

## INDIAN SPORTS—

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remainder of the game was probably much like that of their southern contemporaries, the Aztecs and Mayas, whose game is pictured on the walls of their ball courts, in the early native codices (manuscripts), and written up in the chronicles of the Spanish explorers. The likeness to soccer is that in most versions of the game the ball could be struck only with the knees, buttocks, thighs or head but never with the hands. In fact in the Indian game, if the



HOHOKAM BALL-COURT

The scene of spectacular athletic games

ball was touched with the hands or with other than the specified parts of the body, it was counted as a fault and the opposing side gained a point. The similarity to basketball is found in one of the Maya versions where an object of the game was to drive the ball through a ring placed high in the wall of the court. Another object was to keep the ball in action while it was on either side of a dividing line and to try to drive it into the field of the opposing party, where, if the ball went dead, a point was scored.

### OFTEN 'PLAYED ROUGH'

Among some groups a harder and heavier ball was used than among others, and in these games play frequently involved injury, in which case participation with the heavier ball was often considered a demonstration of manhood. The wagering of high stakes on the outcome was also frequently an element of the game, clothing, featherwork, emblems, and even slaves being wagered.

There is a great deal of evidence in the native codices, the early chronicles, and the decoration and orientation of the ball courts to indicate that the game had a ceremonial significance and symbolism. It has been suggested that the court itself symbolizes the sky and the ball the moon, the morning or evening star, or some other heavenly body. In other associations, it has been suggested that it was symbolic of warfare and quite possibly a substitute for war, in which case the players are the warriors for opposing communities.

The exhibit was planned by Miss Elaine Bluhm, Assistant in Archaeology, and Roger T. Grange, Assistant in Anthropology, and designed by Gustaf Dalstrom, Artist in the Department of Anthropology.

## Audubon Screen-Tour Offered at Museum January 9

The Illinois Audubon Society will present its second screen-tour of the current season in the James Simpson Theatre of the Museum on Sunday afternoon, January 9, at 2:30 o'clock. The lecturer, Alfred G. Etter, a native Missourian and biologist, will show his film "A Missouri Story." The movie records the year-'round story of life on an old Missouri farm tilled just as it was 75 years ago and shows its plant and animal life, both wild and domestic. Admission is free to the general public. Members of the Illinois Audubon Society and Members of the Museum are entitled to two reserved seats on presentation of their membership cards before 2:25 P.M.

## ANGOLA COLLECTIONS COMING TO MUSEUM

The Vernay-Transvaal Museum Expedition to Angola (Portuguese West Africa) has successfully concluded its work, reports its leader, Dr. C. Koch, well-known entomologist and Professional Officer of the Transvaal Museum. Through the courtesy of the expedition's sponsor, Arthur S. Vernay of New York, Chicago Natural History Museum will share in the collections, which number some 50,000 insects and several hundred reptiles, birds, and small mammals obtained in the course of more than 13,000 miles of exploration.

Several of the regions explored that had been considered terra incognita now are penetrated by an entomological survey for the first time, Dr. Koch states. Hazards of deserts, mountains, high sand dunes, and tall waterfalls had to be overcome. One of the most important zoogeographical results of the expedition was establishment of evidence that the Namib Desert is probably the most ancient desert on the African continent. In addition to zoological research, much data was obtained on botany, archaeology, and South African history.

Besides Dr. Koch, the personnel of the expedition included J. Balfour-Browne, entomologist of the British Museum, and the following members of the Transvaal Museum staff: J. T. Robinson, anthropologist; his assistant, K. C. Brain; and L. Vari. The expedition was assisted also by B. W. Zensinger of the South African Bureau of Standards, Dr. E. Scherz of Windhoek, and Dr. Zschokke, Chief Veterinary Officer of Grootfontein.

A spiral calendar covering three billion years helps visitors to Frederick J. V. Skiff Hall (Hall 37—Fossil Plants and Fossil Invertebrates) to establish the relative chronology of the various prehistoric creatures illustrated in the exhibits.

## VENEZUELAN SCIENTISTS

The Museum was host in December to Brother Ginés and Dr. Luis M. Carbonell of Venezuela. Brother Ginés is director of the Sociedad de Ciencias Naturales of the College of La Salle in Caracas, Venezuela. This society publishes a scientific journal that appears three times during the year and, in addition, a series, known as "Novedades," that records species new to science. Under his leadership, expeditions are made to little-known or previously unexplored parts of Venezuela with students or alumni of the college who have received training in fields of natural science. Valuable contributions to the natural history, anthropology, and archaeology of Venezuela have resulted from such expeditions.

The purpose of Brother Ginés' visit was to arrange for exchange of specimens and publications between the Museum and the Society of Natural Sciences of La Salle and to get acquainted with members of the staff. During his visit Brother Ginés showed a motion picture of the society's recent expedition to the Perijá Mountains bordering Colombia and Venezuela in the land of the inhospitable Motilones Indians.

Dr. Carbonell, an alumnus of the College of La Salle, participated both as physician and collector of mollusca in the famous expedition sponsored by the Venezuelan government in 1951 to the headwaters of the Orinoco River in Venezuela. He was one of the party that finally reached the ultimate source of that river. During his visit at the Museum he showed colored slides taken on that trip.

## Penny Stories for Children Raised to 2 Cents

Because of unavoidable increases in production costs, the Museum reluctantly has increased the price of its leaflet "Museum Stories" from 1 cent to 2 cents each for individual stories and from \$1.75 to \$2.75 for a complete set of the 183 available stories on subjects in anthropology, botany, geology, and zoology. Postage charges are extra. Even with the increase, the prices approximate only costs of production. "Museum Stories" are prepared by the guide-lecture staff of the Raymond Foundation after consultation with the scientific staff and are illustrated by Museum artists. The stories tie in with the subjects of the free movie-programs for children presented by the Raymond Foundation in the James Simpson Theatre during spring and autumn and are distributed free to children attending the programs.

The passenger pigeon, which flourished in America until comparatively recent years but is now extinct, is shown in a group exhibited in Stanley Field Hall.





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