THE CARTOON BOOK OF

TUG OF WAR



STRENGTH

SPORT ON EARTH

Sport on Earth Books · The Olympic past Family

Original illustrations · No characters were copied in the making of this book

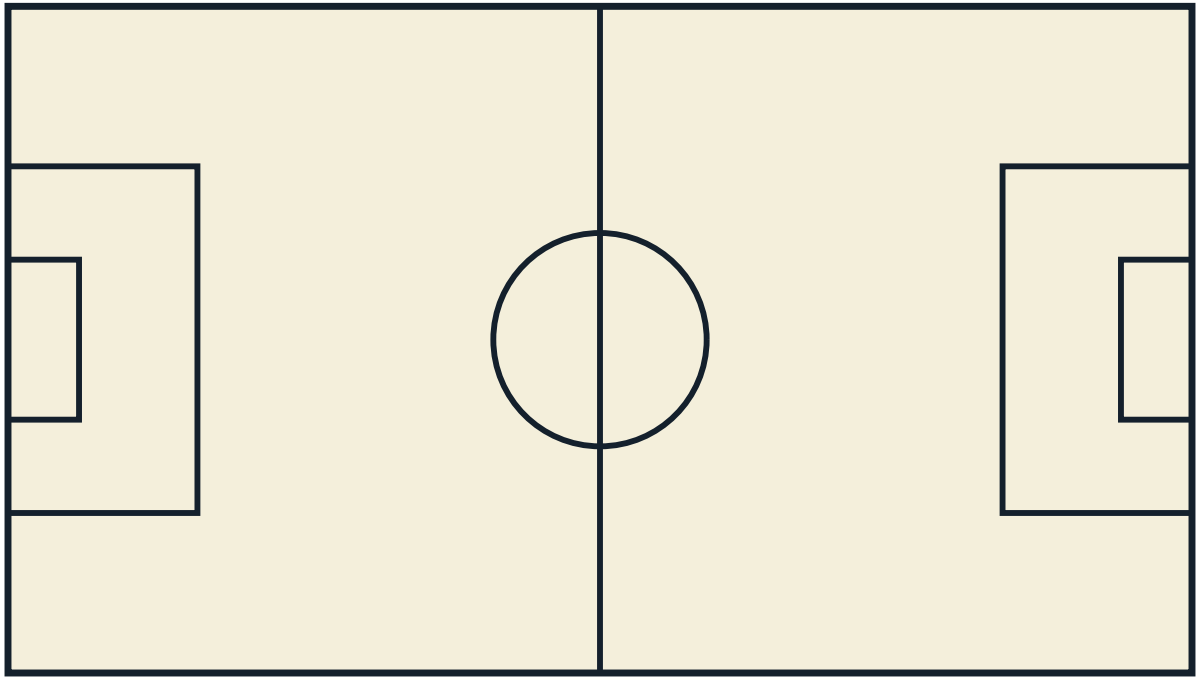
Meet Tug of War!

Olympic medal sport from 1900 to 1920.



Where It Is Played

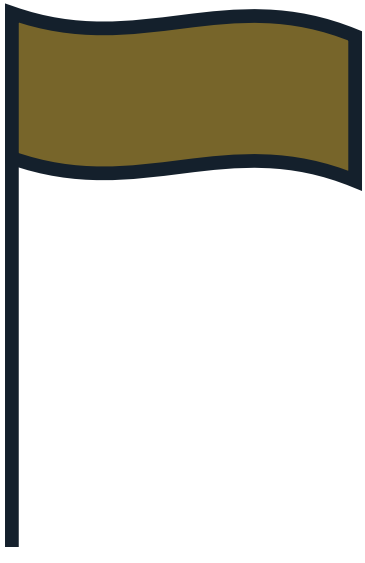
A flat pulling surface (grass outdoors or a pulling mat indoors) with a centre line marked on the ground under the rope's centre mark and the rope laid out along the pulling lane.



The Gear

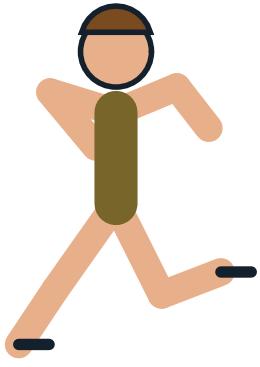
One TWIF-specification rope (at least 33.5 m long, 10–12.5 cm circumference, whipped ends, centre and 4-metre markings), uniform team sports dress, and footwear with no metal or protruding elements; gloves are permitted within the manual's limits.





How It Starts

Begin by joining an affiliated tug of war club, learning the palms-up grip, lean-back pulling position and team timing in a weight class, and pulling first in club competition under a qualified judge.



How to Play

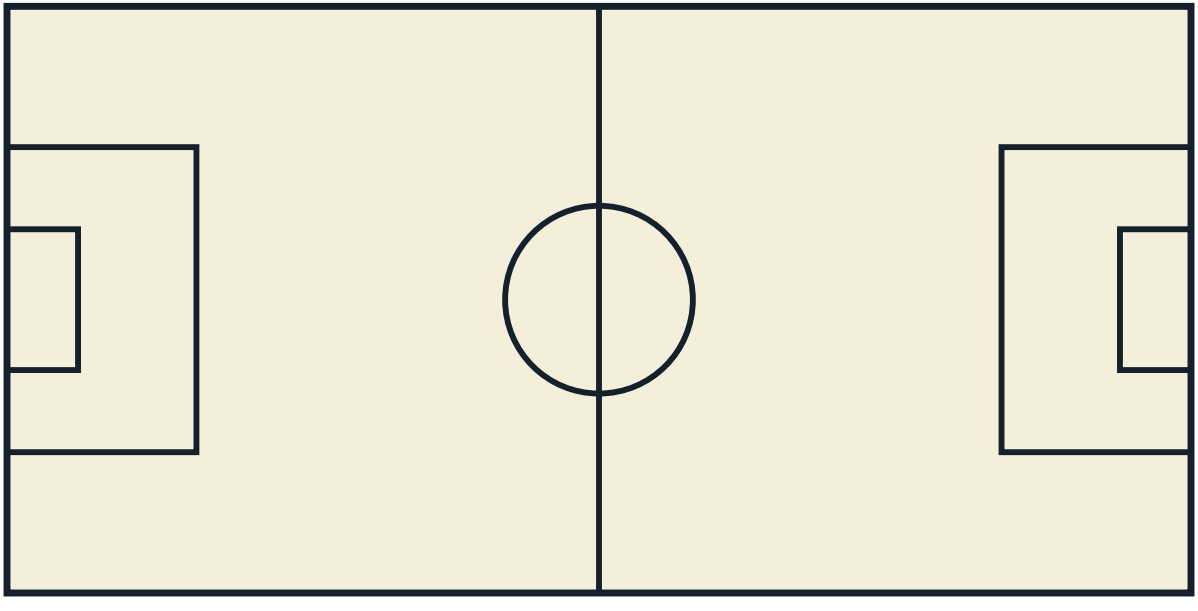
- Format: teams of eight pulling members contest a pull on a rope under a judge's direct supervision, in outdoor and indoor categories for men, women, senior, under-23 and junior pullers, and mixed 4x4 teams.
- Weight law: teams compete in team weight classes — the combined weight of the eight pullers must not exceed the class limit (senior men classes include 560, 600, 640 and 680 kg; senior mixed 4x4 is 580 kg).
- Winning a pull: a team wins a pull by pulling the rope so that the opposing team's 4-metre mark on the rope crosses the centre line on the ground — a pull of four metres from the starting position.
- Rope law: the rope must be 10 to 12.5 cm in circumference, at least 33.5 metres long, free from knots or other holdings for the hands, with whipped ends and five markings — one at the centre and two on each side, four metres from the centre.

More of the Game

- Grip law: the rope is held with both palms facing upward and fingers wrapped around it; creating a loop by wrapping the rope around a hand or body is forbidden, except that the anchor (last puller) may wrap the rope around the body once without it being tied or locked.
- Substitution law: only one substitution is allowed per weight class — it may be made for tactical reasons or injury only after the team has finished the first end of its first match, the replaced puller cannot pull again in that class, and a team may not continue with fewer than seven pullers.
- Conduct: each team may have one coach to direct the pulling and one trainer/attendant, who may not communicate with the team while it is pulling; the pull starts only on the judge's commands (pick up the rope, take the strain, steady, pull).
- Infringements: persistent infringement of the pulling-technique rules — such as sitting on the ground, locking the rope across the body or lowering the elbow below the knee — draws cautions and can lead to disqualification of the team from the pull or match.

The Shape of a Match

Eight-a-side team pulling on one rope: on the judge's 'Pull' command, drag the rope's 4-metre mark on the opponents' side across the centre line to win the pull, in a weight-class competition of qualifying rounds, semi-finals and finals.

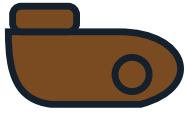


More of the Olympic past Family

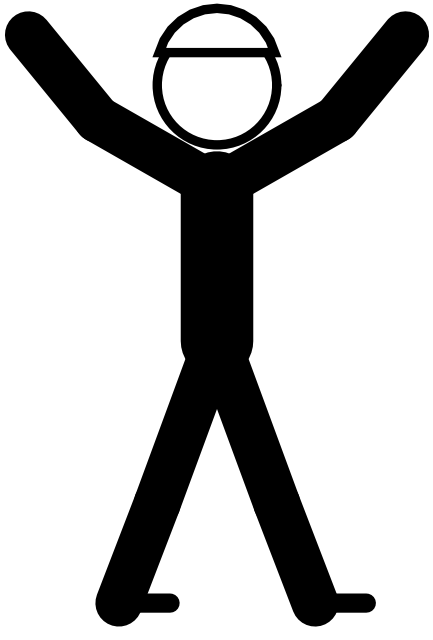
- Club Swinging — Gymnastic club routines at the 1904 and 1932 Games.
- Roque — American croquet variant played in 1904.
- Plunge for Distance — Diving event decided by distance glided, held in 1904.

A Note on the Rules

Tug of war is governed by the Tug of War International Federation (TWIF) under codified weight-class and foul rules; the sport was an Olympic event from 1900 to 1920 before becoming a World Games staple. The modern code is stable. No major documented rule change is carried for tug of war.

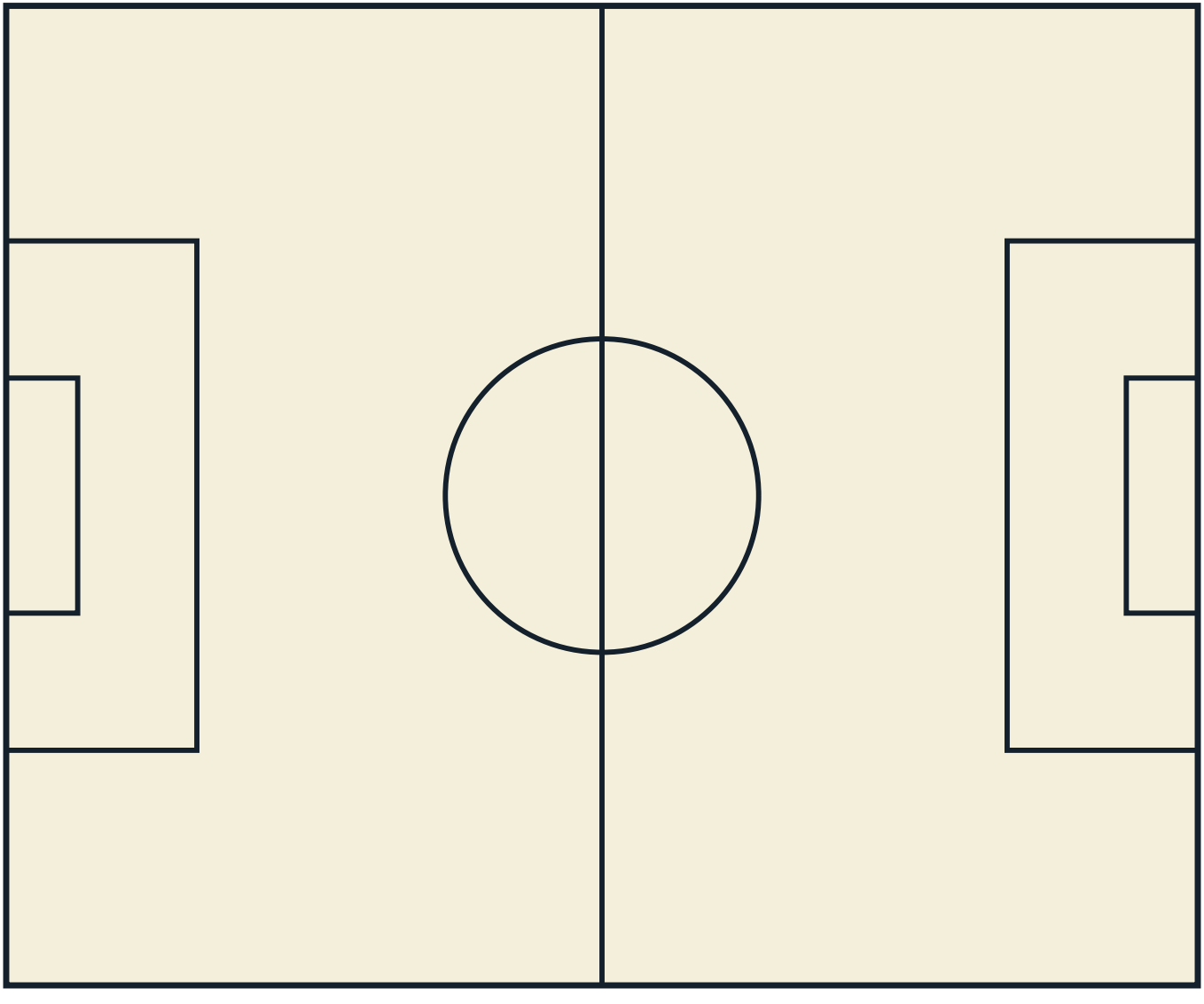


Colour the Action

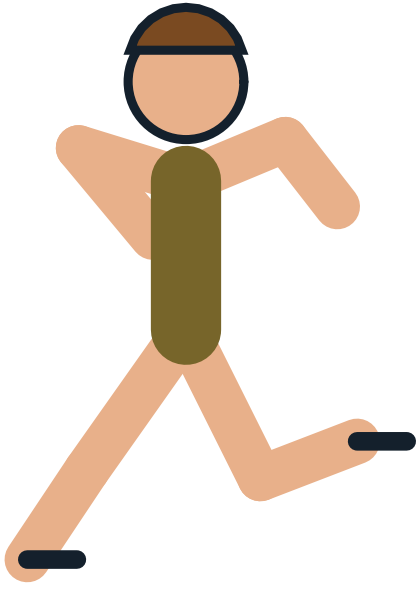


Psst — this page is a colouring page!

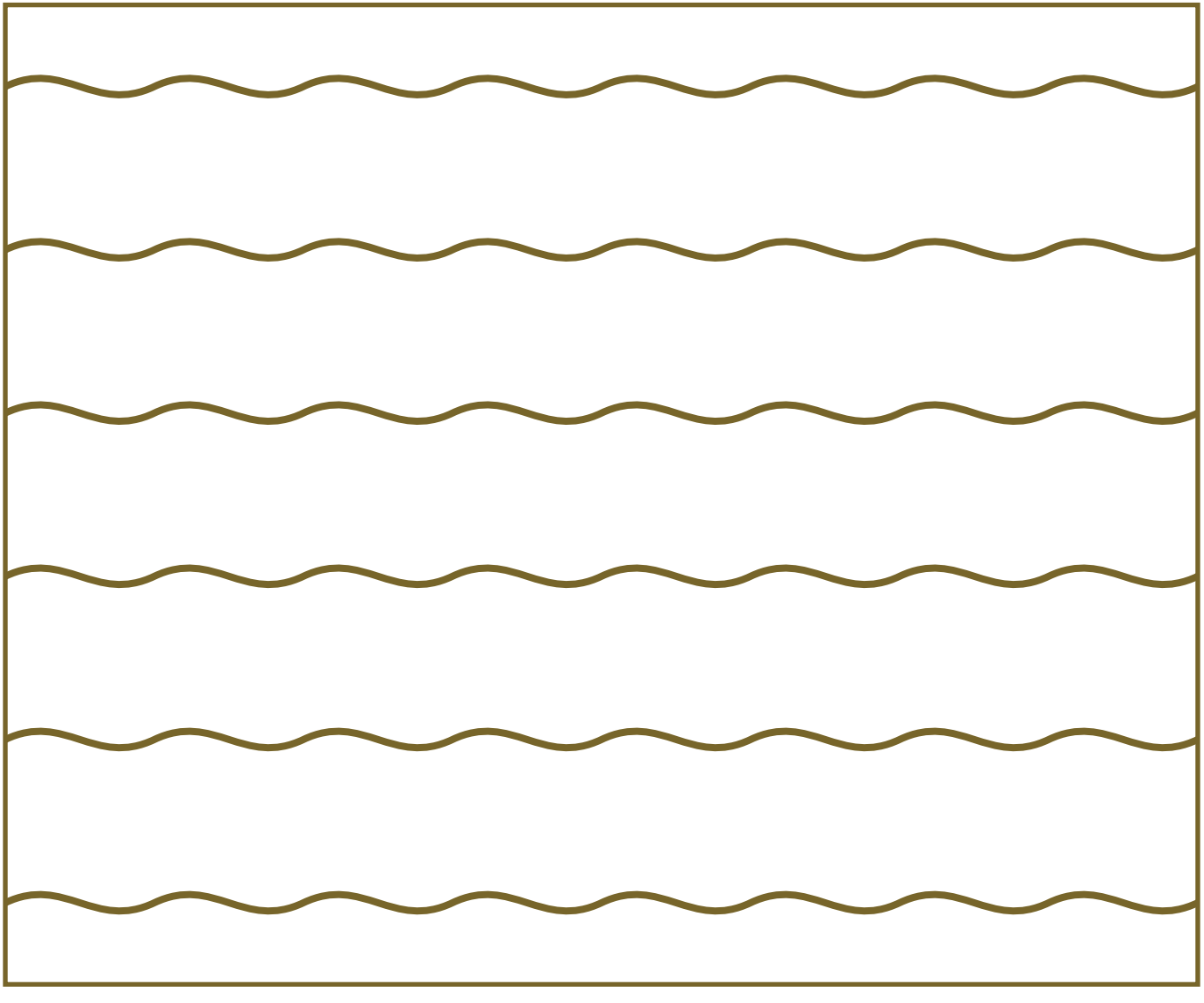
The Sport Today



At School and College



Play It Near You



Through the Year

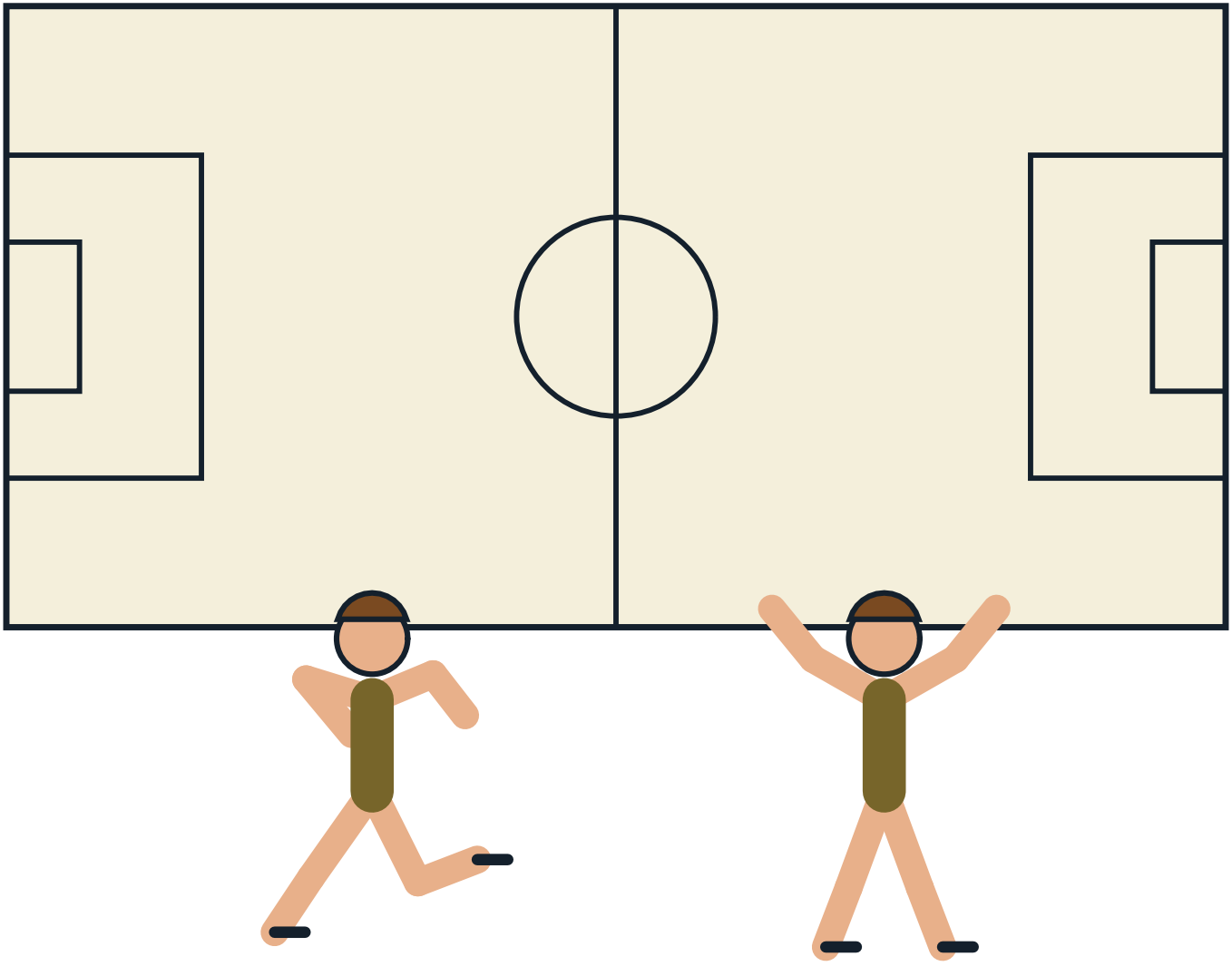


The Olympic past Family

Every sport belongs to a family of games that share its shapes and skills. Here are some of this book's closest relatives — each with a cartoon book and a colouring book of its own.

- Club Swinging — Gymnastic club routines at the 1904 and 1932 Games.
- Roque — American croquet variant played in 1904.
- Plunge for Distance — Diving event decided by distance glided, held in 1904.

Game Day!



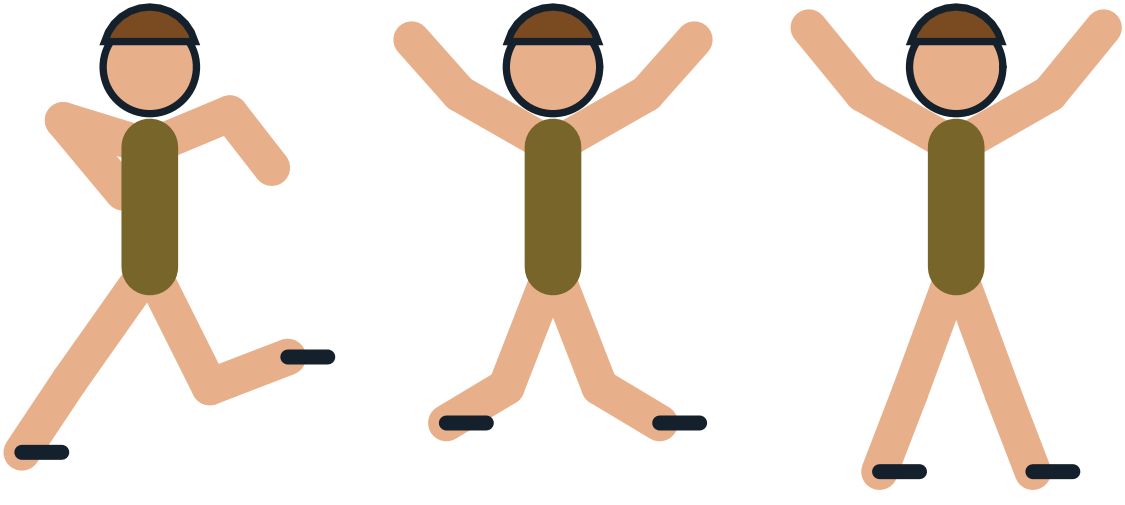
The Sport on Earth Mark

Every sport on Sport on Earth carries its own original mark, drawn for the site. Here is this sport's.

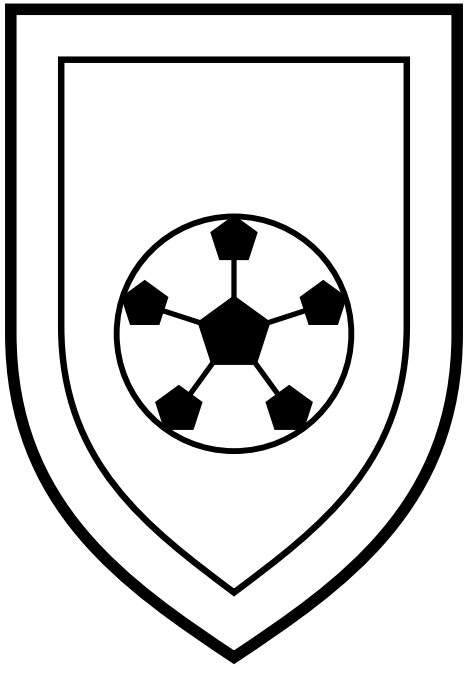


SPORT ON EARTH

Moves of the Game



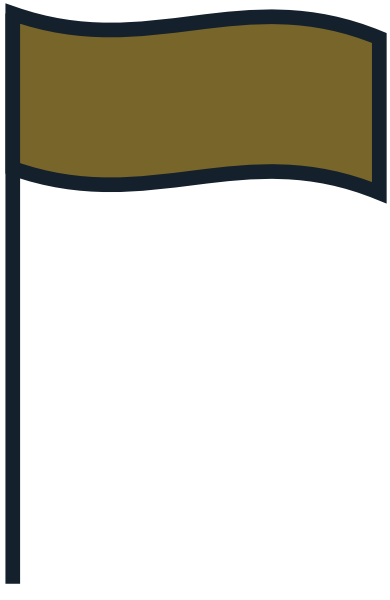
Design a Badge



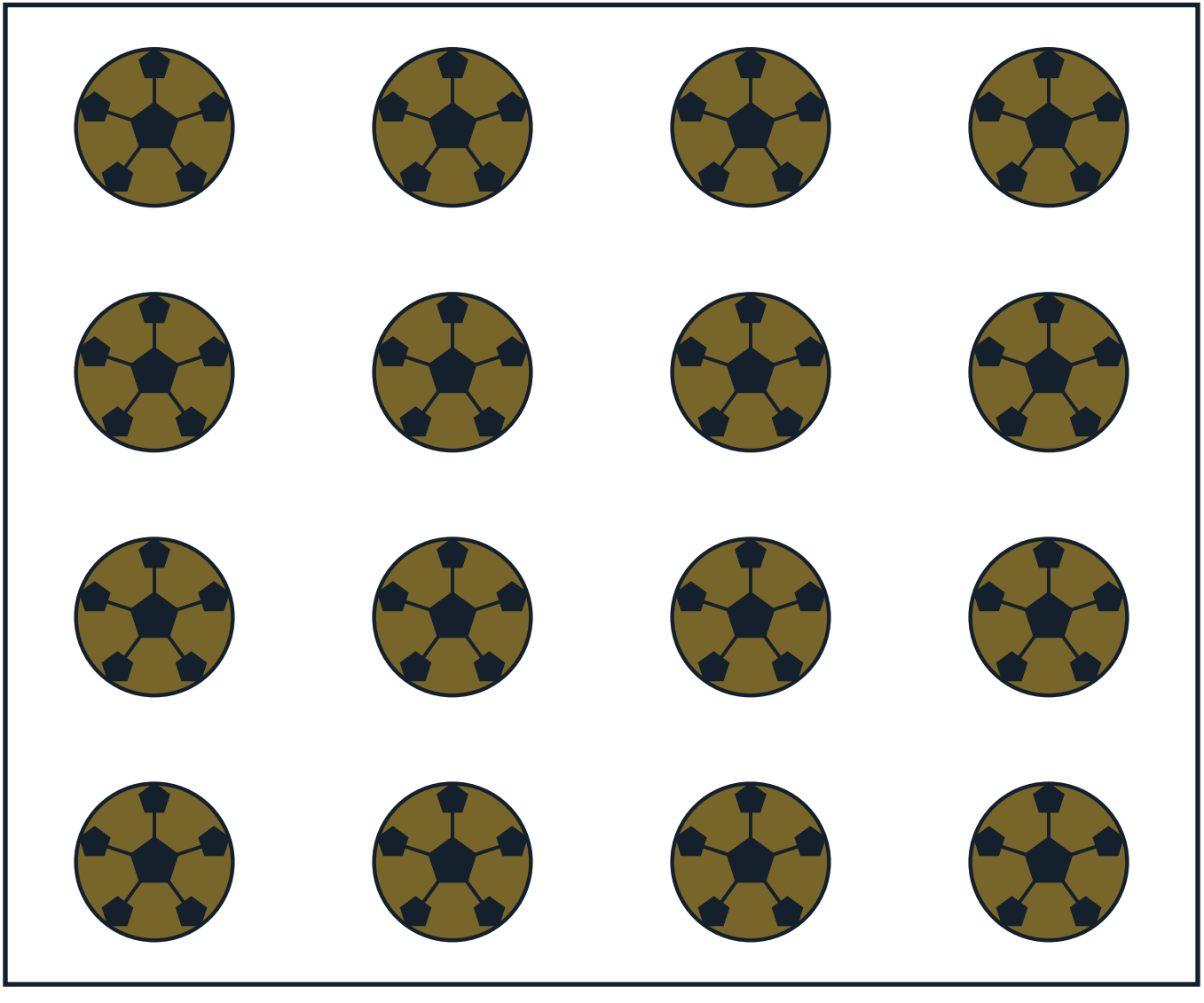
Draw and colour a badge for your own team.

The Gear Parade

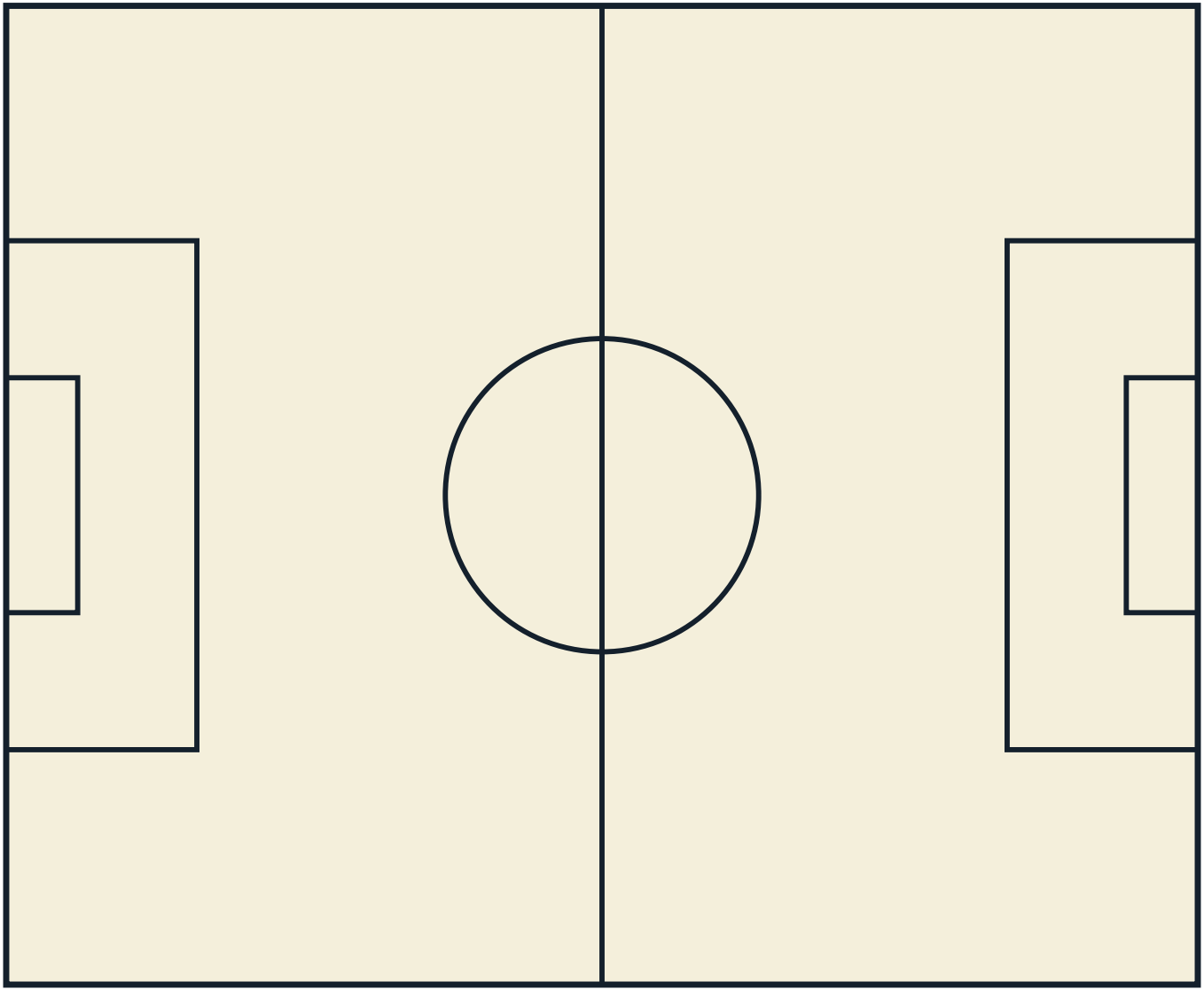




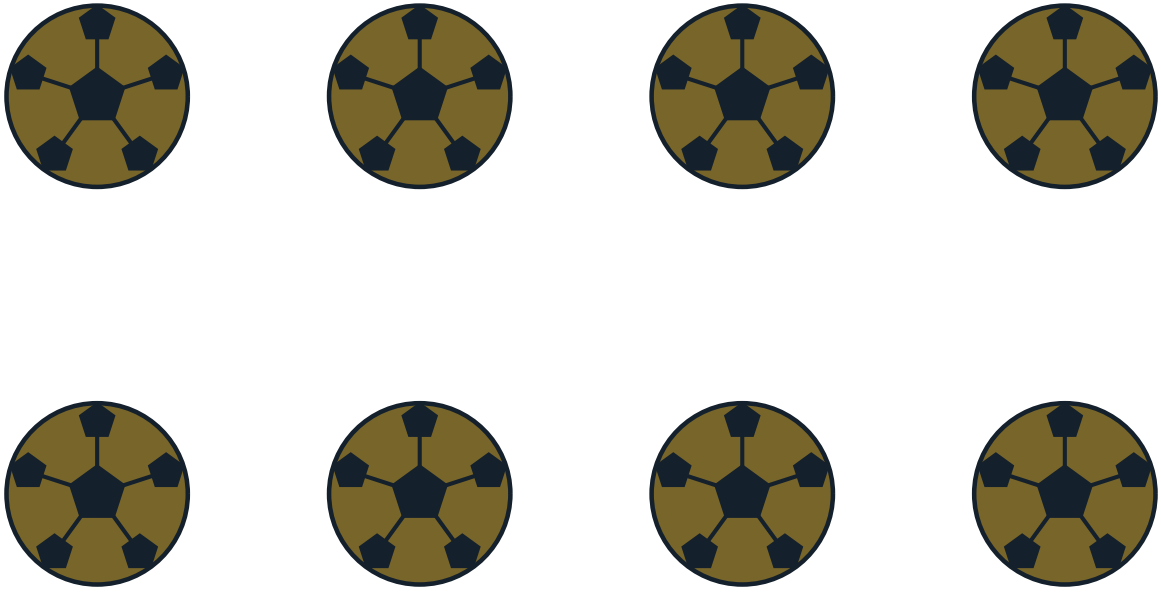
Pattern Play



The Arena From Above



Count the Balls!



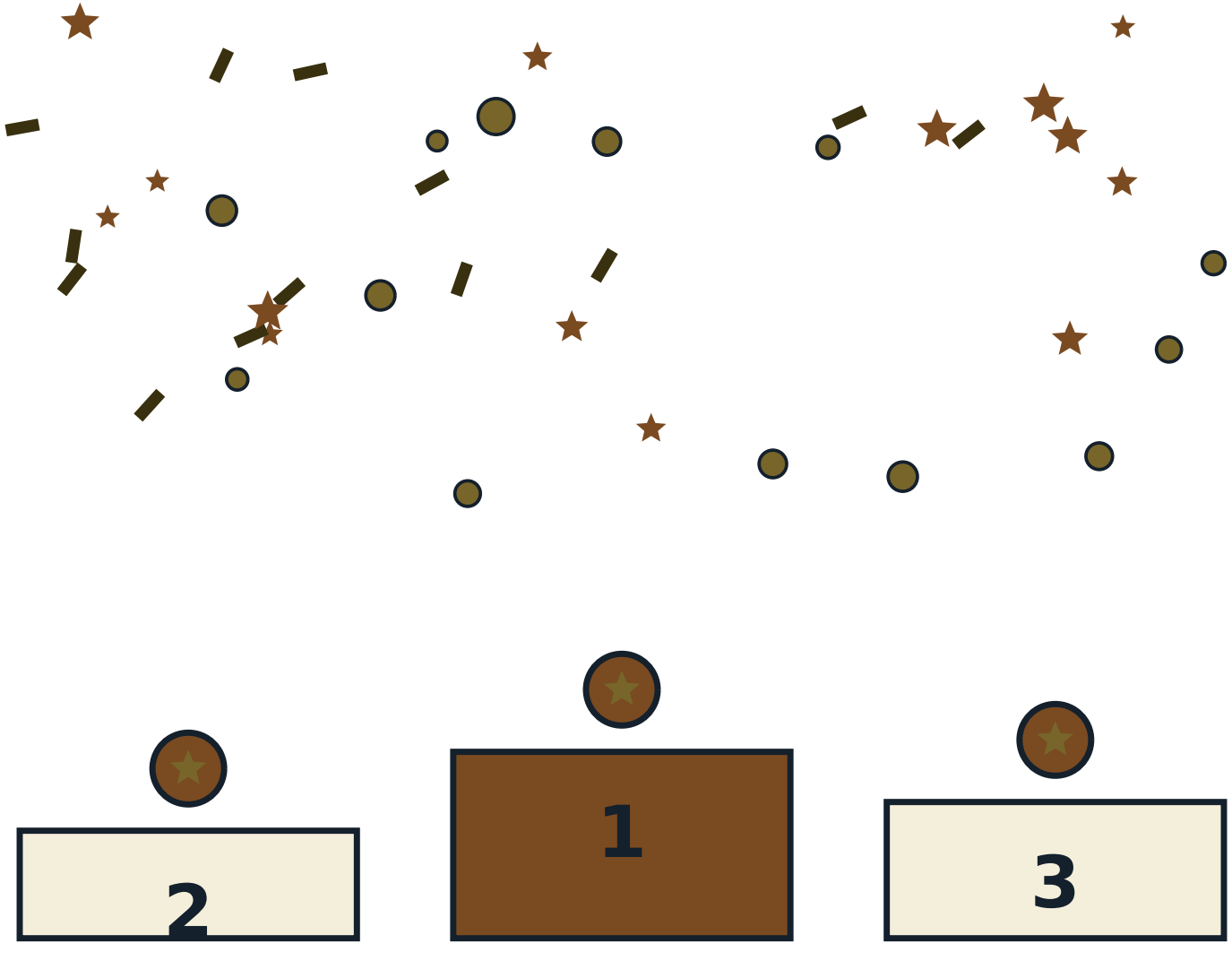
How many can you count? Write the number here: _____

My Favourite Part of Tug of War

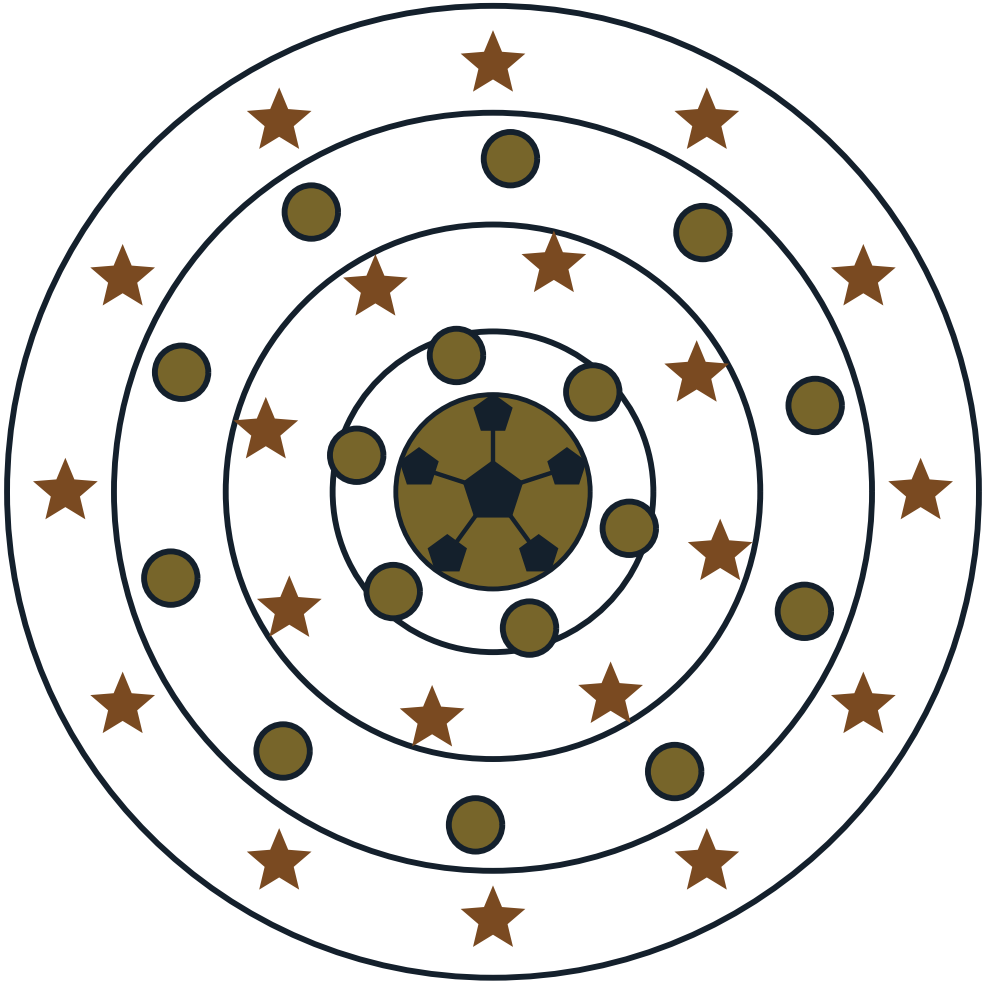
Gear Close-Up



Champions!



The Mandala of the Game



About This Book

Governing body: Tug of War International Federation (TWIF). Laws edition the site's rules file follows: TWIF Rules Manual 2026 (Rules for International Competition). Everything in this book comes from Sport on Earth's own verified sport files — the same words you can read on the sport's page at Sport on Earth. The illustrations are original artwork drawn by computer for this book series. They are not pictures of real players, real teams or anybody else's characters.

More Books in the Family

- The Cartoon Book of Club Swinging
- The Cartoon Book of Roque
- The Cartoon Book of Plunge for Distance
- The Club Swinging Colouring Book
- The Roque Colouring Book
- The Plunge for Distance Colouring Book

My Notes

Tug of War

The Cartoon Book of Tug of War — a Sport on Earth Book.

Text from Sport on Earth's verified sport files. Illustrations: original programmatic artwork created for this series, including the site's own sport mark. No copyrighted characters, team logos or player likenesses appear in this book.

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