

Knur and spell & nipsy

Gordon Taylor, England

As a young boy some seventy years ago growing up in Yorkshire there were two games of which I was vaguely familiar, which I feel sure you will have come across in your researches. They were both played in the coal mining area where I was living.

The first was known as knur and spell and was played by the more prosperous people who could afford the equipment. This consisted of a spring loaded device which when released threw a small round object into the air which was then struck with a stick. I believe from memory that distance seemed to be the main object but what the rules were I am not familiar.

The second was a poorer version of knur and spell which was known locally as nipsy and sometimes shinty. This was played without the expensive launcher but comprised a small hard piece of shaped wood with one end shaped into a rough point. The player tapped the pointed end which caused the mouse as it was called to flip up in the air from where it was then struck with a stout stick.

Both games could be played on any spare bit of ground and did not need special playing areas. They were known as poor man's golf and they helped to pass on a few hours and make life and times a little more interesting.

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