O-Chub / Hammer, Scissors and Paper

Site of Documentation
Tai Yai group, Mae Hong Sorn Province, Thailand

Description
O-Chub is a game that is used by Tai Yai children in the Mae Hong Sorn province of Thailand to eliminate or select a player (or team of players) before starting an actual game. For example, if children want to play a game of “Tag” they would play O-Chub to pick which of them would be the ‘Catcher’. They can do this in a group of two (or more) and if they like, play an adapted version (called either O-Chub Khek Khao or O-Chub Tee Khean), which is a game in itself. The game has exactly the same structure and rules as Rock, Paper and Scissors but in this game “Rock” is known as “Hammer”.

Who Plays
O-Chub requires at least two children to play. Played by both and girls, the maximum number of players and their ages will depend on what the next game to be played is. Each game can have as many players as is needed and they can be of any age group. Older children often prefer to play O-Chub Khek Khao or O-Chub Tee Khean games of which can consist of up to five players.
Time and Place

Each round of O-Chub takes as little as a minute to play and can be played anywhere, at anytime. Games of O-Chub Khek Khao or O-Chub Tee Khean, take a little longer, around 5-10 minutes per game, depending on how long the group wants to play.

Skill, Strategies and Qualities of a Good Player

O-Chub is a simple game that only requires players to make shapes with their hands. As players become more familiar with the game, they often try to predict the shapes others players will make, or bluff by selecting the same symbol repeatedly to make their opponent think that they will choose that one again, but then swapping to a different one to win the game.

Popularity

Younger children are more likely to play O-Chub to quickly find a game starter. O-Chub Khek Khao (or O-Chub Tee Khean) tends to be more popular with older children, since these games require children to be more competitive and alert.

O-Chub has the same rules as To Chub played by Lanna children and Pao Ying Chub played by Akha and Thai children. As versions such as O-Chub Khek Khao or O-Chub Tee Khean are only found in the Mae Hong Sorn province it is thought that the Tai Yai children adapted it themselves for fun.

How is the Game Played?

Determining a Game Starter

Step 1. Two players stand facing each other and in unison say, “O-Chub”. Usually “O” is said slowly (“Ooo”), followed by a short “Chub”.

Step 2. As they say, “Chub”, both players have to form a Scissors, Paper or Hammer shape with one hand.

Step 3: The outcome is determined by Scissors beats Paper, Paper beats Hammer and Hammer beats Scissors.
Playing as a Competitive Game

**Step 1.** If a group of players want to play O-Chub as a longer game, rather than just a quick way of selecting a starter they can choose one of two versions, O-Chub Khek Khao or O-Chub Tee Khean. Both the games are the same, but the title reflects the punishment that the players receive: O-Chub Khek Khao (O-Chub Punch the Knee) or O-Chub Tee Khean (O-Chub Slap the Arm).

**Step 2.** All the players stand in a circle and say in unison, “O-Chub”. Usually “O” is said slowly (“Ooo”), followed by a short “Chub”. Once again, as they say, “Chub”, all the players have to form a Scissors, Paper or Hammer shape with one hand.

**Step 3:** The outcome is determined by Scissors beats Paper, Paper beats Hammer and Hammer beats Scissors. If players are displaying all three symbols, they have to play again until only one of two symbols if being displayed by all the players.

**Step 4.** The winner (or group of winners) can punish the losers by punching their knee or slapping their arms, depending on the chosen game.
Rules

1. Winners of *O-Chub* start the next game.

2. Losers of a game of *O-Chub Khek Khao* or *O-Chub Tee Khean*, have to gracefully accept their punishment of having their knee punched or arm slapped!