

How to play pok-ta-pok

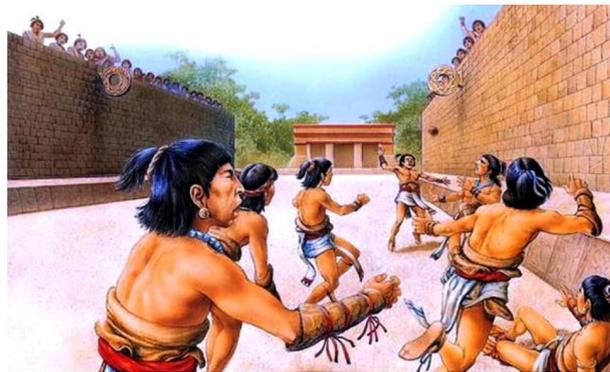
Background to the Sport

Pok-ta-pok was played by the Ancient Maya and is the oldest known team sport with a ball - invented over 3500 years ago.

The game, which was rooted in myth, had great religious and political importance. In addition, the sport has been symbolically linked to the movement of the sun and moon. The game may have also been played as an alternative to war.

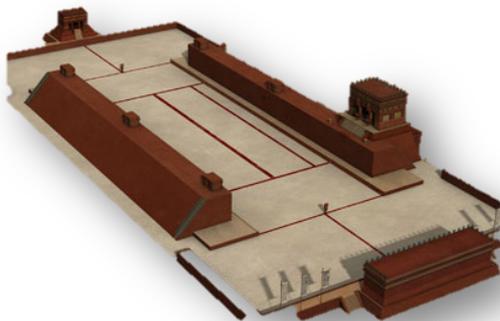
Objective of the game

The aim of the game is to score points by bouncing the ball into the opponent's end zone, or when the opposing team fails to return the ball after the second bounce. If the stone rings are being used, players can hit the ball through one of the two stone rings to instantly win the game.



Court and equipment:

- an 'I' shaped court up to 100 metres long and 30 metres wide (with a long narrow playing alley flanked by walls).
- hard, bouncy rubber ball
- heavy protective body padding and belts
- two stone rings



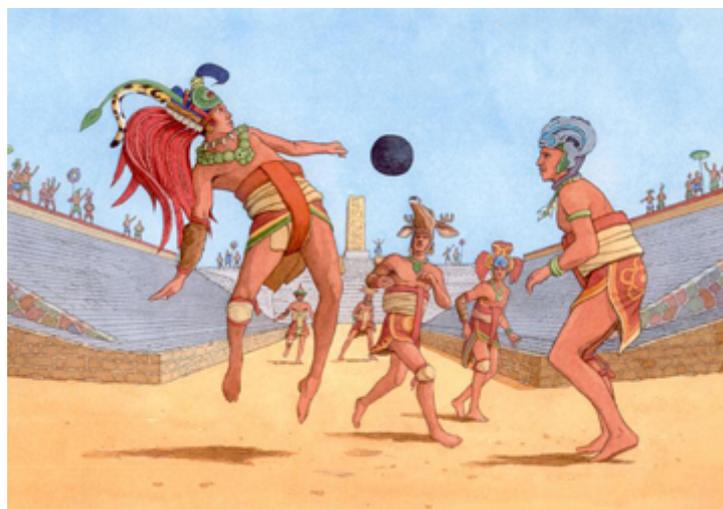
Number of players

Two teams with approximately 5 players each.

Game Play

The ball is hit into the field of play and players can pass the ball to each other using only their elbows, knees and hips. Hands, heads and feet are not allowed. A point is scored when the opposing team fails to return the ball before it bounces a second time, or when the ball reaches the opposing end zone.

The winning team is the team which scores the most points by the end of the game which could last several hours. If stone rings are being used, the ball can be hit through one of the rings. The first team to hit the ball through a stone ring is immediately declared the winner and the game is then over.



Consequences of losing the game

The players on the winning team will be treated like heroes. However, the captain of the losing team may be sacrificed by decapitation or other means.