

The New Zealand Petanque Association was formed in 1993 to promote and foster the game of Pétanque throughout New Zealand. We are affiliated with the world governing body the FIPJP (Federation International de Pétanque et Jeu Provençal).

The NZPA is responsible for running the NZ National Singles, National Doubles, Open Doubles and National Triples, Championships.

The team to represent NZ at the world championships is currently chosen from results at the National Triples Championships.

To date the association has been successful in securing major corporate sponsorship to defray expenses for our overseas representatives.

A National Coach is appointed who visits clubs and regions by arrangement.

Interested members are encouraged to undertake Coaching Association NZ courses run by their local Sports Trust.

Videos on playing technique by past World Champion Marco Foyot are available from the National Coach.

The Association is committed to encouraging visits from skilled overseas players. Marco Foyot coached in Auckland, Napier and Wellington in 1997 and the Air New Zealand NZ Open gives an opportunity to see overseas players, many of world class, in action.

The NZPA also appoints the National Umpire who officiates at National events, it is envisaged regional umpires will be appointed as the game evolves.

Eventually it is hoped the National Umpire and others will undertake the appropriate FIPJP examinations.

The NZPA issues licences which allow one to take part in all four National Championships as well as compete in events overseas. (In all other countries of the world a player must have a licence from their National Association or Federation before they can take part in any competitions.)

As a national sports organisation, the NZPA is eligible to receive funding from the Hillary Commission to aid in the development of the sport, and we are working on acceptance of Pétanque as a Kiwi sport.

A modest publication, The Boules Gazette, keeps NZPA members in touch with events in the Pétanque world nationally and internationally – it appears 3 – 4 times a year.

Currently the NZPA subscription is a mere \$10.00 a year. We encourage all clubs to incorporate the NZPA membership into their annual subscription so all players can have a share in the continued growth and evolution of the game nationally. (Much of the work of the NZPA and attendance at FIPJP annual meetings, required as a condition of membership, is currently funded by members individually.)

The NZPA committee recognises that the continued growth of the game depends on welcoming into the sport the huge numbers of players who wish to play Pétanque as a leisure

activity often with their families, therefore individual clubs and their success are of paramount importance.

As the number of clubs increases in different areas more Regional Associations will form. These will be self funding, often by means of running the Regional Championships and exist to coordinate club activities in the region and promote the game locally. The Regional Secretary acts as a direct conduit to the NZPA committee.

Pétanque is a very young game in New Zealand it is growing rapidly and evolving. We welcome the feedback and involvement of interested players. Join your national association!

Postal Address:

NZPA

PO Box 102

Napier

Internet Site:

<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~sport/Petanque/Petanque.html>

The New Zealand Schools Pétanque Association exists to promote the game in primary, intermediate and high schools throughout the country. Regional schools tournaments have already been held in Auckland, Wellington, Waikato and Nelson. More will follow.

Postal Address:

New Zealand Schools Pétanque Association

6 Summer Street

Devonport, Auckland

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The New Zealand Pétanque Association and the New Zealand Schools Pétanque Association are extremely appreciative of permission received from Mr Claude Azema, President F.F.P.J.P. to reproduce this Coaching Manual, prepared originally for the French Pétanque Federation. Thanks are also due to Mr Dudley Lewin, President of the British Pétanque Association for permission to use Gillian Freeman's excellent translation. It is hoped that the improved access to the wisdom contained herein will increase the enjoyment in Pétanque of ever greater numbers of the wider Pétanque family.

Cam Calder

Secretary, NZ Pétanque Association

Member, Executive Committee F.I.P.J.P.

November 1997

Foreword to the second printing

The New Zealand Pétanque Association appreciates the ongoing staunch support of Peugeot for the game of Pétanque in New Zealand

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P R E F A C E F O R T H E C O A C H

This course offers a method of teaching petanque which is designed, first and foremost, for students with no knowledge of the game. Naturally, if you use it for students who already have a certain knowledge of petanque, you will have to assess the level they have reached so that you can shorten some sessions and spend longer on others. Use your own judgment and your initiative as coach.

Also bear in mind that, whilst the suggested order of coaching sessions has been devised to follow a logical sequence, it is not obligatory. The practice of petanque is such that, right from the start, you may have to talk about aspects which are not covered fully until later in the course. This is why some elements of the teaching are covered in special double-page spreads to which you can refer throughout the course, such as how to hold the boules, the rules, measuring, etc....

We cannot recommend too highly that you let your students 'discover' how to play, that is to say that you let them find out for themselves the necessity for playing in a certain way, or in a certain position, before you explain the reasons to them and shower them with technical hints.

You will soon feel the need to let your students play proper games. You should make systematic demands on them as soon as they reach a certain level, even a relatively low one. It is vital always to mix technical teaching and play or other activities in any one session. Practically all sessions will end with a game or similar activity. It is a good idea to prepare your sessions by having suitable exercises, during which you can pick out concrete examples to reinforce the teaching and advice you have given in all the previous sessions.

Success in carrying out this method depends on you, your patience and the way in which you make your students enjoy the game and want to play it regularly.

S e c t i o n 1

I N T R O D U C T I O N
t o t h e
C O A C H I N G M E T H O D

- Presentation
- Aims
- Implementation

P E T A N Q U E : A C O M P R E H E N S I V E A N D S T R U C T U R E D C O A C H I N G M E T H O D

Petanque is a sport, an open-air activity, a school of fair play, of relaxation and leisure.

Up till now new players have always learnt by joining in proper games. As far as technique is concerned, they imitated their favourite players, learnt the game of boules by listening and watching, were drawn directly into the heart of the game or practised patiently on their own. They discovered petanque as a whole and their mistakes and lack of technique were only corrected in the course of the games they played.

The French Federation, which has nearly 500,000 members, felt that it owed it to itself to take an earlier interest in new players. The aim of this book is to facilitate their entry into petanque and to lead them to take part in games of boules to suit their capabilities.

We should teach them the general techniques of pointing and shooting, not encroaching too much on their natural inclinations in throwing the boule, but by demonstrating the effectiveness of the method we teach.

We should show them progressively the general ideas of tactics, of advantage, of attack and defence, but leaving them free to act on their own initiative.

We should help them to understand, gradually, the rules of the game, self-control and respect for partners, opponents, referees and the public.

The aim of petanque is simple and can immediately be demonstrated to novices. If playing football is kicking a ball into the opposite goal and keeping it out of your own goal, **playing petanque is placing your boules nearer than those of your opponent to a target called a cochonnet.**

We have all noticed how, when someone is given a boule to hold, they first of all handle it, then throw it low and hard at a chosen target, cochonnet, boule or some other object. We must therefore:

1. Teach the novice that the starting point of petanque is simply throwing boules from a circle marked on the ground.
2. Teach them that the first aim of the game is not to hit things, but to place one object as close as possible to another.

Next it is a good idea to summarise the rules of petanque:

- The first team throws a boule towards the cochonnet.
- The second team tries to place a boule nearer to the cochonnet:
If they succeed, the first team has to throw again.
If they fail, they have to continue to play until they succeed or until they have no boules left.
- When a team has no boules left, their opponents play their remaining boules.
- When all the boules have been played, a team scores as many points as it has boules closer to the cochonnet than the best boule of the opposing side.
- Each team totals the points scored, the winning team being the first to reach 13.

You can also add that:

- In the course of a game a team can throw its boules:
So as to go nearer to the cochonnet than the opponents' boule
or
To move one of the opponents' boules so that one of its own is now nearest to the cochonnet.
- Moving the cochonnet can lead to a similar result and this can happen either deliberately or accidentally.

As the game can be explained very quickly, the students can begin to play at once. Obviously you will not be expecting any great technical prowess in the early sessions. However, you should give them a general idea of the technique of throwing a boule and begin by giving them some general instructions.

At every session we will add new ideas which will be taken up again throughout the course until the whole picture can be seen.

Progress can therefore be made in stages, from the natural but awkward throw, up to the stage when the entire body moves in a way which is harmonious and ideally suited to the purpose.

THE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF PETANQUE

These benefits are felt in various areas, which, as in any human activity, are closely linked or strongly dependent on one another. For reasons of convenience they are shown here under five headings. The coach can decide whether to point them out separately or together.

Motor Benefits

Petanque helps to develop the qualities of dexterity and precision. It also helps to co-ordinate limb movements and it aids balance.

Sensory Benefits

Petanque is excellent for the sense of touch and for the maintenance of vision. Above all it helps physical and mental self-control.

Emotional Benefits

Petanque gives the pleasure of acquiring greater and greater control over the boules in the course of play. As mastery over them increases, players experience the pleasure of scoring a point, shooting a boule, carrying out a difficult throw and so growing in awareness of the possibilities of the game.

Social Benefits

Petanque facilitates human contact and does away, for the most part, with social barriers. In a game there are only partners and opponents. The nature of the game encourages the players to discuss, to give their views, to express themselves.

Intellectual Benefits

Petanque contributes many intellectual benefits. Amongst others are attention, concentration, memory, addition and the need to calculate probabilities.

The aim of your teaching will of course be to teach petanque as a sporting discipline, but you can make use of this discipline to make your students aware of the full possibilities of the game.

AIMS TO BE FOLLOWED

You can begin by making use of spontaneous activities: students will play with the boules even if they do not know anything of the rules of the game. You can then lead them to simple games which allow you to illustrate the general rules of petanque. You then move on naturally to exercises preparing the way for a knowledge of basic techniques.

As the capacity of the students develop, you can teach exercises leading, as the sessions continue, to a knowledge of all the techniques and all the methods of throwing the boule. At the end of the course you will be using proficiency exercises to develop greater accuracy and be holding full training sessions.

Throughout the sessions, make use of every opportunity to reinforce the rules and tactics.

As we have stressed, coaches are encouraged to set up games of petanque at an early stage. These are to be organised after the exercises planned for each session. During the first games you should simply correct mistakes in the areas which you have already covered and otherwise only correct, unobtrusively, the most glaring errors in areas you have not yet dealt with. You may also prefer to limit the game to just a few ends.

You should cover the ground at a pace suited to the aptitude of your students. Do not be afraid to go over ground two or even three times if most of the students are still not carrying out a movement correctly.

After the introductory stage, where you introduce exercises which should lead to a sound knowledge of all the techniques, it is possible and even desirable, to reverse or to group together the study of methods of throwing. For example, you can leave the study of the high point to the end of the course, or start on shooting at a different stage.

EQUIPMENT

Boules

Although the rules of the game state that the boules should have a diameter of between 70.5 mm (minimum) and 80mm (maximum), with a weight of between 650g and 800g, they recommend:

For minimes: [11 years and under] 71mm and 650g maximum

For cadets: [12 - 14 years] 73 mm and 680g maximum

It is important to provide enough boules for all the students.

Cochonnet

It is a good idea to have a large number of these.

Canvas Squares

A few squares measuring 30cm down each side.

A Large Sheet of Canvas

Painted with concentric circles.

- a canvas square whose sides are 1.5m long.
- a central circle of 20cm diameter.
- four further circles increasing by 10cm each time.
- these circles are numbered from 5 to 1 starting from the centre.

Circles

Metal or plastic of 50 cm diameter.

Note : These are simple to make with lengths of plastic tubing of about 1m 60, joining the ends with pieces of wood cut to fit.

Wooden Poles

Broom handles are ideal.

Wooden Cubes

These should measure 10cm along each side.

Rope

This should be about 6m long. It should be attached to 2 posts of about 3m high.

Tape Measures

- A retractable metal tape measure, 2 or 3 metres long.
- A retractable metal tape measure 10 metres long.
- A folding rigid metal tape measure whose end section has a slide for fine measuring. [Umpire's measure.]

Playing Area

- Leave the greatest part of the playing area free.
- Set out an area for shooting and an area for pointing.
- Trace a rectangle of 4m by 15m for carrying out some of the exercises.

MANIPULATION EXERCISES WITH THE BOULES AND WARMING UP

Contrary to an all too widespread opinion, manipulation exercises and warming up activities are never a waste of time. Everyone can see that before the start of a competition all the players warm up, in the true sense of the term; no-one likes to start a game 'cold'. Without teaching a systematic routine, it is nevertheless a good idea to let students work out how necessary it is and to show them some of the movements players most often use.

You can teach them some warm-up movements such as rapid rotation of the throwing arm (held straight), movement of the wrists, flexing, throwing the boules...

Manipulating the boules is also useful for becoming familiar with them and helping students to feel at ease when holding the boules. You can use the following activities:

With One Boule

- Turn a boule in your hand, holding the hand in front of you, the arm bent, the forearm horizontal, then vertical, the palm of the hand always kept facing upwards.
- Turn a boule in the hand, the arm by the side of the body, the palm facing backwards, horizontally then vertically.
Note : Vertically, the fingers are together, the boule does not leave the hand; the movements of the fingers and the wrist turn the boule. This acts as a preparation for the game of boules proper.
Horizontally, it is the arm movements which turn the boule. This aids in understanding the properties of the boule (weight, dimensions) and in controlling it, not letting it drop.
- Pass a boule from one hand to the other, first in front of you, then behind.
- Pass the boule around the waist, first in one direction then the other.
Note : The fingers are together and it is these which should move the boule from one hand to the other. The aim is to carry out these exercises with the body upright and without looking at the hands.

With Two Boules

- Turn both boules in one hand to loosen the fingers.
- Take a boule in each hand and pass each simultaneously to the other. The boules will pass vertically from one hand to the other, first clockwise then anti-clockwise.

With Three Boules

- Take two boules in one hand and one in the other; pass one of the two boules towards the fingers of the hand containing only one boule.
- Try to juggle with the boules.

Be Careful! Some of these activities are dangerous for your feet... and for those of your neighbours.

THE COACHING SESSION

Every training session should be carefully prepared. All the materials should be to hand and the coach should have studied his work plan, the exercises and the games. The sessions should be thought through as a teacher would prepare a lesson.

Welcoming the Students

Shaking hands helps to form a bond between students and coach. A few words of welcome and, as you get to know your students, a few words to each of them personally, will always be well received.

Establishing the Coach's Authority - Atmosphere of the Sessions

You must remember that even though it is a teaching session it is not school!

The coach has to take steps to establish authority and keep good control. On the other hand the students should be allowed to express their enjoyment in playing and the coach should let them progress rapidly towards a game.

Warming up and Manipulation Exercises

Petanque is not a particularly physical sport; it does not therefore require such a thorough warm-up as a violent sport like rugby or a sport requiring a short, intense physical effort like athletics.

However, your students should understand that the muscular input is important and that they will not become a good competitor, consistent and high-achieving, if they are not in perfect physical condition. You should certainly explain that fitness is vital if they are to be confident of their skill and want to keep their concentration.

The coach should judge how receptive the students are to warm-up movements - which are always desirable - and to manipulation exercises, though these should not be the same at every session.

Theory and Teaching

After showing the students the aim of petanque - getting near to the cochonnet - you can enable them to discover, as the course progresses, all the technical and tactical aspects of the game.

At every session the coach should explain quickly but clearly the theme to be covered, if necessary by making drawings on the terrain.

Games and Exercises

For each session these should relate to the chosen theme. They are the practical element of what has just been taught. They can also be used to recap previous sessions.

These games and exercises can be varied ad infinitum, but should always be competitive: each student tries to do better or succeed more often than the others. Start with simple exercises and lead up to a full game of petanque.

S e c t i o n 2

A P P R O A C H t o t h e T E C H N I Q U E o f P E T A N Q U E

- Discovery
- General Rules
- Technique of throwing



DISCOVERY OF PETANQUE

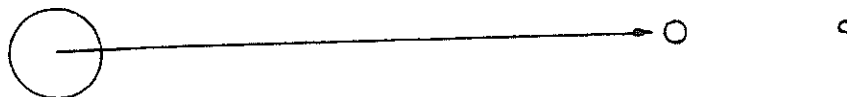
You should first explain to your students that the aim to be achieved is simple: it is to place their boules nearer than those of their opponents to a target which is called a cochonnet.

At this stage the coach will teach the students the essential rules and give them the general idea of how the game is played. The coach should let them play in their own way without telling them how to move, but commenting on the various situations.

During the session the coach repeats the rules according to the situations which arise and asks relevant questions. He makes use of the game to begin to discuss tactics, notably the choice between pointing and shooting.

The Game

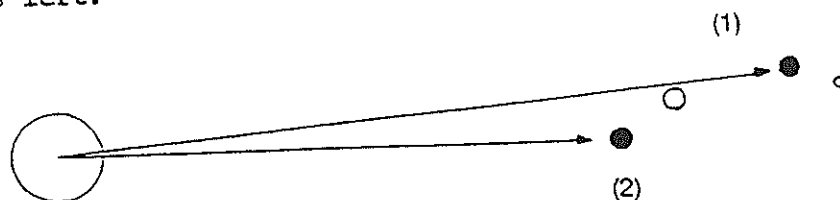
- The first team throws a boule towards the cochonnet:



- The second team tries to place a boule nearer to the cochonnet:



- If they succeed, the first team must throw again. If not (2) they must throw again themselves until they succeed (1) or until they have no boules left:

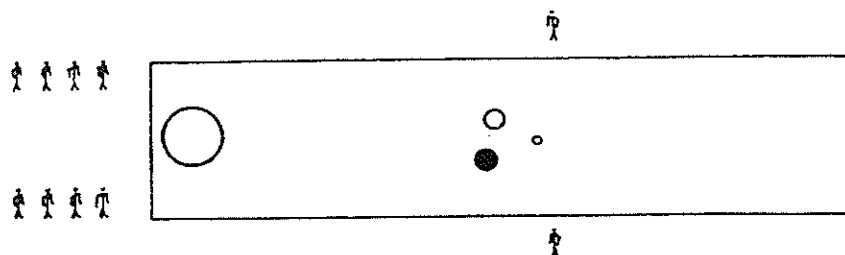


- When one team has no boules left, the other team plays all its remaining boules.

THE BASIC GAME

After this initial stage the coach can start to use what we will refer to as 'the basic game'.

- Mark out a piste and give one boule to each player.
- The throwing circle is marked at one end of the piste and the coach places the cochonnet 5 metres from the circle.
- The players form two teams and line up, as for a relay race, in two columns, outside the piste and behind the throwing circle. As soon as a player has thrown his boule, he goes to stand on the same side of the piste, near the cochonnet.



- Play follows these general rules: a player tries to place his boule as near as possible to the cochonnet. A player of the opposing team plays next: if he does not outpoint the first player, another player from the same team tries; if he succeeds, play returns to the first team.
- When all the players have thrown their boules you count the number of boules from the same team which are nearer to the cochonnet than the best boule of the opposing side and the team concerned scores this number of points: this is an **end**.
- Play continues until one team has scored 13 points: this is a **game**.

To help students distinguish their own boules, one team's boules can be marked with chalk.

One student in each team is appointed to keep the score.

During the game make use of opportunities to point out the need of sometimes 'knocking' or 'removing' the opponents' boules (giving the idea of shooting). Let the students talk about it and only interrupt if they wander from the point. Answer their questions as simply as possible without going into too much detail, because at this stage they are only beginning to discover the possibilities of the game.

To explain the score you need only use the expressions 'closer than' and 'further away than'.

S I M P L E G E N E R A L T A C T I C S

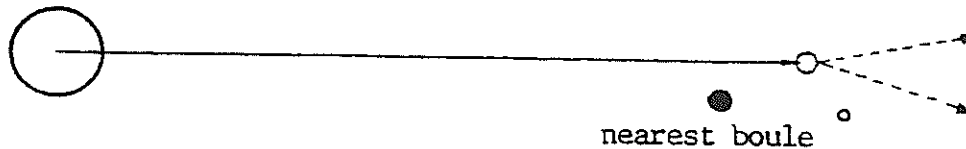
Pointing

During the game, a team can throw its boule so as to go nearer to the cochonnet than its opponent's:



Shooting

You can also throw your boule so as to move an opposing boule if you feel it is too near to the cochonnet, so that yours becomes the leading boule:



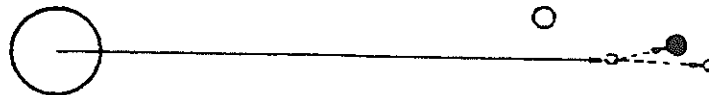
Moving a Boule or the Cochonnet

This may be deliberate or accidental and any moving of a boule or the cochonnet can change the course of the game:

a) Moving a boule

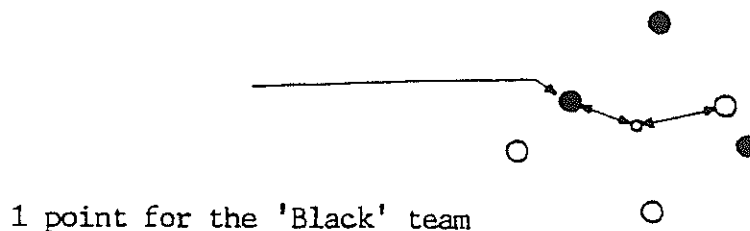


b) Moving the cochonnet



An End

When all the boules have been played, one team scores as many points as it has boules nearer to the cochonnet than the best of the opponents':



The Game

Each team totals the points scored during the ends. The winning team is the first to reach 13 points.

GENERAL RULES OF PETANQUE

Students should acquire the essential rules of petanque as quickly as possible. The best way to achieve this is to let them approach the rules by making them play, if not a real game, then at least a comparable exercise and by using concrete situations to explain the rules. You will probably need several games for this and the coach should question the students on the points which seem difficult to them, always making use of the situations which arise.

So as not to overburden the students, the coach should attempt, as soon as possible, to see that they know the following rules:

1) In a game of petanque, the teams can consist of:

- one player against another: singles
- two players against two: doubles
- three players against three: triples

When playing singles or doubles, each player uses three boules. In triples, each player uses two boules.

2) Toss a coin to decide which team throws out the cochonnet:

- trace a circle on the ground
- any player in the team may throw the cochonnet and this player does not have to play first
- in the following end, the cochonnet is thrown by the team who won the previous end, from the place where the cochonnet finished up

Note: the cochonnet must be thrown between:

- 4 and 8 metres for minimes [11 years or below on Jan 1st of the year]
- 5 and 9 metres for cadets [12 - 14 years old on Jan. 1st]
- 6 and 9 metres for juniors [15 - 17 years old on Jan. 1st]
- 6 and 10 metres for adults [18 years or above on Jan. 1st]

3) The first boule of an end is thrown by a player of the team which has won the toss or which won the previous end.

Once a boule has been thrown it cannot be played again.

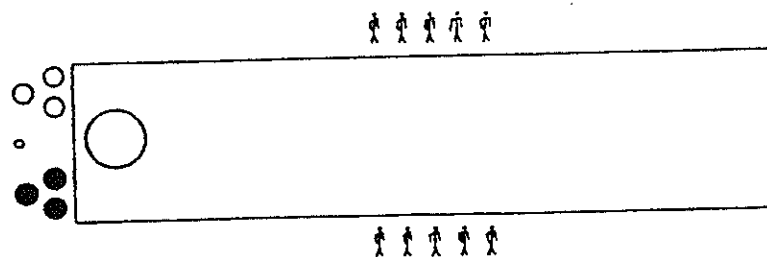
To throw a boule you must stand with both feet inside the throwing circle and remain within it until the boule touches the ground.

4) All members of both teams who are not actually playing should keep at least two metres away from the cochonnet and not move or gesticulate.

Exercises

Basic Game

- Mark out a piste of the official dimensions (15 m x 4m).
- Take two sets of three boules which are easy to differentiate and make sure each team recognises their set.
- The players form two teams and stand facing each other towards one end of the piste.
- The coach explains that you need to toss a coin to decide who will throw out the cochonnet for the first end. He then explains that the winner of the toss draws the throwing circle. He tells them that this circle must be between 35cm and 50cm in diameter. Having done this, he tells them that any player from this side can throw the first boule of the end.
- Now the players play one against the other for the duration of one end and the teams score the points made by their members. The winning team is the one with the highest score.



Progress Towards a Game

Towards the end of a session the coach can steer the exercises towards games between teams formed according to the rules, preferably triples.

He can then start teaching simple tactical considerations: pointing or 'moving' an opposing boule, the order in which the members of a team should play...

All the time the coach should keep repeating these essential rules until everyone is sure of them and should ask questions about concrete examples.

He should not insist on any style of throwing and should only correct the most glaring mistakes, bearing in mind that at this stage the object is only to discover the basics of petanque.

PLAYING STANCE

To approach this subject the coach has two choices:

A) To start from the observation that, in all the previous exercises, the students have spontaneously played from a standing position.

He can then choose whether to deal with the standing position before moving on to deal with the squatting position.

When beginning to talk about the squatting position, he will have to show the students the advantages to be gained from this position even though it is not the most natural. He could, for example, place the cochonnet very close, which will force the students to bend to throw their boule less hard, or choose a corner of the terrain where a boule thrown from an upright position would roll a long way away.

When the students have realised this, he should explain to them the advantages of playing from the squatting position, which will be repeated in the relevant session.

B) The coach may consider that in pointing, the squatting position is the one that gives best results and is therefore the one to be taught first.

In this case he will prefer to begin this subject with the squatting position before coming to deal with the standing position.

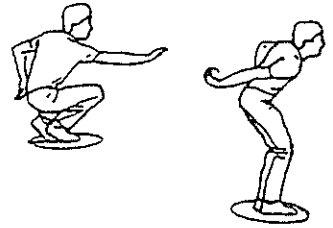
He will need to illustrate straight away the disadvantages of the standing position and the advantages of the squatting position.

When he deals with the standing position, he must explain that it is sometimes necessary to use it. He could, for example, place the students in the circle and throw the cochonnet very long, or he could ask them to move a boule which is a long way away. Observing that they cannot do this, the students will realise that they need to stand up to give their boules greater force.

We propose the first method because it seems to accord better with the situation usually found in early sessions when students naturally throw from an upright position.

Whatever method is chosen, the coach should insist, from the outset, on the following important points:

- A stable stance is vital for throwing a boule :
The coach should therefore find out, with each student, squatting and standing, which positions are most comfortable. He should help them to find out their own best positions in line with the general advice applicable to all.

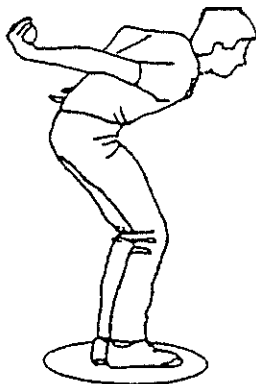


- The boule should be thrown with the palm of the hand facing downwards:



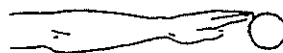
The natural method is to throw with the palm upwards, especially as this seems to the students to give greater control over the boule. The coach should let them play naturally and then show them the drawbacks of this before explaining why it is better to 'hold' the boule rather than 'placing' it on the palm of the hand.

- The role of the arm-swing is essential:



In fact, it is by a combination of its extent and the speed of return of the arm that you can send the boule further or closer, with greater or lesser force. The coach should therefore demonstrate that the higher the arm is raised behind, the easier it is to throw, and the less need there is to strain when throwing a boule long. He should explain why and watch carefully until the students get the movement right.

- The boule leaves the hand from the fingertips:



You should show the students that you cannot simply let go of the boule, otherwise it will have no momentum to roll towards the cochonnet. You can also show them that if you open your hand all at once it will drop like a dead weight. You can then explain that if it leaves the hand from the fingertips it can make full use of all the impetus from the swing of the arm.

At this stage of learning you can point out that generally you stand to shoot and squat to point. Should they ask why, you can answer that it is rare to shoot from the squatting position and that pointing when standing is used in particular cases which will be looked at later.

PLAY IN THE STANDING POSITION

After having let the students throw a few boules without making any comments, the coach should seek to correct their positions by giving any necessary advice to help them to carry out the movements as well as possible, before coming to the practical exercises.

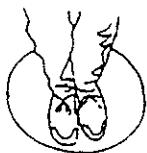
The Throwing Action

The movement of the arm should be in harmony with the rest of the body and should be carried out without any stiffness. Stress the following points:

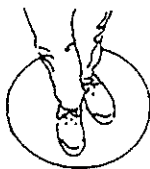
- The throwing arm is placed in front of you, elbow next to the body.
- The hand holding the boule pivots at the same time as the arm straightens and swings back, beyond the vertical axis of the body.
- The arm returns forward quite fast so as not to lose the momentum it has picked up. During this swinging movement the arm remains straight and without any stiffness. As it returns forward, the palm of the hand is turned backwards: the thumb is the part of the hand that brushes near the leg. The hand should pass near the thigh which is facing into the game and therefore acts as a guide; hence the importance of placing the feet correctly in the throwing circle.
- The other arm should follow this movement harmoniously and take the part of the counterbalance, helping the player to keep balance.
- Having reached the required height, the hand now opens and the ball leaves the hand from the fingertips, not as if it were being dropped.
- The eyes are kept fixed on the object or the place aimed at.
- The legs are involved in the movement - the knees can bend - but the heels do not leave the ground.

The coach should point out that it is the combination of the extent of the swing and the speed of the return of the arm forwards that enable the player to throw the boule nearer or further, with greater or lesser force and with greater or lesser height. A full swing enables the boule to be thrown high and long without strain.

Positions of the Feet in the Throwing Circle



Feet together in line with the game.

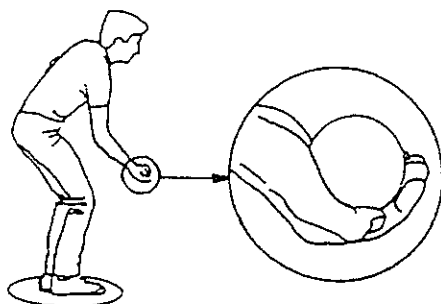


Feet touching but one behind the other in line with the game. Foot corresponding to throwing arm in front.



Feet apart. Foot corresponding to the throwing arm in line with the game.

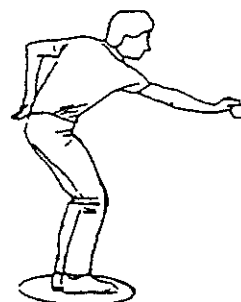
Position of the Boule in the Hand



How the boule is held...



During the arm-swing...



Releasing the boule...

The Arm-Swing



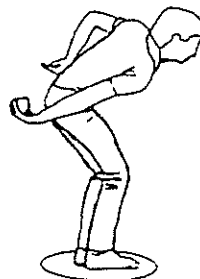
Preparation.



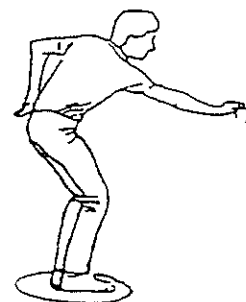
Turning the wrist backwards. Arm swinging back - halfway point.



Arm extended beyond the axis of the body.



Halfway back on the return swing



Releasing.

During this session the coach should ensure :

- That the students are standing properly in the throwing circle.
- That they are holding the boule properly.
- That they are aware of the importance of the swing of the arm.
- That they throw with the palm downwards and that the boule leaves the hand at the fingertips.

To effect this, the coach should :

- Teach the students the correct method of holding the boule.
- Show the ideal position of the feet in the throwing circle.
- Demonstrate the throwing action, without a boule, by breaking it down into its various stages and then carrying it out in slow motion.
- Demonstrate how the boule leaves the hand from the fingertips.
- Stress the importance of keeping the palm downwards and of having a good swing of the arm.

Students should also be taught not to leave the circle until their boule comes to rest.

We are still only in the very early stages and the coach should only correct bad faults which the students tend to make repeatedly. Everyone will have their own style; the aim is to keep the natural and instinctive movements, but within certain precise rules.

EXERCISE

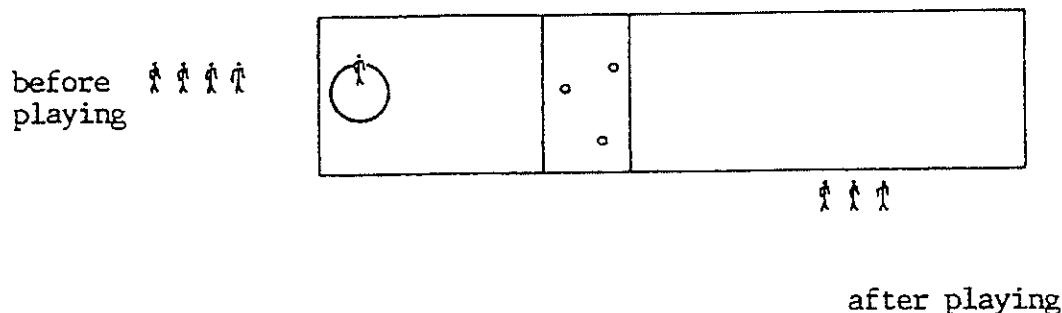
The coach asks the students to practise throwing the boule from a standing position in the throwing circle.

The students stand in a line outside the piste.

Place a throwing circle on the ground and two poles at 3 and 5 metres (these distances can be varied according to the nature of the terrain.)

Each student in turn stands in the circle and has to throw three boules to land between the two poles.

This is not intended to be a difficult exercise: the aim is to practise the throwing action.



GAME

The coach can go back to the basic game, making the students play in the standing position.

He can take advantage of this opportunity to go over ideas previously covered and especially the position of the feet in the circle, how to hold the boule, the swing of the arm, keeping the palm downwards and how to release the boule.

The students could play a game of singles with different opponents for each end.

PLAY IN THE SQUATTING POSITION

Once the coach has made the students realise the advantage of playing from the squatting position, he should emphasise the fact that a good position in the throwing circle is essential for an accurate throw. Most pointing will be done from this position: it is therefore vital that students rapidly learn to feel comfortable with this way of playing.

The students must see that they can maintain a stable position inside the circle in the squatting position and learn to throw their boules from this position. So, what do they have to work towards?

- A stable position in the circle.
- The boule held correctly.
- The palm turned downwards and a good swing of the arm.

After going over the advantages of playing from the squatting position, the coach should show how to take up position in the circle, then describe and demonstrate the throwing movement.

Within this position slight variations of style may appear. However, there is only one way of throwing if you do not want your hand to scrape along the ground during the arm-swing or to overbalance as you throw, both of which would remove any chance of accuracy in length and direction.

The squatting position is used when you want less height, less force, less length than in the natural standing position. The coach should insist on the students achieving the following position: the thighs are horizontal, the trunk is upright, the shoulders are straight, the arm which acts as counterbalance may be held out at shoulder level to keep a better balance and the heels are off the ground.

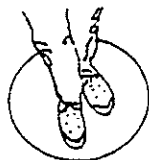
The method of throwing is hardly any different from the one used for playing in a standing position, but the swing of the arm is shorter because the aim is to throw the boule more gently.

GAME

To help the students master this position the coach should return to the basic game but have all boules thrown from the squatting position. He can use the opportunity to revise all the basic rules and some ideas about tactics. However, he will be paying particular attention to the position in the circle and throwing the boule, as these are the topics of this session.

Position of the Feet in the Circle

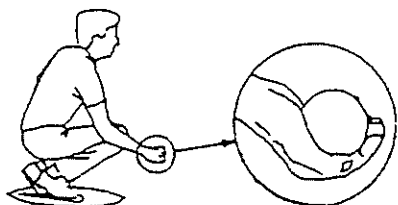
To obtain a stable position in the circle, the feet are not placed exactly as they were for play in a standing position. Finding a good balance is all-important.



To begin: heels together, feet pointing slightly outwards, foot on the side of the throwing arm facing into the game.

In position: heels raised, thighs horizontal.

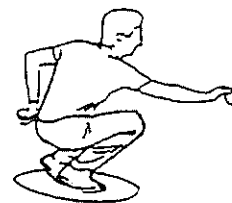
Holding the Boule in the Hand



Position of the boule..



During the arm-swing..



Releasing....

The Arm-Swing



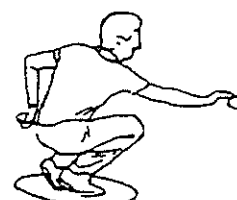
Starting position



Turning the wrist back. Halfway point swinging back.



Arm beyond axis of body.



Releasing.

EXERCISE

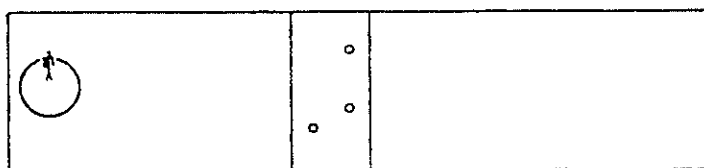
The students repeat the throwing movements while squatting in the circle.

- The students stand behind one another outside the piste.
- A circle is placed on the ground.
- Two poles are placed at 2 and 4 metres from the circle.

The students take turns to go into the circle and throw three boules between the two poles. They may be allowed to stand up after each throw.

Here again, the only difficulties are finding a stable position in the circle, playing with the palm downwards and releasing the boule from the fingertips.

before playing



after having played

STAGES IN PLAYING THE BOULE

The coach should emphasise at the outset the reasons why he is going to break the action up into four stages. He will thus be able to emphasise to the students that they must not play without thinking about what they are doing, that there are rules of discipline and fair play to be observed, that in petanque - as in all other sports where the action is fast - the time for preparation and concentration is relatively long.

Here is the moment to stress that petanque requires preparation and concentration: you do not 'just throw' a boule.

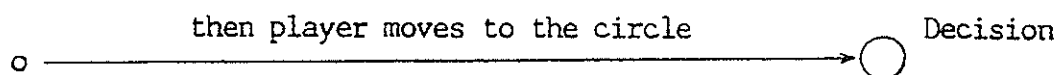
Going over the four stages will give a chance to extend knowledge of the rules. The coach can revise earlier material and add all the ideas to do with the preparation for throwing. He will describe the four stages:

- In the first stage the player(s) who have to analyse the situation stand near the cochonnet. They look at the situation, make their calculations and reach a decision. The one who has to play goes towards the circle and the others stand back from the game. The opponent(s) also stand back; they do not talk or move around.
- In the second stage the player who is getting ready to play waits for a while behind the circle and begins to prepare for play. The other players stand level with the cochonnet, quietly watching the game. The player enters the circle.
- In the third stage the player gets into position and concentrates whilst the others remain still and quiet.
- In the fourth stage the player throws the boule. He does not leave the circle until the boule comes to rest. Nor do the others rush to look at the boule.

It is obvious that in certain cases, one, two and even three stages can be skipped. Nevertheless it is better to teach students not to be in a hurry and not to play their boules without thinking about it first.

First Stage

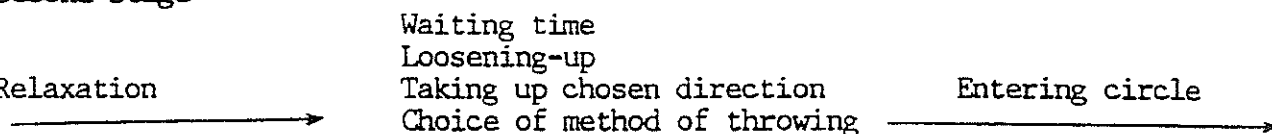
Observation



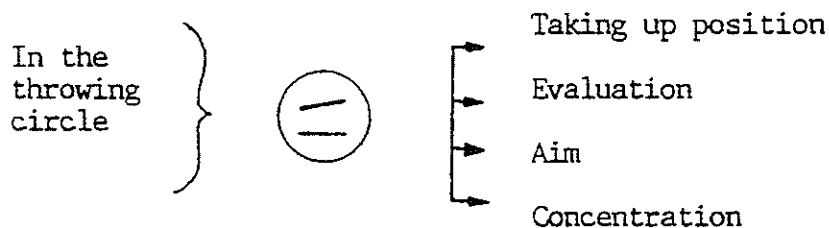
Calculation

Second Stage

Relaxation

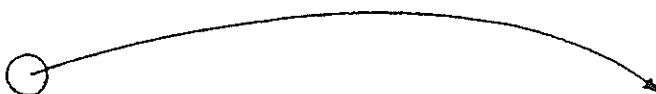


Third Stage



Fourth Stage

Throwing movement



EXERCISE

The coach repeats the stages in throwing a boule so that it becomes an automatic process.

He should see that they observe the game carefully, stand behind the circle before they take up position inside it, concentrate, throw the boule correctly and do not leave the circle until their boule stops moving.

GAME

It is possible to go back to the method of the basic game, watching carefully to see that the students respect the rules they have been taught and the advice they have just been given.

He could also carry out the same checks by letting the students play a proper game.

I M P O R T A N T N O T E

The last lesson brought to an end the general introduction to the basics of petanque.

In essence, we have seen how to carry out the basic movements, which are indispensable if we want to play with the greatest chance of success, and have learnt the principal rules of the game.

It is therefore absolutely vital that the students have thoroughly absorbed these basic ideas before going on to the next stage. Any deficiency here will hinder the acquisition of more skilled techniques. It will impede the students' progress and their chances of understanding the information which will be given in ensuing sessions.

The coach must not be afraid to go back over any points which have not been fully understood or any movements which are still badly performed.

It is only on a firm basis that a fuller knowledge of the techniques of petanque can be set in place.

S e c t i o n 3

S T U D Y o f t h e M E T H O D S o f T H R O W I N G

- Introduction to pointing and shooting
- The different methods of pointing
- The different methods of shooting

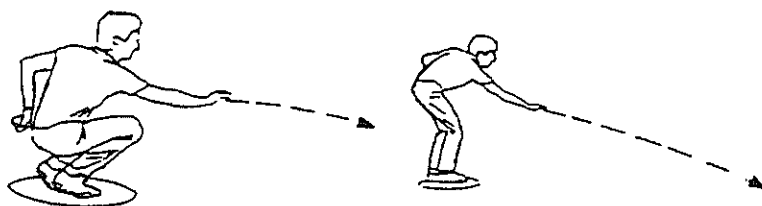
INTRODUCTION TO POINTING

The coach will first of all go over this simple idea: **pointing is the part of the game in which you try to bring a boule as close as possible to the cochonnet.**

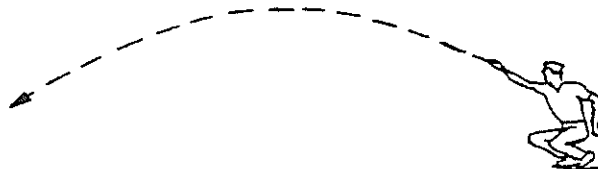
He will then go over the ideas of playing in a standing or a squatting position to emphasise that in general the standing position is used for pointing long and the squatting position for playing short.

He will quickly outline the different techniques for pointing, stressing that each of them will be the subject of a particular session:

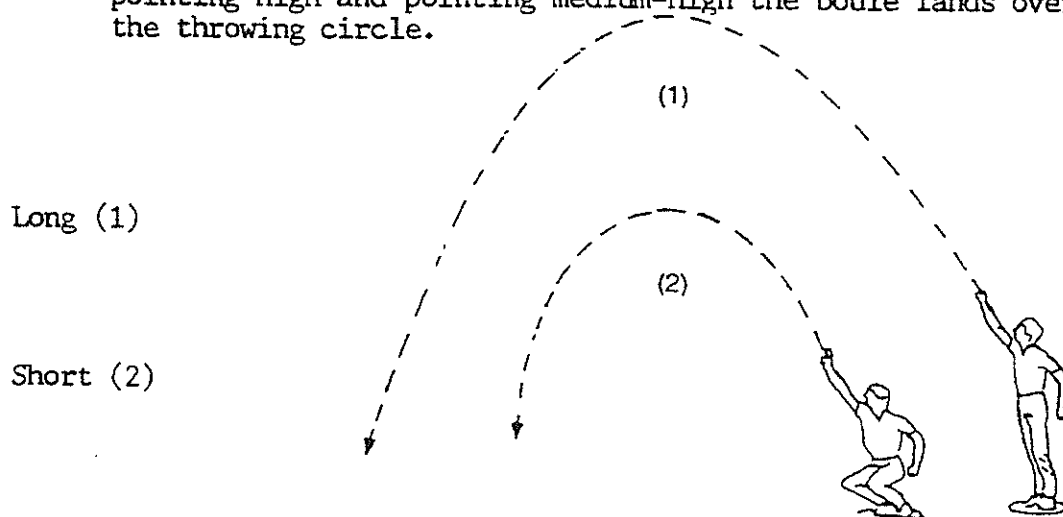
- **The normal point** [Boule does not rise higher than the player's hand; it lands about 3m from the throwing circle.]
(Downhill point, normal point, adverse surface point - p. 34]



- **The medium-high point** [The boule follows a low curve.]



- **The high point** [The boule describes a high trajectory. For both pointing high and pointing medium-high the boule lands over 3 m from the throwing circle.]



Finally, the coach will stress that although, in principle, it is possible to use all the techniques, the extreme cases are only rarely used and the most suitable technique to use will be dictated by the nature of the surface and the distance the boule has to travel.

Positions for Pointing to be stressed by the coach.

Standing

- The feet are quite flat within the circle.
- The body is upright for pointing high, bent slightly forward for pointing medium-high and bent well forward for the other points.
- The shoulders and the whole of the body face into the game.
- The eyes are fixed on the cochonnet.

Squatting

- The soles of the feet are not fully on the ground: the heels are raised.
- The trunk is almost upright, just slightly leaning forward.
- The shoulders are at right angles to the proposed trajectory and the elbow of the balancing arm is raised.
- The eyes are fixed on the cochonnet.

If, when the students are pointing, the coach notices what is a common occurrence, that they are putting spin on their boules, he should use this opportunity to point out that boules should normally be played without spin so that they can follow a straight line. To teach them this technique, which is the one requiring most precision, he should show that at the end of the arm-swing, the release of the boule is carried out in the classical manner, as follows:

The palm of the hand faces the ground while the thumb comes away from the boule, as it is no longer needed to hold the boule in the hand; the fingers remain together as they were when holding the boule; the hand opens, the fingers straighten, the boule rolls along the hand and leaves it from the fingertips.

As far as spin is concerned, the coach should point out that it is only used in special cases and requires an equally precise technique which will be dealt with later.

To practise the action of pointing the coach must insist:

- On the need for keeping the eye on the cochonnet.
- On the field of vision which should extend from between where the boule lands and the cochonnet.
- On the importance of remembering how hard the boule is to be sent, how high it is to go and the distance it has to cover.
- On the vital importance of the arm-swing which governs the success of the throw.
- On the importance of choosing the best point for the boule to land.
- On the correct way of releasing the boule.

EXERCISE

The coach can use various exercises for learning how to point, preferably by letting the students compete with one another.

INTRODUCTION TO SHOOTING

Although the subject has been touched on during previous sessions, the coach should let the students realise the need for moving an opponent's boule. He places a boule very near the cochonnet and questions the students about the best way of proceeding so that their boule will be nearer.

When they have understood the necessity of 'pushing' or 'moving' a boule in this position, the coach will give the definition of shooting: **shooting is the action by which you try to hit a boule which is in the way** (either because it is too near the cochonnet or simply because it is blocking the way).

The coach then gets the students into position for practising shooting. The beginners will tend to send their boules very hard and very low towards the target. He should then explain that they are using the most natural method - shooting along the ground - which is used spontaneously when you begin to shoot.

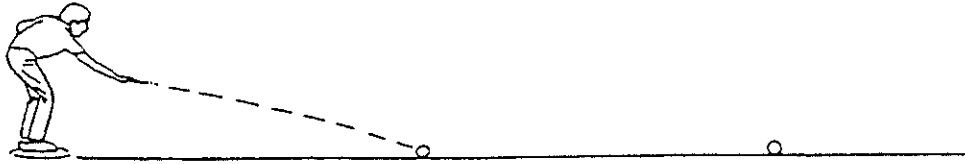
Next he can help them to realise that sometimes this method cannot be used: either he can choose a terrain where it would be impossible, or he can place obstacles between the student and the boule to be shot. Then he can talk to the students about shooting to hit the boule from above, stressing that this is a test of precision and it is absolutely essential to know how to use it.

While the movement of shooting is being repeated, the coach should stress:

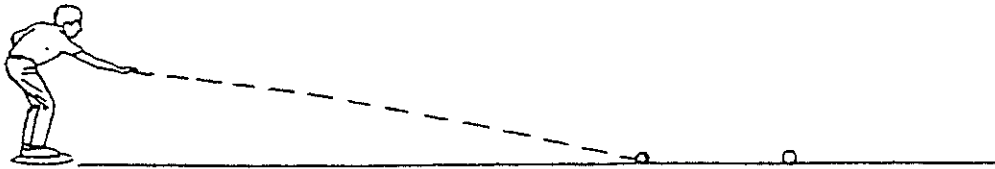
- The vital role of the arm-swing which governs the force and the length of the shot.
- The necessity of keeping the eye on the object to be shot at: the shooter should keep his eye on the centre of the boule.
- The importance of remembering the force, the length and the direction of the boule and the extent of the arm-swing.

Shooting Along the Ground

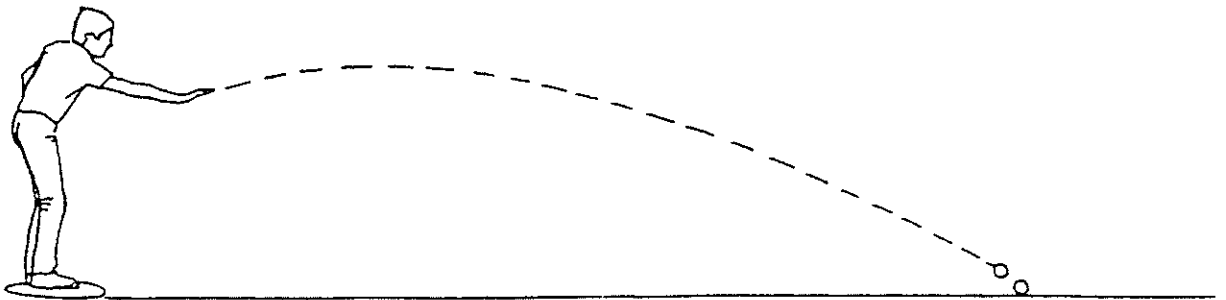
Short:



Long:



Shooting to Hit the Boule Directly



EXERCISE

Several exercises appearing in the sessions on shooting can be used, but limiting the students to the basic movements which they have just learnt.

A good progression would be a simple shooting contest, leaving the students free to choose their own way of shooting.

THE NORMAL POINT

For the normal point there are three techniques available, depending on the surface.

The Downhill Point

This technique is rarely used, only on a sloping terrain. The boule is released in front of the player and only the slope of the ground causes it to roll up to the cochonnet, or even beyond, since there is no technique which will stop a boule from rolling downhill; only obstacles can act as stops.

The Normal Point

This is the most popular and the most natural point. The boule must roll naturally towards the cochonnet, the swing of the arm and the impetus from this - by the speed of the return of the arm forwards - being enough to make the boule travel the distance between the point where it hits the ground and the cochonnet.

The boule does not bounce above the ground; its course begins after it lands in the three metres from the throwing circle.

The Adverse Surface Point

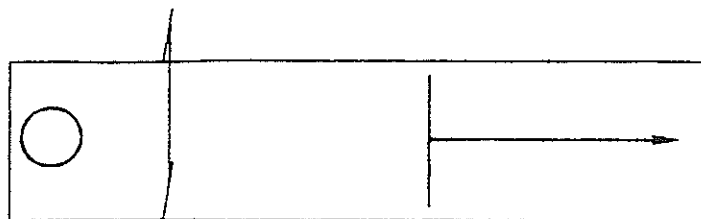
This technique is necessary on terrains which have sharp stones which are not loose. On such surfaces the boule runs the risk of either being stopped short or, alternatively, being sent off at an angle. Therefore you have to throw it, in the three metres from the throwing circle, and 'push' it, giving it some force, so that it can reach the cochonnet in spite of the bounces and brakes caused by the obstacles.

During the session the coach should watch carefully that the students take up a good position in the circle, in line with the advice they were given in the initial session on pointing.

They can then practise pointing from standing and squatting positions so as to let the coach judge their ability.

The coach can also return to the basic game, letting the students point all their boules following the method they have been taught and asking them to use all three techniques in turn.

EXERCISE

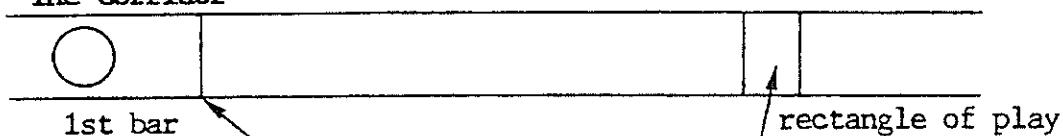


The boule is to be thrown under the string.

- In the case of the downhill point, the boule is to stop before it reaches a pole placed about 3m away for the squatting position and 4m for the standing position.
- For the normal point, the boule should reach a pole placed 5 or 6 m away for the squatting position, 6 or 7 m for the standing position.
- For the adverse surface point, the boule should reach a pole placed between 7 and 9m away for the squatting position and between 8 and 10 for the standing position.

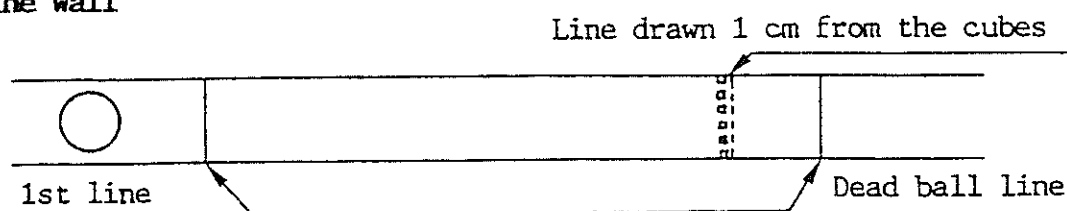
GAME

1. The Corridor



The aim is to throw the boule from before the first 'bar', into the corridor formed by two parallel lines. To succeed, the boule has to stop in the little rectangle placed - or drawn - further away or closer depending on whether you want to increase or reduce the difficulty. The narrowness of the corridor and the position of the circle increase the difficulty further. Each player throws one, two or three boules in turn and scores one point for each successful throw. The winner is the one with the highest score after a fixed number of turns.

2. The Wall



At the end of the corridor, wooden cubes are placed side by side to form a wall. The players have three boules each and the aim is to move the maximum number of cubes. Cubes moved after the first and second boule are not removed.

The boules must be thrown from before the first line, but have to stop before the line at the end. Cubes are considered to have been moved even if they only just touch the traced line, and each score a point. The winner is the one with the best score after a fixed number of turns.

S H O O T I N G A L O N G T H E G R O U N D

Shooting along the ground is to throw a boule with force to hit the ground a few metres in front of one or several boules, or the cochonnet, so that it moves them along or to one side and breaks up the game.

The arm-swing is forceful and rapid and the boule leaves the hand by the fingertips. On touching the ground there should be a slight backspin. The boule moves rapidly along the ground until it makes contact.

The Throwing Action

The starting position is the same as for the point from a squatting position.

- The feet are not flat on the ground, the heels are raised.
- The trunk is almost upright, very slightly leaning forwards.
- The shoulders are at right angles to the line of the game.
- The elbow of the balancing arm is raised.
- The eyes are kept on the object to be hit.

For the throwing action, the arm describes a wide swing back and returns suddenly and quickly forwards. This is like the adverse surface point, but more forceful.

Shooting Along the Ground - Long

The boule is thrown with some force to land a few metres in front of the player. The main objective is to clear the field, to move boules which are too near the cochonnet.

This technique is only used, with one objective, in two special cases:

- When you want to make your boule replace another boule which is sent a long way out of the game.
- When you want to shoot the cochonnet to send it out of the game.

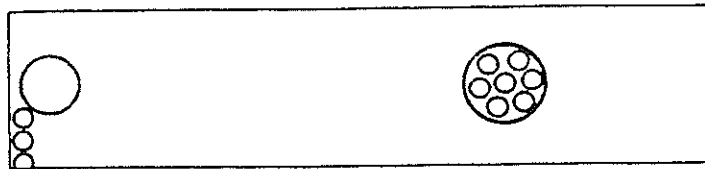
Shooting Along the Ground - Short

This method is differentiated from the previous one because it uses less force and greater precision.

The boule is thrown to land about two metres in front of the object to be shot. It moves it only a short distance, generally taking its place if it is another boule; or, if it is the cochonnet, moving it only a little way.

EXERCISE

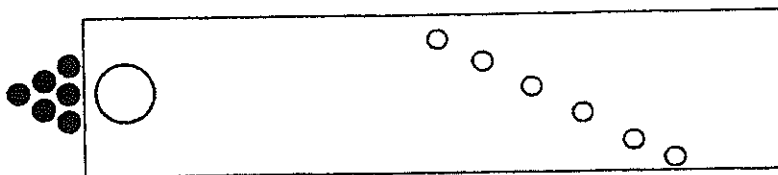
Shooting Along the Ground - Long



This is an 'Aunt Sally' game:

You have three boules to shoot at six boules placed inside a circle of 50 cm diameter, 6 or 7 m from the throwing circle. The point where the boule lands is not very important as long as it is within 3 m of the edge of the throwing circle.

Shooting Along the Ground - Short



You have six boules with which to shoot the six boules placed at different, regularly-spaced distances. The boule should always hit the ground 2 or 3 metres from the boule to be hit.

GAMES

1. The Highest Percentage

Each player shoots at a series of six boules placed:

- a) The same distance away
- b) At different distances

The winner is the one who hits the highest number.

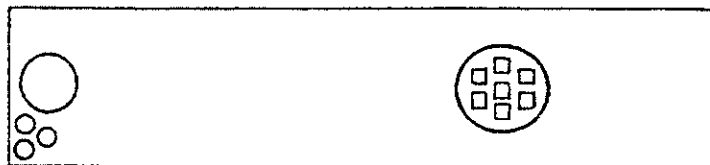
2. The Longest Series

Each player shoots at a boule placed 6 or 7 m from the throwing circle and is given another boule to shoot as soon as he has hit one.

The winner is the one who hits the greatest number consecutively.

Introductory Games for Shooting Along the Ground - Long

1. Skittles



The game consists of shooting the maximum number of wooden cubes out of the circle with three boules. Only cubes moved right outside the circle count.

The winner is the one with the highest score after five rounds.

2. The Triangle



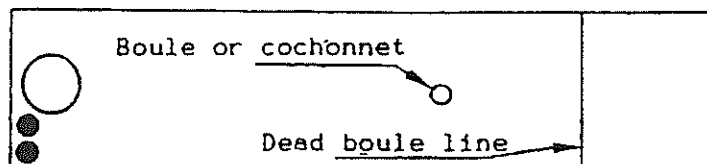
Each player has three boules.

Every boule removed from the triangle scores one point.

The boules used for shooting do not count, though they are not taken out of the game.

The winner is the one with the highest score after five rounds.

3. Dead Boule



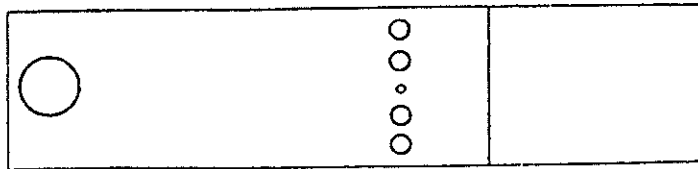
You have two boules to hit the target and send it over the dead boule line.

As the game proceeds, those who do not succeed in sending the target boule out of play are eliminated from the game. The winner is the one who stays in contention longest.

Variation : The same game using a cochonnet as target.

Introductory Games for Shooting Along the Ground - Short

1. Shunting



Base line 1 m
from the boules

The boule aimed at has to be sent across the base line without your own boule overtaking it.

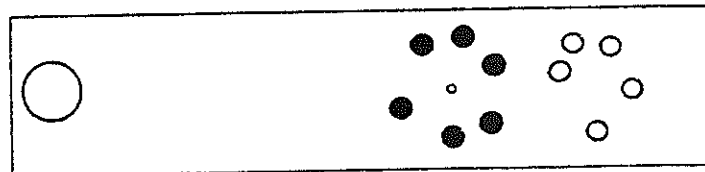
If the cochonnet is aimed at, it must cross the base line without your boule going more than 2 m away from it.

Each player has 5 boules.

Each boule hit according to the rules of the game scores one point. The cochonnet scores five points.

The winner is the one with the highest score. In case of a draw, a further round is played to decide the winner.

2. All or Nothing



The aim here is to move the cochonnet to your own boules at the back.

The boules and the cochonnet are arranged in the same way for each player.

So as to realise how tricky this manoeuvre is - all the points for your side or all for the opponents - each player has only one attempt.

You score plus or minus points for each player.

The winner is the one with the highest plus score after five rounds.

THE MEDIUM - HIGH POINT

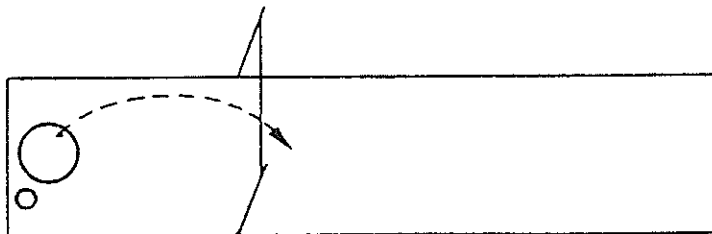
This is the most natural way of throwing: the boule rises to a medium height, lands halfway between the throwing circle and the cochonnet, slows down on contact with the ground and has only enough momentum to roll up to the cochonnet.

Either standing or squatting, it is the most frequent method of playing. The zone where the boule lands is between 3 and 5 m from the edge of the throwing circle, depending on the position of the cochonnet and the nature of the terrain.

The medium-high point can be carried out at two different heights:

- Low, used where the ground does not roll much. The boule is then thrown directly to its landing-place.
- High, where the ground rolls a lot. In this case the boule has to rise well above ground level before hitting the landing-point so as to lose its momentum as it falls.

EXERCISE



The boule has to be thrown above the rope placed or held at variable distances and heights, according to the position of the pole before which the boule has to stop.

The coach should calculate these distances and heights carefully with reference to the nature of the ground, in order to be able to explain why you should play higher or lower.

The exercise can be played standing or squatting.

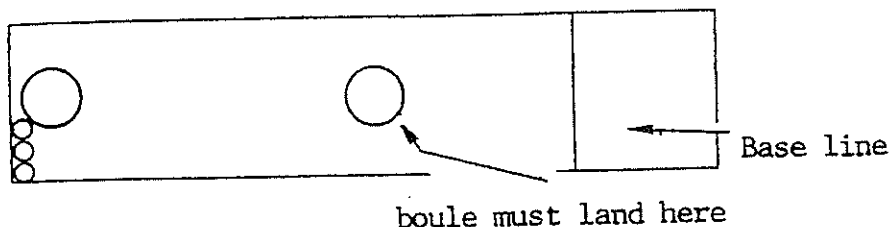
GAME

The coach can return to the basic game, but all the boules must be pointed medium-high.

REMARK: The session can end with a short period of playing singles over a few ends. The boules can only be pointed using the techniques which have already been studied.

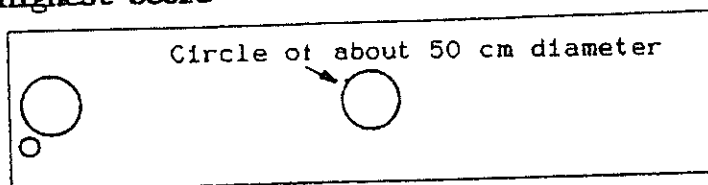
Preliminary Games

1. Throwing into the Circle



Each player has three boules.
Every boule which lands in the circle and does not cross the base line scores one point.
Play continues until one (or more) player(s) has scored 13.

2. The Highest Score

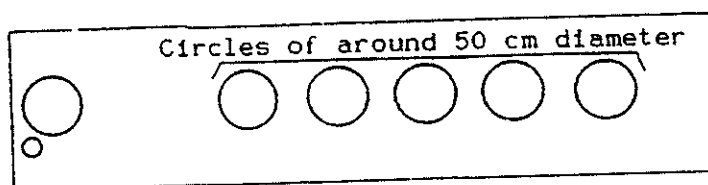


Each player tries to throw into the circle. Each time he succeeds, he has another throw.

The winner is the one with the highest number of successful throws.

If one or more players succeed in getting 13 points, they are declared the winner(s).

Working Through the Circles



The players must take turns to throw into each of the circles. After each successful throw they move onto the next circle, but if they miss, they wait their turn to throw again, carrying on from the circle they had last reached.

The winner is the first to go up and then down all the circles. The last circle has to be landed on twice, once going up and once coming down.

SHOOTING TO HIT THE BOULE DIRECTLY

Although shooting along the ground is the style spontaneously adopted by beginners who begin to want to 'push out' a boule which is in their way, shooting to hit a boule directly means that they have to learn a specific technique. After making the students realise this need, by letting them try out the two methods, the coach will let them work out that it is sometimes impossible to shoot along the ground, for example by placing one boule behind another or behind an obstacle.

He should stress the more spectacular nature of shooting from above, marking as it does a new stage in their acquisition of physical skills. However, he should not denigrate shooting along the ground, stressing that every good shooter, to be fully effective, should have both techniques available, depending on the circumstances.

The Throwing Action

- The feet are within the throwing circle, flat on the ground. If they are apart, the right foot is slightly in front for a right-handed player, the left foot for a left-handed player.
- The body must be kept free from tension. During the entire throwing movement, there should be no trace of stiffness in the legs, the body or the arms.
- At the start, the body is upright and, during the arm-swing, the trunk leans forward, coming back straight as the arm returns forwards.
- The shoulders and the whole of the body face into the game.
- The eyes are fixed on the boule (or cochonnet) to be shot.

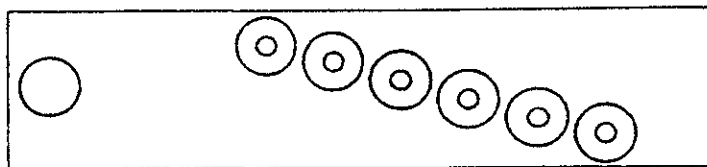
In carrying out the movement of shooting from above, the arm swings well back in order to be able to go higher when it swings forwards again. This impetus - the arm-swing - should be enough to send the boule as far as you need it to go.

During the entire movement of shooting to hit the boule directly, the hand remains facing in the same direction as the body and, when the boule is released, the fingers are held out for a moment. The boule leaves the hand by the fingertips, giving a slight backspin.

Shooting is not throwing one boule against another, but sending a boule so that it lands on another.

EXERCISES

1.

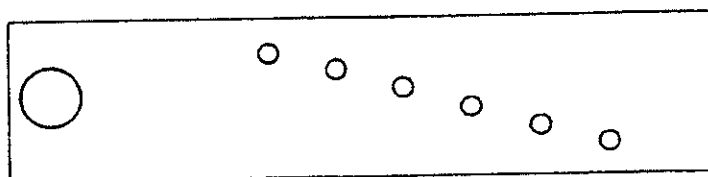


Each player has six boules to shoot at boules placed at 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 metres.

The boules to be shot are placed within circles of 50 cm diameter.

The shot is successful if it lands within the circle.

2.



Each player again has six boules to shoot at boules placed at 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 metres.

The shot is only successful if it lands on the boule from above.

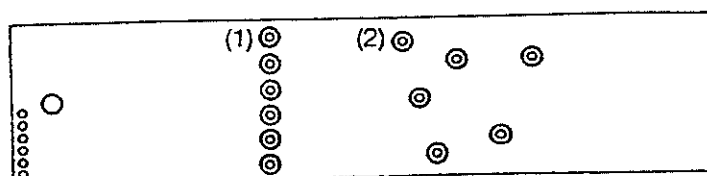
GAME

Everyone shoots at a series of six boules placed:

- At the same distance (1)
- At different distances (2)

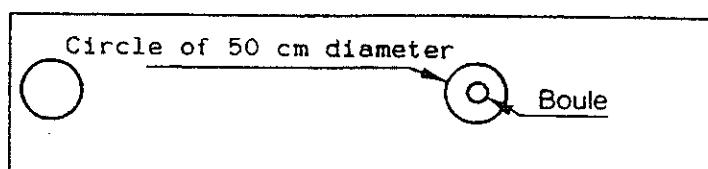
The winner is the one with the highest score over the two series.

The game can be complicated by giving different values to the shots according to the results obtained (see next page, game 2).



Introductory Games for Shooting to Hit the Boule Directly

Shooting Competition 1



Each player shoots in turn five times.

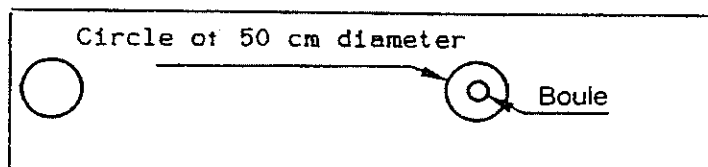
They have to hit the boule from above or in front (but in the circle).

Score one point for each boule hit.

The winner is the one with the best result over the series. In the event of a tie, play a deciding round.

Variation : Play the same game with the boules at different distances.

Shooting Competition 2



Each player shoots ten boules, two at a time.

The winner is the one who scores the most points, according to this method:

- 1 point for a boule hit from above but remaining in the circle.
- 2 points for a boule hit from above which leaves the circle.
- 5 points for a carreau (the boule is hit from above and is replaced by the boule which shot it).

Note: Any boule which lands in the circle from above before striking the boule is considered as having hit from above.

Variation: The same game but shooting the ten boules over different distances.

THE HIGH POINT

The coach will emphasise that this is a very special technique in which the boule is thrown high so that after it lands, it only has a very short distance to roll.

He should also point out that throwing the boule and embedding it near to the cochonnet on a beach or a waterlogged terrain - which would be impracticable on terrains for competitions - is not using the high point but rather a natural reaction to the exceptional demands of the ground. You could not incorporate that method of playing into the normal skills of petanque.

To point high it is necessary to be aware of two factors:

- The boule does not describe a wide trajectory, but rises very high to fall almost vertically to the ground.
- The boule turns on itself in the opposite direction to its natural course. [Backspin.]

Because of these two factors the boule stops practically dead as it hits the ground.

One can distinguish:

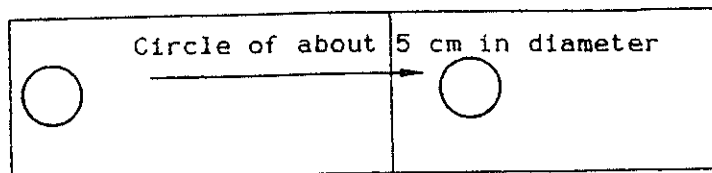
- The half-length high point, in which the boule is thrown two metres in front of the cochonnet.
- The long high point, in which the boule is thrown near the cochonnet, or even beyond it in certain special cases.

EXERCISES

Throw the boule beyond the pole so that it stops inside the circle traced on the ground. If necessary, put a little sand in the circle or water the soil thoroughly to help the boules to stop. You do not need to make use of the rope because the boules should be thrown too high for that. Above all, throwing should become instinctive as each player gets to know the feel of the boule in his hand.

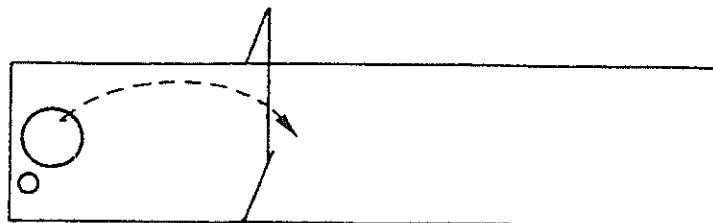
The coach should let the students work at the half-length high point by placing the pole 1 metre from the circle and at the long high point by putting it at the end of the piste.

The two exercises are played standing and squatting.



Introductory Games for the High Point

1. Hurdles



The rope is at 4, 5, 6.... metres from the edge of the circle and is raised higher the further it goes from the circle.

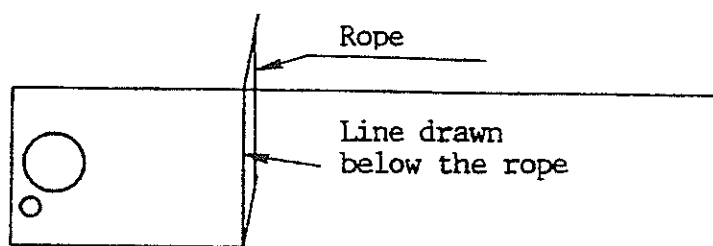
The boules must be thrown over the rope and stop in the 2 metres beyond it.

Each player has three goes to succeed at least once.

At each 'hurdle' eliminate all unsuccessful players.

The winner is the one who throws over the furthest 'hurdle'. If several players succeed at 10 metres, they are automatically winners.

2. The Vertical Drop



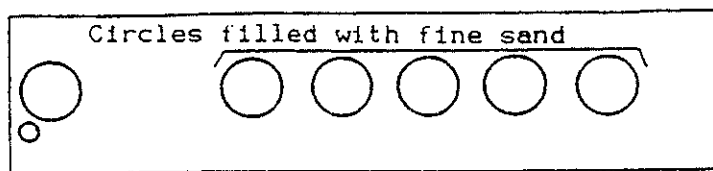
The rope is 5 or 6 metres from the circle and 3 metres above the ground.

Each player has three attempts of which the best is kept. The aim is to throw the boule over the rope so that it stops as soon as possible after. It is even possible to embed the boule in the ground if the surface makes this possible.

Each player's best throw should be marked clearly on the ground.

The winner is the one who succeeds in placing his boule the nearest to the line drawn below the rope.

Working Through the Circles



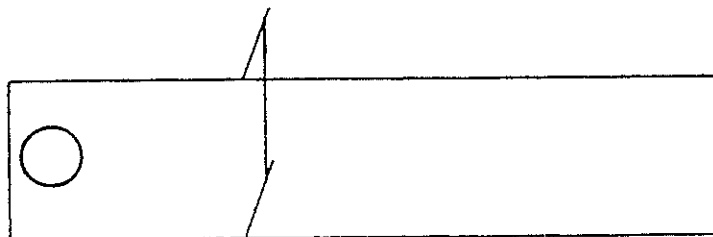
Place five circles filled with fine sand - to help the boules to stop - at 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 metres from the edge of the throwing circle.

You do not use the rope because you would be constantly moving it, but it is obvious that the players will have to throw quite high for the boule to stop in the circle.

Each player should throw his boule in each of the circles successively, aiming for it to stop there. Each successful shot means the player can try for the next circle. If they fail, the next player tries again, from the circle he last reached.

The winner is the first one to succeed in going up and down all the circles. They have to land in the farthest circle twice, once going up and once coming down.

GAME



In this variant of the basic game, all the boules must be thrown in half-length pointing high.

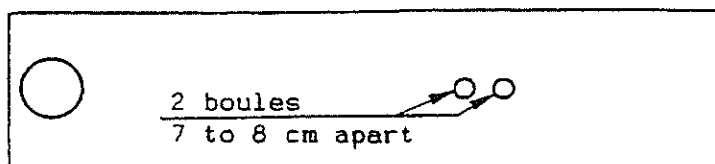
To compel the players to play like this, a rope is placed at a respectable distance so that they are forced to throw over it.

PARTICULAR TECHNIQUES OF SHOOTING

In the last two lessons of this section, the coach will be introducing some very elaborate techniques.

As far as shooting is concerned, he will be showing how to proceed in difficult situations which arise during the course of play, and also what happens in certain clearly defined situations: boule in front, three boules in a line, boules touching one another, and blocking boules. The coach can let them work out what happens by giving demonstrations of mini-pétanque [see page 57] at 1 metre from the throwing circle.

Jumping Over



The students learn to hit the boule behind when the one in front belongs to their own team. It is easy to show that shooting along the ground will be useless. Stress the importance of the arm-swing to raise the boule high enough in the air.

EXERCISE:

Place two boules 6 metres away, one behind the other, 10 to 15 cm apart and remind the students that they are to hit the boule behind without touching the one in front.

Each player has two boules and they can play in any order.

Unsuccessful players drop out and after each round the boule is moved another metre from the throwing circle. If no player succeeds at any one distance, they all start again at this distance.

The game continues until there are two or more players equal with 0, 1 or 2 hits. The winner is the only one to hit at the distance.

Special Situations

Place the boules in such a way that you have to use a particular skill to succeed in shooting, or hit the boule in a certain way to obtain the desired result. The coach has to let the students realise what is happening in any given situation, and then show them the best way of proceeding. In each case he can organise exercises where the students compete.

Some Exercises for Practising Particular Shots

Two Boules Side by Side

Leave a millimetre between them. The coach will show that you have to hit the target boule (first the right one, then the left one) right in the centre to avoid moving the other. If you shoot on the side closest to the other boule you risk moving both. If you shoot on the side furthest away from the other boule, there will be a rebound. The more your shot is off centre, the more the rebound will be to the advantage of the boule you were actually trying to remove.

Two Boules One Behind the Other

After working some exercises in 'jumping over' the coach will let the students realise that it is possible to move just the boule in front by hitting it 'on the ear'.

The space between the two boules and the distance are fixed according to the experience and skill of the players.

Three Boules Side by Side

As for the first case, trying to shoot the middle boule without touching the others.

Three Boules Behind One Another

They are 10 to 15 cm apart and placed at distances apart depending on the skill of the players. The coach makes use of this setting to go over 'jumping over' and shooting at the boule in front. Then he should explain that to hit only the one in the middle, it must be hit from above and at the side to avoid it rebounding onto the boule behind. Shooting along the ground is, of course, clearly impossible.

The same exercise as for JUMPING OVER can be used, gradually increasing the distance.

Two Boules Touching

- One behind the other: the coach will show that to remove only the boule behind, you must hit the first boule in the centre. To remove both, you hit it 'on the ear'.
- One beside the other: The coach will explain that it is possible to remove just one of the boules by shooting the other well off-centre - but this is difficult.

Three Boules One Behind the Other

They may also be a few millimetres apart. The students have to realise that by striking the front one hard, the front one and the back one move whereas the middle one remains in place. The first will travel a greater or lesser distance according to how hard it was shot.

Note : In each situation the coach will show the possibilities of the different ways of shooting - along the ground or directly - and stress the advantages and drawbacks of each method.

U S I N G S P I N W H E N P O I N T I N G

To show the need of sometimes using spin, the coach places obstacles between the throwing circle and the cochonnet. He will ask the students questions about how to proceed and show them that it is possible to reach the cochonnet by curling round the obstacles.

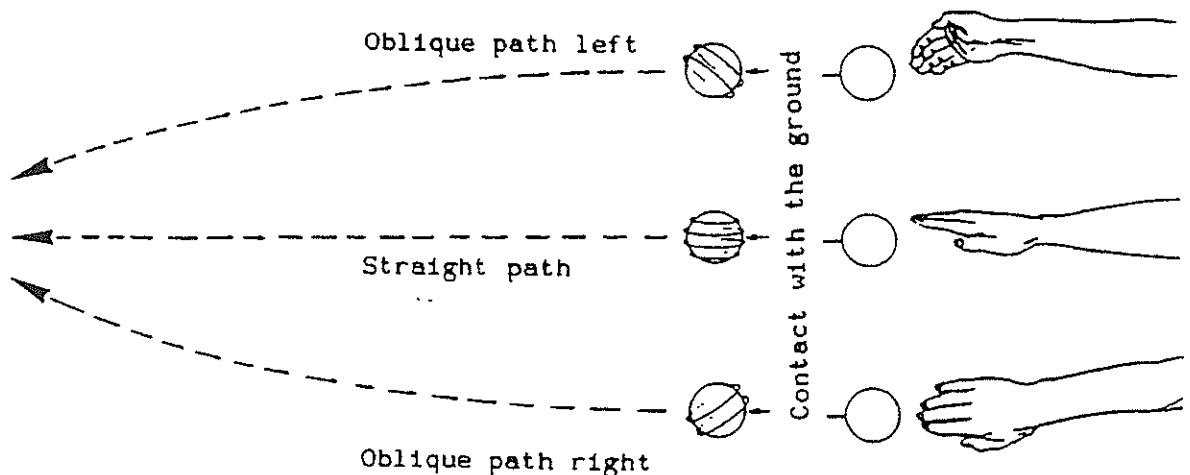
It is worth noting that beginners often put spin on their boules. We do not deal with this aspect of technique until they have shown all the necessary control for playing in the most frequently used way, i.e. without spin, where the boule follows a straight line.

Explanation (For a right-handed player)

If you wish to 'curl' a boule, the general rule is not to have the palm of the hand facing the ground, but to turn it slightly to the right - to go to the right - or to the left, to go to the left. At the moment of releasing the boule, the thumb will be facing the ground to send a boule to the right and pointing to the sky to send it to the left.

In order to increase the curl on the boule, it has to be turned before it reaches the ground, like a globe on its axis; so the hand is at a slight angle. To give the boule this rotating movement, when you release the boule, do not straighten the fingers, but keep them slightly flexed, as if you wanted to scratch the boule as it leaves the hand.

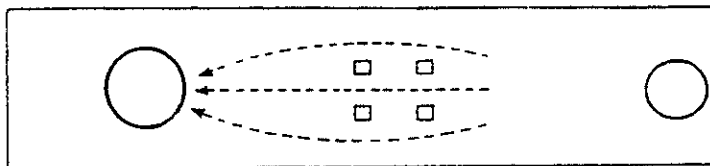
Notice that, in this classic method, the boule turns clockwise in the air to go left and anti-clockwise to go right.



IMPORTANT: The foot corresponding to the throwing arm no longer faces into the game: it is turned very slightly to the left for a left curl and to the right for a right curl.

EXERCISES

1. The Three Paths



The students must throw:

The first boule between the three rows of cubes.

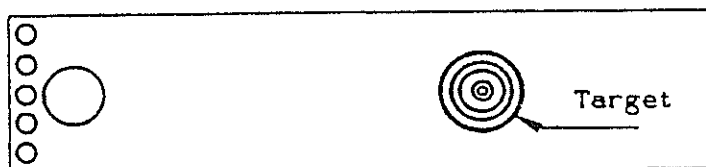
The second to the right of the cubes.

The third to the left of the cubes.

All three boules must stop in the big circle drawn on the ground.

Since the students have up to now been asked to play their boules as naturally as possible, a slight deviation from the path is acceptable, since they are only just learning to use spin.

2. The Pointing Competition



Since the students now know all the methods of throwing a boule, the coach can start to use the pointing canvas.

The competition is generally played with five boules.

To revise the previous sessions, the game can be made more complex by picking out a particular spot where their boule is to stop, for example by placing a square of canvas down.

It is also possible to make it even more complex by stipulating that the students vary their throw so as to revise all the methods they have been taught. To do this you should place obstacles between the throwing circle and the cochonnet: wooden cubes and poles.

S e c t i o n 4

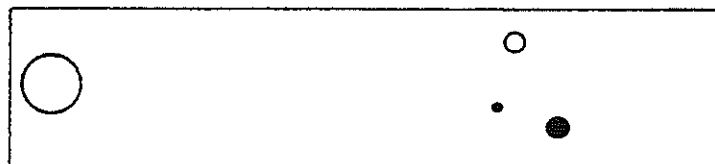
S O M E G E N E R A L H I N T S o n T A C T I C S a n d P R A C T I C E

- Information on tactics
- Approach to measuring and marking
- Guidelines on running a competition

GENERAL TACTICS OF A GAME OF PETANQUE

The coach will first remind the students that in petanque the teams do not play simultaneously but one after the other. He will then help them to realise that the team which starts the game has, at the outset, an initial disadvantage, since the opponent has one more boule in hand than they have. It follows that the team that throws second has the advantage.

This advantage can be simple or multiple. It ranges from the simple advantage where you have one boule more in hand than your opponent to the time when your opponents have played all six boules and you still have five in hand.



The 'black' team has a simple advantage

In theory, this advantage can be worth one point for every boule held. In real life this rule is not demonstrated very often since teams rarely attain such perfection!

The team with the advantage tries to retain it and their opponents try to wrest it from them. To keep the advantage is to keep the possibility of scoring; to lose it is to give the initiative to the opponents.

- With a disadvantage - even that of having to play first - you generally have to point, unless the situation of the boules on the ground, the score or the context of the game impose different tactics. In fact, you should always try to find the method which allows you to minimise the opponents' opportunities to score.
- With an advantage - which may be only that of playing second - you must shoot. It is the best method of keeping the advantage, unless the situation of the boules on the ground makes this unwise. You should look for the method which allows you to increase your score, just as the rule of advantage suggests.
- When there is a choice between shooting and pointing, use the method which looks most likely to succeed.

In petanque, shooting is not necessarily attacking and pointing is not necessarily defending.

It can happen that you shoot to defend either a point or the score or to limit the opponents' score. Conversely, pointing can take on the nature of an attack: to regain the point from the opponent so as to put his boules in danger - boule closely in front, boules touching... - or so as to lead the opponents into making an error which will enable you to regain the advantage.

By carrying out exercises and games, the coach will be able to show the students that these basic rules, although they serve as guides during the game, may sometimes be set aside as the game dictates.

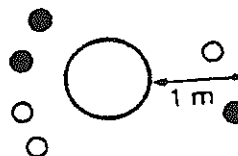
For example, even if you have the advantage, you should point if the opponents' most recent boule is poor and easy to outpoint. Even so, be sure that the nature of the surface or the skill of the opponents does not leave you open to receive a series of carreaux. There are, in fact, many elements which have to be taken into account when you adapt your tactics.....including your own skill.

Equally you may consider shooting, even if the opponents have one or more boules more than you, either to reduce the opponents' score or in the hope of breaking up the game: sending the cochonnet out, scattering the boules

In practice, the coach should be letting the students experience these finer points throughout their period of learning. During the various exercises they will learn that nobody is immune from making an error of play, though this is usually a case of failing to carry out an attempted throw. One of the main attractions of petanque lies in acquiring the art of dictating the course of the game and in gradually discovering its subtleties.

Exercise : Singles with one boule per player.

Game : The game of mini-petanque.



You play singles with three boules per player, but over very short lengths - less than a metre - so that all throws can be used successfully.

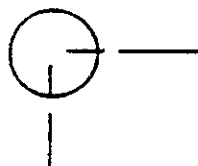
MARKING AND MEASURING

Marking Boules and Cochonnet

The coach will first let the students realise the interest they have in marking the boules and cochonnet, stressing that the rules make it compulsory. To do this he will let them play an end during which he will use a boule from another game to move the boules on the ground or the cochonnet.

He will then explain that marking is essential for replacing the boules. If they have not been marked they have to be left where they ended up.

He will demonstrate marking the position of a boule with a pointed stick or a carpenter's nail - in their absence you can use a finger - to trace two lines about ten cm long, at right angles to each other and which would meet at the base of the object being marked. The lines should be straight.



This marking plays a part in governing how precisely a boule or cochonnet can be replaced after they have been lifted out or moved.

Lifting a Boule Out and Replacing It

After marking the boule as described above:

- Strike the top of the boule from above with another boule, making sure to hit it vertically.
- Lift the boule out, holding it between the thumb and the middle finger - index finger pointing upwards - and lifting it vertically upwards, taking care that it does not roll. Hitting it with the other boule before doing this should have made a little hollow in the precise spot where the boule was. This lifting out may be carried out in order, for example, to carry out a measure which the boule was obstructing.
- Pick the boule up again between the thumb and the middle finger and place it delicately back in its 'hollow'.

Measuring a Point

By placing two boules equidistant from the cochonnet, the coach will be able to let the students see the need for using measures, since the eye is not precise enough.

There are two sorts of points which require measuring:

- Close points - generally less than 110 mm, the length of an 'umpire's measure' - where a single player carries out the measure.
- Distant points, where two players are needed to carry out the measure: one uses his left hand to hold the measure to the boule, the other with his right hand and his eye on the cochonnet. For greater precision the students can be asked to measure points level with the edge of the cochonnet, keeping themselves in a vertical plane relative to the cochonnet.

For all forms of measuring, the player(s) should be squatting between the boule and the cochonnet.

There are also two sorts of measures:

- The approximate measure, which, if properly carried out, allows comparison to about 1 mm. It is carried out with a rigid plant stalk, a piece of non-stretching string or, better, with a metal measure.



- The precise measure which allows comparison up to fractions of a mm. It is carried out by extending two lengths of a stalk, or, better, with the end section of an 'umpire's measure'.



EXERCISES

- The students are presented with the problems of measuring by placing boules far from the cochonnet, then close to it.
- The situation can then be complicated by putting in objects which have to be lifted out.
- Prepare points which are very close and ask the students to judge. This can profitably lead to the question of void ends.
- The students are asked to place a cochonnet at the minimum distance and at the maximum distance. They are then taught how to measure these: from the edge of the throwing circle to the edge of the cochonnet.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The BPA Book of Coaching and Play by Barrie P. Lees ISBN 0 9517148 0 5
This excellent book gives an insight into the whole game of petanque and includes chapters on techniques, tactics and concentration.

The BPA Competition Organisers Manual

This comprehensive manual covers a whole range of different ways to organise competitions depending on their status and the number of competitors. It gives detailed step by step instructions, a list of the equipment required and examples of all the score cards and other papers needed.

Both the above books are available from : The BPA Office
18 Ensign Business Centre
Westwood Park
Coventry CV4 8JA
Tel: 0203 421408

PETANQUE : The French Game of Boules by Garth Freeman ISBN 0 9510213 1 1
This book is essential reading for the beginner and a useful reference for the experienced player. It includes the history of petanque, how to throw a boule, some basic tactics and a glossary of French terms.

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The Pernod Book of Petanque by Maurice Abney-Hastings ISBN 0 04 796058 2
This book was published in 1981 and is no longer in print but can be found in libraries. It is a general book on petanque and its history. It contains a useful section on understanding the rules of the game.

G L O S S A R Y

To help in the understanding of this book, it seemed a good idea to add this little glossary of a few dozen words. It does not pretend to be exhaustive. It does not include terms with the same meaning in petanque as in everyday life and is limited to those words and expressions with a special meaning. It excludes folklore and slang terms.

ARRONDIR: When shooting, by using the wrist, to give a rotary movement to the boule, which increases the chances of making a carreau. [using backspin] By extension: to make a carreau.

ASSOMMER: When pointing, to send a boule high so that it lands heavily on the ground and rolls as little as possible from the point of impact.

ATTAQUER: To shoot when you have the advantage, intending to continue to do so until the opponents have no boules left. Also: jouer l'attaque.

BALAYER: An action forbidden by the rules which consists of making part of the terrain as smooth as possible by removing all obstacles.

BALANCIER: Complete movement of the arm of a shooter, from the start of the shot to the moment of releasing the boule. [The arm-swing]

BLESSER: To move a boule, but not far enough.

BUT: A small wooden ball; the boules try to get as near to it as possible.

CADRAGES: In a competition, games to reduce the number of teams to a power of 2. [An elimination round]

CASQUETTE: Faire une casquette: to shoot a boule and hit the top of it but without making it move appreciably.

CARREAU: The boule which is thrown replaces the target boule.

CERCLE DE LANCER: Circle traced on the ground from which the players have to throw their boules.

COCHONNET: Another name for BUT

CONTRE: When, after a successful shot, the boule thrown or the boule shot hit another boule with force.

DEMARQUER: When playing, to take off a point that had been won.

DEVANT DE BOULE: To point a boule so that it ends up very close to another boule, preferably the opponents', and nearer to the cochonnet.

DONNE or DONNEE: Part of the terrain to which the boule is aimed when pointing.

DOUBLETTE: Team consisting of two players. [Doubles]

ECLATER: To move several boules with force by a successful shot.

EFFET: Rotating movement given to a boule when it is pointed, so that its course curls either to right or left, after hitting the ground: donner de l'effet. [Spin; to put spin on a boule].

ELIMINATION DIRECTE: Formula for competitions in which each round eliminates half the players. [Knockout competition.]

EMBOUCHONNER: To point a boule so that it lands directly against the cochonnet.

ENVOYER: Generally used as a synonym of PORTER.

FAIRE PASSER: Used of a successful shot when the boule shot at is sent off farther than the boule thrown.

FER: Tirer au fer: to shoot directly at the target boule without touching the ground first, or only very close to the target boule.

FIL: Passer au fil: = to skim a line or a boule.

FUSER: For a boule, to accelerate rapidly on hitting the ground, generally because of hitting a hard object.

GRATONNER: For a boule, to be slowed down successively by small obstacles: stones, gravel, twigs...

INTERDIT: Area beyond the marked terrain where boules and cochonnet are 'dead'.

LUNETTE: Two boules close together and side by side. Can be moved by a single shot.

MAIN: Main Ouverte: To play with the hand beneath the boule, palm facing upwards.

Jouer Sous Main: Normal position of play when the boule is released from below the hand, the fingers holding the boule in the palm of the hand which is facing downwards.

Lever la Main (or, Lever le Bras): Being careful to shoot high enough to shoot at a boule placed behind another and to miss the front boule.

MARQUE: 1): Score

2): Lines drawn to mark the position of boules or cochonnet.

MENE: The part of the game in which all the players on both sides play all their boules. [An end.] An end in course of play may be declared void if the cochonnet goes out of the marked terrain.

MONTER: Monter une boule: To point the boule high.

MORDRE: To have at least one foot over the edge of the throwing circle.

NUL: No score when two opposing boules are equidistant from the cochonnet.

NOYE(E): Synonym of 'perdu': when a boule or cochonnet go out of the marked terrain.

OREILLE: Tirer sur l'oreille: To hit the target boule on the side.

PALET: A successful shot in which the thrown boule remains near to the place where it hit the target boule.

PARTIE: Time necessary for one of the teams to score 13 points. [A game]

PETANQUE: Sport of boules originating in the south of France whose name comes from the expression 'pieds tanques', meaning 'feet together'.

PERDU(E): Boule or cochonnet leaving the marked terrain.

PIECE: Faire la piece: to toss a coin for which team throws the cochonnet out first.

PLOMBER: Synonym of porter. [see 'portee]

POINTER: To try to get as close as possible to the cochonnet.

PORTEE: Action consisting of sending the boule high and fairly near to the cochonnet so that it rolls only a short way after hitting the ground.[The high point]

Demi-Portee: The most used form of this throw in which the boule is thrown to a moderate height and lands at a variable distance between the circle and the cochonnet. [The medium-high point]

POULE: A group of three or four teams of which only two will qualify for the next round of a competition. [A league]

RAFLE: Style of shooting by landing the boule well in front of the target.

RACLER - RAMASSER: Although shooting short, hitting the target by landing quite far in front of it and rolling on.

RENTIRER: In pointing, to push a boule nearer to the cochonnet.

ROUND: Another name for the throwing circle.

SAUTÉE: Tir a la sautee: to shoot a boule which is behind and quite close to another, without hitting the front boule.

SECHE: Frapper une boule seche: To hit a boule without touching a nearby boule or without causing any foreseeable rebound.

TENIR: To gain the point.

TETE-A-TETE: game where one player plays another. [Singles.]

TIRER: To try to touch another boule with yours to move it out of contention. See 'tirer au fer', 'tirer a la rafle'. [To shoot.]

TRIPLETTÉ: A team of three players. [Triples.]

TROU: Faire un trou: To miss a shot.

TRUQUEE: A boule which has been tampered with in contravention of the rules.

USEFUL CONTACTS (SUMMER 1999)

<p>NZPA President</p> <p>NZPA Vice-President & National Coach</p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Junior Sport Development</p> <p>National Umpire</p> <p>Secretary NZ Schools</p> <p>Petanque Association</p>	<p>Brian Smith</p> <p>Christian Fouquet</p> <p>Noel Hunt</p> <p>Cam Calder</p> <p>Laurent Neuenschwander</p> <p>Fiona Brick</p>	<p>Ph: (04) 527-9813</p> <p>Fax: (04) 528-9783</p> <p>Ph: (09) 426-7301</p> <p>Ph: (06) 845-1051</p> <p>Ph: (09) 445-4328</p> <p>Ph: (09) 418-4835</p> <p>Ph: (09) 445-0582</p>
<p>New Zealand Petanque Association</p> <p>PO Box 102</p> <p>Napier</p> <p>(06) 845-1051</p>	<p>Taranaki Petanque Club</p> <p>Les Hill</p> <p>PO Box 8192</p> <p>New Plymouth</p> <p>(06) 751-1386</p>	
<p>Wanganui Petanque Club</p> <p>Gonville Bowling Club</p> <p>David Cohen</p> <p>15 Caius Avenue</p> <p>Wanganui</p> <p>(06) 345-7407</p>	<p>Te Awamutu Petanque Club</p> <p>Claire Ravenscroft</p> <p>RD 1</p> <p>Te Awamutu</p> <p>(07) 872-7873</p>	
<p>Rotorua Petanque Club</p> <p>Trevor Neilson</p> <p>PO Box 6154</p> <p>(07) 346-3370 (H)</p> <p>(07) 348-8273 (W)</p>	<p>Tauranga Petanque Club</p> <p>James Blockley</p> <p>84A First Avenue</p> <p>Tauranga</p> <p>(07) 577-6388</p>	
<p>Putaruru Petanque Club</p> <p>Carl Sietes</p> <p>14 Ruru Crescent</p> <p>Putaruru</p> <p>(07) 883-3022</p>	<p>Napier Petanque Club</p> <p>Noel Hunt</p> <p>PO Box 102</p> <p>Napier</p> <p>(06) 845-1051</p>	
<p>Hataitai Petanque Club</p> <p>Phil Doyle</p> <p>163 Hataitai Road</p> <p>Hataitai</p> <p>Wellington</p> <p>Tel: (04) 386-3186 (H)</p>	<p>Kapiti Petanque Club</p> <p>Peter Ball</p> <p>21 Tui Road East</p> <p>Raumati Beach</p> <p>Tel: (04) 299-3299</p>	
<p>Khandallah Petanque Club</p> <p>Neil Dykes</p> <p>12 Baroda Street</p> <p>Khandallah</p> <p>Wellington</p> <p>Tel: (04) 479-4100</p> <p>Fax: (04) 470-6136 (W)</p>	<p>Masterton Petanque Club</p> <p>Gary Wilson</p> <p>F/N 26 Willow Park Drive</p> <p>RD 11</p> <p>Masterton</p> <p>Tel: (06) 378-8664</p>	

Palmerston North Petanque Club
Don Beaurepair
1 Otira Place
Palmerston North
Tel: (06) 354-3995

Porirua Petanque Club
Lindsay Skinner
19 Sombrero View
Porirua
Tel: (04) 235-9327

Upper Hutt Petanque Club
Dawn Cormack
27 William Booth Grove
Upper Hutt
Tel: (04) 527-7863

Papatoetoe Petanque Club
Colin Jones
6 Holden Place
Papatoetoe
Tel: (09) 278-2381

Mt Albert Petanque Club
Paul O'Conner
5/39 Woodward Rd
Mt Albert
Tel: (09) 815-8919 (H)
(09) 849-4180 x 8362

Kennedy Park Petanque Club
David Davis
1/47 East Coast Rd
Milford
Tel: (09) 410-7878

Cockle Bay Petanque Club
Peter De Beer
3/41 Baird St
Howick
Tel: (09) 534-5566

Northcote Petanque Club
Sue Barnes
1/121 Ocean View Rd
Northcote
Tel: (09) 480-5736

Park Avenue Petanque Club
Don Pettett
65 Bristol Square
Lower Hutt
Tel: (04) 569-8731
Fax: (04) 385-0434

Silverstream Petanque Club
Tim Lovell-Smith
4 Sunbrae Drive
Silverstream
Tel: (04) 527-3313

Wellington Petanque Club
Gerard Pinguet
23 Arun Crescent
Melrose
Tel: (04) 383-5049

Victoria Park Petanque Club
Ian Baker
7/85 Beresford St
Ponsonby
Tel: (09) 378-9904

Stanley Bay Petanque Club
Charles Parley
4 Stanley Point Rd
Devonport
Tel: (09) 445-2417

Herne Bay Petanque Club
David Morrison
PO Box 40485
Glenfield P.O.
North Shore City
Tel: (09) 483-8666

Hibiscus Coast Petanque Club
Anne Downey
15 Eagle Place
Red Beach
Hibiscus Coast
Tel: (09) 427-9971

Point Chevalier Petanque Club
Adrian Milburn
38 Cumberland Ave
Westmere
Tel: (09) 370-3620

Salty Dog Petanque Club
Ross Webster
265 Mahurangi East Rd
Snells Beach
Warkworth
Tel: (09) 425-6412

Epsom Petanque Club
Jim Shields
1/76 Waiaatarua Rd
Remuera
Tel: (09) 529-0070

Christchurch Petanque Association
Geoff Soma
PO Box 2414
Christchurch
Phone: (03) 355-5502

Gore Petanque Club
Bernie McKone
Quinns Gore Pharmacy
104 Main Street
Gore

Excelsior Petanque Club
PO Box 184
Bob Dougherty, 3 Alt Street
Oamaru

Queenstown Petanque Club
Gantleys Historic Restaurant
Arthurs Point Road
Queenstown

Waimate Petanque Club
Mrs Elaine A Collett
PO Box 44
Waimate
Phone: (03) 689-8327

City Rise Petanque Club
C/- G Donaldson
295 Rattray Street
Dunedin

Caversham Petanque Club
Ann Sinclair
40 Hazal Avenue
Dunedin
Phone: (03) 454-5556

If your Club isn't listed or details change please notify the NZPA.

