Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

jillora
'jil-lor-a'

All school-age groups (K–12)   **Post-school age**

Background

Spinning balls or tops of various kinds were used as an amusement by Aboriginal people in most parts of Australia and by Torres Strait Islanders.

The spin-ball used in the northwest central districts of Queensland was a round ball of about 2 to 3 centimetres in diameter. It was made of lime, ashes, sand, clay and sometimes hair, rolled into shape, either between the hands or the folds of a blanket, and subsequently baked, thus making it smooth and hard. The spin-ball was often painted with red or yellow ochre.

Language

The spin-ball was called *jillora* at Boulia, *popojo* at Glenormiston and Roxburgh, *pucho-pucho* in the Kalkadoon country, and *anai-dappi-dappa* at Headingly and Lake Nash. The game was apparently introduced from the lower Diamantina River area.

Short description

A ball-spinning activity.

Players

- One to ten players

Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area

Equipment

- Large balls such as basketballs

Game play and basic rules

- Players attempt to make the ball spin for as long as possible.
- Players use one or both hands to spin the large balls on a smooth surface. Younger players may need help from other players in spinning the balls.

Variations

- The game can be played by several players at once. On the signal to start, all players start their balls spinning.

- In a competition the last ball left spinning is the winner.

- Timed-team *jillora*: Players are organised into groups of three to five. Players add their times together and attempt to set a 'record'. Have three attempts to set a record. At the end add the times for all the groups to set a class record.

Comment

This version is designed for use as a warm-up activity and is particularly suitable for younger children.

Teaching points

- Balls ready. Hands each side on top.

- Push with one hand pull with the other. Hold in the fingers. Make it spin.

- Step back. Keep it going.

- Try again. A little harder. That's the idea.