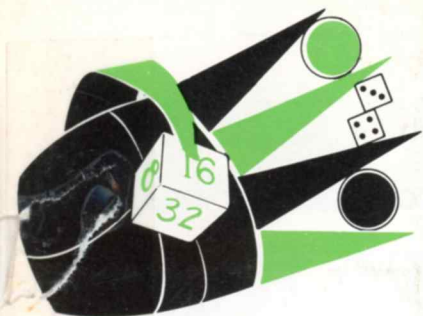


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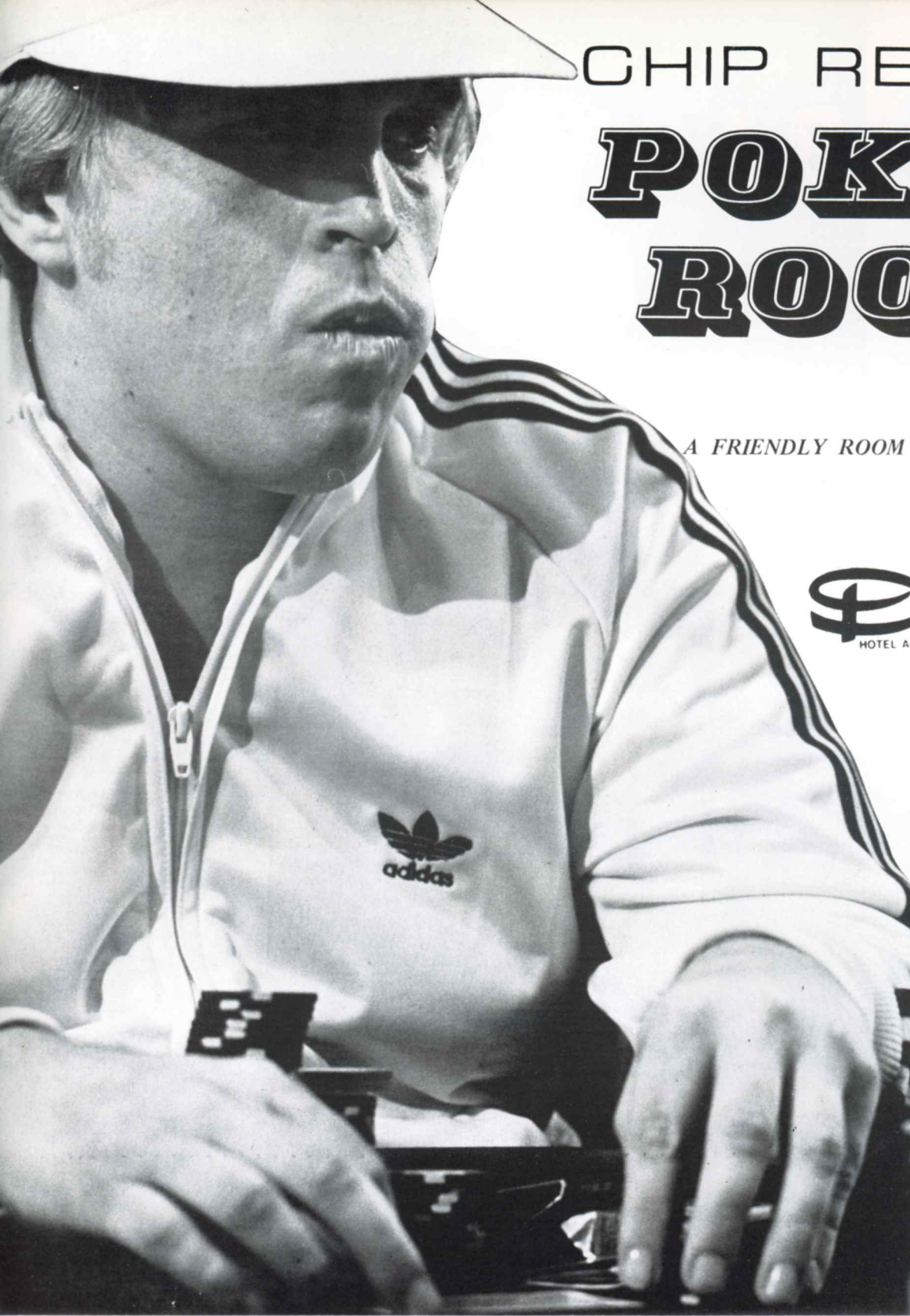
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# SWISS SYSTEM

## Backgammon Rules

by Roger Blaine

I read with interest your short article on the Swiss System. I have been an organizer of Swiss-System chess tournaments for ten years, and recently started thinking, "Why couldn't backgammon be run the same way?"

So last month the Indiana University Chess Club sponsored a Swiss System backgammon tournament. There were to be five rounds in a day, with each round a 13-point match. Later we shortened Rounds 1 and 2 to 9 points and Rounds 3 and 4 to 11 points. The Jacoby rule applied, but was probably not necessary since very few matches went very long.

The strengths of the Swiss System are: (1) definite number of rounds, which makes scheduling easier; (2) nobody is eliminated — we feel that people don't like to be eliminated, even when they are out of contention for the top prizes, and that they expect a certain number of rounds for their entry fee; (3) you cannot be paired against the same opponent twice. Sometimes in elimination tournaments I have been irritated by having to play the same opponent a second time in a consolation round.

The weakness of the Swiss is, of course, that it does not guarantee a clear winner. In a five-round Swiss, if there are more than 32 players, it is possible for two players to go 5-0 and not play each other. And if there are less than 32, as happened in our tournament, one player may be 4-0 after four rounds and then lose in the fifth round to create a several-way tie with 4-1.

1. Each player is asked to fill out name & address on a 3 x 5 card, along with an estimate of skill level. This does not in any way affect eligibility for prizes, but to avoid pairing the strongest players at the beginning and save the most exciting matches for later. Use the letter A, B, C, D, or E.
  - A — Have won a backgammon tournament.
  - B — Experienced tournament player but not top level.
  - C — Have played quite a lot but not in tournaments.
  - D — Still fairly new at the game.
  - E — Beginner.
2. Thirteen-point matches would probably take more time than we have available, so Rounds 1 and 2 will be to 9 points; Rounds 3 and 4 to 11 points; and Round 5 to 13 points. The director has the right to impose a time limit on any match to avoid delaying the following round.
3. As there are several prizes, you are not out of the money if you lose a match. You will be paired against opponents with equal scores insofar as possible. IF YOU PLAN TO WITHDRAW FROM THE TOURNAMENT, TELL THE DIRECTOR so that you won't be paired and your opponent deprived of a chance to play.
4. A 15-minute grace period will be allowed at the beginning of each round. For every 5 minutes a player is late beyond that, the opponent will be awarded 1 point.
5. For those unfamiliar with match play, only the "plus" score of each player is counted until one reaches the winning score. There is no limit on use of the doubling cube — you are encouraged to use it in order to keep the match moving along! However, there are no "automatic" doubles and no "beavers".
6. The winner of the match is responsible for turning in a result slip to the director.
7. (The "Jacoby" rule) — No gammons may be counted unless the doubling cube has been turned at least once.
8. (The "Crawford" rule) — When one player comes within 1 point of winning the match, the opponent may not double. However, this rule only applies to one game.
9. Dice must land in the right half of the board and not be cocked, on the bar, or on a man. Otherwise both dice must be rolled over. Turn ends when dice are picked up. If there is a mistake in a move, the opponent may let the position stand or demand a correction before rolling his own dice. Men must be moved with the same hand.
10. Director will announce pairings and table numbers at the beginning of each round and will settle any disputes over which set to use.
11. Relative silence is requested, and please, no smoking in the room. You may take a brief break between games to go out for a smoke, drink, etc.
12. If there are over 32 players, a tie for first may result and will be settled by a nine-point playoff. Players tied for lower prizes will split the money equally.



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LAS VEGAS

December 1979

# BACKGAMMON MAGAZINE

An International Publication

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COVER: GEORGE PLIMPTON, internationally famous author, actor, adventurer and raconteur. Widely admired for acting out every man's fantasies including getting in the ring with a world champion boxer, quarterbacking an NFL team and playing backgammon against the human computer. Plimpton, author of *Paper Lion*, *Out of My League* and *One More July*, is currently the ranking celebrity in backgammon. This is the third year that he will be hosting the American Backgammon Championships in Las Vegas and awarding the Plimpton Cup.

Photo by Henry Wattson



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## A Note On Calcutta Auctions

by Carol Cole

Most backgammon tournaments include a form of betting on the side called a Calcutta Auction. It is a fairly straightforward procedure, but an inexperienced person is often reluctant to join in. We hope this explanation will assure that everyone who participates in the tournament will feel comfortable with the Calcutta format and will join in the bidding.

The mechanics of the Calcutta are as follows:

1. Each of the players can be auctioned off as an individual field. Or, if desired, two or more players can be grouped together to form a field to be auctioned. Although the two or more players are considered to be a team in the Calcutta, each team member plays individually.

2. Each player or field is introduced and auctioned off to the highest bidder. That is, whoever is willing to pay the highest price on a player is said to "own" that player in the Calcutta pool. *Players or spectators may bid on the players.*

3. The player has the right to buy back a percentage of himself by paying the owner that percentage of the Calcutta bid. In a one-man field, the player is allowed to buy back up to 50% of himself; in a two-man field, he can buy back up to 33-1/3%; in a three-man field, he can buy back up to 25% of the bid, etc. For example, if an individual player sells for \$60, he can buy back 1/3 of himself for \$20, or 1/2 of himself for \$30.

4. Traditionally, the bidding for a player begins at the amount of the tournament entry fee. However, you should bear in mind that most players want to buy back 50% of themselves. This means that if you buy a player for \$30, it probably will cost you only \$15. In addition, you can buy or sell parts of other players. For example, if you buy X for \$50, X buys back 1/2, you then own 1/2 of X at \$25. If someone else wants part of X, you are free to sell any of your remaining interest.

5. In the unlikely event that no one bids on a given player, the club may buy him for \$15, and he will not be allowed to buy back any percentage of himself.

6. Each of the "owners" pays the auctioneer the total amount of the bid at the end of the auction. All of these bids are said to constitute the Calcutta pool. The pool is divided among the owners of the top finishers in the tournament. These amounts will be posted prior to the completion of the first day's play.

*(Keep in mind that the Calcutta pool is distributed in addition to the regular prize pool collected from entry fees.)*

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## BACKGAMMON: What's Missing?

"It's amazing," fumed the insulted player, "that in an era of quarter million dollar purses and overflowing tournaments, people still refer to backgammon as the game on the other side of a checkerboard."

"My picture appeared in a half-page spread on backgammon in the local newspaper," he continued, "and I haven't found two people who read it. What's missing?" We took one look at him and immediately knew the answer. Glamour!

Suddenly, we understood what promoter Lewis Deyong meant when he told us, "I live in mortal fear that some derelict will win an international tournament and I'll be forced to parade him in front of press and sponsors."

The same topic was discussed with other backgammon entrepreneurs and they seemed to agree. The trend towards informality is worrisome. Tournaments which increasingly tend to be held in resort areas are looking like beach blanket bingo parties. It was conceded that the glamour is gone. The exclusive mystique is gone. Only Lewis Deyong tries to retain a semblance of selectiveness by injecting a marquis or baron here and there.

Many promoters now feel that in the future players will have to earn the right to participate in major backgammon competitions as in other sports. After all, not any golfer can show up at PGA tournament and expect to play because he has the entry fee.

Players in the future will be invited because they are skilled, respected or colorful. This is not snobishness; it is good business sense.

To catch its attention and imagination, the public must be tantalized and fascinated. This is usually done by developing glamorous heroes who capture the people's fancy because of their life style. Backgammon, then, needs its own Broadway Joe. Our celebrities

so far have tended to be cerebral. We have admired and rewarded intelligence and skill. But, why should this be so in a game where skill plays only a 25% role? Flair should be the criterion for an idol.

We need "golden boy" idols like Jimmy Connors or Paul Hornung; "bad boy" idols like Bobby Fischer or Bobby Riggs; "glamour boy" idols like Joe Namath or O. J. Simpson.

Glitter celebrities picque public interest and loosen sponsor purse strings.

Backgammon should develop star personalities. Personal prejudices must not interfere with the creation of our own super hero.

Our current stars are not of much help outside the inner circle of backgammon. The suspicion is that we sustain them because they are palatable. We publicly promote their intellect and privately deride their social ineptness.

### *THE TREND TOWARDS INFORMALITY IS WORRISOME*

Our hero must come from the backgammon ranks. He has to be popular because he is a backgammon player first. Backgammon should be given credit for making him glamorous.

We are still opposed to bringing in established stars who play backgammon from other fields. We should blow our own horn. Our superstar should be of equal rank to tennis', golf's or anyone's super-hero. We should stop telling the press how many of their stars play our game. It sounds like we're begging to be taken seriously, like the flea bitten hotel that claims "George Washington slept here". Let's promote our own star. Say, no thanks, to aristocrats who expect preferential treatment because they honor us with their presence at tournaments.

Our new super star should be cosmetic. He should be pretty, drive sleek cars, date fancy women and wear designer clothes. He should be colorful enough to amuse the press and sexy enough to excite the public. In return for the adulation and obvious rewards, he will carry the backgammon banner and word to the masses. He, more than anything else we do, will convince the world that backgammon is for real and here to stay.

The Madison Avenue, super star approach might seem shallow but glamour sells soap. If luster is what's missing, let's get it! Consider these candidates for super stardom: Tony Goble, Joffre de la Fontaine, Alan Martin, the Lorenz brothers. Can you see it?



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# 6~2 6~3 6~4 (OPENING)

by Oswald Jacoby

Fifty years ago when I was taught backgammon, I was told to make the two point with 6-4 and run a back man with the others.

It didn't take me long to see that making the two point was bad and I started running with 6-4.

Forty years ago everyone was running with 6-4 and there had been no change in the play of the other two.

Thirty years ago people started to experiment with different plays with those numbers.

One that got some attention was to move both back men up. These are all inferior plays and the few good players who were experimenting with them have long since abandoned that idea.

Other experimenters tried a slightly different and better approach. They moved a man to the enemy bar point with the 6 and a man around the corner from the mid point with the 2-3 or 4. Another experiment was to move a man from the midpoint to the five point with 6-2 or to the four point with 6-3. These plays had considerable merit and today the play of 6-2 to the five point is standard.

Some way out types have tried using the 6 to move from the midpoint to your own bar point, but this is also a very bad opening play and not worth considering.

Ten years ago it had become fairly standard to run with 6-4 and to move to your opponent's bar point and around the corner when you rolled 6-3. To run with 6-4 and to go to the five point with 6-2 is still standard today.

Of late, I have been experimenting with playing 6-4 the way 6-3 is played and will try to explain why the compound play with 6-3 should definitely be played up and around, and why it is better to be played that way.

When you run with 6-4, your blot on the eleven point is exposed to just 11 shots. When you run with



6-3, your blot can be hit by 13.

When your blot isn't hit, if on the eleven point after 6-4, you have made 5-4; 4-3 and 3-2 into good rolls. If on the ten point, the only rolls you have helped are 5-3 and 6-4.

This doesn't seem like much, but expert backgammon is a matter of putting little things together and this slight difference has kept people from playing 6-4 to the enemy bar point with 6 and around the corner with the 4.

I don't make any claim that this advanced 6-4 opening is better than the run to the eleven point, but I do have a small amount of statistics. Mrs. Jacoby and I have been playing duplicate dice backgammon where each player starts with 6-4. One runs; the other moves to the bar and around the corner. We have only played 40 games, but the new play is a few points ahead. ★★

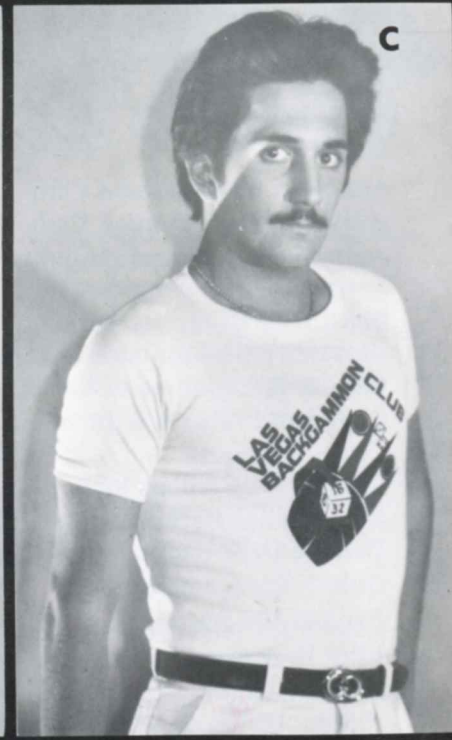
# LVBC FASHIONS



A



B



C

Please send me the LVBC FASHIONS I have checked below.  
I have enclosed check or money order for the full amount including postage and handling.  
All items come in ★ SMALL (30-32) ★ MEDIUM (34-36) ★ LARGE (38-40)

| Code | Item                                                  | Color                | Qty | Size | Price   | Postage | Total |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----|------|---------|---------|-------|
| A    | Men's "Golf Shirts"                                   | Lt. Blue - Tan       |     |      | \$18.50 | \$1.50  |       |
| B    | Women's French Cut                                    | Yellow - Tan - Peach |     |      | \$13.50 | \$1.50  |       |
| C    | T-Shirt "Large Logo"                                  | Lt. Blue - Tan       |     |      | \$13.50 | \$1.50  |       |
| D    | T-Shirt "Small Logo"                                  | Lt. Blue - Tan       |     |      | \$13.50 | \$1.50  |       |
| E    | Children's T-Shirt<br>Medium (10-12)<br>Large (14-16) | Lt. Blue - White     |     |      | \$8.50  | \$1.50  |       |

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**LVBC FASHIONS**  
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LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89119

Orders outside U.S. send International Money Order and add \$3.00 per item.

Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.



(Left to Right) SUZY CREAMCHEESE, BILL JUSTICE, ANITA MADDEN and FAROL SERETAN.

## BLUE BLAST

THE SUZY CREAMCHEESE BLUE BLAST BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS has chalked its fourth successful year in Kentucky. The tournament, a charity affair, is part of the famous annual festivities hosted by Anita Madden. Money raised at this affair goes to the Boys Ranch and School. Kentucky Colonel Creamcheese was ably assisted by John Walden, Leslie Trapp, and John Able of the Louisville Backgammon Club.

1st — Brian Van Steenberg  
2nd — Tony Stevens

# THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

| <u>CLUB</u>                             | <u>STATE</u>   | <u>DIRECTOR</u>   | <u>PHONE No.</u> |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| American Backgammon Club                | Michigan       | Michael Kolian    | (313) 459-5776   |
| Arlington Backgammon Club               | Illinois       | Sargis Serges     | (312) 394-1331   |
| Atlanta/Georgia Backgammon Society      | Georgia        | Craig Tyndall     | (404) 266-8957   |
| Barcelona Backgammon Club               | Spain          | Jordi Arque       | 211 46 15        |
| Black Hills Backgammon Club             | South Dakota   | Rod Woodruff      | (605) 892-4978   |
| Beginner's Backgammon Association       | Missouri       | Frank Petty Jr.   | (314) 521-8544   |
| Calgary Backgammon Club                 | Canada         | Wayne Roberts     | (403) 265-9400   |
| Campbell Bridge & Backgammon Studio     | California     | Martin Miller     | (408) 378-3711   |
| Cavendish North                         | Michigan       | Bob Ciaffone      | (313) 642-9616   |
| Cavendish of Philadelphia               | Pennsylvania   | Mae & Fred Block  | (215) 878-5777   |
| Chattanooga Backgammon Club             | Tennessee      | David Harris      | (615) 267-6418   |
| Dueling Oaks Backgammon                 | Wisconsin      | Merrill Schrager  | (414) 271-0493   |
| Duluth Backgammon Club                  | Minnesota      | Ray Boisjoli      | (218) 724-2435   |
| Federal Hill Backgammon Association     | Maryland       | Michael Maguire   | (301) 528-1157   |
| Flint Backgammon Club                   | Michigan       | Carol Cole        | (313) 732-8594   |
| Hamilton Squash Club                    | Canada         | Ernie Geisel      | (416) 527-1010   |
| Hawaii Backgammon Players Assn.         | Hawaii         | Bernard Bergstein | (808) 533-2227   |
| House of Backgammon                     | Illinois       | Phelicia Krakow   | (312) 674-2598   |
| Iowa Backgammon Association             | Iowa           | Tom Owens         | (319) 364-9236   |
| Jacksonville Backgammon Club            | Florida        | Linda George      | (904) 733-2217   |
| Louisville Backgammon Club              | Kentucky       | Larry Strasberg   | (502) 451-3950   |
| National Backgammon League              | Illinois       | Patt Rottman      | (312) 831-5037   |
| New Mexico Backgammon Club              | New Mexico     | Steve Spellerberg | (505) 776-2282   |
| New Orleans Backgammon Club             | Louisiana      | Joanne Ippolito   | (504) 282-3210   |
| Newport Backgammon Club                 | Rhode Island   | Robert Howayeck   | (617) 674-4905   |
| Northern Nevada Backgammon Assn.        | Nevada         | Bill O'Brien      | (702) 825-3280   |
| Ohio Valley Backgammon Club             | West Virginia  | Dominic Parisi    | (304) 232-0090   |
| Omaha Backgammon Club                   | Nebraska       | Carolyn Caniglia  | (402) 330-3333   |
| Oregon Backgammon Players               | Oregon         | Norman Hunter     | (503) 238-6351   |
| Pacific N.W. Backgammon Assn.           | Washington     | Ted Barr          | (206) 285-6768   |
| Phoenix Backgammon Club                 | Arizona        | Backgammon Mike   | (602) 264-2386   |
| Richmond Backgammon Club                | Virginia       | Richard Murad     | (804) 270-6234   |
| Shreveport/Bossier                      | Louisiana      | Alan Le Bendig    | (318) 797-0560   |
| So. Illinois University Backgammon Club | Illinois       | Jordan Gold       | (618) 529-1667   |
| St. Louis Backgammon Club               | Missouri       | Phil Dunlop       | (314) 839-2365   |
| St. Thomas Backgammon Club              | Virgin Islands | Vernon Ball       | (809) 774-1829   |
| Thunder Bay Backgammon Assn.            | Canada         | Rita Zandette     | (807) 622-3045   |

Association with the Las Vegas Backgammon Club is free to those clubs which will adhere to the LVBC Tournament rules and the LVBC Rules of Backgammon Etiquette. The LVBC Association is a group of grass-roots backgammon clubs devoted to the love and promotion of backgammon. The group is bound together for support and exchange of information and ideas.

LVBC Associates have access to the club hotline, receive hospitality benefits for their members visiting Las Vegas, receive aid in setting up and operating their club, receive free space to publish their ideas and schedules in the *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine* (circulation 10,000), and receive complimentary copies of the *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine* for their members. All in all, Associate Members enjoy many shared benefits which a union of organizations can provide, including reciprocal visiting rights between clubs in the Association.

For details on Association, write to the Las Vegas Backgammon Club or call (702) 361-3910.

# **NEW ASSOCIATES**

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## **New Mexico Backgammon Club**

Taos, New Mexico will henceforth be known as an action spot. You can get a game or enjoy a tournament anytime by calling STEVE SPELLERBERG, the director. Mr. Spellerberg is a well-known backgammon enthusiast, who decided that his town finally needed a club. His club is just another indication that backgammon has reached every corner of America. Call Steve at (505) 776-2282.

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## **Beginner's Backgammon Association**

FRANK PETTY JR., founder of this organization, is committed to keeping backgammon within the reach of the people. The association is a non-profit correspondence club dedicated to the advancement of the Beginner Backgammon player. Current membership is fifty. Anyone can become a member by simply requesting correspondence, assistance, analysis on a play, move, cube strategy, negotiation, psychological approach or any other strange backgammon situation. All correspondence should be sent to Mr. F. E. Petty, 8185 F. Normandy Tr. Ct., St. Louis, MO 63121 (314) 521-8544.

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## **Phoenix Backgammon Club**

"BACKGAMMON MIKE" SHALDJIAN, who doesn't know that name, has organized the hordes in the Arizona area into backgammon players, and put them into Signature's at 4747 North 7th Street. The club holds weekly Sunday tournaments and a once-a-month super tournament with a calcutta. The vice-president is Renny Rush. Michael M. Shaldjian is secretary-treasurer. You can bet that if you want action, you can now find it in Phoenix. The Shaldjian has never turned down anybody! (602) 264-2386.

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## **Ohio Valley Backgammon Club**

It's not where you think it is. The club operates out of Tin Pan Alley, a club in Wheeling, West Virginia. DOMINIC PARISI, the director, is an ex-Las Vegas and a dynamic player. You'll love Dominic as much as we miss him. He's action and so is his club. Catch it all at 1429 Market Street. (304) 232-0090.

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## **Sheveport/Bossier Backgammon Club**

Two weeks in operation and the club's already going strong. Who says they don't play backgammon everywhere? ED BRISTER, the president, feels that offering free instructional clinics will improve interest in the game and the quality of competition in his area. ALAN LE BENDIG is the tournament director. Mr. Le Bendig is a ranked bridge player and a highly qualified tournament director. The club will offer monthly tournaments with calcutta, free instructions, a monthly newsletter and master points. (318) 797-0560.



# GEORGIA OPEN

by Craig Tyndall



Linda George

After an exciting cocktail party, hosted by Rums of Puerto Rico, participants of the 1979 Georgia Open sat down to a delicious dinner featuring Chicken Hungarian — one of the specialties of the Riviera Hyatt.

Next, Bob Wilensky, our favorite auctioneer, generated plenty of excitement with an auction totaling over \$5,000.00.

After the auction, we started the "Tag-team Doubles" event which everyone really enjoyed. This event was won by husband/wife team Dave and De-Ane Schroeder, with Marty Cohn and Charles Lipman taking 2nd place.

The main event drew 44 players in the championship division. The first place prize of \$1,320.00 was won by Don Feigenbaum — professor of criminal justice at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. Second place was taken by our own Steve Moffitt, assistant professor of statistics at Emory University.

Atlantan Paul Foster and George Morse from Houston, Texas tied for 3rd and 4th place. The consolation round was won by Dave Schroeder, with David Kane winning the last chance match. Both Dave and David are from Atlanta.

The intermediate division was won by Jim Burton from Tampa, Florida. Beginners division champion was Ed Ford from Atlanta.

A special thanks is due Sid Jackson, director of the American Backgammon Players Association, for his professional leadership and technical assistance. We also appreciate the efforts of Linda George of the Jacksonville Backgammon Club, Jim Howe and David Cohen of the Texas Backgammon Association, and Orrill Martin of the American Backgammon Association for their participation in making this a very successful tournament. ☆☆

# ABC

## A Day in the Life

by LOUISE GOLDSMITH

A day at the office of the American Backgammon Championships, prior to tournament time, no one really knows — please wait a second . . . "Hello, yes . . . sure . . . right . . . the tournament has staggered starting times . . . sure . . . you can get there on Thursday, even Friday, if you are in the beginner or Amateur tournaments . . . yes . . . OK . . . looking forward to seeing you in Las Vegas . . ."

Anyway, no one really knows what goes on. We usually start the day with, sorry, let me get the phone. "Yes, that is correct . . . the rooms are not included with the entry fees . . . yes they were included the first year, but not this year, as a matter of fact, not last year . . . please call the hotel on their toll free number . . . Great . . . Looking forward to seeing you in Las Vegas . . ."

Tons and tons of paper work are just part of any tournament, but somehow or other, the Las Vegas Tournament take the cake — sorry . . . "Hello . . . sure . . . well I think it might be best for you to take that up with the airlines . . . I'm sure there should not be any trouble with taking your dog . . . OK . . . Looking forward . . ." Anyway, half the people who have called and left their number are not in when you call back, so we take the time to answer the questions from those that are. At this point the scheduling is number one — wait a second . . . "Hi . . . yes . . . well, I'll try . . . sorry . . . you will have to check with the hotel . . . I really don't know if they have water beds or not . . . Looking forward to . . ."

Needless to say, when operating three tournaments in one, the job is enormous. In order to settle staff, registration, and the actual running of this type of tournament, the scheduling must be to a tee. We have literally been working for months on this aspect of the tournament, and after all the graph paper in the office has been used, more ordered, and used, we have finally come up with the scheduling we need to have everything run as smoothly as possible, to accommodate all — excuse me . . . "HELLO . . . backgammon is a board game . . . no it is not played on a court . . . why don't you let me send you some information . . . name . . . address . . ."

These last questions reminded me of a funny thing that occurred in Aruba: The head of the Department of Tourism came to the opening day of the tournament to welcome all the players. Prior to his speech, he asked me if it would be all right to "THROW OUT THE FIRST DICE".

Once the scheduling is finished, we can proceed with planning the ordering of the printed material, which includes an incredible amount of things, such as, rules, score sheets, draw sheets, sheets of 16, etc. The amount of printed matter is outrageous!

Our applications come in from the entry forms in the brochures. These then have to be typed on four part forms with all the pertinent information. Each day we must keep up with this so that we don't get bogged down, otherwise — wait one minute . . . "Yes . . . can I help you? . . . right . . . I did call you . . . you sent in your entry form, but you did not put down which division you wished to be in . . . amateur and open . . . great . . . Looking forward to seeing you in Las . . ." As I was saying, you get so bogged down with paper work you don't have time for anything else, like getting to your coffee while it is still hot.

"Kate . . . what time is it in Chicago . . . I would like to call Ida and Bill and tell them what a great job they are doing . . . and may I please have the geographical breakdown for a minute . . ."

It is amazing how many different places we have people coming from — but why are there no players from Nebraska, when we have entries from Spain, and how come there are no players from Wisconsin, when we have entries from Japan?

Because it is almost impossible to ever finish anything one starts to do, we have made it a habit to check and re-check everything at the end of the day — hold on . . . "Hello . . . yes . . . you may enter all three tournaments . . . Yes, I have your application in front of me . . . yes . . . beginners . . . I shall be glad to put you down for the Amateur and Open . . . just send in your check . . . I'll be happy to take your Visa number . . . Thank you . . . looking forward to . . ."

By the end of the evening, we have everything checked and leave for home. Then of course, we speak to each other ten times during the rest of the evening — Wait, once again . . . "Hi . . . may I help you? . . . well, all participants start in groups . . ."

# The American Backgammon Championships & Dunes Hotel

wishes to thank those who participated  
in the ABC Tournament.

You have made this the greatest  
backgammon event in the world!

## TOURNAMENT COST COMPARISON

|                                | Las<br>Vegas       | Puerto<br>Rico     | Monte<br>Carlo     |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Entry Fee .....                | \$500              | \$250              | \$350              |
| Second Chance .....            | 100                | None               | None               |
| Room & Air (Single Occ.) ..... | 400*               | 694**              | 1300**             |
| Meals .....                    | <u>150</u>         | <u>250</u>         | <u>350</u>         |
| Total Cost .....               | \$1,150            | \$1,194            | \$2,000            |
| Prize Pool .....               | \$100,000.00       | \$20,000.00        | \$15,000.00        |
|                                | + \$400 per player | + \$250 per player | + \$350 per player |
| Total (Est.) .....             | 964 = \$485,600.00 | 150 = \$57,500.00  | 310 = \$123,500.00 |

\* No extra charge if not staying at the Dunes Hotel

\*\* Extra charge if not staying at an approved hotel

Assuming a player that has a 55% chance of winning each match in Las Vegas and he would only have a 45% chance of winning each match in Monte Carlo or Puerto Rico (Pro's are barred from Las Vegas).

### ODDS on winning 1st place

|                                         | With Bye | Without Bye  | 1st Prize |
|-----------------------------------------|----------|--------------|-----------|
| Las Vegas Plimpton Cup (964 Players) .. | 255:1    | 464:1 .....  | 212,800   |
| Puerto Rico (150 Players) .....         | 268:1    | 594:1 .....  | 20,700    |
| Monte Carlo (310 Players) .....         | 594:1    | 1322:1 ..... | 44,460    |

# BACKGAMMON BITS



JEANIE FAVELA & FRANKIE CITRO

The LVBC has access to the finest collection of oldie records in the world. FRANK CITRO and JOHN RICHARDS between them have over 15,000 priceless originals from the '50s. Anyone for an oldies party?

JAINY PICKARD and the rest of the UNLV crowd barely making it to classes on Monday morning due to the long Sunday night tournaments... CARLO KURAJICA, slow, but sure gets all the marbles.



CARLO KURAJICA  
LVBM 14



JAINY PICKARD

No less than six Las Vegas hotels have been approached by different promoters for backgammon. The hotels want to deal only with the best and the best want \$50,000 up front... KEN TAYLOR, new director of the *Oregon Backgammon Club*, former director NORM HUNTER forced to pursue other interests... ACCU, college activities group, seeking sponsor for major backgammon push on US campuses... \$1,000,000 Nine Ball tournament being promoted in Las Vegas with same hype as the old KLAR \$1,000,000 backgammon affair... MARY ISON, backgammon beauty of the month!

VINCE EADE now Aladdin Hotel manager... The famous visit Las Vegas: Mr. & Mrs. LARRY STRASBERG, directors of the *Louisville Backgammon Club*; JEFF BAKER, director *Colorado Backgammon Club*; JOEL HARWOOD, Miami; TONY GOBEL, JACK ZWERNER, ALAN MARTIN, SWAMI, golf pro HARRY BROWN. BARON VERNON BALL and PAUL HOLMES at the Frontier to produce "Roller Disco Party", a TV pilot project, they plan to air in January.

DR. JULIAN RAINTREE sporting new wife, SHASTA



VINCE EADE

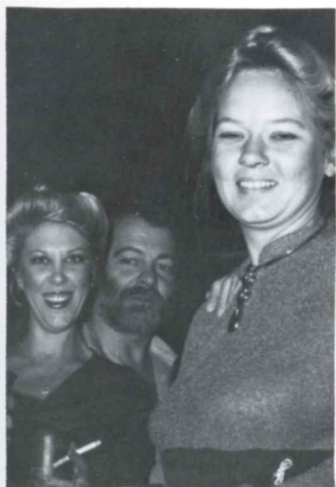


JERRY TARKANIAN, SHASTA & DR. JULIAN RAINTREE



MARY ISON

# AND FACES



TERRY & DON BELLAK.  
KIM SHARP

TERRY BELLAK with Levy Realty . . . Goodbye DEBBIE ENDO, gone to Japan and school. Hello JIM HONEK back from Hawaii . . . DAVID HERSHLEDER back from Milwaukee. BARBARA PA-AVILAINEN to Milwaukee . . . Executive circle: DAN CAMERON to Vegas World.

. . . Does anyone remember the movie, "The Big Cube", starring LANA TURNER? . . . New York's Bar Point back in business with new owners, KEVIN BRANDT and director, MICHAEL CAZEL . . . CARLO ENRICHI & KATHY STRONG on their way to Venice . . .

. . . How would you like to receive 40 TV channels at home? JOHN MENDONCA has home satellite receiving system that will do just that . . . BUDDY BERKE ailing in Palm Springs. Hurry and get well, Buddy. We miss you!



KATHY STRONG & CARLO ENRICHI

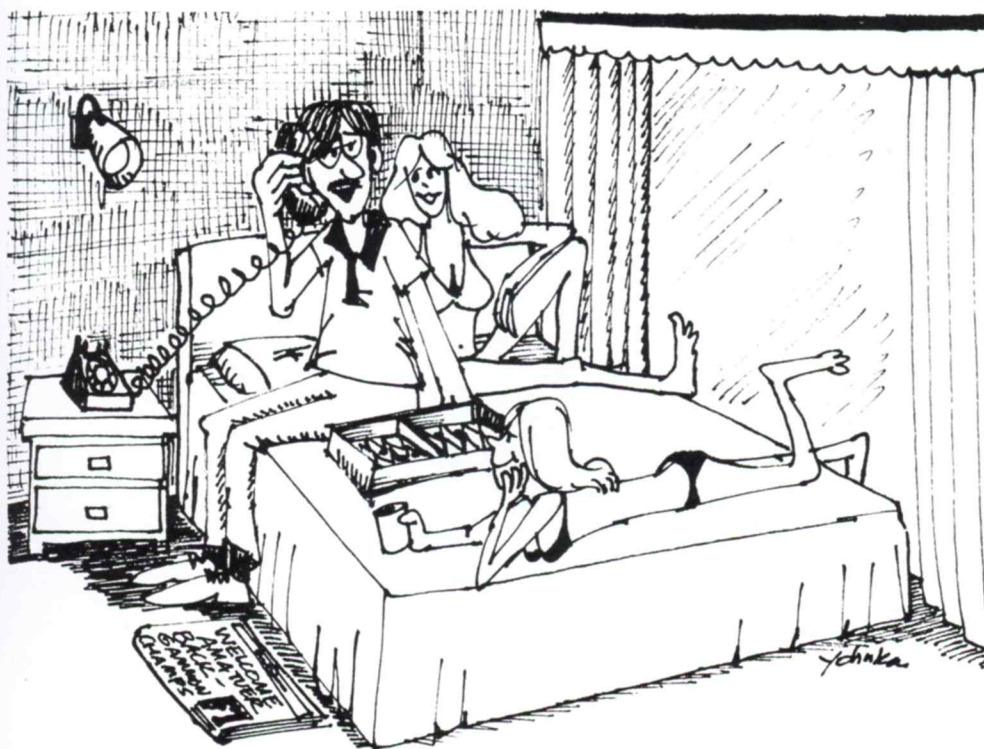
## IT PAYS TO PLAY

### TOP 10 LAS VEGAS PLAYERS

1. Craig Chellstorp
2. Harold Seif
3. Clarine
4. Vartan Sarkissian
5. David Eig
6. Tony Mancari
7. David Hershleder
8. Chris Campbell
9. Karen Wolfson
10. Mike Van Dusen



DEBBIE SONTAG &  
RALPH CHRISTIANSEN



HONEST, HONEY, THERE'S ONLY A BUNCH  
OF BACKGAMMON PLAYERS HERE IN VEGAS.

And for those who missed the annual LVBC biggy party, it was splendid! The RALPH CHRISTIANSEN pool was incomparable, right out of a movie. The JOHNNY JAY BAND rocked, LULU SIDMAN, CURT & LILLY, and DR. LARRY danced and stripped. The ribs were sweet, the punch, a killer and valet only lost one car. Over 400 showed and at times it seemed no one wanted to leave. MAX said he is getting a second job so that he can finance next year's party. How about the famous Xmas party?

Party pictures on next page. ▶

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# THE THIRD DEGREE

*Is it true that the Las Vegas Backgammon Club and the Association maintain a Black Book with the names of habitual no-pays and suspected cheats?*

We wouldn't call it a Black Book, but rather an information exchange service. Data is collected from directors and players and kept in the LV-BC files. Responsible directors of participating associate clubs can request access to it. This system was not created to punish, but rather to protect. Names and deeds are not for publication unless a specific request is made as in the following letter.

August 2, 1979

LVBC  
Las Vegas, Nevada

Re: B. Schlossberg  
B. Verity

Dear Sirs:

This is to inform you that the New England Backgammon Club has cancelled the membership of the above-named for improper payment of their entry fees.

We have written and called both parties, giving them sufficient time to rectify the matter, and have received no response. Copies of our correspondence are enclosed.

We request that you proceed to post their initials, as your policy requires, in your upcoming publication.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

*Jacqueline M. Flynn*  
Jacqueline M. Flynn  
Secretary



*How many backgammon computers are there and what's the big do over them?*

There's Boris, Jack, Aristotle, and various other clones. Aristotle seems to be getting all the publicity lately and several people take credit for him. The only thing we know for sure is that Professor Hans Berliner and Paul Magriel have programmed Aristotle. Artificial intelligence seems to be in vogue and all are rushing to cash in on the electronic game boom. At present, both Lewis Deyong and Henry Wattson are rushing to arrange a match between two gammonoids. Both promoters see the enormous publicity value of two machines playing a championship. One of them has even made a \$10,000 personal bet on his favorite. Personally, we are not impressed with this new technology. We have long suspected that dice possess artificial intelligence of their own.

*Is it my imagination that booze and cigarettes are becoming synonymous with backgammon? Doesn't a healthy product want to sponsor backgammon?*

SHHH! Just order rum or scotch and stash it in various potted plants like we do. It's pretty tough to find sponsors. Backgammon still has an image problem and sponsors shy away from us. In the meantime, non-smokers and non-drinkers should lend support. Write the sponsors and let them know that you are a chain-smoking lush who uses only products introduced at backgammon tournaments. Until Twinkies and Sara Lee wake up to backgammon's popularity, drink, smoke and be wary!

*In late September, my entry was rejected for a tournament being held at the Regency Whist Club in N.Y. Why?*

You must be referring to the Children's Cancer Fund Backgammon Tournament. This event has gone on for many years and invitations

are extended to championship players who competed in previous tournaments and to members and friends of the Regency Club. Due to limited space and facilities, this event is limited to 64 players, who are subject to the approval of the organization committee. This is not what you would call a high equity tournament. But, it has tradition, exclusivity (jackets required) and a good purpose (Children's Cancer Fund). The tournament director was Tannah Hirsch. ★★

## FACES & MORE



ARAM S. KOULEYAN, has been addicted to backgammon for 40 years. In those years, he has developed into perhaps the best tournament player in the world.

At every major calcutta, we have observed knowledgeable money dealing to buy a piece of Aram. The Bulgarian-born Kouleyan doesn't play the glamour role that has brought recognition to other players, but since 1975, he has had a record he'll match with any one's.

This year alone he has won 1st Place at the Pebble Beach B & W Classic; 1st Place in the California Open; Semi-final Consolation in Monte Carlo; Finalist Consolation in Puerto Rico; and Semi-finalist in the San Diego Open.

If you have any doubts, you'll find him ready and willing at the Cavendish in Los Angeles.

# LAS VEGANS THAT PLAY



Puggy Pearson

## TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

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Tournament Directors Available

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- Regional Tournaments
- Major Tournaments
- Auctioneers
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*Hire the Professionals!*

*Call the Las Vegas Backgammon Club*

*(702) 361-3910*

There are other poker players more famous than W. C. "Pug" Pearson, but when the big boys butt heads Pearson is one of the most likely to walk off with the chips.

Pearson's performances in the world series of poker are unequalled, and Pearson doesn't expect them to be equalled. In one series he not only won the main event — a \$10,000 buy-in hold'em game — but a hold'em preliminary, a seven-card stud event, and one other event he can't even recall — probably deuce-seven.

He has won the seven-card stud event so many times the event is sometimes called "Pug's game".

Pearson is 48 and has played in Las Vegas for 20 years, but nevertheless sees himself not as one of the old-timers, but as one of the "new generation" poker players only now coming to the fore.

What gave Pearson the flat-rugged face from which his nickname "Pug" is derived? "I was about 10, showing off for some girls, walking on my hands along a row of stacked-up cinder-blocks. I missed a block and came down right on my nose."

Pearson is originally a Tennessee mountaineer. He joined the Navy at the age of 16, and spent some six years there. "It was a good place to learn poker", he recalls. Later

Pearson became a pool hustler, and figures he was, for a time, one of the best 10 in existence. He still plays an occasional pool game — sometimes for big money. And in the course of playing poker he's developed a sideline . . . money backgammon.

"We started playing a little backgammon around the poker room to kill time between games," he says. "Pretty soon several of us high-stakes-poker players were hooked."

Pearson has been observed playing backgammon as high as \$2,000 a point. Although, his game is still so weak that opponents give him a spot, he's willing to sit down with anyone that will make him a fair game. One famous backgammon player flies in regularly to challenge Puggy with a three-ace spot. The visitor has walked away with six figure scores.

"He can't bust me," exclaims Pearson. "I might not know the game yet, but I sure understand that pill (cube). That pill is just like a poker raise. It tells you a lot about your opponent. I'll make a star of that boy, just like I do with anyone that plays with me. Good gamblers like to play with me because they know it's not going to be a dull game. That computer genius from the East says the pill is half the game. I bet I'll add 10% to that figure before I'm through." No bet, Puggy!

### A Few Golden Rules to Remember

1. Take your time and study each play. Also, do not try and hurry your opponent.
2. Pay attention to your own game and try and not criticize or make comments on your opponent's plays.
3. Do not rattle the dice when it is not your turn to play. Also, do not drum on the table, whistle or otherwise annoy your opponent.
4. Lose with good grace and sportsmanship, and remember that the main purpose of the game is entertainment.
5. Do not make your moves with such rapidity that your opponent cannot follow the plays.
6. Never touch a piece until you are certain you are going to play it.
7. Don't take too great risks during the game, for a sound game is generally a cautious one.
8. Try and play with better players, as this is one of the best means of improving your game.



# Backgammon

## IN THE PUBLIC EYE



David Leibowitz in *People* magazine, one of the best endorsements ever in backgammon and the Amateur Backgammon Championships, is quoted as saying "It never occurred to me that I could win." Huh?

Also in *People* magazine is a lovely pastoral scene of a South American V. I. P. and friend playing a backgammon board, a pure-bred dog and thou beneath a bough.

Roger Dionne continues to do the best pieces on backgammon. He is unquestionably backgammon's scribe. His latest is a comprehensive and entertaining review of the Monte Carlo World Backgammon Championships. "Big Money and Little Voices" is the title of the Dionne article which appears in the Nov./Dec. issue of *Games* magazine.

Abigail Gerd has stars in her eyes. Someone must have picked up her check before she wrote the story entitled "Backgammon's Highrollers Converge on Aruba for a Meeting of the Boards".

If you want to see players you've learned to hate in a new, glamorous light, read the Gerd piece in October's *Signature* magazine. Don't miss it. The accompanying graphics alone are worth the effort of locat-

ing this hard-to-find magazine.

AP and UPI picked up the 'backgammon computer versus man' story and it made every single paper in the U. S. Of course, the wire services failed to mention the audience response to the Luigi Villa-Computer match. It was laughter, not applause that greeted the computer victory.

Yes, we've read all the "sting" stories involving a backgammon director and a Faro game. The facts are distorted and it didn't involve backgammon anyway.

The best "local press coverage" award goes to Michael Kloian of the American Backgammon Club of Plymouth, Michigan. He sent us a truckload of clippings from the *Oakland County Observer* newspaper on his local backgammon promotions.

During their first tournament, the ABC, an L.V.B.C. associate, drew over 150 people. Future plans include a major Mid-west competition with a sponsor.

**NEW PRODUCTS:** "I am a board person" T-shirts from Future Graphics, Arlington, Texas. And, Backgammon Bedsheets by Performance Marketing, Seattle, Washington.

Mark Weinberg, the Association's president, stresses that the USOA wants to attract beginners as well as seasoned players. It is his hope that players will use sanctioned tournaments and the *Quarterly* as forums for teaching and learning from each other. The ultimate goal: to win the world championship title away from the Japanese within the next five years.

For information and a free reprint of a recent *Othello Quarterly* article for beginners, write: USOA, P.O. Box 342, Falls Church VA 22046. —R.W.S.

Congratulations to the 3rd Annual American Backgammon Championships. Las Vegas, "Entertainment Capital of the World" is pleased to welcome each of you to our exciting and fun-filled city.

We are delighted you have chosen our city for your Backgammon games. Backgammon has become a most popular game all around the world and it is fitting that Las Vegas host the players who have contributed to its popularity.

Lavish hotels, great entertainment, and the finest of indoor and outdoor recreational activities are just a few of the things Las Vegas has to offer.

I hope your visit in our city is an exciting one and that you will come back often.

Sincerely,

*William H. Briare*

William H. Briare  
Mayor of Las Vegas



### U.S. OTHELLO ASSOCIATION FORMED

Good news for Othello fans: a group of top players have organized the United States Othello Association, whose purpose will be to serve the serious Othello player by sanctioning tournaments, establishing a national ranking system, and publishing *The Othello Quarterly*. Containing game analyses, articles on strategy, and tournament news, the *Quarterly* is edited by Jonathan Cerf and George Sullivan, who co-authored an article on Othello for *Games* (May/June).

# Kate Wattson



Executive Director

Anyone who has ever known Kate Wattson, has found her to be a joy. She is always smiling, and seems to bring sunshine wherever she goes.

Would anyone believe she was an "army brat"? Her father was a Colonel in the army, and as a child, Kate lived all over the world — places such as Paris, Belgrad, and dozens of cities throughout the United States.

As a young woman, Kate worked in merchandising as a buyer for eight years. This afforded her the opportunity to open her own antique store, which was a huge success.

She and her husband, Henry, met in Nassau. It seems that after they

were married, but long before the backgammon tournaments, someone gave them a backgammon set, which proceeded to land up in their closet for over a year. Finally they decided to learn the game, and were immediately hooked.

Other than working the New York Office of American Backgammon Championships and working at the tournaments, Kate still has the responsibility of her two children, Stuart 6, and Gary 2. Needless to say, that is a job in itself. Nothing throws her, and she seems to manage to do everything.

"The best part of working on the tournaments is meeting the marvelous people from all over the world," says Kate. "Nothing is ever dull."

# Louise Goldsmith



Executive Director  
American Backgammon  
Championships

Louise Goldsmith is the Executive Director of American Backgammon Championships, and has coordinated the Las Vegas Tournament for the past two years. The very first tournament that she ever ran was the "Las Vegas Biggie". Quite an undertaking for a novice. But she is a quick learner, and each tournament has gotten better and better.

The inception into the backgammon world was through her daughter, Lyn Goldsmith, considered at one time to be the top woman player in the world. (Today, Lyn is a commodity broker for Shearson, Hayden Stone, in NYC.) Lyn played backgammon at the Mayfair Club, and mom, Louise would go and watch and sometimes partake. As time went on, the Mayfair made a change into new beautiful quarters, and with the change, Louise Goldsmith was asked if she would be interested in managing the club. And what a job she has done! It is truly the most successful club anywhere.

Apparently, Louise can do just

about anything. Her very first job, in between raising three children, was with an electronics firm. She was the only female component parts saleswoman in the country. IBM was her biggest account, along with many others. From there, she went into the horse business for the next 15 years. She had a boarding and show stable, with 84 horses, a school with over five hundred students each week, and a summer camp. Louise says she would still be "down on the farm" if the state had not condemned her property for a new road to a University being built at that time.

But things always work out for the best. For hubby Russell had a heart attack right after this, and Louise had to run his furniture business for the following year. When Russ got back to work, she then found her way into the backgammon world.

"And what a world it is," says Louise. "Kate and I agree on just about everything, including the fact that nothing is ever dull in our Lives."



# LETTERS FROM READERS

Dear Editor,

First I want to thank you for the complimentary issues of your fine magazine and also to its very complete and excellent coverage of such a beautiful masochistic game. I have been quoted as saying "I'm probably one of the world's best teachers as all my pupils can beat me." In my living room is a table-legs fold under type-given to me for Xmas - (1932!) and still going strong.

The Gammoners Club holds tournaments every Tuesday and should you have any inquiries regarding backgammon in the Orlando, Florida area, we would appreciate hearing from them. Keep up the good work.

W. E. Graham

Orlando, Florida

P.S. We play at "Port o' Call" Seminole Plaza-Casselberry, Florida

Dear Editor,

I suggest that in the future you check the library before you print something - "Backgammon in the Public Eye", Vol. VI. The last time

Paul Magriel wrote his article for the New York Times was in June of this year. It hasn't appeared since.

Loren Stark

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Editor,

Thank you for telling us about Dirty Sally's in Redondo Beach. My wife and I went down there last night and I got wiped out in the 2nd round. We can't remember when we've had so much fun. We also picked up the backgammon book by Paul Magriel.

Thank you for the magazine; we do want to subscribe. Backgammon has changed our whole life style of entertainment. Even the children play most every day. If we can ever do anything for you please call.

Joe & Pat Sutherland  
Inglewood, California

EDITOR'S NOTE: The backgammon hot line is open to all players. Call us at (702) 361-3910 and we'll tell you where to play in your area.



Dear Michael,

Have received the Las Vegas Backgammon Magazines and are so very pleased that you included the article on the Owen Trayner Memorial Tournament. Also enjoyed the letter from Bill Cardona and your editor's note.

Le Club International has been closed for several weeks but we resume our weekly tournaments tomorrow night. Hopefully when people read this excellent Backgammon Magazine, you will receive some additional subscriptions.

Alyda Trayner  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida



## Delightful Dining. Desert Inn Style.

It is a special summer treat for you and yours at the Desert Inn. The new restaurants have become the talk of the town. Lunch in the Grill Room in the La Promenade has become business persons' favorite. And at night, in the popular Portofino, couples find food and fun while dining above the casino. The

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**Monte Carlo Room**

*La*  
**Promenade Portofino**

**Licorice Schtick**

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ultimate in dining delicacies is found evenings in the world famous Monte Carlo French Restaurant.

Yes, dining is a true delight at the Desert Inn and Country Club.

For reservations call: 733-4444.

## DESERT INN and Country Club

# FIRST INTERNATIONAL BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS OF PUERTO RICO

by V. H. Yanko

It was hard for this event to live up to its pre-tournament publicity. When we think of Puerto Rico '79, we'll always remember the glossy invitations and wall-size, color posters. The Cerromar Hotel could not live up to the expectations.

We suspected something was wrong upon noticing few players arriving from Miami. It seems Floridians knew the dangers of hurricanes at that time of the year in Puerto Rico. The price of the hotel was not attractive to them either since they are familiar with the hotels' summer discounts which were not extended to the backgammon players. The hotel offered isolation, poor service and an unappealing and unfair casino.

Thank God Sidney Jackson flew all of his friends in to help him with the tournament. The grateful recipients of Sidney's favors reciprocated by doing a bang up job. The tournament itself was perfect. All players were well-treated, informed and directed. Jackson overcame his lackluster tournament track record. Perhaps credit should be given to the invisible Lesvia Guerra. Talk about delegating authority!

The outstanding member of the Guerra team was Alan Lorenz. Not only did he run an exciting and amusing auction but acted as a

good-will ambassador during the tournament. Lorenz alone lived up to the image he portrayed on the Puerto Rican Rum promo poster.

All the sponsors seemed pleased. So, we expect to see this tournament flourish in years to come. Positive equity tournaments are hard to find so we can hardly wait for our next glossy poster.

## CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION:

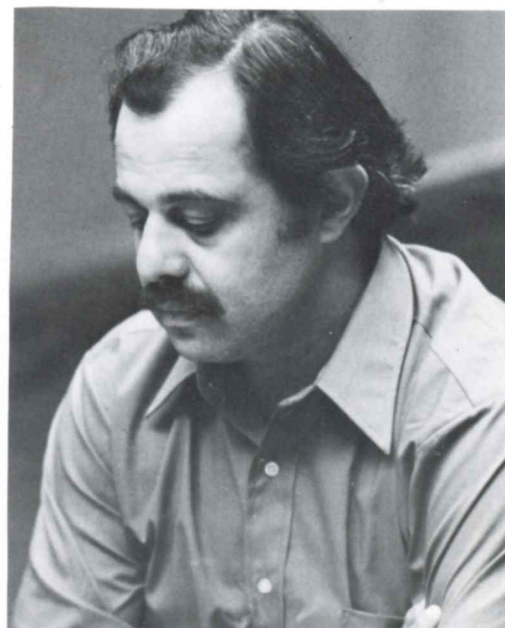
1st Place - Kal Robinson  
Runner up - Peter Gold  
Finalists - Tony Goble - Joel Rettew

## INTERMEDIATE DIVISION:

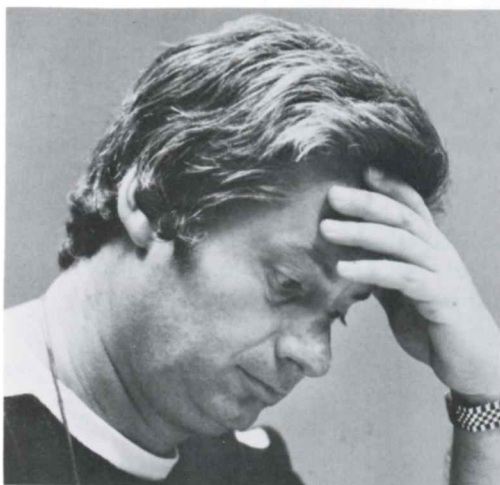
1st Place - Dennis Borgono  
Runner up - Linda Schembre  
Finalists - Andre Hoffman - Denise Berkowitz

## BEGINNERS DIVISION:

1st Place - Alice Reahard  
Runner up - Mark Haboush  
Finalists - Debbie Seidner - Vilar Kelly



CAL ROBINSON



PETER GOLD



OSWALD JACOBY, JOFFRE DE LA FONTAINE & ALAN LORENZ



BUDDY BERKE & RETINUE



TONY GOBLE & FRIEND

# HAROLD G. ZULALIAN MEMORIAL FUND

Harold G. Zulalian Jr., of Brookline, died of cancer after a short illness. Mr. Zulalian was born in Brookline and spent most of his life there and in the Boston area. After serving in the Navy he attended Boston University and graduated in 1956 from the B. U. School of Business Administration. In 1963 Mr. Zulalian joined his father, Harold G. Zulalian Sr., in the operation of Zulalian Rug Galleries, the family oriental rug and antique business in Brookline. He assumed control of the business in 1973, the store's 50th year of business. Known to his friends as "Harry Zu", Mr. Zulalian was a well-known figure in the Boston social scene. He played the flute, had a consuming interest in jazz, and had many hobbies. He was an active yachtsman and cruised New England waters extensively. A member of the Cavendish Club, he was a nationally graded backgammon expert as well as a respected bridge player. He was also a lifelong skier. Mr. Zulalian is survived by his father, a sister, Elizabeth Manger of Huntsville, Al., and his former wife, Mary of Boston.



for the Harold G. Zulalian Jr. Memorial Fund. Harry was my friend. Harry was everyone's friend in backgammon. No one in the backgammon world was more friendly, more amusing or more generous than Harry. No backgammon player from Boston could go anywhere in the world without being greeted with the familiar "How's my friend Harry?!"

Harry Zulalian wasn't the greatest player, but few had more flair. He played for pleasure and not for blood. He could fiddle away many points amusing himself. Yet, no one trapped Harry. It was an indication of the affection that the backgammon world had for Harry. When Harry wanted to lose you didn't let him. Is there a greater tribute in

a world full of hawks? There'll be some tournament somewhere soon and we'll be sitting around actionless and bored. We'll think of Harry then, and how he would get the action rolling and liven the long night.

Some who won't forget Harry have formed the Harold G. Zulalian Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund to benefit Boston University students. The founding committee members ask their friends and Harry's friends in backgammon to send \$100 to the Zulalian Scholarship Fund, %Harbor National Bank of Boston, 57 Franklin St., Boston, Mass. 02109. Attention Amy Alpert.

The committee: Neil Rogern (617) 899-9234; chairman, Ole Sanduen, Vincent Coates, Donald Peaslee, Stephen Cudlitz, Mercedes Cassidy, Peter Smith, Andrew Bater, Carl Kanter, Tim Holland, Oswald Jacoby, Paul Magriel, Sam Hanna, Paul Sonnabend, Michael Maxakuli and Melvin Drapkin.

We won't forget Harry Zulalian and the joy he brought to backgammon. And, in some future time when the backgammon boys get together to chew over the good old great days of backgammon, they'll think of Harry.

## BARR TO 'GAMBLING TIMES'



Ted Barr is a leading Pacific Northwest backgammon professional. After graduating from law school, he served as special assistant to the president of a major corporation. In 1976, Barr left the corporate field and established Ted Barr and Associates, a firm of backgammon professionals. "Barr on Backgammon" will appear regularly in *Gambling Times*.

Barr also writes a backgammon column for the *Seattle Times* and is currently filming a 12-week series of backgammon lessons for public television. Ted is also co-owner of The Game Gallery, one of the largest sophisticated game stores in the country.

Barr lives in Seattle with his wife Sharalyn, an officer at a bank, and their six-month-old daughter, Brittany.

# PLAYING FOR THE GAMMON

by Kit Woolsey

The decision between turning the cube and claiming victory or playing for a gammon and risking losing the game is often a difficult problem, misunderstood by good players. The mathematics are quite simple.

Assume you hold the cube at 2. If you double, you win 2 points immediately (I am assuming your opponent has a clear fold), while if you play on, you win four points if you gammon him, and lose 2 points if you lose the game. Therefore, you stand to gain 2 additional points for the gammon, while risking 4 points (the 2 that you would have won if you doubled plus the 2 you lose), so you must be twice as likely to win a gammon as to lose the game in order to justify playing on.

What many players forget is that, if you decide to play for the gammon you still own the cube, so your decision is not necessarily irreversible. If your position starts to deteriorate you have the option at each roll of turning the cube and doubling your opponent out.

Situations similar to position 1 occur frequently, and are usually mishandled. X owns the cube at 2, and has just hit a shot to close O out. Should X double or play for the gammon? Gammon possibilities are very small, and X could lose the game either by leaving a shot and getting hit or by having O get lucky in a race, so most players would double now. Careful examination of the possibilities will show, however, that X's chances of losing the game are, in practice, zero! This is why:

Suppose X reaches a position where he might leave a shot on his next roll. Before rolling that next roll he turns the cube. O clearly must decline, so X never actually has to leave the shot.

Suppose X takes a man or two off, clears his 6-point, and O rolls 6-6. X immediately turns the cube, and O still doesn't have a take.

Consequently, X can play for the

gammon at no risk whatsoever, provided he remembers to turn the cube when danger approaches. Of course he may later choose to risk losing the game as he clears men off and O stays on the bar thus increasing the gammon possibilities, but that is a decision to be made later. Now, it is 100% safe to play on.

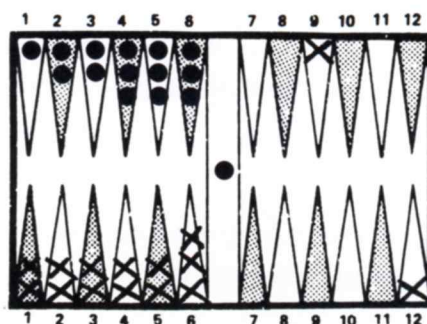
Contrast with position 2: X owns the cube at 2. O, coming in against X's 3-5 backgame stripped his outer points and then rolled a disastrous 4-3, so X now has a quadruple shot, with a reasonable chance of gammoning O if he can pick up both men and close O out. Should X double? The answer is yes, despite the fact that X has far greater gammon chances than in position 1.

First of all, if X misses (and he does have four miss numbers), O may score a gammon, so X is risking 6 points, not 4. Also, X still has a lot of work to do if he hits, and if O links in X's home board X will have to take further risks if he chooses to play on, so it is not worth the gamble in this position.

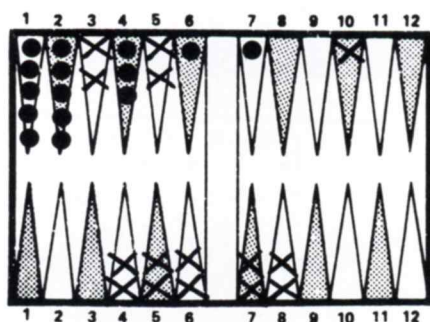
As a final example of food for thought, consider position 3. X has a 3-2 to play. If O owns the cube, it is generally considered best to release the bar point and hope to squeeze one man out, close out both men, and gammon O. This approach risks losing to a 6-6, but the risk is worthwhile since X's gammon chances are considerably increased and he might lose even if he holds the prime, if O either hits a shot from the ace point or gets lucky in a later race.

However, suppose X owns the cube. Now, it might be correct to hold the prime, for this virtually locks up the win, since if O hits a shot or starts to get lucky in a race, X will probably be able to double him out, an option which didn't exist when O owned the cube.

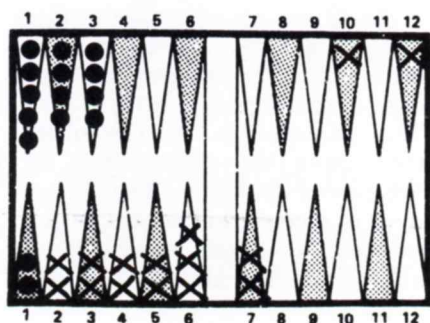
I am not sure which is correct, but the example illustrates the importance of the cube in deciding if and how to play for a gammon.



PROBLEM No. 1



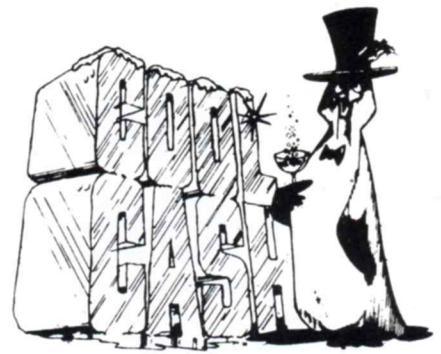
PROBLEM No. 2



PROBLEM No. 3

*Gammon* — A game in which one player removes all of his men before his opponent has removed any. This scores as a double.

# WINTER TOURNAMENTS



| DATE             | TOURNAMENT                           | LOCATION          | DIRECTOR      |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Nov. 28 — Dec. 2 | American Backgammon Championships    | Las Vegas, Nevada | Henry Wattson |
| Dec. 8-9         | The Cricket Club Tournament          | Miami, Florida    | Les Boyd      |
| Dec. 8-9         | Georgia's 7th Monthly                | Atlanta, Georgia  | Craig Tyndall |
| Dec. 29-30       | N.Y. State Backgammon Championships  | New York          | Les Boyd      |
| Jan. 22-27       | Black & White Turnberry Isle Classic | Florida           | Lewis Deyong  |
| Feb. 15-17       | Black & White Los Angeles Classic    | California        | Lewis Deyong  |
| Mar. 23-28       | Black & White Atlantic City Classic  | New Jersey        | Lewis Deyong  |
| May 16-18        | Black & White San Francisco Classic  | California        | Lewis Deyong  |



## MAN VS. MACHINE

Omar, the computerized backgammon game, may be the ideal opponent if you think you can beat anyone around. Its computer brain remembers every move and calculates the surest path to victory. Omar 1, which features a nine-inch magnetic board, runs on AC current or batteries. (By Tryom, Inc., 23500 Mercantile Road, Beachwood, Ohio 44122; about \$50.)

## PUZZLE

page 38

## ANSWERS

Too much dancing in and on the bar.



## 'GAMBLING TIMES' on Backgammon

by Len Miller

The vast majority of players, whether they are at the casino tables, sports betting rooms, or even at the tracks, are something less than serious gameplayers. These people are divided among novice and occasional players, steady but uninformed players, and players who are knowledgeable to a point but won't go on to learn the finishing touches and the finer points of gaming.

The gameplayer, on the other hand, plays the game with intelligent forethought. The gameplayer is riveted in concentration. Awareness to detail, emphasis on planning moves, and a reverence for the laws of probability characterize the gameplayer.

Backgammon players, the serious ones who pay entry fees to play in tournaments, are a case in point. Just recently, 140 players traveled to Puerto Rico to play in a tournament. Each felt qualified to play in competition with other good players. And although most would acknowledge that Paul Magriel, Oswald Jacoby and a handful of other past tournament winners were favored, each participant believed they could win a slice of the cash

prize awards.

But whether or not they walked away with some money, these gameplayers were destined to win something. The environment of this gathering of experts provided an atmosphere of enlightenment that would be of value to them. These contenders improved their game, learned some new things, went home with this knowledge, and won more money as a result.

I personally believe that these backgammon gameplayers can also be winners in the casino, at the race track, or at sports betting. This applies, of course, to those who are inclined to exploit their gameplaying talents in other areas. The same ability used in playing backgammon can be transferred to additional forms of gaming.

Those of you who aren't playing backgammon yet should consider doing so. It's the kind of game that inspires good playing habits. Backgammon provides a delicate balance between skill and chance, as in other gambling games. By playing backgammon, you will add to your perceptiveness, concentration and generally expand your game playing ability.

ALL PRINTING NEEDS  
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# LAS VEGAS TOURNAMENT RESULTS

| DATE                 | OPEN CLASS                   | INTERMEDIATE    |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| July 26 (Doubles)    | Vartan & Emmy Sarkissian     |                 |
| July 29              | Clarine                      |                 |
| August 5             | Karen Wolfson                | Bob Gromek      |
| August 12            | Craig Chellstorp             | Mary Davis      |
| August 19            | Sam Wilson                   | John Liakos     |
| August 23 (Doubles)  | Craig Chellstorp/Rachel Karr |                 |
| August 26            | Mitch Shapiro                | Joe Rulli       |
| Sept. 2              | Arnold Lopez                 | Dan Cameron     |
| Sept. 6 (Doubles)    | Craig Chellstorp/Rachel Karr |                 |
| Sept. 9              | Harold Seif                  | Paulette Murray |
| Sept. 16             | Arnold Lopez                 | Robert Maceda   |
| Sept. 20 (Doubles)   | Harold Seif/Mary Davis       |                 |
| Sept. 23             | Ron Weingrad                 | Doug Thayer     |
| Sept. 30             | David Hershleder             | Jim Honek       |
| Oct. 4 (Doubles)     | John Anderson                |                 |
| Oct. 7               | Clarine                      | Steve Johnson   |
| October 14           | Tim Wisecarver               | Joe Nakouzi     |
| October 18 (Doubles) | Clarine/Sally Ford           |                 |
| October 21           | David Levine                 | Bob Gromek      |
| October 28           | Bob Gromek                   | Marty Stein     |

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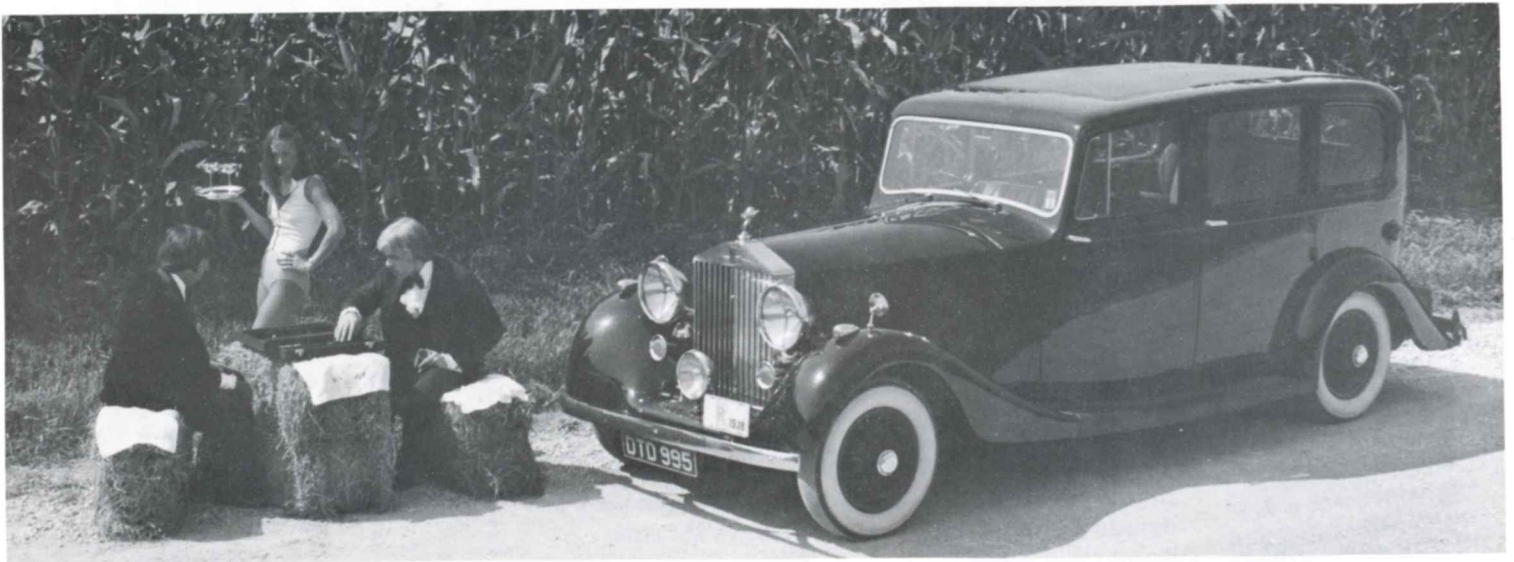
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**SELF OR VALET PARKING**

We offer the Nebraska Challenge Cup as proof that regional tournaments really work. The tournament, sponsored by the Backgammon Club of Omaha, drew participants from Lincoln, Kansas City, St. Paul and Chicago. Enthusiasm was high and nearly \$5,000 was raised in the Calcutta alone.

Special features included a calcutta dinner, \$500 added money, 90% equity return, double elimination and direction by Carolyn Caniglia.

The winners were 1st—Steve Nelson; 2nd—John Valenti; 3rd—P.J. Morgan, and 4th—Rich Chess.

Regional tournaments don't promise to make you an instant millionaire, but they do offer low overhead, high return, personal attention and plain old fun. For those of us who can't fit Monte Carlo into our budget, regional tournaments like this one can be equally satisfying.



(l to r.) TERRY PETERSEN, JOHN VALENTI, STEVE NELSON, CAROLYN CANIGLIA,

# YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO DANCES ON A 1 POINT BOARD!

by Sidney J. Harris

THE VALLEY TIMES

Somebody at the bridge table shrugged off a bad run of cards with the bromide, "Lucky at cards, unlucky in love," and her partner promptly ridiculed her for expressing so absurd a sentiment.

At first it would seem so; and yet I have always believed that these trite old sayings have their roots deep in folk psychology, and may be truer than we think.

**WHAT DOES "luck" in cards actually mean? Over a period of time, the "Lucky" player is the shrewdest player.**

It is axiomatic that the experts always seem to get the best cards — because they know how to make the most of them.

Now, the qualities which make for an expert card-player are exactly those which make for failure in love. The card-sharp is cold and calculating; he is what is known as a "percentage player." He takes only reasonable chances.

But the essence of love is its unreasonableness, its all-or-nothing quality.

Shrewdness may be successful in an intrigue; but it violates the spirit of love. It is impossible to care for another person on a percentage basis.

**LOVE, IT is true, is said to be a "gamble" — but it is a unique gamble in that the stakes are the players themselves. There is no giving part of oneself, or taking part of someone else.**

This is the sure way to lose.

I have seen tournament bridge players at work, and they are appallingly like machines. Expert poker players, too, are completely impassive.

Their "luck" is an uncanny ability to get as much as possible while giving as little as possible. The human element in the game is exploited, not embraced.

**SO THE LADY who uttered the cliché about "lucky at cards, unlucky in love," was, in a certain sense, closer to the truth than was her skeptical partner.**

This does not mean that bad card players are invariably successful in love; it only means that cleverness and guile can win at diamonds, but never at hearts.

★★

**ROBT.  
THOMAS  
McGREGOR**

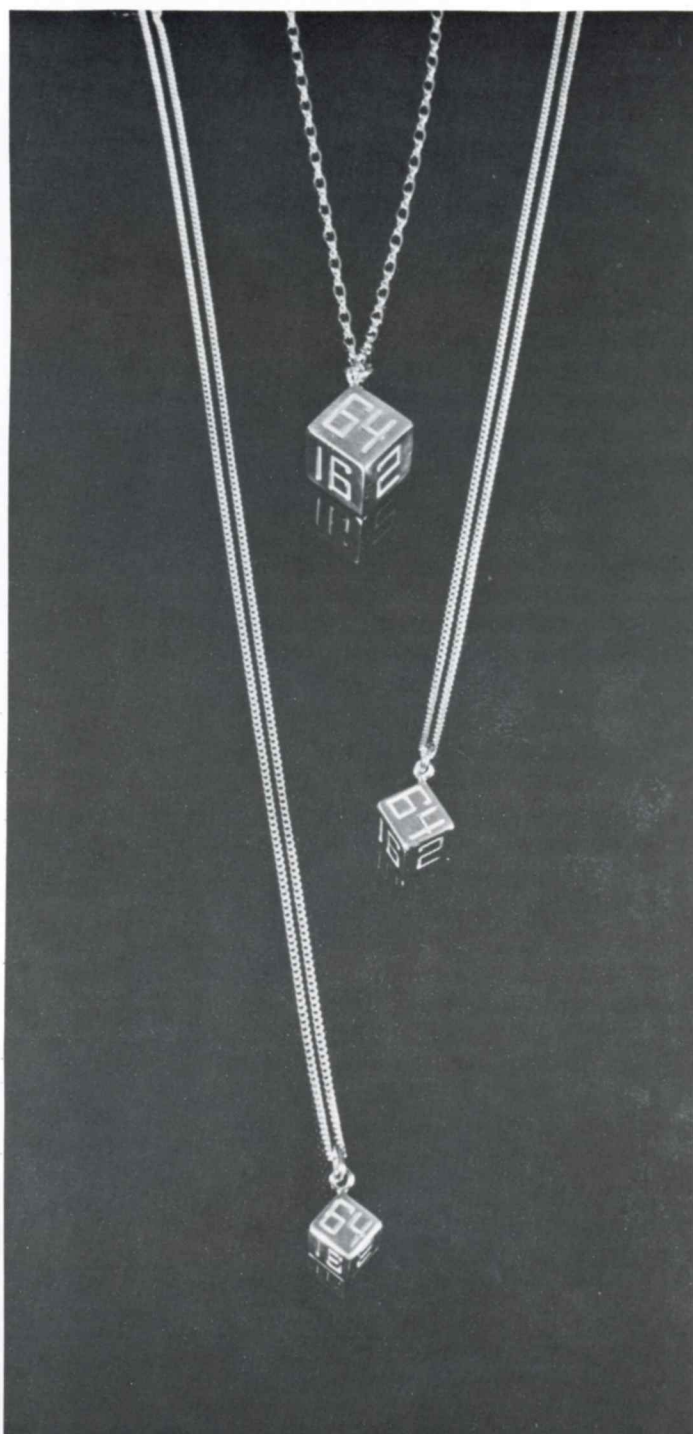


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## HAMILTON SQUASH CLUB



This Backgammon Action photograph features the Hamilton Squash Club. The year-long HSC backgammon championship play-offs are part of the continuous ladder match contest. The prizes were pure gold and silver bullion. Tuesday night is backgammon night in Hamilton; Ernie is at the helm at 1 Jarvis Street.

## Fred Block Dead

The Cavendish Club of Philadelphia is dearly going to miss Fred Block. But, not anymore than backgammon in general. He was an unselfish and tireless promoter of the game. He and his wife, Mae toiled many years to bring backgammon to the forefront.

Mr. Block was a skilled promoter, who shared his ideas and enthusiasm freely with other backgammon operators. Even during his long bout with cancer of the liver, he took time out to talk backgammon. He was one of the early backgammon supporters responsible for the backgammon renaissance. Backgammon can not afford to lose friends like Fred Block.

The Cavendish Club of Philadelphia will continue under the direction of Mae, his wife, with assistance from daughter, Cherie Block, who recently returned to Philadelphia from Los Angeles to help with club operations.



# Remy Martin

## Second Annual Festival of Backgammon

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# BLACK & WHITE SCOTCH CLASSIC

BEST CHICAGO BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT EVER



by Bill Davis

How do you successfully organize and direct an international backgammon tournament like the Black & White Chicago Classic? First, guarantee a 100% entry return by finding a sponsor willing to invest thousands of dollars. Then obtain the assistance of Playboy to throw an honest-to-goodness Saturday night bash at Hefner's mansion. Make the event important enough so that many of the finest players in the world, such as Paul Magriel and Joe Dwek are in attendance. Next invite the Gammonoid robot (recent victor in Monte Carlo over world champ Luigi Villa) to challenge the eventual Chicago champion. Finally, blend everything just right to create a constant atmosphere of elegant fun.

There is no doubt that backgammon owes a debt of gratitude to Valerie Valentine, Louis Deyong, and company for making this Herculean task a reality October 5-7 at the Michigan avenue Marriot Hotel.

First prize of nearly \$10,000 went to Barbara Glazer of Kansas City, Missouri. Barbara handily defeated 1978 World Champion Paul Magriel in the semi-finals and then proceeded to roll over boy wonder Roger Low of New York.

Many of the so-called "hot-shots" were quick to comment that Barbara was a weak, lucky player that didn't deserve first place honors. The fact of the matter is that *anyone* who can win seven long matches in a row against some of the world's finest shooters and remain cool under the intense pressure is a real backgammon *champion* in every sense of the word.

NBL players did quite well collecting their fair share of the \$30,000 prize money. Milwaukee's finest, Bob Holyon won the Consolation Championship and more than \$3500. Bob reached the big-money match by narrowly defeating Bill Davis in the semi-finals. In the Intermediate division, red-hot Paul Larson and Bernie Pygon were both main flight semi-finalists. Chicagoans Charles Witz (Championship semi-finalist) and Stanley Steele (Consolation semi-finalist) also fattened their wallets.

In the end, only one competitor remained undefeated — Scottie, the Gammonoid robot. Scottie short-circuited B & W champ, Barbara Glazer in a one game exhibition match — a feat that no mortal could accomplish all weekend! ★★



## FUN FACTS

### DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Did you know that "prime" is the modern term for what used to be known as a "blockade".

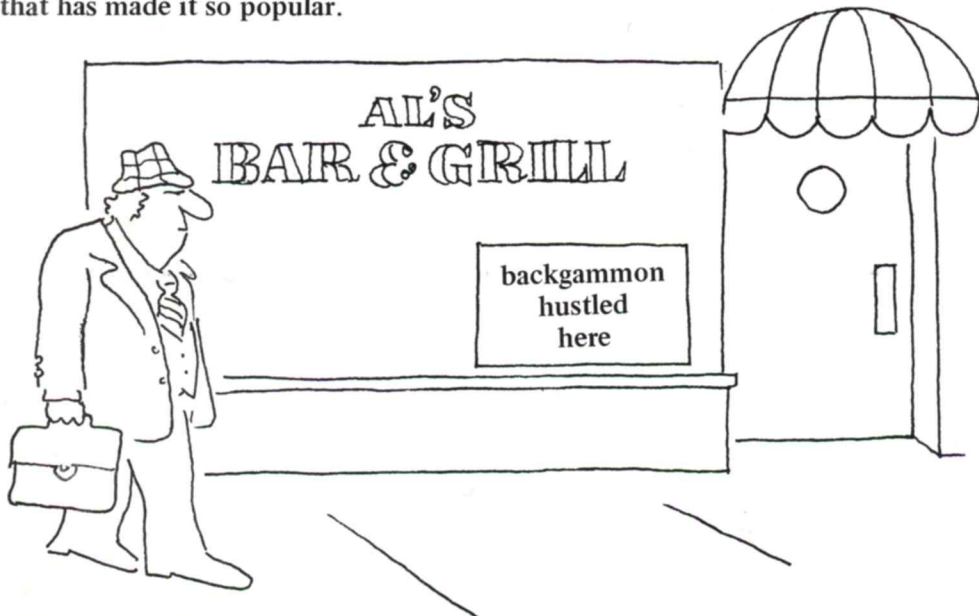
Over 10,000,000 backgammon sets are sold each year - Gucci's 24" mirrored glass table with red and green points and gold "GG's" at each corner sells for about \$700.

It has been 15 years since Prince Obolensky held the first International Backgammon Championships in the Bahamas.

The modern laws of backgammon were drafted by the tournament committee of the Racquet and Tennis Club of New York and adopted by twenty five clubs in 1931.

Prince Joli Kansil, noted backgammon author and expert, invented Bridgette considered by many the greatest two-handed bridge game.

Backgammon is touted as the technical game of exact mathematics and skills, but ironically polls show that it is its' unpredictability that has made it so popular.



*Backgammon is everywhere*



## Backgammon tournament to be played via facsimile

The rattle of dice on September 20 will start an international backgammon tournament between a team in New York and one in Geneva, Switzerland. Each move of the tournament will be relayed by high speed facsimile, used for the first time in a transoceanic backgammon tournament.

This unique tournament is being sponsored by ITT World Communications as part of its exhibit at Telecom '79 conference in Geneva. Telecom

'79 is a telecommunications' industry conference, drawing participation from corporations and communication authorities worldwide. It is sponsored by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

The five day tournament will be a showcase for the capabilities of facsimile communications as well as the skills of eight championship backgammon players.

Two teams were enlisted for the event. Former world champion Paul Magriel heads a New York team which includes top ranked players Oswald Jacoby, who is also a Bridge expert; Barclay Cooke, co-author of "Backgammon, the Cruellest Game;" and Lee Genud, author and entrepreneur. They will play from the Dag Hammarskjold Room at the U.N. Plaza Hotel.

A Swiss team features current world champion Luigi Villa, and renowned players Beverly Phillips, Kumar Motakhausses and Serge Lorenzin. They will play from the specially designed backgammon arena of the ITT exhibit in Geneva.

To display and transmit their moves, players will use Rapifax 100 facsimile units provided by Rapicom, Inc., of Fairfield, N.J. Special formats were worked out and tested prior to the tournament. For the tournament, two players from each team will play their counterparts in simultaneous games. Every move will be immediately transmitted by facsimile via the international facilities of ITT Worldcom in less than a minute.

# PORKGAMMON



by Steve Herman.

I still can't believe that it was a friendly game of backgammon that led to what occurred. The encounter with the bull, being stabbed by a toothpick, the goat urinating on my suit, and . . . Well, maybe I should start at the beginning. Yes, the beginning. . . .

Ronda Stoltz used to be a friend of mine. You've seen her. She's cute, a friendly woman, personable, a good player with the stones (her cube needs work — if you play her, just pass her the cube and watch her shrivel). Well, she is also very conniving. One night we were throwing the dice in Rumors when she decided we should play for something besides 7¢ a point. But thanks to some infinite wisdom, I decided we should play for something besides high stake dollars since — hey, I can get money anywhere!

I was now soused, going on my fifth bottle of Perrier. "I know Ronda, lets play for . . . for . . . for a party or something like that," I remarked. She pounced on that suggestion. "Well, I don't know. Uh, okay, I guess."

Then I blew it, the Perrier had taken its effect. Like a defrocked monk in heat, I rushed in for the

win on a 6-1, leaving a shot. You guessed it. Before I knew it, within several rolls, three of my poor little points were now sole refugees on the bar with Ronda's 5 points in the inner board to greet them on their return to society. To make a long story short — I lost.

"Double or nothing," I declared. With a smug look of victory on her smiling lips, she squawked in surprise, "You want to lose TWO parties!" I said, "No, no, if I win, we're even, if I lose, well . . ." Like Edison, it flashed on in her mind, "I know Steve, if you lose you have to interview Hoofers." Tasting victory, feeling lucky and soused on imported mineral water, I agreed.

A few notes of explanation are needed at this point. Hoofers is a goat — a very special goat — as you will discover. I am a news reporter. Don't get the two confused. You see, Ronda had been after me for some time to interview a goatfriend of hers — that's how she refers to Hoofers, a goatfriend. Hooper — and this is the truth — is a transsexual. Due to some type of rare bladder infection, Hoofers Tule, became a she when she used to be a he, or is it or was it a she and he became a he. I don't know! That's beside the point. The point is, I don't make a habit — in fact, I have a policy against — interviewing animals. It degrades my journalistic reputation.

By my seventh bottle of Perrier, I had lost a party and also had to interview a transsexual goat. I think I would have rather been backgammoned with the stakes at twenty dollars a point and the cube on four. As it turns out that would have been cheaper and less painful.

To add some spice to this party, Ronda decided that we should have roasted pig. She also decided that it should be a fresh pig, a whole pig, and a pig that I would have to go fetch. To make another long episode short, I had to go fetch this FRESHLY SLAUGHTERED FROZEN PIG at a farm about 30 miles

out of town. That is where I met the bull. The dent in my front left fender is evidence of that. The worse part though is trying to bring a freshly slaughtered frozen pig back to town in a sports car — a two seater. So there was Porky in my right seat cruising down the freeway. Days later, a friend who happened to be passing by that day on I-15 asked me who was the great looking fox I was with that had the pointed ears. He was serious. I now was too. The party couldn't turn out any worse than the prelude.

The guests are arriving. They marvel at the roasted pig and the fancy display of foods that surround it.

Towards the middle of the party, it was time for me to pull out my tape recorder and interview the transsexual goat. Ronda had not forgotten about this part of the bet as I hoped she would. I did not like interviewing the goat. The goat did not like being interviewed. Your credibility gets shot to hell when you open a news story like this, "Hi, this is Reporter Steve Herman and tonight at a backgammon party, we are interviewing one of the guests . . . a transsexual goat."

Hoofers Tule, the transsexual goat, proved that his bladder operation was a success. My dry cleaner is still trying to find out how to remove goat urine from polyester.

But that was not the finale of the party, folks. People were having a blast at my expense when Ronda came over to the corner I was sulking in and cooed, "Cheer up Stevie. Let's play a game of backgammon". I looked at her like she was nuts. "Sure" I said in another weak moment of insanity and this time a real sousing on several glasses of straight Vodka. No more of that funny French toilet water for me!

We agreed to play for a weekend for four at Brian Head Ski resort. Need I tell you the outcome? I'll be filing a report from the Utah Ski slopes shortly after the first snow fall.

★★

the annual

# San Diego Open Backgammon Championships



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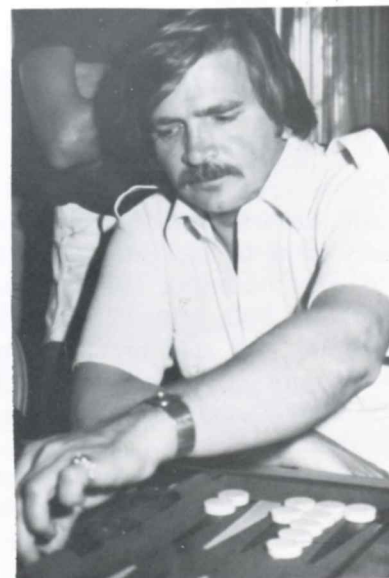
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JOEL RETTEW

## PUZZLE

### QUESTION:

Why were the male & female backgammon players tired and disgusted when they walked out of Rumors?

(Unscramble the five words – then unscramble the letters in the blocks to get answer)

mamgno    ☐ \_ \_ \_ \_ ☐  
koibeo    ☐ \_ ☐ \_ ☐ \_  
insoca    ☐ ☐ \_ \_ ☐ \_  
rinden    ☐ \_ ☐ ☐ \_ \_  
asittr    ☐ ☐ \_ ☐ \_ \_



Too much \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ; \_ \_ and \_ \_ the \_ \_ \_ !!



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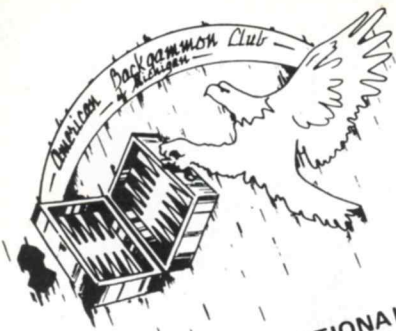
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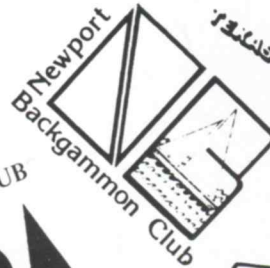
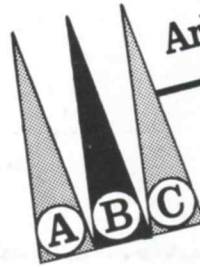
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