

DENE HAND GAMES

Equipment Loaner Program

Athabasca Area of the Northern Sport, Culture & Recreation District has 2 Dene Hand Games Sets and 9 Drums as part of their Equipment Loaner Program. This equipment can be loaned out to communities for programs and special events.

DENE HAND GAMES

RULES OBTAINED FROM THE ARCTIC WINTER GAMES WEBSITE:

1. START: This is a team competition with four (4) players on each team. Teams start in a kneeling position facing each other in pairs. The game is accompanied by drumming. Each team is provided with 30 small sticks.

2. MOVEMENT: Teams take turns to hide and guess. Each player on the hiding team will take his token and with hands behind his back place the token in one hand or the other. Presenting the hands for the other team to see, the player attempts to deceive the player opposite him with elaborate gestures of the hands, arms, head and upper body. This movement takes place with all players on one team at the same time. The opposite player, by a signal, guesses the hand containing the token. The second team then repeats the motions of hiding a token for the first team to guess. Teams may switch their players opposite others during the course of the game if they choose.

- ✓ For a four-person team, all games will start with 12 sticks. These sticks should be finger sized, and may be peeled or decorated.
- ✓ Players must each have a small object to conceal in their hands. This can be a coin, rock or other small object. This object must be presented at the beginning of the game and used throughout the game.
- ✓ Players may kneel on mats and may use a blanket or other cover to help conceal their hands when hiding.
- ✓ There are only four calls (hand signals) used for the four-person team, as indicated on the attached sheet.
- ✓ When a call (Hand Signals) is made, there must be a sound given with the call, this can be a sharp whistle, or a call such as "Ho!" or "Hutch!"
- ✓ When a call is made, players on the opposing (hiding) team must show both hands.
- ✓ Players may touch the ground or floor and call "diya!" when using the crossed arm position to indicate opposites. In this case the caller must identify the position of the object as if the arms were not crossed (opposites).
- ✓ Players may not cross and uncross their arms.
- ✓ All 12 sticks start in the middle between the opposing teams. Play is started by a guessing contest between the opposing captains, who hide and guess the position of the opposing captain's object simultaneously. This continues until one captain is successful and the other is unsuccessful. The captain who wins this initial exchange hides his object first, along with all the members of his team.
- ✓ Each time a captain is unsuccessful in guessing the position of an opposing player's object he must give the opposing team one stick from the middle. A player who successfully deceives the opposing captain continues to play until caught. Play continues until all the sticks (12) are gone from the middle, at which time captains must draw on the collection of markers (sticks), which they have won thus far in play.
- ✓ When one team has won eleven sticks (all but one) and still has at least one player who has not been caught that remaining player assumes an important role. This last call both decides who will win the first round of the game, and which team will start the second round as the team hiding. If this one last player can deceive the opposing captain, then he wins the last (12th) stick for his team and will return all the sticks to the opposing team while joining his team members hiding for the second round.
- ✓ One game will consist of winning two rounds of play (12+12 or 24 sticks).



3. ATTEMPTS: The competition continues, with teams alternating hiding or guessing until one team has all the other team's sticks, or thirty (30) minutes has elapsed.

4. SCORING: A team wins if it has all the sticks, or if at the end of thirty (30) minutes it has the most sticks. The game should be accompanied by a minimum of four (4) Dene drummers.