



OINA

ROMANIA'S NATIONAL SRICK AND BALL GAME

Very few people know that the national sport of Romania is **oina**. With roots from the rule period of Vlaicu Vodă in 1364 – when it spread all across Wallachia region – ”oina” somehow resembles baseball (USA) and lapta (Russia) games.

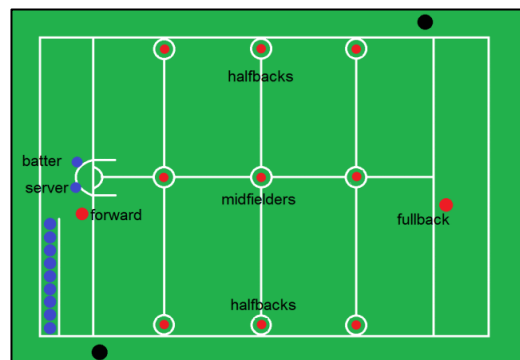
In 1899 the minister of education decided that it was to be played in schools in physical education classes and then the first annual competitions were organised.

The Romanian Oină Federation was founded in 1932, and was reactivated at the beginning of the 1950s, after a brief period when it was dissolved.

The game is very simple. There are two teams of 11 players, one attacking side or ”at bat” and one defending side or ”at catch”. The roles switch at half time.

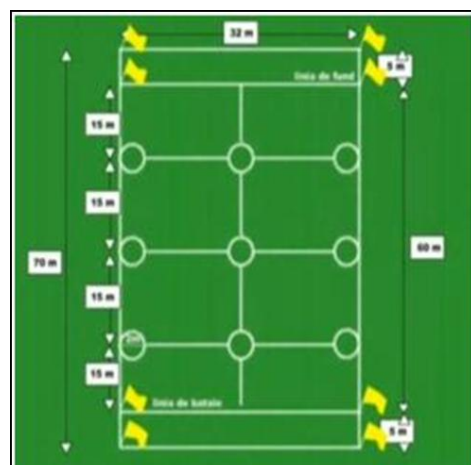
The defending players are placed in the following positions:

- 3 infielders
- 3 advance side players
- 3 return side players
- 1 back player that is free to move within the back zone
- 1 forward player that is free to move within the batting zone



The pitch is a rectangle, 70 m long by 32 m wide divided into:

- the in game area, which is 60 x 32 m;
- the batting zone – 5 m long – delimited from the in game area by the batting line;
- the back zone – a 5 m long safe zone during a run – delimited from the in game area by the back line



Scope of the game

The teams have very different roles depending on whether they are at bat or at catch. At bat players are tasked to open a play and run the lanes until they cross the escape line. At catch players are tasked to hit the players running the lanes with the ball. There can be a maximum of 2 players running each lane at the same time. A player can be hit in both lanes once.

Rules

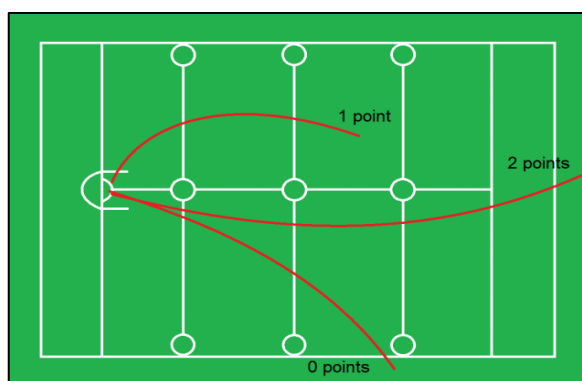
The team at bat is selected by a ritual where the players have to grab the bat, thrown by the referee, and the last one to be able to place at least 4 fingers on the bat wins.

The batting team has a server who throws the ball in the air (like in tennis), a batter who bats the ball and the remainder of the team sits in line waiting for their turn. The order is decided before the game and cannot be changed afterwards. The order of roles of a player is the following: in line – server – batter – runner.

The server throws the ball in the air for the batter to hit the ball. If the ball then lands in one of the squares it scores the batting team one point. If the ball goes beyond the back zone it scores the batting team two points. If it goes too far to the left or right it is considered an 'out' and no points are scored.

Competition

Winning brings the team 3 points, a draw brings in 2 points, and the losing team will score 1 point. Quitting or elimination of the team will result in no points being awarded and a 0-9 loss. Running out of substitutes due to injuries will result in a 0-6 loss and 1 point being awarded, while if the same situation is due to the elimination of a player, the result will be a 0-9 loss and no points being awarded.



Ball

A spherical ball made of leather, filled with horse, pig, or bovine hair is used in oină. The ball is around 8 cm in diameter and 140 grams in senior games and around 7 cm in diameter and 100 grams in U-18 games.

Comparison with baseball:

- similar weight of the ball: around 140 grams for both;
- longer and slimmer bat for oină;
- a game takes only 30 minutes for oină;
- oină teams have 11 players; Baseball teams have 9 players;
- in oină, the defense can score by hitting the attacking players that are in game (running the lanes).

