

Following are a few words used while distracting the opponent players.

Hopelessness! Hopelessness!

Oh! He who shoots toward the wide southern plains;

The bald headed one! You will not hit the target;

It will slip away, even if you hit the target;

May it go higher and miss the target;

May it fall short of the target;

May it be swayed by the wind in between;

May it disturb the arrow, bow and both. Here is an encouraging song for the team members:

The arrow of a gentleman; (used for an ordinary person)

The arrow of lord with power; (used only for a high-ranking official)

May it not fly too high;

May it not land low, short of the distance;

May the wind not disturb its flight;

May it hit straight on the bull's eye.

During the olden days when the king participated in an archery game, the person who hit the target the highest number of times would be rewarded with coins and cash and also clothes of extravagant quality.

Archery has evolved in many ways since its inception to the present day use of technologically enhanced equipment. Nowadays, traditional bows and arrows are used by fewer people while playing casual games. Quite often, special tournaments are organised in which contestants must use the traditional equipment. Archery enthusiasts make the modern compound bows their first choice of equipment and mostly use these both in friendly games, sometimes for small betting, and also in organized tournaments where there are major prizes to be won.

2.2.2. Stone Discus

Doegor is a traditional sport played by men of all ages as a pastime. It is played using two flat round-shaped stones hurled at a target almost hidden in the ground at each of the opposite ends of the field, about 25 metres apart. It is one of the simplest games ever played since it doesn't



require more than a pair of flat stones. One only needs two round and flat stones barely a kilogram in weight for each player and the targets are made from a stake of bamboo or any other wood. The stake is inserted into the ground so that it is hardly visible. There is no standard for the number of players in a team. It can be played between two players at least or more depending on the consent of the participants.

Each player hurls the round stone at the target from one end to the other and the one which lands closest to the target earns a point. The distance between the target and the stone is measured by a yardstick. The interesting part is when the following opponent players are allowed to displace the stone that has earned a point and replace it with their own.

Doegor is played by laymen, farmers and even monks all over Bhutan mostly to pass their free time such as New Year or on holidays. The stake for the game differs from place to place and the people who are involved in the game, but mostly takes the form of dinner or feasts hosted by the losing team.

2.2.3. Soksom or Sorsum

Soksom is a type of game played in the olden days by cow herders to pass their leisure time while they are watching over their grazing cows. A thin and strong piece of bamboo about two metres long, or a stiff and thin branch is cut and sharpened at one end. This game can be played between two players, or between two teams if there are more players. This appears more like javelin throw but at a specific target rather than covering the long distances.

Two targets are fixed facing each other at a distance of about 20-25 metres apart. The targets are made of soft wood 45 cm long and 8 cm wide chopped flat. Each player gets to throw a pair of soksom at the target and fetches two points on hitting it while the one which lands nearest to the target is measured by using three fingers (hence, the name soksom or three fingers) which fetches one point. The player should hold the long soksom just below the middle and then it is thrown at the target with the strength required to reach the other end.

The sharp shooter who manages to hit both soksoms at the target secures four points. This is a race to 25 points and the team securing the first 25 points wins the game. Initially, they would bet for coins during the olden days, money or the losers would have to bring enough packed lunch the next day for the winners as well. The sharp end after it hits the target is no longer sharp so a new end is sharpened at the same place. This process goes on until the whole soksom gets shortened by almost half, thereby another bamboo or a thin branch is cut out to make a new one.

2.2.4. Jigdum

Jigdum is also a game played mostly by the cow herders in the woods during their free time especially by young boys. The main instrument in this game is a short javelin about 45 cm long pointed at both ends. There is a shorter branch, also pointed, in the middle. The targets are placed at a distance of about 35 metres apart. The target is also made out of soft wood which is about 60 cm long and 4 cm broad with the surface of the target basically smoothened.

A player holds the longer branch of the *jigdum* in his hand and throws it at the target so that it spins like the Australian Boomerang and hit the target with a pointed end.

The points are simply calculated. The players are allowed a pair of *jigdum* each and each hit at the target fetches two points while the nearest one is measured by a span (outstretched middle finger and thumb) which secures one point. The measuring of points differs depending on the players from place to place. The other system of measuring the point is using the length of the *jigdum* itself. It is a race to 25 points and whoever scores it first wins the game. This is played by two or more players and the bets are simply to bring enough lunch for the next day by the losers. Sometimes they would play for wine, but at times the loser is required to go and round up the cattle scattered across the pasture.



2.2.5. Wrestling

The Bhutanese version of wrestling is known as *keshe* (means holding by waist or two opponents wrestling by grabbing each other's belt). Over time, the pronunciation of word has changed from Kay shay to Kishi. This wrestling is held between two adult or young adult men to show their strength over one another while at the same time earning respect in their region. Sometimes the young people would showcase their power of strength over another to impress the women they like.

This is a game played mostly by villagers in the remote areas in Bhutan. In former times wrestling used to be a practice among the members of the service corps in the royal court or among the apprentices in the monastery. In some places wrestling is mainly conducted on the evening of Karmai Nyarub festival.

Two persons grip one another firmly about the waist, each holding onto the other's *ker*a (belt) and trying to throw the other to the ground. This game requires strength, agility and balance. Without good balance, one's strength can also be a disadvantage.

In the early days there was no particular occasion or special time to hold this kind of contest. It was a call-on game by one person to the other over different reasons such as provocations or for fun. Today, strong men from all over the country are gathered together for *kyeshe* competition in Thimphu during the celebrations for national day and for the birth anniversary of the reigning monarch.

2.2.6. Dice Game

The dice game (*sho tse*) is an indoor game with its origins in Tibet. It is believed that early traders from Bhutan who went to Tibet for business brought the game back with them. It is played mostly by middle aged men in Bhutan. The game can be played between