



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

boorna jokee

'bor-na-joke-e'



SCHOOL
YEARS
K-3

SCHOOL
YEARS
4-6

Background

In parts of Western Australia mimic battles with toy spears frequently took place among the younger male members of the camp. Mock fights and duels were fought. There were also trials of skill with *kyley* and spear and kangaroo and emu hunts, the children taking turns at being hunter and hunted. In these activities the boys are encouraged by their elders in order to acquire dexterity in handling their weapons, and boys are usually watched closely by the men, especially in their spear-throwing games.

The game of *boorna jokee* was the throwing of blunted spears at a human target. In this manner a player perfected skills in spear throwing and spear dodging. In displays of skill some men could expertly dodge three spears thrown together. They would use their shield or *woomera* to deflect the spears at the last moment.

Language

Noongar is the word used by the people of the southwest of Western Australia to describe who they are.

Short description

In this game players throw soft balls at a player, who attempts to avoid being contacted.

Players

- Groups of four to ten players (*Noongars*)

Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

Equipment

- A sponge or some other type of soft ball instead of small spears

Game play and basic rules

- One player (*Noongar*) stands in the centre of a line of *Noongars* and about 10–15 metres away. The line of throwers is spread out along the throwing line.
- The *Noongars* throw sponge balls or similar at the ‘dodger’. The *Noongar* in front attempts to dodge these. *Noongars* collect the balls when there are none left to throw. The *Noongar* in front is changed and the game continues. Only contacts below the shoulders count.

Variation

- Two teams of players 10–15 metres apart. One player at a time stands 5 metres in front of his or her group while the opposing team throw balls at them. The player must not move his or her feet and may only dodge the balls thrown by turning the body or moving the head. He or she may knock the balls aside by using a cricket pad or cricket bat as a shield. Alternate roles between teams.

Teaching points

- Spread out. Dodger ready.
- Dodge and move.
- Throw and hit. Below the shoulders.
- Stop. Collect the balls.