

## **THE INSTITUTE FOR AESTHLETICS GUIDE TO SPORT INVENTION!**

Hello! If you are reading this you have had the unfortunate pleasure to sit through an Institute for Aesthetics workshop on sport design! Now you must read through this resource packet!

We here at the Institute do not believe so much in formal thought so we will try to keep this packet as useful and unlaborious as possible. That being said, we have many helpful insights on sport design that we would love to share with you. Since we may have reviewed many of these pointers, this guide both serves as a refresher and also expands on some ideas only touched on at the workshop.

### **Introduction**

#### **Why Invent New Sports?**

Why would you invent a new sport when there are already so many great sports out there like Underwater Ice Hockey, Wife Carrying, and Volleyball? The list is endless! So what is the point when we already have these great games? Well, the thing is, while it is great to be able to just go outside and play a sport like ski jumping or synchronized swimming without having to “invent” anything, the labor of making up a game is actually worthwhile and fun. To see how fun and, gasp, how educational sport invention is, we can turn to the foremost experts of sport inventors: children.

Children invent sports all the time, at least they used to before Play Station. When I was a young lad, growing up in the hardscrabble streets of an upper middle class Brooklyn neighborhood, we were forced to make up our own fun. We mainly did this by creating our own games, usually already extant sports modified to our particular environments- the street, backyard, alleyway, park, schoolyard etc. We plotted, designed, mapped out boundaries, made rules, revised rules, argued over rules, and argued some

more. And of course we ran around a lot. At the end of our sessions we had our own versions of football, basketball, baseball, tag and chase games, and even a weirdly conceived American version of rugby (we had no idea how to play except that you could tackle people, which we liked) When friends would come over we would carefully explain our new rules to them so they could play our games. When we took our play on the road to our friend's houses, they too had their own backyard games with unique rule sets based on the necessities of their play area, equipment, and preferences. When we played we also made up imaginary teams sometimes based on real franchises, sometimes not. When waiting to play we announced, or reffed, or started to make up our own game and try to convince the others that this game was more fun. This probably sounds like a familiar childhood to most guys and many girls who were born before the plague of the video game console.

What never crossed our minds at the time, but what was inherently true, was that our activities were incredibly rich learning experiences. The process of inventing, modifying, playing, and sharing games was amazingly fun and actually useful. It taught us to be comfortable with rules- the guiding structure of so many of our social institutions. That two of four of my closest game-playing posse would become lawyers is not surprising to anyone. It taught us to use our minds and bodies at the same time, like they are supposed to be used, unlike the ever increasingly divided activities of mental and physical work we undertake in the computer age. More importantly, we were free to come up with our own versions, solutions, to impose our subjectivity on processes designed to be subjective. Consumer society trains us differently, to search for solutions outside of ourselves, ideally those that can be purchased. Game design was the antithesis to this idea. This process emphasized creativity, improvisation, and playfulness. In fact it was the most productive and amazing activity ever in the history of human existence. There. So that's why it's important.

## **PART ONE: SPORT DESIGN**

At the Institute we prefer the experimental branch of sport invention to the theoretical approach to sport design. The theoretical model of sport design is what people discuss with you when you mention to them that you design new sports. “How about if you mixed bowling with sky diving? How about replacing a football with a porcupine?” In short, theoretical sport design is a lightning rod for bad ideas with thirty-second life spans of appeal. However,

experimental sport design is an extremely rich process that yields fruit one could not even imagine when starting out. This guide will review the basics of game design and then apply them to the genre of sport.

## **SECTION ONE: Game Design**

### THE EXPERIMENTAL PROCESS

1. Brainstorming
2. Game Design Axioms
3. Design Exercises
4. Playing Games
5. Critique and Refinement

#### **1. Brainstorming**

Brainstorming is quite possibly the most important part of the game design process. You must give birth to a new idea, a new concept separate from all of the rest of the millions of games already out there. How will you do this? How will you mine your neurons for an original concept? Let's face it- when we are dealing with games, pretty much everything has been covered, right? Well, no, but almost. With any endeavor you need to give yourself time to sort through and pick out unique ideas.

The key to good brainstorming is to start thinking about design in the most abstract way, get a lot of data, and then hone in on what you're actually thinking about. If you just start thinking of a game idea you may have already restricted yourself too much.

My recommendation is to put yourself in as many weird, unusual and unpredictable situations as possible and see how your brain reacts. The standard way of brainstorming is to get a whole bunch of paper and free associate, writing down anything that comes to your mind. This is a good start, but you may not do your best or most creative thinking when you force yourself to look at a blank page. A couple of tips from my A.D.D. brain-

- Play! Start messing around. Throw a ball, kick something, run around with

an inner tube around your head. Throw grapes into small openings. Wrestle inanimate objects. Contrary to popular belief play is the most productive thing you can do. Do not just sit at a table and wait for an epiphany. Trust me, once you start unleashing your body to physical mischief your mind will follow. By the way, almost all of the great ideas in the history of the world were thought of with this method.

-Always have something to write your thoughts down on. Keep pens in your pockets, bags, car, etc. You never know when inspiration is going to strike.

Don't Sit Down, walk around. I find pacing and walking around to be a great way to get your mind moving. I often go out for walks with a few scraps of paper and a pen knowing that once I start walking around the city ideas will spill out of my brain.

Change your location- try to brainstorm in different places- a café, a park, in the laundromat, in the bookstore, in a shopping mall, in a basement, attic, parking lot, bus, etc. Let your surroundings be your influence. Write down what you observe, what you hear, what you smell. Make random lists of your sensations. Most of what you write down may be complete nonsense, the point is to find just one or two golden nuggets in the muddy river of your thoughts.

Record your thoughts. You can use a program like Garage Band, or maybe a voice recorder on your phone, and record your thoughts- sometimes its easier to think by speaking rather than writing.

Media. Watch tvs, movies, listen to songs, read books and copy anything that interests you- a word, a phrase, a note, a character. Mine anything your mind absorbs and pick out what attracts you viscerally. Keep a list of these things, things that you like, and store them away for use later.

Once you've started up your brain and have a list of random and not so random ideas its time to corral them into a game/sport context. You'll want to keep your "raw data" in the form of your notes for future use, you never know when you'll have use for the phrase "Noodle Helmet". However its time to start thinking about how they can be used. Is your idea a:

Game  
Theme  
Piece of equipment  
Costume  
Team identity  
Performance  
Character  
Dialogue

Make lists of each of these categories in your notebooks. Put an idea into as many different categories as you like. From here you will start to build up a cache of great ideas to be used at your disposal. Once you have started to fill up these categories, you will have been playing around a good bit and you'll hopefully have gotten into actually fleshing out some basic game design concepts. As we delve further into the process its helpful to review some Game Design Axioms once you start to really work on a game.

### **Game Design Axioms**

**Simplicity.** Simplify your game wherever you can.

Imagine explaining your game to a group of people. How long would it take? How many people would be confused and ask a bunch of questions? Make a couple of rules and let your game develop out of those. Some of the best games are the most concise; soccer( football) only has 17 rules, which is amazing for all of its complexity.

**Learning Curve** The basic rule of the learning curve is easy to learn, hard to master.

Is your game easy to learn? If not it might not be fun to play. Does the game have enough challenges for people to enjoy playing it over and over again? Make sure that people can grasp the tenets and be able to build upon their knowledge to have a more enriching experience.

**Design for the Site.** Use your site to your advantage by designing for it, not against it. If you have a specific place in mind to play your game, try to take advantage of its uniqueness to come up with a new game. Have trees in the middle of a field? How about a basketball game where trees are obstacles? Always be on the lookout for interesting places to play games.

## **Take nothing for granted**

Rodney Brooks, robot designer extraordinaire has a great rule for invention: Find what everyone else takes for granted and throw it away.

Conventional wisdom often holds us back from thinking about projects in new ways. A great game invented by the art group Fluxus is the Zen Sprint. Its safe to say that in a sprint one thing that everyone would take for granted is that the competitors must run. In the Zen Sprint however, players assume the typical crouching position on the starting blocks; when the race begins they do not move, but must stay there in that position for as long as possible. After a few minutes people start to fatigue, cramp and fall down and all of a sudden this new very entertaining and competitive game emerges from a seemingly impossible situation. What do you take for granted in games? Chuck it out the window and then start designing.

**Safety/Feasibility.** Make your game safe and easy to play. It's very tempting to design an extremely spectacular and often violent sport. However after a few injuries you'll likely be hard pressed to find more players. Keep your games competitive but do not encourage dangerous play, i.e. tackle football on concrete, dodgeball with bowling pins etc etc.. As well, if you design a game with that old busted accordion in your basement, could others conceivably organize this game? Probably not. Think about how easy it would be for others (or you) to replicate your game. This is not to discourage one-off games, but it is something to consider.

## **Officiating**

Be careful of how your game's rules can be enforced. Can people easily play without having a referee to determine a rule? How hard are the rules to judge? If there is a referee how many rules does the referee have to think about? What are the most important? If the rules are too complicated or rely on small or hard to discern differences chances are that rule will be an endemic problem to your game. Try to make your rules clear and easy to follow and observe.

## **2. GAME DESIGN EXERCISES**

Game design exercises are great vehicles for both individuals and groups to get started making games. Some of them are great for warm ups, some may even help you create a completely new game. Either way they are fun and bend the mind and body into creative thinking.

## **1. Sport Deconstruction**

A good primer exercise is to write down one's thoughts and feelings about sports. Which sports do you like? What specifically do you like about them? Do you enjoy playing, watching, or both? Are there any particular groups of games you enjoy? Do you like playing in particular places? Make a list of your favorite elements, actions, feelings, or particular parts of games. These could be:

The feel of hitting something with a stick  
Running as fast as you can  
Falling on the ground  
The Penalty shootout  
Bouncing a ball  
Trying to catch an object  
Knocking into people  
Being alone  
Jumping as high as you can

Make a list of sports and elements you don't like as well. In a group, individuals can compile their thoughts and then everyone can share, observing the multitudinous and varied responses to these questions. Like with brainstorming notes, keep these ideas to help visualize what you would ultimately want to put into your games.

## **2. Game Mods**

A great design exercise is to modify an existing game. The pre-existing game provides a nice start, and since most games are variations on others almost any sport can be looked at as a modification of another. Write down the basic rule set of a sport on a white board or a piece of paper. Then alter it. You can:

Invent a game by deleting one( or two or three) rule(s) from the rule set

Invent a game by adding( or two or three) rule(s) o the rule set

Invent a game by changing the most fundamental rule of the rule set.

Invent a game by inverting all of the rules of a rule set

Participants can work together or in groups to come up with new games. Once you have a couple of new games make names for these new modifications and start to play them.

### **3. Game Mashup**

Many games are the mixture of two different games, for example, Frisbee Golf is the combination of Frisbee and golf! Take two games and experiment with combining the rule sets.

### **4. Random Game Generator**

Write down on small pieces of paper different rules of games. Divide the categories into –

Field

Play

Equipment

Write 10-15 different rules for each category, for example for the field you could write: rectangular grass field, swimming pool, basketball court, 23 feet long x 34 feet wide, 20 ft circle

For the Play category write down how many people are playing, how to win, how to score, time limits, and any other variables

Make sure to keep the variables possible- don't write 100 people if you do not have them!

Pick seven or eight rules out of a hat and see what you come up with. Some of the games might be completely unplayable, but they will definitely get you out of your game design comfort zone.

### **5. 4 Objects**

Divide a group of players into teams of two to four. Give each team four random pieces of sporting equipment and ask each group to invent a game. Once all the teams have invented a game each group presents their game



and teaches it to the other groups.

## **6. Site specific.**

Break up into small groups and assign each group an unusual place to design a game- underneath a tree, in a stairwell, next to a stream, in a closet etc etc

## **7. Junkyard Sports**

Taken from game guru Bernie De Koven's book Junkyard Sports- make up games using objects that are not traditionally sporting equipment: socks, frying pans, brooms, rubber bands, towels, books, tubes, pom poms, etc etc

## **8. Specialization**

Most ball sports have no player specialization; most players have the same equipment and have the same abilities. Take an existing sport and add new players with unique abilities, for example a football player who can touch the ball on the attacking side of the field. Add several different types of players and see how the game changes. This is a hard exercise as it is very easy to dominate the game with one new player- try to balance everyone so that no one position is the most powerful.

## **9. Blind Game**

Break into groups and try to invent a new sport where nobody is allowed to use their eyes.

## **10. Me vs Group**

Invent some new Me vs Group games. Me vs Group games pit one player versus the rest of the group. Me vs Group games are good for promoting collaborative action and are fun warm up exercises. For example, in the game Firehose, all but one player takes hold of a giant tube, the firehose, and must try to tag the lone player( the fire). If the team can successfully tag the player with the hose they win, if the player gets anyone on the other team to fall down or lose contact with the hose, he/she wins.

## **PLAYING YOUR GAMES**

### **Playing Philosophy**

The Insitute for Aesthetics promotes the playing of new games as part of a larger philosophy of socially engaging physical activity. In this ethos we recommend creating a play environment that is conducive to collaboration, engagement, and high levels of fun. Since games are inherently enjoyable, the main concern is not letting the games get too lopsided or competitive. Make sure to balance teams well. Move players from team to team often. Change the game often, sometimes right when the current game is at its peak so there is no downward spiral of lagging interest and eventual boredom. Intersperse team competition games with individual competition and Me vs Group games to change the focus of play. Consistently promote the celebration of good play, and downplay winning and losing.

### **Play Testing**

## **CRITIQUE AND REFINEMENT**

By now you have played some of your new games and have gotten the feel for them. You have probably noticed how the game is working, where it is not, and what you can possibly do about it. This is the critique stage, and it is important to make this efficient and productive as it is a long and seemingly constant stage in game design. When working in groups it is especially important to maintain some ground rules when critiquing games. The foremost is to keep all discussions pro-active. Dwell on the positives of each design process, not the negatives. People can become sensitive when demonstrating their work, and if they do not feel they are participating in an open and understanding environment they will become defensive and miss crucial opportunities to both improve their games and give useful advice to others. Here are some other questions and frameworks for critique discussions.

**Is it Fun!** This is the most important aspect of your game- Funness!

Apply the rigorous Fun Test to every part of your game and use it as your measuring stick. As games transfer from idea to reality, you will see that sometimes what you thought would be fun actually turned out to be boring,

and you will also be surprised by delightful accidents that turn out to be enjoyable. Throw away anything that is not fun no matter how “fundamental” it is to your game. You do not want a game whose basic premise is not entertaining.

### **Emotional critique**

This is a nice way to start a critique. Before you ask players to describe their specific opinions on the game, take stock of their emotions. How did they feel while playing? Were they excited? Charged? Lethargic? Mentally stimulated? Bored? Exhilarated? Confused? Once everyone has gotten an idea of how they were moved by the game they can more easily elaborate the specific parts of the game that were catalysts.

### **What works? what doesn't?**

Make a list of all the enjoyable parts of a game and follow with a list of elements that are not falling into place. Then make a list of ways the good elements of the game can be highlighted or prioritized, and a list of suggestions to modify or eliminate the others.

### **Keep your own notes**

It's great to work as a group to design games, soliciting feedback from players and observers is indispensable to refining a game. However do not shirk on your own responsibility to critique your own game. If you ask people to make lists make your own list as well. Break down your game as well as you can even though you are not an impartial observer. You may surprise yourself in your emotional reactions or ideas once you have to verbalize them.

Once you've gotten some feedback you need to sort through all of the advice. Most likely you'll get a lot of feedback, some of it conflicting, and you'll have to decide how you want to move forward. The best way to use a critique is to go back onto the field and play. Test out the game with as many new options as possible. Make several different versions of the game and see which one emerges as the most fun.

## **PART TWO: SPORTS**

Let's now further hone in and look at the particulars of sports. This chapter

will briefly review types of sports and some charts for sport invention. Sports are a particular type of game. They are physical. They can be very competitive. They are spectacular. They have history. They have their own aesthetic that is determined by the rules of these games. Let's take a look.

## **Types of Sports**

In designing a new sport, it's helpful to have a classification of existing sports to spur on new ideas, either in making a new sport in one of the categories, blending elements from disparate games, or inventing your own category altogether. Each game type has different objectives, different strengths and weaknesses. There are a lot of new opportunities for new sports in most of these categories through manipulation of the game concepts discussed in this chapter.

### **Ball Games**

Ball games have captured the attention, imagination, and love of the denizens of most every country in the world. The gold standard is football( soccer) played in every country, its final( the World Cup) watched by nearly 2 billion people. Ball games are the classic team sport, and as the world population doesn't show any signs of slowing down, designing for team games is a good idea. The goal of most ball games is to "score" more "points" than the opponent. Ball sports are usually( but not necessarily) of moderate to high exertion level and usually require high endurance levels from players.

### **Fighting Games**

Fighting games are sometimes known as the martial arts. They usually involve a set of combat maneuvers and involve sparring. Some fighting sports can also be considered skill-based if fighting is not a requisite part of the sport. Exertion levels range from very low to very high. Fighting sports usually have a strong culture associated with each fighting style, including cool uniforms, (an interesting area to experiment with). Fighting sports are usually not team sports, but that could be changed. Western fighting games, such as Greco-Roman Wrestling, Boxing, and Ultimate Fighting are traditionally the most homo-erotic sports, if that is a direction you're interested in going in. In fact, Ultimate Fighting routinely involves a position

where a man repeatedly thrusts his pelvis into another man's nether regions on the ground.

## **Races**

Races are an ancient sport, memorialized in Greek Attic pottery, sung in ballads and folk songs, and written in verse. They are also a fairly simple sport, the Protist Kingdom of Sport Taxonomy, and they do not have too much game complexity. Races can either be time-based or task-based. There are a seemingly infinite amount of variations of the race, from the standard track and field events, to candle racing, egg rolling, canoe racing, and hovercraft racing, if you happen to have some of those lying around.

## **Combined Sports**

Combined sports are sports where at least two different games or skills are meshed together to form one competition, otherwise known as the "olon" sports. There's the biatholon, which combines cross country skiing with riflery, triatholon, swimming, running, and cycling, heptatholon, and the pentatholon, there's also a quadratholon which sometimes includes kayaking or inline skating, and the duatholon, which alternates between running and cycling. This is a great area of investigation for sports designers. I certainly feel that there are not enough combined sports events, and that the Ancient Greeks have made the most strides in this area. It is time for an overhaul.

## **Skill Sports**

Skill Sports are contests that demonstrate a specific athletic acumen. That skill could be strength based, aim based, dance based, grace based, oil based, water based etc etc. Some Skill sports require judges and don't have any goal-based objective, such as figure skating and diving. Personally I'm not a big fan of modern skill sports but that doesn't mean that I wouldn't like to see someone try to make cooler ones. The most recent are from the X-Games: snowboarding, skeleton, i.e. a bunch of stoned teenagers falling down a mountain. There are other skill based sports such as stone lifting and strongman competitions, lumberjack games, mule pulling, boomerang sports, orienteering, and how could one forget Korean spinning.

## **Throwing Sports**

There are an unbelievable amount of games that involve throwing stuff, from discus and javelin to pitchfork throwing, hammer throwing and caber tossing. Throwing sports have probably been around as long as man or his predecessor had hands. If you assume that monkeys have been throwing their feces at other people before they ended up in zoos, these games have been around for millions of years. And there is really not much difference between the monkey's game and say, bocce, except maybe the former game is a lot more enjoyable if not socially unacceptable. Throwing games are easy to come up with, play, and don't require many rules. People even throw bales of hay over fences. Southern Europeans have virtually cornered the market of throwing games, however they have uncreatively restricted themselves to infinite variations of throwing different sized balls at other different sized balls on country lanes. There is much to be developed in this area of sport.

### Game Type Chart

Here is an easy to read chart outlining the above sport categories and their strengths and weaknesses.

<b>Type of Sport</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Ball Game	Soccer, Basketball, Table tennis	Good for teams, social games,	Need a lot of people, Lots of space, Lots of rules
Race	100Km, Horseracing, Crew,	Easy to organize, Can play with two people	Not very complex, usually involves lots of running, ugh

Combined Sport	Decathlon, Biathlon	Many skills tested, Great exercise	Difficult to design, Take a long time to play, Usually require top level fitness
Skill Sport	Synchronized Swimming, Gymnastics, Figure skating	Graceful, lots of aesthetic displays	Subjective judging, always a pain in the ass
Throwing Sport	Bowling, Darts, bocce	Easy to invent, Easy to set up, Therapeutic	Not physically demanding, usually involves drinking, which can negate any physical benefit, old fat men dominate these sports
Fighting Sport	Kung Fu, Boxing, wrestling	Levels for beginners and experts, Exciting	Lots of officiating, Can be dangerous

## GAME PLACES

Another primary inspiration, place is of essential use to the sport designer. Having a location for your sport is extremely useful, and your participants will thank you for it. These days it seems as though most sports take place on a grassy field or in a gymnasium. Thus I will beat the familiar drum: there are many more types of terrain and surfaces in the world to play on. Granted some are more suitable than others.

### Game Surfaces

Surface	Conventional Uses	Pros	Cons
<b>OUTDOOR</b>			

Grass	Most ball sports	Even play, soft cushioning	Balls don't bounce very well. Troublesome grass stains
Dirt/ Clay	Baseball, bocce, tennis	Soft, cushions landings of either balls or people	Dirty, sometimes hard and impacted
Concrete/ Blacktop	Playgrounds/ Basketball, Handball	Good bouncing surface	Dangerous for intense sports, head injuries, etc
Astroturf	Ball sports, Mini golf	Grass-like, more bouncy surface	Harder than grass, can cause turf burn and injuries.
Gravel	Petanque, other throwing games	Balls stay put and do not roll away	Lots of pebbles in shoes
Track	Track	Good for running	Usually restricted to circular and straight
Ice	Ice Hockey, Figure Skating, Curling	Sliding Fast movements with skates	Melts without proper temperature control, Slippery, Bad for falling
Sand	Beach Volleyball, Futevolley, Beach Tennis	Soft for landings aesthetic	Mobility, hard to run, no bounce, crabs
Snow	Skiing, winter sports	Soft for landing aesthetic	Mobility, unpredictable in many climates
Mud	Mud Wrestling	Slippery and fun	Mobility, Cleaning uniforms
<b>INDOOR</b>			



Hardwood Floor	Basketball, most gym sports	Good bouncing	Bad for falls
Mat	Gymnastics	Safe, comfy, good for high falls	Hard to run, Bad bounces
Linoleum	None	Good sliding surface	Easily damaged, metal splinters-yikes!
Carpet	None	Soft, feels good on face	Rug burn, dust mites

### Location and Terrain Chart

<b>Terrain</b>	<b>Conventional Use</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Hills	Grass skiing, Sledding	Uneasy unpredictable	Exhausting, hard terrain physically challenging
Mountains	Skiing, Snowboarding, Ski Jumping	Use of gravity	Usually unidirectional
Forest	Cross country skiing, Biathlon	Pleasant	Trees
Cliff	Cliff Diving, Hang Gliding	Beautiful Scenery	Dangerous
Valley	n/a	Easy to control balls, nice setting for combat	Can get dark early
Pool	Swimming, Water polo diving	Controlled water environment	Chlorine, temptation to pee, wetness
Ocean	Surfing, sea kayaking	Good summer sport	Bad winter sport
Lake	Water skiing, canoeing	Safe, controlled water venue	sometimes smelly, snapping turtles, children

River	Crew, kayaking rafting	Exciting rapids	Exciting rapids
Bog	Bog Snorkelling	?	Getting bog smell out of clothes, accidental mummification
Swamp	Everglade air boating	Nice environment	Alligators, Leeches, Cajuns
Jungle	???	Good hiding spots	Various carnivorous animals, poisonous snakes etc..
Public Park	Hopscotch, Dodgeball	Convenient, accessible	Little kids, police officers, citations
Gymnasium	Basketball, European Handball	Regulated environment, actually designed for sport	predictable
Street	Stickball, Ring a Levio	Convenient	Cars, neighbors, wild dogs
Parking Lot	Skateboarding	??	Security Guards
Roof	Base Jumping	Great views, Aesthetically interesting	Tar, falling to one's death
Office	n/a	Large pool of potential players	Boss
Bathroom	n/a	Easily accessible	Small, ball could fall in toilet
Your apartment	?	convenient	Breaking all of your stuff

### Site-Specific Sports

Site-Specific sports clearly have location as their primary influence. No doubt you have already created a site-specific game, in your backyard, at school, maybe even on the school bus. Because these sports are so prevalent, most aesthetic designers do not take these sports seriously. This must not be. Many of the world's most notorious sports started out as site-specific. Tennis was invented in the courtyard of a monastery. The Hole-in-the-Wall game is one of the most famous games in England, and is only played at Eton College. The Calcio of Florence, the Palio of Siena, and Basketball are also good examples. You too can invent your own sport in the confines of an already existing location and god knows what you'll come up with, maybe something worth playing. Site specific games are also interesting in a larger context, wouldn't it be great if there were a large database of site specific games, so if you showed up at some national park you knew there was a great cool place to play an alternate version of kickball, or go to somebody's backyard and play some ingenious sport they invented. Again it is the issue of not giving credit to these games that stifles this sport inventing opportunity.

### **PART 3: WARM UP GAMES**

Below are a list of games if you end up being too lazy to invent your own sports. Actually, each of these sports are good warm up games and are also good examples of aesthetically minded games.

#### **Bear Cowboy Ninja**

**Participants:** 2 and Up

**Ages:** 7 and up

**Time of exercise:** 10 minutes

**Activity level:** Low

**Equipment Needed:** None

#### **Rules**

A variation of paper rock scissors where the players act the part rather than using their hands. Two players stand back to back and take three paces away from each other as in a gun duel. They then quickly turn to face each other and act the part of a bear, ninja, or cowboy. The bear mauls the ninja to death, the ninja kicks the cowboy's ass, and the cowboy shoots the bear.

## **Mod**

Have players come up with their own three character version of this game, for example- Clam, Lobster, Jellyfish Fireman, Cop, Prisonguard etc etc

## **FINGER JOUSTING**

**Participants:** 6-20

**Ages:** 4- Adult

**Time of exercise:** 15-30 minutes

**Activity level:** Medium

**Equipment Needed:** None

Finger Jousting was invented by a couple of graphic designers in Georgia and has taken off ever since. Not satisfied with thumb wrestling, these intrepid sport inventors turned a hand game into a full body sport.

### Rules of Play

Two players interlock hands with forefingers extended. Each tries to touch the other's body with their forefinger while keeping their hands together at all times.

A point is scored when a player touches his finger to the body or head of his or her opponent. Hits on the playing arm do not count. Games can last to a certain amounts of points or can be timed.

### Variation

Different parts of the body can count for differing amounts of points. A head shot is worth 3 points, a body shot 2, and legs and non playing hand.

## **HANDCERCHEIF TAG**

**Participants:** 6-20

**Ages:** 7- Adult

**Time of exercise:** 10-15 minutes

**Activity level:** High

**Equipment Needed:** 15-20 handkerchiefs or tissue paper

Players start with a handkerchief on their heads. They try to snatch the handkerchief off of the other players while keeping theirs intact. They cannot hold their own handkerchief in place and must be careful not to let it blow off while running. The last player standing wins the game.

Animal Dodgeball

## **HAT DODGEBALL**

**Players:** 8-30

**Ages:** 7- Adult

**Time of game:** 15-30 minutes

**Activity level:** High

**Equipment Needed:** 5-10 playground balls, 6-10 assorted funky hats, ie sombrero, cowboy hat, do-rag, baseball hat, fur hat etc etc

### **Rules of Play**

Hat dodgeball is a good example of a specialized game. It uses the fundamentals of dodgeball with a twist. When setting up to play dodgeball, intersperse amongst the balls in the middle an assortment of hats. Give each hat a specific characteristic for the player who wears it- for example, the blue hat give the a player one extra life and the gold hat lets the player cross over to the other side of the field. A good exercise is to start playing regular dodgeball and then ask participants to think up the special abilities of the hats and then play.

## **FLYING SAUCER**

**Players:** At least 4

**Ages:** 5- Adult

**Time of game:** 10 minutes

**Activity level:** Low

**Equipment Needed:** 2 hula hoops, distance marker, distance measure, ie yard stick or marked rope

## **Rules of Play**

Flying Saucer takes hula hoops and turns them into colorful projectiles. At least two teams of two players stand seven yards apart with one person from each team holding a hula hoop. Teams alternate turns trying to throw the hula hoop onto the other player. This means the hula hoop must pass over the head of the player so that the hoop lands at the floor surrounding the player. Players may raise their arms over their head in unison to guide the hoop over the body. If they succeed in completing the throw the teams are allowed to increase the distance between themselves and try again. If they fail they must stay where they are. The team farthest away from each other after five throws is the winner. If the distances are equal teams compete until one team is farther away.

## **Laundry Badminton**

**Type of Game:** Team ball sport

**Players:** 1-4 players per team, 2 laundry line holders

**Ages:** 5- Adult

**Activity level:** Medium

**Time of Game:** 15-30 minutes

**Equipment Needed:** 4 badminton rackets, shuttlecocks, laundry line, lots of funky clothes and accessories, badminton net( optional)

## **Rules of Play**

Laundry Badminton is like regular badminton (for sport rules see appendix) except there are many items of clothing on top of the net or laundry line. Players volley to win points; whichever team loses a point must put on as many articles of clothing as times the shuttlecock passed over the net. For example if team A serves and team B fails to return, team B has to put on one article of clothing. If Team A serves, team B returns, and Team A fails to return, then Team A has to put on two articles of clothing. NB each player does not have to put on one or two items of clothing, the aggregate team does. As the game progresses players will be more ridiculously dressed and more bulkier. Players should strategically select items that will not inhibit their ability to play. This game is great because long rallies become really important as whoever loses has to put on a whole lot of clothing. For really crazy games get about 50 pieces and play to 15 or 21, by the end the players

will be looking like Michelin Men.

## **The Tree Game**

**Type of Game:** Team game

**Players:** 5-20

**Ages:** 5- Adult

**Activity level:** Medium-high

**Time of Game:** 10-20 minutes

**Equipment Needed:** none

One player starts out as the leader, the rest of the players are followers. The player starts out walking in a circle making some sort of a movement like waving his or her hands in front of them. The followers must imitate the movement. At any point the leader can stop and raise his/her hands up in the air in a Y formation( the tree pose). The followers must do the same; the last follower to make the tree pose is out ( for younger children he/she can join with the leader). The leader continues and changes the movement after every tree pose. The leader can run, skip, hop around until there is only one follower left.

## **PART TWO: EVENT DESIGN**

While this resource packet is primarily about game design, I'll go over some parts of event design to help stimulate your minds. The Aesthetics of sports is fairly self evident, ie, players wear brightly colored uniforms, have team "identities", and play in hyper designed stadia. Instead of going into the underlying aesthetic implications of men wearing tights, calling themselves Bears and trying to tackle other men in tights called Packers, I will list all of the different elements of the sporting event that can be played around with.

### **Uniforms**

The Institute cannot more highly recommend the use of uniforms and costumes in all sport play. Uniforms have the amazing capacity of

transformation, not any serious Kafkaesque metamorphosis unfortunately, but more emotional and psychological transformation. Uniforms get people into play mode, and there are many ways to achieve and tweak this effect.

### **Things to consider when making uniforms**

Size: Can everybody wear the same size or do you have to make/buy different sized costumes? You may want to intentionally make uniforms too big or small depending on the look.

Temperature:

Logo  
Mascot  
Uniforms  
Sponsors  
Coach, referee  
Announcers  
Trophies prizes  
Equipment

### 2. Tricks of the trade

### PERFORMANCE

rituals and warm ups  
Haka  
Russottis

celebrations

playing referee, announcing

### 4. Documentation

Photo



Video

Social Media

5. Games

6. Resources

## **Internet References**

There are many places online where you can research sports for the purposes of designing new games.

[Aesthetics.org](http://Aesthetics.org)

[Deepfun.com](http://Deepfun.com)

[Strange-games.blogspot.com](http://Strange-games.blogspot.com)

[Sportencyclopedia.com](http://Sportencyclopedia.com)

[Uniwatchblog.com](http://Uniwatchblog.com)

<http://www.sportsdesignblog.com/>