



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

tjapu tjapu

'ja-pu ja-pu'



SCHOOL
YEARS
7-9

SCHOOL
YEARS
10-12

Post-school age

Background

A ball game was played by the Djinghali people of central Australia. The ball was made of grass tied tightly with string and covered with beeswax.

It was kicked in the air and the team that kept it in the air and away from the other team won. Once the ball was kicked off players could not use their hands.

Language

The game is named after the Pitjantjatjara-Yankunytjatjara word *tjapu-tjapu*, which means 'game of football'.

Short description

This is a team volley-kicking game in which the ball is kept in the air as long as possible.

Players

- Groups of four to ten players

Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

Equipment

- A soccer ball or a similar sized 'soft' ball such as a volleyball

Game play and basic rules

- A player kicks the ball into the air to start the game. The players stand in a designated area (such as a large circle or on a basketball court) and, working as a team, attempt to volley the ball as many times as possible while keeping it away from players in the other team. Players may 'juggle' the ball up to three times before attempting to pass to another player.
- Players take turns either in order — for more skilled players — or randomly (as the ball is directed towards them). A player should call out his or her name to receive the ball then attempt to control and volley the ball into the air above head height to another team player.

- Players must try to avoid contacting each other or kicking dangerously at the ball — keeping feet below waist level — as they attempt to gain possession of the ball in the game. Players in the best position to receive the ball, and who have called for the ball first, are allowed to attempt to catch it without interference.
- For less-skilled players or in the early learning stages of the game, the ball may be allowed to bounce once between volleys and/or juggle the ball up to three times in succession before passing.
- Normally, the arms are not allowed to contact the ball, but in the initial stages of playing or for players who do not have a background in playing football (soccer), the hands may be used to contact or block the ball and direct it towards the feet. The ball cannot be caught. No player may kick the ball (have a turn) more than once in succession.
- If the ball touches the ground the game is started again. The teams attempt to set the highest possible number of volleys before they lose possession of the ball.

Variations

- Younger or less-experienced players may use a medium-sized beach ball.
- Play in a circle with a 10–15-metre diameter. Players stand around the perimeter and as a team in a cooperative activity attempt to volley the ball as many times as possible.
- Players use football (soccer) juggling techniques, including the head and body rather than the feet, to volley the ball. No hands are allowed.
- Players may volley or juggle the ball up to three times to control it before passing to another player.

- Use a volleyball or badminton court without the net. Two teams of equal numbers arrange themselves on each side. Either play the game with continuous volleying between each team or with up to three contacts (juggling and volleying) before the ball is kicked to the other team. The idea is for both teams to work together to attempt to record the highest number of times the ball is passed between the teams. Different rule variations such as an individual using up to three contacts before passing (which counts as only one contact) may be used. For younger players the ball may be allowed to bounce once between player contacts and individual player volleys/juggling. This game may be made competitive with a low net and scoring.

Safety

All appropriate safety issues should be considered.

Suggestion

This could be used as a football (soccer) practice game. In another form with use of arms only — bump passes and set passes — it could be used as a volleyball skill game.

Teaching points

- Spread out in the area. Ready. Go.
- Call 'My ball!' Kick and move out of the way.
- Chase the ball.
- Call out the number of volleys.
- Watch the contacts. No catching the ball. Be careful of other players.
- Try again. A little faster. That's the idea!