

Gotlandic games

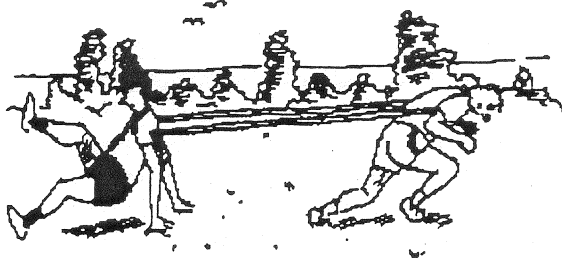
Ancient square-and-border-ball (Pärk)



Ancient square-and-border-ball is an old ballgame. You hit the ball with your hand or you kick it with your foot, on volley or after the first bounce. Ancient square-and-border-ball is played with a ball big as a fist and it is made of tightly winded wool covered with tanned sheepskin.

The game is played on a smooth grasspitch with seven players in each team. The space needed for the game (around 30m wide and unlimited length) is marked by a movable stick. The game starts with the ball being served into a square, 70x210 cm, where an ancient square-and-border-ball player from one team stands, hitting the ball towards the opponent team. The idea of the game is for one team to win as much ground as possible from the other team. After seven serves into the square, the teams change places, and the team which conquered ground must now defend it or otherwise give it back to the other side, which has seven attempts to try to recapture the lost ground. Every round gives the winning team 10 points, and you have to get 40 points to win the set. Best of three sets win the match.

Breaking the Ox

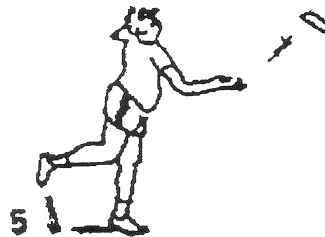
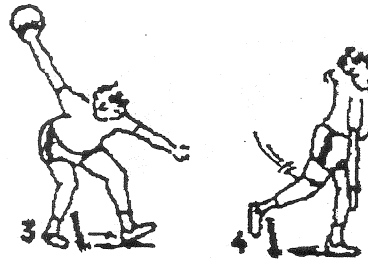
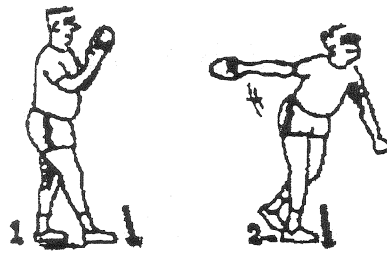


Two persons put a 10 m. long rope across their necks, forwards across the shoulders and backwards under the arms. Then you kneel, with the back towards each other, and the aim is then to pull forward and by that drag your opponent with you. The winner is the one who drags the opponent a certain distance (around 3 m.). Preferably, it should be a ditch filled with water between these two competitors - in that way one of them will get wet - and the winner has reached the goal and won.

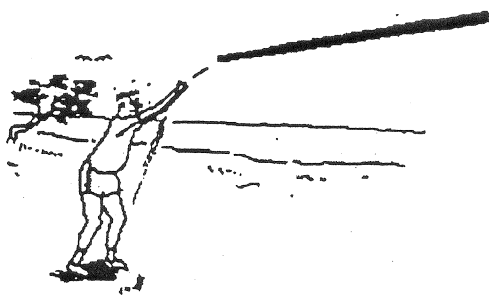
The Stone - origin of " Horse Shoe Throwing " (Varpa)

The Stone is a sport for everyone. There are two different stones, those made of stone and those made of metal. The stone made of metal consists of a aluminiumalloy.

The stone may, in principal, weigh without any limit, bur usually it weighs between 0,5 - 5.0 kilos (1 - 10 pounds). The length of the throwing-track varies due to sex, age and handicap, if any. The track is marked in each end, with a stick. When you throw the stone it is important to get it in rotation in order to get it to fall down as close as possible to the stick. The thrower who gets his/her stone closest gets one point, and when you have reached twelve points you win the set (compare it to tennis). A whole match includes three sets. The person winning most sets, wins the contest, or the throw as it is often called. As a beginner it is most suitable to start with a light stone, at a distance of 10 - 20 m, which is min and max distance in The Stone.



Pole Throwing or Caber Tossing (Stanggstörtningg)



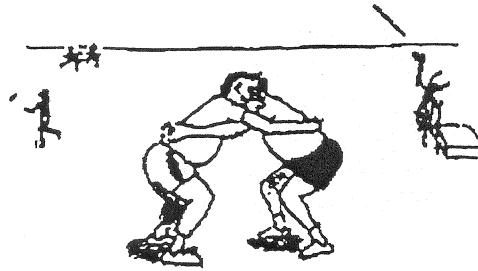
Gotlandic Pole Throwing begins with the competitor heaving the pole into start-position. The pole weighs between 16 and 26 kilos, depending on the ability of the competitors. You heave the pole by pushing the end of the pole with your right hand and lift it with your left hand using your knee as help. (The starting position for the actual throw is both hands around the end of the pole.)

The pole rest against your shoulder and while moving forward you lower the pole and push it with a jerk forwards and upwards.. It is supposed to touch the ground making a somersault from one end to the other. The pole may fall no more than 45 degrees compared to the original push of the throw. The length of the throw is measured from the starting point of the throw to the landingpoint.

Gotlandic Pentathlon (Gutnisk femkamp)

In the Gotlandic Pentathlon, which is an elimination-competition, you compete in five old gotlandic games.

The first event is something called RÄNN'I KÄMP (a run), where the running distance is between 60 and 100 meters.



The second event is called LÄNGDKAST ME' STAIN (similiar to The Stone) This event is about throwing a stone as far as possible without it rolling around. You measure the length, and if the stone has rolled you reduce the total length with half of the rolling-distance.

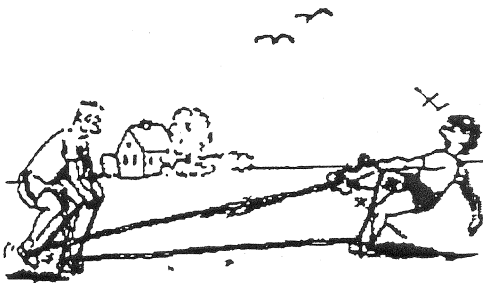
The third event is HAUG-STIKEL (highjump) according to the general rules.

The fourth event is STANGGSTÖRTNINGG (Pole throwing), where you use a pole weighing 20 kilos. The length is measured from the startingpoint of the push to the landingpoint. (Compare it to Pole Throwing)

The fifth and last event is Cumberland Wrestling. In this event, only those placed one to four in the event STANGGSTÖRTNINGG participate. They met in this Cumberland Wrestling, the final event to crown the winner. You stand facing each other, grabbing each other's backs with a waist lock. Your aim is to get your opponent down on his back. To trip a person up is not allowed. Best out of three throws wins the Gotlandic Pentathlon.

A recommendation: Everybody participate in the first event, then after every event you take away those competitors most badly placed, about one sixth of the total amount competitors in each event.

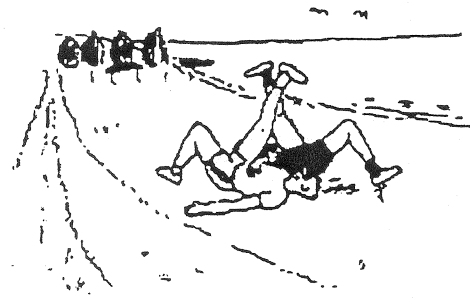
Kick astride or Kicking the strip (Spark' bläistre)



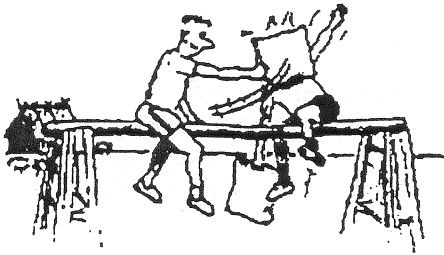
Two persons standing 8 - 10 meters away from each other, with a rope (16 - 20 m. long) around their feet. The rope is supposed to be crossed and put in a loop around the foot in order to get a hold. The aim is to get your opponent to fall, by kicking your feet. It's good to have both technique and skill in this event.

Hook the Bottom or Red Indian Leg Wrestling (Spark' rövkrok)

Two persons participate. You lay on your back, your heads in different directions, alongside the opponent's hip, and then you hook each other's arms. On a startsignal you kick your leg up high, try to hook the opponent's leg and pull him over.



Rule the Roast (Herre pa stangg)



Two persons sitting facing each other on a horizontal bar, about 1,5 m high up (in the old days placed over a mudhole). The aim is to hit each other with a pillow, and make the opponent fall down. The person to loose is the one who first falls down or drops his pillow.

Another name for this gotlandic game is VÄRST KÄLLINGG PA STANGG (

Best lady on bar).

Tug-of-pole or Swingle-Tree (Dra hank)

The equipment consists of a half-meter long round-shaped stick, about 3 cm in diameter. Two persons sit facing each other with bended knees and the sole of the feet touching the opponents. Both grab the stick, and the aim is to pull the opponent over, or pull until somebody drops the stick. The opponents take turns in how to grab the stick; outer or inner edge.

