Dod Nang Yang / Jumping with Rubber-band Rope

Site of Documentation

Akha group, Tambon Mae Yao, Mueang District, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand

Description

*Dod Nang Yang* is a simple yet lively game that has been enjoyed by generations of Akha children. The game requires players to complete a sequence of jumps over a long rope made of rubber bands, which is held by their opponents. Each jump in the sequence is more challenging than the next and only the most agile win.

Who Plays?

This game requires a group of 4 to 10 players. Both boys and girls can play aged 8 to 15 years old. The players will be divided into two equal sized teams. If there is an extra player they can play with either side throughout the game.
Accessories/Equipment

This game requires a large number of rubber bands that are tied together to make a long rubber band rope. Children typically buy rubber bands at school stationary stores or from local shops and construct the rope themselves, prior to playing the game. The rubber band rope can be either a single thread (using only one rubber band in each link), or a double thread where two rubber bands form a link. Ropes usually measure around 2 to 3 metres, to ensure there is plenty of space for the players to jump.

Time and Place

On average, a game of Dod Nang Yang takes around 30 minutes to play, which makes it ideal for playing during school lunch times. When children are out of school and have more free time, each game can last up to an hour, depending on the speed, skill and fitness of players. The environment the game is played in can affect the game’s duration, as children can become exhausted quickly. As a result, children usually play this game where they can find a large space with smooth ground (such as a concrete floor or grass lawn) and shade. Ideally, children need to find a space that is 4 x 8 meters, giving them plenty of room to run and jump. Akha children often play the game in the main village square as it’s usually the largest, flattest nearby space.

Skill, Strategies and Qualities of a Good Player

The most important skill that this game requires is the ability to jump very high in the air. Often taller children with longer legs have an advantage. All players have to be able to keep quiet and still, so to not interrupt those who are jumping.

Popularity

Akha children play this game for fun and enjoy testing their skill at jumping the rope, against that of their friends. It is particularly popular with young girls and as it only requires rubber bands and limited space, it is played by children in most Akha communities. Dod Nang Yang is a much simpler version of ‘Jumping Rubber Band Rope’ than that played by Tai Yai children, with fewer levels and less complex sequences and rules. Akha children do however not play from the lowest ankle height, as they consider it too easy – so instead usually start from the knee.

History of the Game

The game was also played by members of the older generations when they were young, although nowadays there are more additional rules and levels to the game.
**Preparation**

1. Prior to the game, players must construct a long rope made from rubber bands. The rubber band rope can be either a single thread (using only one rubber band in each link), or a double thread where two rubber bands form a link.
How is the Game Played?

**Step 1.** First, players need to divide themselves into two teams. To do this they can split themselves into pairs and play *Pao Ying Chub*. The winners form the team that jumps, while the losers become rope holders.

The ‘Holders’ tie the ends of the rope together to form a large circle. Two Holders stand about 1-3 metres apart from each other and place the rope around their knees, so that there are two ropes for their opponents to jump over.
Step 2: The Holders will position the rope at seven different levels throughout the game. Each level is higher and more difficult than the last. The levels are:

**Level 1: Knee Height**

In Level 1 the Holders have to position the rubber rope around their knees. The ‘Jumpers’ have to jump across the rope and make sure they do so without touching it with any part of their body.
**Level 2: Hip Height**

In Level 2 the Holders have to position the rubber rope around their hips. The Jumpers have to jump across the rope and make sure they do so without touching it with any part of their body.

**Level 3: Waist Height**

In Level 3 the Holders have to position the rubber rope around their waists. The Jumpers have to jump across the rope. At this level Jumpers can touch the rope as they try to jump over or ask a team mate to hold the rope down lower so they can clear the level.
**Level 4: Shoulder Height**

In Level 4 the Holders have to position the rubber rope around their shoulders. The Jumpers have to jump across the rope. At this level Jumpers can also touch the rope as they try to jump over or ask a team mate to hold the rope down lower so they can clear the level.

![Level 4: Shoulder Height](image1)

**Level 5: Neck Height**

In Level 5 the Holders have to position the rubber rope at neck height. The Jumpers have to jump across the rope. At this level Jumpers can also touch the rope as they try to jump over or ask a team mate to hold the rope down lower so they can clear the level.

![Level 5: Neck Height](image2)
**Level 6: Ear Height**

In Level 6 the Holders have to position the rubber rope at ear height. The Jumpers have to jump across the rope. At this level Jumpers can also touch the rope as they try to jump over or ask a team mate to hold the rope down lower so they can clear the level.
**Level 7: Head Height**

In the final level, the Holders have to position the rubber rope at head height. The Jumpers have to jump across the rope. At this level Jumpers can also touch the rope as they try to jump over or ask a team mate to hold the rope down lower so they can clear the level. As the rope is held down, that player (and all those remaining) have to jump across, while their team mate holding it down chants, “Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday”. Each player must jump across, one jump for each day of the week!

---

**Rules**

1. If a team successfully completes all seven levels they win the right to play first in the next game.

2. If a player does not follow the guidelines for each level, they are eliminated from the game. Players can also play a stricter version of the game that stipulates that if a player fails to follow the guidelines for each level, their team is out and the sides swap.

3. Players are allowed to ask their team mates for help. It’s up to the players to decide before the game commences from which level players are allowed to do this.