



## Brightwater Site

# Double Ball (We Pitisowewepahikan)

**Origin:** The Plains tribes and tribes throughout Eastern United States played Double Ball or a variation of this game.

**Motivational Set:** Start with a 'Greeting Circle'. Have students sit in a circle. Begin by initiating the following greeting to the person on your left, "Tansi, Namoyaw" (tanse, nē moi ě)-"Hello, how are you?" The person on your left responds with "Nanitow" (nēmēnto)- "Fine thank-you." In turn, the person on your left turns to the person on their left and repeats, "Tansi, Namoyaw." This format continues until the circle is complete.

Once the circle is complete, tell students we will be learning how to play the game "Double Ball" which is called Pitisowewepahikan (way - pee/tě/sō/way - way pã/hē gūn) in Cree. Have them repeat the Cree name several times with you.

**History:** In most regions, Double Ball was played exclusively by women but over time has become a game played by both genders. Double Ball is sometimes referred to as "The Woman's Ball Game". It is a physically active game that requires skill and endurance.

The implements used for this game include two balls attached with a thong and 3 meter long curved sticks. The balls and sticks used vary from location to location depending on the environment of the tribe. Many tribes played similar games with their own unique adaptations. This was most often dependent upon environmental conditions and what materials were readily available. For example, the Plains Cree used a stick approximately three feet long and a double ball made from two sacks of deerskin stuffed with buffalo hair, joined by a leather thong. (Show students the equipment-courtesy of Saskatoon Public Brightwater Camp). The Chippewa tribe in Wisconsin used a sharp stick that was slightly bent at the end and leather bags filled with sand, attached by a thong for the double balls.

The playing surface used was the open prairie fields with the goals placed up to one kilometer apart. The object of the game was to be the first team to throw the ball over your opponent's goal line and between the markers.

Games of chance and skill were shared with other tribes and thought of as gifts. Double Ball would be classified as a game of skill. During times of celebration and large gatherings, one tribe would challenge another to games. Today we honor traditional games through venues such as the North American Indigenous games.

**Number of Players:** 8 or more (2 teams)

**Playing Space:** A soccer field, football field, or an open field where the goals are at least 100 yards apart. (Can play in the gym using a modified version.)

**Equipment:** 3 meter long,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide dowel sticks.

Goal markers (pylons or posts)

2 small balls or bean bags fastened together with a leather thong.

\*Consider safety goggles when using long handled implements.

**Instructions to Make:**

- Purchase and cut  $\frac{3}{4}$ " dowelling (Home Depot) into 3 meter long pieces. Sand each end and paint  $\frac{1}{2}$  of each stick one color. Repeat until half of the sticks are one color and the other half are another. For example, 4 red and 4 blue. This visual helps the player to adjust the location of the Double Ball on the stick before throwing and to be able to differentiate who is on your team.
- Purchase deer hide (Textile and Sewing Supplies). Stuff and sew sacs using heavy weight thread and beanbag pellets or other suitable material. The material should be pliable and have a slight weight to it (comparable to that of a bean bag)

**Object of the Game:** The object of the game is to be the first team to successfully throw the Double Ball over the opponent's baseline between their goal markers. (Modify by playing best of 3 or 5)

**Psychomotor Objective:** The students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the mechanics of catching and throwing using the proper technique with a long handled implement while moving in both personal and general space in addition to gaining physical strength and endurance from the cardiovascular workout it provides.

**Cognitive Objective:** The students will be able to explain and/or demonstrate the proper technique when using long handled implements and apply this knowledge in a game situation.

**Affective Objective:** The students will be able to foster their emotional need for social belonging by experiencing teamwork, cooperation, and practicing good sportsmanship while playing the game.

**Spiritual Objective:** The students will be able to apply the history they learned from this traditional game to games of the present. Students will be able to make the connection between the origin of the materials and the environment. (eg. buffalo, trees)

**Required Skills:**

**Throwing (Sending) with Long Handled Implements:**

- To begin, start with the underhand pass. First to a stationary partner, then to a moving partner. Teach proper form before concentrating on distance or accuracy. Once the mature form of the skill is developed, throwing for accuracy at a moving target in a game situation can be practiced.
  
- **Learning Cues for Underhand Pass**
  - Face Partner (Your body should be facing your partner.)
  - Both hands on the stick on your throwing side. Both hands will be on the stick (dominant hand above the less dominate) with your dominant hand behind your seat.
  - Opposite leg from the throwing side is forward, facing the target. Weight is on the back foot.
  - Step towards target with the foot opposite throwing arm. Weight shifts to forward foot.
  - Rotate the hips as the throwing arm moves forward (hips now facing forward).
  - As hips are rotating, Flick your dominant wrist from behind while aiming at the target. The dominant hand should lead the forward movement of the arm.

**Beginner Cues: Step, Turn, Throw**

Tell students to throw as hard as possible (at the wall) since speed and accuracy are most important in this stage. Students can practice against a wall or in a large field for distance.

**Advanced Cues: Look, Side, Back, Step, Turn, Follow Through**

Once a mature throwing pattern is developed, aiming at a target or throwing to a partner can be introduced.

- **Learning Cues For Overhand Pass**
  - **Look** (Find your target)
  - **Side To Target** (Make sure the side of your body away from the hand you are throwing with is toward the wall; if you were to walk straight ahead, you would walk along the wall, not towards it.)

- **Arm Back** (bring your throwing arm back so that your less dominant elbow is almost at the level of your chin and your dominant hand is behind your head. Your elbow should be pointing at your target.)
- **Step With Opposite Foot** (Step forward on the foot opposite the side you are using to throw)
- **Turn** (Rotate your upper body toward the direction of your target while your implement releases the ball at approximately eye level.)
- **Follow Through** (After you throw, have your arm follow the ball. Your implement should end up at approximately knee level.)

### **Catching (Receiving) with Long Handled Implements:**

- **Learning Cues for Catching:**
  - **Watch the Object** (Keep your eye on the ball)
  - **Reach** (Reach for the object with your implement. Pay attention to your grip. It should resemble that of a hockey stick grip)
  - **Pull** (Absorb the force of the ball by pulling back on the stick)

### **How To Play:**

- Players are divided into two teams.
- The game begins with one player throwing the ball toward center field.
- The ball, once caught by a player, cannot be carried on the stick. It must be passed from one player to another. (Modifications can be made to incorporate a certain number of steps)
- Players must try to move the ball up field with the goal of throwing it over the baseline and between the markers of the opponent's goal. The first team which does this wins.
- Players can try to take possession of the ball by trying to knock it off their opponent's stick.
- If a player drops the Double Ball, they lose possession to the opponent. A player cannot touch the Double Ball with their hands or feet.

### **Adaptations for Younger Students**

- Decrease the distance of the playing field
- Increase the size of the goal
- Use underhand passes only
- Do not allow the opponent to be able hook the ball off another player
- Have two separate games going at the same time so there are more opportunities to practice sending and receiving the ball.
- Student can be stationary to receive the ball

### **Adaptations for Older Students:**

- Increase the area of the field.
- Decrease the size of the goal

- Use posts for the goal and have students have to ‘ring’ the ball around the post in order to score a goal.
- Increase the length of the game. For example, the first team who scores 3 wins the round. Have a contest for the best out of 3 games.
- Student must be moving to receive the ball
- Each person on the team has to receive the ball before scoring
- When practicing sending and receiving with a partner, have students vary the distance between them and their partner, vary the size of the target on the wall when practicing for accuracy, vary the levels of the targets, vary the force and speed of the throw, and have the thrower send the ball out of reach so the receiver has to move farther and farther away to make contact.

**Relevance to Curriculum:**

- To provide a specific example of how indigenous people have contributed to the development of sport of today.
- To provide students with opportunities to nurture the four aspects of growth through sport (Physical, Emotional, Mental, and Spiritual)
- By presenting students with the opportunity to participate in physical education by developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become physically educated persons.
- Students will apply basic movement patterns including sending, receiving, evading, accompanying, locomotion, landings, pathways, and rotations.
- Students will expand on their movement variables. Body, space, effort, and relationships are all factored in when playing Double Ball.
- Basic movement principles are learned. Stability and force are critical components when learning the skill of throwing and catching with a long handled implement.
- Students become aware of the inclusion of ethnic diversity and the importance of Aboriginal content into the curriculum.