

# **KHOKHO – TECHNIQUES & TIPS**

VASANT SATHAYE

## INTRODUCTION

An Important feature of the Indian games is that these games require very limited number of tools for playing. This can be considered as an asset as the large numbers of participants/ enjoy minimum number of tools. Unfortunately, unlike cricket, football, tennis etc., the number of is small and it is further in recent times. It is no wonder that the literature about is also meager. The published literature of any sport is an important criterion to assess the popularity of that sport. In fact, it is also an important tool to propagate, spread and popularize the sport. Large amount of literature is available for most of the games which respect.

I from interschool to all India tournaments. Thus, I claim to know all the stages through which a player has to go before he can qualify himself as a an expert of the game. With advancing years, I decided to call it a day and said good bye to kho-kho as an active player, I maintained my association with the game as an organizer, coach, umpire or official. Now a day, all 'on the field' activities are reduced almost to zero, I still have an earnest desire to promote and propagate through 'off the field' activities such as writing articles, books etc. confined to rule books, record books containing statistical data, small leaflets for promotion and propagation of the game and some writings in news papers and journals. Until recently, books describing techniques and skills in the game have not been published in any language. To make a beginning in this direction, a book in 'Marathi', named "KHOKHO, TANTRA AND MANTRA," was published in 2001. The game of has now spread in all parts of the country the neighboring countries Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh China and S. Korea who have shown keen interest in the game., present this book for all the lovers of in English. benefit the beginner and expert players, as well as the students of the game because of their knowledge and experience of playing the game. I am sure they will soon enrich the literature on the game. But it is a fact that so far no body has attempted it. So I feel it better to come with my contribution in the hope that this may force them to write if only to correct me.

have a go for two great authorities in the game, Shri Aravind Patwardhan and Shri Suresh Dinkar, 'The Guru' of many generations of expert players. It is more of a compilation of my observations based on my experience and study of the game along with what my team-mates and others shared with me. I firmly believe that the contents of the book have become broad-based due to such compilation.

I was inspired in my childhood to choose the game of by my father late Shri D. K. Sathaye, himself a great player of in his youthful days. In my schooldays, I got my first lessons in this field by late Shri Mhaskar. I am obliged to him for whatever I contribute in the field of. As a Nav Maharashtra Sangh player, my career is shaped by late Shri Shankarrao Patankar, the greatest player of all times about it

Many of my team-mates and others have contributed significantly during the preparation of write-up for this book. All of them are authorities on in their own right. They unreservedly shared with me all their knowledge of the game by giving very useful suggestions. Their contribution is a great value addition to this book. I feel fortunate to get help from Dr. Madhusudan Jhamwar, Mr. Sham Purohit, Arjun

Awardee Mr. Shrirang Inamdar, Mr. Mahesh Medhekar, Mr. Prabhakar Dhupkar, Mr. Suhas Wagh, Dr. Prakash Shet and Mrs. Shaila Patwardhan. The help Mr. Suresh Dinkar and Mr. Arvind Patwardhan is invaluable

Nav Maharashtra Sangha, Pune, a well-known organization in the field of, kindly agreed to publish English version of the Marathi book “KHOKHO, TANTRA AND MANTRA,” published by the same organization. The progressive thinking of Arjun Awardee Mr. Shrirang Inamdar and his colleagues of Nav Maharashtra Sangh have always encouraged me in this endeavor. This publication is a part of their untiring efforts to make, “A Global Sport”. I am thankful to Mr. Inamdar and Nav Maharashtra Sangh for

---

Chapter 1---Rules, Nomenclature and the .

Chapter 2 ----- The of the

Chapter 3 -----The , the and

Chapter 4-----KHOKHO –ussle

Chapter 5-----KHOKHO – Skills - Attack

Chapter 6-----KHOKHO – Skills – Defense

Chapter 7-----Strategies in the Technical – Ideal

Coaching and Training

-----Off-season

-----

-----

## Chapter 1

### Rules, Nomenclature and the

Sports in general and games in particular However,the contribution of ‘Olympic Games’ for the promotion and propagation of sportsis noteworthy. Almost all the countries in the world have hailed the spirit of Olympic Movement.

Playing games is almost a natural and instinctive activity in children. In fact, it is observed that animal cubs also during their early growing period. s commonly seen that cubs of cats, monkeys and kids play among themselves. Such play is very important for strengthening their muscles, imbibing naturally inherited agility, learndecision making and mental and intellectual abilities. It is equally inherited abilities and educate themselves for efficient physical, mental and intellectual activities through ‘playing’. In addition to this, there are other benefits of sports for the civilized human beings. Players learn team spirit which becomes an asset for all the activities through-out their life. Players often prove that they take both victories and defeats in to their strides. Entertainment and stress-management are other important benefits of sports, especially in present days’ fast and competitive lifestyle.he formal education must include sports/physical education in its curriculum. It is the responsibility of the guardians/teachers to see that their wards/students take to sports in their childhood and youth.

Fortunately, the ancient game of, known and played the length and breadth of India since long does not suffer from any such factor . has now become an international sportAn apex body, Asian Khokho Federation (AKF), is formed to conduct the game at international level while the Khokho Federation of India conducts,co-ordinate the activities relating the game in India.Asian KHOKHO Federation (AKF) has published a booklet of rules, regulations and other relevant information with the intentiona common terminology of, throughout India and other Asian countries. As a matter of convenience,is used in the book.

Figure 1 showsthe complete laout of pitch with dimensions. also the sitting arrangement players and officials for the match. The definitions discussed hereafter be read with reference to this figure and dimensions of various parts of the ground. The rules and definitions are applicable to both the groups of gents/ladies and boys/girls years of age.

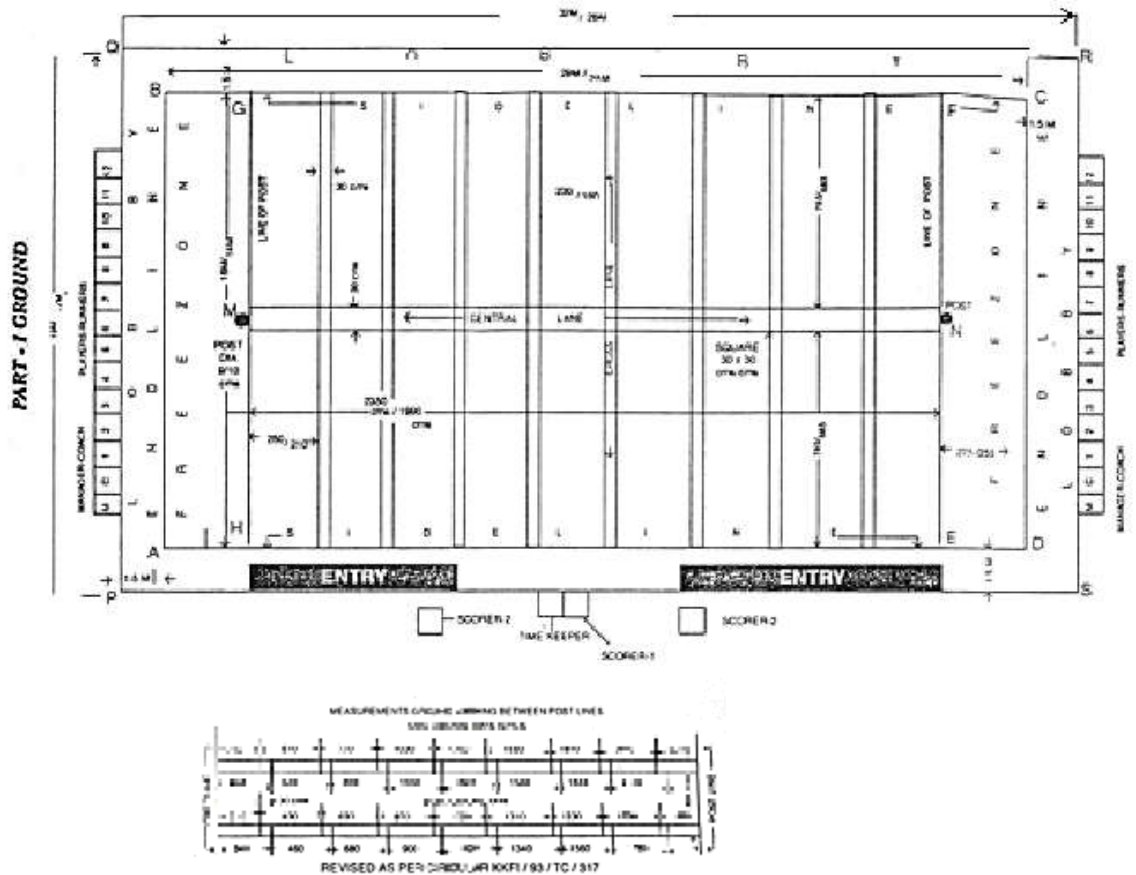


Figure 1  
 Technical details of the ground of KHOKHO

## Definitions:

### 01. ENDLINES

The lines AB and CD running parallel to each other having lengths equal to the width of the KHOKHO field are known as ENDLINES.

Note: Measurements of ENDLINES for

- A. MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior) – 16 Meters.
- B. SUB-JUNIOR/MINI – 14 Meters.

### 02. SIDLINES

The lines AD and BC running parallel to each other having lengths equal to the length of KHOKHO field are known as SIDELINES.

- Note: Measurements of SIDELINES for
- C. MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior) – 29 Meters.
  - D. SUB-JUNIOR/MINI – 25 Meters.

### 03. FIELD

The limits of KHOKHO field are formed by meeting the ENDLINES and SIDELINES at ABC & D.

### 04. COURT

The area between the post lines formed by points EFGH is known as COURT.

### 05. POSTS

Two strong wooden posts smooth all over, diameter 120 to 125 cms. above and perpendicular to the ground, fixed firmly in the free zone at tangent to the Post Lines at M and N are known as POSTS. The points M and N shall coincide with centre of the posts and shall be at a distance exactly half the width of the KHOKHO court. Their diameter shall be uniform throughout and shall measure between 9-10 cms.

Note: The POSTS shall not be tapered. Top of the POSTS shall be free from any sharp edges.

### 06. CENTRAL LANE

CENTRAL LANE is a rectangle in between two POSTS measuring 30 cms. X length of the COURT which divides the COURT in to two equal halves and forms SQUARES at the intersection of CROSS LANES.

Note: The length of the CENTRAL LANE

- A. MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior) – 23.50 Meters.
- B. SUB-JUNIOR/MINI – 19.90 Meters.

### 07. CROSS LANES

Each of the rectangles, measuring 30 cms width of the court that intersects the central lane at right angles is known as a CROSS LANE.

### 08. SQUARE

The area of 30 cms 30 cms formed by intersection of CENTRAL LANE and CROSS LANE is known as a SQUARE.

Note:

- 1) The distance between adjacent SQUARES

- A. MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior) – 230 centimeters.
  - B. SUB-JUNIOR/MINI – 190 centimeters.
- 2) Distance between post line and first CROSS LANE
- A. MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior) – 250 centimeters.
  - B. SUB-JUNIOR/MINI – 210 centimeters.

09. LINES OF THE POSTS

.The lines which are at right angle to the central lane and parallel to the cross lane at tangent to the posts are known as LINES OF THE POSTS or the POST LINES (EF & GH).

10. FREE ZONE

The remaining portion of the field on either end of the court is known as FREE ZONE.

Note: Dimensions of the free zone

- A. MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior) – 275 centimeters x 16 meters.
- B. SUB-JUNIOR/MINI – 255 centimeters. x 14 meters.

11. LOBBY

The area surrounding the field by a measure of 1.5 meters in width is known as LOBBY.

12. WIDTH OF THE LINE

Width of each line should be around 3 to 5 cms and is included in all the measurements.

13. ENTRY ZONE

The area marked in the lobby parallel to the side line and in the side of the scorer's table with outer line of the lobby measuring 1 meter in width and from post line to third cross lane in length is known as ENTRY ZONE. It is meant for the runners to the field for the defence.

14. SITTING BLOCK

SITTING BLOCK for reserve players, coach and manager shall be either side of the field just outside of the lobby adjacent to the end lines.

15. CHASERS

The players who chase the opponents with a view to put out and at same time score points are known as CHASERS.

16. ATTACKER

A player who pursues the player of the opposite side, that is defenders with a view to tag and touch them is known as ATTACKER.

17. RUNNERS

The players of the side other than the chasers are known as RUNNERS.

18. DEFENDERS

The runners who are inside the field for their turn of defence are known as DEFENDERS.

19. TO GIVE KHO

To give KHO an attacker should touch the chaser from behind him/her and then utter the word KHO loudly and distinctly.

Note: If the action of uttering the word KHO precedes the action of touching by hand, then it shall be deemed as Foul. Simultaneous action of touching and uttering KHO is not a Foul. Single action of touching will not be deemed as Foul. However, uttering 'KHO' will be considered as Foul. If an attacker touches a chaser sitting in the square nearest the Post, KHO shall be given. If an attacker utters any word other than the word 'KHO', it will be deemed as Foul. Also, uttering the word 'KHO' or any word resembling 'KHO' by any of the chasers will be treated as Foul. The other actions being perfect, the following three actions of the attacker where a 'KHO' is given will be allowed. However, the feet of the attacker shall not go beyond the Cross Lane.

- A. An attacker's front foot need not necessarily be in touch with Cross Lane.
- B. An attacker may be in the Cross Lane.
- C. An attacker's foot should have in touch with the Cross Lane, with the other portion of his body going beyond that Cross Lane.
  - 1. After touching a chaser except nearest to the post (1<sup>st</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> chaser) if an attacker moves away beyond the cross lane, he will be deemed to have continued his attack and hence shall not be allowed to utter 'KHO' from the distance, However, on Cross Lane, he/she may come back and give 'KHO'.
  - 2. An attacker can not rest or support on a chaser to put out a defender. It will be deemed as foul.

20. FOUL

If an attacker or a chaser violets any Rules, it is known as FOUL.

21. TO TAKE A DIRECTION

When an attacker goes from one Post Line to another Post Line and/or after getting 'KHO' he/she goes to a particular Post Line, he/she is said to have taken a direction.

22. SHOULDER LINE

An imaginary line running through the centre of the shoulders of an attacker is known as SHOULDER LINE.

23. TO RECEDE



When an attacker while going to a particular direction touches the ground which he/she had already covered, he/she is said to have receded.

EXPLANATION

The ground covered will always refer to ground covered by rear foot in opposite direction.

24. TO LEAVE THE FREE ZONE

When attacker loses contact of his/her feet with the free zone and comes in contact with the court by his feet, he/she is said to have left the free zone.

Note: Keeping within the rule of taking direction, an attacker can change his/her direction by kicking the post by one leg and another in air.

25. TO REACH THE FREE ZONE

When attacker loses contact of his/her feet with the court and comes in contact with the ground of the free zone by his/her feet, he/she is said to have reached the free zone.

26. OUT OF FIELD

If a defender loses contact of his/her feet with the field and comes out, he/she is said to have gone OUT OF FIELD.

27. ENTRY

A runner is said to have entered the field as soon as he/she loses the contact with the ground outside the field with his feet and comes in contact with the ground inside the field with his/her foot.

-----

**RULES OF THE GAME:**

01. The play ground shall be marked as shown in the drawing last part DEFINITIONS.

02 shall call for the spin of the coin (TOSS). He shall instruct one of them to call the choice of the side of the coin. He shall then declare the winner of the TOSS.

shall stand at the centre of the court facing the scoring table with captains on either side.

Note: A. The winner of the toss will raise his arm and indicate immediately by his/her index finger either the central lane or the side line for the option of chasing or defence. No captain shall touch the coin.

B. Any eight chasers shall occupy the squares facing the side lanes in such a way that no adjacent chasers face the same side line.

The ninth chaser shall stand in either of the free zones to start the chase.

At the commencement of the turn, the first batch of three defenders shall be inside the limits (field) and the remaining runners shall occupy the seats meant for them. After the defender is out, he/she shall occupy the seat meant for him/her.

After the commencement of the turn, no chaser shall leave the square without getting KHO or change the face. If he/she does so, it is a foul and repetition of the same will amount to misbehavior.

03. An attacker, as a rule, shall not cross the central lane to go to the other half of the court or to the free zone.

Note

04. If the KHO is to be given, it shall be given from behind a chaser. It shall be given in a sufficiently loud tone so that the defenders and the officials can hear. The chaser shall not get up without getting KHO.

Note: A. An attacker shall not give KHO by touching the arm or the leg or any part of the body extended or tilted towards him by a chaser.

To give a KHO touching on the back of the chaser should not be insisted upon.

05. After giving a KHO, an attacker shall cease to be so and shall sit down immediately in the square of the chaser to whom he has given a KHO.

Note: A. after giving a perfect KHO, if the chaser while sitting loses the contact of the cross lane, it shall not be a foul.

B. The natural time needed to sit on the square after giving KHO must be allowed. However, this should not obstruct the game of defender. If he/she does so, it should be declared as foul.

06. After getting a KHO, chaser will immediately be an attacker and shall go to the half that he/she is facing and shall go in the direction which he/she has taken by going beyond the cross lane or turning his/her shoulder towards any of the posts. Attacker shall take the direction according to one of the actions whichever he/she has performed first.

Note:

A. As long as any part of the foot of an attacker is touching the ground of a cross lane, he/she has not gone beyond that cross lane.

B. Defender shall be declared 'out' if an attacker puts him out (touches him/her) before leaving the square without committing foul.

07. An attacker shall take the direction to which he/she turns his/her shoulder line. When an attacker, while going in a particular direction, turns his/her shoulder line through more than a right angle to the direction which he/she has already taken, it shall be a foul.

08. Once an attacker has taken a direction, he/she shall go in that direction till he/she reaches the free zone unless he/she gives a KHO before that. An attacker shall not go to the other half of the court unless he/she turns around the post through the free zone.

09. If an attacker leaves the free zone, he/she shall go in the direction of the other free zone, remaining on that half of the court where he/she was, when he/she left the free zone.

10. The rules about taking the direction and receding shall not be applicable in the free zone.

11. The chaser shall sit in a manner which shall not obstruct the defenders. If a defender becomes out by such an obstruction, he/she shall not be declared out.

Note:

A) If a chaser is found to be deliberately moving any part of his/her body which may obstruct a defender, he/she shall be warned by the officials and appropriate action will be taken.

B) The action of moving/tilting shoulder, thigh or any other part of the body towards a defender who is running near the central lane and closer to a chaser shall be treated as a foul.

12. During a turn, an attacker may go out of court but he/she shall observe all the rules about taking direction and receding even when he/she is out of court.

#### EXPLANATION

The word 'court' is to be noted. Rules of court are applicable within the area covered by or between the extended post lines.

Attacker will be allowed to enter the field/court as he wants, if he/she goes out of court beyond the extended post lines. He/she shall not be insisted to enter through the free zone.

13. A defender shall not touch a chaser. If he/she does so, he/she shall be warned once in a turn. If he/she repeats the same, he/she shall be declared out.

Note

defender should be recorded in the 'remarks' column of the score sheet.

14. A defender shall be declared out if he/she is touched by a hand by an attacker without violating any rule or if he/she goes out of field. He/she shall be declared out by a short blow of whistle.

Note:

A. Deliberate pushing, catching, pulling even by uniform or hitting will be treated as misbehavior.

B. While chasing a defender, if an attacker pushes the same defender out of field, the defender shall not be declared out.

C. If a defender goes out of field he/she shall be declared out.

15. An attacker and chaser shall not violate any of the rules pertaining to them. It shall be a foul if any of the rules is violated.

Note:

A. If a defender is put out as a result of such a foul or a foul is committed immediately as a result of the action taken in putting a defender out, defender shall

not be declared out. The protection from being out due to a foul is applicable to a defender who was being actually chased at the time of committing a foul.

B. At the time of 'Touching at the Post' (Pole Dive), dragging of rear leg and turning of shoulder line more than 90° will not be a foul but touching and/or crossing central lane by any part of the body will be a foul. In this case shoulder line foul should be ignored.

16. If an attacker violates any rules, the umpire shall declare a foul by blowing a short whistle continuously and shall compel the attacker to go in the direction opposite to that of which he is going. Immediately on hearing a signal given by the umpire by his whistle, the attacker shall go to the direction indicated by the umpire and if the defender is being chased at that time, thereby becomes out he shall not be declared out and the attacker shall have to follow the direction indicated by the umpire. He need not give KHO.

Note:

If an attacker commits a foul of 'to recede' and continues his attack, as a result of attacker's action, defender goes out of the ground, he shall not be declared 'out'.

The term 'as a result of action' implies that there should not be time lapse between foul and action. The action putting out a defender is supposed to be a continuation of action of foul or its follow through.

#### 17. ADVANTAGE RULE

If a foul committed by either attacker or chaser does not give any advantage whatsoever to the chasing side in their chase and disadvantage to the defenders, it shall not be declared by continuous short blasts of whistle.

---

### **RULES ABOUT MATCHES:**

01. Each team will consist of a physiologist/doctor, manager, coach and fifteen players for international tournaments and twelve players for national level tournaments/competition. Twelve players will be named for a match; only nine players will take the fielding in the beginning.

02. A.

An inning will consist of chasing and defending turns which shall be of nine minutes each MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior). It shall be of seven minutes for SUB-JUNIOR/MINI. Each match will consist of two innings. There shall be an interval of nine minutes after an inning and five minutes break between turns for MEN, WOMEN, BOYS & GIRLS (senior & junior), for SUB-JUNIOR/MINI the same shall be of six minutes and three minutes respectively.

At the beginning of the turn, three runners shall be inside the field for defence. Immediately on these three defenders being declared out, the next three runners shall be inside the field before two 'KHO's are given. Those runners who fail to enter within the period shall be declared out. The runners who may enter early shall not be declared out but called back. Thus, the runners will continue to enter the field in the same batch till the end of turn. The attacker who has put out the third defender shall not chase the new batch. He shall give KHO. If he chases any of the new defenders,

it shall be a foul. Each side shall enter its runners to the field from the portion marked for them in the lobby (Entry Zone).

B.

Time to enter the field (two correct KHOs) is given to runners. Hence defenders who are inside the field can be chased after 'one correct KHO' is given to chase a new batch. Two KHOs should not be insisted

As soon as first defender of a batch is out, the next three runners must enter the Entry Zone.

shall have an option to declare out runners of the next batch who have not entered the field after two correct KHOs are given.

An attacker shall not pursue a new batch after the last defender of a batch is out in whichever manner. He must give KHO.

Runners who enter early shall be called back by scorer number two/referee.

03. The captain of the chasing team shall have the option to end the turn before allowed time. He shall inform the referee about the same by raising his arm and request him/her to stop the turn. Until the referee had signaled to stop the turn, the turn is not closed. The chasing side shall not leave the squares until the referee has not declared the turn as closed.

Note:

side can also request the referee to close the turn of defence in the second innings provided the match is conceded as 'Defeated'. The referee can allow this if the difference in points at that time is fifteen or more.

04. The chasing side shall score one point for each defender out. If all the runners are out before the completion of the turn, they shall maintain the same order of defence. Order of the runners shall not be changed during a turn.

05. In the knock out matches, the side that scores more points at the end of the match shall be declared winner. If the points are equal, one more inning (one turn for each side as chasers and runners) shall be played. If again the points are equal, an additional inning shall be played on minimum chase basis as follows: Referee will start the turn of this additional innings. As soon as first point is scored, the turn shall be closed by the referee. He shall stop the stop watch with him simultaneously. The time for scoring of this first point shall thus be noted. The side that takes less time to score this first point (minimum chase) shall be declared as winner of the match.( the referee shall stop the match if the time exceeded more than thirty seconds than the recorded time of the opponents). If needed, this process shall continue till the winner is decided.

In the league system, the winner shall score two points and loser shall no points. In case of tie, both the sides shall score one point each. If there is tie, in the group league, the concerned teams in the group will replay the match or matches with knock-out system, after drawing lot. But if it is not possible to conduct match/matches for some unavoidable circumstances, the match/matches can be played in minimum chase basis.

06. If the match is not completed for any reason, it shall be continued further at another time, with the same players and same officials, provided it is played in the same session. The scores of the completed turns of each side shall be counted, the match being continued, from the beginning of incomplete turn. (The same nine players and officials will be there). If the incomplete is not played in the same session, the entire match will be replayed from the beginning. In this case the players and officials need not besame.

Time for sessions will be as follows.

Morning – Sunrise to twelve noon.

Afternoon/evening – Twelve noon to end of the day.

Note:

Match started in one session and completed in the next session will be treated as played in the next session.

07. After completion of first innings, if the points of the side (who chased first at the starting of the match) exceeds the points of other side by nine or more, former side shall have the option of requiring the latter side to follow on its turn as a chaser, without forfeiting its own right to take its turn as a chaser afterwards, in case the other side exceeds its score.

#### CLARIFICATION

Option to give follow on is restricted upon nine points only.

It will be mandatory to give follow on if the difference is more than nine points.

In case of follow on the result will be won by “an innings”

#### 08. SUBSTITUTION

A. Any number of substitutions can be allowed by the referee on the request of coach or captain or chasing turn, at any time during the match.

B. For runners, substitution is allowed only before they enter the field.

Note:

A. During substitution, the substituted chaser shall not enter the field unless the outgoing chaser comes out of the field.

B. Substituted attacker shall not pursue the defenders directly. He must give a KHO.

09. If a defender is out, he shall return to the sitting place through the lobby, entering from the nearest end or the side line only.

10. The teams will not leave the ground till the referee declares the results of the match.

---

## **OFFICIALS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MATCH:**

### **(AUTHORITY, DUTY AND RIGHTS)**

01. The following officials shall be appointed for the management of the match, namely A REFEREE, two UMPIRES, a TIME KEEPER and two SCORERS.

#### REFEREE.

## 02. The referee shall perform the following duties

A. He shall check the score sheets, ground etc. and take the toss before starting the match. He shall help the umpires to perform their duties and shall give his final decision, in case of any difference between them.

B. If player intentionally obstructs the conduct of the play or behaves in an ungentlemanly or mischievous manner or intentionally violates any of the rules, the referee shall at his discretion penalize the defaulting players. The penalty at his discretion shall range according to the default from warning a defaulting player or the entire team to participate in further play of the match.

C. He shall announce the warning by calling the chest number of runner or chaser and showing a YELLOW card. It shall be recorded by the scorer-1 by marking the chest number in warning column. He shall announce the forbiddance from the participation in future play in a similar way as warning but showing a RED card. This will also be recorded by scorer-1 by marking F against the chest number in defence column. Such a player shall be immediately replaced and asked to leave the arena.

Note:

If a defender is shown a RED card by the referee to penalize his offence, he will be declared 'out' and shall be forbidden from the participation for that particular match and in the next match too. His substitute will be allowed to play in the same batch if the batch is to come/play again in that particular turn.

D He shall synchronize his watch to that of time keeper and shall check the time after each turn.

E. He shall check the scores of the sides at the end of each turn from the score sheet and also announce the result of the match.  
chase.

## 03. UMPIRES

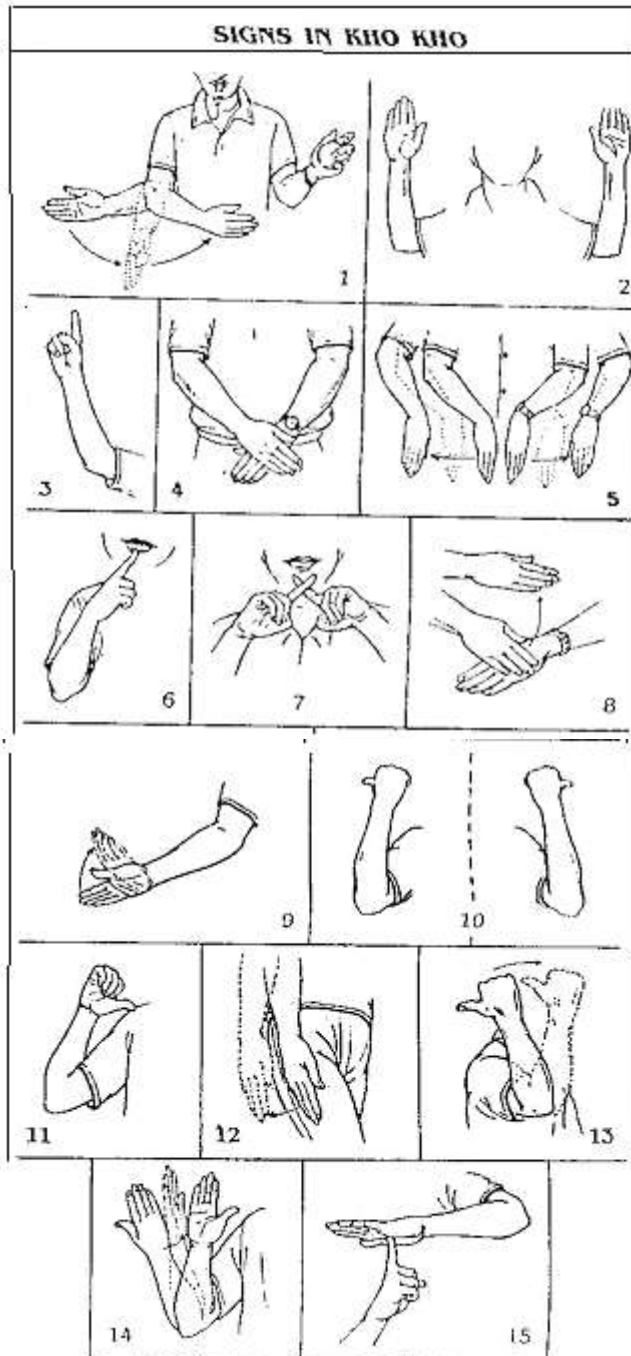
The umpires shall move in the lobby and shall conduct the game. For any reasons if they enter the field, they shall come back to the lobby immediately without obstructing the progress of the match. They shall give decisions by helping each other. Umpire shall declare a foul and compel the attacker to act up to rules, if the latter does not follow the rules. If there is any unfair means in the ground, he will warn the concerned players verbally and bring it to the referee's notice for further action, if necessary.

## 04. TIME KEEPER

The time keeper shall start the turn by blowing a long whistle followed by a short, after getting direction from the referee. The end of the turn shall be declared by him by blowing a long whistle. He shall enter the lobby and declare completion of each minute of play loudly by raising his arm holding an indicator.

Note:

Referee, umpires and time keeper should exhibit signs shown in figure SIGNS IN KHOKHO.




1) Starting the turn. 2) Closing the turn. 3) Out. 4) Crossing the Central Lane by the Attacker. 5) Uttering 'Kho' before touching the chaser. 6) Improper uttering of 'Kho'. 7) 'Kho' or other similar word uttered by chaser. 8) Kho not given after touching the Chaser nearest the Post. 9) Getting up early. 10) Indicate proper direction. 11) Shoulder Line foul. 12) Going beyond Cross Lane. 13) Receding. 14) Change of Direction. 15) Closing turn before scheduled time.

**SIGNS IN KHOKHO.**



## Specimen of the score sheet

SCORE - SHEETS



| ASIAN KHOKHO FEDERATION |  |          |  |          |  |              |  |                  |  |
|-------------------------|--|----------|--|----------|--|--------------|--|------------------|--|
| TOURNAMENT              |  | DATE     |  | COURT NO |  | VENUE        |  | LEAGUE/HANDA OUT |  |
| SECTION                 |  | DIVISION |  | GROUP    |  | TURNS WON BY |  | CHOICE           |  |
| TEAM A                  |  | TEAM B   |  | TEAM A/B |  | CHOICE       |  | DEFENCE/FORWARD  |  |

Regd : S3036-66/67

| SCORE SHEET |  |          |  |          |  |          |  |          |  |
|-------------|--|----------|--|----------|--|----------|--|----------|--|
| SCHEDULE    |  | SCHEDULE |  | SCHEDULE |  | SCHEDULE |  | SCHEDULE |  |
| SCHEDULE    |  | SCHEDULE |  | SCHEDULE |  | SCHEDULE |  | SCHEDULE |  |

| COURT NO                  | TEAM A     | TEAM B           | DEFENCE - TURNS  |             |            |             |          |              |        |                           |            |                  | CHANGE - TURNS |             |            |             |          |              |        |   |   |    |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |
|---------------------------|------------|------------------|--|-------------|------------|-------------|----------|--------------|--------|---------------------------|------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------|--------------|--------|---|---|----|---------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------|------------|----------|----------|--------|------------|------------|----------|----------|--------|------------|------------|----------|----------|--------|------------|------------|----------|----------|--------|
|                           |            |                  | 1  | 2           | 3          | 4           | 5        | 6            | 7      | 8                         | 9          | 10               | 1              | 2           | 3          | 4           | 5        | 6            | 7      | 8 | 9 | 10 |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |
|                           |            |                  | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="10">POINTS SCORED BY TEAM - A</th> <th colspan="10">POINTS SCORED BY TEAM - B</th> </tr> <tr> <td>DEF - &amp; NO</td><td>ATC - &amp; NO</td><td>RUN TIME</td><td>PER TIME</td><td>SYMBOL</td><td>DEF - &amp; NO</td><td>ATC - &amp; NO</td><td>RUN TIME</td><td>PER TIME</td><td>SYMBOL</td> <td>DEF - &amp; NO</td><td>ATC - &amp; NO</td><td>RUN TIME</td><td>PER TIME</td><td>SYMBOL</td><td>DEF - &amp; NO</td><td>ATC - &amp; NO</td><td>RUN TIME</td><td>PER TIME</td><td>SYMBOL</td> </tr> </table> |             |            |             |          |              |        |                           |            |                  |                |             |            |             |          |              |        |   |   |    | POINTS SCORED BY TEAM - A |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | POINTS SCORED BY TEAM - B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | DEF - & NO | ATC - & NO | RUN TIME | PER TIME | SYMBOL | DEF - & NO | ATC - & NO | RUN TIME | PER TIME | SYMBOL | DEF - & NO | ATC - & NO | RUN TIME | PER TIME | SYMBOL | DEF - & NO | ATC - & NO | RUN TIME | PER TIME | SYMBOL |
| POINTS SCORED BY TEAM - A |            |                  |  |             |            |             |          |              |        | POINTS SCORED BY TEAM - B |            |                  |                |             |            |             |          |              |        |   |   |    |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |
| DEF - & NO                | ATC - & NO | RUN TIME         | PER TIME   | SYMBOL      | DEF - & NO | ATC - & NO  | RUN TIME | PER TIME     | SYMBOL | DEF - & NO                | ATC - & NO | RUN TIME         | PER TIME       | SYMBOL      | DEF - & NO | ATC - & NO  | RUN TIME | PER TIME     | SYMBOL |   |   |    |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |
| MANAGER                   |            | COACH            |  | SUBSTITUTES |            | MANAGER     |          | COACH        |        | SUBSTITUTES               |            | MANAGER          |                | COACH       |            | SUBSTITUTES |          |              |        |   |   |    |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |
| LATE ENTRY - B            |            | OUT OF FIELD - B |  | RETIRED - B |            | WARNING - B |          | BENCHES OF B |        | LATE ENTRY - A            |            | OUT OF FIELD - A |                | RETIRED - A |            | WARNING - A |          | BENCHES OF A |        |   |   |    |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |
| SCORED BY                 |            | TEAM A           |  | TEAM B      |            | RESULT TEAM |          | SIGNATURES   |        | SCORER - 1                |            | UNPARE           |                | NAME        |            | TIME KEEPER |          | NAME         |        |   |   |    |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |            |            |          |          |        |

### 05. SCORER

Scorer-1 shall note down and check the names and numbers of the players, shall record the performance of the players. At the end of the match he shall prepare the scores of the two sides and the result of the match. He shall get the score sheets duly signed by the officials. After completing the score sheet he shall hand it over to referee for checking and result.

Scorer-2 shall record the order of the defenders. He shall keep the record of the defenders who are out and make them sit in a place provided for them. H3e shall execute the process of substitution and shall note down with the scorer.

**06.** After the start of the match, if any of the officials is unable to officiate, the remaining officials shall manage the officiating till the end of the turn. If the official is unable to resume the work, he shall be replaced by a new official.

**07.** The officials of the match shall be appointed by the competent authority and shall function under the guidance of referee.

## RULES ABOUT PLAYERS/ MANAGERS/COACHES

### 01. Players Uniform

Uniform of a KHOKHO player shall include sports/canvas shoes (free from any metal part anywhere that may cause injury), short and vest (half sleeves) or 'T'- shirt for men and boys, shirt or 'T'- shirt for women and girls.

Each player shall be numbered in front and back of his/her 'T'-shirt/shirt with number solid color, contrasting with the color of 'T'-shirt/shirt. The number shall be printed / stitched of size 10cms. high and 2cms. width in the front and 20 cms high and 2cms. width on the back. The numbers shall be printed 1 to 15. Players of the same side shall neither wear duplicate numbers nor change during a tournament/championship (In case the need arises, referee will allow the change of chest numbers).

Manager shall furnish scorer-1 the list of players and chest numbers.

## **02. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF PLAYERS**

- a) All players must know the rules of the game and abide by the rules
- b) During the game, a player may address the referee only through the team captain. The team captain may address the referee and shall be the spokesman for his players. He may also address the other officials but only on matters concerning their duties.

## **03. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES, COACHES AND MANAGERS**

The managers, coaches and substitutes shall sit in the place provided for them.

The following acts are punishable:

- (a) Persistent addressing of officials concerning their decisions.
- (b) Making derogatory remarks to officials.
- (c) Committing actions tending to influence decisions of officials.
- (d) Making derogatory acts or personal remarks to the opponents.
- (e) Deliberate coaching during the game from outside the ground.  
Leaving the ground without the permission of referee during the match and before the declaration of the result.

## **04. PENALTIES**

- (a) For a minor offence such as talking to opponents, spectator or official, shouting etc. a verbal warning will be given by the referee. In case of repetition of offence warning will be given by showing a Yellow card.
- (b) For a serious offence, referee may disqualify the concerned players and others from rest of the match by showing a Red card.

Note

If a player is shown Yellow card twice in a match, he shall be forbidden from in that match of the particular tournament and also in a next two different matches in a particular tournament he will be forbidden from the next match of that particular tournament.

As mentioned in the rule 2, 3, 4, of part IV, the action shall be taken by an umpire and/or referee. The concerned shall report the matter in writing to the proper authority (, observer, organizing secretary, convener referee's board of respective derivation).

Note: Masculine gender assumes feminine gender and singular number assumes plural number whenever necessary in all the preceding part.

---

## **IMPLEMENTS**

The following should be used.

01. Posts
  02. Strings
  03. Measuring Tape (steel)
  04. Stop Watches (Two on each ground)
  05. Two rings having inner diameter of nine cms. and ten cms. respectively
  06. Score Sheet Performance Count
  07. Time Placard, one to eight
  08. Red and Yellow Card.
  09. Marking ( lime powder )
- 

## **The of the**

In the last chapter, we learnt the technicalities of the game ofkhokho, namely rules, ground, its dimensions. However, from such technicalities, a layman may not be able to grasp the concept of the game which. Therefore, in this chapter, I shall try to elaborate the structure of the game. Also, I shall try to explain the evolution of the game from simple games which all children play in their childhood. This explanation may improve the understanding of those who are already having some idea of the game. Although, it is almost impossible to get a feel of the game through words, the endeavor is to .

To chase and catch a companion (Catch me, if you can) is perhaps the first game played by all the children in India and the world. Normally, such a chasing game is played in a court yard or any open space. Obviously, the ground would be of limited area, suitable for children to play. The game of chasing and defending from the chase is very appropriate for the children in the age group of six to eight years. It is a usual experience that the number of children coming together increases with the advancing age. They form groups. The need of area for playing also increases. They prefer to play grounds rather than in court yard.

In the game of chasing and defending, normally, only a chaser and a defender are active participants while others only watch the action. Children, in that age group, just can not tolerate such inaction. Therefore, it becomes necessary to choose a game simultaneously. This is a well organized game with well - defined rules, ground dimensions, and . Also, this game is very useful for physical preparation of children before they take up harder games like 'Round KHOKHO', 'KHOKHO' or other sports..In these variations of, the basic act of chasing, to which children are conversant, is implemented in 'a relay' fashion. Therefore, large numbers of players are engaged simultaneously in the action of the game. The act of chasing in co-operative manner in these games. The sharp turns while running fast, getting up quickly from sitting position, maintaining body balance during sharp turns or executing feints are some other skills children pick up when they enjoy the games of 'Laqngadi' and round .Therefore, it is that 'chase-defence' 'Langadi' --- 'round '---is a very useful sequence of games through which players adapt themselves to a proper physical and mental background to become champion

KHOKHO players. The other similarities in these games are that A) all these games are played bare footed on an earthen ground, B) very little equipment is required to play the games, C) the skills and abilities However, the games chase-defence---Langadi---round do not to increasing strength and dynamism Finally, children settle in their sporting career by making a choice of a harder game like .

## The of the of KHOKHO:

The basic concept behind the structure of to beto accommodate large number of players enjoying game in the ground of limited area. Also, the structure of the game Since children from their early age the game of chase and defence, is structured as an advanced version of it. However, it is not Such a situation where many chasers try to catch defenders in a would create chaos. Therefore, by making suitable rules, number of chasers is restricted to nine but actual act of chasing would be carried out by one player at a time. He can surrender his responsibility of chasing to his teammate to whom it is convenient to catch a defender. Probably this idea is taken from the way wild dogs catch their prey. A group of wild dogs spread themselves over a jungle route. prey is chased by the dogs and forced to go over a definite route where other dogs from their group (team) are waiting for their turn to chase. To save its life, prey speeds en route and gets exhausted. By that time, the waiting dogs take over the chase from the initiator dogs. Such relay chasing continues till prey gets totally exhausted and gets hunted by the dogs

In a game of chase and defence, only one player has responsibility of chasing while others enjoy defence. The defenders tease a chaser during the play that he is bound by the responsibility while , the defenders enjoy the freedom (). In this way, players get entertained emotionally. There is no involvement of team-work in the game. This particular aspect is totally different in developed as a team game. The emotional teasing is eliminated. Every participating player becomes a chaser for a limited time. The excitement of chasing and defending is maintained. The skills of the players are tested by giving scope to all the participants to chase and defend in an allotted fixed time for a team. Thus, the game of KHOKHO has created its own identity, even though is described as the advanced version of primary 'chase and defence' game.

This game well organized for at least last 100 years. The basic concept of the game is retained while the rules have undergone modifications a number of times.all these efforts, the present day has become a well organized international sport. I shall try to explain the present day skills, techniques and other intricacies of the game in the ages with the help of diagrams. For the reference of the description, the ground in the diagrams is shown conveniently as a simplified version of highly technical diagram as shown in the last chapter.

It is proposed that ). In the game of chase and defence, the ground dimensions and time limits are not defined. This is understandable as the age in which children play this game; they do not have awareness of these concepts. In the game of , time limits and ground dimensions are well defined. In fact, from players' point of viewthese are vital parameters. I shall describe the game with the help of figure of

the ground. The figure is not drawn to the scale, however, the dimensions may be assumed to be as given in the technical diagram shown in the last chapter. In the game of 'chase and defence', the act of chasing is assigned to one player only. At the same time, there is no limit number of defenders. Chaser catches a defender, the responsibility of chasing is transferred to that particular defender. The former chaser, now, participates in the game as defender and so on.

In the game of , in a ground of 29 meters x 16 meters, two teams, consisting of nine players each, simultaneously test their playing qualities. One team is chasing for the time of nine minutes while the second team sends its players for 'Defence', in three batches, one after another. Each batch consists of three players. A batch defends its presence in the ground as long as it can and when last player in the batch gets caught by the chasers, immediately second batch of defenders enters the ground for its defence and so on. The chaser team scores as many points as the number of defenders are caught in the allotted time of nine minutes. After the rest period, the teams interchange their roles. The chasers become defenders and vice versa. Opponent team chases and scores the points for nine minutes. This completes one inning of the match. After the rest period, a second inning is played. The team with aggregate score of points in two innings is declared winner. Such is structure of the game.

A game needs to have a balance in its structure so that all the objectives of playing that particular game are achieved. For any field game, the main objectives would be 1) Physical exercise 2) Entertainment 3) various qualities in the participants like team spirit, decision making, competitiveness, physical and mental stamina 4) Personality development. Also, by its potential participants by comparing all the accessible games. Therefore, the game under consideration should be adaptive to the positive developments in the other games. At the same time one should try to eliminate the shortcomings in the other games. Another important aspect is that there should be internal balance in the game so that all the players playing the game enjoy it. No one among the players feel that they have scope to achieve any of the objectives of playing the game. We will see that the present day satisfies all these criteria to be a game at par with other recognized games of the world, if not superior to those.

has a very good internal balance. A chaser team chases defenders in a ground of limited dimensions of 29 x 16 meters for an allotted time of nine minutes. It has been observed for over many years that the time of nine minutes and the ground dimensions are suitable to test the skills and stamina of nine defenders. On an average, the last batch of three defenders inevitably enters the ground in the timing of nine minutes. Also, the score of more than fifteen is very rare.

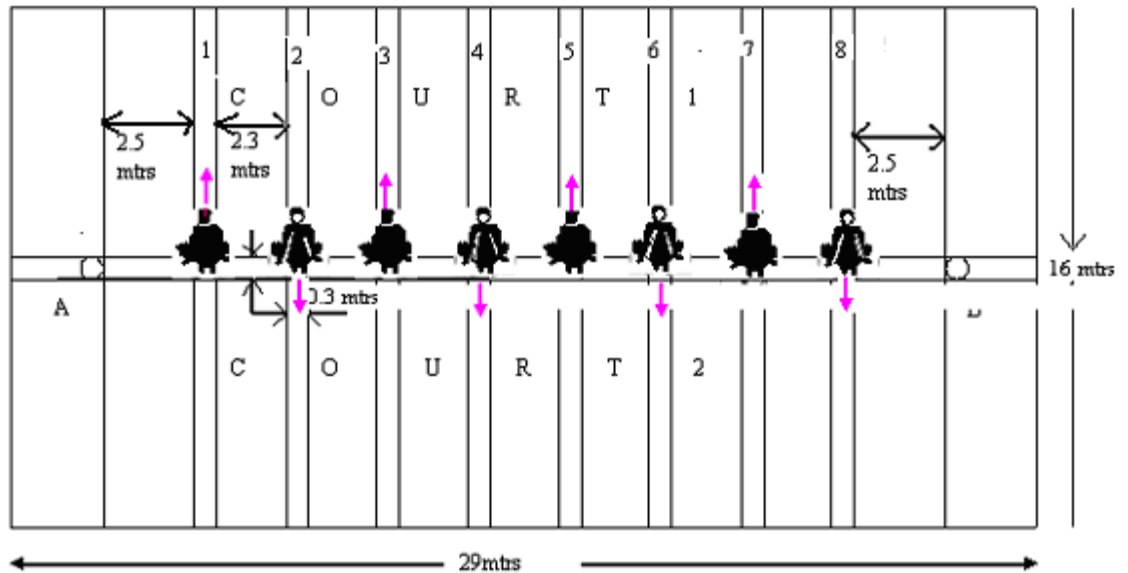


Figure1 KHOKHO GROUND

In figure one, ground is shown for the reference of readers. There are two poles namely A and B at a distance of 23.5 in the ground and most of the play is within the confined space between pole lines and side lines. A batch of three defenders occupy the positions in this space and defend their presence in the ground while chasers chase/catch/touch them. Eight chasers are sitting in the squares and facing in the direction as indicated by the arrows in the figure 1 while the ninth chaser would be standing at a pole. The chasers adopt sitting posture which is suitable to chase a defender, immediately after getting. When a chaser touches/catches a defender, following the rules of the game, he has his right to be in the ground and therefore declared 'out'.

By rules of the game, the defenders have no restrictions regarding the direction they move. On the other hand, a chaser chooses the direction of chase only once and can change it only if he/she crosses the pole line. Alternatively, a chaser can give a charge of chasing to his/her team mate who may choose a suitable direction for chasing. It is this 'Rule of Direction' that differentiates from 'and (atch, if) game. In the 'and game, there are no restrictions regarding the direction in which players move either for a chaser or a defender.

Another important rule is that a chaser can not go opposite court by crossing the central lane. For example, if any chaser in court 1, (refer to figure) wants to chase a defender in court 2, the chaser has to go round the pole 1 or 2, or alternatively give khokho to a chaser facing court 2. On the other hand, defenders can freely change the court by crossing the central lane. often takes advantage of this rule and always tries to stay in the opposite court to the one from which a chaser is trying to catch him/her. This situation forces a chaser to go round the pole to chase the defender. By that time a defender is likely to change the court again; making the efforts of a chaser futile. Alternatively, a chaser is forced to give a 'kho' to a team mate who is suitably positioned to chase the defender and so on.

In short the tussle is between the defender having advantages from above mentioned rules and the chasers trying to chase the defender out. Apparently, the rules seem to be biased towards defenders. One may think that the game is imbalanced and therefore uninteresting. This would be a wrong inference. The balance is restored as the defender has to bear the burden of defence all alone for a does not get 'out'. On the other hand, the chase is shared by nine chasers. Thus, the real tussle is between the individual stamina of all the defenders in a team and collective stamina, skill and team-work of chasers. This balance is further fine tuned by interchanging the roles of defenders and chasers after a turn of nine minutes and having two innings of two turns each.

Two poles and the free zone beyond each pole are the buffer tools for defenders and chasers. Khokho takes the form 'and in the free zone'.

## **DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY**

After basic structure and rules of the game, it would be appropriate to introduce the common terminologies of the game. This would facilitate the descriptions of various skills and tactical play of the game. Since it is a traditional game being played for few centuries in India, some of the terminologies have come through the tradition. Although, the definitions given in the earlier chapter, and therefore demand some explanations/comments. The readers will have better understanding of the subject matter through these explanations/comments. Also, some terminology has come in through their colloquial usage. Where ever convenient, the colloquial terms are used throughout this book.

**Pole** The word used in the rule book is very appropriate. However commonly used term of 'pole' has become more meaningful because of its second meaning namely 'two ends of the axis of the world'. At the pole of the world, directions lose their relevance. It is a special feature of the game that chaser is bound by the 'Rule of Direction'. However, in the game of khokho also the chaser can take any direction after crossing the pole line. This similarity makes the usage of the term 'pole' more meaningful. We propose to use of the word 'pole' hereafter in the present book.

As per the rules, it is recommended that a pole be a wooden pole. With this, it is possible to make poles using other materials, for example, fiberglass. Considering these possibilities, the recommendations of the rules may be modified. Also, It is proposed that a pole may be numbered 'one' which an observer facing east, in the playing field, would observe first while turning clockwise around himself. Obviously, the remaining pole may be numbered 'two'.

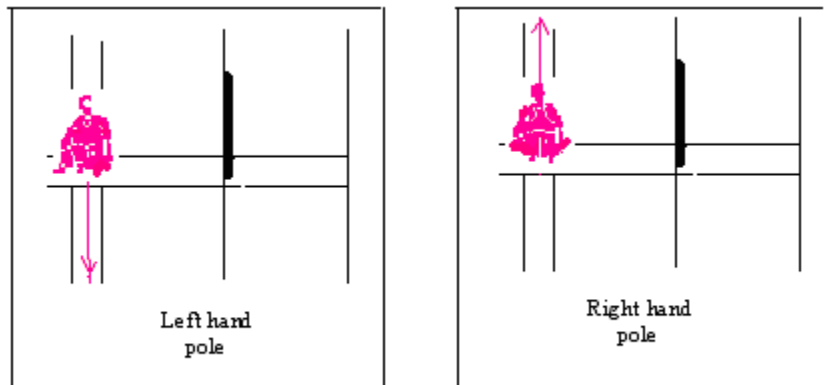
**Free zone** – The part of the field beyond poles is rightly named free zone. The chasers are free to take any direction in this part of the field. The chasers are otherwise bound by the rule of direction in the other part of the field.

**Boundary** – The end lines and side lines together make a boundary of the khokho field. This can be a common word used where end lines or side lines are involved. The terminology of cricket is popularly used in khokho. The usage of 'boundary' is therefore, consistent with it.

Court – The playing space between the pole lines is called ‘court’. For the sake of description of the game or the running commentary, it is convenient to number/name two equal parts of the court divided by the ‘central lane’. It is proposed that an observer standing near pole 2, facing pole 1, shall have court 1 on his right and court 2 on his left hand side. Alternatively, the court in front of the first chaser may be called ‘front court’ and the remaining court may be called ‘back court’. The other terminologies and the definitions are self explanatory.

In cricket, for example, fielding positions like ‘mid on’, ‘mid off’, ‘slip’, ‘third man’ or the strokes by a batsman namely ‘hook’, ‘cover drive’. Similarly, Hokey, Foot ball, Tennis, Basket ball, Volley ball have their own ‘language’. The readers or the listener understand these languages and immediately visualize the description of the situation. Khokho has become popular in various parts of India and nearby countries like Bangla Desh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka in last couple of decades. , there is no common terminology so far as regional languages are used by the players in their respective zones. It is, therefore, advisable to have a common terminology in English which can help to make khokho an international sport. The following terminology is recommended for the consideration of readers.

**Right hand pole/Left hand pole-** When the chasing side chooses ‘sitting in squares’ that the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> chaser has pole on his/her right/left side, the team is said to have chosen Right hand pole/Left hand pole.



**Gathering -** Normally, the chasing side’s strategy is to chase an exclusive defender at a time. However, with an opportunity to score a point, the chasers try to bring two or three defenders together; such a strategy will be called ‘Gathering attack’.

**An –** While chasing an exclusive defender, an attacker finds any of the other defender to be lazy, unconscious or negligent then he suddenly changes the target prey and attempts to score a point by chasing lazy, unconscious or negligent defender. Such an action is termed ‘an attempt’.

**Hinder Kho-** When the defender changes the side of the court by crossing the central lane, it is beneficial for an attacker to give a kho. If the kho is given to a chaser so that defender is forced to proceed in a chosen direction towards a pole without changing his direction, such a kho will be called ‘hinder kho’. If a defender is going from pole one to pole two and crosses



central lane by going past a chaser sitting on square three, then kho to a chaser sitting on square one or square three would be 'a hinder kho'.

**Forward Kho-** When a defender changes the side of the court by crossing the central lane, an attacker prefers to give kho in order to reach the defender and put him out. He may give 'hinder kho' or sprints and goes ahead of the defender who is in opposite court. If attacker and defender continue to run in the same direction, they are likely to come near each other near the pole, resulting in attacker scoring a point. In order to avoid losing a point defender stops near the back of the sitting chaser, turns to run in opposite direction or goes towards the side line. In such a situation, the attacker has no choice but to go round the pole in the defender's court or to give kho to next sitting chaser beyond defender. Such kho is termed 'forward kho'

**Getting up** - After getting kho, attacker gets up and moves in the cross lane towards a defender, without taking either of the directions. He makes sure in his mind about the defender takes/is likely to take, then and only then he opts himself to take a direction. All the movements an attacker before he takes actual direction are termed 'Getting up trait.'

**To** - When a defender is making full use of the width of the court for his defence; he intends to take advantage of the rule of 'To Recede'. The defender through his body movements induces an attacker to take direction immediately after getting up. The defender himself, on the other hand, moves in the opposite direction so as to escape from the chase. These events become advantageous defender. In order to avoid this advantage, an attacker is advised to cover the width of the court and make sure that defender cannot escape the chase by running in opposite direction. These actions of an attacker are termed as 'To over'.

Tap ttempt (to score) - When an attacker throws his hand to score a point, it is termed as an 'Tap ttempt'.

**A /-** When a defender adapts to ring game, in order to break his rhythm and force him to go towards a pole, attacker gets up strait, covers and gives kho to the nearest sitting chaser, then attacker is said to have given middle kho/meddle kho. This action is nothing but meddling in the ring game of the defender and hence the term meddle kho.

**Appeal** – In a fast game of khokho, negligence split moment can affect the decision of the match. Therefore, it is necessary to attract the attention of the referees towards all delicate actions, especially like the ones when points are being scored. Also, when an attacker attempts successfully to score a point, there is invariably a spontaneous shout of 'killed'. Such shouting is termed as 'ppeal'. Considering the area of the ground and the speed of the game, it is possible that referee/s may the tender touch to a defender by an attacker. It is, therefore, natural to point out the action of an attacker through an 'Appeal'.

**Defence by single/double chain route** – A defender chooses a fixed route for safely defending himself from chasers and spends longer time in the field. A defender takes maximum advantage of the rule of the game that defenders can go to the opposite court by crossing the central lane while attacker cannot. Therefore, a defender tries to remain in the opposite court to the one where attacker belongs. An attacker counteracts by giving kho as and when required. When a defender crosses the central lane between each sitting chaser, he is said to have adapted defence by single chain route. When he prefers to go to the opposite court from behind the third and sixth sitting chaser, he is said to have adapted defence double chain route. He crosses the court two times between two poles and hence the name defence by double chain route.

**Defence by Ring game** – A game within four chasers – When a defender runs in approximately elliptical/circular route within four sitting chasers by taking full advantage of the width of the court, the defence is termed as ring defence or running in four.

ti – If an attacker is chasing a defender in the same half of the court, the defender suddenly reverts his running direction by making use of the width of the court. Unaware of the defence plan, the attacker continues to go in his earlier direction as reverting is prevented to him by . Thus a defender escapes the chase. Such an escape is termed as everting eception/everting eint/Palti.

**Outer feint** – When an attacker speedily ‘gets up strait’ or speedily ‘covers’, defender pretends through his body swerves and foot work to go towards side line (with the intention to run in the opposite direction of the attacker) and suddenly goes towards sitting chasers by controlling foot work, speed and balance. On the other hand, the attacker continues to go towards the side line because two forces In effect, he is unable to chase the defender. Such an escape from the chase is termed ‘outer feint’. An attacker moves towards outer part of the court by this feint and hence the name.

**Inner feint** –As an attacker ‘gets up strait’, a defender pretends through his body swerves and foot work to go towards the sitting chasers so as to cross the central laneattacker immediately takes the direction to catch the defender. Ready for such an attack, the defender changes his pretended direction and runs towards the side line. The attacker is then unable to catch the defender as he gets the protection of the rule ‘receding’. An attacker moves towards inner part of the court by this feint and hence the name.

**‘Palati’ or Directional eception** – A defender playing a chain game decides to go towards a particular pole. He finds that a chaser is likely to catch him in a short distance to come. To defend from the possible loss of point, the defender, all of a sudden, changes his direction of running exactly opposite to the original. For execution of this deception, the defender makes use of the width of the court and suddenly goes towards a side line initially, followed by changing the direction. Normally unaware of the intentions of the defender, chaser continues to run in the

predetermined direction because of the gathered momentum. However, the use of this feint is considered as risky as an alert and conscious chaser would unmistakably score a point.

Since khokho is an Indian game, English terminology is not used. The terminology needs to be created. The terminology will help uniform understanding of ideas in khokho in all parts of India and abroad. Unfortunately, English the link language in India instead of any of the Indian languages. We propose the following terminology for expressing the points that can be scored in the game of khokho. However, In Cricket for example, the readers or listeners will have exact understanding of the decision when it is described that a batsman is declared lbw, bowled or run out. Same is true in football when it is reported that a team scored a goal by heading or free kick, or in Hockey, a goal is scored through 'penalty corner' or field goal.

**Dive prey** – When an attacker touches a defender, not merely by virtue of his (attackers) speed but supports himself by diving forward while running and gets advantage of his own height and additional speed, the point scored is called Dive prey.

**Leg Prey** – A running defender normally bends forward and therefore his legs are the nearest among his body parts to the chasing attacker. Taking advantage of the fact, the attacker touches the leg of defender to score the point that is described as Leg Prey.

**Reach prey** – When a defender crosses the central lane and intends to go towards a pole, attacker in the opposite court touches the defender by making full use of his reach derived from his height and stretched hand, the scored point is termed as Reach prey.

**Feint prey** – An attacker deceives a defender through his body swerves and jerks and in effect manages to touch the defender to score a point. It is termed as Feint prey.

**Combination prey** – This is a modified feint prey. An attacker through his body swerves and jerks deceives a defender, particularly near the pole. The attacker pretends that he would go round the pole to catch the defender and makes the defender go away from the pole towards the side line. In fact, the attacker gives kho to a chaser nearest to the pole. The concerned chaser after getting charge of attack touches the defender and scores a point. Such a point is termed as Combination prey.

**Palm prey** – When defender is changing the court by going round the pole, his body goes to the opposite court while he has still a grip of the pole by his palm. An attacker cashes this opportunity by touching defenders palm on the pole by his own, thus scoring a point which is termed Palm prey.

**Speed prey** – A defender who is running at a distance away from the central lane has to go often in a curved path for going in the opposite court. An attacker, on the other

hand, takes a linear path to catch the defender. Since the curved path is longer than the linear path and also straight running is likely to be faster than the curved running, the attacker touches the defender to score a point. Of course, better speed of the attacker will have an added advantage. A point scored by this method is termed Speed rey.

**Boundary rey** – When a defender is declared ‘out’ under the rule ‘out of field’, the point scored is termed Boundary rey.

**Foul rey** – After a due warning, a defender touches a chaser/attacker, and then the defender is declared out, the point scored is termed Foul rey.

**Hunting rey** – An attacker anticipates the direction of a defender while ‘getting up straight’ or turning round the pole and takes the direction in advance of the defender. The tigers or panthers adapt such a tactic for catching their prey. Therefore, the point scored by this tactical play is termed ‘Hunting rey’.

## **Khokho, A and an**

Earlier we have seen the overall structure of the game of khokho. Now, we will see the various aspects of the game which make it so interesting and entertaining. We will try to explain how the structure of the game the physical, mental and intellectual abilities of players. the various facets of the skills involved in the game are useful for the personality development of a player.

In its structure, khokho is a team game. However, there is a perfect scope for the development and application of individual skills. We will discuss the defence and the chase aspects of the game and show that both need individual skills as well as team work, individual skills predominate over team work in the chase turn, team work gets more importance than individual skills.

Normally, the chasing team concentrates its efforts on an individual defender to score a point. Obviously, the defender has full scope to apply his individual skills on such an occasion. Still it must be noted that the defender being chased is also a part of the batch of three defenders. The team of skilled chasers can try to score a point if an attacker finds that any defender among a batch being chased is negligent, lazy or unconscious. The ‘active’ defender often needs to give a call to his team mates to be ready for such ‘sudden attacks’ or planned ‘gathering attack’. Therefore, giving calls, receiving calls and accordingly adjusting individual movements in the court becomes a part of team work. If, from a batch of three defenders, two defenders are ‘out’; then the defence of third defender can be said an entirely individual effort. Thus, individual defence teamwork.

In case of chasing efforts, most of the times, team work predominates individual skill. On most occasions, an efficient chaser is entirely dependant on the co operation of his team mates to display his skills of attack. On number of occasions it is observed that even a skillful attacker scores very few during an entire tournament. Once the de points through him. On the other hand, a team without a

specialist skilled attacker but very good team work can prove to be a very good performer by scoring many points in its chasing turn. However, it is advisable to have a skilled attacker in the team. It can be compared with the skills in the popular games like foot ball, basket ball etcetera. In these games also the team work is very important to get the passes of the balls in the scoring zone. Even after getting proper passes, the importance of the skilled scorers is well recognized. in foot ball or successful [shooter in the is the hero of respective game](#). Similarly, a team of chasers through its combination can get an opportunity of scoring a point; there and then an attacker has a chance to exhibit his skills through cashing the opportunity.

Now, we would like to show that the game of khokho is well balanced in its structure, giving equal scope to defenders and chasers with respect to physical, mental and intellectual activity without compromising with another major objective of namely entertainment.

Considering the rules of the game for defenders, it would be a guiding principle that defender keeps himself in the opposite court to the one that of an attacker. rules of the game, an attacker is prevented from crossing the central lane. Following this guiding principle, a defender is, thus, protected from an attacker. An attacker, desiring to score a point, may have to go round the pole to continue his chase or alternatively give kho to a chaser who is facing the court where a defender has taken shelter. Going round the pole is a definite hindrance to speeding attacker as he needs to change his direction. Giving kho is worse than it as the speed becomes zero when he gives a kho and then a new attacker accelerates. On the other hand the defender can maintain his speed as he has the initiative regarding choice of direction and speed. Thus, one may think that even an attacker with higher speed may not be able to catch the defender and score a point. A defender may defend until he is fully exhausted or becomes a 'boundary prey'. Is it that khokho rules are biased in favor of defenders?

An affirmative reply to this query would be a wrong inference. Although, a defender has an initiative for choosing direction, he needs to change it time and again. To counter this initiative, a chasing team uses the tactics by which a defender is forced to go to a pole. At the pole, defender is also forced to change his direction, as in the free zone beyond pole; a defender does not get an advantage of the rule of direction and/or a foul of receding attacker. Thus a game would be that of simple 'me if you can'. Such situation is advantageous for chasers for scoring a point. A defender is partly trapped in a situation where an attacker is waiting to catch him in the opposite court and in case an attacker gives a kho, an alert first sitting chaser facing the court in which he (defender) is standing is ready for a kill. Thus, a defender has to develop a skill to come out of such a trap to continue his defence. The limits of the dimensions and the provision of free zone, pole maintain the balance .

One may think that a skilled defender would be able to defend in the court as long as three or four to nine minutes (). This would be a misconception. A defender does not get rest during the defence as he is continuously chased while chasers get some rest when they are not attackers. Recently, it has been shown that defence is anaerobic activity while chase can be considered as aerobic one. (Nataraj and Mandal) Obviously, the stamina defender becomes the limiting factor for

defenders performance while chasers have an advantage in regard to stamina factor. On an average, two minutes defence in the court is considered as a good performance. A chasing side scores seven to nine points in one turn. This point is important from the structural point of view of the game as it shows that all the defenders get an opportunity to prove their skill of defence at least once in two turns.

Speed is the soul of chase. However, it is a principle of 'division of labor' that applies for the chasing team in scoring points. Nine chasers are pursuing an individual defender and therefore stamina factor of chasers is less important as compared to that of a defender. Every attacker gets rest when he becomes a sitting chaser. However, chasing players should mind the vital factors of sudden acceleration and deceleration without which skillful chasing is almost impossible in khokho. Another important aspect for the chasing team is team work. Many a times, a skillful chaser needs to keep aside his individual skills to maintain the rhythm of chasing team. A chasing team needs to develop a combination for a coherent, co operative, rhythmic, speedy attack. In other words, team work is the trump card of a chase.

Although, a chasing side needs to overcome the speed of a defender to score a point, the chasing team needs to do it through team coordination, teamwork while defender himself is individually responsible to his speed and actions. Thus in one turn of chase and defence, the defenders are tested physically for their stamina, suppleness of movements, speed, while the chasers are tested for the team work, speed .

The intricacies of the rules of khokho are also very important for the appreciation of the conflict between two teams. The chasing team should take care that an attacker while giving kho does not commit foul. If foul is committed then an attacker has to change the direction and/or give a kho. This action amounts to attaining negative speed by the team. The over all speed of the team is lowered. The and rhythm of attack lost. The defender gets rest. All these points are extremely for the chasing side large number of points.

The rules of the chase, especially of giving kho, are very subtle. An attacker needs to do two actions together. He has to shout kho and touch the back of the sitting chaser palm. These are the necessary and sufficient conditions for a kho within the rules of the game. If he shouts kho from a distance wherefrom he can not touch back, it is declared as a foul. Also, if he touches the back of the chasersitting chaser starts the chase in anticipation of a following kho If an attacker touches the back of the chaser sitting on the first 'square' near the pole, and continues his chase without giving kho, then it is adjudged as a foul. Another common foul committed by an attacker is crossing the cross lane as a consequence of his speed while giving kho. The penalty for the fouls is either change in direction of chase and/or a kho in the direction indicated by a referee. This becomes very costly for chasing side as described above. Thus, the speed of the chasing team provides positive results only if it is not foul prone. Also it should be coherent and supplementary among the chasers.

side decides its strategy based on these subtleties of the rules. Taking advantage of the rule that an attacker can not cross the central lane to change the court, an active defender always changes the court so as to be always on the opposite side of an

attacker, forcing more khos to be executed by the chasing side. This increases the possibility of chasers committing large number of fouls, unfavorably affecting the speed of chase and in turn easier defence. Often, defenders take advantage of the 'rule of direction' which prevents an attacker to change the direction once chosen by him. Through his pretensions, a defender induces an attacker to take a certain direction. Once an attacker chooses the direction, defender himself goes in such a safe position in the court where an attacker needs to change his direction to continue his chase. Such actions are well developed skills of defence in khokho called 'feints'. Many a time, defenders make use of the width of the court for the application of these feints. In fact the game of khokho without this special feature of feints would have been a relay chase version of 'catch me if you can'. Also, the width of the khokho ground is well justified by the feature of feints.

The game of defence by the application of feints is some times by those lazy defenders who do not have enough stamina and speed to defend by continuous running from pole to pole. In fact, when a defender tries to run from one pole to another, chasers disturb it by giving 'forward kho'. A defender will have no option but to change his direction. If the defender intends to change his direction while running speedily, it is very difficult proposal as he has to control his balance, prevent himself from injuries and also to keep his mind alert for further course of action. There is likelihood that he may forfeit his turn of defence in the court while trying to adapt to directional change in 180°, giving a point to opponents. The only way out in such a situation is to make use of the width of the court to avoid sharp turns. This forces him to adapt to the 'ring game' using feint as a weapon to counter 'forward kho'.

It is above that 'Speed is the soul of chase'. A spectator feels that the statement is an truth for khokho players. However, from the discussion above it would be clear that speed is only a desirable skill for khokho players. The skills like feints, ring game constraints of the rules of the game bring limits to its use. Also it is shown that the struggle among the chasing team and defending team is keenly contested as the strategies of one team are evenly countered by the opponent team with respect to physical skills. Now, we would like to discuss the mental battle among two teams.

A mere development of physical skills does not make a complete player. A player needs to develop a suitable [It is true of khokho as other games that apart from the primary benefits like entertainment and exercise games are always as a tool of personality development.](#) A contest in the game is, therefore, an important part of the player's personality development and hence his career. A contest acts as a catalyst for the player's development, may it be physical, mental or intellectual. Players develop and improve the qualities like boldness, a fighting spirit, sustenance/endurance, patience, sportsmanship, decision making, alertness, reading the minds of ones team mates and opponent team players. Players also learn to take incidental defeats and victories into their stride. The repeated uses of these qualities become a part of the personality of the concerned player in due course of time. The development of personality is very subjective. Only the receptive and open mind can get these benefits from sports. Few examples may be useful to justify the subjectivity in personality development.

A player from Pune was so skillful in the defence that for years, he represented winning Maharashtra khokho team in khokho national championship tournaments. Chasing team use to get exhausted and therefore him to retire from defence in the practice sessions. He the match spirit and the fighting spirit so as to give fullest benefit to his team through his skills in a tough match nor did he develop those qualities in his sporting career. Undisputedly skilled though he never showed the performance he was capable of. The absence of the match spirit and the fighting spirit reflected in his personal life also. In contrast to this some players were not the state in national championship. However, when those players got a opportunity proved to be winning performers and even won the laurels by getting awards. They had inherent mental set up as match winners. **Of course these were extreme examples the importance of mental set up for the contest in the game.** It is true that such a mentality can be developed and improved.

During the game, mental pressures are built up at various moments. The chaser team consisting of nine players is chasing a single defender. The defender, therefore, is continuously on run. See it that defender can not resting defender has to the tactics the chasers to catch him needs to counter the chasers tactics and accordingly plan is own. This simultaneous process of defence consisting of thinking, planning and executing the plans under physically tired condition is extremely stressful and the patience of a defender. Only an expert defender can withstand such stress to give good performance. This feature battle many players (chasers) against a single opponent (defender) is rarely found in most of the games. (Kabaddi is another example.) In fact, a defender in the game of khokho can be compared only with an efficient Indian housewife managing the household work on so many fronts simultaneously. In the morning, she looks after the cleaning of the house, cooking, preparing children for going to school, attending the aged people in the house and assisting her husband in all his needs. Similarly, a defender's mind is working on so many fronts simultaneously. While defending himself he has observe the tactics being by the chasers, a weak chaser if any, a faster chaser, typical fouls committed by chasing team, giving right 'calls' to his defending teammates. A defender need to be alert and intelligent to battle on so many fronts, take suitable decisions and execute

. The feature of battle between many players (chasers) against a single opponent (defender) is rarely found in most of the games. (Kabaddi is another example.) Chasers often use the tactics of 'gathering attack' or 'an attempt' to score a point. If chasers force two or three defenders to near the pole, all the defenders will be under stress because a defender has to defend him but he has to the interest of his teammates. In such a situation, a player with a fit mindset defends itself in such a way that teammates also come out of the trap without surrendering a point to the opponents. Normally what is observed is that a player who does not have mental fitness may escape the trap his team mate unguarded to the chasers to score a point. Although, the example describes how chasers tactically pressure in the minds of defenders. Simultaneously, an attacker who gets an opportunity to score a point by touching one among two or three defenders gathered together is himself under stress. He needs to concentrate and take a spontaneous decision of catching a defender who is confused and positioned tactically in a wrong part of the court. This is a very rare



quality of decision making. Most of the time, efforts of scoring a point described above are proved to be futile.

When chasers increase the speed of chasing without committing any foul, defenders are under mental strain if they can not cope with the speed of the chase. Then the tendency of the defender is to apply reverting feint/reverting deception. If the chasers are alert and anticipate the feint, they have an easy opportunity to score a point. A skilled defender does not panic because of the speed of the chase. He knows for sure that increasing speed the possibility of fouls. On the other hand, a skilled defender only pretends that he would be applying reverting feint/reverting deception. In fact, he never adapts to the feint game. The chasers are always kept guessing about the timing of the defenders feint. It affects the speed of the game, bringing chasers tactics to naught. This is another example of how a defender can pressurize chasers. In short, for every tactical play by either side in the game of khokho, counter tactics are developed. The important point to make is that mental pressures, stresses and strain play very important part in this game.

It is obvious that chasers use pressure tactics more than defenders. They have advantage in terms of number as there are nine chasers chasing one defender. However, occasionally a defender can become successful to overcome the advantage of number of chasers and pressurize the complete chasing team. In a Pune khokho team in 80's, a player used to play single chain game in his defence turn. Since defender was changing the court after crossing each sitting chaser, attacker was forced to give kho successively to almost each sitting chaser. During the efforts to increase the speed of the chase, chasers were committing too many fouls. The concerned defender pointed out the fouls to referees and chasers as well. To increase the speed of chase and to avoid the fouls created pressure in the minds of the chasers because most of the khos were made more or less mandatory by the defender. In fact, the said player got recognition as a very good defender in the game of khokho at national level, by using his skill of playing single chain defence game and in turn creating pressure in the minds of opposition team chasers.

An amusing example of pressurizing the mind of chasers is worth recording. A defender played a long inning of defence in the court. Lost their patience resulting in many fouls during the chase. In turn the speed of the chase also diminished. Took fullest advantage of this situation and started the referees as well as the chasers, consequent amendments to the fouls. Defender was so much exhausted that he was just standing near the side line. An attacker went towards him with the intention to score a point. When an attacker was about to touch that defender, the defender pointed his finger towards a nearby sitting chaser, as if it was a foul requiring an amendment by giving kho. In fact, referee had not indicated any foul. The attacker's mind was gripped by the earlier decisions of fouls and their amendments. He, therefore, took it for granted that a foul had occurred for which defender demanding amendment. Although he was on a touching distance from the defender, he, instead of touching defender, went for giving a suggested kho. All the spectators and defenders broke into laughter while the chasing team was cursing the said attacker. All this had occurred because of the pressure of situation on the mind of attacker which he could

not sustain. This is perhaps the best example of psychology based feint application in khokho.

The intelligence of the players also plays an important part in sports in general and khokho in particular. The difference is that for a khokho player, no adviser, even coach or captain of the team, is accessible for taking decisions during the play. There is no provision of 'time out' once the inning starts in the games like basketball, football, hockey, volleyball, badminton. In these games, the 'time out' can be conveniently used for consultation, discussion or for giving instructions to the players. Also, there is a time lapse when ball/shuttle goes out of play or a player is preparing for the 'service'. This time can be for advice the players. In other words, in all these games there is a sort of during the play. On the other hand, khokho is a continuously played game once the inning starts. There is no time-break during the inning in the game. Therefore, decision making during an inning is left to individual players. The individual decisions of the players need to be consistent the interest of the team. In other words, the decisions must guard team interest. This is effective when the decisions of all the players have unanimity. Another rigorous requirement is that the decisions need to be intelligent decisions as those depend on the tactics being used by the opponents. The decisions must counteract opponent's tactical play. This is a unique feature in the game of khokho that each player needs to take intelligent spontaneous decisions that have unanimity among the members of the team and are consistent with the team's interest. In fact the alertness of a khokho player intelligence, spontaneity in decision making, spirit of team work, without compromising the physical agilit.

In fact, Defenders game is mostly an individual effort and therefore may get a word of instruction/advice during play as normally only one defender is chased at a time. His team mate defenders, who are inside the court, are always in a better position to instruct/advice him. For chasers, the situation is Except an attacker all the chasers are immobilized in their respective squares, one among them being captain of the team. The game of chasing is mainly a team effort; the team needs common instructions/advice. Such instructions/advice in an evolving situation is almost impossible. It is left to the assessment of each individual chaser to judge the situation wherein the collective intelligence of the team plays a decisive role.

[In a match, after first inning, a defending team was leading over chasing team by a large margin.](#) The first batch of defenders had entered the field for the second defence. A player from the chasing team had noted that throughout that tournament, the defending team had always chosen 'right hand pole' during their chasing turn. Taking clue from this observation, at the eleventh hour, the chasing team decided to choose 'left hand pole' sitting arrangement for their chase. The chasers team thought that if the defenders have no practice of 'left hand pole' sitting arrangement, they might get confused. This decision was so effective that chasers won that match. This was a very good example of good observation followed by an intelligent decision based on it.

Yet another feature of battle is time management. There are no team games with a comparable time limit. Therefore, every player needs to understand and use chapter in the high school mathematics book, namely, Time, Work and Speed. I can not restrain myself from giving the example of the game of cricket. We

have the changes in the game of cricket that took place when apart from 'test cricket' 'one day cricket' tournaments were adapted throughout the cricket world. **increased many fold**. The tactics changed. The requirements changed. One may extrapolate the qualities of the game to khokho wheretime limit is perhaps the shortest among team games. The excitement of sport is crammed in a small time span. The players stuffed with sporting qualities, skills need to prove it in short time. The time management becomes a vital requirement in khokho.

Although, khokho is a speedy game, it is controversial In fact, the proper description would be a game of rhythmic speed. The frantic running during defence or chase is of little value. There need to be rhythm in the run for defence which not only makes the game attractive but also helps to use the stamina of running effectively for a longer time. Having rhythm in chase is more difficult and more important It is difficult because more number of players is involved. It is not just relay catching of a defender. Rhythmic chase is an entity consisting of collective physical, mental and intellectual activity of nine chasers. It needs planning and execution. It needs a process of 'building up.' It has some in the games of foot ball, hockey, and basket ball etc. In these games, the goals or the baskets are not scored just by passing the ball to opposition goal/basket. An attack is 'built up' by planning. A rhythm is required in the attack.

In present day routine, there may not be two opinions that playing games is one of the best choices for exercise and entertainment together. However, the games in general and khokho in particular, can be considered as a tool of prime importance for personality development. It is described above that the physical, mental and intellectual efficiency of a khokho player is of vital importance. Team work, decision making, leadership qualities, management and execution are tested in khokho. A player needs to have patience, tolerance and endurance. The inculcation and development of all these qualities together are complementary for the personality development efforts.

Khokho is considered as a hard game. It is a game of exertion. The game is speedy and involves various types of strains and stresses. It tests physical, mental and intellectual abilities of players. A meaningful khokho can be played only with hard practice. In this aspect also khokho can be differentiated from many other games. There are games in which once one achieves basic skills, one may play the game for a long time. It isnot possible in khokho. ore than nine players for a meaningful practice and more than eighteen players for a match are other difficult conditions for playing the game. all the rigorous requirement of khokho entertainment. The of few centuries has proved that the game is very popular for entertainment and pastime in India, so much so that all the rigors are forgotten. Players and spectators equally enjoy the excitement, patience, charm, delight and thrill within one hour. peed, agility, alertness, footwork, daring dives, by players can be experienced by players and spectators as much in khokho as in 'One day cricket match.

---

## **Skills – Chase/Attack**

Before the skills involved in chase are described, the physical, mental and intellectual qualities required to acquire various skills in the game of khokho will be discussed. The other aspects that will be mentioned are exercises related to chasing and possible errors. Actual skills of chasing would be elaborately discussed in this chapter.

Chasing in the game of khokho is basically teamwork. However, individual skill is also an important aspect in the development of a player. It is important to emphasize that many a time, player needs to his individual skill in the interest of the team. Also, an individual should be alert to cash the opportunity of scoring a point, although the opportunity might have arisen from team efforts.

### **1) Speed ----- (Many critics have described hokho as a game of 'Speed'.**

The importance of the speed, may it be a collective speed of the team or an individual speed, is rightly highlighted. In fact, a collective speed of the team and an individual speed are complementary to each other. The skill of speed can be discussed in two parts. A) Sprinting in short bursts and B) Speed with stamina, endurance and leg strength. The representative examples of these types of speeds from animal kingdom are panthers and horses respectively. A panther can sprint and attain maximum speed in a very short time but can maintain thefor few seconds while a horse may take some time to reach maximum of its speed once attains the speed, can maintain it for a long time.

Sprinting in short bursts (panther) is more useful in khokho than a uniform speed (horse) using stamina and endurance. It is on a very few rare occasions that an attacker needs to chase a defender for a longer distance than the length of the khokho court. On the other hand, a chaser needs to sprint a short distance with maximum possible speed on almost every occasion a chaser gets a khokho. There are some very special features of these out bursts of speed by an attacker in khokho. An attacker needs to attain his maximum speed in a very short time, from the initial speed of zero when he is a sitting chaser. Also, the sitting posture is also not suitable to attain maximum speed in a short time, what is true for a short distance athletics competitor at the starting point. An athlete is in a posture with upper body in a bent position, suitable for running forward as against a khokho attacker in a sitting position seeking to sprint in the direction of  $-90^{\circ}$  to  $+90^{\circ}$  with respect to his facing direction. The other feature is that khokho sprinter needs to decelerate from maximum to zero speed instantaneously while giving kho as per the requirement of the rules of the game. In fact this feature prevents great athletes becoming natural choice for khokho chasers. This particular feature is perhaps an exclusive one of khokho, not observed in any other sport. On several occasions, very good sprinters could not make good khokho chasers but for this area of expertise of the game.

A speedy chase that tests stamina and endurance is also important in khokho apart from an outburst of speed as described above. Apparently, the intermittent chase of nine minutes by each chaser, with some rest after giving kho,

appears to be rather easy. In practice, it is a difficult test of stamina and endurance. The exhausting action of getting up from sitting posture every time a chaser gets a kho, apart from speedy outbursts of chase, remains overlooked, perhaps because such an action is not experienced in any other sport. In fact, it has been pointed out by players playing both khokho and some other sport like football/basketball/hockey, that

**2) Stamina/endurance/strength ----- Stamina, is a relative term and therefore may be defined with respect to a game.**

An athlete of long distance running may have good stamina for, say, 10,000 meters run. This does not necessarily mean that the said athlete would be fit with respect to stamina for a speedy khokho match. Stamina for every event in sport is a singular concept which depends on many factors associated with each sport. Therefore, for increasing the stamina for a particular sport, repeating the activities involved in that sport many number of times and for a longer duration of time is a common part of the practice. In khokho and specially during the chasing turn, the activities involved are quick sitting and getting up, bursts of sprinting, fast acceleration and deceleration, sudden stops during running, dives, turning round the pole, pole dives, stretching the legs while giving 'action kho'. Apart from playing actual game, repeating these actions singularly or as a part of some complementary game helps stamina for khokho.

Another important quality is endurance. It may so happen that a player may have stamina of playing a khokho match during a session but if the points scored by both teams are equal, need to play an extra inning. **The stamina manifested in such extra ordinary circumstances is endurance.** It is possible that a player may have stamina without endurance. The quality of endurance needs to be developed in a player.

Normally, the word stamina is taken only the physical capacity of a player during the exhausting conditions. It may have different meanings in different games. In fact, in the game of khokho itself, the stamina during defence and chase can be differentiated. The actions of khokho players during defence are anaerobic while chase is considered as aerobic activity. Therefore, players' sustenance to breathlessness during defence would be considered as their stamina; on the other hand, chasers maintaining their tenacity and speed of chase even at the end of chasing turn of nine minutes will be considered as chasers' stamina. For chasers with stamina, it is important to have leg strength. It is observed that chasers surrender to the fatigue of legs due to lack of strength, rather than breathlessness. Apart from game practice, special efforts need to be taken to increase the strength of legs.

**3) Agility -----**

Agility is differentiated from speed of a khokho player. Speed is related to a fast displacement of a player's self in a defined direction while agility may or may not have displacement of the self at all. It is any quick action with a purpose. An elephant or a rhinoceros may have good speed but these animals can not be described as agile. A cat is perhaps the best example of agile animal. In the game of khokho, changing direction while running is a common feature, whence agility

becomes an important quality of a player. Also, getting up from the sitting posture, turning round the pole, diving on pole or otherwise, bending while running to score a point by 'leg prey' are some of the instances where agility proves its importance. As an attacker, he use to employ diving technique to score a point; however, his speciality was to get up quickly and continue his chase of next defender. He use to do his actions so fast defender had no chance to rest in spite of attacker's div.

#### 4) Spontaneity -----

Khokho is a very fast short duration. Therefore, every point scored is of vital importance. The structure of the game suggests that nine defenders would be put 'out' by chasers in nine minutes to score nine points. This would mean that every point is having a capacity to decide -10% of the final score. This fact would highlight the importance of the quality of spontaneity in the actions of chasers.

In a match, an attacker attempted to score a point by 'Dive prey' on the 6<sup>th</sup> cross lane. According to he was successful in scoring a point and therefore appealed to a referee accordingly. The appeal was turned down. The concerned defender crossed over to the opposite court; however, his actions were fumbling and seemed to be confused. Taking cognizance, ignoring the lost appeal and without time in reappealing, the attacker immediately got up to continue his chase, went round the pole and attempted again for 'dive prey'. His appeal, this time was and earned a point for his team. The spontaneity of the attacker was thus proved to be decisive in scoring a point for his team.

#### 5) Decision making -----

In the last paragraph, it is already pointed out how the game khokho is different with respect to decision making when compared to other games. **Most of the decisions by players of khokho need to be made spontaneously.** There is hardly any time for a player to think before he takes the decision. The best example would be that of 'dive prey'. A skilled attacker is habituated to score a point as soon as he 'feels' that he can touch a defender by diving. He may be rather too late in the usual procedure of thinking and then executing the thought. This is true for many actions of a chaser in khokho. This emphasizes the importance of spontaneous decision making, there are many occasions where giving full thought over the consequencesChoice of right hand pole/left hand pole, initial sitting formation of chasers, choice of defender to be chased are some of the examples oflatter decision making.

#### 6) Teamwork -----

Chase/attack in khokho is necessarily a team activity and therefore, a player should have a quality of adapting to collective efforts. It is a common experience that a good attacker in a team does not score significant number of points in a match/tournament just because he sacrifices his individual chances in the interest of the team. Team's chase is not total sum of individual players' chase. It is an entity in itself. It has its own rhythm, a plan, a strategy. **The understanding regarding the tactics of chase by all the chasers needs to be so good that the strategy of chase for the team should be automatically implemented without any instantaneous discussion/plan.** It is possible when all the chasers know each

chaser's individual positive and negative points regarding chase. This can be achieved by playing together as a team for very long period of times like months/years and occasional mutual discussions among players.

We have seen desirable for a chaser. We shall elaborate some qualities which are directly related with the game of khokho that need to be adapted by each individual chaser. At the start of the chasing turn, an attacker stands near one of the two poles and remaining eight chasers would be sitting in squares so that neighboring sitting chasers face opposite to each other. The chasing team has to make some choices. An attacker may start the chase by standing near either of the poles. Also, the first/eighth sitting chaser may choose to sit with nearest pole to his right hand side (designated as right pole) or to his left hand side (designated as left pole). The choice right or left pole is a matter of team practice. There is no particular advantage/disadvantage for either of the choices. It is observed that choosing right pole is a dominant choice among playing teams. **It is advisable that teams should adapt to both choices equally during the practice so that the defenders in the team get used to defend under right/left hand sitting arrangement.** It must be remembered that defenders have to defend in the sitting arrangement of opponent's choice. In fact, the habitual choice of left or right pole during the chasing turns by a team is often exploited by the opponents by challenging the team to defend under the choice of sitting arrangement inconvenient to the defending team.

**Sitting stance of a chaser** ----- The rules of the game state "Any eight chasers shall occupy the squares facing the side lanes in such a way such that no adjacent chasers face the same side line." The obvious meaning is rules do not recommend any stance for sitting. The only restriction by the rule is that chaser should occupy the space within the square. This is possible only by resting two toes of the feet on the ground within the square. However, the stance of the sitting chaser is decided by the intention of the chaser. An attacker chases a defender with the intention to touch him and score a point for his side. He accelerates himself to his maximum. A defender changes the court to protect himself from the fast chasing attacker. The attacker can continue the chase by going round the pole or by surrendering the responsibility of chasing by giving 'kho' to a sitting chaser who is conveniently positioned with respect to a defender being chased. The chaser is supposed to be steady in the square while getting a kho from a very speedily running attacker. At such a juncture the stance of the sitting chaser becomes crucial. **The sitting chasers stance should be such that he can accelerate immediately after getting a kho.** This action is expected to be very swift; so much so that a defender cannot relax a bit from a newly accelerating attacker. On the other hand, defender should get panicked by the fear of getting out from the unexhausted fresh attacker.

The stance of a chaser should be similar a short distance runner at the starting block with a difference that an athlete is in the running posture with his body in a bent position while the rules of the game constrain a khokho chaser to a sitting posture in a square. However, in both cases the body muscles, especially the leg muscles, are toned up for immediate acceleration after getting a signal. Mentally, an athlete can fully concentrate his mind on body acceleration s running track, direction of running, the distance of running are definite. A khokho chaser needs to be more alert as these factors are variables for him.

Two stances are normally recommended for khokho chasers. 1) Balanced stance and 2) Biased stance.

**Balanced** ----- A chaser sits in a square on his toes. (See the picture) The weight of the body is well balanced two toes and hence the name 'Balanced stance'. The toes are in one line parallel to central lane.

The distinct advantage of adopting this stance is that a chaser can conveniently accelerate on either his right or left side as soon as he gets a kho. The purpose of sitting on his toes is obvious chasers legs simulate the running style minimum contact with the ground which minimizes the resistance for running. The two major differences from athletes start and khokho chasers start from the square must be noted. starting position is extremely convenient for purpose of strait running bent body posture with toes direction matching that of his running direction while khokho chasers toes at right angle to the direction he normally intends to nadditional action of getting up from a sitting posture before he accelerates. (Figure 1)

**Biased** ----- In the case of biased stance also a chaser sits in a square on his toes but the toes are not in the line parallel to central lane.

. Any of the toes would be conveniently little forward than the remaining one. (See the picture) Obviously, the body weight is more on the rear toe than that on the toe; and hence the name 'biased stance'. The forward toe, say right toe, can be a fulcrum for acceleration to left direction, giving additional advantage to a chaser. On the other hand, forward right/left toe is disadvantageous to accelerate to right/left direction. A chaser, therefore, may have to change the forward/backward positions of the toes as per his choice of direction of chase.



Sitting posture is a subjective choice of a khokho player. **For the beginners in khokho, balanced stance is recommended by experts.**

**Other for a sitting chaser** ----- A chaser, sitting in any of the stances, may rest his palms on two sides of the cross lane in front of him. (See the picture) This, to some extent, helps him to control the action of 'taking direction'. , resting palms against th starting blockSuch a bent body posture is advantageous for immediate acceleration after getting kho. However, a word of caution may t is observed that an attacker, after getting up, keeps his palms down as if those are being pulled down by the ground by some unknown force. This action is very



unnatural and hampers the chasing movements This should be strictly avoided. The movements of an attacker/chaser need to be natural and free to achieve his goals.

A sitting chaser is directly not involved in attacking a defender to score a point but still he should not be inattentive. He needs to be as alert as a cat, a tiger or a panther He should observe if any of the defenders is lazy, slow in movements or a 'surprise attack' on him. The other complementary guidelines are: **1) a attention always be on defenders. He should never look at an attacker who is likely to give him kho.** A beginner in khokho has a tendency to look at an attacker instead of defender. Such a tendency needs to be nipped in the bud. **2) A chaser needs to be attentive all the time as if he is going to get the very next kho.** **3) While getting kho, a chaser must concentrate his attention on the likely touch on his back and listening to a simultaneous shout of the word 'kho'.** **4) A chaser keeps him in proper body posture and also keeps his leg muscles toned up so as to swoop on his prey as soon as the he gets a kho.**

**for an attacker -----** Only an active chaser is designated as an attacker. Along with a defender being chased, an attacker is center of attraction in khokho. A defender, however, becomes the focus of attraction for a continuous period of time while an attacker changes after each kho. Every attacker is responsible for scoring the points for his team by chasing the defenders. The chase, however, is a collective responsibility of the team. It is, therefore, necessary to analyze the common minimum qualities expected of a chaser/attacker. The importance of teamwork in chase has been discussed earlier. For the sake of emphasis, its repetition here is definitely not out of place.

Team's chase is not a total sum of individual players' chase. Chase is an entity in itself. It has its own rhythm, plan, and a strategy. The understanding of all the chasers needs to be so good that the strategy of chase for the team should be automatically implemented without any instantaneous discussion/plan. teamwork is possible when all the chasers know each chaser's individual positive and negative points regarding chase. This can be achieved by playing together as a team for long period of time and occasional mutual discussions among players.

**An attacker/chaser must be convinced that chasing is teamwork.** This conviction is more important for an expert chaser as he may misunderstand that scores the points team. Instead, he must know that the team scores the points through him and other chasers. When an attacker gives a kho to a chaser, it is definitely with the intention that a new attacker would score a point or lead the chase resulting in scoring a point. The attacker also should respond positively to the expectations if there is genuine opportunity for scoring a point. Even if there is no opportunity of scoring a point in his turn, the attacker's actions are equally important if not more. He should read the mind earlier attacker and understand his intentions of giving kho. H previous attacker and implement those instantaneously, may it be a simple kho to a subsequent attacker or some other actions.

attacker's actions other than scoring points are also important from the view point of rhythm, plan and the team's chase strategy. Here is some interesting statistics The structure of the game suggests that nine defenders would get opportunity to defend in one turn. In other words, the chasing side is expected to score minimum nine points in one turn. It has been observed over the years that in

one turn, on an average, one hundred and eighty khos are executed. This would mean that one point is scored per twenty khos. Ninety five per cent of the khos are with respect to scoring points. Attackers/chasers may be trained to make these khos meaningful if not productive. These khos should be consistent with the plan/strategy of the team. The rhythm of the chase of a team may be maintained through these khos. The most effective factor which breaks the rhythm of the chase is 'fouls'.

**Fouls** ----- The importance of the speed of a team's chase can not be overstated. The capacity to contribute to the team's chase by each chaser individually is not the same. Also, after each kho, an attacker needs to accelerate from zero speed. In spite of these factors, every team assumes certain average speed of chase. This speed is unfavorably affected by fouls and consequently the rhythm of chase. In fact, as per rules of the game, fouls are amended by giving kho in the opposite direction to that of chase. This would be an instantaneous negative contribution to an overall speed of the chase. An attacker/chaser must resolve in the mind that fouls are totally avoided from the team's chase. Such a resolve acts as a weapon of the team when the opposite team defenders' strategy of defence assumes fouls from the chasers. A chase, even with moderate speed, without fouls pressurizes defenders and forces them to commit errors. Chasers may score the points for their team by cashing on these errors.

Fouls can be classified in two parts. 1) fouls occurring during the actions of scoring points by an attacker and 2) fouls occurring during the all other strategic movements by attackers. The example of the first category would be that of a toe of an attacker dragged in the cross lane during an attempt to score a point by pole dive. Such a foul may be considered excusable as many factors other than the negligence of an attacker, are responsible for its occurrence. These factors may include application of extra speed by an attacker, effect of centrifugal force during pole dive, some special skills used by the attacker, skill of the defender to escape from the pole dive. Although, the example pole dive prey is considered presently, the discussion is applicable to all the scoring attempts using specialized skills of the chase. Using the terminology of Tennis, these fouls may be termed as '**forced errors/fouls**'. The other fouls should be considered as '**unforced errors/fouls**'. All the unforced errors/fouls can be eliminated from the chase by hard practice.

The unforced errors indicate shortcomings of attackers/chasers of the chasing team. Although, these fouls occur when the chasing team as a whole is executing its strategy of winning the points, only one or two chasers may be responsible for each foul. The performance of the whole team gets adversely affected by these fouls. It would be worthwhile to couple of concrete examples.

A team's strategy is to two defenders at the pole and try to score a point by confusing them. Accordingly, two defenders are at the pole. A chaser who is supposed to score a point for the team loses his patience and gets up as an attacker just before he is about to get a kho. His action of getting up as an attacker without getting a kho is a foul according to khokho rules. All the maneuvering of the team of scoring point is in vain because of a single overenthusiastic chaser in the team committing a foul.

A defender is playing a ring game. Chasing team decides to counter defender's ring game by forcing a defender to move towards the pole by giving

consecutive middle/meddle khos. middle kho, an attacker's toe touches the area in the central lane. The foul is declared if defender escapes the trap near the pole and continues to play ring game of his choice.

These examples make it amply clear that such fouls are inexcusable. Among these fouls, the most commonly occurring foul is that of giving improper kho. For a proper kho, there are two necessary conditions to be fulfilled: 1) An attacker needs to touch the back of a chaser getting kho and 2) An attacker needs to pronounce the word kho clearly and loudly while touching a chaser. Failing to fulfill either of the conditions is declared as a foul. An attacker and chaser getting kho are equally responsible for proper kho to occur. Normally an attacker tries to maintain/increase the speed of chase. In eagerness, an attacker shouts kho from a distance wherefrom his palm cannot touch the back of the sitting chaser. Simultaneously, a sitting chaser understands the eagerness of an attacker to give kho, responds by getting up and starting his attack as soon as he listens the shout of the kho without waiting for the touch on his back by an attacker. Thus, both an attacker and a chaser contribute foul to occur. Such unforced fouls need to be totally avoided. Particularly for avoiding this foul, the instruction given to players is normally, 'while pronouncing kho, touch a sitting chaser's back by your palm'. Instead the instruction should be, '**while touching the back of sitting chaser, shout kho**'. The difference is obvious and proved to be beneficial from experience over the years.

The other common foul that occurs is that an attacker gives kho when his hind toes get dragged beyond the cross lane over which chaser is sitting in the square. A speedy attacker, while giving kho, wants to be steady near the sitting chaser. For this purpose, he extends his forward step beyond the cross lane of sitting chaser. Through these efforts, if he is not able to steady himself in proper position, he complements it with dragging his hind toes within the cross lane of sitting chaser. As a consequence of speed it may so happen that hind toes get dragged beyond the cross lane of the sitting chaser which is a foul. A practice is the solution to it. A well known Pune player used an innovative technique to avoid these fouls. Instead of dragging the hind toes, he to step with his forward leg beyond the cross lane of the sitting chaser and extended his step further by dragging the toes of the same leg, keeping the hind leg toes within the cross lane of sitting chaser. It was a very special and effective technique developed by him which can become a workable alternative to the presently used technique.

#### **Role pole in chase -----**

Considering the structure of the game, it is obvious that defenders often use the space of the ground between the poles for their defence. They have an advantage of moving without any directional restrictions while chasers are bound by it. In the space beyond poles, defenders and chasers are at par regarding directional movements and therefore defenders lose a distinct advantage over chasers and hence avoid using that space. Defenders are partly trapped at the pole as they are nearest to attacker/chaser. Also, defenders have no distinct advantage as both defenders and attackers/chasers change the direction by going round the pole. These facts demand a very efficient use of a pole by attackers/defenders to their advantage. Special skills need to be developed to take advantage of a pole. An attacker should see to it that

speed of the attack does not slow down the other hand, pole may be used as a tool to reduce the distance between him and a defender. Some tips for it are as follows. 1) **Use both hands for holding the pole. Never turn round the pole held by one hand. Such a practice is not only inefficient but also may lead to serious accidents.** 2) **It is convenient to have a distance of approximately six inches between two holding palms with both the thumbs directing upward. The hold of palms with both the thumbs near each other is** 3) **The height of hold on the pole is dependant on the height of the player. While turning round the pole, a player may hold the pole with a s bend at his arm pits, slightly pulling the pole towards his body. The player bending at his waist may turn faster than in his upright running posture.** 4) **A player may adjust his stepping for turning round the pole in such a way that no two consecutive steps are taken by a single leg. This is a key suggestion for fast turning round the pole.** 5) **A player may be aware that there is a tendency of the body to put last step slightly towards central lane before steps round the pole are executed. A care needs to be taken that the foul of stepping in central lane is avoided. practice is the only way to achieve a skillful use of pole for attack/chase.**

**An ideal kho -----** The rules of the game have defined the necessary conditions of a successful kho. These are: 1) an attacker needs to touch the back of a chaser getting kho by his palm. A push to a sitting chaser while giving kho should be totally avoided. It is observed that the beginners in khokho have this tendency out of enthusiasm to accelerate the chase. Such a push adversely affects the speed of chase. 2) An attacker needs to pronounce the word kho clearly and loudly while touching a chaser. To fulfill these conditions while maintaining the speed of chase, some tips would be useful. 1) **While pursuing a defender, an attacker may keep his body with a slight forward bend. The bending is suitable for higher speed as well as for reaching the defender for scoring a point or for giving a kho to a chaser who is likely to be a subsequent attacker.** 2) **While giving kho, an attacker is recommended to bend his body still further so that his reach to touch a prospective attacker is extended.** 3) **To touch the back of the prospective attacker for giving kho, attacker may use the hand, right or left, which will conveniently touch a back of a sitting chaser. If the prospective attacker is on his right/left, use right/left hand for giving kho.** 4) **While touching the back of sitting chaser, shout kho.** 5) **Never push a sitting chaser while giving kho.**

**An ideal 'getting up for attack' -----** It has been mentioned earlier that 'a chase' is teamwork. Therefore, the first and foremost suggestion would be to understand what the team needs at the moment chaser gets a kho. The ultimate aim of every attacker is to score a point for his team. Therefore, every time a chaser gets a kho, he would be looking for scoring a point. We have also seen that the khos for scoring points are on an average only five per cent. Therefore, it is necessary that all the chasers/ attackers understand what the alternatives are regarding their actions after getting a kho. Every chaser must try to guess the objective of his team and an

attacker giving him a kho and whether there is a consistency. As mentioned earlier, this is where khokho's uniqueness is proved as players can not get on the spot strategic instructions. Unless an unforeseen opportunity of scoring a point arises, a chaser should act with the same objectives set by his erstwhile attacker/team chasers.

Some tips for the chaser/attacker: 1) **A sitting chaser should concentrate his attention on the defender in action. He should never look at an attacker who is likely to give him kho. On the other hand, he must look all the time at the defender in action and try to guess regarding his tactics of defence.** 2) **He should totally rely on the touch on his back and simultaneous uttering of kho by an attacker to ascertain a kho to him, giving him an opportunity of an attack.** 3) **When a defender, especially playing ring game, has not steadied him in a suitable position in the ground at the time of kho, a chaser getting kho should get up fast and immediately start his accelerated attack so that a defender does not get a leisure to decide his tactics to settle in his defence. It often forces him to commit errors, in turn, attacker getting a chance to score a point.** 4) **When a defender has chosen a single/double chain defence where he chooses to move forward in a chosen direction, a chaser/attacker need not waste time in 'getting up straight'. Instead, a chaser/attacker may get up in the direction of defender and accelerate immediately. The only precaution a chaser/attacker needs to take is to watch for defender's sudden decision to change direction towards side line in place of direction towards a pole.** 5) **When a defender chooses to play a ring game, a chaser/attacker needs to get up straight and start his chase by running near the defender. When a chaser/attacker ascertains regarding the possible direction defender is likely to take, then and only then, he should take direction and accelerate to catch a defender.** 6) **A chaser/attacker needs to be clear in his understanding of the rules that 'looking at a defender in a certain direction by bending his head in neck' does not amount to take that direction. Therefore, a chaser/attacker should continuously 'look' at a defender while keeping his right to go to any of the directions of his choice.** 7) **A kho to a chaser sitting on a second square from the pole, towards which a defender is moving, is always advantageous to a chasing team. Therefore, it is recommended that such a kho should not be avoided unless an attacker is sure to score a point or the intention is to accelerate the speed of chase.**

#### **Advanced skills in chase/attack**

It is made clear earlier that scoring points in khokho teamwork. However, the statement may be slightly amended. It should read, **"To the opportunities of scoring points is teamwork."** In the game of khokho, one common aspect in all the skills of scoring points is the anticipation of defenders actions by a chaser/attacker. This is a very rarely used skill in other sporting and therefore adds to the excitement of Indian games in general and khokho in particular. The object being chased in the game of khokho is a 'live object', a defender, as against a shuttle in badminton, a ball in football, cricket, volley ball, basket ball, tennis, a ring in ring tennis The objects' movements are decided by the laws of mechanics and therefore can be mastered by understanding the laws and . Yet other peculiarity of an object expected

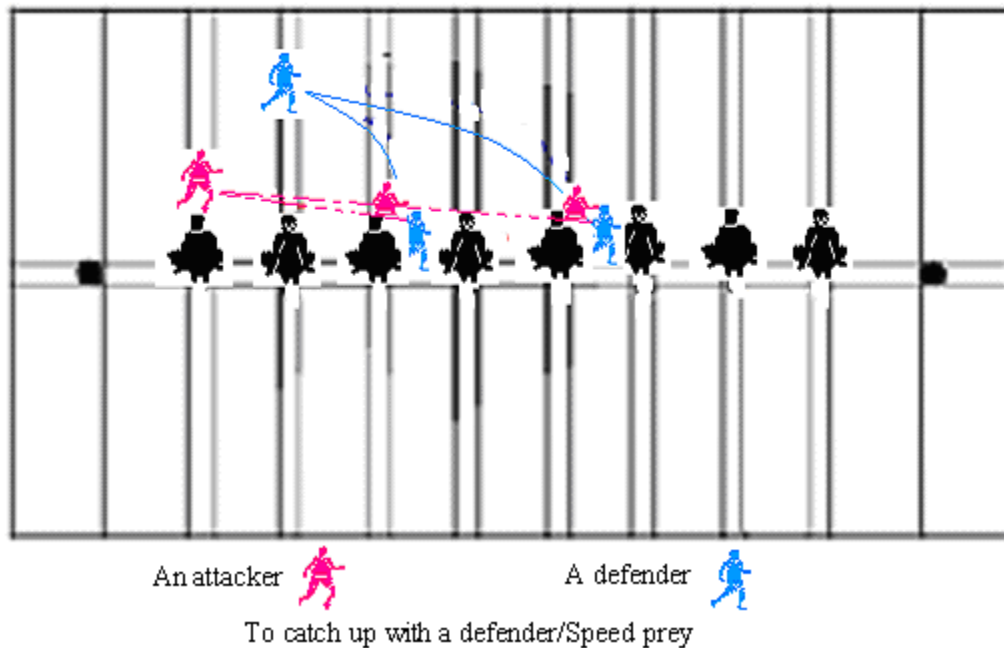
to be chased in khokho is that the object is ‘a living man’ who is the uppermost intelligent thinker in evolutionary set up as against animals in the game of fishing or hunting, if those are considered as the games at all. In short, the point to be emphasized is that it really needs a special skill to anticipate the position of an object which is moving, lively and doing intelligent thinking. Some special skills will be discussed below.

### To catch up with a defender/ Speed prey -----

As the name suggests, a skill of superior speed of a chaser/attacker plays a very important role in scoring a point by this skill. The anticipation of defenders by a chaser/attacker is assumed.

Normally, a defender would keep him in the court opposite to that of chaser/attacker. Also, a defender keeps him away at a distance approximately equal to distance between two consecutive cross lanes (one lane distance) from an attacker. Under such circumstances, if a defender adapts to ‘chain defence’ then scoring a point by speed prey is difficult. However, a defender playing a ring game may fall to the speed prey. Apart from attacker’s better speed and proper anticipation, other important point to be noted is the longer distance to be run by the defender to cross over to opposite court than the distance to be covered by an attacker to catch the defender.

(See figure)



**Dive** ----- Unlike speed prey, dive prey is useful to score a point by catching a defender using any of the defence techniques. A defender in khokho has an advantage in initiating the actions of defence to which chaser/attacker respond. Thus, defender does the primary action followed by chaser/attacker's secondary action. This advantage is favorably used to continuously maintain the distance between him

and an attacker. Apparently, it seems then, to catch a defender is impossible unless defender is at fault. The skill of better speed of the chaser is already discussed above. If, however, an attacker has an average speed, he can also score a point by using dive prey. The principle is that an attacker makes use of his physical height to complement his speed to cover up the distance between him and a defender. When an attacker is chasing a defender, 1) the distance between an attacker and defender decreases to less than that of attacker's height, 2) The speed of a defender is not more than that of an attacker 3) both the defender and an attacker are running in the same court and 4) an attacker, while running, has a suitable stepping for an attempt to dive, if all these conditions are suitable, by design or by impulsiveness, an attacker throws his body forward in the direction of a running defender with stretched hands so as to touch the defender by either/both of his palms. Since the diving action is done while running, the body of the attacker gets dragged to a considerable distance on the ground, most of the times, without any injury. In fact, by practice, all the actions connected with dive prey, mental or physical, become reflex dependant. When dive prey is attempted as an impulsive action, it has been noted that there are no injuries occurring. When an attacker is in two minds whether to dive or not to and finally attempts half-heartedly, the chances of injury are very high, apart from lower probability of scoring point. These points highlight the importance of practice to develop the skill of scoring through dive prey. Some other tips for the application of this skill are: 1) a forward bend of the body during chasing gives a considerable advantage as centre of gravity of the attacker's body is suitable for dive, body falls to the ground from lower height, lowering the shock. 2) The direction of a dive should be such that the body of an attacker makes a positive acute angle with the ground so that the palms of an attacker touch the trousers/legs of a defender. 3) An attacker, likely to attempt for dive prey, may use proper protective for knees, elbows and waist-bones.

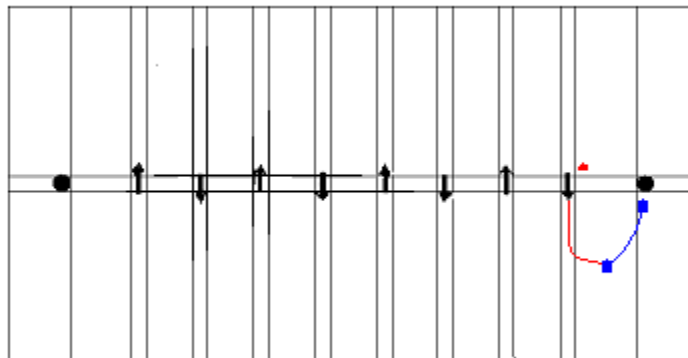
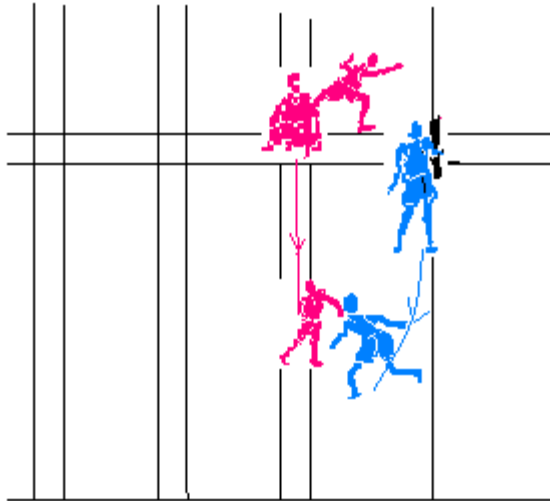
Initially, khokho players may diving in sand so as to be free from m pressure and then on the ground. The agile body and unhesitant daring mind suit the application of dive prey.

**Action kho - Combination prey -----** A defenders actions are very much restricted near the pole as he can not strategically use the tools of playing safe, namely, keeping him one lane distance ahead of attacker and positioning him in the opposite court to the attacker's court. /attacker wants to take advantage of partially trapped defender. A defender tries to be steady near the pole-line, partly in the court facing first chaser. (See figure) An attacker in the opposite court plans to score a

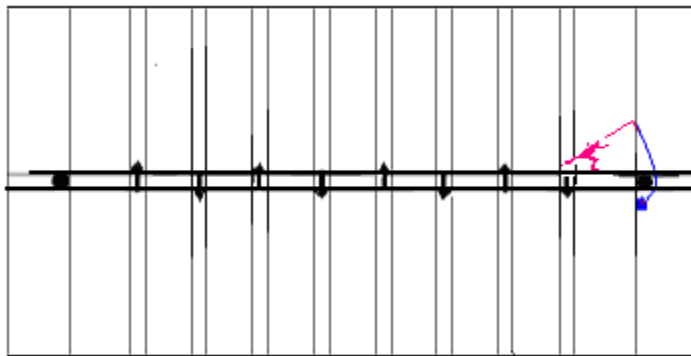
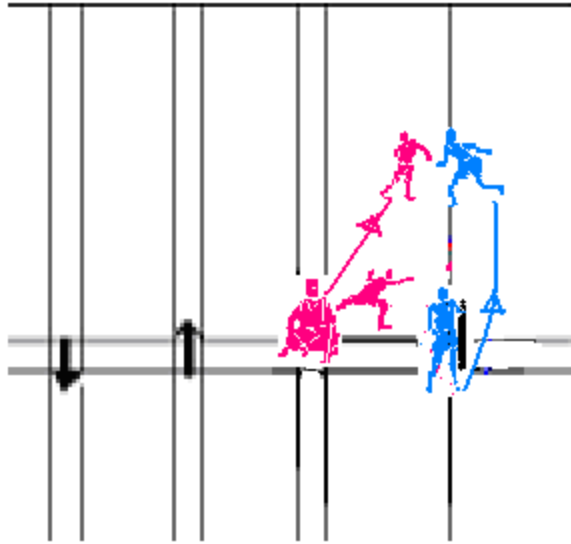
point in combination with first chaser. An attacker keeps his hind toes firmly routed on first lane and swerves-jerks his body so that a defender standing near the pole feels that the attacker may chase him by changing his court by going round the pole. In anticipation, the defender runs towards the side line. In fact an attacker gives a kho to a chaser nearest to the pole. The concerned chaser after getting charge of an attack touches the defender and scores a point. In this process of scoring a point, the most important action is the one by an attacker before he gives kho to first defender. This is a very special skill which needs to be developed by chasers/attackers. The skill involves vigorous body action, suppleness of the body, understanding the psyche of defender and a good understanding with the chaser sitting on the first square.







Alternatively, an attacker does the action of giving kho to first sitting chaser. received defender changes his court by going round the pole and enters the court of an attacker. The attacker instead of giving kho to first sitting chaser runs towards the defender to score a point.



Blue – defender Red - attacker

**Pole dive** ----- This is one of the most effective and attractive skill developed for khokho attacker. An attacker is prevented by rules of the game from going over to opposite court by crossing the central lane. Therefore, a defender always tries to be in the court opposite to that of attacker's court. An attacker is, thus, deprived of the most of possibilities of scoring points when a defender takes shelter of the opposite court. However, pole dive is one such possibility where an attacker can score a point by touching a defender in opposite court.

A defender is partly trapped near the pole. To get out of the trap, defender normally positions him near the pole with the stance as described below 1) defender stands steady in the opposite court to that of an attacker's, facing an attacker, standing behind the sitting chaser who is facing defender's court. 2) defender's one palm would rest against the pole, making it very convenient for him to go round the pole. 3) defender's one toe would be resting behind the pole line while the other would be resting in the opposite court to that of an attacker. This is perhaps the best stance to give a defender free easy access to the courts without any undue time delay

in its execution. However, this stance forces a defender to stand very near the pole. An attacker attempting pole dive.

An attacker, through his body language and body swerves/jerks, forces a defender to delay in his decision of going to a court of his choice. In the mean while, an attacker runs towards the pole with the intension of pole dive. Instead of going round the pole, firmly holds the pole in an elbow joint of a hand opposite to a defender's court, toe of a leg on pole's side positioned conveniently near the pole (taking care that it is not touching or crossing the central lane) and throws his body in the space opposite court (dive), stretching the free hand so as to touch the defender by the palm. (See picture) The body dive increases the range of attacker's reach, giving him a chance to score a point by touching a defender if he could not judge/anticipate an attempt of pole dive and therefore is late in moving to an appropriate direction. In the above mentioned case, an attacker runs the distance of only one lane before he attempts a pole dive and therefore the speed of an attacker is moderate. An equivalent case is that of a chaser who after getting a kho, attempts a pole dive on the nearest pole. These are relatively simple cases of pole dive requiring moderate skill. However, there are few more occasions in khokho where pole dive is attempted by an attacker running towards the pole with very high speed. Courage, proper foot-work and great skill are required in the attempt of pole dive at high speed. practice is the key factor for the effective pole dive attempts.

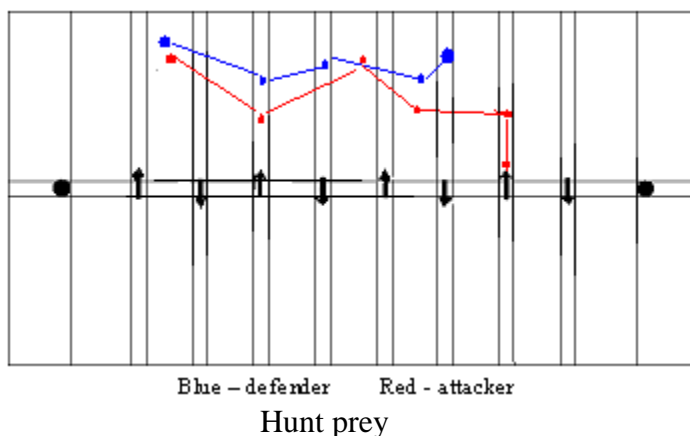
The positions of hold on the pole, the position of toe on the ground are the matters of details which are most of the times subjective.



**Hunt** ----- Earlier it has been emphasized that it is necessary for a khokho chaser to develop a special skill of anticipating the position of an object, a defender, who is moving, lively and doing intelligent thinking. A repeated and consecutive use of such anticipation skill is used while attempting to score a point by hunt prey. This skill is very manifested in the game of khokho as it is hard to

When a defender adapts to ring game, an attacker gets up straight. When the distance between an attacker and a defender decreases, the attacker uses his skill of anticipation of the direction that would be chosen by the defender, say, towards sitting chasers/central lane, and moves, in advance, in that direction. If the attacker

proves right in his anticipation, the defender also moves in the same direction to fall an easy prey to the attacker. However, an intelligent defender reads the mind of an attacker and chooses the other direction, towards the side line. Immediately, the attacker also changes his direction so much towards the side line so that the defender is forced to change his direction again towards sitting chasers/central lane and so on. Ultimately, constraints of the ground dimensions leave no margin for defender to run safe and falls prey to the attacker.



A video recording of a hunt by panthers or tigers clearly shows the procedure, how they anticipate the movements of the preys and accordingly decide their actions. The procedure adapted by skilled attacker of khokho in scoring a point as described above is very similar to that of the hunt by panthers/tigers and hence the name 'hunt prey'.

In the game of cricket, a team consists of specialized batsman, specialized bowlers, a wicket keeper and etcetera. However, every player in the team needs to contribute as a fielder. Therefore, in modern cricket, good fielding abilities of players have become a pre requirement for playing a quality cricket. Similarly, good chasing abilities have become a pre requirement, if not a special skill of the game, to play quality khokho. The expected minimum chasing abilities from **all the chasers** are:

1. Practice of chase with the sitting scheme of both right hand and left hand pole.
- 2) Adapting the stance of 'balanced sitting' in the square.
- 3) A chasers attention may always be on defenders. He should never look at an attacker who is likely to give him kho.
- 4) A chaser should be always ready, physically and mentally, for the spontaneous action of getting up and accelerating to his capacity after getting kho. The time lag between the actions of getting kho and getting up is not appreciative.
- 5) It should be conviction in minds of all members of a team that every chaser is a part of chase by a team. Unless definite of scoring a point, a chaser should not execute any actions which are out of team's scheme of chase. It is a primary expectation from every chaser that team work does not break down through his actions.

- 6) If a defender is going towards a pole, a penultimate kho may not be avoided by any attacker unless the concerned attacker sees the opportunity of scoring a point or accelerating teams chase.
- 7) It should be a habit of all the chasers that each kho they give is an 'ideal kho'.
- 8) When a defender escapes an attack by an attacker, the attacker should maintain the speed of attack by giving subsequent kho immediately. It is an observation that the desperation of defender's escape affects lowering the speed of concerned attacker which is undesirable.
- 9) All the chasers must understand the instructions of a captain/senior player and implement the instructions. For example, if a defender is playing a ring game, an instruction to the chasers would be 'to cover'. If this instruction is implemented, the defender can not take advantage of the feints. If a defender is playing a single/double chain defence game, an instruction to the chasers is likely to be 'to give a forward kho'. This may force a defender to adapt to ring game with possible advantage to chasers to score a point.

## **Special skills of defence**

In an earlier chapter, the conflict in the contesting khokho teams is described. The inference can be summarized as 'the game of khokho manifests the contest between the teamwork of skilled coherent, co operative, rhythmic, speedy chase by nine chasers and skillful defence by nine defenders (normally by one defender at a time) employing various skills namely deceiving chasers by variety of feints, taking fullest advantage of the rules of the game, exploiting the shortcomings of the chasers by the defenders etcetera. In the previous chapter, the requirements of qualities of a team for skilled chase are discussed. Chase is mainly a team work, although, the individual skill of a player as a chaser upholds its importance in the game. On the other hand, defence is mainly an individual skill. Therefore, it is important to discuss inherent and acquired defence skills and their development. In the forthcoming pages we discuss various aspects about the skills involved in defence.

For acquiring the skills of defence in khokho, an individual player needs the qualities of agility, alertness, stamina, endurance and speed. A reader may be surprised to find speed has a low priority in the list of virtues. If a defender has inherited/acquired other qualities, although desired, speed is not considered as inevitability among the qualities.

### **Agility:**

While chasers have many limits such as choosing only one direction of chase, not to cross the central lane while attacking, observing the restrictive rules of khos and etcetera, khokho rules do not bring any restrictions for defenders except that the defenders movements are confined by the dimensions of the ground. Defenders game of defence is, therefore, designed to take fullest advantages of the rules of the game by commanding restrictions of movements on

chasers. Chasers, on the other hand, try to trap defenders near the pole where the difference in the restrictions on movements becomes minimal, if not null. A defender takes a position near the pole in one part of the ground (court) opposite to a court where attacker is standing behind the first sitting chaser. In such a situation, if a defender tries to run away from the pole, attacker gives kho to first sitting chaser facing the court where defender is positioned, not at a very safe distance from him. On the other hand, if a defender stays at a pole, an attacker takes the initiative of action. He may go round the pole or give action kho or attempt pole dive. A defender near the pole is, therefore, said to be partly trapped.

Agility is the most important escape from this trap. Assuming that a defender is alert and watchful, he has an advantage of being around eight feet away from any chaser. A player with normal agility also can defend himself with the distance. If an attacker goes round the pole, not only he has to get over the advantage of distance to defender but also spend time turning round the pole, change direction etc. while a defender will have to run straight. If an attacker gives a kho to first sitting chaser, new attacker has to get up from sitting position and then start his chase as against a defender who is standing in a posture convenient to turn round the pole. Thus, part entrapment near the pole is not a hopeless situation for any defender. However, the importance of agility is highlighted in this situation. When a defender chooses to play a ring game of defence, agility is an essential virtue.

**Alertness:** Alertness is another very important quality for the defence in the game of khokho. It may be noted that a mistake by an attacker can be made up subsequently. Moreover, such a mistake, for example, a foul, does not give direct benefit to . If, on the other hand, defender is not alert, the effects are many folds. is likely to get 'out' losing his defence turn. His team directly loses a point. score a point irrespective of the team's capability to win a point.

During the discussion on the quality of agility, it is shown how a defender is partially trapped near the pole. In a trapped situation alertness is the most important quality to a defender. Even the slightest complacency on the part of a defender might cost him to lose a defence turn and donating a point opponents. The importance of escaping from the trap is emphasized because every defender playing a chain game needs to go near the pole after every ten to fifteen seconds. In other words if a defender is defending for two minutes, he needs to go to the pole on an average eight to twelve times. In case of defender playing ring game, the number of occasions going to pole may become less but can not here are very many other situations in khokho where alertness proves its usefulness. In case of a defender being chased, the remaining defenders from the batch need to be alert to defend 'a sudden attack', a specialized technique of scoring a point in chase. The defenders of the subsequent batch need to be alert when the last defender of the batch is being chased to avoid the complications arising from 'early or late entry'.

### **Stamina:**

On several earlier occasions, the importance of stamina in khokho has been emphasized. have . It is quite understandably related to each game, as the activities in games are very much varied from each other. For example, during the

defence in khokho, a defender's aim is to stay in the ground as long as he can. To achieve this, he needs to run almost ceaselessly, accelerate and decelerate, stop, run in zigzag fashion, turn back, adapt to feints, . All such activities need to be done under physical stress, mental tension and alert intelligent thinking every moment. It is, therefore, obvious that the stamina of playing khokho may not be compared with any other sports activity. In fact, stamina for defence in khokho can not be compared to stamina of chasers in the same game of khokho. It has been scientifically analyzed and recorded that defence in khokho is an anaerobic activity while chase in khokho is, overall, an aerobic activity. (Nataraj and Mandal) An exclusive hard way to acquire the stamina of khokho is to play khokho in the ground for long time, with high time frequency, against tough opponent teams, etc The usual practices of ground running, road running, cross country races, running up and down the hill, skipping, ground exercises, weight training become complementary to khokho. Without undermining the importance of complementary activities for increasing stamina, the inevitability of playing the game itself can be clear by quoting an example. A Pune player, representing winning Maharashtra khokho team in National khokho Championships, never playing the game of khokho, time, season, place, ground conditions or any other conditions normally used by players to avoid playing game. He proved his stamina while defending against the best chasers of his times. The defenders with stamina for defending a complete turn of nine minutes are not very uncommon. Hard work and of playing the game is a key factor for enhancing the stamina. It has gone in the record books that few players have stamina so as to defend for the full time of defending turn of nine minutes.

### **Endurance:**

It is necessary to understand the difference between stamina and endurance. Stamina is defined as or moral strength to resist or withstand illness, fatigue, or hardship endurance is defined as an ability or strength to continue or last, especially despite fatigue, stress, or other adverse conditions. Although both the words are related to 'strength', stamina does not have inherent reference to the time, while endurance refers to continuous application of strength beyond one's natural stamina; as if one is using reserves.

With reference to defence in khokho, endurance can be elaborated as follows. A defender defends as long as his stamina permits him. The need of the time is that defender continues to defend. Coincidentally, chasers also do not have capacity to 'out' him. Chasers make mistakes/fouls giving an opportunity for a defender to continue his defence. The time defender defends beyond his stamina would prove his endurance. A defender his breath, fatigued body, momentarily lost strength, and to continue his defence by resting for a short time, is a clear signature of his endurance. Of course, it may be called incidental endurance. A player is expected to have long term or lasting endurance also. In a tournament of a long period or few consecutive tournaments, such a lasting endurance is tested. After a match or a tournament, the physical and mental abilities of player The recovery of abilities during the time between the matches or tournaments would

indicate of players. However, the repetitive good performance irrespective of the time for the recovery is a real test of lasting endurance. In two tournaments being played simultaneously, it is in the records that a team played one semifinal and two finals in a time span of only six hours and performed well, proving the teams lasting endurance.

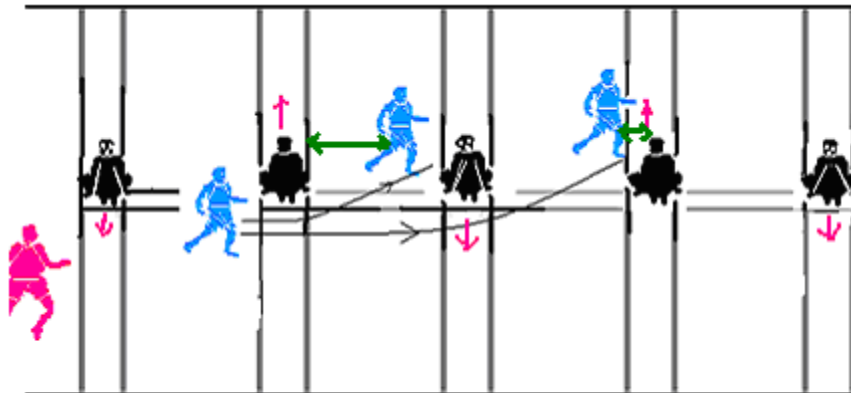
After discussing the desired qualities of defender the skills of defence and related topics .

## **Skills in :**

**Preliminary preparation for defence:** In an earlier chapter we have discussed the contest between chasers and defenders in the game of khokho. We have seen rules that constrain chasers, rules of directions, requirements of ideal kho. Another important rule prohibits chaser to cross central lane. The game of defence is mainly designed to take advantage of these bindings of the rules to chasers. A simple logic of defenders is 'be always in the opposite court to the one that attacker occupies'. Since attacker can not cross the central lane, he is forced to go round the pole to catch a defender or give a kho to a sitting chaser facing opposite court to the one attacker belongs. rule of thumb is that 'stay away from an attacker'. If the game happens to be in the central part of the ground, the second option of giving kho is suitable for an attacker. On execution of such a kho, attacker and defender come in the same court. As per the guidelines stated above, a defender changes the court and runs towards a chosen direction. reacts by giving kho to a suitable sitting chaser and so on. Thus the game continues. [rom the experience, observations and thinking of khokho players over a period of several decades a tradition.](#) The thinking behind these acts and its suitability is explained below.

When an attacker and defender happen to be in the same court, defender changes the court. A tip for changing the court is that defender should cross the central lane from behind the sitting chaser so that if concerned sitting chaser gets a kho, defender will find himself away from a new attacker by a distance between two consecutive cross lanes. On the other hand, if a defender crosses central lane from the front side of sitting chaser; he will find himself in front of subsequent sitting chaser who is suitably positioned to next kho. Such proximity may make the defender to surrender a point chasing team. clear.





Green arrows – after defender crosses a central lane  
'distance between defender and prospective attacker'

Another tip to a defender is that when he crosses the central lane, he needs to watch attacker's actions. The best location to watch an attacker is near the back of the very next sitting chaser after crossing the central lane. This would enable a defender to know whether an attacker is giving hind kho or forward kho. While watching a kho, a defender needs to take care that a defender needs to take a pause/stop in his run towards a pole kho by an attacker. In case, a hind kho is given by an attacker, defender needs to accelerate his run towards the pole in the earlier chosen direction as the attacker and defender are in the same court. In case a forward kho is given by an attacker, defender would change his running direction opposite to original one, towards the other pole. The defender, subsequently, would change the court at a suitable part of the ground.

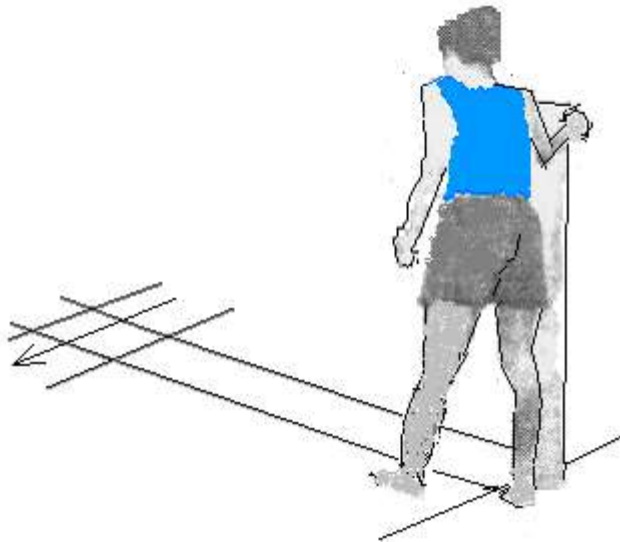
If a defender is running fast while crossing the court, it to stop and take a pause near the back of the subsequent sitting chaser after crossing the central lane. In case can not control his speed, he goes beyond the back of nearest sitting chaser, then he may become an easy victim to next sitting chaser as he would be facing the court to which defender belongs. is that running fast can be disadvantageous to a defender on certain occasions in khokho. A tip, therefore, that defenders need to run with a full control over a speed and a directional movement.

In summary, the basic guide-lines for a beginner of defence in khokho are **1) tries to be in opposite court to the one wherefrom attacker chases. 2) For changing the court, defender crosses the central lane from behind the sitting chaser. 3) Immediately after crossing the central lane, a defender takes a pause at the back of the next sitting chaser and watches the actions of an attacker. 4) A defender decides his course of action depending on the action taken by an attacker. 5) A defender should learn to run with a controlled speed and directional movements 6) The defenders in a batch, other than the one being chased by opponents, also take positions behind the sitting chaser, preferably forth from each pole and at a distance of two third width of the court**

Earlier it is mentioned that a defender is partially trapped at the pole. A defender is always vulnerable at the pole unless he develops the skill to overcome such trapping. How to get out of partial trap at the pole? This is a very crucial question

because defender escapes from this trap, khokho structure is in defender's favor to play long innings.

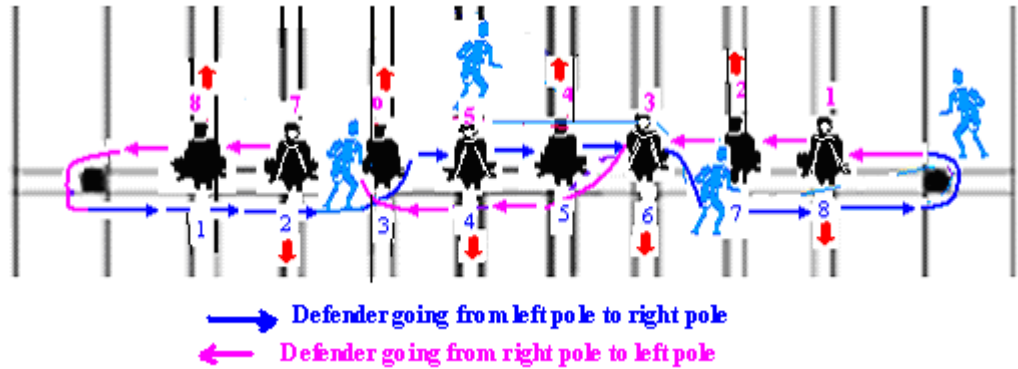
What is the most advantageous style of defender standing at the pole? The following figure shows the 1) A defender should fully concentrate his attention on an attacker in action behind the first sitting chaser. 2) A defender should keep a suitable distance in between his steps, normally about a foot, with a sole of foot nearer the pole resting behind the pole line while the other sole resting in the court where first sitting chaser is facing. (See picture). 3) A defender holds a pole by the palm of the hand nearest to pole. 4) The standing posture with a slight bend at the waist is preferred.



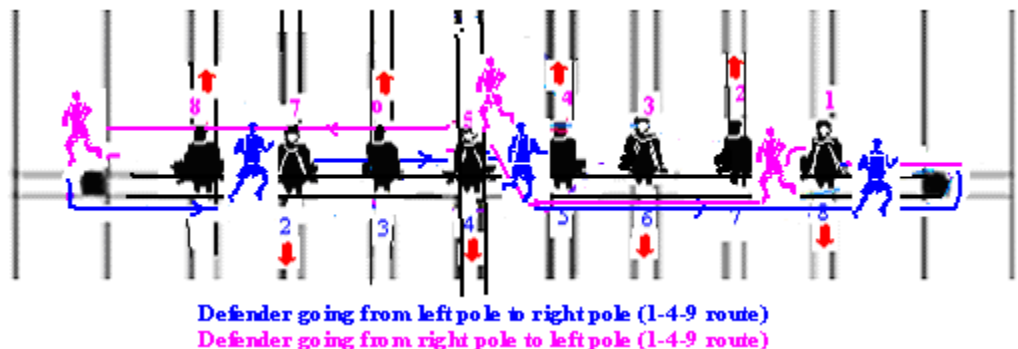
It is easy to visualize that these tips make it convenient for defender to enter in either of the courts smoothly and without any time lapse in physical movement's adjustments. If the first sitting chaser gets a kho or action kho, a defender immediately brings his palm of the second hand in action to hold the pole and goes round the pole in the court opposite to the court new attacker. If, on the other hand, an attacker prefers not to give kho and comes round the pole to catch a defender; defender has a distinct advantage that he is partly in the court where he wants to run. He saves the time for going round the pole. This advantage makes it difficult for an attacker to catch a defender. Another tip of caution to a defender is that he should take care that either a sitting chaser on square one, after getting kho or an attacker does not attempt a pole dive to catch him. Once the skill of getting out of trap at the pole, becomes capable of playing long defence innings.

**A route defence:** As the title of the skill suggests, a defender decides his route between the poles and defends by running on the same route repeatedly. It is mentioned above that if a defender crosses a central lane by going past the back of a sitting defender, he maintains a safe distance between him and chasers. Based on this guide line, a traditional route is developed for safe defence, called 'A

route defence' or 'A double chain defence' or 'a 3-6-9 route defence'. (See picture)  
 The middle name has its origin in the observation that defender going from one pole to another and his returning to the starting pole forms a chain of three loops for which defender crosses the central lane **twice** between the poles. The third name is self explanatory as defender crosses the central lane by going past the chasers' backs sitting at squares number 3,6 and pole as if it was 9<sup>th</sup> square.



It may so happen that chaser third square is facing the court where defender is positioned. In that case, defender needs to adjust his 'route' by crossing the central lane by going past the back of chaser sitting on square two, followed by another change of court by crossing the central lane by going past the back of chaser sitting on square three which brings him predetermined route. Alternatively, there can be other adjustments like 4-5-6-9, or after going past the back chaser sitting on square four, a defender may directly go pole. Some times another route defence is adopted by skilled defenders in which a defender go round the pole and changes the court immediately by crossing the central lane going past the back of chaser sitting on square one. The next change of court would be by crossing the central lane going past the back of chaser sitting on square four followed by a run directly to opposite pole. Thus, a route is named as '1-4-9 route of defence'



Two important points need to be mentioned here. 1) A route with change of court after going past the backs of successive chasers needs the development of special skill. 2) The change of court of more than three defenders should have a lower priority as it is likely to increase the speed of chase.

It is important to change the court by crossing the central lane by going past the back of chaser sitting on square six as defender reaches the pole by keeping the safe distance between him and attacker. sitting on square 7 also faces the opposite court and therefore it may be thought that after 3 & 6 defender crossing the court by going past the back of the chaser sitting on square 7 would suit the defence. It is not so. If executed and chaser on square 7 gets a kho, defender does not get enough ground to make adjustments in his 'route'. In fact, every defender is instructed never to cross the court from behind the chaser on square 7.

After crossing the court by going past the back of chaser on 6<sup>th</sup> square, defender is expected to go towards the pole but not directly. If a chaser on square 6 directly attempts to catch a defender without giving kho to a chaser on square 7, it is convenient for defender to cross the court from the gap in between pole and chaser on square 8. A chaser is forced to go round the pole as he is prevented to cross the central lane by rules of the game, thus, a defender gets an advantage in terms of covering less ground and cross over to opposite court earlier. In fact, this is the only occasion where a defender is recommended to cross the central lane from the front sitting chaser. In fact, every time defender goes towards a pole, he is advised to prepare for crossing the central lane from the space in between pole and chaser on square 8. However, if chasers manage to give kho on square 7, defender, instead of crossing over to opposite court may go to a pole and continue his defence with a normal strategy.

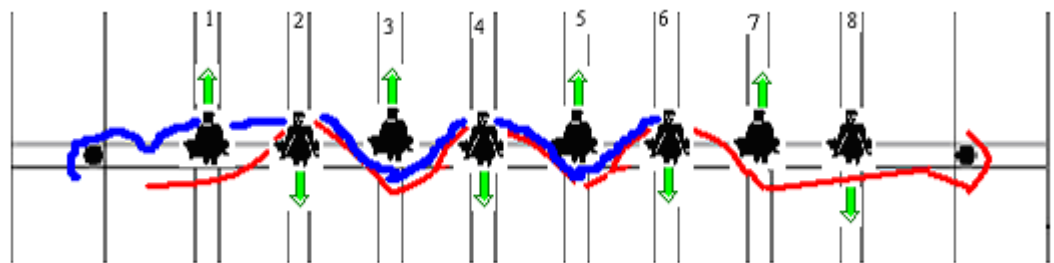
The chasing team tries to disturb the route defence described above by giving forward khos. The counter strategy of defenders is to take a stop near the a sitting chaser next to one on the 'route'. In case of forward kho, defender changes his direction, makes adjustments and continues his route defence in the opposite direction. Few difficulties arise in the counter strategy. Since defender runs a distance of almost three lanes before crossing over to opposite court, he gathers considerable momentum. It makes him difficult to stop at the back of a sitting chaser and immediately change the direction of defence, in case of forward kho. Moreover, while making adjustments for establishing the route in opposite direction, defender needs to cross the central lane from the gap in between consecutive sitting chasers. Such cross over of courts needs special skill which every defender must acquire if a route defence is to be applied.

a double chain defence, a defender crosses the central lane by going past the chaser on square 6. Chaser, instead of giving kho to the chaser on square 6 give forward kho to chaser on square 8. The defender, taking pause at the back of chaser on square 7, marks the forward kho and changes his direction of running, crosses the central lane immediately after going past the chaser on square 7 in forward direction (which is same as chaser on square 2 in backward direction); takes a pause at the back of chaser on square 6 of forward direction (square 3 of backward direction). If chaser on square 7 gets a kho, defender once again crosses

the central lane going past the chaser on square 6 of forward direction and then continues his defence of 3-6-9 in the backward direction, thus making forward kho futile.

In fact, there is another version of modified 'route defence' which is routinely being used by defenders who have specialized in this skill, called 'single chain defence'.

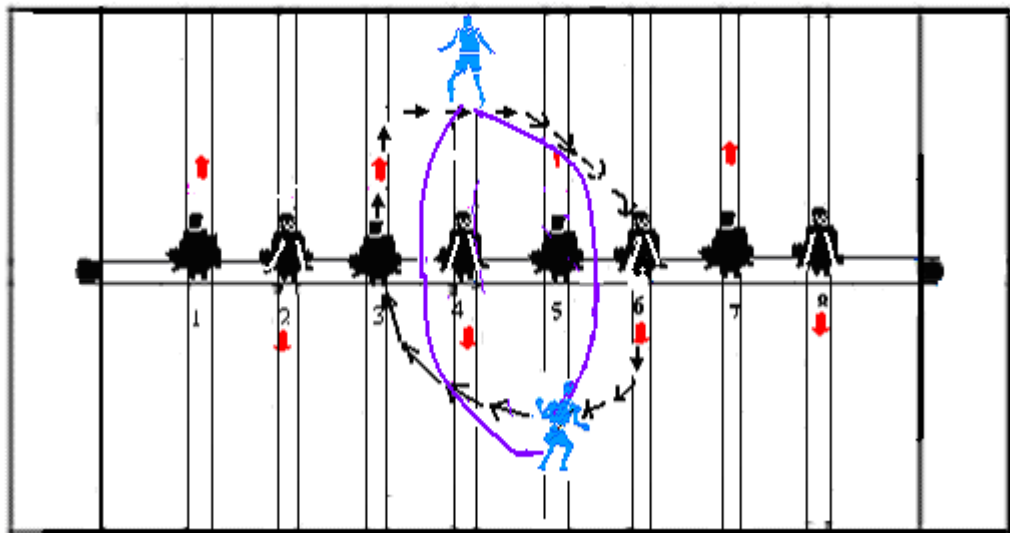
**Single chain defence:** In this version of route defence, defender crosses over to an opposite court every time he goes past the back of sitting chaser u the chaser sitting on square . After going past the back chaser on square he directly goes towards the pole, unless chaser on square prefers to directly chase him rather than giving kho to a chaser on square . In that case, defender may cross over to opposite court from the gap in between chaser on square and pole. The advantages of such cross over to opposite court have been discussed above. A general route of single chain defence is shown in following figure. (Normal single chain defence is shown by red line. case of forward kho is shown by blue line)



If a defender has adapted to single chain defence, tactically, it is normal practice that opponent team tries to break the 'route' by giving forward kho. The defender can still continue to play single chain defence by changing his direction. As an example, where a chaser on square instead of giving kho to a chaser on square gives a forward kho to a chaser on square ; a defender reacts to this by changing his direction and then a general route of single chain defence in the changed direction is also shown in the above given figure. single chain defence over double chain defence. The foremost among those is that chasers are forced to give many khos. Since many fouls are related to the actions while giving kho, the possibility of fouls rises; lowering the speed and rhythm of the chase. Also, a defender is vulnerable to get out near the pole. In the game of single chain defence, defender spends more time in the mid court avoiding the pole. However, defenders must be aware that single chain defence game needs special skills apart from the like suppleness of the body, fast reflexes A defender should be able to adjust his stepping/footwork to the maximum Also the careful application of the 'Palati or Directional deception' proves to be very effective. It is very difficult to play single chain defence game in fast chase with fewer fouls. In case a defender finds difficulty in adjusting his stepping, he may switch over to double chain defence without any difficulty. For beginners, double chain defence is much easier to adpt. Incidentally, single chain defence is more used by .

### Ring game of defence – Round game in four lanes –

This is another popular tactical game of defence in khokho which is only second to 'route defence'. Although safe with respect to not conceding a point, in route defence, a defender is chased by the opponents almost continuously. As a result, there is very little opportunity for defender to rest during his defence. While the efforts of chasers in the game are evenly distributed, a defender has to the burden of his defence individually route defence the stamina of a defender might get overtaxed. Also, if the chase is very fast, in case of forward kho, a defender needs to change his direction by which is almost impossible. Alternatively, a defender may like to use the width of the court and face the chaser as is a part of the ring defence which will be explained shortly. Another disadvantage of route defence is that during the play, a defender has to take special efforts to see/know the actions of a chaser by turning round and seeing back. Also, a defender relies very much on the shout of kho by the attacker to know the location of an attacker. These efforts affect defender's speed, concentration, judgment, rhythm. Another drawback in route defence is that a defender has little scope to take full advantage of the ground size, especially the width of the ground accessible for his defence. In fact, before taking up the game of khokho, younger children play the games like 'Langadi' in which they are accustomed to defend by continuously facing a chaser. This experience when they adapt to route defence in khokho. The overall chasing speed in route defence always rises to which skilled defenders are accustomed but the defenders may or may not be able to adapt to the risen speed. This may adversely affect the team interest. With this background, a tactical game of defence in khokho is developed called 'Ring game'. The example shown in the picture below wherein a ring game is shown as played within the space of four lanes numbering 3, 4, 5 and 6 and hence the name 'round game in four lanes'.



Black arrows – chase route, violet ellipse – The ring game route

See the picture to understand 'The ring game'. A defender takes position behind the sitting chaser for his defence. In the picture defender is shown behind the sitting chaser square four, at a distance of about two third of the width of the court. chaser on square three is facing the court where defender has taken the position and therefore he gets a kho. An attacker does not choose the direction towards his right (in the picture) because a defender may go in the opposite direction beyond lane three and thus escapethe attack by taking advantage of the rule of 'taking direction' or likely foul of 'receding'. Therefore, an attacker gets up straight, walks/runs few steps in the lane three and tries to close up the distance between him and a defender. defender reacts by going towards the sitting chasers and crosses the central lane from the space in between squares five and six. Thus, going in opposite court, instead going towards the pole, he runs on a curved path to take a position behind a sitting chaser on square five at a distance of about two third of the width of the court. attacker chasing him is forced to give kho to a chaser on square six. Now the positions of attacker and defender in the opposite court are the mirror images of their positions in the previous court and therefore their actions are also likely to be similar. An attacker square six 'gets up straight', chases a defender who in turn crosses the central lane and takes his original position, thus, completing one loop of ring game as shown in the picture. Unless and chasers maintain the order of their actions, the defender's game would continue to form loops or rings of his running path which the name 'ring game of defence'.

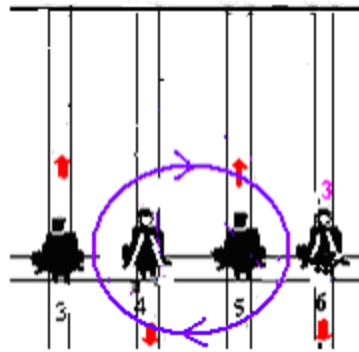
The rings are subdivided in two parts 1) a right handed ring wherein a defender moves towards his right throughout the play. example in the picture shown above is of this type 2) a left handed ring wherein a defender moves towards his left throughout the play. A defender playing a ring game between the lanes four and seven would be an example of this type. This differentiation is important as it is observed that every player has an inherent tendency to play only one type of ring game. However, to be an expert ring game defender, one must get habituated to play both types ofing games.

The drawbacks of 'route game' have been discussed earlier. In the 'ring game', most of the drawbacks of 'route game' are absent. The actions of chasers are very much dependant on the actions of a defender which automatically brings a check on the speed, continuity of chase. An attacker speedily approaches a sitting chaser for kho in a curved path which increases the possibility of fouls at the time of giving kho. This situation further limits the speed of the chase. A defender can play longer innings without taxing his stamina. A defender need not have to turn round to see the actions of or alternatively as he is observing an attacker continuously during the normal 'ring game'. Yet another feature of the ring game is that a defender smaller distance than the combined distance run by chasers. Earlier it has been mentioned that defender experience partly trapped at the pole. In the 'round game in four lanes', defender can partly avoid going to the pole during his defence; thus lowering the risk of loosing a point to opponents. In 1965 – 66, a team from Vadodara developed the skill of scoring points by trapping defenders at the pole. They had specialists in 'action kho', pole dive and feints at the pole. These tactics

were nicely counteracted successfully by a Pune team by adapting toring game of defence and minimizing the pole.

It is necessary to point out that in ring game a defender is crossing the central lane after going past a chaser facing him as against from behind a chaser in single/double chain route. If a defender is running from pole to pole, as in the single/double chain game, his run-route is closer to sitting chasers. In such cases it is crossing the central lane from the front of sitting chaser is unsuitable. However, in the ring game, a defender does not proceed towards a pole. He, in its place, goes towards a side line and takes a position behind a sitting chaser as described earlier. While running for taking position, he is all the time seeing the likely attacker. Therefore, the disadvantage of crossing the central lane from the front of sitting chaser in the single/double chain game does not exist in the ring game.

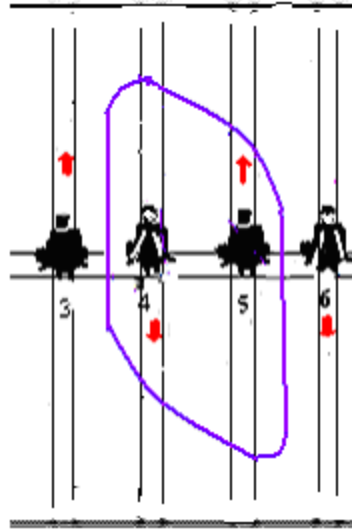
modifications of ring game played; each its own advantages disadvantages. **1) A short ring game**



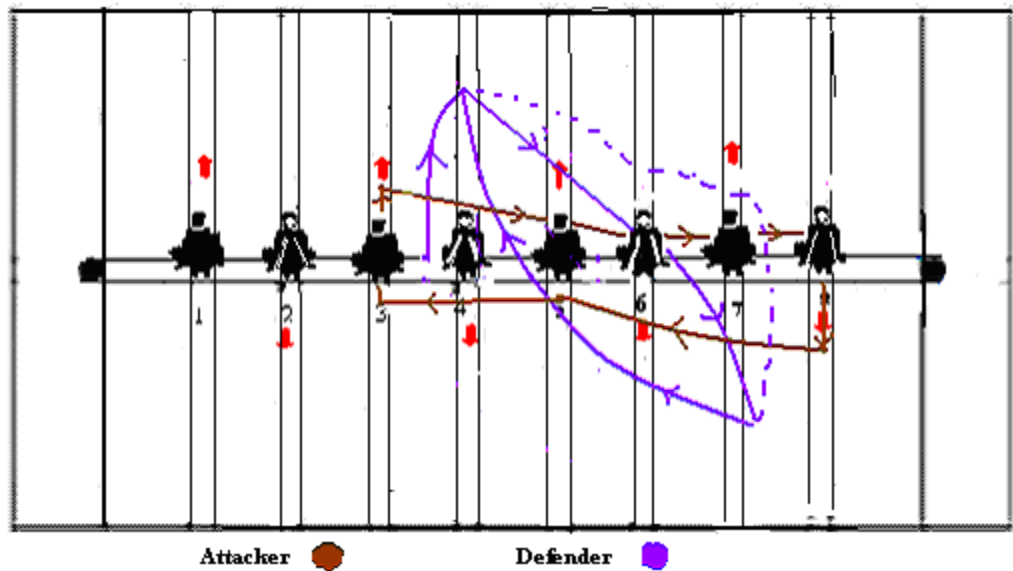
In this modification of ring game, the width of the ground is not fully exploited by the defenders. The ring or ellipse formed has small dimensions. A defender needs to be very quick in actions and extremely alert for its application. There is little scope for the application of various feints for which generally, the ring game is preferred. Also, the advantages of the ring game like lowering of the speed of chase are not obtainable and therefore this modification is not

**2) elongated ring game:** This modification of ring game makes fullest use of the width of the ground of khokho. In traditional ring game, a defender takes a position behind the sitting chaser (almost on the marking of the lane), at a distance of about two third of the width of the court. In the modification of elongated ring game, a defender takes a position even farther than in traditional ring game. Also, instead of positioning behind the sitting chaser on the marking of the lane, a defender prefers to position between the lanes of likely attacker and sitting chaser as shown in the picture. A defender desires that an attacker 'gets up straight' and runs a longer distance in the lane in front, resulting in defender's easy crossing to opposite court, or defender makes use of feint.





3) Ring game between six lanes:

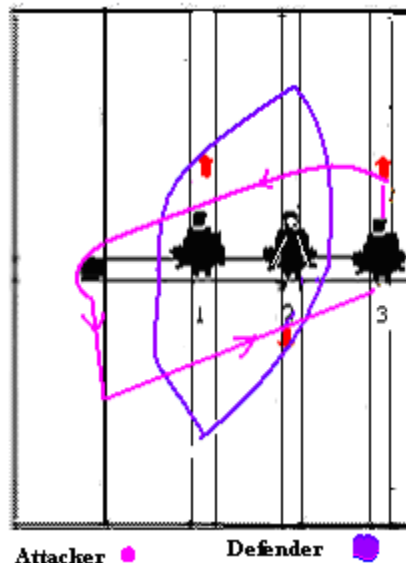


In case of very fast chase, it is difficult to play ring game within four lanes because it is likely that an attacker may score a point by touching a defender crossing the central lane from the gap between squares five and six. (picture above) Therefore, the original ring game within four lanes is modified to ring game within six lanes. A defender takes a position behind a sitting chaser (on square four in the picture) as if he is playing ring game within four lanes. A chaser on square three gets a kho, gets up straight a few steps forward and then sprints to catch a defender. [dg that crossing central lane from the gap between squares five and six](#) may have to yield a point to an attacker crosses a central lane from the gap between squares six and seven and proceeds to take a position behind the sitting chaser on square seven. Accelerating attacker can not control his speed so as to give kho to a chaser sitting on square six and is left with no choice but to give a kho to a chaser sitting on square eight. Thus, the relative positions of an attacker and defender become the same as in

the beginning of ring game. In the new positions, a defender has a choice to play ring game four lanes between eight and five or within six lanes between eight and three, depending upon the speed of an attacker.

A small variation in the ring game within six lanes is played by defenders with skill of dodging while moving backwards. In this variation, a defender forces a speeding attacker to control his speed by dodging while moving backwards. Thus, a defender avoids change of court after crossing square six in the above example. Instead, he gets assured that an attacker is not able to touch him before he changes the court from the gap between the squares seven and eight and takes a position behind the sitting chaser on square seven. (line in the picture above) The same technique can be extended to play ring game in eight lanes.

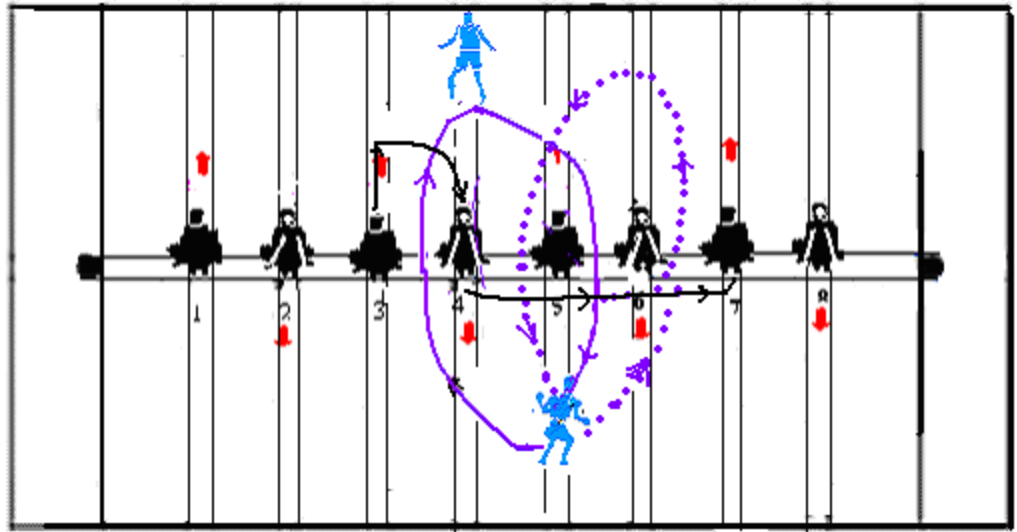
Another modification often used third lane or second pole line sixth lane. A defender needs to acquire specialized skills to use it. In ring game, a defender forces chasers to get up straight and run a few steps in the lane before taking direction. In this modification, a chaser square 3/6 while for an attacker chasing round the pole, defender forces him to run in the free zone by taking advantage of the definition 'To leave the free zone'.



The application of ring defence appears to be simple. In fact, it needs precise footwork acquired through hard practice. A small mistake in the judgment or stepping may cause losing a point to opponents. opponent chasing team never allows more than few turns of rings to defender's ring game. The easiest way to disturb a ring game by a defender is to make use of middle kho.

A defender in the picture below planned to play ring game between the lanes three and six. An attacker kho to a chaser on square three. He gets up straight and starts chasing defender ring game. expected the next kho would be to chaser sitting on square six smart attacker gives a kho to a sitting chaser on square four instead. Disturbed plans need adjustments and therefore, a smarter defender after crossing the central lane from the gap between squares five and six, instead of going towards a side line, changes his direction and again crosses the central lane from the gap between squares six and seven and then prepares to run towards a side line. An attacker (a chaser on square four), presuming that ring game is thwarted and a

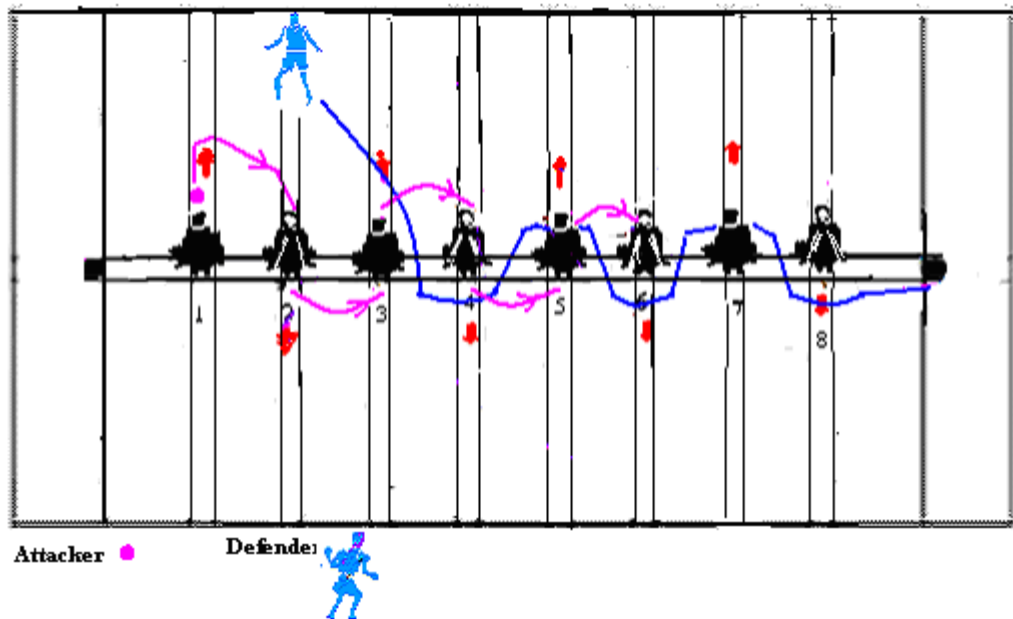
defender is confused, chases him to give kho to a chaser sitting on square seven. defender runs towards a side line, takes a position behind the sitting chaser on square six and continues his ring game in a new set of four lanes between lane four and lane seven. Thus, disturbing ring game by middle kho is successfully prevented. At the same time, it may be noted that a defender was originally playing right handed ring game which on adjustments has changed to left handed ring game. his ring game is undisturbed, otherwise, chasers are partly successful in disturbing the ring game.



Ring game adjustment after 'middle kho'

In the above example, a ring game was tried to be disturbed by middle kho. It is shown that if properly reacted, a defender can continue a ring game. However, the example is specific where only one middle kho is attempted to disturb a ring game. If a chasing team applies the technique of giving middle kho repeatedly, what happens to ring game? If chasing team repeats an action, defender . In that case, chasing team may have a false satisfaction of breaking a ring game but the team can not be happy as a modified single chain game as shown in following picture.

Single chain defence as an outcome of middle kho



In a normal single chain defence game, the distance between an attacker and a defender remains usually equal to distance between two consecutive lanes; while in a single chain defence game resulting from the disturbing a ring game by giving middle kho, the distance between an attacker and a defender happens to be more than the distance between two consecutive lanes. In other words, single chain defence game resulting from the disturbing a ring game by giving middle kho has an advantage over single chain defence game, with respect to possibility of an attacker catching a defender. However, the adjustments required to be done by defender playing such game of defence demands specially acquired consisting of excellent footwork, presence of mind, suppleness in movements and perfect understanding of the situations.

The conventional techniques of defence in khokho as described above are sufficient to an expert khokho defender, the additional skill of applying feints while playing by the conventional techniques of defence makes one an accomplished defender in the game of khokho. In fact, the use of feints is made during chase also. An action kho to a chaser sitting square one near the pole is an ideal example of a feint during chase. Thus, 'feints' is an important feature of the game of khokho. Therefore, a special discussion of feints in khokho

The actions of a defender/chaser in khokho depend on 1) the actions chaser/defender to offset the opponent's strategy and 2) the anticipated actions of chaser/defender. The second aspect works on a mental level. Deception of an opponent player in actual actions and on mental level can be called a feint. However, following examples would make it clear to readers how a feint works in the game.

A defender has taken a position behind a sitting chaser for playing a ring game of defence. An attacker is about to get up straight for on defender. defender turns and steps in a direction of a pole and after one or two steps, suddenly stops. attacker, wishing to catch defender before he crosses to opposite court, accelerates in

the direction defender, running in a straight line from near the sitting chasers. Because of the defender's sudden accelerating attacker goes ahead of the defender and to his attack by giving a kho to avoid the foul of receding. Thus, pretension of a defender that he is going towards a pole and wrong judgment of an attacker amounts to successful application of a feint by a defender to escape an attack.

A defender is forced to go to a pole. He has taken his position at the pole, facing an attacker standing at the back of a sitting chaser on square one. Attacker concentrates his attention on actions for giving 'an action kho'. A defender anticipates the action kho and without waiting for kho, goes towards the side line of the court in which action kho is being attempted. Unaware of such intentions of the defender, the attacker catches a defender and is forced to give a kho. Thus, defender escapes an attack by upsetting an action kho by . A defender uses a feint and extends his defence period in the court. Such a feint would be risky if an attacker is alert. Of course, there is always a calculated risk taken by a khokho player while he attempts a feint. The factors like acquired skill, practice, proper anticipation of the situation of game, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of opponents more than overcome the risks taken.

One must remember a hint in using a feint that **“A failure in the application of a feint is deceiving oneself.”**

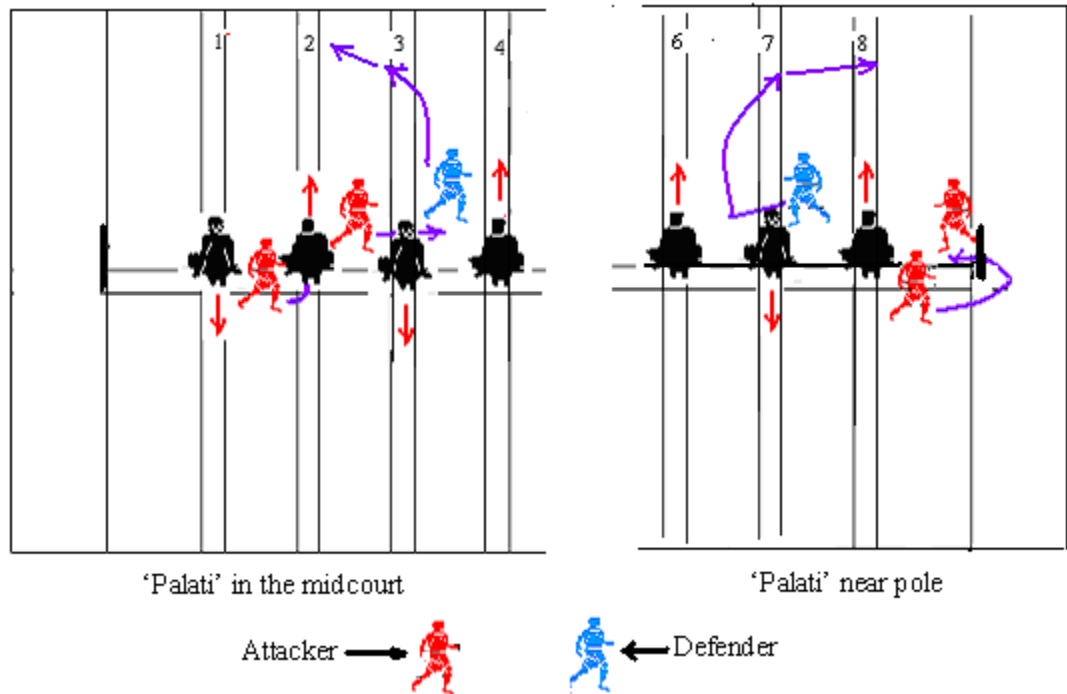
reader, by now, must have a clear idea feint Any advantageous action which could not be anticipated by the opponents can be called as feint. However, there are some conventionally used feints which are described below **Feints useful while playing chain defence.**

**Palati:** A defender playing a chain game decides to go towards a particular pole. He finds that a chaser is likely to catch him in a short distance to come. **To defend from the possible loss of point, the defender, all of a sudden, changes his direction of exact opposite the original.** For execution of this deception, a defender makes use of the width of the court and suddenly goes towards a side line initially, followed by changing the direction. Normally unaware of the intentions of the defender, chaser continues to run in the predetermined direction because of the gathered momentum. However, the use of this feint is considered as risky as an alert and conscious chaser would unmistakably score a point.

There are many situations where a defender can make use of the feint palati. In a chain game, the speed of chase increases. Every chaser in relay khos tries to reach a defender. Therefore, chasers concentrate on increasing the speed of chase and in this process A defender takes advantage of it and makes use of palati. Once this feint becomes successful in giving benefits to a defender, he pressurizes the chasers by pretending to make use of palati as and when required. The chasers under pressure become watchful for defender's palati actions and in the process the speed of the chase is lowered giving advantage to defender. Thus, the pretension of feint without actual action, itself serves as a feint. Palati is very effective for lowering the speed of chase.

A defender going round the pole is closely followed by an attacker; in this situation also palati becomes very effective. An attacker's attention is diverted from watching a defender while he (attacker) is going round the pole. Also, after entering the opposite court, an attacker, in an eagerness to catch a defender before he

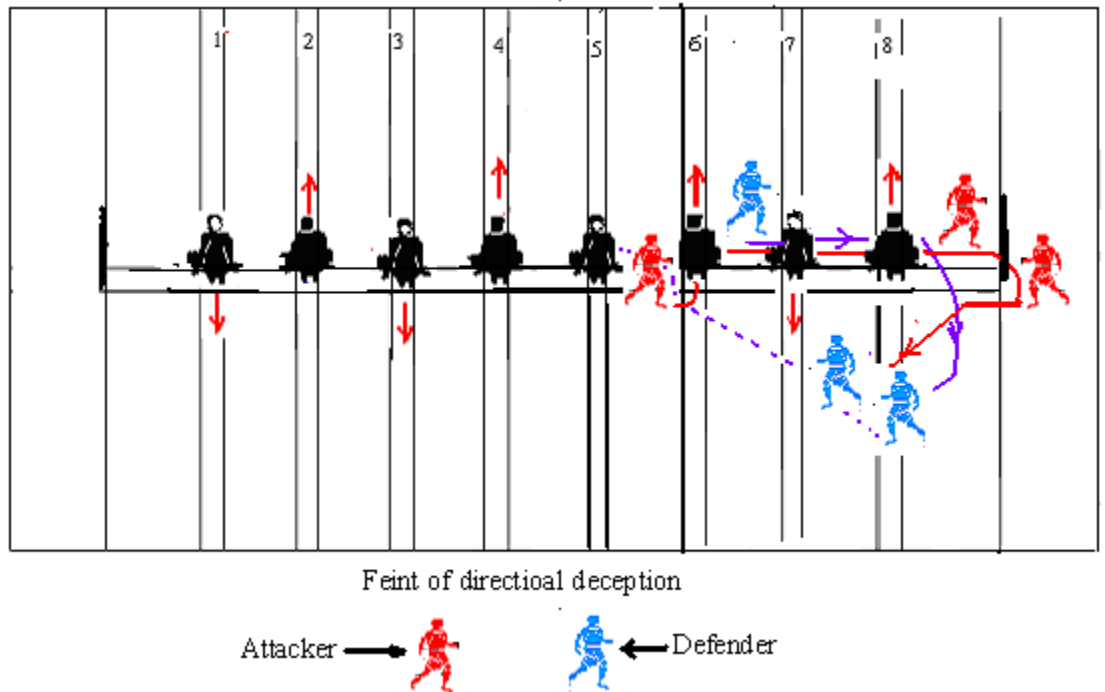
changes the court, accelerates, running from near the sitting chasers. A defender anticipates this and applies palati as he knows for sure that attacker may not be able to cover the width of the court. A defender may take advantage of the rule 'leaving the free zone'. A palati in the, however, is a risky proposal if attacker is an alert customer.



**Run away feint:** A defender is standing at a pole. An attacker is about to give a kho to a chaser sitting on square one. chaser on square one gets a kho and eager chaser accelerates towards a pole where a defender is standing. chaser expects that a defender would change the court and go towards second pole defender, on the other hand, anticipates that chaser would try to catch him near the pole itself or just after entering the opposite court **defender runs towards the side lines of the court in which chaser is present taking advantage of the predetermined action of chaser, accelerating towards a pole with the assumption that a defender would not attempt his escape in that court.** This feint is often used as defender's rush for escape rather than well planned feint. If the chasers are alert, the application of this feint is very risky and therefore not recommended by many coaches.

**Feint of directional deception:** While playing a double chain defence game, a defender crosses over to opposite court by going past the back of a sitting chaser on square six. attacker gives a kho to a sitting chaser on square six. The defender goes towards the pole. Normally, an attacker gives a kho to a chaser sitting on square seven. However, if sees the possibility that he can catch a defender before defender crosses over to opposite court, instead of giving kho to a sitting chaser on square seven, he also runs after defender towards a pole. The counter strategy is to cross over to opposite court from the gap between pole and a chaser sitting on square eight. An attacker has no option but to go round the pole to get in the court of defender. Because of the rush to escape, a defender is forced to go a little distance

away from the sitting chasers towards the side line. Now, if a defender tries to change the court as usual, attacker coming round the pole is likely to catch up with him by running from near the sitting chasers. Therefore defender pretends to go to opposite court by going one or two steps in suitable direction and stops. attacker reacts to this by changing the angle of chasing direction towards defender. defender, in turn, goes towards the sixth sitting chaser with the intension of crossing over to opposite court. attacker can not adjust his direction closely to that of defender because of the sharpness of the angle and the speed. Thus, defender escapes an attack.



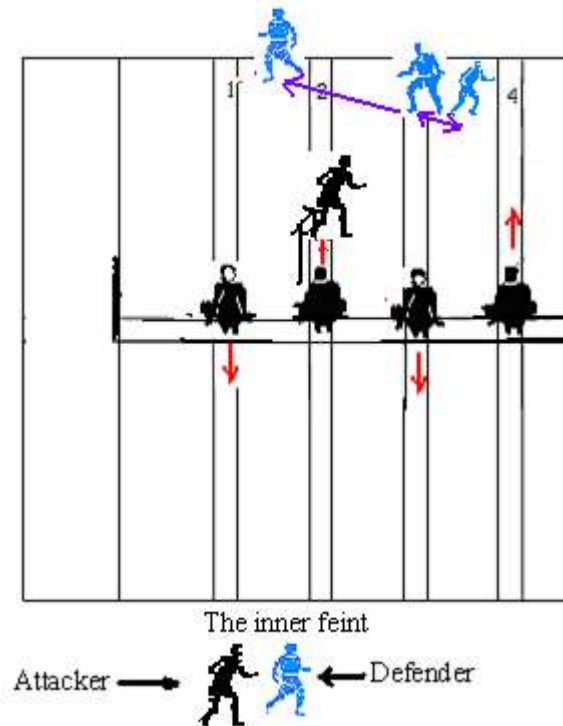
### Feints applied while playing ring game: Inner feint-

A defender, playing ring game takes a position behind a sitting chaser but at two third a width of the court from nearest sitting chaser. A sitting chaser facing the court where defender is positioned gets a kho. After becoming an attacker, he gets up straight and starts a chase in lane in front of him so as to go as near defender as possible. defender responds by doing a body action which pretends that he has decided to change the court to escape from the attack. This action includes going one or two steps towards central lane, changing the direction of shoulder line towards the sitting chasers and suddenly stopping and facing attacker. These actions induce attacker to take a direction for a possible pounce on a defender. Once attacker takes a direction, defender quickly goes on the other side of the court beyond the lane through which attacker was closing in for him attacker's attempt to catch him gets frustrated as his actions are constrained by the possible foul of receding.

A defender must consider the following points before he applies an inner feint. 1) attacker must be at a convenient distance away from him. 2) A suitable

timing of feint should be chosen. 3) attacker is undecided whether to take direction or go straight to catch a defender.

If successfully applied, an inner feint allows some rest to a defender during which he can take stock of the situation and plan his strategy accordingly.

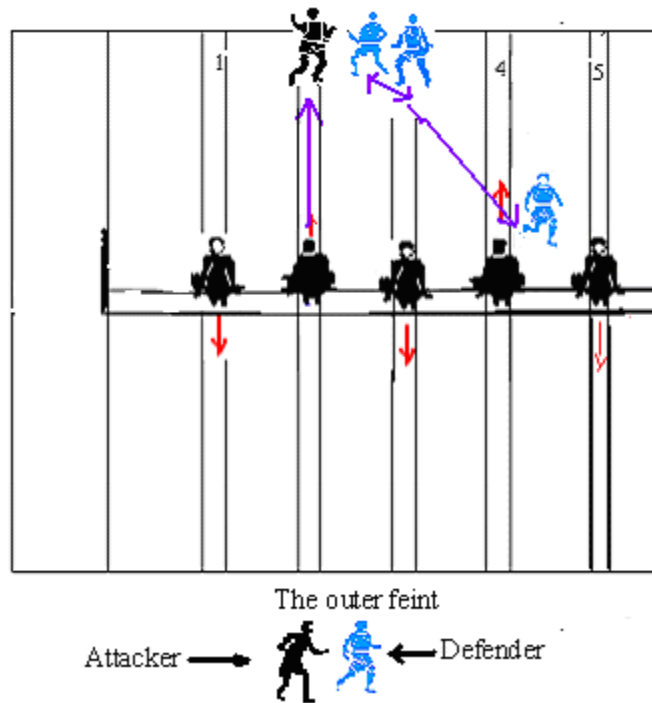


**Outer feint:** A defender, playing ring game takes a position behind a sitting chaser but at two third a width of the court from nearest sitting chaser. sitting chaser facing the court defender is positioned gets a kho. After becoming an attacker, he gets up straight and sprints to get closer to defender. defender can not apply 'inner feint' because of the speed with which attacker gets closer to him. If he 'inner feint', he finds himself very close to an attacker to lose a point. Therefore, he pretends that he is attempting to go in the area of the court on the other side of the lane occupied by an attacker believing that attacker has taken a direction. A defender moves one or two steps towards the side line with his shoulder line facing end of the lane occupied by attacker. Then defender suddenly stops and returns to his original position. attacker is deceived by a defenders action and because of the gathered momentum goes straight towards a side line beyond defender. Seeing that attacker is off balance towards side line, defender coolly runs towards sitting chasers to cross over to opposite court.

The outer feint can be applied with a slight modification also. While pretending that he is attempting to go in the area of the court on the other side of the lane occupied by an attacker believing that attacker has taken a direction, defender not only moves one or two steps towards the side line but turns round his own self and returns to his original position facing to opposite direction to the original one. This action is so swift that attacker is deceived effectively; however, defender in the process turns his back towards attacker and therefore whether attacker is deceived or



not by a feint. In fact, this feint is nothing but a feint of 'palati' in different circumstances and the feints of 'palati' in any form have a disadvantage of being 'blind' to its effectiveness. In case an attacker is smart and alert, outer feint fails and a defender has no option but to hurriedly cross over to opposite court with a closing in chaser. In this situation, normally, another attempt of feint, many a time, like 'a palati' is successfully tried; however, hurried attempts of successive feints are not recommended.



#### **Some common hints to defenders:**

The defenders must be aware of the fact the use of feints in the game of khokho is not a concerned player. When a chaser/attacker is getting up straight and is at a safe distance from a defender, then and only then, a feint may be attempted so that if the deception of attacker is not successful, defender has an option of continuing a ring game or a route game.

The defenders should never surrender an attacker in case he (defender) is trapped near the pole or at any other part of the court by the tactical play. defender must try to escape from any difficult circumstances. It is observed that the chances of a defender escaping to lose a point even after an attacker comes as close as a touching distance from a defender are considerably large.

The defenders must judge the condition of the ground before the actual play begins. They should check the nature of ground if it is slippery at any place or the soles are getting good grip of it, the poles are suitable for the play, the lines' marking is in order for the play For playing ring game, the soles' is very important not only for good performance but to avoid injuries during play

A defender may start his play with a route game which is with losing a point. During this play, defender gets an idea about the condition of the ground, the speed of chase and later plays his tactical game.

On a turf covered ground, the grip is good in normal conditions of play. In case of a drizzle, watering or morning dew, the ground becomes slippery

The ground marking powder used for earlier matches may get spread on the ground making it slippery, especially near the pole. If it is found to be so, players may bring it to the notice of chief referee of the match.

A ring game is more useful and attractive when compared to route game; however, the chances of players slipping during the play are more. Also, the possibility of injuries to knee, ankle sprain more. On the other hand, route game is safe and reliable. Therefore, the of route game for individual and team performance is on rise while ring game is loosing its favour in spite of its attractiveness.

defence game is one which is played the tactics of chasing team and at the same time applying various techniques, tactics and styles in the game. It is advisable to start the defence game by 'route defence'. A defender gets a fair idea of the tactics of chase and ground conditions during route defence. Later defender may look for an opportunity to play ring game. opportunity is normally gifted by chasers as they try to break the route defence by giving a forward kho. During the application of ring game, a defender may put into practice various feints. Once the body gets warmed up the muscles get toned up and body suppleness rises. The applications of all sorts of feints are often successful under such conditions. A defender gets some rest intermittently thereby his stamina for defence. A defender is advised not to be obstinate in choosing either a ring game or a route game. A mixed game chosen considering the ability of a defender, suitability and incidental necessity give good results.

Some other general hints to defenders are as follows.

- 1) Each defender from a batch of three should consider that every kho given is for scoring a point through him and therefore be attentive suitably.
- 2) Two defenders among three in a batch who are not being actually chased may take positions behind the sitting chasers sitting on squares four and five respectively. They may stand at a distance of two or three feet inside the side line
- 3) In case of 'an attempt', a defender may use stepping useful ring game and simultaneously give a 'call' of alert to the remaining defenders in the batch.
- 4) In a route game, a defender may cross the court by going past back sitting chaser. On the other hand, in a ring game a court is by going past the sitting chaser ; but he should see to it that he is all the time facing a would be attacker except in case of middle kho.
- 5) As far as possible, crossing over opposite court is avoided in the area between pole line and nearby two lanes.
- 6) A defender should try to check and control the speed of chase.
- 7) A defence is a team
- 8) In case, two or three defenders are trapped near the pole, each one may take care of oneself rather than accepting martyrdom for one's team mate.

## Winning strategies for a khokho match

The factors under consideration of players, captains of teams and coaches of teams playing a match with each other will clarify the strategies in the game of khokho. The assumption is that strategists of both the teams know the strengths weaknesses of each others team. The first factor under consideration would be team selection.

**Team selection:** Although, team selection depends on the strengths and weaknesses of opponents, it is very essential to maintain the balance of the team. It would therefore, proper to discuss what is balanced team.

**Balanced team:** In a khokho match, each team two innings, each inning consisting of two turns, defence and chase. team having more number of skilled defenders, it may so happen that all the players of that team need not have to perform in the turn of defence in a limited period of nine minutes. However, all the players have to show their skill in turn of chase. Therefore, the first consideration of every team should be that all the players of the team should have bare minimum skill of chase. A chase in khokho is mostly team work and therefore even though a player is skilled in chase, he not become obstruction to team work. When a player fulfils this condition, then and only then player's skill of chase to make individual contribution can be considered as an asset a team. Scoring a point is the most important skill for a chaser; however, it is not the only contribution that a chaser can make. In fact, the chasers' actions like increasing the speed of chase with minimum fouls, using feints to score a point by self or via a team mate, implementing team strategy of chase, avoiding totally unforced fouls can makevaluable contribution to a team effort of chase. A chaser having all the skills and virtues to score points as described in the chapter on of does not secure because many a time opponents take care that he does not get any opportunity to exhibit his individual skills and virtues to score points. Unless such a chaser is reasonably good defender who can defend him for one or two minutes at a critical point in time, his inclusion in a team as a pure attacker/chaser is a controversial point of discussion. In short, while selecting a team on the basis of chasing skills of players, following points need serious consideration

- 1) Chasing is inevitable for every player in a team.
- 2) Minimum chasing skills are expected from all the players in a team.
- 3) Individual skills must be complementary to teamwork. Individual efforts **against team strategy** are not
- 4) On the basis of utter chasing skills a chaser can not secure his position in a team. Every chaser is expected to have the bare minimum skills to defend in a critical time for team.

Criteria for the defence of players are relatively simple. During every defence turn, the time capacity of a player to defend can become a player's performance. A defender having acquired advanced skills of defence would not only spend longer time in the court but would break the rhythm of opponent's chase which helps the performance of his team mate defenders to improve. Also, he takes care that the speed of chase is controlled by his game of defence. His defence does not

create any difficulties for the other defenders in his batch. Obviously, such a skilled defender needs to adapt to the opponents' tactics of attack. He should be able to play a route game, a ring game, and/or make use of various feints during his defence. A chaser's performance very much depends on teamwork. For a defender to show his performance, his individual skills and application of those skills in action are the only decisive factors. **In short, a defence performance is done on following points.**

- 1) Defence in khokho is an individual effort.
- 2) Leading defence performers may have all the skills of defence namely route defence play, ring defence play and application of feints.
- 3) A defender can help the defence play of his team mates.

Taking into consideration the points mentioned above for chase and defence in khokho, it can be said that defence of a team is predictable and therefore should become while selecting a team. Three specialist defenders, three players, quite proficient in both aspects of the game of khokho defence and chase, and remaining three players who are specialist chasers and bare minimum skill in defence, such a combination can make a balanced khokho team.

**Choosing captain of a team:** There is a qualitative difference in the expectations from captains of other games and of khokho. Normally, in most of the games, a captain of a team gets an opportunity to give instructions/advice to the players in his team. The provision of 'time out' is included in the rules of many games. Also, in many games, there is some time gap when a ball/shuttle/ring goes out of play or a player is preparing to do 'service', It is possible for a captain to give instructions to the players personally or through his team mate during such time gap. In the game of khokho, such opportunities for a captain to give instructions to players are generally very rare and particularly during the chasing turn. Therefore, a khokho captain is expected to give training/coaching to his players rather than the spot instructions. It is found beneficial for a khokho team if a captain is chosen for a long period of time rather than for a tournament or a match. A captain trains his teammates how and what decisions are to be taken on various occasions during a match. Especially, during a chasing turn, all the players need to arrive at a common decision or else it would be chaotic chase. **In fact, team work in khokho can be defined as circumstantial thinking of all the members of the team and execute actions accordingly.** It may be noted that a player may differ from the common decision; however he knows for sure what other players consent on and keeps aside his opinion and join hands with his team mates. It is observed that if and when the team mates are playing together for a considerably long period of time, such understanding develops among the members of the team. Of course, at the time of the match, when an occasion demands, it is duty of a captain to give instructions and this practice continues; however, with training as described above, the execution of eleventh hour instructions also becomes efficient.

When a team is selected by selecting players from more than one team, it is a routine practice to have a training camp before actual matches. The purpose of such training camp is exactly to develop understanding among players as described in the paragraph above. However, a training camp of a short duration **Toss and considerations of choices related to it:**

**1) Stamina of players in the team:** stamina of players in the team they need to play two full innings and in case equal scores of competing teams, an additional inning. This means that all the players play with full vigour for more than one hour. Khokho is as hard a game as any other recognized games like foot ball, hockey and rugby etc, if not more. It is. Fortunately or unfortunately, with a present structure of the game including rules of the game of khokho, all the nine defenders in a team are rarely tested in one turn of defence as the opponents score less than nine points. The players who do not get a chance of defending in a defence turn are not exhausted and therefore fresh and energetic for the succeeding turn of chase. Therefore, a team choosing defence after winning toss gets an advantage in terms of stamina of players during their chasing turn. On the other hand, a team choosing chase after winning toss gets exhausted after a chase of nine minutes. . The defenders of the first batch enter the ground within the time period of five minutes from the end whistle of their chasing turn so that there is every possibility that they are not fully recovered from the exhaustion during their chasing turn. Therefore, after chasing turn, players of team enter the ground for their defence with slightly lowered stamina.

**2) Warming up:** It is an established fact that before the actual game starts, the players warm up for the actions they are expected to do during the game benefits the players to enhance their performance. The quantification of ‘warming up’ is a very delicate subjective matter. However, ‘warming up’ can be an important criterion in the choice the toss According to this criterion, when a captain chooses to defend on winning a toss, the players who do not get a chance to defend within the stipulated time of nine minutes are not ‘warmed up’ because of the actions during the defence turn. In fact, they get ‘cooled’ if they have done exercises for ‘warming up’ before the game starts. This would affect their performance in the succeeding chasing turn. On the other hand, a captain choosing ‘chase’ on winning a toss will get all the players in his team ‘warmed up’ during the chasing turn and derive its benefits in succeeding turn of defence. Therefore, choosing chase is beneficial to a team according to ‘warming up’ criterion.

**3) The ground conditions:** The captains must consider the ground conditions while decision of choosing defence or chase on winning a toss. It is true that a captain may not be able to read the ground conditions to the extent of hundred per cent. If the ground is slippery, while a defender if slips, may lose his chance of defence surrender a point to the opponents. It is clear that defenders have heavier penalty to pay because of the unsuitable ground conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to know the ground conditions as early as possible before any occur for a team. Therefore, the ground conditions, choosing chase on winning toss is recommended so that all the chasers get fair idea of the ground conditions before they go for defence turn.

**4)** It is rare to find a balanced team. Most of the time, it is observed that teams strength a defence or chase as per the skill acquired by the players Experts of the game advise that on winning a toss, captain should make a choice of chase or defence the strength of his team. As mentioned earlier, the chase in khokho is mainly team work. Apart from players’ efforts to develop team work during practice sessions, it depends on many circumstantial factors. Therefore, there is a

certain amount of uncertainty of performance based on it. A defence performance, on the other hand, mainly depends on individual efforts of the players in a team. Therefore, the performance in it is predictable. A captain of team having strength in defence, therefore, prefers to choose defence on winning a toss. In general, a captain wishes to keep hold on the course of compete match by making a suitable choice of his team's strength of defence/chase.

**Defence strategies:** Formation of batches of players for defence The formation of batches is dependent on the structure of the team. For example, a team having six expert defenders will have different strategy of formation of batches than a team having only three good defenders. Also, the style of defence of players in a team (ring game/route game) is an important consideration.

A defending team is expected to hold out the time of defence of nine minutes. Also, during the course of its defence a team may give the lowest number of points to opposition team. A captain of a team needs to perfectly plan his defence by considering various positive and negative aspects of the skills of players in both the teams. Although, all the possible in a contest can not be covered in such a discussion, some examples would be useful as a guideline.

The first batch may consist of three players who have acquired maximum number of skills of defence. At the beginning of the match, the chasers in opposition team are expected to be fresh, alert, energetic and unexhausted. Therefore the chase is likely to be fast, vigourous and full of life. The defenders in the first batch should be able to face an assault in every respect. For example, if high speed is being used as a weapon of chase, defenders should be able to counter it by playing a ring game with occasional applications of feints. Defenders play a game which disturbs the rhythm of chase. When a defender plays a long inning of defence proving his stamina, chasers lose patience, balance of mind and then their game becomes faulty. A defence, then, becomes easier which helps the players of the next batch to perform better.

The players in the first batch are supposed to read the tactics of opponents and play a game to nullify it. Also, they will give an idea of a tactical play, strengths and weaknesses in opponent team to all the players in his team. They should be able to judge the ground conditions properly and plan their game accordingly. All in all, the best talent of defence in a team may make the first batch of defenders. A defence of two minutes by every player in the first batch is a fair expectation from a good khokho team.

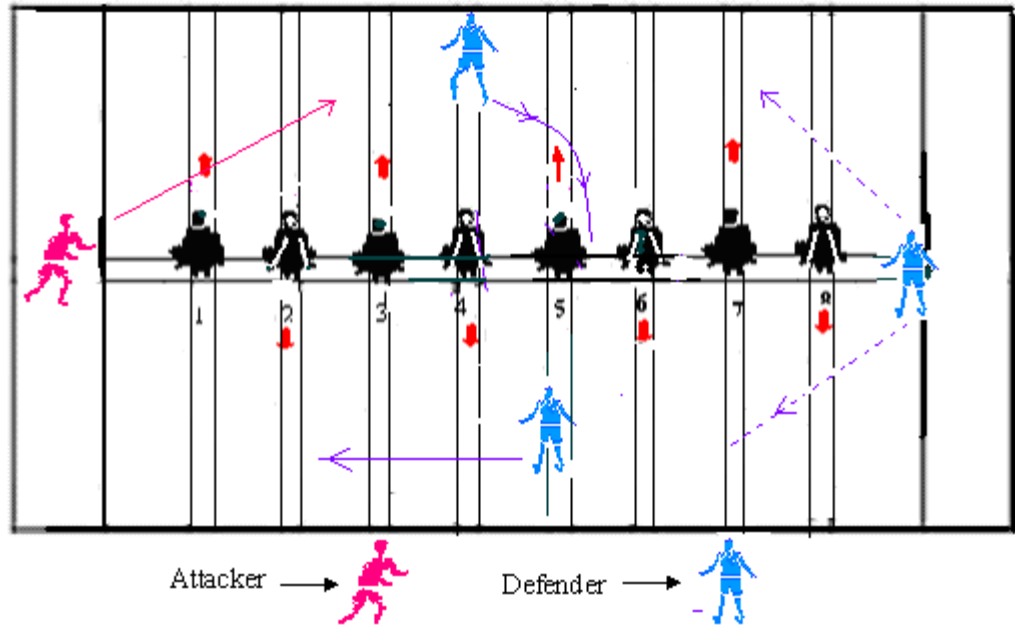
second batch may consist of defenders who may be called all-rounder players. These players are supposed to have skills of both chase and defence. If the time management works perfectly and all the defenders in second batch actively participate in defence, each player has a share of responsibility of playing hardly minute. In that case, the players in the third batch need not have to defend in that inning and they remain unexhausted and fresh for the chase that follows. When by accident or otherwise, a defender in the first batch gets out earlier, defenders in second batch need to the burden of making up for it. The players in the first batch, normally, get enough rest before they prepare for the chasing turn that follows. However, the players in second and third batch get less rest. Therefore, they are expected to have better stamina end endurance to sustain play with less rest.

The third batch of defenders may be made up of specialist chasers and therefore are supposed to be fast runners. They may not have acquired special skills of defence but are still expected to know the fundamentals and application of route defence which suits their speedier running. Being good chasers, they are likely to have positive frame of mind by which they become successful in defence also, should the occasion demand it. Another point in favour of defence of third batch is that the players of chasing side are likely to be tired by chasing two batches of expert defenders. Considering these points third batch of defenders also can play an important role in defence of the team.

**Ploys and tricks of defence:** The actions of defenders depend on the tactics of chasers and therefore one must consider the chasers tactics while discussing ploys and tricks of defence. However, defending team can have a plan of its own by which a team can force the chasing team to to a characteristic style of chase. Such a plan includes psychologically pressurizing the players of chasing team for a chase convenient to defenders.

The first and foremost of the conditions of the plan would be that three defenders in a batch would take positions which are spread all over the khokho ground and away from the chaser starting the inning from a pole. It is a normal practice that one defender takes position near the second pole while the remaining two defenders would stand behind the fourth sitting chaser from each pole near the side line. The defenders in the first batch are supposed to have acquired all the skills of defence, prominently, route game and ring game. Therefore, the defenders positioning behind the sitting chasers may stand near or at a distance from sitting chasers which suits them.

After the play begins, as a first ploy, chasing team initially attempts to gather two defenders near the pole. If the defenders adapt to ring game, the attempt gets foiled. Defenders positioning as described above is very useful for it. A figure below shows the movements of defenders in case chasers attempt to gather two defenders at the pole. An attacker is about to start chase from a pole on left side of the ground. An arrow shows that he chases a defender positioned behind a sitting chaser on fourth square. ultimate aim is to force him to run towards a pole where another defender is positioned so that two defenders are gathered at the pole. Expert defenders read this plan and therefore defender on lane four would avoid immediate going to pole by adapting to ring game between the lanes 3, 4, 5 and 6 as indicated in figure. Another important move of the defenders to frustrate the plan of chasers is that although an attacker seems to chase only one defender, all the three defenders in batch adjust their positions by moving from their original positions so that gathering defenders at the pole becomes impractical. Thus, a defender behind a sitting chaser on square five moves towards lane three and avoids going on a pole on right side.



A chaser has options to give kho to a sitting chaser either on square four or six. While being chased dodges attacker by playing ring game, a defender waiting near a pole on right side gets enough opportunity to adjust his position suitably to avoid gathering the defenders at the pole. It has been mentioned earlier that defence is mainly an individualistic performance however, the movements of defenders and giving 'calls' accordingly to their batch mates is a classic example of team work in defence.

A chasing team neither can continue its efforts to gather defenders at the pole for a long time nor repeat it often as it may result in loss of time and rhythm, speed and continuity of chase. In case a defender is standing near a pole and other defender is forced to go towards the same pole, as soon as kho is given to a chaser on square seven, a defender standing at a pole would run towards a side line behind a chaser on square seven while the other defender would use his usual skills to escape a trap at the pole. This technique is called 'quitting from a pole'.

Normally, chasers concentrate efforts on one defender at a time. Chasers strategy is to understand the shortcoming in the game of defenders for which they try forward kho, middle kho etc. Initially, an active defender may choose to defend by the application of 3-6-9 route strategy as it involves least risk of losing a point, unless a defender makes a gross mistake or in case of accident like slipping of step. A defender a judgment of the nature of ground surface, chasers strategy of chase, speed of chase for some time during which he gets warmed up. **His muscles are also toned to play a game through which he controls the chasing strategy.** In case a forward kho is given, a defender immediately switches over to a ring game. If a kho is in play, defender starts playing again a route game. Through the application of feints, he is able to control the speed of chase. It is always advisable that the application of feints should be preceded by a combination of route and ring game of some time. The chasers get upset when the applications of forward kho, middle kho etc do not unsettle a defender. As a result, they lose patience. Fouls occur



along with mistakes of chasers in a play defence becomes easier and effective. [During the play, defenders should be on look out for the weak links in a chase.](#) They can exploit fully an unskilled chaser if there is any.

When a new batch of defenders enters the ground, a little instability exists before defenders settle in their suitable one defender position near a pole while the remaining two defenders would stand behind the fourth sitting chaser from each pole near the side line defenders execute their defence game independently without any interference from other defenders. However, there can be sudden action of 'an attempt' from an expert attacker for which all the defenders in batch must be ever prepared. The 'key' tips for such an attempt are: 1) Even if one defender is being chased at a time in any part of the ground, the other defenders in batch also should be alert sudden attack. They should think that each kho given is with the of scoring a point by ending defence game of each one of them. 2) A continuous oral communication between the defenders present in the ground is recommended. The instructions could be like 'beware of an attempt', 'play a ring game' or 'leave a pole' etc. 3) Give top priority not to lose point to opponents by the end of your own defence game. Each defender himself may take care of his survival in the ground.

When the last minute warning is declared by a referee, a defender being chased may adopt to double chain route game of defence as it is a game of least risks of losing a point; unless he has defended a long time before the warning and can not sustain continuous double chain defence for a minute. Although attractive and exhibiting skills of defence, a ring game and game consisting feints at such a juncture is risky losing a point even through a small and minor mistakes or accidents like slip of step.

Defenders need to adjust their game to counter the opponent's tactical chase. When chasers try to dominate the play by the excessive speed, defenders may defend by which the game slows down. A ring game, a game having feints often lowers the speed of chasers. A single chain route game also helps in lowering the speed of chase as number of khos increases. This rise in number of khos also increases the possibilities Another common tactical ploy of chasing team to score the points is to trap the defenders near a pole. Every team takes efforts to have specialist players giving 'action kho' and specialist attackers to take advantage of action khos. In reply to these tactics defenders with mastery over ring game of defence can totally avoid going to pole and still play long defence innings. In a decade of 1960-1970, Madhyasth Ramat Kendra team of took efforts to develop expertise in the technique of 'action kho', 'specialized feints at a pole' and players exploiting these. Using these techniques, the team won matches after matches, dominating khokho field. Nav Maharashtra Sangha players of Pune gave a fitting reply to these tactics by adapting to ring game of defence, especially the ring game where a pole is one end point of the ring.

The defenders need to observe the weak points of opponents while defending. There is likely to be a slow chaser or a chaser who is easily deceived by feints, defenders must take fullest advantage of these. Defenders should see to it that these players often get khos. Defenders keep in mind the convention that "the slowest runner determines the speed of chase". The referees' attitude regarding the

implementation of rules of the game may be noted by the defenders/chasers. If a referee is very particular about certain rules, defenders may point out if such rules are not honored by the chasers. It is observed that any disregard for a rule by chasers is meticulously implemented by the referees and defenders can take fullest advantage of it. Any deficiencies in the playing conditions like slippery ground, a pole not fixed firmly etc. should be pointed out to referees by defenders captain as far as possible before the game begins. The foul tactics of opponent chasers like making noise similar to kho during the game or deliberate hindrance running defenders by a part of the body should be immediately brought to the notice of referees.

After all the players in a batch get out, the defenders in next batch should be alert to enter the ground immediately. They must know that a kho need to be given after the last defender in a batch gets out. An early or late entry brings confusion/commotion in a play in which defenders may lose a point and more importantly a disorder in the game may prevail.

#### **Ploys and tricks of chase/attack:**

Chase/attack in khokho is team work and therefore the tactics to be used need to be worked out together as against, most of the times, individual actions during defence. A rule for chase/attack is that the maximum number of pounces on The number of attempts to score points through the collective efforts of all the chasers using various tricks at their disposal gives positive results.

Before the chase starts, chasing side needs to take a decision whether to choose left or right pole for their sitting arrangement. In an earlier chapter, the importance of choice of left/right pole is described with an appropriate example. A practice of the players of chasing team and its suitability / unsuitability to defenders needs to be considered while making a choice. A chasing team has a free choice for a sitting arrangement of all the players in a team with respect to squares on which they sit initially. A chasing team may expect that chasers may attempt to gather two defenders on a pole. is discussed above. Considering those actions, chasers may arrange expert attackers sitting on key squares so that they may successfully gather two defenders at the pole and attempt to score a point. Alternatively, chasing team may decide to accelerate the chase in the beginning of the innings. Assuming that a defender would play double chain route game with the least risks, expert speedy chasers may be arranged to sit on squares three and six. Whatever the tactics chasing team chooses, an important point to make is to score a point at earliest. It enhances the spirits of the chasers. The speed of chase may rise and every player would be enthusiastic to go for 'a kill'. Concurrently, defenders may loose heart by early loss of point. It may be noted that unless team is made up of considerable number of skilled chasers, the plans of gathering defenders at the pole do not succeed. In fact, team loses precious time in such attempts. If the number of skilled chasers in a team is limited, an attempt to catch an inattentive defender may be fruitful through a skilled chaser rather than attempting to gather defenders at the pole and cash a point.

Gathering two or more defenders at a pole is often attempted However, a warning needs to be stated for chasers. It is true that defenders gathered at a pole are in a state of commotion and can not make a decision of action to escape the

trap. Expert chasers can take advantage of the situation by scoring a point. Procedurally, the ploy looks simple but in practice that during an attempt of gathering defenders at a pole, most of the times, a weak link among spoils the plot. An attacker who is supposed to score a point also should have extra ordinary capacity to make quick decisions. It so happens that an attacker is in a position to catch either of the defendersattacker may decide to catch one who is easier to catch. If himself gets confused, he does not catch any of the gathered defenders and all the exercise goes in vain. Precious time is lost. chase gets disturbedhe chasers must exercise discretion while using these tactics. It should be noted that it is chance that a skilled chaser is in a position to score a point as a result of this tactic.

The chasers in a team are expected to note the weaknesses of a defender in his defence. For example, a defender skilled in playing a route game of defence; however, he not have foot work needed for applying ring game of defence. The chasers' tactics would be to give a forward kho forcing defender to adopt ring game in which he is not skilled. defender is likely to make a mistake resulting in chasers scoring a point. captain of chasing side or any other skilled chaser quickly judges the limitations of a defender and instructs team mates for the proper suitable actions. A chasing side with good team work can immediately adapt to the instructions, helping team to score a point. Some defenders use ring game of defence to avoid running. A middle kho by chasers frustrate their plan. A defender, in that case, needs to adjust his ring at different location in a ground or adapt to route defence. If he is not skilled enough, he often misses in his foot work or slows down can such an opportunity.

**Some tips to chasers:**

A superior attack is one where there is the maximum number of attempts to score points. It is that speedy attack is the only chasing skill. Running after a defender with speed without any planned plot is fruitless. Also, the individual skills of attack like pole dive, ground dive etc. However, team's attack should be worth something extra than the total sum of the skills of individual players coming in to play. In short, a planned strategic attack with excellent team work, supported by contribution from individual skills of all the players in a team is real valuation of team's attack. It must be remembered by all the chasers that when one scores a point by virtue of one's individual skill, prestige is if efforts are in tune with team's strategy; if , player may be cursed in spite of his hard work. Therefore, a player should always be ready to sacrifice individual performance in the interest of his team.

As a part of team strategy, break defender's route game of defence or chance of scoring a point, an attacker shall not avoid kho wherefrom a defender is crossing the central lane for going opposite court. This instruction is more applicable especially the kho to a chaser sitting on square from a pole. A repetition of the negative contribution of fouls in chase would not be out of place here. A foul less attack is really a precious quality, an asset of a team. When a new batch of defenders enters the ground, chasers should start a chase with a renewed vigor and try to score a point before a defender settles in the ground. A point scored before defender utilizes his full capacity to defend not only adds a point to a chasers

scorebook but the quality of an attack itself goes up which ultimately may prove to be

a

---

## **KHOKHO GROUND**

In an earlier chapter, technical information of khokho ground is given. and subsequent developments of the game, khokho. It is only imagination or speculation that may give some idea about the earlier developments of various aspects of the game. Before the development of khokho as an organized sport, the game was being played in the evenings as an entertainment after full day's hard work. Most of the population in India was engaged in agricultural activities. Availability of land for games or sports was not a problem then, the modern concept of well maintained playing ground had not evolved in the days khokho was taking shape as a game. Therefore, choosing a plain piece of land of suitable dimensions and marking it with a suitable tool, perhaps a stick must have been the playing ground in earlier days of the game. A stone, a sitting person or just a marking on the ground may have served as the end of playing field where poles are introduced in modern khokho. Inconvenience for changing a direction by a player in earlier arrangement was obvious and therefore the introduction of poles is understandable. The importance of poles in modern khokho is not just an indicator of an end of playing field but those are perhaps the most important locations of khokho ground with respect to activities during an actual play. This is a very good example of developments in the game which are directly related to the developments of playing tools such as playing ground. Another example would be development of diving skills in khokho. Those skills could not have existed without good quality grounds where diving is safe injuries as its consequence. The importance of the quality of playing tools in general and ground in particular need no further emphasis.

last hundred years or so, the purpose of playing khokho is not limited to entertainment only. It has become an organized sport. the standardization of various facets of the gamea khokho ground perhaps the most important among. competitive khokho is an important feature of these developments. For the standardization, the organizers need to consider various aspects such as grounds for the players in different age groups, rules and regulations, dress code of players, responsibilities and rights, tournament rules etc. A definite rationale is followed for the standardization and the process continues till date. for khokho .

Once upon a time, a standard ground had a simple criterion namely that the game should be accessible to all the people irrespective of their age, financial status, sex etc. A plane piece of ground marked with the tools available to all served the purpose. All the expensive and costly activities and items were avoided. This is no more a criteria as khokho is an organized sport to day and aspires to become a world sportnear future. The criteria for an ideal khokho ground in present times would be: 1) a ground that would do justice to all the special features and virtues of the game khokho 2) ground all the skills used by khokho players during the game 3) a ground which is safe accidents and injuries to khokho

players during game. Apart from these criteria the other points that consideration 1) if khokho is to earn a status of world sport, some standards need to be defined by the organizations for khokho grounds at various levels. 2) the maintenance of grounds should be possible irrespective of geographical place of the ground 3) all the modern amenities such as artificial turf, wooden ground, indoor ground, ground covers, markings of the ground etc. get due consideration for making of the ground 4) the dimensions of the ground may be fixed by considering the physical of men/women in various parts of the world.

A very special characteristic of the game is variable speed of players. A steady sitting chaser accelerates to his maximum speed as soon as he gets a kho. On the other hand, an attacker his maximum speed needs to stop after giving kho. A defender runs with a controlled speed, however, he may have to change his running direction quite often. For the maintenance of these features, the first and foremost condition is that a khokho ground should not be slippery. In fact, a ground should be **such that toes get good grip on the ground. It needs to be pointed out** that unlike many other sports, khokho is a game played bare footed. An attempt to play it wearing playing shoes successful so far. While running, quite often sharp frequent turnings, may lead to sprains. In fact, players shoes are specially designed having a carving or the spikes on the surface of the toes so as to get a grip on the ground. have not proved to be safe for the use in khokho.

The moist ground surface without any grass on it proved to be suitable a good grip for toes on the ground. Such grip serves both the purposes of sudden acceleration and stoppage of chasers and sharp turnings of defenders. The surface of the khokho ground should not have hard surface like, for example, court For sudden stopping or controlling the speed, khokho players use frictional force derived from the dynamic contact toes and ground surface. Occasionally, toe of a player gets struck on the surface of the ground. If the surface is hard, an injury or sprain may occur. If the soil is not compacted hard by heavy roller, the shock of toe hitting the ground or the frictional force is partly absorbed by the soil on the surface thus avoiding injuries. In the process, some soil may get loose which can be restored by using light roller at regular intervals. If the ground is rolled hard as Tennis ground, it may become injurious to knee joints the effects of which may be observed years after the active participation of the game by the concerned player.

A ground prepared by maintaining turf on it is suitable for khokho. It gives proper grip to the toes of players and absorbs occasional shocks which otherwise can to khokho players. Grass roots protect erosion of soil. However, the maintenance of such a ground is very expensive and requires large work inputs. Another difficulty for the use of turf ground is that if it gets wet either by rain water or dew in the cold season, it becomes slippery. Both common in India and Indian subcontinent. A wetting of turf needs to be taken seriously as khokho is normally played at early hours of the day or in the evenings. Of course, covering the ground by suitable covers is a common remedy in modern times; but it is an expensive thing. The grass that makes turf need to be high quality (Durva, in Marathi), otherwise the lumps formed at the roots of grass can cause injuries to players.

There was time in the history of the game when ground used to be given cow dung washes. It to fill the cracks in the ground making it last longer for play. For obvious reasons, such practices are discontinued. The present day art of preparing a khokho ground is to have lightly rolled soft soil on porous ground on which water is showered at the time of play. The exact procedure and the reasons behind it are discussed ahead.

A plane piece of land which can accommodate playing ground, a lobby, a reserved area for players to sit, a reserved area for officials etc. is chosen. actual playing ground area is approximately marked in it. The soil on the surface of the said area is removed by digging it to the depth of about five inches. This five inch deep pit is filled with three inch layer of porous stone (Murum in Marathi) and/or brick pieces followed by another layer of soil which on rolling fills the pit completely. A layer at the bottom various roles in making of the ground namely 1) it prevents the erosion of the soil because of its rough surface 2) holds water in the bulk because of its porous nature resulting in keeping the top layer of soil humid for a long time 3) after rolling of the ground, the top layer is firm enough to be useful for players acceleration, sudden stops, sharp turnings etc. and simultaneously the ground is soft to absorb shocks because of the occasional hard impacts during diving by a player or toe hitting the ground. It these two apparently contradictory functions because of the complex interlocking of porous stones/brick pieces under layer. The second and third points are of vital importance from the point of view of safety of players and fast game of khokho which is its very special feature. The choice of soil is another important parameter in making of good ground. The soil in agricultural fields is not suitable as it forms clods or considerable sized masses on getting wet and harden on drying which can to players. Gravel soil or sandy soil is not soft enough to be used for khokho ground. Red or white soft soil which does not form hard masses on getting wet is used for the ground. In fact such a soil gets softer on getting wet.

The most important precaution that should be taken while preparing ground is its leveling. The maximum injuries occurring in khokho are due to bad leveling of the ground. An unleveled ground may of the negligence while preparing or careless maintenance after its use. It is a common observation that the soil in the surrounding area of the poles gets loosened and a pit is formed. Same is true for the areas near the squares on central lane where chasers sit. Such loose soil or pits formation is an invitation to injuries. The changes in direction while running speedily are quite common in khokho. There are occasions when a defender takes a turn of 270° with respect to his running direction. defender well maintained and leveled. The presence of unanticipated pits in the ground would make it impossible to prevent injuries. A hard ground surface, similarly, makes chasers vulnerable to injuries. Good leveling and soft surface are therefore crucial requirements of khokho ground.

For attaining the required leveling, the ground is watered so as to make both the layers of porous stones/bricks and surface soil saturated with water. The top layer starts getting dry earlier. The ground is rolled by a medium weight roller during the drying process at such a time that soil does not stick to the roller surface. If the ground gets completely dried and then rolled, often cracks may

develop making the ground unsuitable for play. An appropriately rolled ground attains good leveling top layer of soil gets compacted, avoiding erosion of soil by wind or its short time use for play. A light periodical watering followed by rolling can maintain the ground for day to day practice of khokho. If the ground position is properly chosen so that rain water does not accumulate within the playing area, erosion of soil due to rain can be avoided. Use of wet ground for play or for any other use spoils the surface and then it is difficult to bring it to its original status. Occasional growth of grass in parts of the ground may be immediately removed. The part of the ground covered by wet grass becomes slippery as against the remaining part which needs watering as it suits players of khokho. Normally ground is marked by lime stone powder (fakki in Marathi). During the game, the powder spreads and line markings become broader than what rules of the game allow. Apart from this technicality, the ground becomes slippery where marking powder gets spread. Removing the earlier powder and remarking the ground is also an important part of the maintenance of the ground.

A well maintained turf ground for khokho does not exist. If such a ground is to be prepared, may be, cricket or tennis grounds men give the 'know how' for it. The marking of the turf ground is rather difficult as the powder markings get covered by the grass after the use of the ground. In fact, all the techniques in the game of khokho developed so far are based on the assumption that the game would be played on earthen ground. Some techniques may come into play. In fact, players who normally play on earthen ground reported that turf ground does not suit them as their legs get fatigued earlier. May be, players need to get adjusted physically and psychologically to the playing conditions on turf ground. [Khokho ground are suitable to protect it rain water so that game of khokho can be played through out the year as against the present practice of considering rainy season as 'off season'](#). An in-door ground of khokho is also a feasible concept. Khokho played in flood lit ground is now a well accepted practice which overcomes the restrictions of playing the game in a day time only or stopping the game for want of light. Yet another recent development is playing the game on wooden ground. Match between Indian and Bangla Desh khokho teams was played Subhash Chandra Bose stadium, Calcutta in the year 2000 on a wooden ground. This experiment, technical as well as other data based on players' experiences need to be collected before introducing those officially. A participating player reported that a wooden court was not satisfactory to the players who are used to play on earthen grounds. A change of technique of fixing of poles may be considered. Well maintained grounds for various games are becoming scarce. Therefore, reserving a part of the ground exclusively for khokho by permanently fixing the poles in the ground is becoming impractical day by day. When khokho is to be played, permanently fixed bases inside the ground on which poles can be fixed by screw and nut arrangement is quite a feasible idea. The same ground can be available for other sport events by removing the poles.

**Poles:** According to khokho rules, the material of construction of poles should be wood. A wooden cylindrical blocks of given dimensions, firmly fixed in the ground in given positions are accepted as poles. The purpose of introducing poles in khokho is perhaps to limit the ground length and more importantly,

making a tool available for players to change their direction at the end of the major playing field without significantly affecting the speed of the game. This objective is achieved if players can conveniently hold the poles while speedily running. The dimensions of the poles are decided accordingly. Also, the surface of the poles should be smooth and crack free. This The poles should also withstand the jerks, shocks or fierce dashes during the game so that cracking or cutting of poles do not occur. With recent technological developments, it would be worthwhile the material of construction of poles which may improve the required functional expectations from the poles. The materials like fiberglass, polymer composites may be considered for the purpose. The rules of the game for it.

The present procedure of fixing a pole in the ground is as follows: The exact location of the pole is marked. A pole needs to have a fixed length above the ground. For firm fixing of a pole in the ground, total length of a wooden log may be two feet more than the required length of pole above the ground. This extra length is preferred to have a shape of parallelepiped/rectangular instead of cylindrical shape recommended for the part of pole above the ground. The angular corners help giving firm grip to the pole in the ground. Dig a pit in the ground having a shape and size so as to just accommodate the portion of a pole expected to be in the ground. Place a pole-base in the pit and check that pole is exactly vertical to the ground. Also check the required length of pole is above the ground. A gap pole and pit-wall is filled with crushed stones/sand - cement mixture which on curing in moist air for few days firmly fixes the pole in the ground.( see figure)

**Ground marking:** In the game of khokho, the marking of the ground becomes very important as the decisions of fouls are closely connected with it. However, selecting plane piece of ground suitable for playing khokho, the first task is to choose the direction of the ground. It is convenient to have east-west direction with respect to the length of khokho ground. In the Indian subcontinent, games are played early in the morning or in the evening. Therefore, sun coming in eyes of khokho players becomes a factor worth considering. If the ground direction is East-West, minimum number of khokho players gets affected by this factor. pole position is fixed and pole line is marked which becomes a reference line and consequently fixes a ground direction. At the ends of the pole line, side lines are drawn which are at right angle pole line. A small deviation in an angle between pole line and side lines will distort the ground dimensions on large scale, therefore, due care should be taken in this regard. There are engineering tools to mark right angles correctly. In absence of such tools, a simple method is to make use of Pythagoras theorem. If a small rope of length three/six units from the end of pole line along its length gives a point A (see figure). With the help of small rope and taking A as a centre, mark a curve of radius five/ten approximately in the direction of side line. Taking end of pole line as a center, draw another curve of radius four/eight, cutting the earlier marked curve. The line joining point of intersection of curves pole end point is at right angle to pole line. With the help of small rope,



the line can be extended to required length. Since a khokho ground namely free zone, playing field, central lane, cross lanes etc are made up of rectangles, same trick may be used to mark the components and in turn the whole ground.

The marking lines become faint or are wiped out after the use of ground. Without doing an exercise of marking whole ground again as described above, the vital points of the ground can be identified by placing stone pieces or wooden pieces below the ground level as indicators. Finding out these indicators by little digging of soil makes it much easier to re-mark the ground after use. As mentioned earlier, lime powder is used for marking the lines. After watering the ground, the lime powder adheres to the ground, however, such marking does not last long. Especially, remarking of central lane, pole lines and cross lanes near sitting squares become essential after each match if not for each inning.

Although, most of the information regarding the ground is covered in the paragraphs given above, some more points need serious consideration on the background that efforts are on to take khokho at international level. At present, khokho grounds with well defined standards are scarcely seen in use. Technical authorities of khokho organizations at various levels must take due note of this and do the needful. In fact, this matter is closely related with the standard of the game. As an example, it can be easily understood that diving skills can develop and improve when and only when suitable soft plane khokho grounds are available for play. There are two to the problem of standard khokho ground namely 1) The improvements overdue in the present status of the grounds and 2) What needs to be done in this context if khokho is to become an international sport.

The biggest problem regarding the maintenance of the khokho grounds is water scarcity. If the ground is watered every day before playing on it, the ground surface remains soft. With some exceptions, most of the grounds are not owned by khokho playing clubs. The owner institutes are not particular regarding the maintenance of grounds. Grounds develop cracks; the upper layer soil gets eroded resulting in making the ground unplayable. Efforts to see that the affiliated clubs have well maintained grounds for playing khokho. A tournament of khokho should not be allowed to be held on substandard grounds. Organizations may give recognition to few well maintained grounds only on which tournaments shall be allowed to be held. A practice of preparing a ground only for the purpose of tournaments be discontinued. It is recommended that turf grounds for khokho at various places, however, that must be final of all well wishers of khokho. In the prevailing weather conditions in India, poles invariably get cracks after use should be replaced periodically. Line marking is not satisfactory. Some research needs to be done to find a better alternative. The lighting standards need to be defined as flood-lit tournament is a well accepted concept presently.

A dream of khokho being played at an international level needs a lot of ground work to be done to make it acceptable to foreigners. The major work among it is standardizing of ground conditions. Most of the western games are played by the players with shoes on their feet as against khokho being played bare

footed by most of the players. In developed countries excitement, entertainment and physical exercise induce them to play it. Even the players in the developed countries play the games bare foot if the conditions of play suit players. The examples of Karate, Tykwondo etc. A turf ground for khokho would suit the features of the game. A player be free to wear shoes while playing khokho; however, as pointed out earlier, may be difficult. All concerned must deal this issue with an open mind. A provision of covering the grounds to protect those from rain must be in the rules of the game. players are forced to play more than one match in one session of a day to maintain schedule. The expenditure for covering the grounds in fact, a small fraction of the tournament expenditure.

use of wooden grounds for badminton and an artificial turf as being used for Hokey are relatively recent developments in sports. These may be considered as alternatives for presently used khokho grounds. Although too costly to be considered for use as khokho grounds in near future, should be on an experimental basis. For taking game international level, such experiments are a must for organiz. Secondly, image of khokho as a game of low expenditure and therefore as poor man's game needs to be changed. The quality of the game can improve with the improvement in the equipment, quality of the ground etc. A large money investment is a must for such a qualitative change in the game. Then and only then, Khokho can be accepted by the sports world as an international sport.

Lastly, an indoor khokho ground can become a practical proposition. Indoor Kabaddi tournaments are in offing. The other sports like badminton, basketball, volleyball are being played on indoor courts. Considering the playing conditions, ground dimensions etc. there is no reason why khokho can not be played as an indoor sport.

---

## **Khokho Coaching**

As discussed in the earlier chapters, the game of khokho has some very special features of its own. A person aspiring to become a coach of khokho must have fullest knowledge of these facets of the game. All the same, a coach be aware of the fact that the other requirements like physical fitness, mental set up of players etc. common to most of the field games

It is therefore, necessary that initially coach assesses the standard of players under training. A second important aspect of coaching is that a coach must be very clear in his mind about his targets and plan his methods accordingly. Lastly, it is advisable to divide the training in two parts namely short term and long term coaching. The coaching also called coaching camps of the players for particular tournaments has very short period aims and rarely contributes to the lasting development of players.

Normally khokho is played by the players in the age group of ten to thirty. The players in the age group of ten to thirteen may be considered for the primary training of the game while an advanced training can be given in subsequent ten years. Beyond the age of twenty three or four, guidance is given

mainly regarding the strategic matters, plans, or subjective specialized skill-matters relating to game. It would not be out of place to discuss, in short, the expected qualities of a good coach. The first and foremost requirement is that a khokho coach must be extremely knowledgeable about the game. The expected knowledge is the one which is practical. Such knowledge can be by playing the game. Therefore, if a coach is a player himself, it would be an added qualification to a coach. However, it may be mentioned that he may or may not be a great player himself. On the other hand, a great player of a game does not automatically become a good coach. To catch soul of the game is entirely a different developing expertise of the game. Therefore, it may so happen that one may win many laurels in one's sporting career by acquiring various skills of a game and still does not have a good concept about the basic nature of the game.

A coach is expected to impart the knowledge of the game to the students (players) of the game. When a coach guides or gives instructions, he is expected to make the underlying principle behind it. He should be able to explain a thought or logic behind the actions recommended by him along with its consequences. He takes care that his plans materialize by the actions of players. Knowledge of proper work-out, exercises, practice plans, rest sessions, alternative sports and diet is a necessary requirement coach. On an individual level, coach should be able to pinpoint the virtues and shortcomings of every player coach is not expected to produce a team of prototypes. If a player is found to have a natural exclusive skill, a coach should be able to exploit it for the player's and subsequently team's benefit even through unconventional instructions. He needs to have affable, friendly relations with players. As mentioned earlier, the are expected to be in their 'teens' coach is expected to be friendly. Therefore, the friendly A coach needs to take initiative through his dialogue and interactions with students so that players fully trust him. If the need arises, a coach himself should be able to demonstrate the actions in the game he recommends to players which coach's physical fitness. If a coach sets an example of fitness before the players, it helps in raising the fitness awareness among the players. The players select the game by choice and subsequently love their game. If players find that a coach also loves a game intensely, it helps in creating mutual faith among players and coach. The virtues of a coach like devotion to the game, punctuality, sportsmanand inside and outside the ground are definitely reflected among the playersAll in all, coach's duties are many-sided and need comprehensive thinking technical, physiological, psychological the game.

A coach must khokho especially young ones, play the game more for their entertainment rather than making career in the game. Therefore, intelligent coach shall never give instructions which interrupt the player's enjoyment through khokho. Acquiring khokho skills takes time. [laims of making champion khokho players in a coaching camp of eight to fifteen days are either](#) or It is a fact that the progress. coaching for the youngest players of khokho is the most difficult task. The players in this age group are prone to change their choice of game. A coach, therefore, must that player's interest in the game remains undisturbed during their initial training. It is a matter of a couple of years after whichA coach may not insist exclusively lessons of khokho, instead, the players

may be encouraged to play the games like 'Langadi, Atyapatya, Round khokho and Standing khokho' which are allied games to khokho. Players get introduced to many of the skills of khokho through these games. They learn the terminology which is mostly common to these games including khokho. The players playing Langadi, Atyapatya etc. may be instructed to observe the game of khokho played by expert players. On such occasions, a coach has an opportunity to explain the intricacies of the game. After a couple of years of such 'soft' training, players have enough understanding of the game to training for making career in khokho.

The beginners of khokho have a tendency to free and natural movements. The sudden stops while running, sharp turnings etc. influence their movements and running style. These changes need to be nipped in the bud. They should be instructed to play in their natural style. Once players get habituated to an inborn/natural style of play, it is very difficult to change it. A coach should see to it that players do not adopt a perverted style or play in order to prove their performance in a competitive game or otherwise. The instructions by a coach to players regarding the mode of play need to be subjective so that every player is encouraged to perform by his individual style. It is always advisable to instruct the beginners to watch the game of expert players and explain them the peculiarities of each player. Also, during the practice session of senior players or during a tournament, they may be asked to listen to the language used by players among them and the words of guidance by a teacher. This very much helps new players to grasp the terminology of the game and consequently improves the communication among players and between them and their teacher.

When the beginners start playing the game, the strictness of the rules may be diluted. It is important to see that players enjoy the game. Even the slightest feeling of complexities of the rules or technical matters of the game, players have tendency to leave the game or change their choice of the game. Until they experience the excitement of the game, the rules may be given less importance. After to the practical game, beginners may be encouraged to participate in the game of senior players who are appropriately instructed to accommodate them, especially for the defence game the proper methodology, when beginners manage to defend for a considerable time, confidence. One or two beginners may be accommodated in a team of senior players during an attack turn to make them understand the technique of attack.

A coach not only gets exhausted but also during coaching session. Initially, the players will be explained the sitting arrangement as recommended by the rules and the purpose behind it. Once the players take the proper sitting positions, they will be instructed to catch the defenders in the field. The beginners perhaps have a background of 'catch me, if you can' game. This is a game where players have to perform as individuals. The mind is therefore set individual skill. Every chaser, therefore, pursues a defender individually and wants to score a point oneself without giving kho. coach intervenes to explain that unless kho is given, chaser not be able to catch a defender. Thus, the attackers are team-work. The common instructions to beginner chasers would be: 1. Not to cross a 'cross lane' while attacking. 2. Give a kho to a sitting chaser who is nearest to the being chased. 3. Hold a pole by making use of both hands. 4. Look at defender being

chased and not at attacker who is likely to give kho. 5. Do not change chosen direction of chase. 6. Follow the necessary requirements of shouting a word 'kho' and touch a sitting chaser for a proper kho. 7. Do not leave the lane after giving a kho. It takes long time for beginners to become accustomed to instructions 5, 6, and 7. However, reasonably organized chasing can come in to play with the above instructions.

Most of the defenders among the beginners have a tendency only to run away from an attacker in the court he just in the game of 'catch me, if you can'. The first instruction to them, therefore would be to take advantage of going over opposite court by crossing the cross lane. The other preliminary instructions would be 1. Try to be in opposite court that of chaser/attacker. 2. A defender may pause near the back of a sitting chaser. 3. Watch a change of attacker which changes after each kho and run away from him. 4. Restrict your game within an area between two pole lines.

With these limited tips game of khokho may be enjoyable to beginners. Within six months to one year, the beginners, to some extent, recognize the basic concepts of the game and receptacle for further subtle instructions from coach.

For the, the pattern of training is entirely different. The first and foremost training for them is them understand the intricacies of the rules of the game. Almost in all the popular games of the world, some rules of every game have the that a player must The examples of 'LBW' in cricket or 'Off Side' in football are well-known. In khokho, understanding of the concepts of taking direction or the foul of receding should be clear in the minds of players. A coach must explain the players time and again until every player is conceptually clear about it. The players in this age group be informed about the differences and similarities in the skills of khokho and other games. Fast movements are considered as a skill in all field games and therefore, speed of running, alertness, supple movements, agility, coordination of sense organ and consequent actions etc. are However, the players must have a clear idea about the uncommon features of the game of khokho. A sensitivity to touch is rarely used in other games. Quick acceleration is quite common in games quickest deceleration to zero speed is observed, perhaps only in khokho. Sharp turns and bending while sprinting, squats; turning round the pole speedily, etc. are some other special skills of khokho. If players know the final skill requirements of khokho then they become receptive to the instructions of coach.

The players are eager to acquire various skills of the game once they understand the basic structure of the game. A coach need not have fixed criterion for the skill development in players as if he is a manager quality control in a production unit. He is to convert raw players in to champions and not to produce 'Robots' with defined functions. This is a very important and difficult task.

With this preliminary preparation, daily khokho practice sessions of players be The assistance of other senior players to coach is very much to train players in higher age group. A senior player may concentrate on conducting a game while coach concentrates on giving 'live' instructions during the game. A coach advises players to acquire various skills and use those in their regular

performances. The biggest problem during the applications of various skills by players is that because of various reasons such as on the spot compulsions, individual constraints of players, etc. players erroneous style. A coach needs to interfere at such juncture, stop the game ask the concerned player to correct his style/action and then allow the game to continue. From the players' point of view, the stoppage/discontinuity in the game is a very hurtful gesture. However, a coach knows that if players get habituated to such erroneous game, it is impossibly difficult to correct it at later periods in players' career. As the players perfect their

The skills of defence and chase have been described in earlier chapters. The methodology to acquire these skills is not unique. The coaches have scope to use their imagination to use traditional methods or use innovative methods. A coach must advise players that they follow the correct techniques of defence and chase while playing in a day to day practice sessions. It so happens that playing against weak opponents, players apply wrong techniques and still successfully serve their purpose of either chase or defence. From such experience, players doubt the need of traditional techniques of play. They do not understand that such aberrations might work against weak opponents. [They try to use it again and again](#), and ultimately get their game spoiled. Timely intervention by a coach can avoid it. However, players should be encouraged to discuss innovations in the game with coach who may try new ideas with an open mind and may allow players to use those, if found workable.

A coach needs to have a long term and short term planning for the development of the team's game. The routine day to day practice may include warming up exercises, actions in the game of khokho like giving proper khos, turning round the pole, single/double chain defence, getting up straight, ring game stepping practice, etc; actual game and 'cooling down' and relaxation. The short term planning is done for a tournament/s in the near future and the instructions from the coach aim During this training, the players are not expected to acquire new skills or develop qualities like stamina, endurance, speed etc. as it is not possible to achieve those in short time before the expected tournament. In fact, getting rid of the faults by the players or changing the style of a particular player is not attempted in short term planning the whole concentration of a coach is to exploit the qualities of the players constructively.

If the number of players is more than eighteen, it is good to form two teams of the players and have a practice match. The players get accustomed to the 'match' atmosphere through such practice. If the number of players is between twelve and eighteen, still, two teams can be formed and 'match' practice done with less number of sitting chasers on each side and a symbolic 'pole' at a proper place. Such a practice serves all the purposes of 'match' practice with limitations that defenders can not adapt to routine chain defence and chasers have only one pole to take advantage of, for their chase. On the other hand, defenders get a practice of adjusting their 'route' for changing the court by crossing the central lane. Alternatively, nine chasers can make a full team for chasing and remaining players can practice defence. It is always advantageous to practice defence in a batch of three as required by the rules, as defenders get a practice to organize their defence while chasers can practice 'collecting two/three defender at a pole' or 'an attempt'.

If the number of players is less than nine, number of chasers less than nine and defenders may be asked to play mainly a 'ring game' of defence.

Apart from team practice, a coach needs to advise players to do individual practice. In such a practice session, every individual may try to perfect his skills in consideration of style, speed, stepping etc. For example, a chaser, expert in 'action kho' would perfect his style, stepping, etc. individually as the occurrences of instances for such a practice during the actual game are circumstantial. A defender expert in a 'ring game' may perfect his technique by playing 'a shadow ring game'. In khokho, the actions by the players are so fast that most of those need to be 'reflex actions'. Players hardly get any time to think and act accordingly. Therefore, the style, stepping, foot-work and timing of actions need to be perfected through so called 'shadow practice' sessions as described above.

A coach need to explain the defenders in his team that even if each individual defender can play a defence game perfectly with the application of acquired techniques, the chasers use tactics such as 'action kho', 'an attempt' or 'bringing two or more defenders near the pole' etc. to score the points. He explains how to counter these tactics. For example, the defenders need to know 1) how to concentrate and what needs to be done to escape from the partial trap near the pole, 2) where the defenders in a batch take positions in the ground and how they should move with respect to a defender among is being chased, etc. The chasers need the instructions For example, 1) if a defender is playing 'double chain route game', apply 'forward kho' to frustrate it. In case of 'ring game', 'middle kho' may work to chaser's advantage, 2) all the chasers shall mark a lazy, unwatchful or 'slow' defender and the application of 'an attempt' be done on an opportune moment, etc. With such preliminary training day to day practice improves the performance of a team to a considerable extent. With these instructions, defenders and chasers can become good players of khoko they can not become expert khokho players. A coach must point out to all the players the limitations of primary tactical teaching as mentioned above and the need to acquire special skills of the game.

The long term coaching consists of all the activities of short term coaching and the other activities which need time to their results. The main concern in the long term coaching is about the fitness of the players. Khokho is a game which tests almost all the abilities of players, physical, mental and intellectual. Although mental and intellectual abilities are mostly inherited, those can be shaped/handled to suit the applications through human efforts. In this respect coach has a great responsibility. The physical fitness is the most important quality of khokho player and acquiring it takes long time. Among the five 'S's namely skill, stamina, speed, strength and soul required to become champion of any sport, the group of middle three 'S's needs longer periods to improve upon the inherent levels. A coach needs to give selective 'work out' for each player in a team depending upon the individual's inadequacies or weaknesses. For example, a player may have a good skill of defence but does not have enough leg strength to continue his skilled defence for a long time; coach would recommend exercise to increase the leg-strength. A coach, also, player might be very good defender and

still may not find a place for him in a team because of his weakness in chasing skills/abilities. Such a player would get special training/instructions to improve his chasing abilities. A coach must always keep in mind that he has to form a team and not just skilled players. A team needs to be constituted by inclusion of good defenders and good chasers to keep the balance of both major aspects of the game; thus a coach needs to consider team requirements independently.

Since most of the khokho players are students in their formative periods, long term planning is often neglected under excuse examinations etc Such 'work-out breaks' is a great hurdle in the long term coaching plans. In fact, if a player is lacking only one among these three 'S' qualities, he may be advised to concentrate his efforts on it for which he may have to sacrifice occasionally a day to day practice of the game. It always takes less time to recover from nonperformance lack of practice than to improve 'S's' quality.

Apart from the coaching of directly related allied subjects such as the scoring in the game of khokho, the and hierarchy in it, 'press', 'other media' and their role in relation to game, etc. a coach is expected to give guidance to the players in many other matters complementary to the game. It includes 'warm up' exercises to be done before the game which tones the muscles of players for the best performance, 'cooling down' procedures to be followed after the game to prevent the effects of exertion, the exercises which are not directly related to the game but useful for making progress in the game, usual diet, changes in a diet before the tournaments, rest, relaxation, physical and mental, instructions to maintain the mental stature and high level of confidence of the players, behavior of players inside and outside of the ground, 'off season practice for the game' etc. It would not be out of place to discuss some of these points

**Warm up:** 'Warm up' can be defined as an activity done by the players before the participation in a sport or [exercising](#). The purpose is to increase the heart rate and warm the muscles for high performance activity at the desired sport or exercising. Warm up is a sport specific activity as different group of muscles need to be toned up for different sports. It starts with slow jog and other movements followed by gradual increasing rate of actions that activate the muscles and energy systems which get loaded in final activity. In fact, initially slow actions of the activity of the concerned sport with gradual increase in its speed can be an ideal warm up. However, it is always advisable that the general warm up of the body activity precedes a specific warm up for the game. These exercises such as jogging, fast walking slow movements of all the joints of the body, spot jumping, bending, stretching etc. may be common to all the sporting events. Specifically for khokho, the recommended warm up actions include 1) short sprints with moderate speed 2) sudden stops while running with moderate speed 3) Sprint starts 4) action emulation of pole dives 5) 'getting up straight' actions 6) bending while running as if one is trying to score a point by touching a hind leg of running defender in a game of khokho 7) sitting like a khokho chaser and quick starts on left and right sides of oneself 8) emulate stepping of defender defending by single/double chain route or ring game 9) 'action kho' actions etc.

The benefits of warm up are well accepted in the field of sports, overdoing warm up may be avoided. In fact, Some exceptional cases of lowering



of abilities of athletes on routine warming up are also reported. In general, medical science a record of physical, physiological, metabolic and psychological changes occurring during warm up of sportsmen which prove the benefits. Some instances of its detrimental overdoing are recorded. The intensity, time and amount of exercises are the subjective matters and therefore each player be advised to decide those for from his experience from practicing it for long periods. to do warm up before day to day practice of the game. Any unusual actions during warm up before the match should be strictly avoided. If an actual game is being delayed for some reason after a warm up, players be advised to cover their body suitably to keep it warm. This is true for any rest period during a game recess between the 'turns' and 'innings' in khokho. It is a that warm up is needed only before the game. Another important benefit of warm up practice avoiding/minimizing injuries during the game. There is a definite rise in the levels of team work, morale and confidence of players. If a coach shares such information with the players, it is useful to convince them about the importance of warm up etc.

Cooling down is equally important to adjust body, especially heart conditions to 'no load' state. Also, soreness of muscles or 'catch up' i.e. cramps of muscle can be avoided. The procedure of gradual deceleration of actions like jogging, running etc. takes hardly five to ten minutes to serve its purpose.

reasons could be 1) physical-psychological fatigue after a long playing season 2) academic year end when most of the student players concentrate on studies for the annual examinations 3) rainy or any other season when playing conditions are not suitable to play khokho 4) player's ill health 5) non availability of playing ground 6) any other reason when players wish a break in routine etc. A coach may be ready with an alternative game/exercise which may entertain players and keep them fit to keep hold on their performance in the game on recommencement. The choice of the game/exercise should be such that it the **reasons** and helps the players to get over their shortcomings collectively or an individual level. It is important to note that skills, qualities and virtues of some games/exercises complement the skills of khokho. Some of the games/exercises for practice during such 'breaks' are suggested below although the list is not exhaustive by any means.

- 1) Trekking is a very good exercise as it serves most of the purposes of change in routine. 'Trekking' is an entertaining change for a player which also tests the physical/mental abilities of players. Moreover, it is a team event that helps enhanced mutual understanding among players.
- 2) The football, basketball, volleyball etc. for a change. In fact, it is observed that khokho players can quickly pickup the skills of these games since 'foot-work' is a common skill required to play these games. Conversely, khokho players help themselves to maintain/improve/acquire 'foot-work' that helps them to become better khokho players.
- 3) **Program** of running can be a very good alternative for a routine game of khokho. There are various alternatives to chart out the program of running. Apart from entertainment and general fitness, Running on an athlete's track is very similar to running on khokho ground and therefore its program is as good as continuing the routine practice of the game. A) If the team is to be given running

program, relay races may be planned. This (baton exchange in the race) will help improving the coordination among the players regarding collective consecutive actions. After all, giving khos consecutively in the game of khokho is very similar to baton exchange in relay race. B) For building up the stamina of players, hill running is a very good exercise. Players may be advised to run 'cross country' races or running up the hill twice a week. Running down the sharp slope is not advisable as its frequent practice may harm knee joints and muscles around it. C) Running on the hard surface like road is another alternative exercise to routine game of khokho. It helps increasing the strength of calf, thigh and hip muscles.

4) The running program can be planned on the basis of speed of running. The spurts of short distance sprints help the speed of players which is of utmost importance to khokho chasers; while long distance slow running helps building stamina and endurance. Intermediate distance running with medium speed and occasional bursts of sprints is useful for stamina building suitable for khokho defenders.

A coach will plan a time table for each player and for a team with suitable combinations of alternatives mentioned above as per the requirement of individual player and team being coached.

5) **Weight lifting/training:** In many parts of India, out-door sports activities in rainy season Weight lifting/training can be a very good alternative activity for the players in general and khokho players in particular in rainy season. It is a misconception that a khokho player should have thin, lanky figure for supple and quick movements during play. thin-ness of the body refers to the accumulation of fats in the body. However, the strength of the parts of body very much depends on the developments of muscles. Developed muscles are bulky and body weight also increases due to it. However, it does not have any adverse effect on the suppleness of movements. Weight lifting/training is a well recognized exercise for the development of muscles. For khokho players, development of leg muscles and hip muscles is very important. The development of these muscles by playing the game can be complemented by weight training programs including exercises like squats, half squats, jogging with weights etc.

6) Skipping is another exercise that is useful for the fitness during the period when the game is not being practiced. In fact, it should be a part of daily routine practice of every khokho player. During the 'off season' practice, the intensity of skipping practice be increased. It helps to improve muscle strength, stamina, endurance of players but more importantly, time-action coordination of the body gets better. The foot-work of players also improves which is of utmost importance in the game of khokho.

7) Games, complementary to khokho: **Langadi** – In India, very popular sport for kids in the age group of five to nine years. Although branded as a sport for kids, experts in sports field think that there is no reason why this game should not be played by players in higher age group. In fact, experts recommend practicing it for any sport where foot-work is important, obviously khokho from muscular developments and spring action of the legs, the abilities of concentration, anticipation of opponent's movements, changing direction quickly and balancing the

body on one leg are developed and improved. All these developments are extremely useful for playing khokho.

**Atyapatya:** This game is perhaps the best field game developed in India. It is most unfortunate that it is now being listed as a vanishing sport. 'Most entertaining' and 'good exercise for all parts of the body in a limited time of one hour' are the greatest virtues of this game. The actions in this game are complementary. For example, In Atyapatya, a player concentrates his attention on opponent player who is trying to apply feint to distract him. Such efforts of concentrating attention can be useful in the game of khokho for a chaser. On the other hand, applying feint in spite of opponent's concentrated mind is similar to what defender in khokho tries to achieve. Players need to develop skilled foot-work for 'crossing the lanes' in Atyapatya. Acquiring the skilled foot-work can be useful to many sporting events and more so for khokho as the actions are very similar in khokho and Atyapatya. Application of intellectual faculty is perhaps seen at its best in the sport's world in the game of Atyapatya. In fact, the game is so virtuous that many experts in sports field feel that all the basic skills which are required to play any game in sport's world are developed by playing this game. Advise players to play Atyapatya as a game in 'off season' practice or at least learn the inherent techniques of it.

There are some more exercises which are used by players for some specific skill development. Running in water or sand, running on plane ground with heavy lagging on legs, spot running with a stretched fixed rope round runners waist, etc. are useful to increase the leg-strength, stamina and endurance of runners. These techniques are commonly recommended for athletes but considering the similarities of requirements of khokho players and athletes exercises would be equally useful to khokho players.

While describing 'Off season practice' of khokho players, a word of caution is necessary. The complementary sports/exercises should never become substitute the original game of choice, khokho, in the present case. A priority should always be for playing khokho. Circumstantial inevitability, urgency of a particular player to progress faster or team's short term target of winning a particular tournament may force a coach to modify the priorities. There should be a calculated balance in dividing time and efforts between playing actual game of khokho and doing complementary exercises. A khokho player's interest in the game should not get affected while practicing alternative sport or exercises.

Safety of a player while playing khokho is another important aspect to which a coach needs to pay attention to. He needs to know all the possibilities of injuries occurring while playing khokho and the actions that need to follow. A coach must convince players that fitness of a player is the best injuries in the game. The major reasons of injuries occurring in the game khokho are lack of fitness of players, unsuitable ground conditions, accidents like player dashing against a pole, wrong style/timing of diving etc. are bruises, ankle sprains, cramps of leg muscles, toe injuries, stress fractures, dislocation of joints; especially shoulder joint and injuries due to falls such as fractures of bones etc. A coach and players must be aware of some very unusual movements in khokho such as sharp turns while sprinting, pole dive, dives while running in speed, speedily turning round the pole and continuous actions of 'sit ups'. Although most of these injuries need to be attended by

specialized doctors, early 'first aid' and some proper actions would prevent aggravation of injuries ensuring early recovery.

A well equipped first aid box is very useful to stop blood from and keep the wounds clean and disinfected. Players and coach must know the procedures to give first aid. If coach knows the tips like 'RICE' in case of sprains, fractures etc. further complications can be totally avoided. (R = rest, I = ice application, C = compression, E = elevation) In case of fractures, the concerned parts need to be immobilized immediately. A coach need to have such relations with players that he should calm down the injured player through a proper dialogue Also the rehabilitation of injured becomes easy. If there is a case of breathing difficulties due to shocks/over exertion, concerned player needs to be fully rested. If an first aid is not available around, it is better to take concerned player to a medical expert than to experiment on him/her.

Another very much neglected aspect concerning players in general and khokho players in particular is . Khokho is an extremely hard game. As has been recently, khokho has both aerobic and anaerobic components in its actions. The exertion of playing the game of khokho might be comparable to playing of foot ball. Therefore, the diet needs to be rich in terms of caloric value as well as proper physical developments. Very few khokho players have been observed to have physical built up to ideal performance in the game. It is misconceived that a khokho player must have a lean stature for agility and supple movements required in the game. As a consequence, players have overlooked the developments of muscles (muscle-mass which contributes to body weight) which otherwise would have resulted in better strength, stamina, endurance and hence better performance. A coach needs to go into details of the dietary requirements of the players and advice them accordingly. and nutrition experts may help immensely in this respect.

Lastly, coach must take the responsibility of players' behavior on the field. When the objectives of sports are discussed, it is well accepted that 'Winning' is neither sole nor the uppermost purpose of playing games. 'Winning' at any cost should never be advocated by a coach. The ideas like a sportsman spirit, spirit of participation, ethics of sports etc. may often be shared with players so that they have a set up in tune with these ideas. It should be always kept in mind by a coach that players behavior on the ground is a reflection of what coach has trained them for.

## **KHOKHO – Author's point of view**

There is no published information about the origin of khokho. It a popular sport last 300-400 years as we find indirect reference to it in the writings of saint-poet Tukaram . There is a direct mention of another sport Atyapatya which is considered as a twin sport of khokho. Although, the origin of other Indian sports is also not known, the games like wrestling, chess, ball games, archery are known since ancient times. The sporting activity in India has prehistoric origin as excavations in Mohenjadaro and Harrappa revealed some playing tools like dolls, rolling carts etc. It can be inferred from the ancient literature in India that the effectiveness of sports for entertainment and physical exercise was well understood since earlier times.

There is likely to be a close link between the kind of sports played in a region and cultural life of players of that region. Indian civilization was agriculture

oriented society since ancient times although historically the region was divided in small states ruled by different kings. , sports being one among those. It was very striking that the sports developed had a clear signature of the fundamental business in the region, the philosophy of life and the political/historical activities around. The tools of sports have their origin in agricultural/natural products. The examples of 'Ball-games'- ball - a rubber product, 'Viti-dandu' (Gulli-danda) [viti and dandu – wooden sticks], 'Tops' [made up out of wood], 'Pebbles' – [naturally occurring stones], 'Surparambya' [where tree itself is a tool of the game], 'Kabbaddi', 'Khokho' – [wooden poles], 'Atyapatya', 'Langadi', 'Lagori' – [wooden disks], 'Sagargote' – [a tree product], Wrestling, etc. use land, trees and products of wood as tools of the games. has its origin in India and the tools of the game were made out of wood.

The political and historical activities are clearly reflected in Indian games. The greatest example is chess. As mentioned earlier, the region was politically divided in many states, ruled by different rulers. There use to be attempts to expand the areas of the states through wars among the armies of involved states. The armies consisted of warriors on foot, horse-riders, elephant riders, camel riders etc. with king or ruler and his prime-ministers playing key roles in planning and execution. All the excitement of war being won and lost is best reflected in the game of chess. However, war was obviously fought when it was inevitable. At other times, there use to be political activity and battles/clashes/skirmishes on the common fronts of adjacent states. These are reflected in the games of Kabaddi, Khokho and Atyapatya. In other words, there is a common theme for the design of these sports reflecting political and historic activities around general public.

When the frontier guards of adjacent states face each other on a common front, a warrior from a state tries to probe the strength of the army of opposite state by intruding in their territory. He may be hooked or he may inflict some loss the opposite army by preying one of their soldiers. Alternatively, he may judge the strength of opposition and return to his part of the territory. At other times, it is the turn opposition to answer with similar actions. These on the spot skirmishes on the borders are, perhaps, imitated in the game of Kabaddi.

In Khokho, the imitation is of an intruder who goes deep in the territory of opposition and tries to stay there as much time as possible. In such a case, the army ethics/traditions do not apply for catching an intruder as it is likely that lay public occupies the interior region of the state. Therefore, the rules/laws of the civic people are applicable to catch an intruder. This is well reflected in the rules of direction for the chasers in khokho. The defenders, on the other hand, take fullest advantages of knowing these rules to maximize their stay in opposition region. If the hypothesis Indian games reflect the political and historical activities around common people is correct, I beg to differ from the conventional terminology of calling an active chaser an attacker, suggesting that he is an intruder. The player of opposite team is called defender suggesting that they are defending their region. It is a common experience that intruders are least bound by any rules of the region they are in while the defenders, although they are dealing with intruders of opposition, are bound by the rules of that region.

In Atyapatya, team simulates a state protecting its region through a series of guards from inner region to border. The intruders enter together in the guarded region; therefore the individual progress each among the intruders is blocked by the guards. If the number of intruders is more than one, guards manage to trap them in a confined region with the help of chief guard. Thus, the game reflects the skill of entering deep in the opposition region as against the skill of guards preventing/limiting progress.

Another popular game for kids is 'langadi'. The rationale of the games mentioned above fits very well to langadi also. In this game, in a limited ground, the intruders of a team enter who are chased 'out' by opposition team through a chaser, hopping on one leg.

Of course, the competing teams have an opportunity to 'play' both the roles of intruders and guards which is consistent with the history of small neighboring states within Indian subcontinent.

In the games 'viti dandu', 'surparambya', 'bhovara' (tops), a player is given an exclusive responsibility of doing certain functions and is centre of attraction of the game. What is interesting is that he is named as 'a ruler'. The exact origin of such a nomenclature is not known; however, the linking of the nomenclature with the historical background is quite striking. The nomenclature in Indian games has a clear influence of philosophical developments in India. Indian games, a player is 'killed' by an opposition player. The equivalent in the sporting world is 'getting a player out'. The idea of in Hinduism has a telling influence on players, playing these games and therefore, 'kill' is not a very offending one as 'rebirth' is assured. In fact, in the game of Kabaddi, a player once 'killed', is born again after a player from opposition is 'killed'.

Another important feature of Indian games is that almost all are 'touch games'. There are very few internationally recognized games which can be called as 'touch games'. All these games happen to be forceful games while the Indian games test mainly the skills of players. There is a sort of delicacy involved in the touch in the Indian games which is absent in the games mentioned above. All the discussion above concerning Indian games is totally relevant for khokho

**Developments of the game of khokho:** Although, khokho has a history as a game for at least 300-400 years, there are records various developments in the game for last 100 years only. From these records some inferences can be drawn 1) The basic structure of the game is maintained. 2) The number of players, playing this game is ever increasing 3) In recent times, a large number of games to desiring players. The relative number of players playing khokho has dwindled. 4) There is a significant improvement in the technical developments of the game. 5) A vertical organizational growth is good while horizontal growth seems to be alarming. 6) In general,

The authoritative body bringing about the changes in the rules of the game has generally seen the interest of players. The rule for chasers 'recede' has been reinterpreted, may be with some rationale behind it. However, the decision is definitely harmful to preserve the skills of the game. For example, ring game is a very special feature of the khokho skills and it has been proved from the statistics collected by the experts in the game that the changes in the interpretation resulted in killing this special feature among the khokho skills which is certainly not in the

interest of the game. Concomitantly, the diving skill of khokho players is encouraged by these changes in interpretation of the rules. Also, the scores from of contesting teams have shown a welcome rise in which tests the defending skills of more defenders from all the contesting teams. The authorities need to reassess the changes so as to keep positive developments in the game avoiding degeneration, if any.

The technical part of the game has also advanced. However, the progress is seen n paper. For example, if the rules are given exacting interpretation, it should be reflected in the decisions of the referees at all levels. This is not especially at lower level khokho tournaments like district level. The reason is, perhaps, availability of good referees ready with an updated knowledge of developments in the The organizations need to correct such situation. The players of the game also need to be kept informed about the changes and developments in the game. After all, players need to be the centre of attention for every thing that is happening in the game as they are the carriers of the great tradition of the game khokho in the country

There is a provision of observers of organizations being appointed the developments in the game see the light of the day. However, seems of organizing tournaments at all levelsdeficiencies. As an example, quality of the ground is taken seriously into consideration either by players or by organizers. The essential amenities like changing place or toilets are also neglected. It is not known whether the appointed observers have pointed out these facts in their reports and if so, what actions have been taken by the organizations on the report.

The rules of khokho have been amended many times in last hundred years. In general, the changes have been in the interest of the game's progress. However, the ideas the game's progress differ at various times in the history of the game. Therefore, it is necessary to harmonize the changes with definite criteria. The following criteria may be given due consideration when the major changes in the game are .

- 1) Since the game has evolved from the historic and cultural background of India, the basic structure of the game should be retained.
- 2) The balance the two parts of the namely 'defence' and 'chase' should not be disturbed.
- 3) In a match between two teams of matching strength, all the players need to have equal opportunity to exhibit all their skills.
- 4) The players should not feel the pressure of technicalities of rules and discipline guidelines affect the result of the match.
- 5) The external factors such asstate of affairs at times and place should not become a driving force for changing the rules.

On this background, some amendments in the rules need to be discussed that can help the changes in the rules to be made in future. There were times when defenders useto enter the ground for their defence turn one by one. When one defender is declared 'out' by a referee, then and only then,next defender used to enter the ground and so on. This system was modified by an amendment in the rule by which simultaneously two defenders defended in the ground. Out of these two defenders, if one defender gets out, immediatelynext defender enters the groundSubsequently, this system was also modified, andenters the ground for their defence. A chasing team, thus, was allowed better scope to attempt to score point by

catching a lazy/slow/inattentive defender. Presently, this system of entry of defenders is well accepted in khokho.

The transfer of right of to a chaser in the team was granted by just uttering the word 'kho' in earlier days of khokho. This provision was being misused by uttering the word 'kho' from a distance which was a great disadvantage to a defender. The provision of simultaneous by palm to prospective chaser along with uttering the word 'kho' was introduced through an amendment in the rule. Thus, a 'kho' to prospective chaser

Historically, the time required to chase out an opposition team was a criterion to decide the winner of the match. In such a system, a good point was that all the defenders were being tested for their skills of defence. However, some times it becomes an unworkable proposition as a team may not be able to chase out opposition team at all. Thus, an amendment in rules became inevitable. In a fixed time, the points scored by a team of chasers became the workable criterion which is well accepted till the present day. It may be mentioned here that the special feature of 'all the defenders are tested for their skills of defence', however, no more exists. Also the time of chase increased from seven minutes to nine minutes in nineteen nineties. It is observed that the vigor in chase lowers after ~ 7 minutes. The changed chasing time of nine minutes perhaps has a thought behind it that khokho players should have an enhanced stamina over the present average.

There are some rules wherein one develops a feeling that rules dictate the game rather than guide .

“After completion of first innings, if the points of the side (who chased first at the starting of the match) exceeds the points of other side by nine or more, former side shall have the option of requiring the latter side to follow on its turn as a chaser, without forfeiting its own right to take its turn as a chaser afterwards, in case the other side exceeds its score.

#### CLARIFICATION

Option to give follow on is restricted upon nine points only.

**It will be mandatory to give follow on if the difference is more than nine points.”**

In my opinion, the high lighted part is not in the right spirit of the games. The players should have free choice to make a decision in this regard.

“At the beginning of the turn, three runners shall be inside the field for defence. Immediately on these three defenders being declared out, the next three runners shall be inside the field before two 'KHO's are given. Those runners who fail to enter within the period shall be declared out. The runners who may enter early shall not be declared out but called back. Thus the runners will continue to enter the field in the same batch till the end of turn. **The attacker who has put out the third defender shall not chase the new batch. He shall give KHO. If he chases any of the new defenders, it shall be a foul.** Each side shall enter its runners to the field from the portion marked for them in the lobby (Entry Zone).”

Here also the high lighted part is disagreeable “**The attacker who has put out the third defender, shall necessarily give KHO. If he continues the chase of a defender in a new batch and touches a defender without violating any**



**normal rules of chase, a point thus scored by him shall not be granted to his team.”**

If this amendment is accepted, the unreasonable statement like **‘If he chases any of the new defenders, it shall be a foul’** Pole dive and dive were adjudged as fouls for few years during the development of rules of khokho. The interpretation was based on the literary meaning of the words in the framed rules. Dive use to be declared as foul of ‘receding’ as during the action of diving, the toes of the attacker lose the contact of the ground and then while getting up establishes the contact, thus, contact recedes with respect to covered ground. At later times, the wise counsels prevailed and rule was reinterpreted considering the workability of the diving skill in the game. The same spirit is expected to be maintained in the developments of khokho.

The nomenclature used in the leaflets of the rules/definitions etc. is, on occasions, For example, the wooden blocks fixed on each border of the court are named as ‘POSTS’. The word ‘POLE’ is appropriate and traditionally known to people where the game of khokho grew. It is difficult to understand the purpose for changing the popular nomenclature. As per the author’s hypothesis regarding the origin of the game of khokho, the ‘DEFENDERS’ in the game as defined presently are invaders and the ‘CHASERS’ are ‘DEFENDERS’. However, it is difficult to change it as nomenclature has been accepted by all concerned.

In the first chapter of this book definition 19 states the term, ‘TO GIVE KHO’ in which there is a clause, ‘However, uttering ‘KHO’ will be considered as Foul, if an attacker touches a chaser sitting in the square nearest the Post. This is an exception to a general rule. However, it is uncalled for clause in the rule. In fact, giving kho in the manner described in the clause can be a good tactics for an attacker to score a point. Also, removing exception from a rule adds to the rule’s generalization.

A foul is defined as ‘If an attacker or a chaser violets any Rules, it is known as FOUL.’ However, in the section ‘rules of the game’ it is stated ‘After the commencement of the turn, no chaser shall leave the square without getting KHO or change the face. If he/she does so, it is a foul and repetition of the same will amount to misbehavior.’ The latter part of the statement namely ‘repetition of the same will amount to misbehavior’ is unwarranted. It is difficult to understand how repetition of foul amounts to misbehavior. This is not true in case of other fouls in the game. There are enough provisions in the rules to punish a player if his intentions are proved to be against the spirit of the game. In this particular case, declaration of foul repeatedly is enough as concerned chaser’s team suffers a loss through his repetition of action of leaving the square without getting KHO or changing the face. Declaring such an action as misbehavior amounts to overstepping the match authorities.

another example of bad framing of rule is the corrective action by a chaser/attacker on declaration of ‘foul’. It states ‘If an attacker any rules, the umpire shall declare a foul by blowing a short whistle continuously and shall compel the attacker to go in the direction opposite to that of which he is going’. The action of the umpire ‘shall compel the attacker to go in the direction opposite to that of which he is going’ can be interpreted as an interference in the game by the umpire. In fact, it is clarified by the subsequent wording in the same paragraph of the rule that the defender being chased shall not be declared ‘out’ by the concerned foul action which is totally

justified. Decision of defender being 'not out' after a foul action shall induce an attacker to take corrective action as the very purpose of efforts of chasers is to 'out' defenders and score points. If this purpose is not serving then chasers shall not choose to continue with foul actions. Instead, immediately on hearing a signal given by the umpire by his whistle, the attacker shall go to the direction indicated by the umpire which is in attacker's interest. Since all these actions of chaser/attacker seem obvious, the wording 'shall compel the attacker to go in the direction opposite to that of which he is going' is unnecessary. In fact, a similar action is expected from the umpire where his duties are defined. (Umpire shall declare a foul and compel the attacker to act up to rules, if the latter does not follow the rules.) Any compelling actions by the umpire can be justified when the intention of the player is against the spirit of the game. It is unjustified to doubt the players' intentions while framing the rules.

In the booklet of rules, the numbering part of the dress code of players is defined as 'The number shall be printed / stitched of size 10cms. high and 2cms. Width on the front and 20 cms. high and 2cms. width on the back (contravention) on the lesser size will be treated as misbehavior.' The match authorities are likely to check the fulfillment of the dress code before the commencement of the match. Any shortcomings can be pointed out to concerned team and corrective action insisted. Instead, a contravention expected size of the chest/back numbers on the dress is treated as misbehavior. This is another classic case of doubting the intentions of players. The framers of the rules of the game need to have full faith in the basic intentions of the players of playing the game.

The booklet of rules gives 'RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF PLAYERS'. It states that 'all players must know the rules of the game and abide by the rules.'

During the game, a player may address the referee only through the team captain. The team captain may address the referee and shall be the spokesman for his players. He may also address the other officials but only on matters concerning their duties.

I do not see any 'rights' to the players as against the title of the writing. In fact, the writing burdens the players by desiring that they **must** know the rules. Readers may note that of 50% khokho players are in the category of 'under 14 years of age'. The authorities controlling the game activities expect them to know the rules and the intricacies involved in it. That the players selecting khokho as their game of choice is fast dwindling. [I hope that the framers of the rules license](#) A reasonable provision in the rules would be 'not knowing the rules' can not be granted as an excuse for players' actions in the field. The succeeding part of addressing officials by the players is unworkable. If an attacker has successfully touched a defender and wants to claim a point for it, fast game of khokho, such an appeal is a spontaneous action by a player. In fact, such an appeal may be mentioned as a **right** of a player. It seems that the framers of the rules are prejudiced the players behavior/intentions on the field.

Presently, the game of khokho is being played at international level. Therefore, it is necessary that the language of rules and technical matters need to be framed carefully. In the above paragraph, an example of . All the matters regarding the language and rules/technical matters may be reviewed through the experts in the respective fields.

A few words about the reporting, running commentary etc. of khokho would be appropriate. Khokho is slowly going international. There is a need to develop specialized nomenclature for media. The language/words need to be meaningful and keeping with the tradition and historical developments of the game. Some examples of such words in use presently are 'cover', 'prey', 'killed' etc. The readers/audience knowing the game understands the proper meanings of these words easily. However, it remains to popularize these word For the running commentary of khokho, of the game Tennis would be because of the occurrences of very fast actions in it comparable to khokho. 'a passing shot', 'a crosscourt volley', 'ace service', 'down the line shot' etc. The necessity of similar words for khokho description is strongly felt the concerned people. An outer feint, pole dive, inner feint etc. are the words already in use but more needs to be done in this direction. Khokho is a very fast game. There is hardly any time for a commentator to describe the actions of players during the game. A common terminology, therefore, becomes necessity for the description of the game. There is no time to get expert's comments on the game during the game except during the recess. This is a very special feature of the game of khokho as against other games where commentator gets time to narrate the events during service breaks etc. as in the fast games like tennis, badminton, table tennis, volley ball etc. A very special skill of narration and appropriate terminology needs to be developed for the and media reporting of khokho.