



Rise of Sports in New Orleans

Dale Somers Ph.D.

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During the nineteenth century, New Orleans won and stoutly defended a reputation for amusement and dissipation that made it distinct among American cities. Exquisite cuisine, theaters, casinos, and private clubs attracted the affluent, while gambling dens, saloons, public ballrooms, cockfights, and ten-pin alleys drew the masses. In the antebellum period, organized sports were added to the numerous diversions already available. This book, on a neglected aspect of American social life, treats an important facet of Louisiana history and shows how the growth of cities contributed to the emergence of a leisure ethic. Professor Somers explains the reasons for the rapidly growing interest in sports, their impact on the city's social and economic life, and their effect upon race relations and the emancipation of women. In the space of some fifty years sports, moved from a minor to a major role in the city's play habits. By the turn of the century, sports played an unprecedented part in the daily lives of New Orleanians and thousands of other Americans.

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