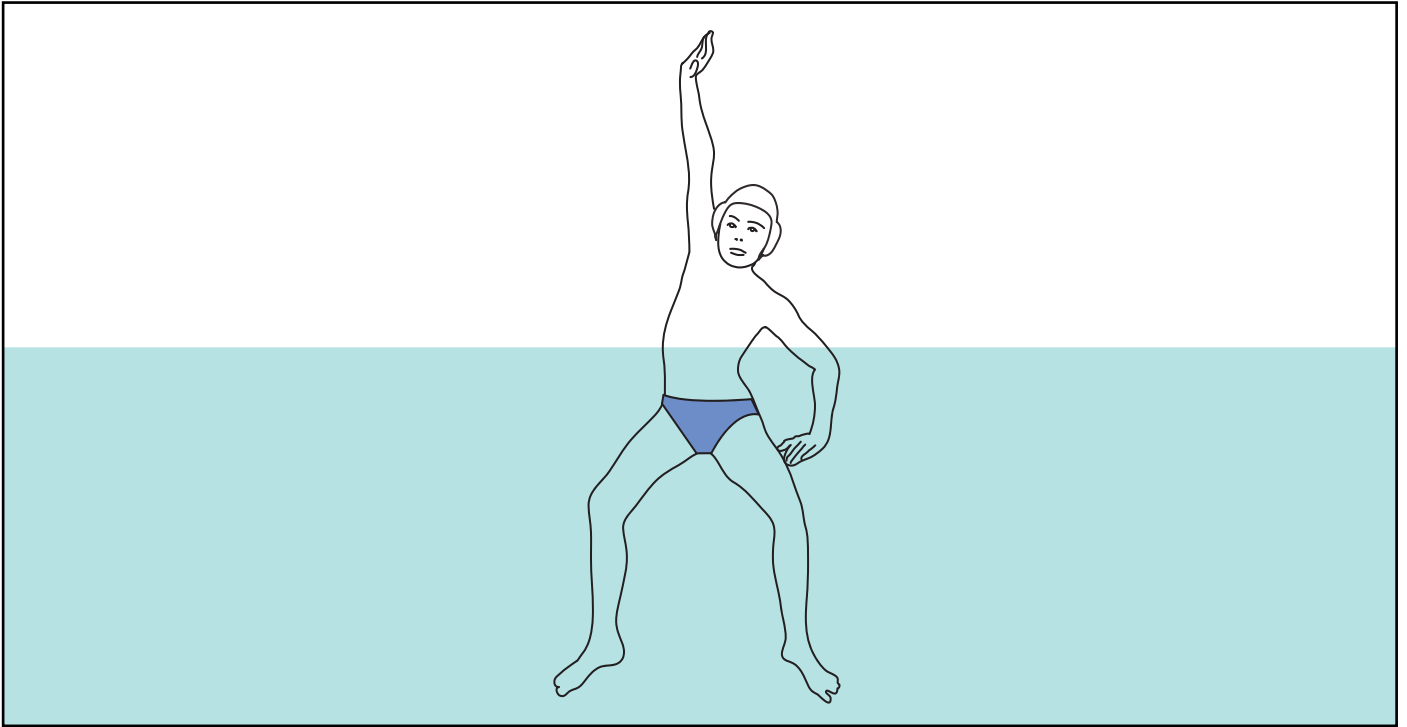
#### Test Criteria

The above three coaching points must all be achieved for the defined 30 second period.



### Test Area 1: Eggbeater

*Exercise 1.D Demonstrate a boost & hold.*



#### Set-up

The candidate should be positioned in deep water a few metres from and facing the examiner so that the examiner can get a good perspective of the height of the boost. The examiner tells the candidate to demonstrate a boost and hold. Candidates should be examined one at a time so that they are carefully observed. If the examiner so requires then a second boost and hold may be called for in order to confirm the height achieved.

#### Coaching Points

- On the signal the player boosts one arm high and briefly holds the reach at its maximum extent by working hard with the legs and in a support scull action with the other hand and arm.
- The body height should be such that the armpit of the supporting arm is clear of the water level when the other arm is held in the extended position.

#### Test Criteria

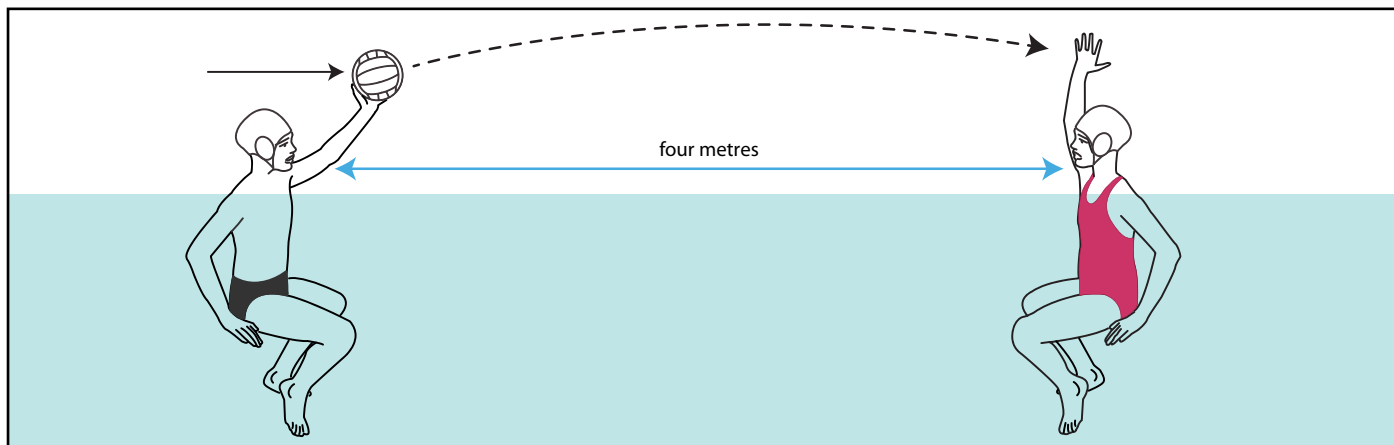
The above two criteria must be met. Note in particular that the exercise is a boost and hold and not simply a boost and that briefly holding the boost is also a crucial element to assess.

It is recognised that the task of examining this exercise can be difficult and so the examiner may require a second or subsequent attempt if they were not able fully to judge the previous one. The intention is not, however, to offer a free re-sit!, it is to allow for a situation where the examiner was not able to make their assessment in the brief time that the initial exercise took place.



### Test Area 2: Throwing & Catching

*Exercise 4.A Demonstrate the ability to give and receive dry passes of good style over a four metre distance.*



#### Set-up

The passing is carried out in deep water between two players directly facing each other and 4 meters apart. Ten passes are made (i.e. each player gives and receives 5 passes). There is no time limit for this test and if the ball is dropped the swimmer should return to a position four metres away from the other before giving the next pass. The examiner may give minor corrections during the exercise.

Note that for these Water Polo Skill Awards all the passing tests are to be undertaken with a partner of at least one skill level higher than the candidate who is being examined or with an appropriate senior player. This partner should give passes of suitable speed in the light of the candidate's skill level. Should this skilled partner be the cause of any failures then that pass should not count and is to be re-taken.

#### Coaching Points

- Give and receive five consecutive dry passes (i.e. a total of 10 passes are made by a pair).
- Correct body position must be shown throughout the exercise with a vertical body supported by a good eggbeater kick.
- Passing must be with the full body and not just from the elbow.
- The receiver should hold their hand above their head indicating where they wish to receive the ball.
- The ball must be brought into control by moving the hand and upper arm backwards after the ball is collected.

#### Test Criteria

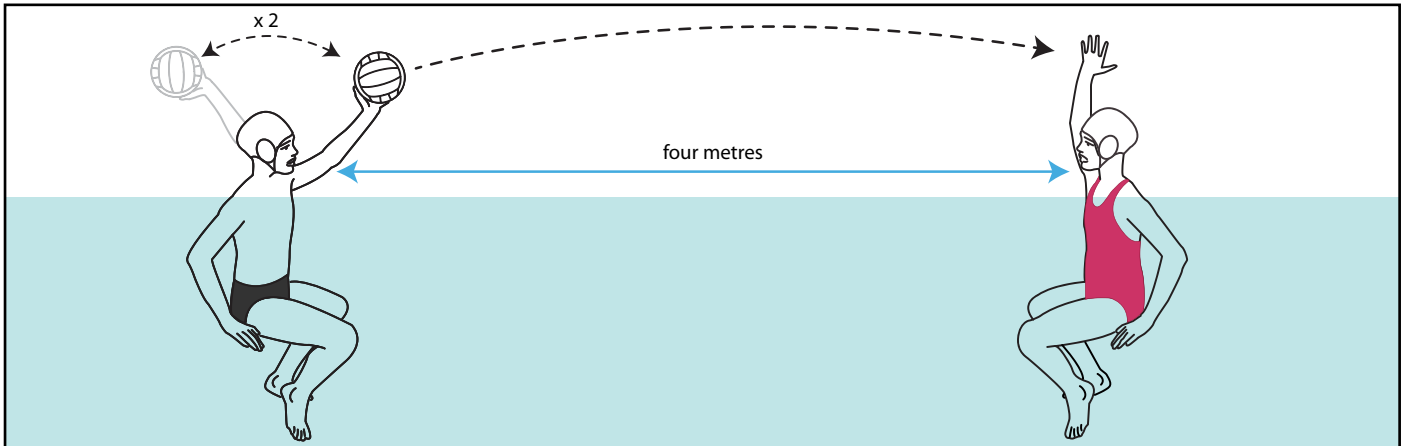
At least 8 of the 10 passes must be of a “good” style and dry (i.e. the ball must not touch the water). The requirement to achieve a “good” style does not demand perfection but any coaching corrections that are given by the examiner must be responded to.

This test area comprises three tests all of which must be passed. Each candidate is permitted “one life” and if a particular exercise is failed it may be retaken immediately. At least two of the tests must be passed at the first attempt.



### Test Area 2: Throwing & Catching

*Exercise 2.B Demonstrate the ability to receive/threaten/pass.*



#### **Set-up**

This exercise is set-up in a similar way to exercise 2.A. The only difference is that on receipt of a pass the receiver must give two or more “threaten actions” before actually releasing the pass.

#### **Coaching Points**

- Apply the passing approach explained in exercise 2.A but before each pass effect two or more crisp and clear “threaten actions” with the ball.

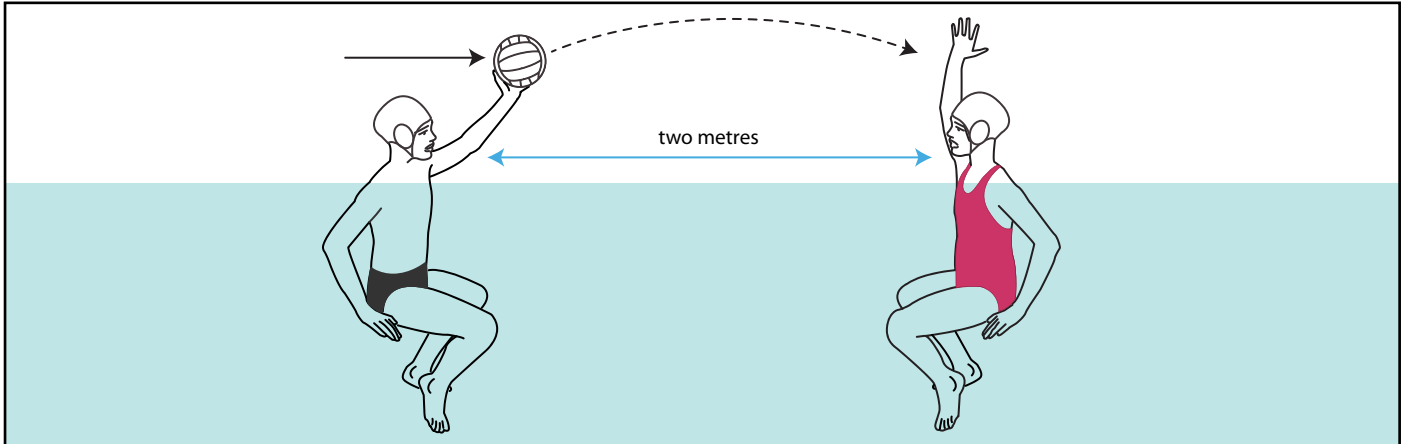
#### **Test Criteria**

At least 8 of the 10 passes must be of a “good” style and dry (i.e. the ball must not touch the water). The requirement to achieve a “good” style does not demand perfection but any coaching corrections that are given by the examiner must be responded to. The reference to the threaten actions being crisp and clear is important. They should be sufficient to make, say a goalkeeper, think that a shot was going to be made and not just a cursory waving of the ball.



### Test Area 2: Throwing & Catching

*Exercise 2.C Demonstrate the ability to give/receive quick dry passes.*



#### Set-up

Once again the exercise is set up in a similar way to exercise 2.A, with a candidate and a more skillful partner positioned in deep water two metres apart. The pair is then given 30 seconds during which time they must effect as many dry passes as possible. The pair may make as many attempts to pass as time permits but only those where the ball remains dry are counted. Should the ball be dropped players, should cooperate with each other to re-establish a two metre gap between them. The passes should be over a distance of two metres but they need not always be from the same place. A number of candidates may be examined at one time provided each has a separate counter.

#### Coaching Points

- The aim is to give as many passes as possible but only dry passes count towards the total. Style is not taken into account – any two metre dry pass is acceptable!

#### Test Criteria

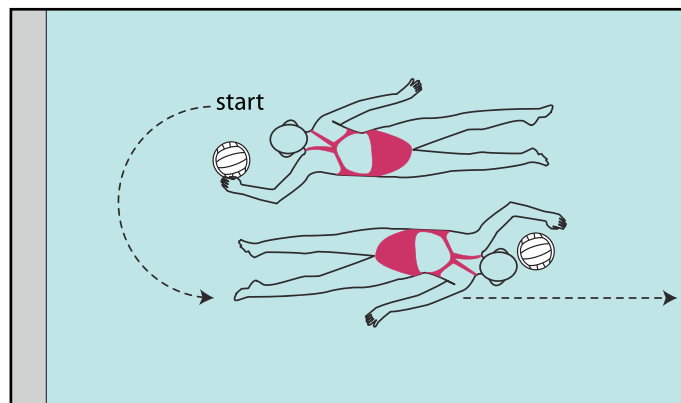
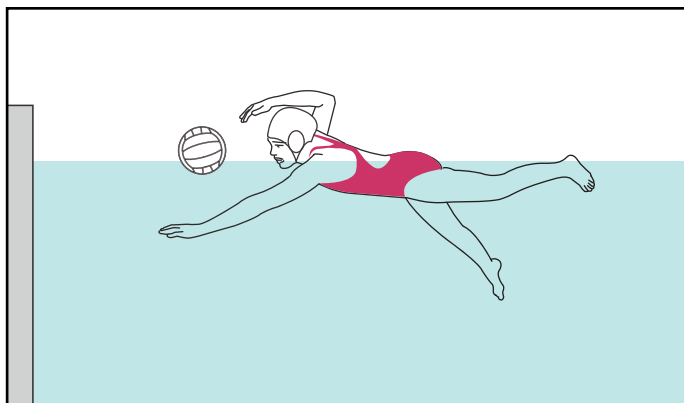
At least 22 dry passes must be made during the allotted time of 30 seconds. Style is not taken into consideration as all that matters is the ability to give and receive quick dry passes. Should the skilled partner cause a significant delay by dropping an accurately delivered pass or giving a bad pass then the test would be deemed null and void and should be retaken. This would not count as using the candidate's "one life".





### Test Area 3: Swimming with the ball

Exercise 3.A Pass the dribbling speed/style test.



#### Set-up

This exercise should usually be conducted by swimming across the width of the pool provided this is at least 12.5 metres. If the pool is not this wide, then the exercise is conducted by swimming part of a length. The candidate starts in deep water with the ball on the water 12 metres from the side/end of the pool. The swimmer is positioned initially facing the ball, looking away from the direction in which they must swim. On the signal the swimmer must pick up the ball, turn and then dribble the ball to the side within the specified time and with an acceptable style.

#### Coaching Points

- Retain the ball under control at all times (i.e. always within reach of one's arm);
- Swim with head up and still (not flicking from side to side);
- Maintain the ball in the cocoon created by high elbows and the head;
- Show a good leg kick creating significant splash behind;
- Touch the ball to the minimum extent possible and mainly with the arms not the hands.
- The swimmer may start with their hand on or under the ball and must retain possession throughout (i.e. always have the ball within an arm's reach of themselves).

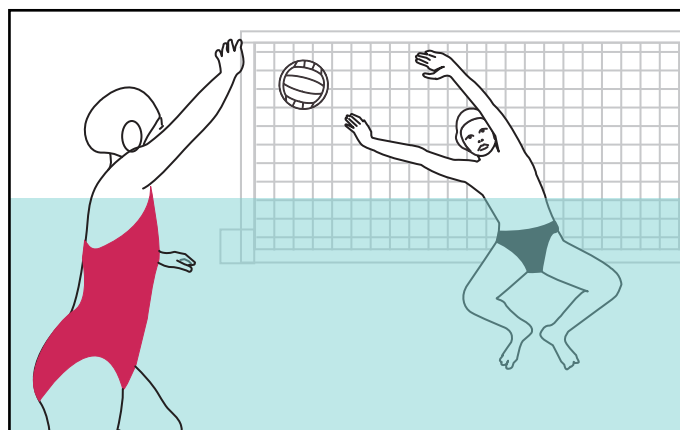
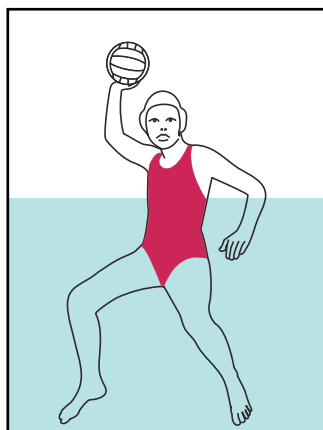
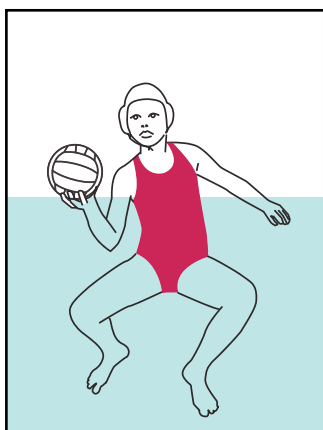
#### Test Criteria

The swim is timed with the watch stopped when the ball touches the side/end of the pool. The swim must be completed within a time not exceeding 10 seconds. The style of the swim must also be deemed by the examiner to be good with no more than very minor style errors relative to the six coaching points above.



### Test Area 4: Swim, pick-up, shoot and score technique

*Exercise 4.A Demonstrate the swim in, pick up, prepare, shoot, score technique into a deep end goal. Goalkeeping skills are also to be demonstrated when called for.*



#### Set-up

This exercise involves shooting into a deep end goal. One candidate starts in front of the goal about 10 metres from it and with another candidate who is being examined acting as a goalkeeper in place in the middle of the goal. When told to start by the examiner the first candidate swims to the five metre line. At this point they pick up the ball and then shoot straight away at goal, from between five and four metres from goal. The exercise is then repeated four more times. The goalkeeper should be of about the same standard and size and should attempt to save the shot if it is within their reach but is not expected to guess the direction and move early to one side. Then roles are reversed with the goalkeeper shooting and the shooter going in goal. Note that the set-up implies there are an even number of candidates being examined. If this is not the case then either one candidate must take an extra turn in goal or a helper of about the same standard must take a turn in goal.

#### Coaching Points

- The ball must be picked up from underneath.
- A good shooting position should be established with the body upright and eggbeater kick being applied.
- Use the full body to effect the shot rather than just shooting from the elbow.
- The shot should be accurate (on target and away from the keeper) and flat.
- Goalkeeper positions themselves in the middle of goal and slightly in front of the goal line.
- Goalkeeper raises their body position in response to the shooter starting to threaten.

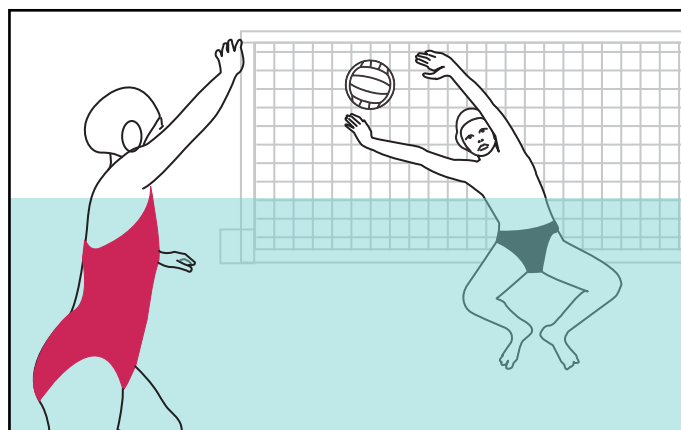
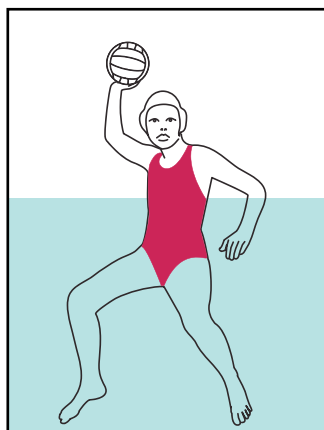
#### Test Criteria

The shooter is expected to score with at least three of their five shots and to demonstrate a good style. The examiner may if necessary give corrections on style on the first two shots but the final three shots must be line with the four coaching points concerning shooting made above. The goalkeeper is expected to make reasonable efforts to stop shots that are directed towards them but it is recognised that at this stage they may not have the opportunity to make saves if the shots are all well directed. The goalkeeper must also demonstrate a good style as set out in coaching points five and six above. As with the shooter, the examiner may indicate necessary corrections on the first two saves.



### Test Area 4: Shooting and saving

*Exercise 4.B Demonstrate the ability to shoot with accuracy and to save shots directed directly at you.*



#### Set-up

This exercise is carried out in the deep end goal and involves a shooter and a goalkeeper. The shooter starts on the five metre line with the ball on the water. The goalkeeper is positioned slightly to one side. The shooter must shoot directly at the goalkeeper with the ball arriving at the goalkeeper's position with reasonable speed, in the air and well within the goalkeeper's reach. The exercise is repeated until the shooter has given three suitably accurate shots for the keeper to save.

#### Coaching Points

- The ball must be picked up from underneath.
- A good shooting position should be established with the body upright and eggbeater legs being applied.
- Use the full body to effect the shot rather than just shooting from the elbow.
- The shot should be accurate and reasonably flat.
- Goalkeeper positions themselves slightly in front of the goal line and about one meter from one post.
- Goalkeeper raises their body position through a strong eggbeater and double handed sculling action in response to the shooter starting to threaten.
- Goalkeeper attempts a save by getting arms towards the shot once it is made.
- If possible the save is done in such a manner as to knock the ball onto the water in front of the keeper.

#### Test Criteria

The shooter must place at least two out of their first three shots on target (i.e. in the air and within reach of the goalkeeper). The style of the shots must be good, i.e. in line with the first four coaching points above. The goalkeeper must show a good style as described in the final three coaching points and must save at least two out of three shots that are on target. Note that this may require extra shots if the shooter does not land their shots on target but for the shooter only the first three shots can count towards passing their test.