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Games--Sac and Fox  
Sac and Fox Indians

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Indian-Pioneer History  
April 26, 1937.

Interview with  
Mrs. Frank Smith (Bo-no-we)  
Sac and Fox Indian, fullblood  
Route 2, Avery, Oklahoma.  
Born, Iowa, about 1877.

Ko-the-ka-no-ke or Indian dice game,  
As told by Mrs. Frank Smith.

The game of Ko-the-ka-no-ke has been a favorite form of recreation for the Sac and Foxes for generations and generations. It can be played at any time during the day or night, and can last as long as the players wish it to. Fifteen to twenty-four can play at one time.

The players sit on a pallet in a circle around the room. In front of them is a much thicker pallet, about twelve inches thick, made of blankets or pillows on which the bowl of dice is shaken.

The articles used in the game are seven "dice", two animal heads--turtle, horse, bird, or other animal, and Indian-made wooden bowl fifteen inches in diameter and two inches high or a turtle-shell about the same size.

There are certain members of the tribe who make the "dice" and turtle-heads. The last one who really knew the art was Reuben Wayman, but there are a few who can make them now, even though they are not as nice as the ones made by the older Indians.

The "dice" are carved out of bone with a knife. They are about the size of a nickel in diameter and one-eighth inch thick. On one side they are the natural bone color; on the other they are dyed black. The dye was made from the roots of wild berries.

The turtle heads were also carved from bone, but were not dyed.

They are about size of a quarter, and also one-eighth inch thick.

On one side the eyes and bill were carved, and, if the head were a horse's head, the Mane was shown, too. This was considered the top side.

The "dice" and heads are all turned face down (black being the face of the "dice") in the bowl, and the game begins. Each player has twelve buck-eyes to be used as counters. The first player takes the bowl in both hands and bounces it on the padding in front of him one time. The number of dice turned face up determines his score. So long as he continues to score he keeps the bowl. When he fails to score the bowl is passed to the next player, who in turn bounces the bowl. It goes on around the circle until a person wins the game. The bowl then reverses directions, going back the way it came (starting with the individual who won). Each time a game is finished the bowl's direction is reversed.

The counting of points is as follows: Twelve points is considered a game, and the twelve buck-eyes for each player is used for score-keeping. As each point is made a buck-eye is set out in front of the player, and the first one to get twelve points wins the game. There is no such thing as partners in the game; each player is out for himself.

The points are made thusly; its being understood that it means the number of dice or turtle heads turned face up:

- 1. Turtle Head-----10 points
- 2. Turtle Heads-----20 points
- 1. Dice----- 5 points
- 2. Dice----- 2 points
- 3.-6. Dice----- 0 points
- All 7. Dice----- 9 points

The turtle heads can either lie face up, or can stand on end with the head pointing up.

Some people bet on the games. Some do not. Sometimes as much as, a dollar a game is bet but it is usually much less than that. I have been in some fifty-cent games, and have come out pretty lucky. When you win just one "pot" that means quite a lot of money, especially when twenty-four are playing.