



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

boogalah

'boo-ga-la'



SCHOOL
YEARS
4-6

SCHOOL
YEARS
7-9

Background

This was a ball game played by both genders of the Juwalarai people in New South Wales. A ball (*boogalah*) was made of sewn-up kangaroo skin. In playing the game all of one *Dhé*, or totem, were team-mates.

Short description

This is a team throwing and catching game.

Players

- Two teams of six to ten players

Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

Equipment

- A soccer ball (size 2 or 3) or a gator skin ball as the *boogalah*

Game play and basic rules

- All the players start in the middle of the playing area. To decide who will start the game a player (or referee) throws the *boogalah* into the air and the player who catches it moves with their totem (team) to stand in a group in the middle of the playing area. The other team is in a circle around them.
- The *boogalah* is thrown high into the air and the players attempt to catch it for their team.
- The players in the circle cannot move to catch the *boogalah* until it is thrown in the air. If a player from the outside circle catches it, his or her side goes into the middle to swap places with the other team. Teams change places quickly. Physical contact should be avoided as much as possible.

Scoring

The team keeping the *boogalah* in play the longest or the highest number of times during the game is the winner.

Safety

For younger players, mixed-age and/or gender teams there is to be no pushing while attempting to gain the *boogalah*. When the *boogalah* touches the ground, play stops and the turn is taken again.

Variations

- Small group *boogalah*: One ball for each group of five or six. One player throws up the ball and they all attempt to catch it. The successful player scores one point.
- Play the first team to five points or the highest score after a set time. (Suitable for physical education lessons.)
- Ten-catch *boogalah*: To start players from both teams, players stand in two lines, 10 metres apart and face each other. The referee throws the *boogalah* into the air and players attempt to catch it for their team. When a player catches the *boogalah*, his or her team moves to stand outside the playing circle (radius of 8–10 metres) and the catching team moves to stand inside the circle. The player catching the *boogalah* is in the centre of the circle and throws it into the air. After throwing the *boogalah* the thrower leaves the circle. Players from the catching team attempt to catch it to throw up again. The first team to make ten catches in a row wins (or count the total catches of both teams without dropping the *boogalah*).

Suggestion

To add more action and as a possible warm-up activity, it is possible to use two to three balls thrown up in different directions. Players retrieve the balls and move to the middle of the circle and throw them up as part of a continuous whole-group activity.

Note: The game may also be played as a cooperative game for the enjoyment of playing.

Teaching points

- All in the middle. Form two circles.
- Throw it high. Go and get it.
- Watch the contact. Be careful.
- Swap teams. Let's go.
- Make the game quick.
- Good. High throws.
- Call for the ball.