



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

# Garumba

'ga-rum-ba'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

## Background

Teams from far and wide gathered at a 'place of wrestling' (at Dingulami) in Kabi Kabi territory in south Queensland each year at the time when the bunya nuts were ready. Tingalpa near Brisbane was also a wrestling place. Only one team represented each group attending.

Two players came from each totem of a group. Each pair in the competition wrestled in a 'rough and tumble' manner.

A spear was used as a prize, the shaft painted with coloured earths and decorated at the top with feathers of various birds. This was stuck in the ground and given as a trophy to the winning team.

The winners put the trophy away carefully until the next contest. If the local Jagara (or Jagera) team won the trophy they kept it in a cave until the next contest. Much practice was indulged in before the competition, and the teams were carefully picked.

## Language

*Gurumba* means 'wrestlers' in the Kabi Kabi language used in the area where the game was played.

## Short description

In this wrestling game players attempt to push an opposing player out of a circle or past a line.

## Players

- Individual contests or teams of four to six players

## Playing area

- A designated area marked with three parallel lines about 1.5 metres apart. Each line is 3 metres long.
- The two players face each other along the outside lines (3 metres apart) before moving to the middle to wrestle. An alternative is to mark circles based on a diameter of 3-5 metres.

- The activity can be undertaken on gymnastic mats in an indoor facility.

### Scoring

One point is scored each time a player pushes the opponent completely back over an end line (or out of a circle).

### Game play and basic rules

- *Gurumba* (wrestlers) in each team compete one at a time against their opponents. Players should compete against an opposing player of the same age, weight, height and ability.
- To start the contest players face each other in the middle of the area and place their hands on the shoulders and upper arms of their opponent. Players attempt to push their opponent back over their own end line.
- Players must keep even contact on both shoulders and upper arms of their opponent. No tripping or pulling is allowed. If one or both players lose their grip the contest is not re-started and players must quickly make correct contact.
- If the wrestlers fall to the ground the bout is re-started. A player is disqualified if he or she deliberately takes the opponent to the ground.

### Variations

- Have individual contests (either elimination or round-robin) with the best out of three contests.
- Conduct a round-robin team competition with teams of four to six players. Record a win, loss or draw to decide the winner, or use the total of all bouts won to decide on the winning team.
- Organise a competition based on height, weight, age and ability divisions. Wrestlers compete against all the wrestlers in the same division, with the winner remaining in the middle if he or she wins. Rotate through the group two to three times.

- Players of each team (four to six players) meet at the same time against another team. Judges decide on the winners and each team is given one point for each success. Teams carry the points through the competition against other teams.

### Safety

It is important to note that no person should be 'forced' to engage in activities involving physical contact. Students should be advised of their right not to participate before the activity begins.

### Teaching points

- Face each other. Ready.
- Hands on shoulders.
- Hang on tight.
- Push. No pulling or tripping.

