



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

# epoo korio

'e-poo ko-rio'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

*Epoo korio* was a wrestling game of the Kiwai people of Papua and some people in the northern parts of the Torres Strait Island region.

## Language

An *epoo* was a mound of earth built by a bird named *kamuka* — generally known as a brush turkey or scrub hen — which was about the size of a common fowl.

## Short description

This is a team game in which attackers attempt to knock over a mound of sand and defenders try to stop them. The level of physical contact is controlled.

## Players

- A group of six or more players in two teams. The player's roles are either as guards or attackers.

## Playing area

- A suitable outdoor area. In this game two mounds of earth or sand are built about 10–15 metres apart.
- If indoors, a large medicine ball on a mat can be used for the mound and attackers need to take it off the mat and place it on the ground next to the mat.

## Game play and basic rules

- Half the players in each team are the attackers and the other half are appointed as defenders of the mounds of sand.
- The attackers attempt to get past the defenders of the other team and destroy the mounds (if played indoors they attempt to take the medicine ball off a mat and place it on the floor next to the mat).

- The attack on the two mounds is made by the opposing sides simultaneously. The guards may use their hands to push back the attacking players but the attackers cannot use their hands to push the guards.

### Scoring

The first team to overtake the mound of the opposition is the winner. Players may change around roles during the game.

### Variations

- Individual challenge. One player builds a mound and challenges one to three other players to push them off.
- Place a very large medicine ball at one end of the playing area and the other team attempts to reach the ball, lift it in the air and call out, 'Epo korio'.

### Safety

Safety procedures should be strictly adhered to and players should not be forced to participate or feel obliged to do so.

For safety reasons it is also recommended that players stay on their knees at all times.

### Comment

This game is included to represent the close association of the people of Papua and New Guinea and Torres Strait Island region.

### Teaching points

- Team ready.
- Pushing only. Be careful.
- No hands attackers.