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ANCIENT SPORTS OF HAWAII

Such as Surfing, Jumping, Sledding, Betting and Boxing.

Very many were the practices in Hawaii here relative to this subject of pastimes, which has been termed the ancient sports of Hawaii here, such as those named above. Those are the sports it is desired to have described, therefore it is best perhaps for me to explain them singly, and their nature.

Of Surfing, that is a most popular sport of Hawaii here, from the chiefs to the common people. It is practiced in the following manner. The [surf] board is first prepared, it may be of koa (Acacia koa), kukui (Aleurites moluccana), ohe (Tetraplasandra hawaiiensis), wiliwili (Erythrina monosperma), or some other wood suitable to furnish a board. In its first preparation, it is hewn while the wood is green, after which it is left to season, then it is worked down to a finish, with the smearing it with the black substance, and well covered with kapa and put up in some suitable place, till the time of surf sports arrive, when it is ready for surf riding. This however is the procedure: at the time of swimming out to reach the line of surf breaking, then watch for the surf suitable of landing [you], then enter it and be carried to the shore. There are three places in which to take the surf:

to race with its spume, or surf at its end, and the third surf in on top of the wave, and the [surf] board suitable for the top of the surf will not allow the wave to engulf the man.

contest

If the surfing should be of chiefs, it is done in this manner: They go to the sea-shore, place the dog in the underground oven while the chiefs go surf-riding, on finishing that surfing contest they return, when the oven of dog baking is uncovered and all the chiefs have their meal, then go surf-riding again. Such is the surfing continued till their desire is satisfied.

If the surfing should be a contest of pride, it is done in this manner:

The men are girded with red-dyed kapa malos, as they go leisurely and stand looking fine, girded tight, like a company of soldiers of that day. Of women also, they are dressed with red-dyed kapa skirts, then they go and join together with the men in surf-riding. In their surfing, a man and a woman will ride in on the same surf. Such riding in of the man and woman on the same surf is termed vanity, and results in sexual indulgence.

Surf-riding is a means of deception with some people, and this is the way some charge their parents: "I am going with my sight-seeing companions, if you hear that I am dead on account of stealing, or other cause perhaps, then grieve both of you, but if you hear that I am dead through surf-riding desire,

do not sit and mourn, nor indeed drop your tears." There are many things related to this pastime, but perhaps this unfolding thereof is sufficient in this place, so we will speak of leaping.

Leaping, this was one of the pastimes of Hawaii here, which was practiced in the following manner: a swimming pool with adjacent cliff is sought, a place suitable for leaping into the water, and when found some folks will want to go to jump into deep water from the precipice, so they go to the place of leaping and make preparations, and men and women together jump into the pool, and the one who can leap into the water from a height without splash receives the greater praise, and is the most sought after. If a group of men desire the women, then they act in this manner: they take the puakai (red-dyed kapa) malo and gird themselves and stand in company; the women also dress themselves in the red-dyed kapa (puakai) skirts, fastening the same, and proceed to their jumping. By that practice followed it relates to mischief, that results in sex gratification.

Of Sledding. There are very many kinds of sled-racing, but I will explain some kinds of its practice. Here are some: there are two boards forming its sides, between which are ladder-like connecting pieces whereon the man rests. Coconut stalk is one thing used in sledding, ti-leaves is another, as also banana stalks, and other things suitable for sled racing. The place for

the practice of this pastime is on some hill-side, grass-grown, free of stone, as also in places of small or low precipices, sloping down, where they would sled, and where would be seen the skillful man in sled-racing. At the time however of racing, the lower parts of the runners are smeared with kukui so as to be very slippery, then hung up in the sun to polish, such was the method for swiftness of the sled. In case the board (sled) turned over during its running, it would be the death of the man by the edge of the board. It is said that the swiftness of the sled is like that of a fast running horse.

By that sport men had great pleasure, though injuries and death at times resulted.

On betting property, this was one of the pastimes of Hawaii here, a very evil sport it was. It was practiced in this manner: If some people wished to wager property, then they prepared first that which they were ready to stake, then sought for an opponent. Here are some of the betting games: 1. The hiding of the stone. 2. The noa, a similar stone game. 3. The bone-breaking lua. 4. Surf-riding. 5. boxing, and various others. In the betting it is to win over his opponent and disappoint him. When it is heard that A, has vanquished B, the people flock forth to wager with them. This is the customary practice with this sport.

Of boxing, this was a popular sport in Hawaii, somewhat like fighting.

and the parrying of today. This was the method of that pastime. If it is
heralded abroad that W. is a strong boxer, then, ^{the thought} will arise with some one to
go and engage him in contest, and so he goes forth. In doing so, he takes ^{with}
him his company of friends and reaching the place of contest, the boxing is
at once entered upon, striking back and forth, and on one man's falling down
and hurt, and perhaps killed, the men shout aloud, with the saying "he is
strong." and such like. The fruit obtained by this practice, are injuries,
a reddened forehead, and afterwards death.

J. Waiamau, Kuokoa Dec. 23
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