



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

keentan

'keen-tan'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

Background

A keep-away game of catch-ball was played everywhere by both genders in the northwest central districts of Queensland. Because the action of the players jumping up to catch the ball resembled the movements of a kangaroo, the Kalkadoon people sometimes described this game as the 'kangaroo-play'. The ball itself was made from possum, wallaby or kangaroo hide tied up with twine.

Language

Keentan is 'play' in the Wik-Mungkan language from northern Queensland. This name has been used in the absence of an identifiable Kalkadoon word for the game.

Short description

This is a running, passing and catching team keep-away game.

Players

- Teams of four to eight players

Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

Equipment

- A ball such as a size 3 football (soccer ball) or gator skin ball

Game play and basic rules

- When this game is played in teams the ball is thrown from one player to another player of the same team. The players of the opposing team attempt to intercept the ball while they are off the ground (only a small jump is needed). The ball is only gained if it is caught while the defender is in the air.
- If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground by a player attempting to catch it, the other team

gains possession. A change of possession also occurs when a thrown ball falls to the ground untouched. No physical contact is allowed.

- Players cannot stop opposing players from moving around the area — no interference is allowed. Passes must be a minimum of 3 metres.
- The player in possession of the ball may run around the playing area for up to 5 metres. This player cannot be guarded (marked) or obstructed while he or she is attempting to pass the ball — the defender must be at least 1 metre away.

Variations

- After catching the ball a player may pivot on one foot only (as in netball). Opposing players must be at least 1 metre away while a pass is attempted.
- All players (team in possession and defenders) must be in the air (two feet off the ground) to play the ball — throwing and catching. Players jump to catch (receive) the ball and jump to pass the ball. (This is recommended as the most successful way to play the game.)

Suggestions

- Practice activities: Practise in pairs or with one player standing 5–10 metres out in front of a line of players. The player in front throws the ball for the first player in line to run out and jump into the air to catch it. After catching the ball and landing on the ground the player then jumps in the air and passes it to the thrower — players may take a few steps with the ball if they wish. Players may also jump into the air to catch the ball and throw it back to the thrower before they land on the ground.
- Team practice. Groups of four to six players form a team by running around and passing in a playing area. Teams could count the number of successful passes or play a cooperative game for fun.

Comment

This game could be used as a skill game in sports such as netball, basketball, Australian rules football, rugby league and rugby union.

Teaching points

- Teams ready. Go.
- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Move to open spaces. Keep moving.
- No contacts. Watch the guarding.
- Quick passes. Jump to pass, jump to catch.
- Call for the ball.

