

vol. IV no. VI



U.S.	\$1.50
Grt. Brtn.	1£
Greece	40 Dr.
France	6 Fr.
Mexico	40 Pesos

A Guide to What's Happening

LAS VEGAS BACKGAMMON

MAGAZINE

LAS VEGAS NO. 1
MAGAZINE
NOW IN OUR
6th
YEAR

SUPERCUBE

**LADDER
COMPETITION
PLAY**

**BACKGAMMON
AMERICA**

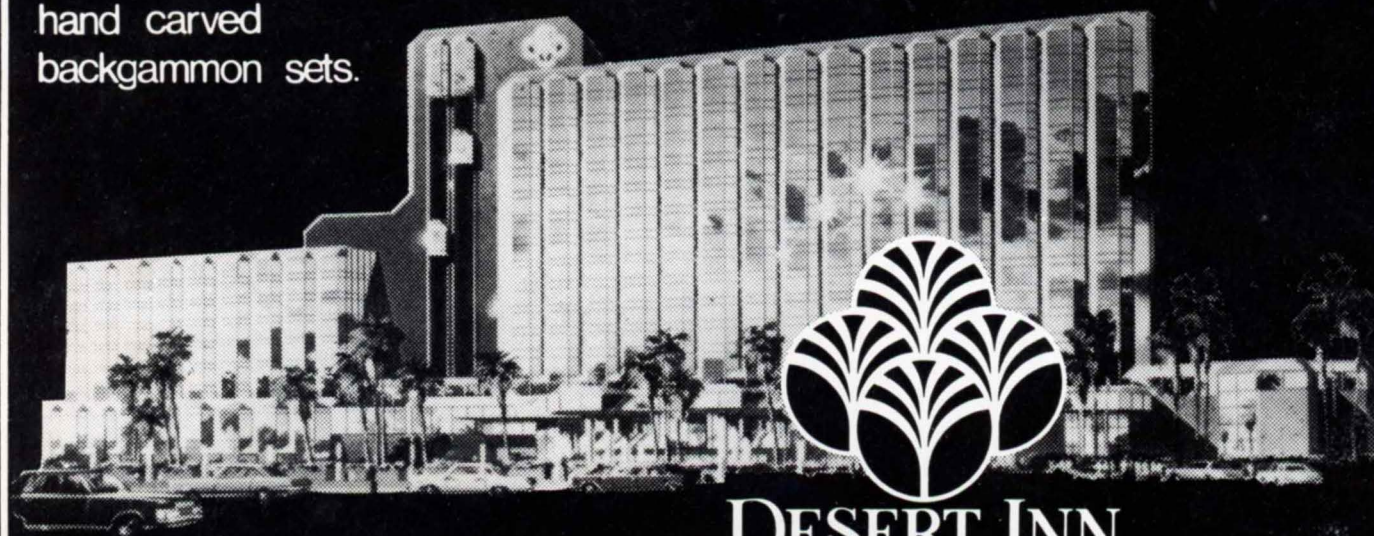


spring tournaments

DATE	TOURNAMENT	LOCATION	DIRECTOR
Feb. 17-18	Florida Regional	Ft. Lauderdale	Les Boyd
March 2-3	L. A. Spring Classic	Los Angeles	Henry Wattson
March 2-4	3rd Annual Bluegrass Regional	Louisville	Larry Strasberg
March 8-11	U.S. Open	Lake Tahoe	Les Boyd
Mar. 31 - Apr. 14	Floating Backgammon	Port Everglades	Prince Obolensky
April 18-23	Aruba Tournament	Aruba	Henry Wattson
April 20-22	Mediterranean Championship	St. Tropez	Lewis Deyong
May 18-20	Costa Esmeralda Championship	Sardinia	Lewis Deyong
June 1-3	Italian Championships	Como	Lewis Deyong

The "Brightest" Star on the Las Vegas Strip...

And where many of
the rooms feature
hand carved
backgammon sets.



DESERT INN
and Country Club



SUPERCUBE...

by Dave Thompson

Most experienced backgammon players know that a double should be accepted only when they are a three-to-one underdog or better. If they ever bothered to think about it, they usually reason as follows:

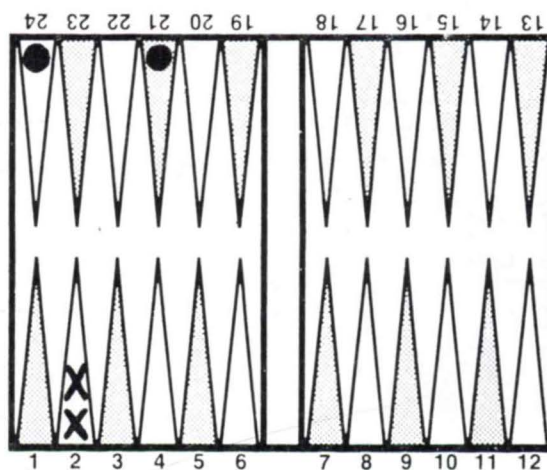
"If I accept the cube as a three-to-one dog and play four games at doubled stakes, I'll lose six units and win two for a net loss of four. Since I come out the same if I were to refuse the cube and give up one unit each of those four games, I do better by accepting a double anytime I'm better than a three-to-one dog."

Blackjack players reason the same way when they're faced with the surrender option. Instead of being offered the choice of giving up one bet or playing for two, they're permitted to give up half their bet or play on for the full original bet. It's all the same thing — the point at which it becomes profitable to surrender the original bet (or half-bet) is three to one.

While on the subject of blackjack, what is the answer to the following problem? "You're playing blackjack and have taken insurance against the dealer's ace. How big a favorite on your hand must you be to want to lose your insurance bet and to play the hand out?" The answer is the same — three to one. Once again, you're being given the choice of giving up half or playing for the whole thing.

Returning to backgammon, it turns out on closer inspection that something less than 25% (which is the same as being a three-to-one dog) is all that is needed to accept a double. The reason is that you needn't act-

ually play the game out to a successful conclusion, but only become a big enough favorite to double your opponent out of the game. Let's take the following simplified example:



O is only a 26 to 10 favorite to bear off both men (any ace but 1-1 will leave a man), which is less than 3 to 1, but look what happens when O doesn't come off AND NEITHER DOES X. Seventy-two percent (26/36) of the time O will win immediately, but of the 28% of the time he doesn't, O will miss also when he rolls 3-1, 2-1, 1-1 for 5/36 or 14% of the time. Thus O's total chances are $.72 + .28 (.14) = 75.9\%$, which is greater than the three to one that X needs to act-

accept the double.

An experienced backgammon player will quickly protest that O is not entitled to his extra 3.9% since he will be doubled out by X before he ever gets the chance to roll a second time. That's very true and leads us to scrap the three-to-one rule in favor of the following:

"If acceptance of the cube meant that no further doubling action could ensue and the game would be played out to a showdown, then a player in order to accept a double would have to have a 25% or one-quarter chance to win. But since possession of the cube involves the capacity to put an end to the game short of a showdown (to "double the opponent out"), then a player can be something less than 25% to accept a double."

In fact, it turns out that he need be only 20% or four to one to accept. The proof is as follows:



A player who stands a 25% chance to win will definitely reach 100% (victory) one-quarter of the time.



A player who stands a 20% chance to win will reach 80% (at which point he will double his opponent out) THE SAME ONE-QUARTER OF THE TIME. It should be clear that it's just as easy (or difficult) to go from 20% to 80% as from 25% to 100%. In both cases the player is exactly a three-to-one underdog, which as we've seen, is the dividing line between correctly accepting or rejecting a double.

DAVE THOMPSON, Professional Gambler, Sports Betting Columnist, and author of *Play Backgammon Tonight*.



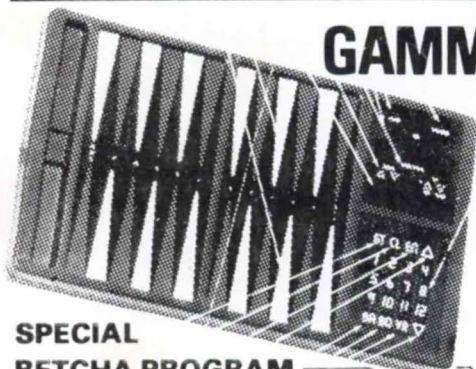
CHAMPIONS AND MORE CHAMPIONS

It seemed that every other person you met at the Amateur Backgammon Championships had won something.

Jason Lester of New York almost won everything! He was marginally defeated in the Super Sixteen by Oswald "how does he do it" Jacoby. He went on to win the Pro-Championship although by default due to a sudden illness that struck his opponent. A silver bullet in the heart would not be enough deterrent to keep most players from answering that final bell. That was a very strong and expensive virus!

Many were disappointed in the lack of closing ceremonies. With all the money spent by the promoters on foreplay, time should have been found for a cigarette and some conversation afterward.

Award ceremonies are important to the occasional champions.



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VEGAS — Gamblers' Mecca



By Dick Odessky

Gamblers and casino operators throughout the world have long considered Las Vegas to be the "Mecca" of legalized gaming, a title jealously held by Monte Carlo for decades until the Nevada desert blossomed fully.

Although men and women are able to indulge in casino gambling of one type or another in dozens of countries, everyone of them seems to desire play in one of the garish and gaudy Las Vegas gaming areas more than anything else.

There are many reasons why Las Vegas enjoys all this fame and, with it, plenty of fortune. The absolute flamboyance of the Strip and downtown casinos is probably the greatest attraction.

In England, casinos are not permitted to have signs. In Las Vegas, neon is measured in miles and light-bulbs are counted by the tens of thousands. Along the glittering Strip, every hotel boasts a huge free-standing sign that might tower 200 feet into the sky, in addition to building as much excitement as possible into the facia of their buildings.

Downtown Las Vegas has long been known as "Glitter Gulch," thanks to the spectacular signs that turn nighttime into daytime along Fremont Street. As well,

there are big, painted billboards well-placed to catch the eye of the most blase tourist.

Casino entry is another area where all Nevada resorts are able to out-shine their foreign colleagues. In Seoul, Korea, gamblers pay an entrance fee for the chance to gamble their money. In Mar del Plata, Argentina, hours of play are limited, with casinos opening at noon.

In Las Vegas, the games and slot machines are ready and available at any hour of the day or night and the doors of every casino are wide open to all comers. In some countries, local residents are not permitted to even drop a coin in a slot machine, whereas Nevada casinos depend on the local trade for millions of dollars in revenue, each year.

In many regions that have legal casinos, drinking is not permitted in the gaming area and the operations are not permitted to offer any entertainment. Las Vegas features the biggest stage shows in the world and cocktail waitresses constantly circulate through the tables and machines, taking orders for complementary drinks.

Credit is something else that is just in its infancy in many countries. Players are expected to bring along enough cash to enjoy their visit to casinos. But, in Las Vegas, there are credit accounts reaching into the millions of dollars for an individual.

Of course, the Las Vegas operators won't allow you to simply walk in and grab off a handful of hundred dollar bills to play at the tables. Before any cash will be handed over, the customer must establish a credit line.

Suitable banking references are required and then the patron is told to set the maximum amount they might want during a single visit. All information on the application is then checked through a worldwide network and an account is opened.

No Las Vegas casino will permit players to increase their limit while they are playing or drinking. It is felt that emotions or booze could cause a person to overindulge and, possibly, cause them permanent financial harm. Since Nevada and most other states do not recognize gambling debts for collection purposes, the Las Vegas casinos must do a closer check on applicants than many banks might require for a loan.

A tremendous attraction to Las Vegas that is not found in any other gaming area is low prices for resort living. Rooms, food, drinks and entertainment are far lower than in resort or business hotels anywhere else in the world. As well, the service in most of the properties is superior.

Although the local Chamber of Commerce would rather believe otherwise, scenery and side trips are not Las Vegas' long suit. In most gaming regions of the world, the casinos are in beautiful settings that might include the ocean, snow-covered mountains or a historic city.

But, Las Vegas is set in the middle of the Mojave Desert. For those who enjoy the stark beauty of the desert, it can be very satisfying. As well, the Charleston Range of mountains, skirting the area, can be most attractive, especially when they carry the snows of winter. But, there are no forests, streams or other attractions one might expect in a resort area.

Of course, massive Hoover Dam and the man-made Lake Mead are about a half-hour away. And, for those who enjoy history, a rented car may be driven to some of the most quaint ghost towns in the Wild West.

But, Las Vegas' glamour is almost entirely man-made. The nearly 15 million tourists who come here every year apparently are well satisfied because they are the ones who have turned this into the "Mecca" for gamblers.

SHOW GUIDE

TROPICANA 739-2222

Tiffany Theatre:
Indefinite: Folies Bergere '79
8 p.m.—Dinner Show
12 midnight—Cocktail Show



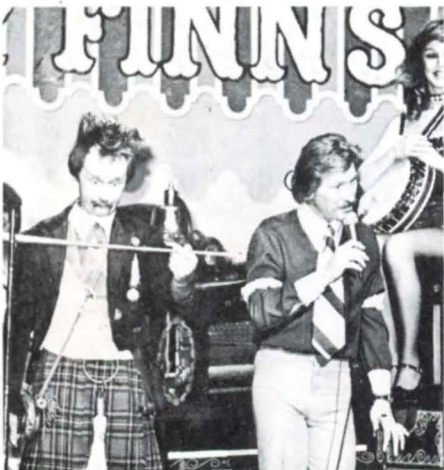
HACIENDA 739-8911

Showroom:
Indefinite: Ice Fantasy
Lounge:
Indefinite: Continuous Entertainment



UNION PLAZA 386-2110

Showroom:
Indefinite: Anything Goes 8 pm & 11:45 pm
Indefinite: Mickey Finn Show 2 pm & 4 pm



CIRCUS CIRCUS 734-0410

Indefinite: Circus Acts from
'Round the World
11 a.m. to 12 midnight



STARDUST 732-6111

Showroom:
Indefinite: Lido De Paris '79
Starring Siegfried & Roy
Sun.-Fri. 7 p.m. & 11 p.m.
Sat. 6 p.m., 9:15 p.m. & 12:15 a.m.



DUNES 734-4110

Showroom:
Indefinite: Casino De Paris
Sat. 6 p.m., 9:15 p.m., 12:15 a.m.
Mon.-Fri. 7:45 & 11:45



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Living on Love

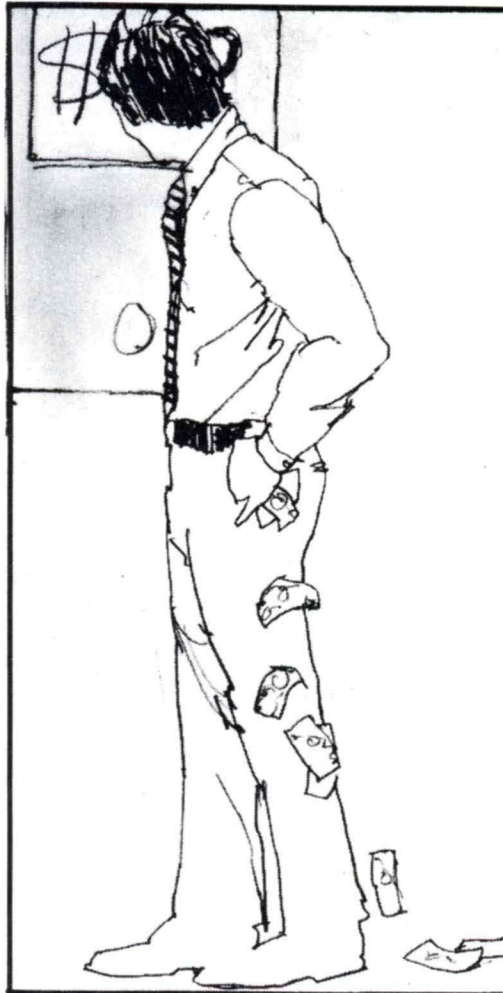
Nothing lives on love. Even the most intoxicated newlyweds soon realize that lack of money causes disputes and disillusionment. It is this money crisis that has brought regional backgammon club operators to the point of divorce. They are weary of constantly being asked to help in the promotion of major tournaments because they love the game. They all fall for the courting line, "It is in the interest of backgammon, therefore, in your interest to have this tournament succeed!" We, and it now seems many others, disagree.

The tournament organizers profit from donated efforts. Club operators are used as salesmen, information offices, and distributors for promotional material. This represents thousands of working hours for the already overworked and underpaid backgammon operator. Those of you who have spent a half hour on the phone while dinner waits, answering questions concerning some miles-away tournament will understand what we mean.

Many directors now feel that, since the majority of the tournaments have commercial sponsors, it is unfair to expect all this manpower and publicity for free. Evidence of this attitude surfaced at the ABC Tournament recently held in Las Vegas where less than a third of the participants were signed up by clubs.

Directors now are curtailing their activities on behalf of money-making backgammon ventures — unless there is just compensation.

In the past, some promoters have paid small fees to clubs who have signed up players for a tournament. But, problems have arisen. Often, more than one club claimed a player. Even more often, the promoter, in ensuing years, bypassed the local club by soliciting the player directly since he now had



him on his own mailing list. The fledgling clubs in need of additional survival money started to resent this practice.

Directors of these clubs feel they rightfully earned some compensation by their continued unselfish promotion of backgammon tournaments. They claim to have spent too many uncompensated man hours answering questions, distributing promotional material, and convincing players to travel to major tournaments.

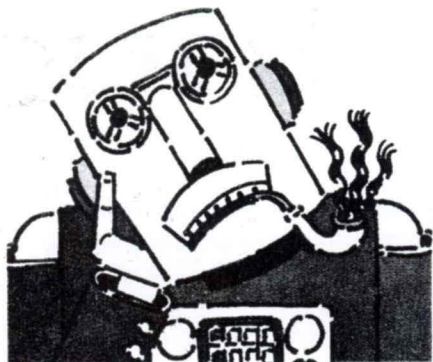
Crocodile tears, streaming down the faces of the backgammon entrepreneurs, are not going to convince them otherwise. After all, if there was no money to be made there would not be any tourna-

ments. Only positive action will change the growing belief that the regional promoter is continuously exploited by the organizers of big national tournaments.

Our suggestion is simple. Start by scrapping all present confusing and unequal agreements that have been struck by club directors and promoters. Henceforth, insist that all tournament players designate their preferred backgammon club. Many players belong to more than one, but consider a particular club their home. This club should receive a standard fee for the player. The money need not come from the tournament promoter's pocket. It simply can be added to the entry fee and charged to the player. It can be argued that there will be resistance to this idea from the participants. We predict the opposite.

Tournament goers already are accustomed to having as much as \$30 deducted for "rubber chicken" auction dinners. Many players dodge these boring affairs, but pay the obligatory fee anyway. The auction dinner, of course, benefits the tournament promoter in that he receives a kickback and/or rakes the calcutta pool. We think the player will feel more satisfied knowing that a small piece of his entry fee goes to the support of his local club.

It is in the interest of the tournament promoters to adopt this or some similar program. It is a matter of staying alive! Strength flows from the bottom to the top. The local club is the foundation upon which your tournament business is built. Small local clubs are struggling. They need as much encouragement as they can get to stay active. They are not going to respond to ego massaging anymore. They are aware of how hard they work and how much they contribute. They also realize that they can't live on love.



I DOUBLE . . . I THINK?

Reno, Nevada hosted this year's Conference on Gaming. The prestigious event, sponsored by the University of Nevada, draws the foremost experts on gaming from around the world. Not an affair for the layman, the conference features sophisticated speakers and insider seminars. LVBC staffers, nevertheless, attended the conference having anticipated that the ever-growing interest in backgammon would result in some sort of presentation involving our game. We were not disappointed! Not one, but two time slots were reserved for prepared backgammon theses. We fell asleep during the first one, but pledged to hear the second one through. One hundred and fifty type written pages later, we can report that:

"Assuming that the dice are unbiased, each ordered pair in the set R has a probability of occurring $= 1/36$. Since we do not distinguish between pairs such as 1,3 and 3,1 we can consider all the entries above and on the main diagonal of the matrix to be the element of a new set R^* . The cardinality of $R^* = (R^*) = 21$.

The probability associated with each element of R^* is

$$P[(i,j)] = 1/36, \text{ if } i=j; 2/36, \text{ if } i \neq j, \\ (i \text{ less than } j)$$

Let $G=(V,E)$ be a digraph as previously defined. Let U be a subset of V , i.e., $U \subset V$, and let $u \subset V$ and $r \subset R^*$. Define a fixed strategy to be a function

$$: U \rightarrow R^* \rightarrow V, \text{ equivalently} \\ : (u, r) \rightarrow w.$$

In terms of backgammon play this means; given a position and a roll there is only one way to play the roll, UNDER THE FIXED STRATEGY, thereby arriving at a new position."

The above excerpt has been lifted from a computer study entitled BACKGAMMON: COMPUTER COMPUTATIONS FOR EXACT SETTLEMENT VALUES AND DOUBLING DECISIONS IN THE LATE BACKGAME, by Gregory E. Dahms, Carleton University.

A copy of the paper is available for viewing at LVBC headquarters for those who speak computer. But, we must inform those interested that the variable \$64 has been ignored in all of the figuring. Translated to the vernacular, it means steam.

SPECIAL EVENTS

CHOUETTE NIGHT

Due to repeated demands, we are designating THURSDAY nights at 9:00 pm as Chouette Night. All those who have asked for it, please show up! Chouettes may be any size from \$1 to \$20.

* * *

DOUBLES TOURNAMENT

Every other TUESDAY will be Doubles Night 2 on 2. Get a partner and come down and play. Excellent opportunity to learn. Entry Fee \$30 per couple (limited to 16 teams). For additional info call 361-3910. Mike Van Dusen, Director.

COVER: Conceived by Tony Klonarakis; Technical production, Larry Lee; Sets, costumes and models compliments of Follies Bergere, Tropicana Hotel. The showgirls are Kathy Price and Mary Ann Davidson. Photo by Linda Kruegel.

LAS VEGAS BACKGAMMON

In Las Vegas, RUMORS, on the Strip, is the home of the Las Vegas Backgammon Club and the place for nightly action! But, backgammon is also played at TIFFANY'S, the LAS VEGAS COUNTRY CLUB and the JOCKEY CLUB (all private membership clubs).

A couple of boards are available at the ADVERTISER Bar on Paradise Road and TONEY BALTIMORE'S on Spring Mountain Road (both are open 24 hrs.). Backgammon replaces Monday Night Football at GOOD TIME CHARLIE'S on Maryland Parkway. That action at Charlie's starts at 4 pm till whenever and drinks are two for the price of one. Of course, GIBBY'S front room has a few boards that are occasionally in use. Backgammon at Gibby's now shares the room with pinball machines.

The SPORTING HOUSE, a Stardust Hotel operation on Industrial Road is a racquetball and exercise club. The management of the Sporting House has seen the light and put four boards in the lounge area.

If you are coming to Las Vegas on a comp and are staying at the ALADDIN Hotel, ask for one of the two bi-level suites. There you will find a spectacular hand-carved backgammon table permanently set up for the highrollers' use. But, the quintessence of backgammon comfort is at the DESERT INN where each room features an ivory inlaid backgammon table. The new DI has no traditional hotel rooms. Each room is a mini-suite and backgammon is part of the decor.

It might be of interest to note that nowhere in Las Vegas is there a table charge for playing backgammon. This is largely due to the no-charge policy pioneered by the LVBC six years ago. For more information while visiting Las Vegas, call us at (702) 361-3910.



CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS

by Lewis Deyong

May I be permitted a few observations on Vol. 4, No. 5. Your correspondent who wrote "*Have You Seen A Doubling Cube Standing in the Shadow?*" (pg. 37) should be commended for his enterprise, along with the other members of the Rhode Island Backgammon Club. However, on one point he is misinformed.

Before acclaiming a new peak of attendance, you might be inter-

ested to know the existing record. While 652 (Las Vegas 1978) is a very substantial number, the Philip Morris International/Daily Mail British Amateur Championships of 1976 attracted 2130 players to venues all over Britain. The London qualifying heat alone contained over 700. We wish Rhode Island good luck.

"... *The Missing Man*" (pg. 8) deserves consideration by all serious tournament players. My own view is that if each player is made responsible for his own men, at least the question of who is at fault will not arise. Such a responsibility should not overburden the brain of any player who has moved beyond the stage of counting on his fingers. Once the blame (advertent or inadvertent) has been fairly allocated to one party, the only problem remaining is the extent of the penalty.

If the man is found off the board during the course of a game, the offended player will have the option to place his opponent's man on the bar, or force the opponent

to play on with 14 men. The player with 14 men can still lose a gammon or a Backgammon."

This is the wording of Rule 30 of the Merit Tournament Rules, recognized by over 100 leading Backgammon Clubs, Associations, etc., throughout the world. When players see this admittedly stringent penalty invoked once or twice, the incidence of the problem should drop rapidly!

Finally I would like to congratulate the author of "*Are You Too Cool...*" (pg. 9) on both the style and the content of his article. He has caught the actions and the character of "Mr. Cool," perfectly, and in a very few words. These percentage merchants are so busy looking for sure things that they do not have the time or the inclination to attain the status of a true expert, one who is fully recognized and respected by all players for his mastery of the game.

Thank you for exposing the danger posed to backgammon by its No. 1 parasite, "the mini-pro."

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CAESARS PALACE



BACKGAMMON BITS

"Backgammon Bits" is our way of cleaning the files of the mountains of information we accumulate between issues. It should be more appropriately called "Backgammon Bulletin" since it contains both gossip and news. So here's the low-down:

Impossible to mention every important person who visited Las Vegas during the ABC Tournament but at least 30 directors of backgammon clubs were here including



BOB CIAFFONE (Detroit), NICK MAFFEO (S.F.), SID JACKSON (L.A.), LINDA GEORGE (Jacksonville), BERNARD BERGSTEIN (Hawaii), SARGIS SERGES (Chicago), IDA WEIL (Chicago), BILL DAVIS (Chicago), PATTI HEYMAN (Maryland), JAIME ABADI (Mexico), LEE SILVERSTEIN (St. Paul), ROBERT HOWAYECK (Massachus.), STEVE KURZBAN (N.Y.), and MAE and FRED BLOCK (Philly). Special trips to Las Vegas: CHUCK PAPAIZIAN in for the Electronics Show & Convention (Chuck's company now doing game programming for Mattel and others);

Off to Hawaii: ALAINA NABIT (loved it, stayed), JIM HONEK (loved it, stayed), MARY JO (loved it), DEBIE ENDO (always loves it, that's her birthplace) . . .

The SIG SAKOWICZ Show, hosted the LVBC in response to growing interest in backgammon . . . ADAM ALMAGORE in from England briefly . . .



MICHAEL MAXAKULI and NED DAY spent three days in Mexico City at the Magriel Cup tournament and three days in bed in Las Vegas on their return . . .



JUNE WILKENSON, famous actress and pin-up, is also an accomplished backgammon player. She dropped in to the club for some choutetting between shows at the Union Plaza where she is starring in "Pajama Tops". We had planned to use Miss Wilkenson on the cover, but the photographer was so overwhelmed by her presence that very few of the pictures turned out! . . .

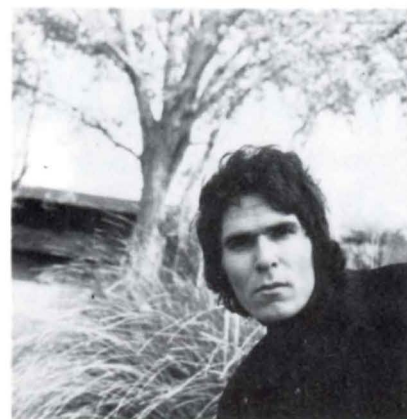
CRAIG CHELLSTORP back to Chicago. DAVID EIG back to Miami

. . . DR. MICHAEL JONAK, the only doctor smart enough to still make house calls . . . MICHAEL JOSEPH, to Detroit, of course

. . . DENVER KEEN (our former guardian) now at the Maxim . . . CLIFF KING, again living in Las Vegas, former director of the S.F. Backgammon Club . . .



MARK CALLAS and his super band, HI-ENERGY, is now appearing at Caesars Palace in Cleopatra's Barge . . .



TONY KLONARAKIS, loyal LVBCer and expert skin diver, was impressed with VERNON BALL's attempt to play backgammon under water. Tony tried it on a recent skin diving excursion and reports that it's easy enough to play under water, but hard to collect on the surface . . .



Playboy Magazine's Feb. issue stars LVBCer ANGELIQUE PETTYJOHN in "Girls of Las Vegas" feature.

To those who have complained about the mis-numbered dice at the Club (5 opposite 3, 4 opposite 2, etc.), write your complaints to CHESS & GAMES, Los Angeles. We didn't get an answer to our complaint letter and neither will you! We'll continue to suffer with the numbering error and the surprise of often having them explode upon hitting the board. The ruling on the latter phenomenon is that you play all three numbers since it is an Act of God. These dice cost the Club \$1.00 each! . . .

ALAN MARTIN in for the Alan Martin Show; GREG BLOTSKY in from Hawaii to discuss new directions for the Honolulu Backgammon Club. STEFANOV, incognito sans mustache) from N.Y. Las Vegas to Turnberry Tourney (Fla.) SUZY CREAMCHEESE, BILLY INCARDONA, JOHN ANDERSON. Speaking of Suzy C., she was recently honored with membership to the Kentucky Colonels, one of the handful of women to be so honored. Is it because Presidential mother, MISS LILIAN, has taken to wearing Suzy C. fashions?

It was my cousin, BILL M. who made me play blackjack. . . Current steadies: TONY MANCARI vs CARLO KURAJICA; MITCH SHAPIRO vs RICHARD SCHWARTZ; KAREN WOLFSON vs HARRY BROWN . . .



CAROL and DAVID BOYER expecting already . . . SUSAN KEEHN now a licensed real estater . . .



CARLO ENRICHI and KATHY off to Venice, Italy . . . LYNN BERKE and C.J. BOYER being congratulated for their hard hitting series (Las Vegas SUN) on religious cults . . . JOANNIE BLEWETT, hard-working reference librarian, thank you for your constant support in our research for the magazine . . . Did anyone else receive the MIKE PASSARELLI letter announcing the disbanding of the Rhode Island Backgammon Club? It left us confused. What sinister forces have strong-armed him? . . . What does PETER FINCH have to do with backgammon? What does PAOBLO CASALS have to do with backgammon? Was he really an "egotistical capitalist,***hole to the feeling"; changed to a "thinking, feeling, human being"? Is this metamorphosis or just the long goodbye? . . .



RACHEL KARR is now with Eldorado Realty as sales manager, call her at 385-5026. Her claim to fame: has been trying to win Beginners for over a year!



. . . DIANE PITAK can't wait to go back to New Jersey — in the meantime, she will settle for Acapulco . . .

NOTE: Time Limit of 45 minutes per match will be imposed in all future LVBC Sunday tournaments.



LETTERS FROM READERS



Dear LVBC:

While the Las Vegas Tournament is still fresh in our minds, we would like to take the opportunity of expressing our feelings.

So much was learned from last year's tournament to this year, and it certainly showed! We had worked so hard on improving all the areas that had been problems last year, and the effort we put into this paid off. Everything ran as smoothly as possible, and needless to say, we were delighted!

One thing is clear — without the Las Vegas people to help us, none of the wheels would have turned. It is really terrific to see their interest in this tournament. Our entire staff, 75 in all, were sensational, and our sincere "thank you" to all.

Interesting enough, the difference in the amount of amateur players from last year to this year, 705 last year, 600 this year, has been a major source of concern to us. In our final analization of matters, we found that the percentage of players from individual clubs throughout the country was so low it was amazing! Then just where, if not from the Clubs, did our players come? We know just how hard it is to get pre-publicity

for this tournament, for the newspapers are really interested in the finals. Our only answer to this seems to be magazines such as yours, and word-of-mouth. But why should the clubs, who depend on players' interest to keep their business going, not put the effort into helping players become interested in tournaments? It must eventually be beneficial to their clubs.

All in all, the tournament was a huge success. We learned from last year, and have learned from this year, and with the knowledge put together, next year has to be bigger and better.

Once again, thank you to all the wonderful people who helped us.

Louise Goldsmith & Kate Wattson
Executive Directors, ABC

Dear Mr. Maxakuli:

I just came aboard Games Magazine and was delighted to come across your magazine, especially since I'm a Vegan, and more especially that you were kind enough to give us mention in your Vol. IV, No. V issue. Everyone at Games appreciated your nice comments. While I have enclosed the Nov/Dec issue, I'm sending a dozen or so under separate cover for you and your staff. May you have a happy new year.

Roger McCord
Games Magazine

Dear Backgammon Enthusiasts:

Dec. 22, 1978, Gammon Magazine is finally at the printers and will be ready for mailing in three weeks. After all this time, we've finally broken through. Best wishes for a happy holiday season. We're counting on your help.

Buddy Berke, Publisher
Gammon Magazine

EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm from Missouri!

Dear LVBC:

Greetings from myself and everyone in Milwaukee. This month's magazine is great! I could not agree more with some of your articles and letters from other readers. I would just like to say that in Milwaukee we adhere to the LVBC rules, because we feel they are the best comprehensive compilation of backgammon rules put together. They are very clear and concise and cover just about anything that could happen in a game. Also, I want to comment on your article on club support. Granted, we are new here in Milwaukee and struggling to get started. But your article made me realize just like it is, for the aloof backgammon player to remain aloof. It is up to me not to be discouraged by this player's aloofness and unwillingness to join and support the club he plays at. It is my job to try and provide an atmosphere conducive to backgammon play and sociability as well. And, this is what I will continue to do.

Merrill Schrager, President
Dueling Oaks Backgammon
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

CAMPBELL BRIDGE & BACKGAMMON

We apologize if anyone drove around Orange County looking for the Campbell Backgammon Club. We meant to describe its location as just south of the bay area; two secretaries and a typesetter-later, it came out as Southern California.

Campbell Bridge & Backgammon is near San Jose. As of Feb. 1, the club will move to larger quarters at 175 Campbell. Marty Miller is the director. Sorry, Marty!



Las Vegas, "Entertainment Capital of the World" is pleased to welcome each of you to our exciting and fun-filled city.

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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



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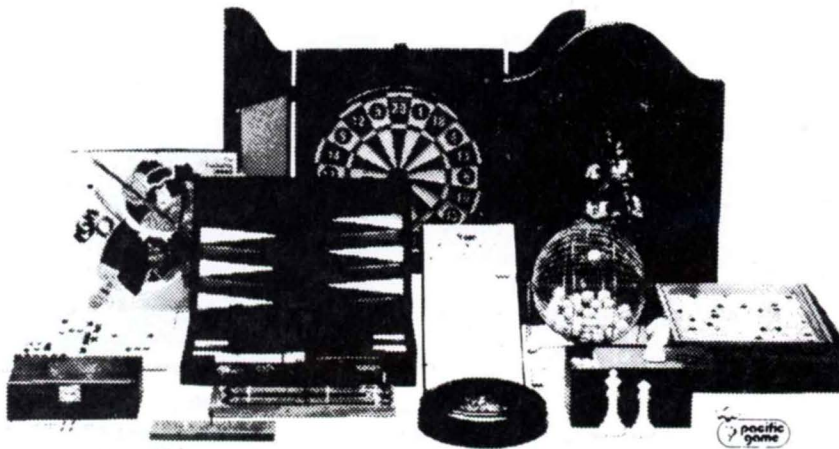
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The Game Keeper

The Meadows Las Vegas

CHILDREN PLAY TOO

There wasn't going to be an article on the children's tournament held recently. What can you say about the lil' darlins except that they're lil' darlins? But, the children played so intensely and were so well-behaved that we have to comment. The level of play was exceptionally high. Any child in that tournament could have triumphed over 50% of our regular intermediate players.

Some cried when they lost, but, that also is a regular occurrence in the adult tournament.

RUMORS' owner, Glen Pitak, dragged himself out of bed early to have the disco in top shape for the young dancers.

Boston Pizza delivered hot and tasty miniatures for the hungry horde.

Mike VanDusen, tournament coordinator, donated backgammon boards and other games as additional prizes. He also did a fine job of hiding in the bathroom.

Someone won the dinner-for-two donated by the Desert Inn and has to decide whether to invite Mom or Dad to enjoy it with him.

The trophies, of course, were contributed by our regular super trophy maker, Boulevard Trophy.

Thank you all. You did such a good job that now we are forced to have another one soon!



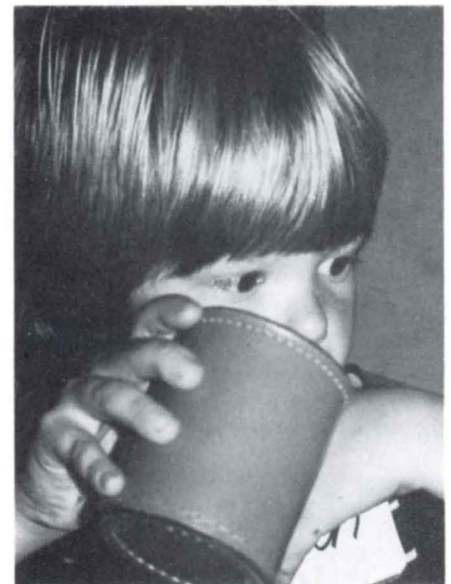
KORINA GROMEK



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MIKELLE VAN DUSEN

Book Review

TWO BOOKS — TWO OPINIONS

by Mike Bacon

With the recent popularity of backgammon, there has been a rapid rise in books on the subject. Backgammon still has a long way to go to catch up with chess, as there are more chess books than books on all other games combined!

Two new additions to the backgammon library are *Paradoxes & Probabilities* by Barclay Cooke, and *The Backgammon Quiz Book* by Prince Joli Kansil.

Which do you want first — the good news or the bad news? The bad is the *Quiz Book*. Prince Kansil is certainly no prince at backgammon. Take the position illustrated as an example: "O is on the bar and has a 3-2 to play. Obviously you will enter with the two." What do you do with the three? Prince Kansil gives five points if you bring a man to the five-point. If that was the move you chose, you are losing far too many gammons!

You receive two points if you bring a man down from the mid-point. You can also afford to lose a large amount of money! To his credit, the Prince does give two points for the only move to keep you in the game, hitting on the one point. If you do not make your opponent use half a roll to enter (and almost half, 44% of the time, he will stay out, and look who gets gammoned then!), he will make the two point, putting you



on the bar with a five point board, 59% (21 out of 36) of the time.

The worst thing that can happen is for him to come in with a one and hit, and nine numbers put two men up. But you may enter with a two or four and eleven numbers return hit. Unfortunately, that is only one example of many.

The only good thing about the book is the price: \$2.50 in paperback. My advice is to use the money to buy *Paradoxes & Probabilities*.

Lewis Deyong says, "The author doesn't sidestep controversy, but candidly admits that certain positions defy concrete analysis." In other words, he doesn't claim to know everything, which is a refreshing contrast to the inflated egos throughout the world of backgammon.

Barclay Cooke takes actual game positions and discusses them in depth. He also talks about the cube in a way most authors do not. In one position he admits that he cannot tell you why he prefers one play over another, except that it just feels right. He explains his reasons in a clear and concise manner. I would have to say that it is one of the better backgammon books on the market. It costs \$8.95 in hardback and is well worth the price

Reprinted from the *Georgia Backgammon Assn. & Atlanta Backgammon Society Newsletter*

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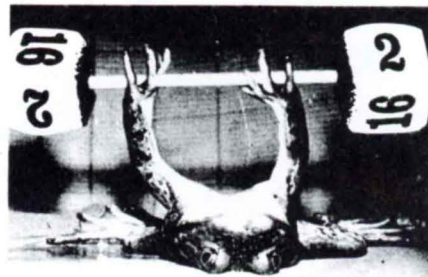
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BACKGAMMON FUN FACTS



Backgammon has out-lasting all other ancient forms of amusement. The Japanese lay serious claim to the invention of Backgammon. The ancient Greeks had a similar game known as "Abacus." A Sanskrit quotation reads, "Thus Kala and Kali casting day and night with a pair of dice play with human prices on the board of the world." In the tomb of King Tutankhamen were found a gaming board, with sets of men and some dice!

New



Las Vegas

ASSOCIATES

NATIONAL BACKGAMMON LEAGUE (CHICAGO) — *The National Backgammon League Newsletter* has been a source of information to us for a long time. Finally, we got to meet its helmsman, Bill Davis, in Las Vegas. We found him to be truly dedicated to the growth and advancement of backgammon. The current president of the club is Pat Rottman who directs two weekly tournaments in the Chicago area. The group operates on a non-profit, no membership fee basis. At one time the club boasted over 2,000 members, although no current figures are available. This organization is probably responsible for the proliferation of many small neighborhood clubs in Chicago. When in Chicago, contact Pat Rottman at (312) 831-5037.

ARLINGTON BACKGAMMON CLUB — Sargis Serges is the well-known, ever-present tournament player. Colorful and conspicuous, he is a recognizable figure on the tournament circuit. This same pleasant backgammoner operates the Arlington Backgammon Club in Arlington Heights, Illinois. He joins the associates this month because he believes "Backgammon's survival depends on unity at a grass-roots level." We applaud this philosophy and will lend our strength to help him grow in Illinois. (312) 394-1331.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY BACKGAMMON CLUB — Three members to 48 in just one week! Sold out tournaments twice a week. That is the short track record of this club. Started on campus by Jordan Gold, this organization has become the hottest happening in Carbondale, Illinois. Although no cash prizes can be awarded on campus, the alternate off-campus tourney does have them. Both tournaments feature other non-cash prizes. Backgammon at college is an excellent passtime. It sure beats silly activities we used to occupy ourselves with during our free time at school. Someone might consider backgammon theory as a subject of interest. It surely is a more interesting subject than Advanced Calligraphy! Welcome Jordan (618) 529-1667.

CAVENDISH CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA — Hard working Fred and Mae Block operate this fine club in Philadelphia. We spent a long time talking to Fred on the phone discussing the direction of backgammon and was impressed with his insight on the subject. He has come to the same conclusions we have on the future of the game. Since his club has great influence throughout the East Coast, we plan to work closely with them. Currently, the Cavendish operates in the Imperial Towers at 3801 Conshocken Ave. They have many backgammon activities including weekly tournaments. Call Fred or Mae at (215) 878-5777.

FLINT BACKGAMMON CLUB — Carol Cole works hard to keep backgammon alive in Flint, Michigan. Besides the Thursday night tournaments at the University Club, they offer backgammon every Saturday afternoon at the Dunn Inn Lounge. The Flint Club publishes an informative and creative Newsletter for its members. Other activities include backgammon outings and parties. Carol has kept us supplied with good ideas and new activities in backgammon. She is ably assisted by Amy Mitoma. We are proud to have Flint join our group. (313) 234-5615.

HOUSE OF BACKGAMMON (SKOKIE) — We first met Phelicia Krakow at the Chicago Cup Tournament. She was so energetic and concerned, that we thought the event was sponsored by her. Phelicia's attentive assistance made that tournament a success for us. Ida Weil, her partner in the club, we met in Las Vegas at the ABC Tournament. Ida was enthusiastic and capable. Together, they are a terrific one/two punch for backgammon. Currently, they operate three weekly tournaments — 1) Wednesdays at the Beefsteak Inn, Chicago — 2) Thursdays at Victoria Station, Northbrook — 3) Mondays at Cas & Lou Restaurant, Skokie. House of Backgammon is located at 8950 Kilpatrick, Skokie, Illinois, telephone (312) 674-2598.

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Puzzle Picture

Find the key to success. In the picture we have hidden the undeniable edge that makes a backgammon pro a big winner and a good roller. Is it flair? Is it Lady Luck? Is it charisma? Turn page upside down for the answer.



ANSWER: Many, wealthy backers.

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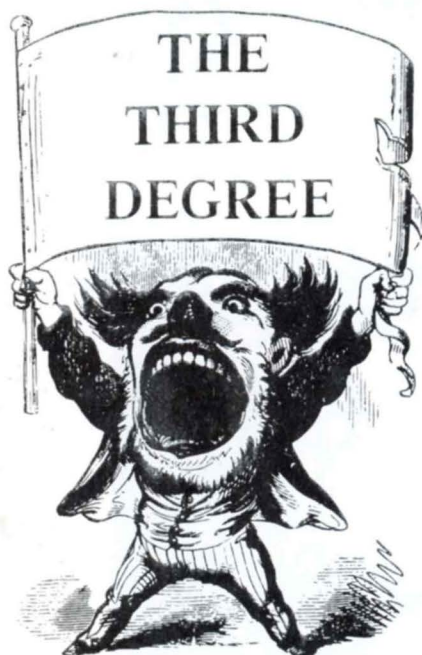
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NOTE: Between issues of the magazine, we receive hundreds of calls and letters with questions on anything and everything about backgammon.

The majority of the time the inquiries are routine and the answer is not of general interest. "The Third Degree" section of the magazine has been designed to deal with those questions and answers that are of interest to all of our readers.

Is it true that backgammon enthusiasts are now playing the game by mail?

It surprised us, but, it's true! We asked around and found that Carol Cole of the Flint Backgammon Club had the answer. She turned us on to a booklet called *Backgammon By Mail* authored by James E. Opre. BBM is played, like the conventional game, according to the official laws of backgammon. The only difference is the BBM substitutes a system, to determine the moves of the men, in place of the conventional dice roll. One of the benefits of BBM is that a game is readily charted so the players can later go back to evaluate key moves and work out how the game could have progressed differently had optional moves been exercised. You can buy this book for a dollar by writing to James Opre, 12793 Joseph Drive, Grand Blanc, MI 48439, phone (313) 694-2573.

What is the Ladder Competition System?

This system of running club tournaments has been successful for the Hamilton Squash Club, as well as the Rochester Backgammon Club. It is of so much current interest that we are reprinting the HSC rules (provided to us by Ernie Geisel) in their entirety on another page.

We've heard that non-consulting Chouettes are popular in California. What are they?

They are the west coast version of a mugging! The less experienced player struggles by himself receiving none of the learning benefits derived from discussing possible plays. Chouettes were originally designed to include the weaker player and give him comfort in the thought that although he might lose, he would come away with valuable knowledge. Non-consulting chouettes adhere to the rule "never educate a pigeon". If you are betting your money on moves that are too advanced for you to understand and no one will tell you why, you'd better check the wheel.

The Backgammon Grapevine is abuzz with rumors of treachery following the Mexican Championships in Mexico City. What of it?

LVBC members attended the well-run Magriel Cup tourney held in Mexico City. The turnout was light, but the results were excellent. Sanchez Osorio is the premier promoter of tournaments in Mexico and an excellent host. We were well treated, well housed, well protected, and got Montezuma's revenge only once!

The incident to which you refer occurred outside the control of the tournament. It seems that a local player, unhappy with an unexpected loss, contrived an elaborate scheme to recoup his losses from a visiting player. The staged piracy was obvious and resulted in little violence. Redress arrangements are now being made by the embarrassed friends of the unscrupulous perpetrator.

Your Backgammon America List is incomplete. Isn't it true that many country clubs feature backgammon?

We have a mile long list of country clubs featuring backgammon. We don't publish this information because many are open only to their own members and others hold backgammon events occasionally. When specifically requested, LVBC will list a country club as in the following: "Although our club is a Country Club, we have a very large backgammon contingent and our players frequently partake in tournaments given across the country. Please list our club as the Wood-Country Backgammon Assn., Haddonfield, Berlin Rd. & Evesham Rd., Cherry Hill, NJ., Frederick Thompson, Chairman, Backgammon and Card Room.



The *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine* is one of the most important reasons to belong to the club. It is now considered the finest publication of its kind and can be found on newsstands all over Las Vegas.

In addition to the magazine, members play at a reduced rate in all LVBC tournaments, are invited to all club parties free of charge, may buy equipment at wholesale costs from the club, get free use of the club facilities at RUMORS (unique in the world), enjoy full access to all the information Las Vegas has on tournaments and players throughout the world, and receive reciprocal benefits from all LVBC associates.

There is no other single better bargain in backgammon than the Las Vegas Backgammon Club. Call (702) 361-3910 to join or renew your membership.

A.B.C. *BACKGAMMON* TITLE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD MAN

A 22-year-old commodities analyst from Hollywood won the Second Annual World Backgammon Championship after out-lasting more than 600 entrants from each of the 50 states and 12 foreign countries.

David G. Leibowitz defeated 40-year-old Jack Barney of San Jose 21-15 in the final match, which lasted three hours.

Besides receiving the Plimpton Cup, named for the contest's honorary chairman, George Plimpton, Leibowitz won \$128,000. Barney won \$51,400.

Many Las Vegas Backgammon players participated in the event. A surprising number placed in the money. Eddie Hattori was one of our top money winners receiving additional prizes because of Early Bird benefits. Others receiving \$1,000 sectional winner awards were Don Hiatt, Kenny Chin, Craig Chellstrop and Harry Brown.

We are going to avoid critical comment on this tournament since we believe Henry Wattson to be unselfish and well-meaning. But, it is absurd for a tournament to draw over 1400 players in two consecutive years and lose money both times. Considering the whole-hearted support from the international backgammon community and monetary bolstering from the participating casino, this tournament should be deep in the black. The promoters should stop congratulating themselves on their efficiency. Running a good tournament should be taken for granted when you are investing top dollar in personnel and publicity. They should in fact be worried that their spending practices are imprudent.

Attention to detail is also an important element of success.

Often, a clean ashtray is more important than a George Plimpton.

Finally, in response to all who complained to us that the winner was ill-mannered, bullying and irresponsible, we say "C'est la vie!"



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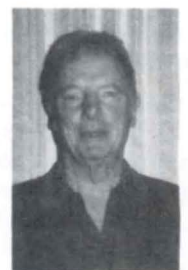
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AMBROSE

KANSIL OUT BLOTSKY IN

KUILIMA, OAHU, HA — Prince Joli Kansil, on the 5th anniversary of the first backgammon tournament in Hawaii, announced that he would be retiring as Director of the Honolulu Backgammon Club.

Expressing that he had been running local backgammon tournaments for almost four years and that he had directed 22 major tournaments and countless mini-tourneys, he explained, "This is long enough. I've never held one job longer than four years, and in 1979 my publishing, game inventing and traveling commitments, and other projects, will be taking up much more time than in the past."

Specifically, he will be doing a lot more of backgammon writing, as his *Backgammon Quiz Book* has enjoyed impressive initial sales nationally, and his publisher, Playboy Press, has expressed interest in more works on backgammon from him.

Kansil referred only briefly to the turmoil in backgammon affairs that was present earlier in the year, but added that the new Honolulu Backgammon Club, after only a year of operation, was on solid ground and "that the transition to new management would be easy." The club will maintain its name, the owl symbol, its system of master-points, its four major tournaments for perpetual trophies, and the other traditions that were a part of the old Hawaii Backgammon Club.

While not directing or administering club affairs, Prince Joli Kansil will be participating in many of the Club's tournaments and activities.

Greg Blotsky, who was recently awarded a double-zero number for his services to the Club, will be the new director of the Honolulu Backgammon Club, effective in late December, 1978. He has been assisting in the direction of tournaments and club affairs since late 1977.

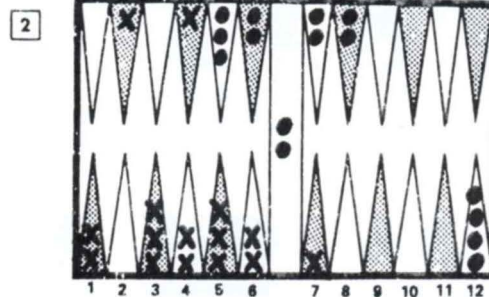
LVBC 24

EDDIE'S PROBLEMS

PROBLEM No. 1

X Rolls 5-3

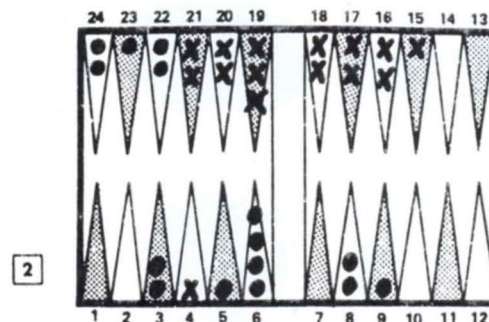
"O" has two men on the bar, therefore the correct play is to run 21/13. However, if "O" had only one man in the air, then make the 2 points and gamble on rolling 5's or 6's to escape.



PROBLEM No. 2

O to Play 2-2

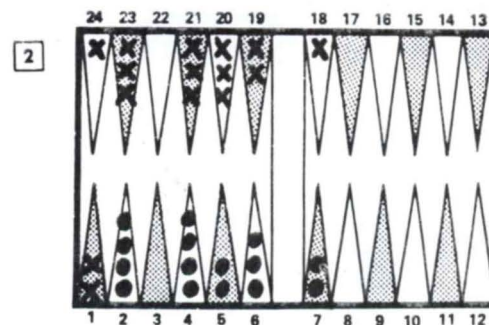
Bombs Away! Play 6/4 hitting X, 6/2 and 3/1. The insane reason for this play is to improve "O's" timing.



PROBLEM No. 3

O to Play 4-3

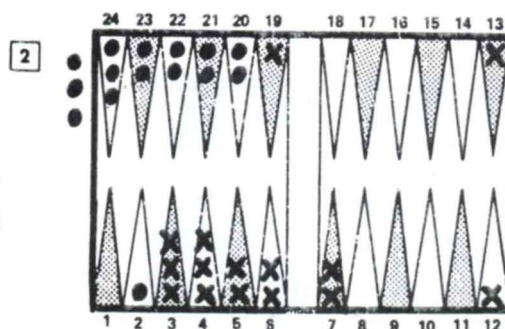
Play 7/3, 6/3 as you not only duplicate 6's, but also are making way for a cleaner bear-off. 7/3, 7/4 leaves a double shot if "O" rolls 6-5 or 5-4.



PROBLEM No. 4

X to Play an Ace

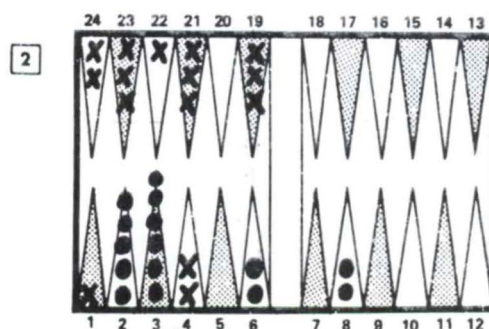
Hit by moving 3/2. Now if "O" rolls a 2-4, 2-3 or 2-1, he will leave another blot.



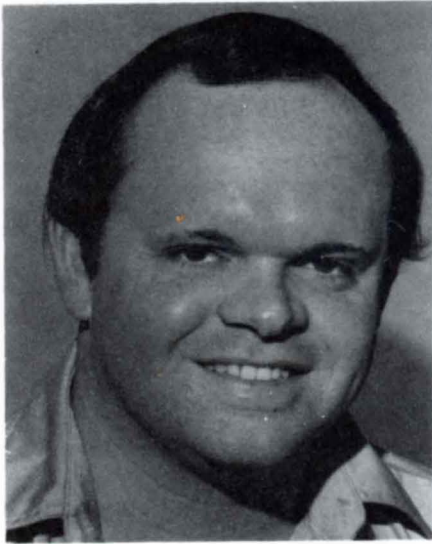
PROBLEM No. 5

O to Play 3-1

"O" would play 6/5 and 6/3. This play duplicates aces and even though it may lead to bear-off problems later, it is the only play which doesn't get "O" into trouble by leaving a double shot. Don't forget X owns the cube.



THE SCENE



A new entertainment form is being introduced along the glittering 'Strip', a natural and long-overdue by-product of the burgeoning disco scene: namely the booking of major disco-recording acts.

It's happening at the center Strip's RUMORS DISCO, one of this entertainment capitol's top after-hours hot spots, which has become the first club to initiate bookings of major disco acts here.

Inaugurated Jan 8th by RCA-Solar recording act Shalamar, the new policy is a new direction by RUMORS operator, Gary Pitak, who bought the club 18 months ago.

"We can draw promotional tours now. Record companies are contacting us for we need this type of entertainment in this world renowned show business capitol," said the 31-year-old Pitak.

Formerly known as "Dirty Sally's," the popular nitery place, situated between the Sands and Frontier Hotels, was jammed to 500-capacity for the disco/soul act.

Composed of Jody Watley, Gerald Brown and Jeffrey Daniel, Shalamar picked a local couple as part of its 40-city, three-month tour and contest to culminate at

New York's glamorous Studio 54 on March 5th.

Head DeeJay, Doug MacDuff, a Montreal native, mans the posh disco's 2500-watt sound system, which features Cerwin-Vega equipment, Technic turntable and 12 speakers.

According to MacDuff, who's creating a "Disco-Trek", a three-hour, syndicated disco radio program, the club plays 38 of 40 top hits from *Billboard* magazine's weekly disco chart while breaking new products such as Edwin Starr's "Working Song," the flip side of "Contact."

The relatively large, lighted dance floor is surrounded by dried, hanging floral arrangements, mirrored panels and a center light carousel. Comfortable booths, a handsome bar and lower-level seating are also found.

Pitak, who manages a staff of 20, maintains the club's strategic location offers a unique exposure of East and West Coast music styles with the cross-matching of locals and tourists.

Joining the weekly dance contest and representative seasonal special events are luau parties, fashion shows, record give-aways and a popular Sunday Night Comedy Club. A backgammon club, the LVBC, is also featured at Rumors.

Recently, the busy disco was taken off the Nellis Air Force Base blacklist which was levied against the former Dirty Sally's management for discriminating against Blacks.

Pitak also settled out-of-court with former Sally's owner, Rudy Schneider, when the entire disco's decor and equipment was stripped and removed.

"We have the vehicle, room and marquee to successfully promote well-known disco acts, under \$10,000 of course," concludes Pitak. "Our variety of clientele is

from the age group of 21 to 25 and over 40.

Hopefully Pitak's determination, courage and foresight will gain the recognition of major recording labels and disco acts in making this long-overdue entertainment addition the Las Vegas show business scene.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Hanford Searl, the Las Vegas correspondent for *Billboard* Magazine and entertainment critic for the *Valley Times* newspaper. Mr. Searl is best known for his "no holds barred" observations on the Las Vegas entertainment scene and the many top name stars that appear here.



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UPCOMING
GTC'S
PRO/AM TOURNAMENT

LADDER COMPETITION PLAY at the HAMILTON SQUASH CLUB

In order to play ladder competition matches, BOTH PLAYERS MUST BE MEMBERS of the Hamilton Squash Club. Any player listed anywhere on the ladder board may challenge any other player. The name of any HSC member who is playing a ladder match will automatically be placed on the Ladder Score Board in the "under 10 matches" category ranked by his accumulated average.

PLAYERS ARE RANKED according to their plus-point averages. These averages become their "official" column on the Ladder Board. Until then, he is listed on the unofficial "under 10" column.

The "over 10 matches" column on the Ladder Board indicated THE OFFICIAL CLUB STANDINGS, i.e., a player who has not played at least 10 matches does not have an official standing until moved into the "over 10" column. The Club management reserves the right to increase the number of matches from "over 10" to any higher number at a later time or times in order to establish the "official standing."

Only players having reached "official standing" are eligible for club awards and inter-club competition. All players are divided into 4 groups from A to D (in both "over 10" and "under 10" columns).

The first 5 players are A

The next 10 players are B

The next 14 players are C

The remainder are D

The Ladder Board is changed at least once a week before the scheduled Backgammon session. For regular ladder matches (and appropriate handicaps), THE LADDER BOARD SERVES AS THE OFFICIAL RECORD, i.e., a player is in the group as shown on the Ladder Board, even though interim match results may have caused a change in his grouping. For other specific purposes, the official score book will confirm a player's exact position. If a player has not played a ladder match for 5 weeks, his name is moved to the "inactive column"

which shows no average besides his name. To return to the "active" column on the Board all he needs to do is play a match. This will reinstate him with his previous record. A player who hasn't played for 3 months is completely removed from competition and his score is completely annulled unless, in the opinion of the Director of Backgammon, there is cause for an exemption of this rule. PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED BASED ON VARIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS in Ladder-play competition (see HSC Championships).

All matches are played to 7 POINTS. If the winner's score exceeds 7, the maximum number of credit points he will be given on the Ladder score will be 9 points. Likewise, the total number of points scored against a player will not be higher than 9.

All Ladder-matches SHOULD, PREFERABLY, BE PLAYED AT THE HAMILTON SQUASH CLUB. The scores of matches played off the premises must be turned in not later than the following Tuesday, but are not necessarily recorded on the Ladder standing until after Tuesday night's Backgammon session. Score of matches played outside the Club must be initialised by both players.

Players are entitled to play as few or as MANY COMPETITION MATCHES AS THEY WISH, at any time, provided they play at least 3 matches before playing the same opponent again. Failing to observe this rule BY EITHER PLAYER, nullifies this particular match for both opponents. Therefore, a player should assure himself that his opponent has played 3 matches since they played together. The greater the number of matches played, the more meaningful the player's average becomes and vice versa.

Players may request to inspect separate instructions kept by the officials pertaining to the updating of score records and the Ladder Board. Players may also request to

inspect their own score standings in the official score book at any regular HSC Backgammon session.

Willful tampering with the Ladder Board or score sheets will be subject to expulsion from competition and tournament play cancellation of prize privileges at the option of the Club Management.

THE HANDICAPS apply equally to the "under 10" and "over 10" column:

Group A starts the match at -1

Group B starts at 0

Group C starts at +1

Group D starts at +2

NEW PLAYERS NEITHER GIVE NOR GET A HANDICAP

The handicaps are printed on the Ladder Board. Following are some examples:

A-player (-1) vs B-player (0)

A-player (-1) vs D-player (+2)

B-player (0) vs C-player (+1)

C-player (+1) vs D-player (+2)

or by agreement (0) - (+1)

New player (0) vs any player (0)

A-player (-1) vs A-player (-1)

The handicaps allow players of various playing calibres to play each other with equal opportunity of success.

A PLAYER HAS THE PRIVILEGE TO CANCEL HIS ENTIRE PAST RECORDS and re-start his scoring any time - and as often as he wishes - PROVIDED he has played at least 10 matches every time he does so. If he wishes to do this, he simply needs to advise the scorekeeper (or in his absence, any judge) in writing on a score sheet. Such notice must contain DATE and TIME OF DAY. Only matches played AFTER giving his notice will count on his new record. Once a player makes this decision, it is irreversible and he will give up any benefits which he may have had before, including "official standing," prize privileges, etc. until they are re-earned on his new record.

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TROPICANA

Hotel and Country Club

In view of the competing and conflicting rules and regulations proposed by the various groups organizing tournaments, the Las Vegas Backgammon Club has decided to glean the best of the existing rules and establish a format that will be followed by it and its associate clubs.

These same rules will be submitted to the Nevada Gaming Control Board with the suggestion that they be made obligatory for all tournaments held in Las Vegas in the future. Comments are welcome.

OFFICIAL LAS VEGAS TOURNAMENT RULES

1. All entries are subject to the approval of the tournament Committee.
2. Both dice must be placed in the cup and shaken vigorously before rolling. Players may change dice before the commencement of any individual game. Once a game is in progress dice may not be changed. The Committee reserves the right to change dice in any match, at any time, without prior notice. If a player mixes the dice in the middle of the game or throws one or two of the dice away, he will be penalized one point.
3. Players must roll to the board on their right, unless the opponent's permission has been obtained prior to the roll. Cocked dice must be re-rolled.
4. A move is not concluded until a player has picked up his dice. No player may roll until his opponent has picked up his dice. A player who rolls out of turn may be asked to re-roll at the discretion of his opponent.
5. Direction of play and choice of color of men and seats shall be decided by a roll of the dice before play starts. Once decided direction and color shall remain constant for the entire match.
6. In any dispute the decision of the Committee will be final.
7. Any infringement of the accepted standard of Tournament behaviour by a player will result in disqualification from the Tournament.
8. Spectators must observe complete silence during matches. Spectators have no right to draw attention to any misplays or make any comment on plays. If such a case arises the offended player has the right to call for the Committee to give a ruling.
9. Unless otherwise announced by the director, the official tournament language is English. No other language will be permitted between players and spectators, or spectators and other spectators when matches are in progress.
10. Any proven signaling between player and spectator will result in the player's instant disqualification from the Tournament and forfeiture of any prize money. The spectator will suffer the same penalty.
11. All players have the right to request that any spectator(s) leave the table and it will not be necessary for a player to give a reason.
12. If a player inadvertently concedes a match, even though his opponent has not reached the requisite number of points such concession shall be deemed valid once the name of the winner is entered on the tournament draw sheet.
13. Scores must be kept by both players and compared after every game. In any dispute concerning the score a player not keeping score will be at a disadvantage.
14. The Committee reserves the right to appoint a referee in any match.
15. Gammons and Backgammons will apply in all matches. It is not necessary to double the opponent to win a gammon or backgammon.
16. The Crawford Rule, as defined below, will apply in all matches. When a player reaches match point, for example: 14 points in a 15 point match, for one game, and one game only, the doubling cube may not be used. The Holland Rule applies to any subsequent games in that match. The doubling cube may be used after four rolls of the dice. The opening roll counts as the first of the four.
17. Promptness is expected of all participants. Penalty points as posted are automatically awarded if a player is not present fifteen (15) minutes after a scheduled starting time. No exceptions.
18. Unless previously announced, all match pairings and necessary bye awards shall be made by random draw at the commencement of the Tournament.
19. Play should proceed at a comfortable pace. Very slow play may result in a penalty being imposed.
20. If a dispute arises between the players all men shall be left "status quo." A tournament official should be summoned immediately. If an appeal is made, the tournament director will appoint a 3-man committee to decide the dispute. When a committee satisfactory to both players has been appointed, its decision shall be final.
21. Physical interference with a player's throw does not invalidate the roll.
22. One hand should be used in moving the men.
23. No automatic doubles. No settlements.
24. Breaks—throughout the Tournament each player will be allowed two breaks of maximum of 5 minutes duration in each match up to the Quarter Finals of each flight, and two breaks of 10 minutes maximum thereafter.
25. In the event of a misplay once a player has picked up his dice his opponent may point out the misplay only if he wishes it to be replayed. If the misplay is not pointed out, it stands. The intervention of any spectator relating to misplays is strictly illegal and will be deemed totally invalid.
26. All matches must take place in the playing room unless permitted by the Committee.
27. It is the responsibility of both players to see that the doubling cube is in the middle at the start of each game. In the event of any dispute concerning the position it will be deemed to be valid in the position it lies at the time of the dispute.
28. If a man is found off the board during the course of the game, before either player has reached the bear off, the man remains off the board and the game continues on with 14 men. The man with 14 men can still lose a Gammon or a Backgammon.
29. A player hitting another man must remove that man and place it on the bar.
30. The cups of both players must be left on the table while waiting for their turn to roll. At no time should a cup be below the table. If this offence occurs the Committee has the right to take positive action.



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PUBLISH or PERISH CONTINUED

The last issue of the *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine* informed the readers of all the clubs publishing magazines and/or newsletters. The *Georgia Backgammon Assn.* and *Atlanta Backgammon Society Newsletter* was inadvertently omitted.

We learned from their December issue that Craig K. Tyndall is the director; that there are at least five locations featuring backgammon in Atlanta; that there is an Annual Georgia Open and a Christmas Muscular Dystrophy tournament; and that the backgammon hotline is (404) 266-8957



GO TO YOUR POKER ROOM!

David "Chip" Reese, noted backgammon enthusiast, is the new boss of the Dunes Hotel poker room. Reese is the youngest player to ever join the top ranks of the poker hall of famers. He has been described by *Gambling Times* as the best all-around card player in the world. It is due largely to his interest in backgammon that the highest stake matches anywhere have taken place at the Dunes. Chip Reese and his poker room associates are also the innovators of the spots and handicaps that have become so common of late.

The affable Reese in his new position will do much to enhance the popularity of both poker and backgammon in Las Vegas.

When contacted by the LVBC roving reporter, Chip said, "Hi, I'm David Reese, from Dayton."

AVOID THE CON...Keep the Customer!

Playing backgammon for large sums of money can turn into a disaster if you beat your opponent and you have broken the psychological, and credit limits of your opponent. Both players have the desire to win. This desire to win can be overwhelmed by one opponent's bending of the rules in order to fulfill his objectives.

A way to avoid this from happening is to familiarize yourself with your opponents, and their ability to pay. Ability to PAY and WANT to pay are too separate things. If over-pressed, your opponent can figure a way to justify skipping on you. You have just wasted a lot of hard work and many agonizing hours. The reputation of your opponents, then, is the best guide line you have to avoid the con.

The best way of acquiring this information is probably by asking the noted players in the area about the credit of the players.

While at SMU - I majored in finance. I have 80 credits in business alone. My final paper in Seminar was a 60-page thesis on con men, fraud, deceit, and deception. I found that the best way to avoid

the con is to neutralize the repressed innate larcenous tendencies in everyone. That is avoid backing someone into a corner where he has to reach into his bag of tricks to survive.

The primary rule is never to beat an opponent to a point of desperation; preserve his dignity and give him an operating margin within his sense of fair play. The following rules could be of use:

- 1) Larceny is everywhere, do not be the victim
- 2) Play for what you can afford and no more
- 3) Verbal agreements are not enough, secure his cash and yours
- 4) Agree on number of games and relative stakes and stick to the agreement
- 5) Do not take checks unless you know the party personally
- 6) If you are losing, take a break and get yourself together. Don't continue playing. Bad luck runs in streaks
- 7) Do not allow the monies to get into six figures or five or so - whatever

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DR. CUBE

by DAVID EIG

PROBLEM No. 1

X to Play an Ace

This position actually took place in one of our weekly tournaments between Eddie Hattori and myself. Eddie was X and had a 1 to play. (Let it be noted that this game was for the match so gammons are incidental.) The correct play is X3 to X2 hitting 0. Although 0 has a five-point board, unless he comes in with a 6-2 or 5-2 he cannot hold his board intact. Even with a 5-2 a six must immediately follow on his next roll or his board breaks. Eddie played X from 0-6 to 0-7 and lost the match because of it.

PROBLEM No. 2

X to Play 5-3

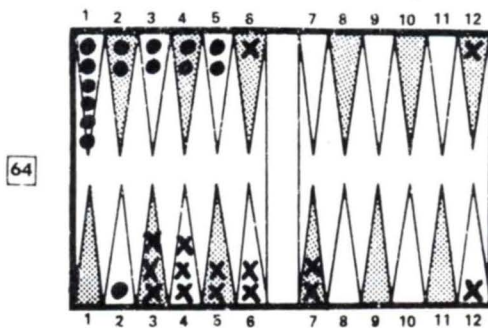
In this position most players would play X5 to X1 hitting and X3 to X1 covering without even considering another play. This would be a big mistake as it would give 0 time to hold his board intact and would keep 0 from ever having to break the two-point. The correct play is 07 to 012 and then X10. Now if 0 rolls any six he must break the two-point and can be easily gammoned. X has the cube and would not double before the 5-3 because he was too strong and should go for the gammon.

PROBLEM No. 3

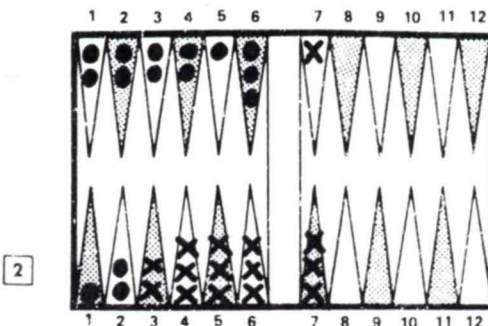
X to Play 2-1

This is a very good roll for X and should not be wasted. In many similar positions players are told to clear the furthest points, however, in this position to break from the end would allow 0 to escape with 6's and still hold the two-point inside X's home. The correct play would be X8 to X6 and X8 to X7. This way if 0 rolls a six he now has to break the two-point and good-bye backgame!

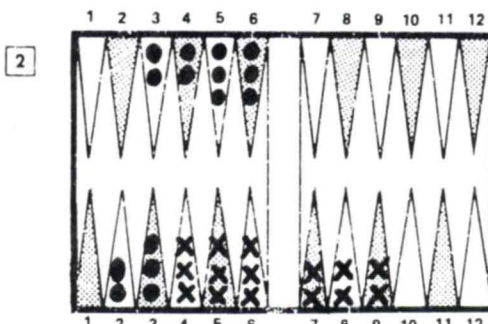
LVBC 30



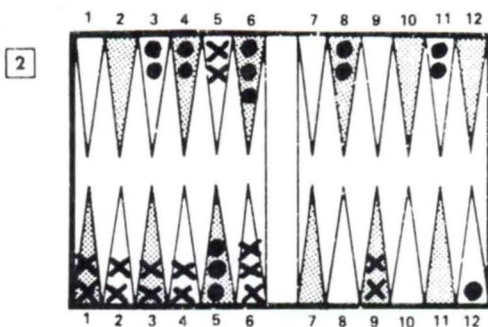
#1



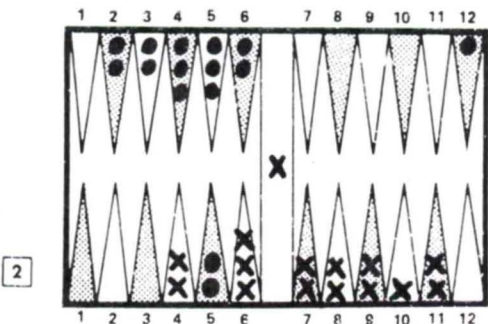
#2



#3



#4



#5

PROBLEM No. 4

X to Play 6-5

Here both players have their five-points. In these games timing is the crucial factor and the person ahead in the race is usually at a disadvantage. X's timing is completely gone and should not hesitate to leave the five point. Some don't leave the five-point until they are forced to and in a very precarious situation. The play is from 05 to 010 and 010 to X9, and take your bumps.

PROBLEM No. 5

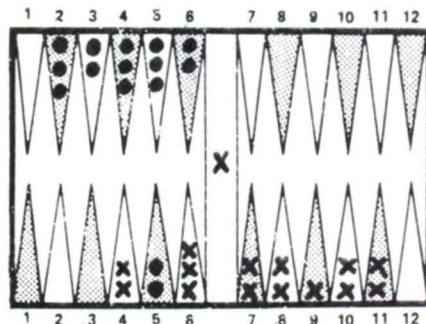
0 Doubles — Should X accept?

No, X cannot accept this cube. When X loses he will usually lose a gammon and 4 points. It will not be easy for X to win as 0 would have to not roll a five for a good three rolls before he would be likely to leave a shot or start breaking his board. Your chances of winning must be higher than normal to accept a cube that when you lose your "gammoned."

PROBLEM No. 6

0 Doubles — Should X accept?

Yes, although diagram No. 6 is similar to No. 5, it is different in some very important ways. For one thing, 0 doesn't have any checkers in his outer board to play and if he doesn't roll a 4 immediately, he might have to leave a shot with almost any 5. In positions like No. 5 and No. 6, don't ever try to generalize, examine the position as closely as possible and be aware of the whole board.



#6

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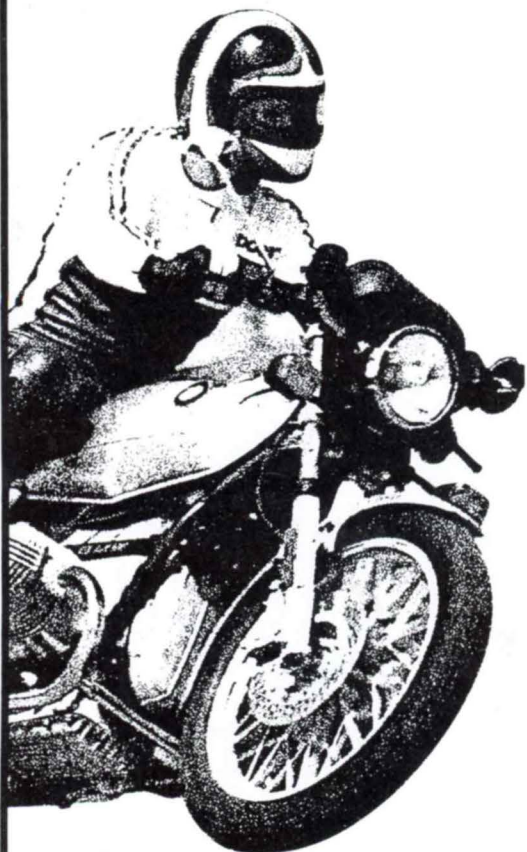
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CALGARY BACKGAMMON—Doing It Right!



by Wayne Roberts

Our new club is now open. We want to extend an open invitation to all LVBC members to drop in and visit us at 510 Ninth Street, S.W. when you are in Calgary.

In the next few months we will be finalizing the arrangements to form the Western Canada Backgammon Assn in conjunction with the Prairie Backgammon League of Regina and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, two other clubs in Alberta, and one club in British Columbia. We hope eventually to form a nation-wide association to standardize tournament rules and procedures. Thanks to your activities I believe we can foresee a time where competitive backgammon will be standardized around the world and it can take its rightful place among competitive events.

Now that such huge prizes are available it is up to the promoters around the world to put on well organized events that draw the public's attention to the game. We are proud to be associated with your fine club and its associates and we hope to pull together in the coming year to make the game better than it has ever been.

We just recently completed the taping of our show, "Gammon on Ten." The series is now in reruns here and an edited version is going into syndication. I would advise all local promoters to look into this in your area. The show, here, received tremendous public response and wide attention. Your local community channels are always looking for show ideas so check it out!

One of the biggest drawbacks to increasing public participation has been the fact of the same group of

people ending up in the finals of every event. It seems that if competitive backgammon is going to survive and grow we must create room for new winners.

In order to facilitate this, it has been decided that this year we will go to three divisions of play, from the two we had last year. So for all minor and major tournaments sanctioned by the club, the divisions shall be Beginners, Intermediate, and Advanced. We are hoping that by moving the top 10% of each division up, there will be room for all new winners.

The people that this primarily affects are last year's top intermediate players. In some cases, these are people that have not placed first in a lot of events, but finished consistently in the finals. And to these people, I apologize but if we are to survive, this type of action is necessary.

We have also had a good deal of success promoting backgammon by providing short-term lessons to various groups free of charge. I just completed a series of four lessons with the people at a senior citizens group and they had a tremendous time. This type of public relations costs only time and the return is great! It's an ageless game so count no one out. Please keep us informed of what is happening in your area. Communication is the key to success.

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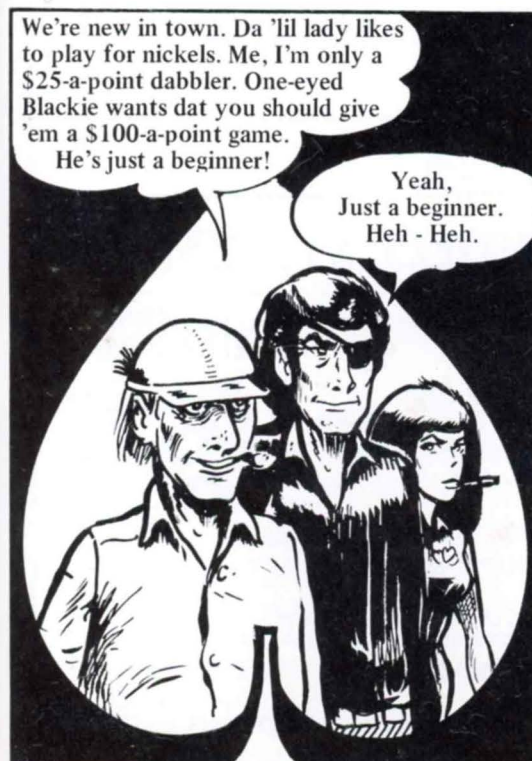
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Just a beginner.
Heh - Heh.



TOP 10 LAS VEGAS PLAYERS	
Craig Chellstorp	47
David Eig	43
Don Hiatt	42
Gary Ford	38
Vartan Sarkissian	36
Ed Green	33
John Anderson	30
Mike Van Dusen	29
Munchkin	27
Eddie Hattori	26



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Joe Abercrombie
Ronny Levav Bar
Ray Boisjoli
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Gary Carter
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John Greer
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Las Vegas

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

SPECIAL \$50.00

OPEN CLASS

November 5, 1978

1. Harry Brown
2. Bob Vernoff
3. David Eig
3. Gary Ford

November 2, 1978

1. Ed Green
2. John Anderson
3. Ed G.
3. Craig Chellstorp

November 19, 1978

1. David Eig
2. David Hershleder
3. Mike Van Dusen
3. Craig Chellstorp

November 26, 1978

1. Rex Brush
2. Jack Reynolds
3. David Eig

December 3, 1978

1. Marve Temes
2. David Eig
3. Bud Ashmore
3. David Hershleder

December 10, 1978

1. David Hershleder
2. Munchkin
3. Doug Blomert
4. Vartan Sarkissian

INTERMEDIATE

1. Guy Fritz
2. Robert Tedone
3. John Fort
3. Gary Wilkins

1. Robert Tedone
2. Alaina Nabit
3. Gordon Ritholz
3. Robert Gromek

1. Richard Schwartz
2. Jim Hughes
3. Ed Seidner
3. Tony Mancari

1. Karen Wolfson
2. Meir Bram
3. Jim Ross

1. Cliff King
2. Karen Young
3. Mike Casey
3. Suzy Creamcheese

1. Mike Yanish
2. Karen Young
3. Richard
3. Wayne Drogseth

1. Dave Ashley
2. Sam Wilson
3. Howard Markowitz
4. Mike Van Dusen

December 17, 1978

1. Doug Blomert
2. Craig Chellstorp
3. Mike Van Dusen
1. Richard D.
2. Mike Brown
3. Mitch Shapiro

December 26, 1978 DOUBLES

1. Cherie Bowen / Mitch Shapiro
2. Richard Kiskis / Eddie Hattori
3. John Anderson / Dorothy DeFelice
4. Suzy Creamcheese / Doug Blomert

January 7, 1979

1. Don Hiatt
2. David Eig
3. John Cloy
3. Gary Ford
1. Robert Gromek
2. Harry Fritz
3. Robert

January 9, 1979 DOUBLES

1. Clarine / Gary Ford
2. Dave Ashley / Bob Vernoff
3. Richard Schwartz / David Eig
3. John Anderson / Dorothy DeFelice

January 14, 1979

1. Tony Klonarakis
2. Don Hiatt
3. Dave Ashley
3. Steve Johnson
1. Alaina Nabit
2. Harry Fritz
3. Wayne Drogseth

January 21, 1979

1. Mike Sherman
2. Stan Fulton
3. Sam Wilson
1. Wayne Drogseth
2. Suzy Lindsley
3. Cherie Bowen

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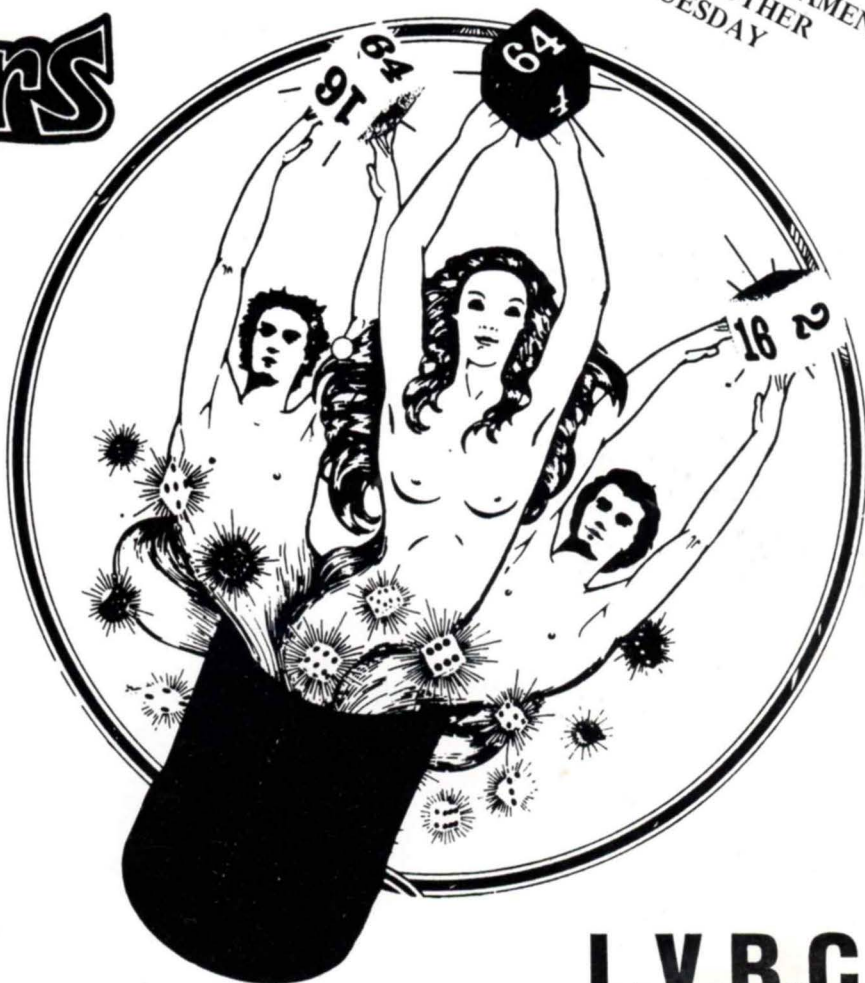
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