



Standing figure of a ballplayer

On display

Title/Description: Standing figure of a ballplayer

Object Type: Figure

Materials: Pigment, Terracotta

Measurements: h. 302 x w. 145 x d. 49 mm

Accession Number: 694

Historic Period: Formative (late)/Classic (early) period (AD 100-400)

Production Place: Mesoamerica, Mexico, The Americas, Veracruz

School/Style: Pánuco style

This ballplayer wears a *yugo* around the waist, protective pads on the left knee, right wrist and upper left arm, and carries a ball in the right hand. A headdress, necklace, and ear and nose ornaments are also modelled on the figure. Jones (1991:174) suggests that the distinctive head-dress represents hair, drawn through a kind of helmet with a hole, with the hair ends neatly knotted into ribbons around the top. As is typical of figures from northern Veracruz and southern Tamaulipas, the eyes and other features are rendered by drill holes (Ekholm, 1944: 442-5). Some additional details are painted on the head-dress and body with *chapotote* (petroleum-resin paint), a pigment that is commonly used in this region.

This figure is similar to several other late Preclassic examples (Castro-Leal, 1986: figs. 70-71; Jones, 1991:175; Leyenaar and Parsons, 1988: nos. 16-23). The sex of these figures is not always clear, and it has been suggested that some may represent female players.

Entry taken from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997).

Provenance

Purchased by the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia from John A. Stokes Jnr., New York, in 1977 out of funds provided by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury.
