
Ohio Sport, 1785-1835

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The purpose of the paper is to attempt to trace the development of sport and recreational pursuits in Ohio 1785- 1835 and to bring together primary and secondary sources. The aim is to collect and display the evolution of sport from the early frontier settlement in Marietta, 1788 to the passing of the pioneer life.

The short period lasting only 50 years was not dominated by any one single group or people or their cultures. It will be necessary therefore to show the historical evolution of the respective cultures, to Ohio and how the environment affected their sport and recreational contributions. Since I will be primarily concerned with Ohio's first 50 years, I will attempt to overlap the New England, Pennsylvania and Tidewater recreational sport contribution to Ohio's frontier look.

Since each of the respective cultures and peoples are from dissimilar geographical sections of the United States, they were different. I will also attempt to show how Ohio Civilization was greatly enhanced by these heterogeneous peoples. The lives of the New Englanders, Pennsylvanians and Tidewater people overlapped chronologically and the influence of each will be developed wherever possible.

The sports and recreational activities were closely related to two central roots, common to the migrating groups, British and German in stock and heritage. However, the New Englanders retained their individuality in their religious and community concept of living that took many years to alter despite the central theme to all, survival.

The new settlers were a curious mixture of recently discharged soldiers, farmers, land speculators and a vestige of Virginia aristocrats. Though all were involved in sports or recreational pursuits of one type or another, it seems that the environment had a larger pull on their recreational pursuits than any one single cultural factor. It's true that each of the dissimilar areas had several games that were played similarly, but new pursuits of recreation were established to combat the very necessity to survive.