



TRADITIONAL MAORI GAMES

Courtesy of
Harko Brown





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KITE

Kite is an exciting game that involves a minimum 2 players but in different versions many more can play. The artefact used in this game is called a "Ki Paua" (see photo below). It is made by putting broken shells inside two paua shells that are then bound tightly together. When shaken a rattling sound emanates. In former times, shell or stone filled gourds were also used as ki in this game.



(photo: Katie-Mae Crawford)

History

The ki, is also generally any type of small ball. Many other games use traditional ki, which can be purposefully woven from harakeke or other materials, or sculptured from wood and stone. In former times, when manu were flown extensively, Ki Paua were sometimes attached to them so that they rattled. The whakapapa, or origin, of ki is often said to be from the small ancient kete with the same name. These small woven kete were used to carry a single moa egg and could be fastened shut by pulling a plaited drawstring and carried in bunches with ropes attached.

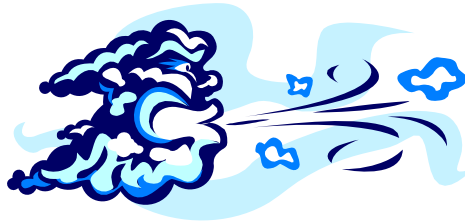
The Rules

There are many variations to this game. In one version, two players each hold a Ki Paua in one of their hands. They stand some 5 or so metres apart in a defined area. They then close their eyes or are blindfolded. Each player must rattle their Ki Paua vigorously with each step. They can remain stationary but must still rattle their Ki Paua vigorously every 5 seconds or so. The object of the game is to work your way into the vicinity of your opponent so that you can grab or tag them before they get you!





TAUMATAWHAKATANGIHANGAKOAUUAUOTAMATEATURIPUKAKA- PIKIMAUNGAHORONUKUPOKAIWHENUAKITANATAHU



This is a memory word game. The different variations are also called by the word recited but generally today the above name applies.

History

Memory type games are numerous and have always been popular. This version of the game is a modern adaptation of the famous place name:

'TaumatawhakatangiHangakoauauotamateaturipukakapikimaungahoronuku-pokaiwhenuakitanatahu'

which means - 'the summit of the hill, where Tama tea, who is known as the land eater, slid down, climbed up and swallowed mountains, played on his nose flute to his loved one'.

The Rules

Players divide into two teams. A smallish defined area is chosen. A 10-metre square or round court area is ideal. One player from the reciting team stands stationary on a boundary line or the circle of the defined area while all of the other team spread out within it. The reciter takes one big breath and then in a clear and audible voice they start to recite the name of the game without stopping for breathe while chasing their opponents to try and tag them. Any players who are tagged must leave the court. When the reciter has just about run out of breath they leave the court, whereby the next reciter enters the court where their team mate left it. If a reciter takes a breath on court, or gets the word wrong, an opposing player can come back on. The reciter must still leave the court. The game continues until everyone has been tagged or when a predetermined time has elapsed.





POI RĀKAU

Poi Rakau is one of a multitude of traditional games that use rākau artefacts. The rākau used in the pictorial demonstrations are korari, the seed fronds, of the harakeke.

History

Such games as 'Poi Rākau' were in essence warrior-training games. They kept reflexes sharp and promoted quick thinking – important attributes in hand-to-hand combat. All manner of sticks and branches were used in rākau games, some even intricately carved.

The Rules

One person stands in the middle (putahi) of a circle that is formed with 6 or more players. Everyone stands about 3-5 paces from the person in the putahi (see photo below). There is usually trepidation by everyone to begin with, it is not every game that you get sticks thrown at you!



The 'Putahi' starts the game by throwing the korari upright to someone in the circle. That person catches the korari with one hand, keeps it upright, and then quickly hand passes it (not throws it), using either the left (maui) or right (mataui) hand, to a person immediately to their left or right. The person who receives it then throws it, upright, back to the person in the middle. A fast-paced co-operative game is played to a rhythmical beat or an appropriate waiata. The 'Putahi' throws randomly and speedily, turning quickly to catch and then throw the korari. Depending on their skill levels, the catchers can add difficulty by keeping their hands behind their backs until the korari is thrown to them.



When the Putahi feels comfortable using one korari, they can try using two, then three korari (see picture above) to quicken the game up and keep everyone literally on their toes. An extremely skilful game requires fast reflexes and quick thinking. Keeping three korari in motion is a difficult motor skill and needs total concentration.





TUAKIRI



This game is one of the many educative game methods, or pedagogies, that our tipuna used in their wananga.

History

"I whakaakona nga tikanga a te Maori i roto i nga whare wananga." The Whare Wananga was a place where Maori lore was taught. Its principles have been adopted and adapted to modern times and incorporated into the highest educational institutes of mainstream NZ society.

The Rules

The 'teaching-games' scenario is set, then a discussion explores the meanings of whakapapa, whanau, hapu, Iwi and these are compared to the similarities that a tree and its branches and leaves have with each other and their environment.

Tamariki then get to choose one leaf from a tree. Each 'player' then gives their leaf an identity. One way to display this, these days, is for each child to clear tape their leaf to a page and then to write about their leaf's interests and whanau and to 'dress' them up with kakahu in art form and even to draw 'facial' features.

They then compare their leaves and discuss how the leaves can be grouped, from all those available into a 'whanau' collective. A leader is then chosen for each whanau. That leader stands to give a short speech about their whanau. The next sequence involves each whanau deciding how to ally with other whanau to form a hapu, so obviously connections need to be explored and justifications made. From each hapu, leaders are again chosen, and these 'rangatira' decide on a competition between the hapu and how it will be judged. Now the competitive aspects really pick up! Each leader stands to talk about their hapu, reciting their connections and acknowledging their whanau leaders, they then support the inter-hapu comp and lay down the wero. This speech is often humorous and serves to 'fire-up' their hapu.

Each hapu, with their combined creativity and synergy, then tries to out do the other hapu in whatever challenge has been agreed on. This wero could create a waiata relevant to their group (perhaps in rap style), or a haka, or legend – the options are endless. Having an elder to preside over and comment on the produced works, or the processes of this educative game is the ideal. Their presence and insights are invaluable. A range of humorous and creative processes can be threaded into this aspect of taha whanaungatanga'.





KORARI



The general use of sticks in games and activities is commonly known as mau rākau. One of the best “user friendly” rākau resources are korari. Korari are the seed fronds of harakeke. Children of all ages can use them to experiment with motion and flexibility. The korari can also be personalised by painting or decorating.

History

The lighter korari are easier to use than heavier rākau and do not carry the tikanga of, for example, taiaha. They therefore were used in mock combat, for physical conditioning and fast paced co-ordination games. They were primarily used in games to quicken the users’ reaction times, co-ordination and flexibility.



The Rules

Catching and flexibility exercises are ideal for the lightweight korari. Start by stressing to participants that the korari are not spears or clubs and have them practice catching, from an underhand throw, at close range. The catching will ease the normal apprehension that we all have with sticks whizzing around us. When everyone is comfortable, introduce them to various korari throwing games, such as, “Ruru” and “Maui-te”.



Other options include using ‘Te Reo Kori’ principles to practice a range of physical movements as well as speaking Te Reo Maori. Instruction would start from simple instructions such as, “kei runga...waho...raro ...mataui...maui”. There are numerous activities based around pairing up and practicing tuakana / taina, which is an integral aspect of Te Reo Kori.





POI TOA



Poi toa have been popularized around the world as "fire poi". Their origins hark back to ancient Maori warrior rites. Today they are used in numerous games and physical activities. They have a ki (head) with a metre long rope in a range of patterns and colours. The tikanga associated with dance poi does not apply to poi toa.

History

Warriors in extremely physical training regimes originally used the poi toa. The "ki", or round head, of the poi toa was often weighted with a rock, which improved its velocity and impact. Long ropes were sometimes attached so that warriors could practice flick and pull exercises on each other from a range of five or six paces. The various throwing techniques of the poi toa were used in exercises to improve the reaction times of their users' and to keep their wrists supple and strong.



The Rules

Poi toa exercises are always stimulating and they are numerous, so that all abilities can be catered to. Humour, fun and excitement always accompany the exhilaration of twirling poi toa. Learning to swing 1, then 2....then 4 or 6 poi toa at once is great for flexibility and co-ordination as well as being aesthetically pleasing. Throwing and catching exercises, from short then long range, are essential before playing poi toa games, such as, "horohopu" and "tereina." Have participants catch the poi toa on the rope only. Running games with the addition of poi toa skills adds a dimension of multi-tasking to demanding physical exercises. Circle games whereby numbers are called and poi toa are thrown up to be caught can also be challenging.





TEREINA



Use two korari to mark out a distance of about 25 metres for each team. Choose teams with equal numbers of players. Sides line up behind one of the korari, with the first team member (the "train engine") holding the Poi Toa.

On "go!" that player runs to their other korari while swinging the Poi Toa round and round for the 25 metre sprint, and returns after going around their korari without knocking it over. They then hand the Poi Toa over to their next team member, making sure to keep the Poi Toa circling – it must not stop spinning! They then go behind the new "twirler" (Poi Toa handler), and with both hands grab onto their waist.

The new "twirler" then sprints to the distant korari (with their attached "carriage"/teammate) and returns. They then hand the Poi Toa over to the next player waiting inline, and then they grab that player's waist also.

So now there are three players, all attached to each other, racing to complete the 50 metre course. The process continues until all the players have had a go at being the "train engine," have kept the Poi Toa spinning, and have remained attached.

The first team to finish correctly wins.

Remember that the first person who runs will cover the greatest distance (so if there are eight in a team that player will have run 400 metres) whereas the last person will have covered only 50 metres.



MENGAMENGA



The ancient game of mengamenga has been adapted today into a boardgame. It is focused, like mu torere, on nine game positions. It is thought that mu torere may in fact be a variant of mengamenga. Mengamenga seems deceptively simple but in reality, to play it well, requires vision and abstract thought. However if the rules are explained appropriately, supported with patience and aroha, all age groups, from pre-school onwards, will have no problems completing a game enjoyably.

History

Intellectual "boardgame" type activities were actually very common in ancient

Maori societies. Recorders of Maori pastimes chose to ignore this aspect of Maori culture. That in itself is nothing new, The 'Penguin History of New Zealand' (by Michael King), variously described as "the best history of New Zealand available," actually fails to mention any traditional sports! Yet historically games and sports had an enormous impact on Maori societies and cannot logically be left out of any in-depth Maori treatise. Iwi often had their own "boardgame" variations, but as most of these games had the commonality of 'nine' the belief is that they may have had a common origin. In Mengamenga, a small board of nine squares was usually placed, in the middle of a square or circle made of wood or flax matting. Great care was taken in selecting bright and colourful groups of stones of a uniform size.

The Rules

Any number of players can participate at once. The object of the game is to fill up the nine central squares with as many of your stones as possible. One colour is used per player although two players can divvy up the coloured stones as required.

Squares on the outer board are not necessary as the game surface is filled with the stones as play progresses. All the stones played are left on the board for the entire duration of the game and once placed cannot be moved unless being taken for placement into the "putahi".

To move one stone into the "putahi" (central nine squares) in a two-player game, a player must firstly have placed three stones in a line. One stone is then taken out of that line and placed in the putahi. That line is then deemed "mate" and that player cannot use those stones again to form any part of another line. To get another one of their stones into the "putahi" the player must next place four stones in a line...then five...and so on. It is not that easy however! Your opponent can block you from forming lines by simply placing a stone at one of the ends.



There are variations on the placement of the stones in the "putahi". The "putahi" has 4 different colours – of 4 squares, 2 squares, 2 squares and 1 square. For simplicity when first playing it is a good idea to just play to fill up the "putahi." When the strategies and intricacies of mengamenga are better appreciated, the player carefully calculates which square, in the "putahi," that they will place their stone onto.

If the player puts their stone on one of the 4 identically coloured squares, their opponents can then remove one stone off the board, or save it until they choose. Placement on the 2 squares enables opponents to remove two stones, and three stones respectively, and the 1 square (most central square) enables their opponents to remove 4 stones at a time of their choosing.





RURU

Besides poi toa different versions of this game also use pebbles, korari, raupo, and small objects released from Manu Kopua (shown below).

Sometimes poi toa are used by beginners with the rope wound around the head and tied thereby becoming a ki (a small ball).



History

Recitation games were extremely popular in former times. They incorporated aspects of memory, ture, hand & eye co-ordination, physical ability, competitiveness and what we recognise today as 'Nga Taonga o Takaro Maori' (Sportised Maori Artefacts).

The Rules

The verse that was sung during the playing of game hundreds of years ago is still vocalised today. This song is called:-

Ka Kotahi ti
Ka kotahi ti, ka rua ti, ka haramai te pati tore,
Ka rauna, ka rauna, ka noho te kiwikiwi,
He po, he wai takitaki, no pi, no pa,
Ka huia mai, kai ana te whetu, kai ana te marama.
Ko te tio e rere ra runga ra te pekapeka kotore,
Wiwi, wawa, hekeheke te manu ki o tau, tihe mauri ora!

The basic version of Ruru is played in this way. The player swings a poi toa around and around vertically and when optimum velocity is attained they release it upwards and then immediately start reciting the verse 'Ka kotahi ti'. The idea is to catch the poi toa before it hits the ground. If the throw is a good one, it will be several seconds before they have to catch the descending poi toa, and then simultaneously stop their reciting. The player then has another go and starts reciting the verse from where they had previously stopped. This carries on until they have finished the verse. Players try to complete the reciting of the entire verse with as few throws as possible. The poi toa must be caught on the full (by the rope) for it to count. Missed catches are added to the total and the reciting starts again from the beginning.

High, accurate throws are difficult to perfect, and the speed of the descending poi toa makes it tricky to catch on the rope. Therefore beginners are advised to concentrate on the skyward direction of their poi toa rather than the optimal power of its release.





KUTIKUTI

Being able to hold one's breath for a long period of time was considered a personal asset in times gone by. This ability often transferred to the skill of collecting kaimoana such as koura.

It was also regarded as a means to focus and control one's mind and body in a meditative way. Therefore many games were played that harnessed this revered ability.

History

At the time of the Treaty of Waitangi signings in 1840, most European observers commented on the overwhelming popularity of this game. The popular verse 'Ka Kotahi ti', just as in the game Ruru, was the preferred song, although today the word 'TaumatawhakatangiHangakoauauotamateaturipukakapikimaungahoronuku-pokaiwhenuakitanatahu' is also used, mainly by beginners, because of its relative shortness and interest value. However, in the 'old days' reciting the entire verse of 'Ka Kotahi ti' without breathing was considered 'easy'.

The kutikuti form of non-verbal communication, with the fingers and arms, was also conceptually transferred to a host of other games such as Tupea. Many attributes involved in playing Kutikuti well, such as, speed, agility, physical fitness and quick mental processing were also applicable to weapons training and combat.



The Rules

A player recites "Ka Kotahi ti" in a single breath.

Ka Kotahi ti

Ka kotahi ti, ka rua ti, ka haramai te pati tore,
Ka rauna, ka rauna, ka noho te kiwikiwi,
He po, he wai takitaki, no pi, no pa,
Ka huia mai, kai ana te whetu, kai ana te marama.
Ko te tio e rere ra runga ra te pekapeka kotore,
Wiwi, wawa, hekeheke te manu ki o tau, tihe mauri ora!

But that's not all! At the same time as the verse is being recited the player also tries to fit in as many 'kutikuti' as possible. A kutikuti movement has two parts – firstly the opening and closing of the hands quickly followed by a bended arm movement. This movement depicts, in non-verbal form (like the game sharades), the particular passage, or words of the verse, which the player is reciting at that time.

Players perform kutikuti to groups of words or even to individual words as they continue their reciting. The more skilful players fit in dozens of kutikuti during their recitation of 'Ka Kotahi ti'.

It is an amazing sight to watch experts vigorously performing lightning fast kutikuti for nearly every word they utter! Some players are so fast that they not only kutikuti for every word but also double or triple their initial opening and closing finger movements – their hands and arms are a blur!

The game is all about invention, improvisation, and creativity and getting up to korero! Songs and poetry can also be used in this game as well as speeches and whakatauki.





MU TORERE

This was one of the most popular 'board games' in ancient times. It is a deceptive game, seemingly 'simple', but its range of moves and strategies escalates it into the highest realms of games problem solving and abstract conceptualisation.

History

Mu Torere was one of several traditional types of 'board game' that used stones as pieces. Early European observers noted how adept Maori players were at this game. Some hapu played variations of Mu Torere that had dozens of 'kewai', or 'points', which made the game much more complicated. It is believed that Mu Torere may have evolved out of the very ancient stone game called Mengamenga.

Mu Torere has enjoyed a revival with its popularity in overseas educational programs and would rate as the most popular Maori 'board game' internationally. Today, worldwide, Mu Torere is being increasingly utilised in school pangarau (mathematics) curricula and university programs.



The Rules

On a standard board, there are eight kewai (points) and one putahi (centre) which makes nine placement positions for the eight stones (pieces). Each player takes half the board and places their four stones (pieces) on their four kewai.



Players alternate moves. There are three ways to move their stones – (1) they can move into a vacant kewai adjacent to a kewai their stone is on, (2) into the vacant putahi from a kewai, or (3) when one of their stones is in the putahi they can move it out onto a vacant kewai. The first player to move must move one of their two outside stones first.



They move one stone into the putahi because that is the only vacant position. Then the next player has their turn – which is to move their outside piece onto the adjacent vacant kewai and so on. Players must move both of their two outside pieces (stones) before they can move any of their two back pieces.

The objective of the game is for a player to trap their opponent's pieces so that they cannot move.





KI-O-RAHI ('TE MAHI A TE RAHI')



Ki-o-Rahi is the most popular traditional Maori game worldwide. It is gathering a huge following with rangatahi. Being a typically action packed traditional game that involves quick passing, alertness, game cunning, intelligence, team cohesion, inclusiveness, whanaungatanga and lots of movement, young people from NZ society, and the U.S. are really 'getting into it'.

History

Maori have rich ball playing histories. Ki-o-Rahi has evolved out of archaic forms of play which are based on the depiction of Rahi, a legendary figure, feeding his tupuna, in the form of a large rock, with his 'mauri' contained in a small kete, or 'ki'.

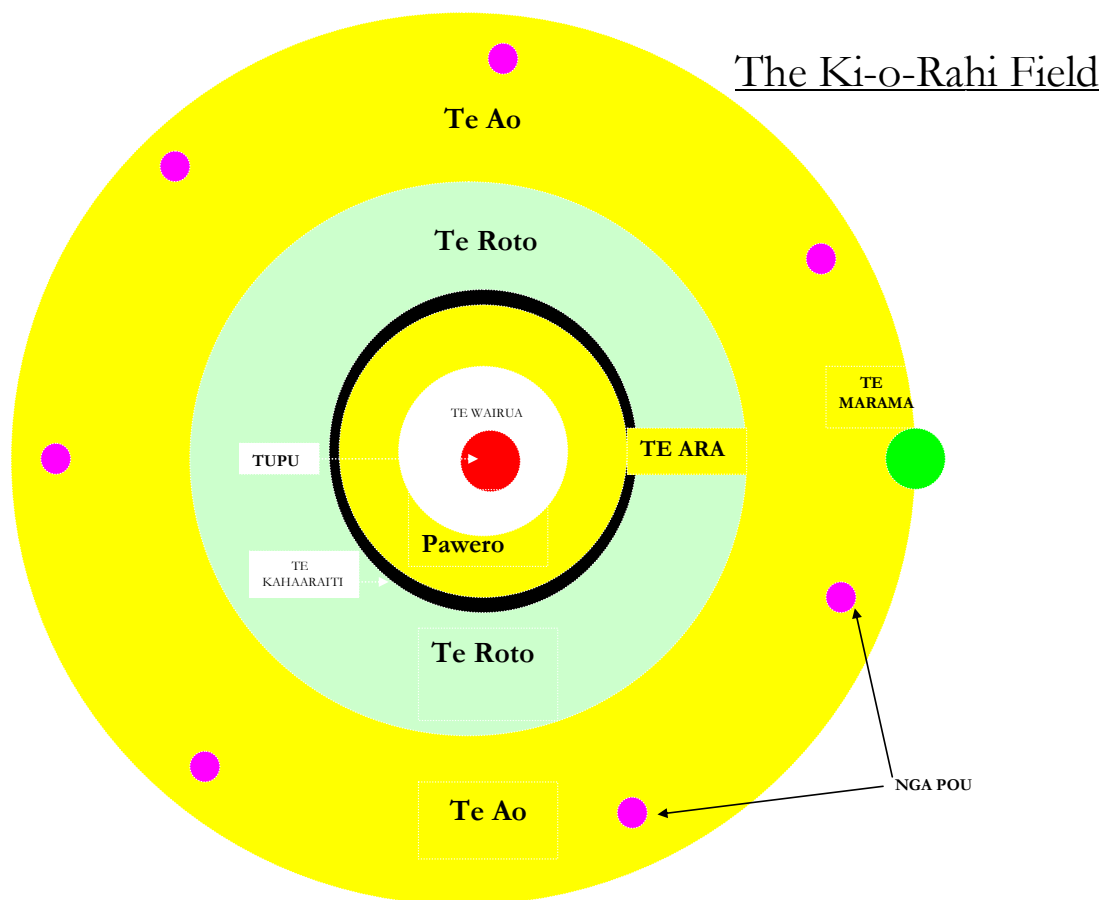
The important central 'tupu' in this game is represented by an actual rock, or carved log, at only a few locations in NZ. Generally today a large drum is used as the central target instead.

The game involves quick hand passing, combined team strategising, skilful ball handling, chasing, tackling and fun. Historically the ball games were mostly played on circular clearings with variable dimensions, however these have been standardised today.

The game gained a huge international following recently with its introduction into several thousand U.S. schools as part of an educational initiative.



The Rules



Legend

Te Ara – the 'pathway' which the Kioma players use to travel between the Pawero zone and Te Ao. At 'permanent' fields, this pathway can be made from sand. Often the pathway is given a significant name. **It is formed with two parallel lines 2 metres apart. These lines are 7 metres long.**

Kahaaraiti – the circle between the Pawero zone and the 'Te Roto' zone. **This circle has a 4 metre radius.**

Kahaaranui – the circle between Te Roto and Te Ao. **This circle has an 11 metre radius.**

Pou or **Poupou**– the boundary posts that the Kioma players need to wharongo (or 'touch') before attempting a Tupu Manawa ("try"). There are seven (7) pou positioned equidistantly around the 'Te Ao' zone. At 'permanent' fields these pou can be carved logs, each with a dedicated name. **They are usually placed about 5 metres infield from the Tapaparoa circle.**

Tapaparoa – the outermost boundary circle. **This circle has a 21 metre radius.**





Te Ao – The outermost zone of play

Te Marama – the circle from which a Kioma player starts the game and from which the game is restarted after each Tupu Manawa. It is positioned on the Tapaparoa circle. **This circle has a 1 metre radius.**

Te Motu – the entire zone within, and including, the Kahaaraiti circle. It includes the Pawero and Wairua zones. At 'permanent' fields this zone is sometimes made into a large circular sand pit. **The 'Te Wairua' zone has a 1 metre radius.**

Te Roto – the zone of play between the Kahaaraiti and the Kahaaranui circles.

Te Tupu – the 'target' which occupies the centre of the field. At 'permanent' fields, Te Tupu is usually a large rock or carved log with a name dedicated from the genealogy of a particular marae. Non-permanent fields use big drums as centre targets.

Te Wairua – the central zone in which the 'Te Tupu' is centrally positioned

The Rules of Ki-o-Rahi



There are 2 teams of 7 - 10 players on the field at once, whatever is agreed upon by both sides. The 2 teams are called 'Kioma' and 'Taniwha'. These modes of play have different objectives.





The game is usually played with a small handball. Traditional balls are called 'ki' and are made out of flax, wood or light stone.

The Kioma team

The whole focus of this team is to score 'Tupu Manawa' (or 'tries').

Starting Game Position:

There are 2 different starting positions for the Kioma team players – they are actually split into two different areas.

If the game is 7 aside up to 3 players can be positioned in the 'Pawero' zone. If the game is more than 7 aside then up to 4 players can be positioned in the 'Pawero' zone. For the entire game, these are the maximum numbers of players permitted in the 'Pawero' zone at any one time.

The remainder of the players position themselves in the 'Te Ao' zone.

Pawero zone players:

Their area of play:

These players can step and handle the ball within the Pawero zone. They must not step into the 'Te Wairua' zone or into the 'Te Roto' zone. They can also run out to the 'Te Ao' zone through the 'Te Ara' pathway whenever they want to assist their team mates in the 'Te Ao' zone (different players can then return to the Pawero zone via the 'Te Ara' again). They cannot handle the ball, or interfere with play, in the 'Te Roto' zone, or carry the ball along, or handle the ball, within the 'Te Ara'.



Job description:

The players positioned in this zone have 2 main jobs. Firstly to stop the other team from scoring on the 'Tupu' ('centre target') – they use any part of their body to block the ball from hitting the centre target. Secondly to get the ball, to gain possession, so that they can pass it out to their players in the 'Te Ao' zone.

Te Ao zone players:

Their area of play:

These players can run anywhere within the Te Ao zone inter-passing the ball and backing each other up. Their opponents, the Taniwha players, can also position themselves in the Te Ao zone and try to get the ball off the Kioma players by tackling them and retrieving the ball.

Job description:

Kioma players in the 'Te Ao' zone try to wharongo the poupou (posts and/or cones) in the 'Te Ao' zone and to then to run the ball into the Pawero zone for 'Tupu Manawa' (also known as 'tries').





Wharongo ('pou touch') play:

Whenever the ball enters the Te Ao zone, the Kioma players, pick it up or catch it, and inter-pass it, as they try to 'wharongo' the pou pou (posts/cones) in their zone. Wharongo means to touch a pou (a post or cone) with any part of the body while holding onto the ball. There are seven pou pou (posts/cones) in the Te Ao zone. Once the Kioma players have been able to wharongo a pou (a post or cone) they can then attempt a 'Tupu Manawa'. Each of the 7 pou can only be touched once in a wharongo sequence.

Tupu Manawa ('try') play:

If a wharongo has been successful on just one pou (post/cone) a Kioma player, who is holding onto the ball, can then run into the 'Te Roto' zone and try to run into the 'Pawero' zone (with ball in hand), or attempt to ground the ball on or over the 'Kahaaraiti' circle, for a 'Tupu Manawa'. Remember, however, that the other team's players are trying to tackle that player – so it is not a walk in the park! The common slang for a 'Tupu Manawa' is 'try'.

If a wharongo had been successful on 1 pou (post/cone) prior to the 'Tupu Manawa' being scored, then that 'Tupu Manawa' is worth 1pt. If wharongo had been successful on 2 pou pou (posts/cones) prior to the 'Tupu Manawa' being scored, then that 'Tupu Manawa' is worth 2 pts and so on. The maximum value of a 'Tupu Manawa' is therefore 7 pts as there are only 7 pou pou (posts/cones) in the 'Te Ao' zone.



The Kioma player who attempts to score a 'Tupu Manawa' cannot pass the ball while they are in the 'Te Roto' zone. They also cannot score a 'Tupu Manawa' in the gap where the 'Te Ara' joins the Pawero zone. A Kioma player with the ball in hand can run in and out of the 'Te Roto' zone.

Kioma players in the 'Te Ao' zone can throw the ball back to their Pawero zone players also if they wish. Doing so does not negate any successful 'wharongo' they have accumulated. Their Pawero players can then throw it out again and so on.

The Kioma side also has the option of using support players for the ball carrier who is entering the 'Te Roto' zone. If 1 wharongo has been made only the one person holding the ball can attempt the 'Tupu Manawa'.





However if 2 wharongo have been made then another player can enter the 'Te Roto' zone to assist the ball carrier. The method is that the support player has to be bound, holding onto, the ball carrier as they enter the 'Te Roto' zone – but once their grip is broken or they have been tackled they are deemed to be non-supportive and must not continue to assist the ball carrier. If 3 wharongo have been made then two support players can support the ball carrier to score a 'Tupu Manawa' in the same fashion. So a maximum six players can theoretically support a ball carrier. The ball cannot change hands at all within the 'Te Roto' zone.

Once a 'Tupu Manawa' has been scored the game restarts from the 'Te Marama' zone – a Kioma player who is standing within the 'Te Marama' circle throws the ball infield and tries to get the ball to their players in the Pawero zone. They cannot throw it into the 'Te Ao' zone.

The Taniwha Team

The whole focus of this team is to score 'Tupu Wairua'.

Starting Game positions:

The Taniwha players can position themselves anywhere within the 'Te Ao' or 'Te Roto' zones.



Job description:

The Taniwha players in the 'Te Ao' zone try to stop the Kioma players from getting the ball. They also try to get the ball off the Kioma players and can tackle their opponents to do this.

If there is a maul all the players involved must wrestle for the ball only. If a maul is in progress but the ball does not look likely to be freed up the ref will decide who gets possession – it will usually go to the team who did not get caught in possession.

The Taniwha players in the 'Te Roto' zone, once they gain possession, try to contact the ball onto the 'Tupu' or centre target – to score a 1pt 'Tupu Wairua'. The method is thus – for men/boys the ball must be firstly bounced in the Pawero zone, or deflected off a Kioma player, before it hits the 'Tupu' (centre target) for 1pt. Women/girls can throw the ball onto the 'Tupu' on the full for a 1pt 'Tupu Wairua'. However, anyone can kick the ball onto the Tupu in any way for a 1 pt 'Tupu Wairua'. 'Tupu Wairua' is also commonly called 'hits'.

Game start & restarts

The game starts with a throw-in by a Kioma player standing inside the 'Te Marama' circle – they try to throw, or kick, the ball to their teammates in the Pawero zone. The Taniwha players cannot obstruct this throw; however, they can try to intercept it within the 'Te Ara' pathway or the 'Te Roto' zone. The ball must at least enter the 'Te Roto' zone from such throw-ins.

If the ball goes out, the ball is given to the team, which did not put it out – they then throw it in from the Tapaparoa, approximately from where the ball crossed the outside circle.





After a 'Tupu Wairua' has been scored by the Taniwha team the ball is given back to them in the 'Te Roto' zone to immediately continue play.

After the Kioma team score a 'Tupu Manawa' a Kioma player then restarts play from the 'Te Marama' with a throw-in as for the start of the game.

The Tewhatewha duo and/or the referee can decide all other restarts, including for stoppages, or awarding of penalties.

Mixed teams & inclusive rules

Rules are devised so that girls and boys can play together equally. For example the two handed touch rule can be applied whereby girls tackle girls in a game but only have to manage a two handed touch to 'tackle' boys and vice versa. No body should be left out who wants to play. Formulating inclusive rules is part of the 'Tatu' process.

10 times-in-a-row-rule!

If one side score 10 times in a row, they win the game, even if they are behind on the scoreboard!

Tewhatewha / referee

Both sides can agree for a player or supporter from each side to help control the game, they are called Tewhatewha, these players can run onto the field at the same time, to converse freely together, as non-players, to guide and control play OR a referee can control the game, with or without Tewhatewha. The primary purpose of Tewhatewha is to focus on the behaviour of their team, to support them and to berate them if they are detrimentally affecting the positive flow of the game. However, these days it is usual for just one person to referee throughout a match.

Penalties

Generally anyone who breaks the rules or who disrupts a game, wastes time, tackles too high, or 'loses their cool' gets a 30-seconds "out." This means either they have a sit-down on the field for 30 secs or they go off the field for 30 secs. It is upto the ref and the Tewhatewha from each side to control the integrity and free flow of the game.

Periods of Play

The game is divided into quarters. There can be intervals between each quarter. Teams alternate playing in the Kioma and Taniwha modes of play. Each period of play is started from the 'Te Marama' circle - a Kioma player attempts to throw the ball to their teammates in the Pawero zone.

Time Limits

A referee or Tewhatewha controls time limits. Generally, the Kioma side has about 20 seconds to 'wharongo' each time. The Taniwha team also has about 20 seconds to attempt a Tupu Wairua (or 'hit') each time - an attempt being when the ball contacts one of the Pawero players or if it the ball passes through the 'Te Wairua' zone. The Pawero players also have about 5 - 10 seconds to throw, or kick, the ball out of their zone. These are just a few options that can be finalised in the pre-game negotiations ('Tatu').

Full contact

Ki-o-Rahi is a full contact game that involves tackling. Players running with the ball in the 'Te Ao' zone cannot be "shielded" by their own players, so that their opponents cannot tackle them. However, in the 'Te Roto' zone this is permitted when a Kioma player, is bound to, and is supporting their ball carrier.



Standardised Rules & Tatu

Thankfully, Ki-o-Rahi has not got to the stage yet where one set of rules applies to all! The traditional process of 'Tatu' is still alive and well! For this process representatives (or all players) from both teams discuss the rules, or variations to them, before the game starts.



This can occur over a period of time, such as weeks, or can be decided the night before a game, or 5 minutes before a game starts. Many a marae game has commenced after a previous night of 'Tatu', when all the energies of debate and consequent celebration, have left the players lacklustre and bleary eyed! However, 'Tatu' is also a time for shrewd negotiation, for a team's managers to maximise their players' strengths and to ameliorate their opponent's perceived strengths.

Teams also decide on their infusion of Tikanga Maori, including the specific hapu, or Iwi, devised tikanga appropriate for the match. Types of haka might also be discussed. Some hapu have formalities that must be respected preceding a game and in the after match.

Poupou

In the 'Te Ao' zone seven pou are placed equidistantly around the field. The Kioma players use them to wharongo. These poupou can be cones, rakau, posts or even mats – as long as they are highly visible and easily touched.





COMMON KUPU USED IN KI-O-RAHI

Ihi – power

Kawa - procedures

Ki – the small handball used in play

Kioma – the mode of play in which players attempt to score Tupu Manawa

Mahana – the throw-off, from the 'Te Marama', to start the game.

Manuhiri - visitors

Mauri – life force / life essence

Mo – to catch the ball (ki) on the full

Mowera – awesome tackling by the Taniwha team

Namu – a 'scrag' type tackle which keeps the player upright and unable to pass the ball

Nga Taonga - resources

Nga Taonga o Nga Tupuna Maori – treasures of the ancestors

Nga Taonga o Takaro Maori – traditional implements used in sports / play, also known as 'Sportised Maori Artefacts'.

Ngahau – a period of awesome ball passing by the Kioma team

Ngaro – a 'shy' player, someone who doesn't get involved in play

Oka – moving while carrying someone, usually on your back

Paupane – a head high tackle

Pawero – the Kioma position of defending the 'Te Tupu'. Also a period of awesome defence

Rehia – a pleasurable pastime

Ringawera – quick passing of the ball from hand-to-hand

Takaro - play

Takepapo – a 'Tupu Wairua' scored by a player from the 'Te Ao' zone or the 'Te Marama' circle

Takou – players who assist their Teitei runner in the 'Te Roto' zone

Tangata Whenua – people of the land / local people

Taniwha – the team mode of attempting to score 'Tupu Wairua'

Tatu – important process before a game whereby players and supporters, discuss, decide and agree on the interpretations of the rules to be played and local tikanga to be adhered to

Teitei – a Kioma player who enters the 'Te Roto' zone with the ball in their hands

Tepuru – any type of legs only tackle

Tewhatewha – the traditional style of refereeing whereby one person from each team takes on the responsibility of ensuring that their side adheres to the rules decided in the Tatu negotiation process.

Tupu Manawa – the scoring process of the Kioma side. Immediately after their side has succeeded with one or more wharongo a player needs to carry the ball through the 'Te Roto' zone and into the 'Pawero' zone to score a Tupu Manawa or, as it is also colloquially known - a 'try'. The resultant 'try' is given points – 1pt for each preceding wharongo.

Tupu Wairua – the scoring move whereby the ball (ki) contacts the 'Te Tupu' in the correct manner. Tupu Wairua are also colloquially known as "hits". Kioma players can score "own hits".

Turangawaewae – 'a place to stand'. Indicates rights and obligations of a person to a certain place, such as their marae.

U – a long, powerful, flat throw

Utumai – a full contact tackle between the legs and neck

Whaikorero – formal speech making

Whanaungatanga - kinship

Wharongo – when a Kioma player, with the ball in hand, touches a pou with any part of their body it is called harongo

Te Whakapapa o Ki-o-Rahi

