



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

Tur-dur-er-rin

'tur-dur-er-rin'



SCHOOL
YEARS
4-6

SCHOOL
YEARS
7-9

SCHOOL
YEARS
10-12

Post-school age

Background

The lessons learned around the camp fire were often required for survival. *Tur-dur-er-rin*, *war-rok-min-der-neit*, or *work-ern-der-eit*, was a wrestling game from Victoria in which the most skilful, or perhaps the strongest, proved to be the winner. The old men and women and the children acted as spectators and sat down around a smooth area of grass. After sitting down for a time one of the wrestlers stood up, grasped a handful of dust or ashes and threw it towards a wrestler in the opposite team as a challenge to wrestle. They then sat down.

The wrestler who was challenged rose and threw dust towards the wrestler who made the challenge. When this was done all the men of both the groups rose and threw dust (or the ashes of the dead fires) into the air around them.

The two wrestlers who competed rubbed their hands with ashes or dust and then rushed towards each other. The contests continued until all the wrestlers were tired.

Short description

This is a pushing-and-pulling contest where players attempt to put each other on the ground.

Players

- The wrestlers divide into two teams of two to six players (or more) on opposite sides of the playing area. Participation should be voluntary within guidelines.

Playing area

- The wrestling area is about 5 to 7 metres across, with a larger area around this for safety. For outdoors a sandy surface is recommended.

Equipment

- Players wear short pants or a swimming costume. Players may wear a football jersey if they wish.
- Gym mats can be used indoors.

Game play and basic rules

- The wrestlers face each other a few metres apart and on a signal to begin they move towards each other. They place their hands on each other's upper arms near the shoulders and, holding on tight, move around, pushing and pulling in an attempt to put the other player on the ground.
- If a grip is broken the wrestlers stop. They continue after they hold each other again.
- Fair play is a feature of the contests. No kicking, tripping or other unfair actions are allowed.

Comment

The young boys were taught all the skills for this type of wrestling. It was necessary for their safety in later life, when they may have been required to test their strength and skill in single-handed encounters with members from other areas.

Scoring

Skill in the activity involves not falling to the ground when knocking — by pushing and pulling — an opponent down.

After the contest the successful wrestler returns to his place amid shouts of praise. If both wrestlers fall to the ground this is a draw or 'no contest' (and in the traditional game was considered to be worse than losing).

Variation

- Team *tur-dur-er-rin*: Have teams of four players (similar age and weight) organised in an elimination or round-robin contest with another team. There is a time limit of 90 seconds for each round — best two out of three rounds in a bout. A player who touches the ground with any part of the body other than the feet loses the round.

Safety

Safety procedures should be strictly adhered to and players should not be forced to participate or feel obliged to do so. Participation should be voluntary within guidelines.

Suggestion

This activity could be used in judo, wrestling and as a rugby or Australian rules football training activity.

Teaching points

- Players ready. Wrestle.
- Push and pull. Hang on tight. Push and pull.
- Be careful. Put them on the ground.
- Stop, next group.