Meskwaki Bone Dice (Gusigonogi)

Many Native American tribes have dice games, often using hand-carved bone dice or figurines. The Meskwaki tribe has their own version of bone dice, which may be played by all tribal members but is most often played by women. This game is hundreds of years old but is still played for fun by tribal members at social gatherings.

Meskwaki carved bone dice artifact. Source: Luke Kapayou on Pinterest.com

Playing

To play, you will need a set of 8 bone dice (2 marked with stars, 6 marked with 2 inset circles), a bowl, and a set of 10 marking sticks. The underside of the dice marked with only circles is plain, while the underside of those marked with stars is most often marked with a piece of metal. This set has a red underside for the die marked with stars. Starting with the dice in the bowl, grab the bowl in both hands and move it to toss all of the dice up in the air and catch them in the bowl, then score the dice as shown in the table. Players score points only when the pieces are tossed in an arrangement of 8-0, 7-1, or 6-2. All other arrangements score 0 points. If all 8 dice do not land back in the bowl, the player scores 0 points. The 10 sticks are used to show who has the most points (1 stick=1 point). The game ends when all 10 sticks are given out and the player with the most points/sticks wins.

Scoring

Points	Description	Image	
4	Eight marked sides up OR Eight plain sides up		
2	Seven marked, one plain OR Seven plain, one marked		
1	Six marked and two plain OR Six plain and two marked		
5	Seven plain, one star		
5	Seven marked, one red		
10	Six plain, two stars		
10	Six marked, two red		
0	Any other arrangement		