



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

pulukwanti

'pulu-kwan-ti'



SCHOOL
YEARS
4-6

SCHOOL
YEARS
7-9

Background

The Aboriginal people played a variety of water games and a common activity was to dive into the water.

Short description

These are activities associated with diving into the water.

Players

- Groups of four to six players

Playing area

- A swimming pool area or a water area with sufficient depth for safety. A diving board or tower may be used.

Language

The activity is named *pulukwanti*, which means 'to dive into water'. This word was used in the Walmatjari language spoken in northwest Australia and has been selected to represent all the diving games played around Australia.

From the Bandjalang language spoken in northern New South Wales:

ma:n da:dam na:ri-ni nabay-da

The children were playing in the water.

Thurakami was the word for swimming used in the Dieyerie (Diyari) language of South Australia.

Game play and basic rules

- The Aboriginal people of the Bloomfield area in north Queensland would often see who could jump into the water feet first from a great height. They did this singly, or in twos and threes. On the way down they called out loudly and when they surfaced they would say: '*Tummel artaro pudda karent!*' (My feet stuck in the mud).

- Jagara (Jagera) women of the Brisbane area were observed by Tom Petrie in the early 1900s engaging in bomb diving. They would bend both legs up and hold their ankles with their hands before they hit the water. (This is commonly called a 'cannon ball' dive.)

Variation

- Players spread out along the edge of a pool about 1 to 2 metres apart. On a signal they all jump into the pool together. (As an alternative the players jump in one at a time in quick succession.)

Safety

Care must be taken to observe all safety regulations. Players must be aware of the risk involved in diving activities and should not be forced or pressured to participate.