



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

meetcha boma

'meet-cha bom-a'



SCHOOL
YEARS
4-6

SCHOOL
YEARS
7-9

SCHOOL
YEARS
10-12

Post-school age

Background

A hockey game was played by the Noongar people in the south of Western Australia. The game was called *meetcha boma* ('nut striking') in the Perth area. A *meeja* or *meetcha* (red gum nut) was used as the ball and a piece of wood with a crooked root (*bandeegurt*) as the hockey stick. The stick was generally bent into shape with the aid of fire.

The goals were certain spots at either end of the ground and arranged beforehand by the players. Sometimes a ring was marked as a goal at either end if nothing special could be observed in the place chosen. When goals were scored a mark was made on one side of a tree.

The team with the most marks on the tree was declared the winner when the game ended. The game was often played from almost sunrise to the late afternoon and resumed again the next day.

Language

Hockey had various names: *meetcha toordeet*, *owt kambong* (*owt* 'game' or 'play') in Fremantle and Rockingham; *booloolul wabbin* ('playing hockey') in Albany; *nandap toordeet* and *owt-Murray* (red gum nut and hockey stick). In the York district *deedagurt* was the name for the hockey game.

In the Noongar language from the southwest of Western Australia, *warp condil* means to 'play hockey'.

Short description

A one-touch game of hockey using push passes.

Duration

- A game of 5–10 minutes

Players

- The players divide into teams of three to four players each. There are no positions and players spread around the playing area.

Playing area

- Use a designated area about the size of half a tennis court. A line may be marked across the centre of the area.

Equipment

- Use a unihoc ball or tennis ball for the *meetcha*.
- A unihoc stick (plastic floor hockey stick) or light hockey stick can be used for the *bandeegurt*.
- For the goals, set up two cone markers 1 metre apart at each end of the court.

Game play and basic rules

- A *meetcha* (ball) is placed in the middle of the half-way line. To start the game a player passes the *meetcha* to a player on the same team.
- Players in this game do not attempt to dribble the ball but just hit it (push-pass recommended) — one contact. Either side of the stick may be used. A player who is in position first to hit the *meetcha* will be allowed to do so.
- There is to be no physical contact or ‘tackling’ of a player and all players must have both hands on the stick at all times. Players attempt to intercept/block passes to team-mates who may hit (push-passes).
- The end of the stick should not go above waist height. For any infringement or the ball going out of the area, the other team has a ‘free’ pass.

Scoring

Each team attempts to score as many goals as possible during the course of the game.

Variations

- Play as a keep-away game or a practice game in which one team has possession until they lose control of the ball. The players on the other team ‘shadow’ the team in possession until either a set number of passes is made or there is an infringement. (This is a good practice activity for classes.)
- Play with two contacts on the ball — one to stop/control the ball and one to pass.
- For younger players, allow them to use their foot to stop/block (but not stand on) the ball and then make a pass to another player.

Safety

For safety reasons players are not allowed to hit the ball above waist height or make wild swings at the *meetcha*. The *meetcha* should not go above knee height at any time. Physical contact or deliberately contacting another player’s stick is not permitted.

Suggestion

Suitable as a hockey practice activity. Push strokes only are allowed. Players attempt to control and pass in the one action.

Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Sticks down (below the waist). Push the ball — push the bottom hand, pull the top hand.
- Pass to open players. Control the ball and pass.
- One to control, one to pass, if two contacts of the ball are allowed.
- Watch the contacts.
- Keep the ball on the ground.

