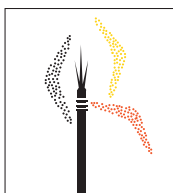


Indigenous Traditional Games



INDIGENOUS
SPORT
PROGRAM



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission



Office
of Sport
Sport & Recreation

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Acknowledgments

The games have been sourced by John Evans from the research by Ken Edwards published in *Choopadoo: Games from the Dreamtime* (Brisbane : QUT Publications, c1999). We are grateful to Ken Edwards (and QUT???) for permission to use and adapt this research. A number of the games have been modified to suit special needs and safety requirements.

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kai



Background

In this game from the Torres Strait a number of players stood in a circle and sang the kai wed (ball song) as they hit a ball up in the air with the palm of their hands. The game was played using the thick, oval, deep red fruit of the kai tree which is quite light when dry.

Players

- Teams of 4–8 players.

Playing area

- Can be played inside or outside

Equipment

- A small beach ball or soft sponge ball for each team

Game play and basic rules

This is a hitting game which can be played as a cooperative game. Players in each team attempt to make as many consecutive hits as they can and work through the letters of the alphabet – one letter for each hit. Each time the ball is hit the players call out a letter of the alphabet.

Players stand or kneel in a circle about a metre apart. One player hits/throws a small soft ball or beach ball into the air and the players take turns hitting it upwards with the palm of either hand (usually with an underhand action).

The team starts from the letter A again if players:

- do not keep their hands open and flat in contacting the ball
- miss the ball and/or it hits the ground
- hit the ball twice in succession
- hit the ball back to the player who previously hit it to them
- catch or trap the ball with any part of their body

For younger players the teams may be allowed to continue from the letter they were at before they made a mistake.

The ball must be hit above head height for younger players and at least a metre above head height for more experienced and older players.

Scoring

In a team competition the game is decided by the team which is able to work their way furthest through the alphabet in a set time (2–3 mins).

A competition could also be held with 1 point awarded to the team with the most consecutive hits in a set time. Younger players may use one or both hands.

Suggestions

The game can be played with a number of modifications/progressions. For example:

- layers randomly hit it to other players who call out their name - attempt to work through the whole team. This is a good ice-breaker activity for teams where players are unfamiliar with each other.
- Players work as a team to hit the ball in the air and go through the letters of the alphabet.
- Players hit the ball around in a circle (either direction).
- Give each player a number; the idea is to work through the players in numerical order. The ball is hit high into the middle of the group; a player steps in and hits it up for the next numbered player, and so on.
- One player stands in the middle of the circle and the ball is deflected to another player who in turn hits it back to the middle player. If the ball hits the ground at any time, the middle player is changed – the aim is to keep a player in the middle as long as possible.

Variations

- Individual contest or practice kai. Players compete to see who can hit the ball into the air (above head height) with their hand the most number of times without the ball touching the ground. This can be played using either hand, right hand, left hand, left and right alternating, or combined with other stunts/skills. Have a set number of turns (such as five).
- In groups of 4–8 use underhand and overhand one- and two-hand hitting/striking to keep the ball in the air. Groups count the number of hits they make before the ball touches the ground.

parndo



Background

This ball game was played by South Australian Aborigines in the vicinity of Adelaide (Kurna language). The parndo (ball) was made with a piece of opossum skin, flattish in shape and about the size of a tennis ball.

Players

- Teams of 12 players on a soccer or rugby field and 15 players on an Australian football field

Playing area

- A rugby, soccer or Australian football field

Equipment

- A soccer ball, rugby ball or Australian football

Game play and basic rules

This is a kicking and hand passing game. Play starts and re-starts with a throw-up of the ball at halfway.

When a player is in controlled possession of the ball (not a 'loose' ball) it must be passed to another player before a kick for goal is made.

A player who catches/marks the parndo from a kick (at least 10 metres in distance) is allowed to move up to 5 metres without being touched or interfered with. Players who are not touched may run up to 10 metres with the parndo and then bounce or touch it on the ground and run for up to another 10 metres before playing the ball. A player has 3 seconds to play on after they catch/mark the ball from a kick.

A player may not kick straight for goal from a catch/mark but may kick to another player. A player may kick for goal only after they receive a pass/handball from another player from the same team. A player must kick for goal and score without being touched for it to count - if a goal is scored after a touch, no points are given.

If the ball is loose on the ground, players may tap or hit it with open hands, or kick it along the ground but a controlled hand pass has to be made to another player before a goal can be scored. A player contacting a loose ball is not considered to be in possession.

When a player gains possession of a loose ball they may run with it or kick it to another player but it must be passed to at least one other player before a kick for goal can be made.

A score cannot be made unless a pass/handball is made to another player.

In attempting to catch/mark the ball players should attempt to avoid all contact – a player in position first is usually entitled to catch the ball. A player may not punch the ball at any time; only a hit with an open hand is allowed.

A player who is touched while stationary must pass or kick the ball immediately (a quick 'one and two' count) or release the ball to the ground for another player to play. After being touched a player cannot interfere with another player as they attempt to play the ball but they can touch them when that player has possession.

For safety reasons players are not to dive on the ball on the ground but must bend over and pick it up – no other player may contact a player or kick at the ball as they do this (this is judged to be dangerous play).

A ball on the ground cannot be kicked for goal. A kick may be charged down but a player cannot be contacted.

No shepherding/obstructing opposing players is allowed at any time.

Scoring

Rugby: Drop kick over crossbar 3 points; punt kick over crossbar 2 points; kick off the ground no points; punt or drop kick below the crossbar all 1 point; hit or pass between the uprights 1 point.

Australian football: Normal scoring but can be played with 8 points for a drop kick between the goal posts.

Soccer: Either same as rugby or score 2 points for a goal when the ball is kicked from the hands and no points if kicked from the ground.

Variations

- Players are only allowed to kick the ball if they have received it from a pass/handball.
- The game may be played with teams going to either goal if they gain possession.

Comment

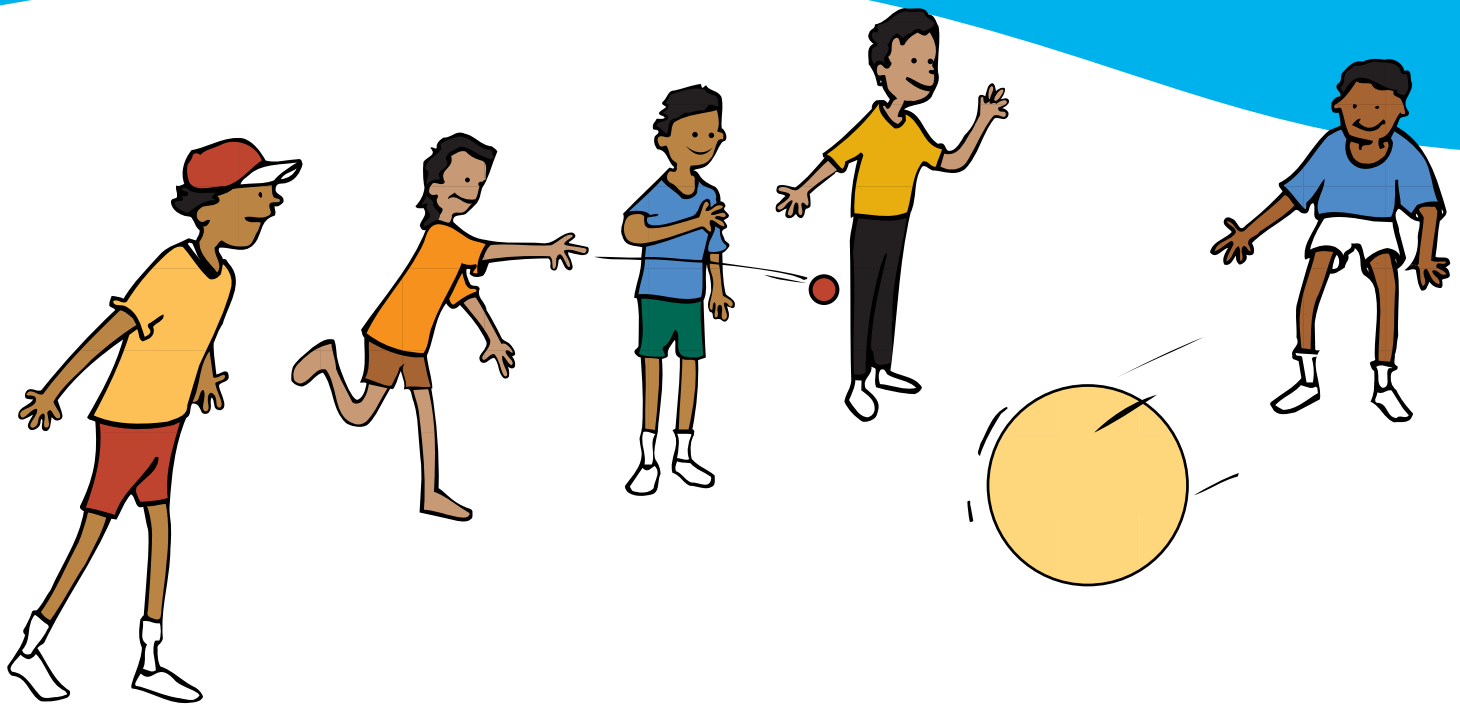
Refer to the rules of Australian football for the basics of the game.

This game is an attempt to include some of the intent of the traditional game in a version that will allow for a more modern game.

Language

In the Kurna language spoken in the southern parts of South Australia a parndo was a ball to play with.

gorri



Background

Bowl-ball or disc games were played by Aboriginal boys and men in all parts of Australia. For example, in the disc-rolling game common throughout Western Australia a piece of rounded bark (disc) was rolled by one of the players for the other boys to aim at. The boy who set the disc rolling was about 15 metres away from the throwers and would call out *gool-gool* (going-going) as they started the disc rolling. The boy or young man who succeeded in piercing the disc took the place of the roller. Accuracy of eye and speed in casting the spear were easily learned from the disc game.

Players

- A group of 10–20 players

Playing area

- An area about 15 to 20 metres long
- A marker is placed at each end of a playing area and throws can only be made by players when the target is between these markers

Equipment

- About 10 marker cones to designate the playing area
- A large ball or a soccer ball
- Allow each player 1 or 2 tennis balls

Game play and basic rules

A roller stands 5-10 metres to one side of the playing area and about 5-10 metres in front of the other players - the distance can be varied to suit the age and skill of the players. Another player stands in a similar position at the other end of the playing area ready to field the ball.

The other players (throwers) stand behind a line along one side of the playing area and parallel to the direction that the ball is to be thrown. These players call out for the ball to be rolled when they are all ready.

The roller calls out *gool-gool* and starts the ball rolling toward the other end of the area.

As the target ball rolls between the markers in the playing area the players either throw or roll their tennis balls at the target in an attempt to hit it. Players do not go out to retrieve the balls until all the balls have been thrown. A signal is given to allow them to retrieve their balls and re-form the line. The ball is then rolled from the other end to continue the game. Change around the throwers after a number of turns.

When a player makes a hit they are greeted with applause and cheering. Successful players are expected to be modest about their achievement.

Safety

- The playing area is marked and players must only throw out in front of them and not toward the throwers/fielders in front of the group

Variations

- Use balls of different sizes
- Vary the speed of the ball
- Bounce the target ball along the ground in front of the throwers
- Vary the distance of the throws
- Roll several balls at a time to be hit

koolchee



Background

This ball throwing and hitting game was played by Aboriginal people in the Lake Eyre district of South Australia. The balls used were as round as possible and were usually about 8–10 centimetres in diameter. Gypsum, sandstone, mud, or almost any material that was easy to work was used to make the balls. To play the game, players were in two teams and lined up on each side of a dry claypan. Each team then rolled the balls along the ground to the other side with the aim being to break up an opponent's ball by hitting it while it was moving. When balls cannoned out of play to the sides they were left until the stock of balls was nearly used up. These were often retrieved by the small boys and put into play again. The game was played for hours and usually until the balls left were too few to cause any excitement. The balls were called koolchees.

Players

- Two opposing sides of equal numbers

Playing area

- An area about 30–40 metres long and 15–20 metres wide (badminton, basketball or tennis courts are also ideal)

Equipment

- Use tennis balls, Kanga cricket balls or larger balls as the koolchee (ball) – one per player
- Wooden skittles or plastic one litre soft drink bottles (weighted with a little sand) – one per player

Game play and basic rules

Players line up next to each other and with the teams about 20–30 metres apart facing each other. The aim of the game is for players of one team to hit a koolchee (ball) rolled by the opposing team.

Players of each team roll their koolchees underarm (below the knees) toward the opposing team. The game is a continuous activity. Each player has a number of koolchees and each team has a large central supply in a bin/basket. Players may only use one koolchee at a time.

When there are no koolchees left the game is temporarily halted for players to collect koolchees so that the game can continue. No set scoring is used.

Suggestions

In a physical education class use a badminton, volleyball or tennis court using some or all of the following:

- Warm-up. Teams at each end of an area roll the koolchees (tennis balls) toward each other — no scoring. The idea is to hit another koolchee.
- Practice koolchee. Mark lines 5 metres apart. Place a skittle/bowling pin on one line and stand 5 metres away and attempt to knock it over. The skittle may be placed in the middle of two players. Younger players may have an individual competition or team relay using a similar set-up. After practice the distance may be increased to 10 or 15 metres. In a competition, players have 5 attempts at each distance (10, 15 and 20 metres — less for younger players) to knock the skittle over and score 1 point. The player with the highest score is the winner.
- As a challenge activity players stand 10 metres from a wall and rebound a koolchee off it to knock a skittle down 5 metres from the wall — you may need to use a soccer ball as the koolchee. Players have three attempts and if the skittle is knocked over they move it a metre further back from the wall; if they miss with all three attempts they move the skittle a metre closer to the wall. Players may change hands to roll or vary the angle of the rebound.
- Cooperative koolchee. Each player has a koolchee. A number of bowling pins or skittles (around 10) are placed in a line halfway between two groups of players. The two teams work together to knock the skittles over. The time taken to knock all the skittles over could be recorded. Repeat a number of times with players attempting to set a koolchee record — the best time could be used to decide on a champion team in a competition. For younger players the distance between teams could be reduced and the pins/skittles placed closer together. Players may not retrieve balls from the playing area while the game is in progress — players need a supply of balls at each end. If a number of games are played at the same time then a competition may be held to see which team is the first to knock all the skittles down.
- Competition koolchee. Use a badminton or volleyball court. Place a line of five bowling pins or skittles about 2–3 metres in front of each team. A competition with 4–6 players in each team on a badminton court works well; matches are the best of three games for younger players and bets of five games for older players; change ends after each game. Each team attempts to roll their koolchees past the skittles at their end of the court to knock over the skittles/pins at the other end. They attempt to do this before the skittles/pins at their end are knocked down by their opponents. Players may ‘defend’ their own pins by rolling koolchees to hit koolchees that might knock over one of their skittles/pins. Depending on the ability or age of the group the pins may be knocked down randomly or in sequence. No players may go on to the playing area to retrieve koolchees.

wana



Background

The young noongar (or nyungar) girls in the south-west of Western Australia had many games they played just among themselves because after a certain age they were not permitted to play with the boys of the camp. In one of their games a short piece of stick was placed on the ground to represent a nhoba (baby). Each girl had to defend her child from the wanas (digging sticks) of the other girls – all of whom pretended to try and kill the nhoba (baby). Wanas were thrown from all sides at the young 'mother', all of which she tried to fend off with her own stick. The mother held her wana between her thumb and forefinger, putting it over her head, behind her back, against her side, in whatever direction the missiles came, thus learning to defend her young ones. In real adult fights women sometimes stood beside their husbands and warded off the kidjas (spears) of their enemies.

Players

- A group of 4–10 players

Playing area

- A designated area
- Use ropes or cones to mark a circle 3 metres in diameter
- Mark another circle 7–10 metres in diameter around this smaller circle to mark the playing area

Equipment

- Tennis balls to throw (coloured softball-sized airflow balls work very well especially if a number of groups are playing in the same general area)
- A rounders bat or small cricket bat as a wana
- A set of wickets, a skittle or container as the nhoba (baby)
- A large hoop to place over the nhoba (baby)

Game play and basic rules

One player with a wana (bat) stands next to a nhoba (skittle symbolising the baby) in the middle of the 3 metre circle. A large hoop is placed over the nhoba and the batter (mother) may not step inside this area.

The rest of the players are spread around the perimeter of the playing area. Start the game using one ball and build up to two balls.

On the signal to start, the players in the outside group attempt to throw a ball (with an underarm or sidearm action – below shoulder height) to hit the nhoba while the batter uses the bat (wana) to hit/tap the balls away. Players may throw the ball to another player for them to have a throw. They are allowed to baulk but cannot delay a throw. Players should throw the ball as soon as they field it and must not wait until two balls can be thrown at the same time.

The batter cannot use their body to block the balls and must stay inside the 3 metre circle and outside the large hoop placed over the nhoba. The batter may only tap/hit the ball away and they are out if the ball is caught on the full, if it is caught with one hand after one bounce, the ball goes out of the playing area on the full, the ball is hit away too hard, the batter steps inside the hoop or outside the 3 metre area, or the batter hits/knocks the nhoba over.

A player from the outside group may enter the playing area (large circle) to catch or retrieve balls but they cannot throw while they are in this area. A player from the outside circle may not enter the 3 metre circle at all in catching/retrieving balls.

Players who retrieve balls from outside the large circle return to the playing area to throw the balls. Players may use a spare ball while a player retrieves a ball hit outside the playing area.

The player who is able to hit/knock over the nhoba with a ball becomes the new batter and the game continues. The game may be played with players batting in a set order and players are not out until they hit at least one ball.

If wickets are used as the nhoba the players around the circle must first bounce the ball on the ground outside the hoop in an attempt to knock the nhoba over – no direct hits are allowed.

Suggestion

As a competitive game players in two teams score runs or points for the number of balls they hit before they are out. The game has a lot of action and players do not tend to stay in for a long time. Note: To play this game in a competition format, players may vary the rules and work out their own scoring systems.

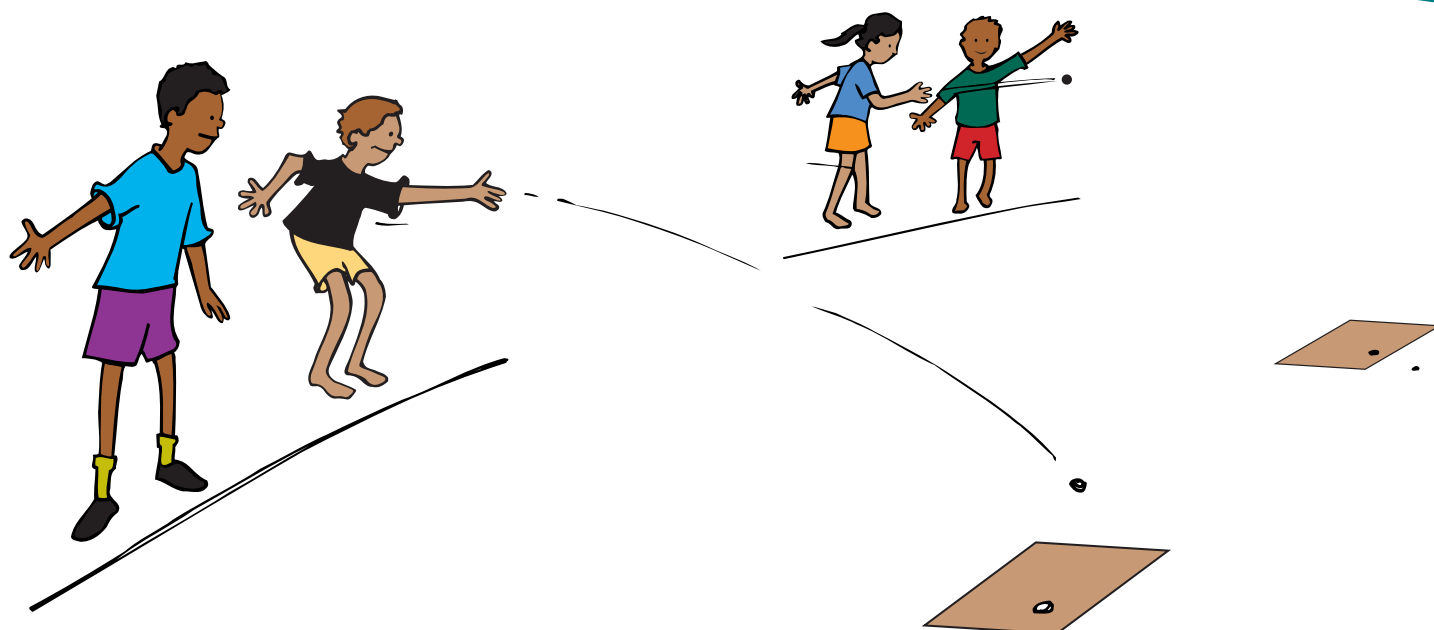
Safety

- Players are not allowed to retrieve balls from inside the small (3 metre) circle until the game is stopped

Language

A wana is a digging stick in the Noongar language of the south-west of Western Australia. A baby is called a nhoba.

kolap



Background

This object throwing game was observed being played on Mer Island in the Torres Strait late last century. The game is named after the beans of the Kolap tree which were used as throwing objects.

Players

- Two players form a team to compete against another team or the game can be played with one player against another

Equipment

- Two mats (softball bases, rubber mats or towels) are laid at a distance of 5–7 metres apart
- Use bean bags (for younger players), coins, large buttons or flat bocces to represent the kolap beans

Game play and basic rules

Two players sit (or stand) behind each mat. The players who are partners are placed diagonally opposite each other. Each player has four kolaps which they try to throw to land on the mat opposite them.

One player has their turn. The kolaps are collected and the player on the opposite team at the other mat has their turn. Continue in this manner.

Scoring

Players score when their kolap lands on the mat. The kolaps must land completely on the mat to count as one point. A combined score of 20 finishes the game for a team.

buroinjin



Background

This is a ball game played by the Kabi Kabi people of southern Queensland. The game was played with a ball made of kangaroo skin which was called a buroinjin. Spectators used to mark their applause by calling out 'Ei, ei'.

Players

- Teams of up to eight players
- Mixed teams of four girls and four boys are recommended

Playing area

- A designated area approximately 60–70 metres long and 30–35 metres wide

Equipment

- A size 3 soccer ball or touch ball as the buroinjin

Playing time

- Play games of 15 minutes each half with a 5 minute break at half time

Game play and basic rules

This is a running and ball passing game. The aim is for a player of one team to run with the buroinjin

(ball) and fully cross over the score line at the other end of the field to score a touchdown.

The game is started and restarted after a touchdown with a pass by a team from behind their own score line - halfway for younger players. Play to four touches before possession changes. The referee will call 'one', 'two', 'three' and 'four – change over' as the touches are made. Players call out 'touch' when they touch the player with the ball.

There is no offside and players may run with the buroinjin and pass in any direction. If a player is touched by a defender while running with the buroinjin they have two running steps (and before the third step lands on the ground) from when touched to play the ball (kick or pass/throw). A player cannot play the buroinjin and regain it unless it has been intentionally played at by another player of either team.

Players who are touched while standing still or walking have a 'one and two' (and before 'three') count to play the ball.

The buroinjin may be passed/slapped from player to player, but it cannot be hit with a closed fist or contacted by the leg below the knee.

The buroinjin may contact the ground, and bounce passing off the ground is allowed. The game is played by running and passing and does not stop if a player drops the buroinjin. Players may run with the buroinjin as far as they can until touched by an opponent.

If the buroinjin is on the ground, players may not dive on it — they must bend down and pick it up.

A player juggling, slapping or hitting at the buroinjin and regaining possession is considered to be in possession if touched — they must play the buroinjin. If a player drops the buroinjin and re-gathers it but they have been touched (as they or after they have dropped it and regained possession) they are still considered to be in possession and must play the buroinjin. This stops a player intentionally dropping the ball to avoid a touch.

A player who drops a pass and has not been touched may pick up the buroinjin and play on.

Passes may be blocked using the body (above the knees) but no contact other than a touch (with minimum force) can be made on the player with the ball. Guarding/marketing of opposing players (without contact) is allowed. A buroinjin cannot be hit from a player's hands when they are in possession — penalty is a free throw. If a touch is made on the buroinjin while it is in the possession of a player, a touch is called.

Possession changes through infringements such as intercepts, a player running out, and holding or obstructing an opponent. On a change of possession for an infringement or other stoppage, a player either throws the ball in (if it is out) or passes it to another player from where the infringement occurred. For a changeover on the field of play defenders must be at least 3 metres away until a pass is made (within the count of 3 seconds).

A player cannot deliberately play the buroinjin into another player. If they do, possession changes to the other team.

Advantage should be played as much as possible.

In certain cases, such as disputed possession or double infringements, the referee will perform a bounce ball (ie drop the ball to bounce to waist height) between two opposing players a metre apart. If a touch ball is used in the game the referee will throw the ball in the air and two opposing players will jump for it (ie same as a jump ball in basketball). All other players must stay at least 3 metres away.

Scoring

A player scores 1 point if they are able to run over the score line with the buroinjin, without being touched by an opponent.

If an attacking player is touched and the two running steps they are allowed takes them over the score line, a change of possession must be given 10 metres back from the spot where they crossed the score line. If the defending team are touched behind or knock the buroinjin behind their own score line, the attacking team take possession 10 metres out from the score line opposite the spot where the infringement occurred.

To score a touchdown a player must receive the buroinjin with two feet in the field of play and cross the score line completely without being touched. Players may not receive a pass and score when they are over the score line. If a player is touched as they are crossing the score line a change of possession is given 10 metres out.

Safety

- Players are not allowed to dive on the buroinjin on the ground — they must bend over and pick it up
- An additional safety rule could be no diving touches below the knees
- In competing for a loose buroinjin players must avoid contact

Comments

For any situations not outlined use the basic rules of touch for general guidelines.

Note: The buroinjin can be 'played' by hitting (with an open hand only), heading, throwing/passing or any other method of moving the ball within the rules outlined.

Variations

- Play with six touches for inexperienced and/or younger players.
- There is no limit on the number of touches which can be made on a team but passes must be longer than 2 metres (a lead-up game).
- Immediately a player with the buroinjin is touched, it has to be thrown up and away (at least above head height in the air) by that player for team-mates or the opposing players try to pick it up (traditional version).
- Players must cross the score line untouched and place/ground the buroinjin to score.
- Allow players to be over the score line to receive a pass.
- Players may not re-gather the buroinjin when it is dropped.
- Allow kicking of the buroinjin.
- Do not allow the buroinjin to contact the ground (penalty is change of possession).

Play the ball back under the legs after a touch is made.

Suggestion

The game outlined is the result of requests to refine the traditional game to one which could be played as a competitive sport or could be used as a variation of the sport of touch.

woggabaliri



Background

Children from the Bogan and Lachlan rivers area of New South Wales played a kind of football with a ball made of possum fur. The fur was spun by the women and made into a ball about 5 centimetres in diameter. It required great agility and suppleness of limbs to play this game with any degree of skill.

Players

- Groups of 4–6 players
- Players stand in a circle about 2 metres apart

Equipment

- A size 4 soccer ball, volleyball or a soft inflatable ball (such as a beach ball)

Game play and basic rules

This is a kicking volley game. The players do not take sides in this cooperative game emphasising skill.

One player kicks the ball up in the air and other players try to kick it (one touch only) again before it hits the ground. Younger or less experienced players may use two touches.

The main object is to keep the ball from hitting the ground.

No player may kick the ball more than once in succession. All 'kicks' are made with the feet or knees.

Players must have one foot on the ground when kicking the ball.

Scoring

Each group attempts to volley the ball (consecutive kicks) in the air as many times as they can within a set time. The group with the greatest number of volleys in the time wins. If the ball touches the ground the count is restarted. A competition could require players to follow a set order.

Safety

- Players are not allowed to push each other out of the way to reach the ball
- Dangerous kicking at the ball is not allowed

Variations

- Team competition. Two teams of four players play in an area the size of a volleyball court. Use indoor soccer goals at each end. In this game the ball is always played in the air. Possession is lost to the opposing team when the ball contacts the ground or when an infringement occurs. Tackling is not allowed, only pass interceptions. Goals may be scored from anywhere. The game is played for two halves of 10 minutes.
- Warm-up. Players use their feet, thighs, chest and head. Each player has a maximum of three touches. For younger or less experienced players a beach ball may be used.

Language

The name for this game was taken from the Wiradyuri language for 'play' (woggabaliri). This language was spoken or understood by many Aboriginal groups in central and southern New South Wales.

keentan



Background

A keep-away game of catch ball from the north-west central districts of Queensland played by both genders. Because the action of the players jumping up to catch the ball resembled the movements of a kangaroo the Kalkadoon people sometimes described this game as the 'kangaroo-play'. The ball itself was made of a piece of opossum, wallaby or kangaroo hide tied up with twine.

Players

- Teams of 4–8 players

Playing area

- A designated area such as a netball court

Equipment

- A ball such as a size 3–4 soccer ball

Game play and basic rules

A running, passing and catching game. The ball is thrown from one player to another player of the same team. All players (team in possession and defenders) must have two feet off the ground to play the ball – both in throwing and catching.

No physical contact is allowed and guarding from 1 metre away only is allowed. Players cannot stop opposing players from moving around the area – no interference is allowed. Passes must be a minimum of 2 metres. The player in possession of the ball may move around the playing area for up to four steps after landing and before they play the ball.

If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground by a player trying to catch it, the other team gains possession. A change of possession also occurs when a thrown ball falls to the ground untouched or a player steps out of the playing area. If the team with the ball lose possession or drop the ball on the ground, the defenders may pick up the ball and play the advantage. Players may not dive on the ball but must bend over and pick it up.

A player cannot hold the ball for more than 3 seconds while standing still. When a free throw is taken, defenders must be at least 3 metres away.

The ball may be contacted in a controlled manner (while in the air) with an open palm in playing it to another player – no punching the ball is allowed. The ball cannot be deliberately played into another player in an attempt to gain possession. Contacting the ball below the knee (kicking) is not allowed but advantage can be allowed for the non-offending team if this occurs.

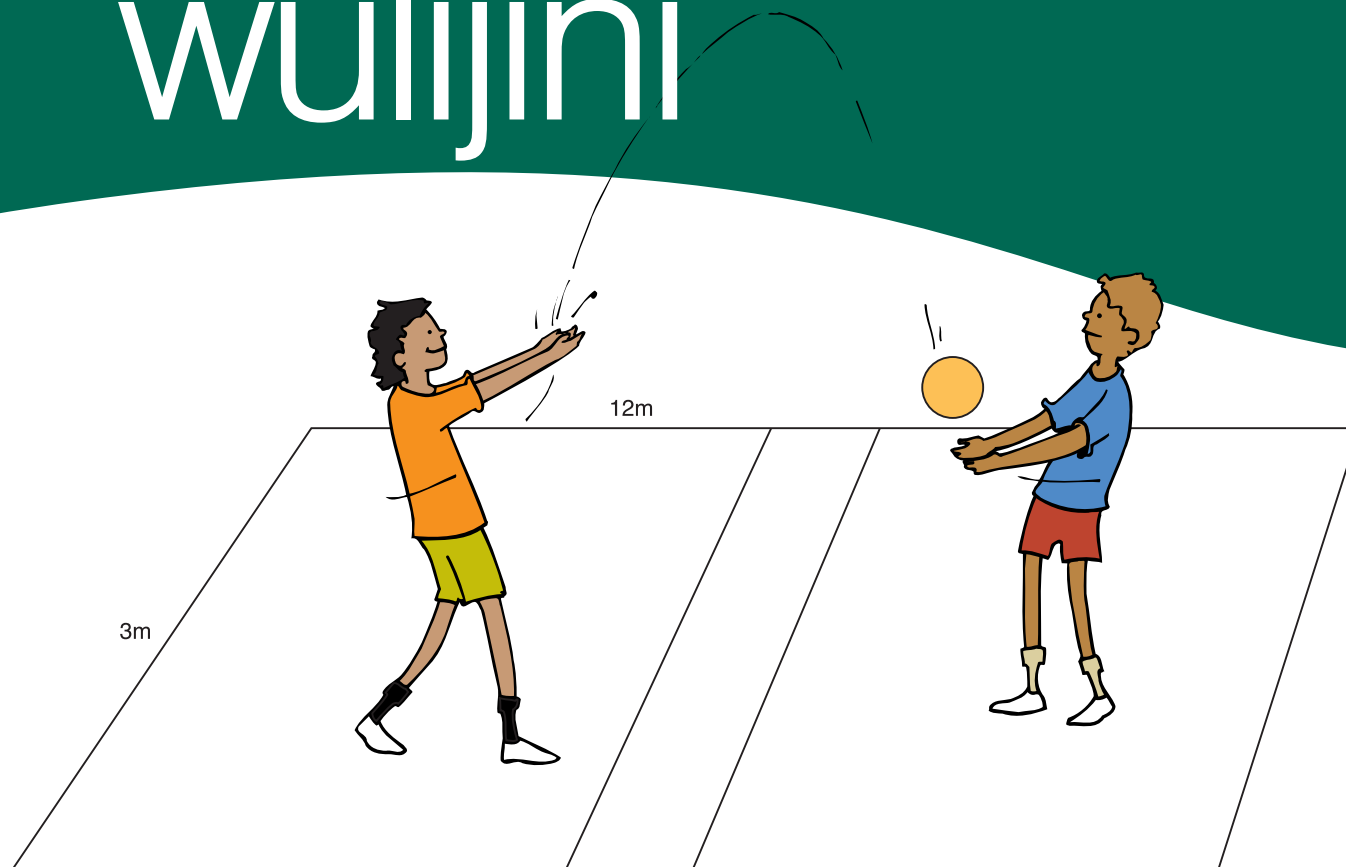
Suggestions

- Practice activities. Practice in pairs or with one player standing 5–10 metres out in front of a line of players. The player out in front jumps and passes the ball for the first player in line to run out and jump into the air to catch. After catching the ball and landing on the ground the player then jumps into the air and passes it back to the thrower. Players may also practice jumping into the air to catch the ball and pass it back to the thrower before they land on the ground (catch and pass in one action).
- As a keep-away skill game two teams of 4–6 players use half of a basketball court and attempt to retain possession for 10 passes to score 1 point. In a competition the first team to 5 points is the winner.
- As a competitive game two teams of 5–8 players use a netball or basketball court. Play starts from the centre of the court with a pass. Players attempt to pass to a player from their team who is in the goal semi-circle (netball) or ‘key’ (basketball) to score 1 point. After a score, the ball is passed in from the baseline by the defending team. A player from the defending team opposes the player in the scoring area and no other players are allowed in the area.
- Variation
- Players run freely around the area.
- Play continues even if the ball is dropped on the ground.

Language

The name is taken from ‘play’ (keentan) in the Wik-Mungkan language of north Queensland.

wulijini



Background

This hand hitting or handball game was played with a zamia (*Cycas media*) seed by the people of Bathurst Island in northern Australia. In the Meda district of north-western Australia players used flat pieces of wood.

Players

- Two players in single games or teams of 2–3 players

Equipment

- A small inflated ball or a covered sponge ball as the zamia seed

Game play and basic rules

A) Singles or pairs

Practice/cooperative game. Two players face each other and hit (volley) the ball back and forth with the palms of their hands as many times as possible.

Competitive game. Use a playing area 12 metres long and 3 metres wide. Mark a halfway line and two lines across the court one metre each side of a centre line – the area between the lines is out-of-bounds. One or two players in each team. Players hit the ball underhand (below the waist) and/or sidearm (below chest high – under armpits) to each other in a game to 11 points (three serves each). Teams have

one hit to return the ball (younger players have two hits for each return – one to control the ball and one to hit).

B) Teams

Cooperative team game. Divide the players into two teams facing each other 3–5 metres apart. Players of both teams attempt to keep a rally going as long as possible – aim to set a record for the group. To make the game more of a team effort allow each player up to two contacts (to control and then hit the ball) and each team at least two and no more than three player contacts. When players become more confident, try to hit the ball higher and restrict each player to one contact.

Competitive team game. Teams of three players. Use a badminton court and a 'soft' ball about the size of a softball. Net height may be set to volleyball height for older players. Serving is underhand below the waist. Follow volleyball serving rules and play to 11 points – best of three games. The ball cannot be hit (spiked) from above net height from inside the front area of the court. Only 'clean' volleys (not a 'carry') made with the fist or palms of the hands are legal hits. Overhead and underarm hits are allowed. Teams may have up to two hits to return the ball over the net – but only one hit is allowed for each player.

Language

The game is named wulijini after the Tiwi language (Bathurst Island) word for 'play'.

kokan



Background

Various versions of hockey type games were played in many areas of the Torres Strait and Papua and New Guinea. A hockey game called kokan was played in Mabuiag. The kokan (ball) was between 6 and 8 centimetres in diameter. The game was played on a long stretch of the sandy beach. The kokan was struck with a rough bat or club, baiwain or dabi, which was usually cut from a piece of bamboo, between 60 and 85 centimetres in length, on which a grip was cut. On Mabuiag Island the game was played by both genders.

Players

- Two teams of 4 or 5 players

Playing area

- A tennis court or similar sized area

Equipment

- Each player has a hockey stick (for the baiwain or dabi)
- Use a softball sized perforated ball or a tennis ball as the kokan
- Markers or goal 60 centimetres high and 1 metre wide

- A goal area 5 metres wide and 2.5 metres out in front of the goal is marked (or a 3–4 metre semi-circle)
- Goals may be placed against the walls/fences at the end of the court
- There is no goalkeeper and no players are allowed in the goal area

Game play and basic rules

The game starts with a player hitting the kokan from the centre of the playing area to another player. Either side of the baiwain/dabi stick may be used to hit the ball.

The main method of play is to hit/drive the kokan; no dribbling is allowed. To reduce the risk of the kokan being dangerously lifted into the air two 'touches' of the kokan will be allowed for a player — one contact to control or stop it and one to hit it. More skilled players and/or older players may use one touch in general play but can use two touches to shoot for goal - the player must be over halfway to shoot.

Players must have two hands on the stick at all times. No body contact or intentionally hitting a player's stick is allowed — all forms of contact are to be avoided. A player is not allowed to use their body to stop the ball but unintentional contact/rebounds off the legs are allowed except where it greatly advantages the player or team in possession (the penalty is a free hit to the other team).

If the ball goes out, the other team hit the ball back in to play.

The ball must not go above knee height and the head of the stick must not be lifted above waist height. Push passes combined with running into space are encouraged as the main ways of moving the ball around.

Players attempt to hit the kokan to players in their team and keep it away from players in the other team.

For infringements or the ball out of play a free hit is awarded to the other team. Defenders are to be at least 3 metres away (body and sticks). No free throw can be taken any closer than 3 metres from the goal. Intentional contact or entry into the goal area is a penalty goal.

The kokan must not be handled or touched in any way other than by the baiwain/dabi. Play for 10–15 minutes. Score 1 point for each goal.

Comment

This game has been modified to provide for a competitive game that retains some of the features of the original game. The game outlined also contains features from a game of hockey played in Western Australia called meetcha booma.

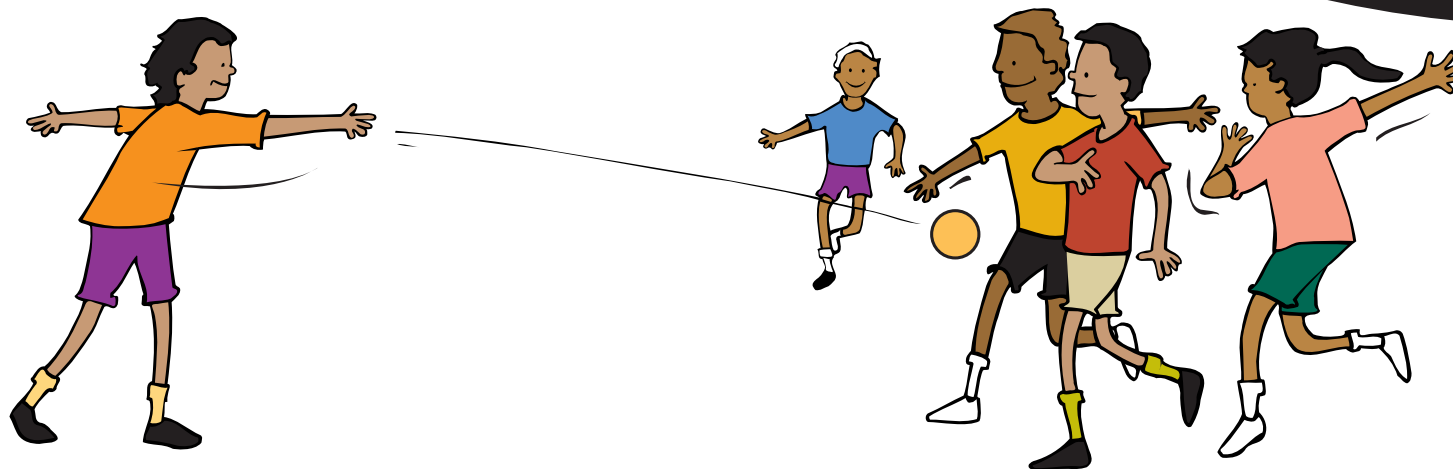
Safety

- Players are expected to play the game with some consideration for other players
- No swings of the stick above waist height are allowed, and the ball cannot be hit above the knees

Variations

- Keep away. One point is scored by a team when a set number of passes are made between players (such as 10) of the same team without being intercepted by players of the other team.
- Play two-on-two 'one-touch' game using push passes in a small area.
- Two teams of three (or four) players. Use a tennis court, a large soft inflated ball the size of a volleyball, and Kanga cricket bats. Players attempt to hit the ball into a goal 3 metres wide. The first team to reach 10 points and hold a 2-point lead is the winner. Players are only allowed to hit the baiwain/dabi once before it is played by another player.

taktyerrain



Background

In most parts of Australia the young boys (and sometimes girls) played mock combat games for enjoyment and as a practice for adult life. Toy spears or shafts were made from grasses, reeds and rushes. The spears were held at their lighter ends and thrown either with the hand or with a toy woomera (throwing stick).

Players

- Two teams of 4–8 players

Playing area

- A volleyball court

Equipment

- Sponge balls, paper balls, fleece balls or socks filled with a light substance

Game play and basic rules

This is a team throwing and dodging game. Players stay in their own half and behind the spiking line (front court) of the volleyball court. On the signal to start, the players throw the balls and try to hit the players of the opposing team.

Any balls in the middle area of the court (between the spiking lines) are retrieved when there is a stoppage in play.

Suggestion

This activity would be most suitable for younger children and could be used in a classroom.

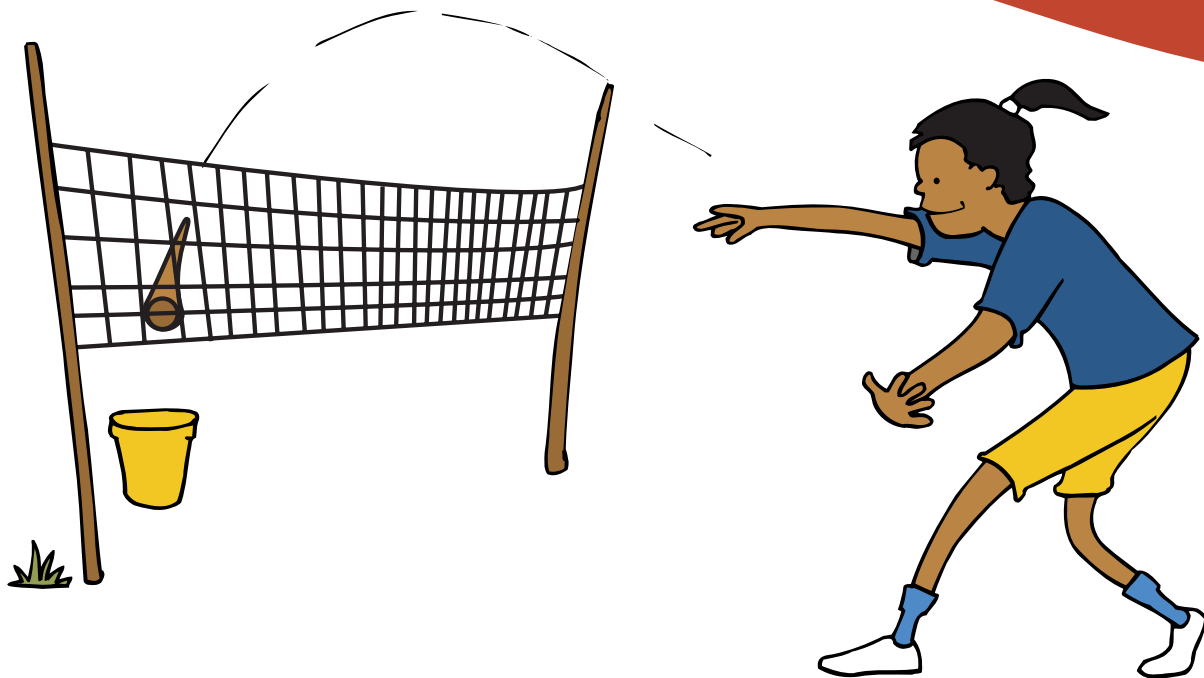
Variations

- Players throw from behind the base lines of a badminton court.
- Have one or two players in the middle attempting to avoid being hit. If hit, the successful thrower swaps into the middle. Use both ends or throw from one end only.
- Individual taktyerrain contest. Two players stand on carpet squares (small mats or a 2 metre by 1 metre marked area) and face each other about 5–7 metres apart. Players have a sponge or fleece ball in each hand and try to hit their opponent below the shoulders without being hit themselves. Players may move around on the mats (dodge), jump into the air, or bend down to avoid being hit but must remain on the mat. After the balls are all thrown they are regathered and the competition begins again. Conduct individual contests to three or five hits or hold an elimination contest in teams.

Language

The activity is named after the word 'to fight' or 'hit one another' (taktyerrain) in the Wembawemba language of Victoria.

kee'an



Background

In areas of North Queensland a game of throwing skill was played. A large sized animal bone (with twine attached to it) was thrown over a net (used to catch emus) and into a pit or hole. Considering the distance to the hole, great skill was required to correctly aim the bone and ensure that it did not touch the net.

Players

- Up to 8 players
- The game is played singly or in teams of 2–4 players

Playing area

- A badminton court and net or similar arrangement

Equipment

- Use 'foxtail or comet' balls or a tennis ball in a stocking to represent the bone with twine attached. When a ball in a stocking is used, the length of the foxtail may be adjusted.
- Use a large plastic bin as the pit or hole

Game play and basic rules

A bin is set up in each half of the court to allow for two games at the same time. Players try to throw the foxtail from the baseline of the court over the net and into the bin. The bin is placed touching the inside of the centre of the front line of the court. A longer distance could be used for very skilled players.

Players take turns to throw the foxtail into the bin. Younger players may hold the foxtail in the middle of the tail and older players hold it where the end and centre sections join.

Scoring

The game is usually played for fun and recognition for a successful throw.

Variations

- *Sports day competition event.* Use the usual set-up or arrange medium-sized storage bins (circular) along the sideline of a tennis court. Competitors line up on the opposite singles sideline. A player has 10 attempts to throw the foxtail into the bin. Record the results. A longer competition would consist of three rounds of 10 attempts. The first round would be from the centre line, the second round from the singles sideline and the third round from the doubles sideline.

- *Tabloid version.* As a tabloid or skill activity players in groups of 4–8 line up behind one another. Players take it in turns to throw the foxtail into a small bin from 3–5 metres away. As an extra challenge the balls are held in the middle of the tail and are lobbed over a set of Kanga stumps into the bin. Players retrieve the ball after their turn and give it to the next player. Keep a team score for a set time or number of turns.

Language

The game is called kee'an which means 'to play' in the Wik-Mungkan language of North Queensland.

tarnambai



Background

On Bathurst Island the children collected the seed heads of the spring rolling grass (*Spinifex hirsutis*) growing on the sandhills near the coast. They took the seed heads to the beach and tossed them into the air where they were blown along by the wind. After a start, the children chased the seed heads and tried to pick them up while running at full speed.

In many Aboriginal settlements in remote parts of Australia the children commonly played games with 'rollers'. These could be toy trucks made from wheel rims or large tins filled with damp mud. The rollers are pushed or pulled with handles made of wire. Sometimes groups of children with rollers have races.

Game play and basic rules

A) Tarnambai events

Players roll a tennis ball away from their partner who sprints after it, picks it up on the run after it crosses a line 20 metres away (30 metres for older players) and returns. Conduct a series of races and/or time the attempts — best of two. Spread competitors out across the field.

In a team relay players roll the ball themselves, chase after it and return it to the next player.

In a tabloid event players attempt to score as many returns as they can in a set time limit (2-3 minutes).

As a carnival championship all the players from the different age groups in a house/team have their places/points or times added together.

B) Thurnda-gu events

Conduct individual races where a player pushes a roller along a straight path or around an obstacle course. The wheels must stay in contact with the ground at all times.

Relay races can be conducted in the same manner as individual races.

Note: Ensure that all the 'rollers' are of the same construction. A roller may be an empty food tin through which a wire or string has been threaded from end to end and wound up tightly to make a long handle (steering wheel). The tin is filled with sand or rocks and pulled or pushed to make a track.

Variation

In the Torres Strait a continuous running game is played on the beach using two trees up to 50 metres apart. One selected player starts by running toward one tree to try and touch it. If they are touched by another player this player calls out loudly, 'Eda', (signalling that they are now the runner) and starts running toward the tree which is the furthest away. The game continues in this way. On a football field with large numbers of players, two runners may be used. When a player successfully touches a tree, they are declared a winner.

Language

Tarnambai means 'running' in the language used in the Batavia area of North Queensland.

Thurnda-gu means 'to roll something' in the Yindjibarndi language of central parts of Western Australia.

munhanganing



Background

The game of Munhanganing was reported being played by children of the Arnhem Land in northern Australia. Children played this and other running games in the flickering lights from the firebrands of the grown-ups sitting about a camp site.

Players

- Up to 40 players in two even teams
- One team is called *munhanganing* (gecko lizard) and the other team is named after a beetle or other insect, eg a fly (*wurrurlurl*).

Playing area

- An area 40 metres long and 20 metres wide
- A 'tree' area 3 metres square is marked 10 metres in from one end and in the centre of the area.

Game play and basic rules

This is a tag game. One team (*wurrurlurl*) is scattered around the area while the other team (*munhanganing*) start behind the line at one end of the playing area.

On a signal, the *munhanganing* players begin chasing the players of the *wurrurlurl*. The *munhanganing* players try to catch (touch) the *wurrurlurl* players. Players from the *wurrurlurl* team can also become caught if they go outside the playing area when they are being chased.

The players that are caught are sent to the 'tree' area where they remain until all the players in their team are caught. After this, teams swap roles and start again.

Scoring

In a competitive game teams are timed to see who can catch the other team in the fastest time.

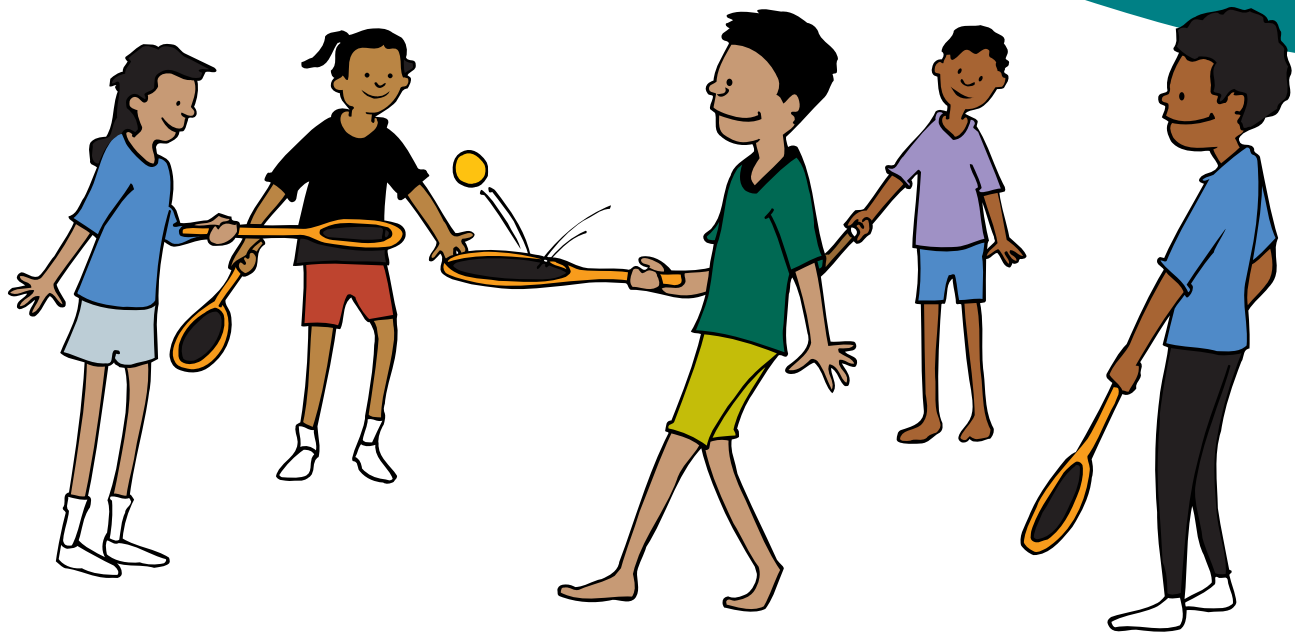
Variations

- *Continuous play.* When the referee calls, 'swap', the teams change roles. All caught players become 'free' when a swap is called. This game avoids concerns associated with eliminating players.
- Players who are caught (touched) sit down where they are touched. Only the *wurrurlurl* players that have not been touched are able to move around the playing area.
- Players from the *wurrurlurl* team wear a velcro belt or piece of cloth tucked into their shorts. They are caught when this is removed. The caught players leave the playing area and the belts/pieces of cloth are placed in a hoop just outside the playing area.
- Players who are being chased use party clickers to imitate the sound of the *munhanganing*. This is close to the original version of the game.

Language

The game is named after the small nocturnal gecko lizard called *munhanganing* in the Datiwuy language of Arnhem Land.

kalq



Background

This was a spear game played by some Aboriginal groups on Cape York Peninsula in North Queensland. The men used a throwing stick (*woomera*) to project a big killing spear (*kalq*) toward the next player. The spear would travel around the circle of men who were armed only with their *woomera* – which they used to deflect the spear to the next player. When the small boys played they used spears with a blunted end.

Players

- A group of 4-6 players form a circle about 2-3 metres apart – distance depends on age and ability

Equipment

- Each player has a small bat or a tennis racquet
- A tennis ball or airflow ball

Game play and basic rules

This is a cooperative team game. The aim is to try to hit (volley) the ball around a circle of players without it touching or bouncing on the ground between hits.

Players start by standing on a marked spot/area in a circle.

One player hits a ball (preferably underarm) toward the player next to them. This player uses their racquet or bat to hit/deflect the ball to the next player in the circle.

When the ball returns to the first player or does not complete the circle then the next player in the circle starts the game again. All players have a turn to start with the ball.

Scoring

In a team competition a point is awarded to the first team to hit the ball around the circle after a signal to start. Players must stay the correct distance apart and must start again if the ball is not hit around the circle in the designated manner.

A competition could also be held with a point awarded to the team with the most hits.

Suggestion

This could be used as a training game for tennis as well as in physical education classes.

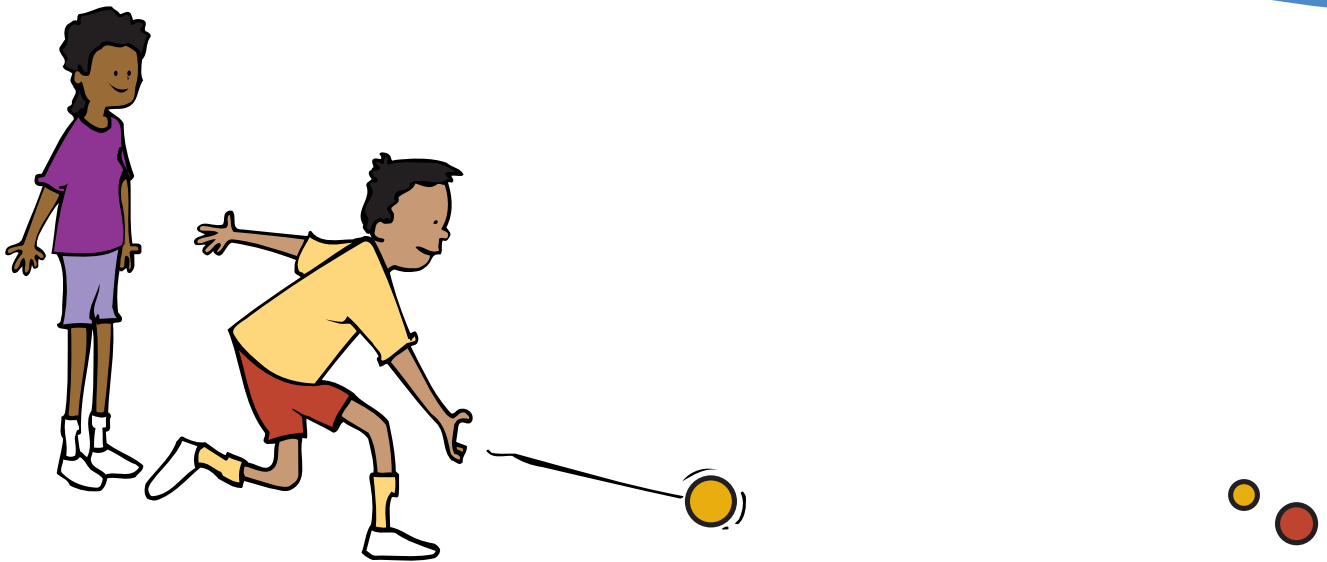
Variations

- Younger players can be allowed to bounce the ball between hits. Use upward hits to the next player.
- *Continuous kalq.* Each group tries to hit the ball around the circle as many times as possible without the ball hitting the ground. Either count 1 point for each player who hits the ball successfully to the next player or 1 point for each time the ball goes around the circle and comes back to the thrower. Compare team scores after a set time.
- Skilled players may use two balls.
- *Practice.* One player stands in the centre of the circle. A player hits the ball to the centre player who hits it out to the next player in the circle; this player then hits the ball back to the centre player who hits it out again, and so on around the circle. After the ball has been hit to every player in the circle the centre player is changed.

Language

This game has been named after the word for spear (*kalq*) in the language of the *Yir-Yoront* people from North Queensland.

weme



Background

The Walbiri people of Central Australia played a stone bowling game. One player threw a stone which was used as a target by the second player. Players alternated turns with each aiming at the other's stone.

Players

- Between 1 and 4 players
- The game can be played alone, one player against another player, or in pairs of players against another pair

Playing area

- A designated area

Equipment

- Use two sets of lines (each 5 metres long) marked 10 or more metres apart – the distance depending on age and ability of players
- Use balls/bowls such as bocce balls

Game play and basic rules

The game is a bowling game where balls are rolled underarm along the ground. Players may toss a coin for choice of start. Turns are taken from behind designated lines.

One player starts the game by rolling their ball toward the line marked on the ground 10 metres away. If the ball passes beyond this line then the other player scores a point.

After a fair roll which stops before the line, the second player rolls their ball to try to hit the first ball. If the ball is hit, the second player scores a point.

Both players then collect their balls and the game is restarted from the other end.

Players alternate turns. The second player now has the first turn.

If the game is played in pairs one player from each pair stays at each end. Teams alternate turns.

One point is scored for each hit. The first player or team to reach 11 points is the winner. Play continues until the game is decided.

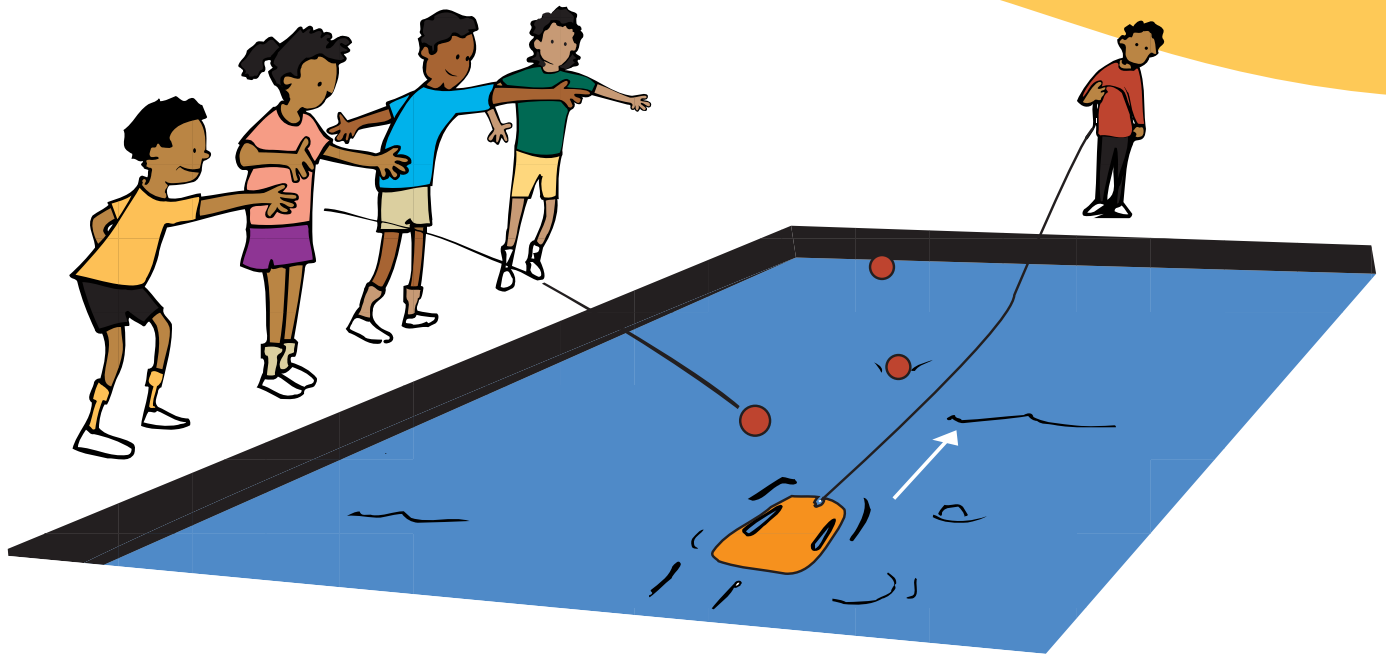
Variations

- No scoring in the game. Play for the fun of the activity.
- Play a set number of ends (such as 20).
- *Alternative play or practice.* Two players stand 15 metres apart with a circle the size of a large hoop in the centre. Three balls are placed in the hoop-sized area and players alternate turns in trying to knock the balls out of the circle. If one or more balls are knocked out of the marked circle they are replaced before the next player's turn. Keep a score or use this variation for practice.
- *Hoop weme.* Two large hoop-sized circles are marked 7-10 metres apart. Players have two turns each to throw/roll their ball to land in the circle to score a point. Players take it in turns and alternate as the first person to roll at each end. If a ball is knocked out of the circle before all players have finished then their ball does not score. If a ball stops before it reaches the front of the circle it is removed from the game.

Language

The game is named *weme* after a word from the Eastern Arrernte language of Central Australia which refers to 'throwing something at something else and hitting it'.

yiri



Background

A spear game recorded being played by the boys at Ulladulla in New South Wales. Small spears were thrown at pieces of wood which were placed into running water.

On Dunk Island in Queensland the boys used wood chips and pieces of bark floating on the water or threw objects at small fish.

Players

- A group of players

Playing area

- A swimming pool

Equipment

- Players use small rubber balls
- Use larger balls, kick boards, rubber quoits, pieces of wood as targets

Game play and basic rules

This is a throwing game played near water. One player tows a target (such as a rescue tube) across the pool and 5-7 metres in front of the line of players lined up along the edge of the pool. Throwers try to hit the target with a ball.

Scoring

A team contest could be held with a swimmer from each team towing the tube across the pool. Count the number of hits made by players of the opposing team.

Safety

- The player swimming across the pool with the rescue tube may swim underwater to avoid being hit by the balls being thrown
- Throwers should try not to hit the player towing the ring
- The throwing area is clearly defined

Language

The activity is called *yiri* (to throw) from the language that was spoken in the Sydney area of New South Wales.

tabloid activities

The activities outlined are examples of how the games can be modified to use in a tabloid. Groups of 4-6 playing over a 2-4 minute time period are recommended. Groups are taken around each activity and the rules are explained. Groups are then assigned an activity to start with. After each rotation, and while the scores are being recorded, one player from each group stays behind to explain the activity for the next group before rejoining their own group. Allow a short practice time.

Student leaders may be used where mixed age/ability groups are involved — these leaders stay at each activity and explain the rules to each group and record the scores.

1. Kalq

Players with a paddle bat each stand in a circle 2-3 metres apart. Players hit (underhand) a unihoc/ball around the circle. Count one for a hit by each player.

Number of hits:

2. Koolchee

Players divide into two groups 10 metres apart. Arrange marker cones a metre apart in the middle. Players in each group take turns to try to roll a tennis ball between the markers.

Number of good rolls:

3. Gorri

Players line up behind each other. A hoop-sized target is marked against a fence or wall 7 metres in front of the group. Players take turns to try to throw a ball 'through' the hoop. Balls must hit inside the hoop to count.

Number of good throws:

4. Kee'an

Players line up behind each other and take turns to throw a foxtail ball - held in the middle of the tail - over a set of cricket stumps and into a storage bin. Retrieve the ball for the next player.

Number of successful throws:

5. Tarnambai

Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn rolls a tennis ball out past a line 5 metres away and runs out to retrieve it. Count the number of times the ball is returned.

Number of returns:

7. Kolap

Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn attempts to throw a bean bag or small soft ball into a small hoop 3-5 metres away. The thrower retrieves the bean bag each time. Count the number of successful throws that land inside the hoop.

Number of good throws:

8. Kai

Players stand in a circle about 2 metres apart. Use a light ball such as a medium-sized gator skin ball. Use the palm of the hand to hit the ball upward toward the next player. Players hit the ball around in a circle (either way). Count the number of players that hit the ball.

Number of hits:

