



Cultural Connection: Play Oreano!

A traditional outdoor game played in Kiribati called *Oreano* can be easily replicated and enjoyed where two teams go head to head and try to outlast the other.

Oreano literally means ‘throwing the ball’ as it is composed of two words: *ore* (to throw) and *ano* (ball).

The aim of the game is to score the most number of points in a given time. To score a point the serving team has to make the opponents drop the ball. If the ball is thrown outside the area or hits the ground before reaching the defenders front line then the serve is taken again.

Service changes when the defending team catches the ball. A point can only be scored on a serve. If a server crosses the middle line when serving, no points can be scored. When this happens service changes to the other team.

The ball has no standard size, however, men usually play with a ball at least 20cm in diameter weighing at least 5kg. The core of the ball is made of a heavy rounded stone that is covered by a layer of coconut tree fibre to provide a softer skin to the ball.

The number of players on each side ranges from six to twelve but must always be equal. Players can stand anywhere inside their half court behind the middle line. Good catchers normally stand at the front – they are called *bwaene*.

The game can be dangerous due to the nature of the ball. In the standard rules substitutes are only allowed if players are knocked unconscious!

The ball can be thrown a number of ways:

1. *kabwara* – where the server rolls the ball down their arm as they spin their body around in a tornado action.
2. *taerake* – the thrower runs quickly towards the middle line and releases the ball letting it roll down their arm which they raise at the same time to propel the ball forward.
3. *butu* – the thrower again runs quickly with the ball outstretched. Just before arriving at the middle line they push the ball forward upon release.

ADAPTING THE GAME

Use a volleyball or beach ball to make the game safe and enjoyable.

Rather than keeping points, play an elimination game where players are eliminated when they drop the ball. A team wins when their opponents are eliminated.

Use more than one ball to keep players on their toes and aware of their surroundings.

Players lose points when they serve the ball into the ground or out of bounds.



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