

# JUKSKEI



## NAMIBIA

### A Basic Introduction to the Sport

**Presented by the Namibia Jukskei Board**

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# A BASIC GUIDE TO PLAY JUKSKEI

Background

How to Play Jukskei

The Pitch

The Equipment

Mode of Play

Scoring

5 Basic steps required to cast a Skei

Measuring the Distances from the Pen

References

## **BACKGROUND**

Today Jukskei is not only an indigenous sport, but also an official competitive sport played by amateurs

The actual “birth” according to tradition can be traced back to approximately 1734.

Thereafter on 3 March 1940, the Eastern Cape and Free State played the first interprovincial match.

Annually a national championship is held where national teams are selected to participate in international tests

Jukskei, the name, originated from the object used to play the game with. Players would normally remove two skei’s from a yoke. One skei served as a pen or target, anchored in the ground, while the other skei was hurled towards the pen.

The interaction created by the rules of the game creates a sociable atmosphere for players. Players and teams interact with each other in a friendly, yet competitive environment, applying their skill to beat the opposing team. The game requires a great deal of skill, but can equally be enjoyed by players who do not have the same skill level as elite players.

## HOW TO PLAY JUKSKEI

Skei's from both teams are all thrown from one direction (a round) and then the other direction (also a round).

During a game the skei's are thrown over various distances with the maximum of 16 meters at a pen planted in a sand pit. The distance thrown is determined by the age and gender of the player (see condensed rules)

Teams usually consist of four players, each with two skei's. Players from the two teams alternate, each player throwing both their skei's during their turn.

## THE PITCH

A Jukskei pitch consists of two playing areas (sandpits) in opposite directions, so that play can take place in both directions.



Diagram 1  
A jukskei pitch

## THE EQUIPMENT

Each player has two skei's. The sizes and weights depend on the age of the player



Diagram 2  
Different skei sizes

A pen is positioned in each sandpit as per the rules. A caliper is a useful measuring tool that is required to measure which skei is the closest to the pen.



Diagram 3  
Measuring using a Caliper

## **MODE OF PLAY**

Players take turns throwing a pair of skei's

A player of team A will throw his/her two skei's, scoring points with each skei.

The player achieves a score with every skei thrown which is calculated at the end of every player's throwing turn, i.e. after a player has thrown both his skei's.

A player of team B then starts his throwing turn, throwing both his/her skei's. The points scored by the player of team B are then used to eliminate the score achieved by the player from team A.

The additional points scored by either player are then summated to the team's score. This sequence of events continues until all the players from both teams have thrown their skei's.

Any player in a team can eliminate the points of the opposing team and only the final score not eliminated by either team will be added to the team's score. This occurs after the throwing turn, i.e. all the players of the team, have completed their individual throwing turns. A final score then is calculated for that round by the Captains.

## SCORING

The unique way of scoring allows teams to develop strategies and to use different tactics to out maneuver opposing teams. It transforms the game from being merely physical to an intriguing mental game, drawing on the strategic planning skills of players and teams.

Scoring in jukseki appears to be very complicated. It takes place at two levels.

**Firstly**, within a set the purpose of the set is to reach a score of 23.

When the pen is knocked over it counts 3 points

If the skey is closer than 460mm from the pen, it scores 1 point.

If the skey hits the pen and lay within a radius of 460mm from the pen it scores 4 points. – i.e 3 plus 1

The aim of the game is to achieve exactly 23 points ,before the opposing team.

If a team achieves more than 23 points, they bust and have to restart the game.

Teams therefore try to eliminate the opponent's score by restricting the final points they can add after each throwing turn.

**Secondly**, for each set or 23 points achieved a set is awarded. This set counts 5 points.A game usually takes place within 60 to 75 minutes. In this time teams need to score 3 sets.

The aim is to score 3 sets in a match.Hence a a maximum score of 15 points can be achieved or scores totalling 15 - i.e.

10 vs 5

15 vs 0

8 vs 7

13 vs 2

10.5 vs 4.5

12 vs 3

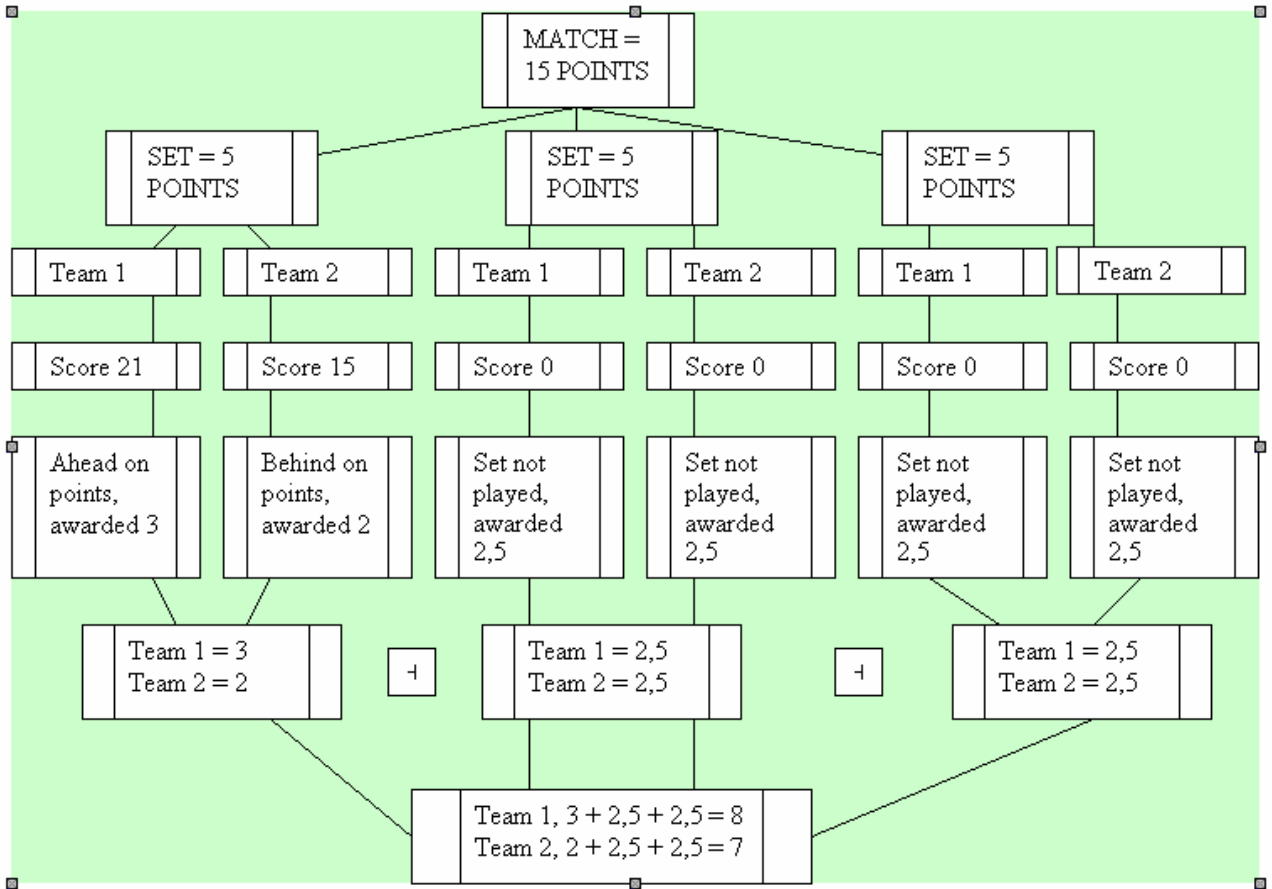
9.5 vs 5.5

12.5 vs 2.5

This will be demonstrated during the practical session

## SCORING

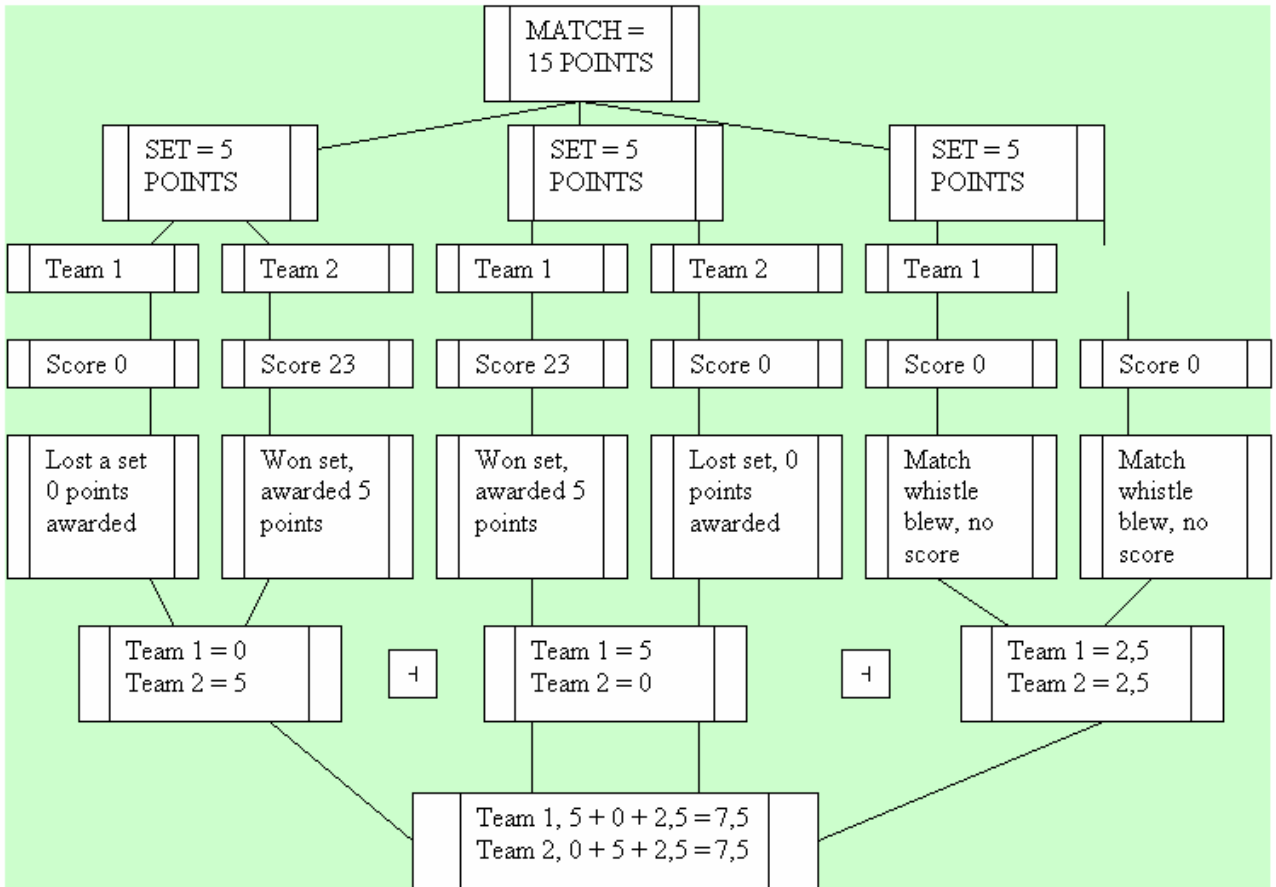
A Sketch indicating how the scoring takes place



Final score is 8 for team 1 and 7 for team 2

## SCORING

A Sketch indicating how the scoring takes place



Final score is 7.5 for team 1 and 7.5 for team 2

## 5 BASIC STEPS REQUIRED TO CAST A SKEI

Jukskei looks like an easy game to play, but is actually a very technical game to master. It is a good idea to allow people to throw over shorter distances in the beginning teaching them to stand correctly, aim, swing, step and release the skei.

Start by practicing a “straight skei “.

Basically the skei is gripped by the handle and, by means of a swinging forward motion of the arm, is cast underhand past the leg. A skei has been cast as soon as it leaves the hand of a player. This throwing action is divided into different movement components to assist the analysis of a player’s technique.

**The basic 5 steps to throwing properly are:**

**Stand correctly, Place the skei in the hand, Aim, Swing and Release**

Remember – the swing and release action should be even and similar in fashion to a clock’s pendulum

### **STEP ONE: Standing in the correct position**

The player needs to concentrate to realise what is expected from him. He positions his feet with the stepping foot slightly forward. Weight is placed on the foot that is behind. Shoulders are relaxed. The aim is to keep the body in the same direction as the pen. One centimeter body deviation can result in missing the pen by about 3 centimeters over the set distance.

The players should take up a position behind the appropriate delivery line, determined by his/her age and gender. The leg that will be used to give the stride with, should be slightly bent and placed in front of the anchor leg. The coach can use the following indicators to assist players with the technique:

- The player must feel and look relaxed.
- Players must anchor their body position by placing most of their weight on their anchor leg.
- The stepping foot should be placed slightly in front of the anchoring foot.(Diagram 4)
- Players standing too far behind the delivery line tend to give to big a stride, which often results in overstepping.
- The body should be pointing in the direction of the casting line and towards the pen.



Diagram 4  
Correct  
standing  
position



## STEP TWO: Placing the Skei in the hand

Take hold of the skei by placing the index finger, of the casting hand, on the neck area of the skei. Close the hand with no part of the handle protruding from the back of the hand. Place the thumb on the middle digit, not the index finger. Let the arms hang next to the body. This will allow the skei to hang straight down with the head pointing toward the ground.



Diagram 5  
Placing the skei in the hand

## Step THREE :Taking Aim

The next movement unit of the throwing action involves the process of taking aim. This normally occurs after the player has taken-up his/her correct standing position and grip. The visual input from the eyes will service as the control centre that will guide the direction of the cast. The pen will be the target and will be separated by the hand and arm holding the skei.

The skei is lifted into a position that brings it in line with the eyes and the stake. The elbow will be bent forming a 90 degree angel between the forearm and the upper-arm. (See diagram 6)

The elbow and upper-arm must be relaxed, but should not touch the body. The player is now in a position to take aim. This can be done by looking past the shoulder of the skei at the stake.

The grip must look and feel comfortable. It grip must be firm, yet relaxed. The player's muscles must be relaxed.



Diagram 6 and 7  
The typical aiming positions



## Step FOUR : The Swing

The casting movement is started with the eyes focused on the pen. Drop the skei until the arm is straight. The swinging motion follows a path, in a straight line, next to the side of the player (diagram 8) until the shoulder locks at the back. This will move the arm into a position that is nearly horizontal with the ground. (Diagram 9) The shoulders must point towards the target, e.g. the stakes, and maintain this position at all time. The extent of the backward swinging motion is different for every individual. Use the following indicators to guide the technique of players:

- The path of the skei in this motion should not slant:

Behind the back or outward away from the body

Players should apply an optimal level of strength, i.e. the strength applied should only be enough to get the skei to the target, e.g. pen. Players develop a sense for applying the right level of strength by judging the distance and weight of the skei.



Diagram 8  
Backward  
swing past  
the body



Diagram 9  
Shoulder locks  
at the back



Diagram 10  
Forward  
swing past  
the body

## STEP FIVE - Releasing the Skei

The skei must be released in line with the player's face. This motion is deliberate and casts the skei in the required direction. It is important that the skei does not remain in the hand for too long a period. This fault will normally cast the skei on a pathway that is either too high or rotates too fast. The hand must follow the skei as far as possible after releasing the skei. This follow-through will assist the player with the type of shot or rotation used.



Diagram 11:

Back swing showing bent knees

### **Bending the Knees**

The knees should be bent at a slight angle during the throwing motion. This will assist the player to transfer his/her weight onto the front foot. The body must keep its forward momentum and should not move up and down.

### **The Wrist**

The movement of the wrist is important in determining the type of shot or rotation applied to the skei. The wrist should be firmly aligned in a straight line. Again, it is important that the muscles be relaxed.

### **Rhythm**

The casting action of Jukskei is an A-cyclical movement. It is consisting of various movements that need to be executed in a synchronized pattern. Players must maintain an easy cadence throughout the casting motion. The stepping movement usually precedes the swinging motion forward in this sequence of movements.

### **Balance**

Core balance must be maintained throughout the casting movement. It is especially crucial at the point of delivering the skei. The body weight of the player is in motion during the swinging movement and is carried forward by the stepping movement. Players should concentrate on keeping the balance on the front foot, while moving the back foot gracefully forward to join the front foot. The casting arm should also stay in the release position until the skei reaches the sand pit. This movement will eliminate a pulling-back or dragging motion of the hands. Successful elite players are normally characterised by their smooth casting movement, appearing to be effortless.

## MEASURING THE DISTANCES FROM THE PEN

A condensed set of rules are available.

It is recommended that they are always available, together with a calliper.

During tournaments an Umpire is on duty and can be called anytime during a game by the Captains of the team.

As we have learnt from the rules, skei's are measured from the nearest point of the skei to the pen. If this is measured accurately it can result in a team winning or not achieving a set.

A steady hand and Calliper are needed for this.

Remember that the Calliper must touch both the pen and the closest part of the skei being measured.

Measure the skei in question nearest the pen, then keeping the Calliper in the measured position, put the Calliper against the pen and measure the opposing skei in question.

This should determine which skei is nearest. If they are exactly the same distance then they cancel each other and no points are awarded to either team for these skei's.

If there is any dispute an Umpire can be called by the captains.

### Moving of the Skei

It is important to remember that when moving skeis, it should be done very carefully

So that the least possible disturbance occurs. Skei's are moved in the direction requiring the least movement. (see diagram 12)

Skei's move in the direction that they have landed ( do not roll the skei)



Diagram 12

Here it can be seen that there is more space on the left of the skei than on the right.

This means that the skei would move to the left (making it the least amount of movement.)

## Where to from here?

Every region is made up from representatives from all the clubs and together they form the top management of the Namibia Jukskei Board. Every region also has people that are responsible for junior/schools jukskei and referee-issues.

Every year the Junior and Senior National Championships takes place in Kroonstad at Jukskeipark. The 21 unions play on a Round Robin format against each other. The team with the most points at the end of the week's games will be declared National Champions.

