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(If your club is not listed

please contact the Las Vegas Backgammon Club)



SUMMER TOURNAMENTS

DATE	TOURNAMENT	LOCATION	DIRECTOR
May 18 - 20	Costa Smeralda Championship	Sardinia, Italy	Robert Perry
May 19 - 20	Texas Backgammon Association	Dallas, Texas	Jim Howe
June 1-3	The California Open	Los Angeles, California	Sid Jackson
June 1-3	Italian Championship	Lake Como, Italy	Robert Perry
June 23	Pipmaster's Open	Portland, Oregon	R.S. Kolemaine
June 23 - 24	Texas Backgammon Association	Houston, Texas	Jim Howe
July 9 - 15	Merit World Championships	Monte Carlo	Lewis Deyong
July 21 - 22	Texas Backgammon Association	Dallas, Texas	Jim Howe
Aug 20 - 26	1st International Backgammon Championship of Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico	Lesvia Guerra

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EDITORIAL

PATRONS FOR OUR ART

BACKGAMMON needs sponsor dollars! The new-found success of many sporting events in America has been attributed to support they are receiving from advertisers. Since new laws have limited cigarette and liquor advertising, these companies have had to find new outlets for their advertising dollars. The windfall went to tennis, boxing, golf and other waning sports. Suddenly, tennis players were playing for the largest purses in the world.

Predictions of the popularity of certain sports became self-fulfilling. The more money sponsors threw in, the more people became interested. The more people that became interested, the more the sponsor was willing to spend.

Promoters had very little trouble finding sponsors. Actually, advertisers began to bid and vie to sponsor them. So what happened to backgammon? While esoteric and inane events like wrist-wrestling readily found sponsors, backgammon with 40 million players in America, got nothing!

Backgammon, therefore, is stuck in an inbred situation. We depend on each other to pass the word and go into each other's pockets to sweeten the pots at tournaments. This makes tournament conditions less and less attractive to players. We must escape from this trap.

The answer is to promote a patron for backgammon. In the past, those approaching major sponsors have been told that backgammon was not good for the image of their product because of the gambling connotation.

This is no longer a good argument since nearly a third of Amer-

ica plays backgammon. It has been proven that the majority of well-educated and upper income Americans are interested in the game. This makes it ideal for a company looking to sell a product appealing to the more sophisticated customer.

Sponsors have told us we are asking for too much money and for not enough money — that backgammon players don't spend — that they don't drink — that they don't pay attention — and that they are not supportive of backgammon events.

All the figures available tell us different — 800 people in the World Amateur Tournament in Las Vegas, 2130 players in the Philip Morris/Daily Mail British Amateur Championships, and 1000 players in the Rhode Island Regionals.

While more and more manufacturers are rushing to meet an ever-growing demand for backgammon equipment and computer backgammon games, advertisers are telling us that it is a fad.

Backgammon is not a fad. We are strong without a sponsor. We are loosely, but well organized. We raise money for charities. We generate vast publicity. And, we keep growing and growing.

Some smart executive will sooner or later make a decision to have his company sponsor backgammon events and all will herald him as a visionary. In the meantime, we have to struggle without support while advertising bigwigs amuse themselves sponsoring log-rolling events.

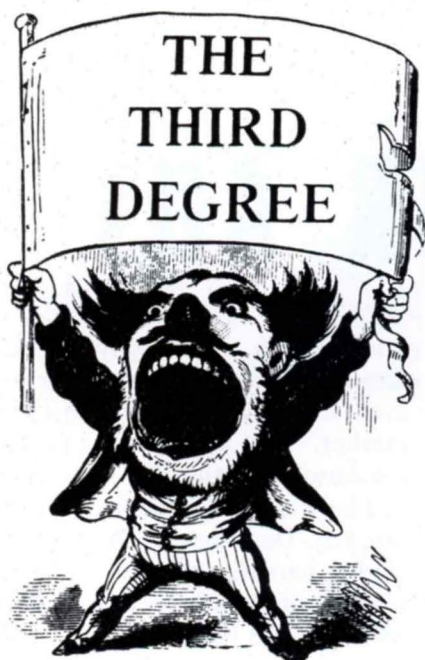
But backgammon will survive

and prosper. Eventually advertisers will clamor to sponsor our events. We are a vast untapped market. We are bound to find a sponsoring "angel".

There are 40 million people in our P.R. Department. When we do find a patron, that most exciting, long-awaited Golden Age of Backgammon will be at hand.

☆☆





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.

The review of the Backgammon Quiz Book in the last issue of the magazine was disappointing. Isn't it true that at \$2.50 this book represents the cheapest backgammon lesson one can find?

The review was written by W.M. Bacon and reprinted from the *Atlantic Backgammon Newsletter*. Personally, we have found several technical errors but, on the whole, the quizzes in the book are accurate and challenging. Prince Joli Kansil does choose many passive plays to avoid gammons. Many fine players are beginning to feel that avoiding the gammon at any cost is a desirable goal. We think that this is a reflection of habits learned during tournament play.

What or who is the American Backgammon Players Association?

It is or he is (213) 396-4551.

Is it true that the World Amateur Tournament will be held elsewhere this year?

An alternate site to Las Vegas was never considered according to promoter Henry Wattson. But, bids from other hotels were entertained. The bottom line is that it will again be held at the Dunes. The tentative dates are November 28 to December 2. The tournament this year will include a \$25,000 guaranteed beginners tournament and no championship section.

In your "Publish or Perish" article a few issues back you mentioned several backgammon magazines that I can't find. Who has them?

Unfortunately, no one is rushing to press with anything. The WBC Magazine hasn't been published in 3 years. The *Phillip Morris International* magazine hasn't been seen since last summer. The *Gammon* enterprise still has failed to deliver. The IBA has fortunately been putting out a reduced version. But that's all there is. It costs money and time to put out news and there are few willing to do it for the love of backgammon.

Is it true that there is a new super private, super elite backgammon club in New York?

TRUE. We visited that particular club in N.Y. called Park 65 Backgammon Club Ltd. It is the first time we felt nervous walking into a backgammon club. We were greeted by the director, Angelo Nunez, a pleasant attentive man with all the elegance and arrogance of a maitre 'd. He explained to us that Jim Jacobson and Tim Holland had decided it was time for a high society backgammon club where social players could meet and be safe from the preying mini-hustler. From what we could see, they have succeeded. While we visited, there was an endless parade of fashionable upper crust types. The atmosphere was subdued and dignified. The ambiance was classical and polished.

The rules of the club are stringent. Twenty-five dollars is the largest game allowed. In high stake chouettes, the player in the box must take a partner. No beavers allowed. Men must wear jackets and ties at all times. There are two more pages of similar rules. And for all this you must pay \$1,000 membership fee with 20% service charge on food and beverage plus other dues. Of course, the club guarantees all play up to 50 points. Frankly, with the kind of luck we've been having lately in the collection department, PARK 65 sounds like a bargain at that price even if one has to wear a tie!



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

LAS VEGAS BACKGAMMON MAGAZINE



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Photograph of Connie Stevens. A backgammon enthusiast and accomplished entertainer. Appearing in the Aladdin Hotel/Casino showroom. Cover styled by Nick Naft. Photo by John Litty. Many thanks to Red Doff!

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DICK ODESSKY ON GAMING

When a federal jury recently convicted four men connected with the big Aladdin Hotel, along with the hotel corporation, on felony conspiracy charges, Nevada's gaming authorities were faced with a unique problem.

Gaming regulations state that any individual convicted of a felony is to have his precious gaming license suspended until after appeal proceedings, or revoked.

But, in this case, the jury, in Detroit, also convicted the corporation that owns and operates the resort/casino. By following the rules, that meant that the license for the entire property should have been picked up, closing the doors of the hotel until it was either sold or following a favorable ruling on a court appeal, which could take a couple of years.

The State Gaming Commission and the Gaming Control Board began some marathon emergency sessions, in an attempt to find a means to keep the major Strip property from being locked up.

About 48 hours after the jury brought in its verdict, the gaming officials had their own. They would allow the Aladdin to stay open, under certain, stringent conditions. Failure to abide by any of the orders laid down would result in immediate closure of the hotel.

First, the edict declared that those men convicted on the conspiracy charges were to be suspended from their employment and were to be barred from the premises. This was anticipated, even though one of those found guilty was the general manager of the multi-million dollar operation.

Secondly, the four of the six stockholders in the Aladdin, who are also officers of the corporation, were to be immediately relieved of all duties and they too were to be kept away from the property.

This included Peter Webbe, chairman of the board; Richard Daly, president of the corporation and the hotel; Sam Diamond, the card room manager and former operator of the Aladdin, and Mrs.

Vicki George, a major stockholder.

To replace the heart of the operation, the gaming authorities dictated that Leo Lewis, a highly respected gaming resort executive and a whiz as a comptroller, be placed on the premises, mainly as an overseer and conservator.

The primary interests of the State were to see that the hotel remained in operation, while all funds were well accounted for, to assure payments of all taxes and other liabilities. In the casino, the State placed full-time investigators and auditors, from the Gaming Control Board, the enforcement arm of the gaming authorities, to assure that no untoward events occurred.

When the proposal was presented to the Aladdin's owners, they had little choice, but to accept it. Otherwise, their property, valued at about \$100 million, would be out of business.

Immediately, the sages of the Strip began predicting a wide assortment of new problems for the Aladdin, as the result of the revolutionary move by the State authorities. This type of handling of such a serious situation had never before been attempted and there were many who were certain that it would be a matter of days before the entire arrangement fell apart.

But, Lewis was already too busy acquainting himself with the Aladdin's inner workings to take heed of the prophesies of doom that were shooting out in all directions.

As well, the emergency brought St. Louis attorney, Sorkis Webbe, the hotel's general counsel out to Las Vegas on the first available plane. Webbe, who owns no stock in the Aladdin, is the brother of the hotel's board chairman.

It would be Webbe's duty to look out for the interests of the corporation during the State authorized operation and to work as closely as possible with Lewis. The two men, who had never before met, hit it off immediately and a great rapport was in evidence,

even under such trying conditions.

While even the most optimistic observer would have to agree that a forced situation, such as the one that now exists, would create some special problems, the general operation of the Aladdin has continued without skipping a beat.

Employees, who had feared they might be thrown out on the street because of the felony convictions, are feeling far more secure. Vendors and suppliers, who had visions of non-payment of their bills for at least many months, are continuing to receive their payments on a regular basis.

And, most importantly, guests in the 800 room resort have been kept totally oblivious of any problems. A business as usual atmosphere has prevailed, throughout.

The hotel's sales department was besieged with telephone calls shortly after the jury verdict was announced. As a leading convention hosting property, the Aladdin has a wide assortment of meetings and conventions booked on a continuing basis. All were assured that any arrangements made would be fulfilled and that the difficulties of the corporation would in no way taint their visits.

The gaming authorities, acting as realists are watching the total Aladdin situation very closely to make certain that everything holds together, either until the verdict against the corporation is reversed or the property is sold. In either event, it appears that the present type of operation will continue for a long time.

And, while the Aladdin experiment appears to be working smoothly, the rest of the legalized gaming industry has been assured that the only reason for such a test was because of the unique position of having the actual operating corporation convicted.

The rules remain, whereby any property running afoul of the law will be faced with the distinct possibility of losing its license and its opportunity to continue profitable operations.

☆☆



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PUZZLE

QUESTION: Why was the man hungry while playing backgammon?

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

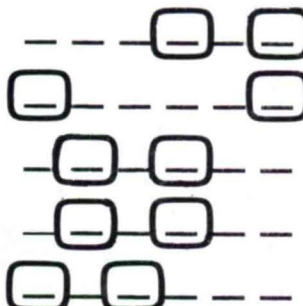
S U V E S R

R X T E E P

M R U B E N

E K R M R A

T A C E R E



?



ANSWER: He was thinking of _____



By MARTY MULE

New Orleans Times-Picayune

The road in the National Basketball Association just isn't the same anymore.

Coast-to-coast travel has appeal, but as an eight-month constant, the excitement turns to tedium quickly. A 7-foot basketball player could spend half a day trying to stretch in a first-class plane seat built optimistically for at most a 6-footer while the nation's cloud cover changes beneath him.

The flight frequently is followed by long bus rides to hotels with cardboard motifs in cities which often roll up the sidewalks early.

Long hours of killing time in the hotel lobby or the bar traditionally have been broken either by staring blankly at a television set or, more often, by card games, which have been the league's principal pastime probably since its inception.

But no more. The flights, bus rides and motels remain part of the NBA's lifestyle, but the Aquarians who play basketball in the late 1970s are as likely to open a board as a deck of cards for time-consuming recreation.

On every team, on every trip, backgammon has the appearance of the wave of the NBA. Rolling dice and moving counters have become as common as picks in professional basketball.

Earl Monroe, the former captain of the New York Knicks, says, "I remember just a few years ago when there was nothing but card playing in terminals and hotel rooms. Now there's as many people playing backgammon. You pick up the game and learn the tactics. After that, it's luck."

San Antonio center Billy Paultz, reputedly one of the best backgammon players in the NBA, says, "I've seen everybody play on

BACKGAMMON: TAKING NBA BY STORM

planes, in airports, and on buses. I think one reason it's so popular is because it's so convenient. You get a small board and you can take it anywhere.

"We have a lot of time to kill between games, flights and bus rides, and backgammon helps the time pass. I know in years past, when I played with the Nets, as soon as we got anywhere it was lay out the cards and play. Now, some people don't want to play cards because you need four, five, six guys if you're going to play poker.

"With backgammon you need only one other player. It's just more convenient . . . I think it started picking up popularity around the country when it started picking up popularity around the NBA."

Pete Maravich of the New Orleans Jazz, who feels he is the best at everything he tries, learned the game last season. When he wins, the victory is considered a triumph of tactical superiority. When he loses, the outcome is hung on chance. No matter what happens, Maravich comes off well.

"Sure," says Lee Daniel, the public relations director of the Indiana Pacers, "most of these guys are pretty competitive whether it's on the court or anywhere else. They play competitively."

Paultz explains, "You can lose

Rolling dice and moving counters have become as common as picks in professional basketball.

some money in backgammon if you're playing for money. But you don't have to play for money to have a good time. It's rare to find a game where you don't bet and still enjoy the competition. It's really a way of keeping your mind active during a two-hour delay in an airport or an hour's bus ride. It's one of the few games I've run across that has both luck and a mental challenge to it.

"I don't think I've ever seen Mike Gale or George Gervin turn down a game."

Portland's Lionel Hollins began playing backgammon by watching a couple of teammates play. "It looked pretty interesting and I wanted to learn" says Hollins. "Afterwards I did and went on from there. I play against teammates, guys from other teams and in clubs around the league. It's really enjoyable and relaxing, and you don't have to lose a lot of money to play. You find very few players who will play poker for free, you know."

Monroe, who is self-taught, says the game has spread to social outings. "On the road," explains Monroe, "we play for fun most of the time. But in New York, there are places you can go and a lot of people do play for money. But Lonnie Shelton, Phil Jackson and some others play socially. We play at supper clubs.

"There's a whole lot of things directed toward entertainment and backgammon, especially on off-nights like Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Night clubs don't have a lot of people come in, so they offer backgammon nights."

Calvin Murphy, the Houston Rockets' little firebrand, says he doesn't use the game for relaxation or a time-consumer. "I just play," he says. "If I want to play checkers, I'll play checkers. I first learned how to play backgammon on the playground on the back of a checkerboard set when I was in sixth grade. I don't say that I've played it straight through all those years because I didn't. But my interest has picked up again because everyone's playing it now."

Lee Daniel says he's never seen any backgammon playing in the locker room. "I'd be very surprised. Coach (Bobby Leonard) wants them thinking about just one thing in there—basketball," explains Daniel.

But the way things are going, you have to wonder.

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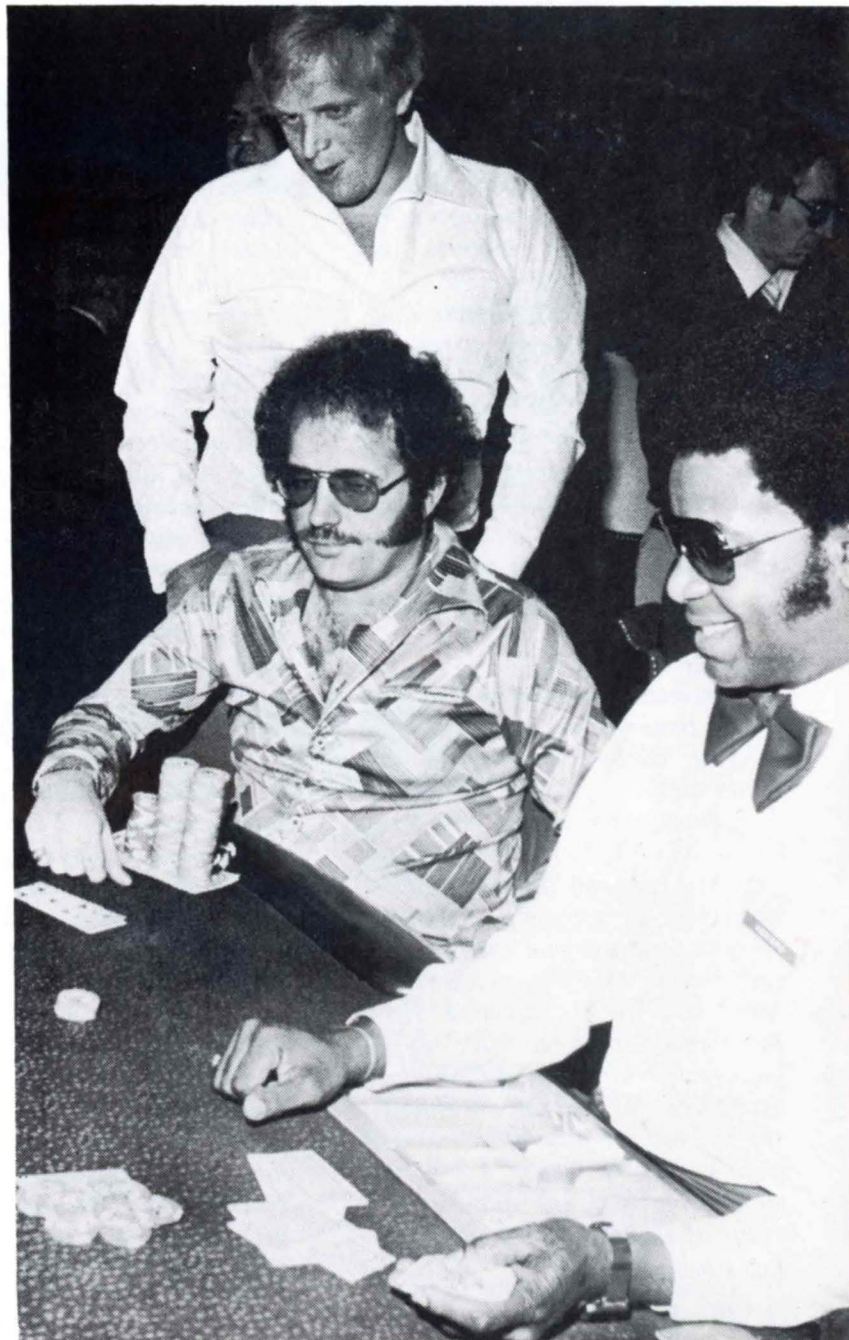
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LETTERS FROM READERS



Dear Editor:

You ought to be ashamed of yourself. This magazine is obviously intended to disseminate information promoting idleness and greed; to imbue our youth with a pernicious set of misguided values. *Backgammon* possesses no redeeming social value. My wife and I are consumed with an abiding fear that this magazine, an unashamed advocate for indolence will somehow fall into the hands of our impressionable but as yet uncorrupted children. We'll pray for you.

Gerald Dobson, Boise, Idaho

Dear Mr. Maxakuli,

This letter is in reference to your recent issue where you pointed out to your readers about "mis-numbered dice."

I remember receiving your letter dated Nov 7, 1978. You claimed you had received "defective dice" that were "misprinted". I told our shipping and receiving clerk to contact you so that you could return those dice to be replaced. However, that employee after my recent research, did not follow up. I apologize for the inconvenience. We will replace your dice with dice that add up to seven if you will supply me with the quantity and color of the dice that you are having problems with. We will

ship you the new dice with the aforementioned information.

However, I must point out to you that it is not a requirement that the opposite sides of dice add up to seven. This does not make them defective. If you inspect the Korean made backgammon sets (which are the better quality sets) in your area, you will find that they too may also have the numbers distributed differently. I refer to *Scarne On Dice*, by John Scarne, published by Stackpole Books at \$12.95 (the most complete book on dice). Not once did he say (in all 504 pages) that it is a requirement that opposite sides of dice add up to seven to eliminate them from being "defective."

He did say, almost all "drugstore" variety of dice are bias, since they are not "square" and holes are stamped out. Only precision hand-made dice are "perfect". The probability of a person getting a good pair of drugstore dice is so slim you can forget about it. Let alone four that are needed for Backgammon. Dice are numbered with opposite sides adding to seven primarily to aid the dice player in identifying duplication of numbers, of which would be considered "crooked dice". In your publication you said that the Club paid \$1.00 each, when in fact, you paid \$1.00 a PAIR. This is the going rate for rounded dice.

In light of the above information (and much more I could provide), *Backgammon* players by the thousands have invested in precision dice. These dice are much more expensive however, ranging in price from \$4 to \$6 a pair.

As you know, we had a very successful booth display at the WBC in Las Vegas. I can't help but become puzzled when I think back to the tournament, that you could have easily expressed your dissatisfaction. Why? However, much to my dismay you used the tool of your Magazine to voice your opin-

ions. (What a positive contribution to *Backgammon*).

The success of *Backgammon* is dependent upon organization and communication of the people who are connected with its welfare. Derogatory publicity towards a positive contributor (Chess & Games Unlimited, Inc.) of goodwill and services for the public far exceeds the necessary steps it seems that you could have taken to get assistance. Think about it for a minute and see what conclusions you come up with that may have solved your problem without harming your relations with others in the *Backgammon* community.

Hopefully, you will be more informed and prepared to print the true facts in your publication in the future, after having made proper research. I typically do not hold grudges but as you can probably tell — this whole thing really gripes me. As you can tell from the composition of this letter, letter-writing is not my forte, but what I have written, I have researched the facts before presenting them to the public.

Larry D. Gerst

Chess & Games Unlimited, Inc.

Dear L.V. *Backgammon* Magazine,

I've always said there were only two things I could never get enough of — a good backgammon game and a good woman.

Fortunately for me you had both on the cover of your last issue. The girls are nothing short of devastating. I play a great game of backgammon. Will that help me win gorgeous girls like that?

Tom Maguire

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

P.S. I play as high as \$10 a point.

EDITOR'S NOTE: You can't score at \$10 a point!

Dear Mr. Maxakuli:

Pitiful, is perhaps the best word I can use to describe the calcutta auction at this year's U.S. Open in

Lake Tahoe. Instead of being a highlight of the tournament, it turned out to be a disgraceful example of "how not to..."

No, it wasn't a disaster because the No. 1 seed only sold for \$800 and the total pool for better than 80 players over \$12,000. It was, however, because of the way in which the auction was conducted: a unique mixture of apathy, sneakiness and enthusiasm.

Apathy on the part of the auctioneer when he did not receive heated or appropriate bidding for the tournament's top players. Sneakiness which allowed the auctioneer to buy a couple of excellent players at bargain basement prices by opening the bidding with "Do I hear \$200 for John Dow?" and before anyone had a chance to respond, immediately closing it with "Sold to the auctioneer for \$200."

Then, in almost about face enthusiasm, in what I consider a deliberate effort to boost up the total auction in favor of his buys, there was a noticeably slower pace in selling the remaining fields and players in an attempt to extract another \$50 here and there.

If calcuttas are to remain a vital part of large tournaments they should be run by someone who knows and cares about running a successful auction, and not someone just serving his own needs.

A few suggestions on how this might be done are: 1. The auctioneer is supposed to create interest in what he is selling. How about a few brief words on the player? Where's he from? Has he won any significant tournaments? If nothing, at least allow the players to be identified by standing up when his name is called. The extra amount of time all this takes will be worth it, and much of this information could be obtained from the players upon registration.

2. An auctioneer who has some sense of humor and has a colorful and persuasive personality as opposed to a listless bore — that can't be too difficult to find!

3. Lastly, and certainly not least,



Surprised?

Very.

That's how you'll feel after dinner at Sam's Saloon at the California Hotel and Casino.

Perhaps your tastes run to Tournedos Bernaise or Veal Oscar.

Maybe you prefer Chateaubriand for two, or just a good steak.

Our chef can prepare it just to your liking. And your pocketbook will like it too.

There's a good chance you know somebody who has already had dinner with us.

We'll bet they were surprised, too.

Come and be surprised, tonight.

Sam's Saloon in Sam Boyd's California Hotel and Casino, Downtown.

Sam Boyd's

CALIFORNIA

Hotel & Casino

1st & Ogden, Downtown

an auctioneer who is not trying to steal good players for himself would be nice! Afterall, the bigger the total purse the more for everyone involved, including those who run the tournament and rake their percentages off the calcutta.

Herb Roman, Chicago

Dear Editor:

The two showgirls on the cover of your magazine are sensuous and

provocative. I think I recognize the redhead on the right having sat behind her in homeroom (Lincoln High, Milwaukee class of '69).

Could you please send me her telephone number so that I might contact her on an alumni matter? I am the chairman for the 10 year reunion and would like to make this event a rousing success.

Stan Lewndowski, Milwaukee

☆☆

THE ASSOCIATION

<u>CLUB</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>DIRECTOR</u>	<u>PHONE No.</u>
Arlington Backgammon Club	Illinois	Sargis Serges	(312) 394-1331
Barcelona Backgammon Club	Spain	Jordi Arque	211 46 15
Black Hills Backgammon Club	South Dakota	Rod Woodruff	(605) 892-4978
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
Dueling Oaks Backgammon	Wisconsin	Merrill Schrager	(414) 271-0493
Duluth Backgammon Club	Minnesota	Ray Boisjoli	(218) 724-2435
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
Louisville Backgammon Club	Kentucky	Larry Strasberg	(502) 451-3950
National Backgammon League	Illinois	Patt Rottman	(312) 831-5037
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
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
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

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

EXCHANGE

NEW



Las Vegas

ASSOCIATES

ST. THOMAS BACKGAMMON CLUB (Virgin Islands)— What can we say about Baron Vernon Ball? He is a former world champion, author of books, columnist, entrepreneur and just about the nicest guy you ever want to meet. The club (100 strong) meets and plays at his 1829 Hotel, perhaps the most beautiful hotel in the Virgin Islands, so much so that it has official national historical status. One of the activities of the club is the prestigious Annual Remy Martin Caribbean Backgammon Championships. Welcome Baron! (809) 774-1829

DULUTH BACKGAMMON CLUB — Twenty-nine members might not sound like a lot but remember, the LVBC started with 11 members. We predict a huge success for his club because Ray Boisjoli, the director, is energetic and caring. The DBC meets at the New Jolly Fisher, located at Lake Avenue and Superior Street. (This is the new building with the ship on the exterior.) The DBC operates as a non-profit group and looks to promote backgammon for fun to all of its members. There are no dues. Operating expenses are derived by a modest cut of the tournament entry fees. A unique club — we wish them luck! (218) 724-2435.

PACIFIC N.W. BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION — Ted Barr, director of the PNWBA is a long-time LVBC member. But, we never realized how active he was in backgammon till we saw his group in action at the Lake Tahoe U.S. Open Tourney. Twenty-four of his members entered the tournament and eight placed in the money. Few clubs can promise and deliver that many players to any backgammon event. Currently, Ted Barr operates the "Game Gallery" tournaments and weekly columns on backgammon in the Seattle papers. The action line in Seattle is (206) 285-6768.

HAMILTON SQUASH CLUB (Ontario) — Owner, operator and director are the titles belonging to Ernie Geisel the imaginative and hard-working chief of the Hamilton Squash Club. The club has developed a unique Ladder Competition System. The rules and regulations of the Ladder System were featured in the last issue of this magazine. The HSC is well organized and has over 70 backgammon playing members. They also host the Hamilton portion of the Can-Am Backgammon Championship which includes Toronto, Buffalo and Rochester. Welcome to the Association! (416) 527-1010.

THUNDER BAY BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION (Ontario) — This newly-formed club already has signed up 35 members after its first meeting. The Association is operated by an executive committee from the membership and overseen by a Board of Directors. The current director is Rita Zandette who writes us that "there are a lot of hearty Northerners here who enjoy the game, so the club should be a strong one." WE AGREE! (807) 622-3045.

BACKGAMMON

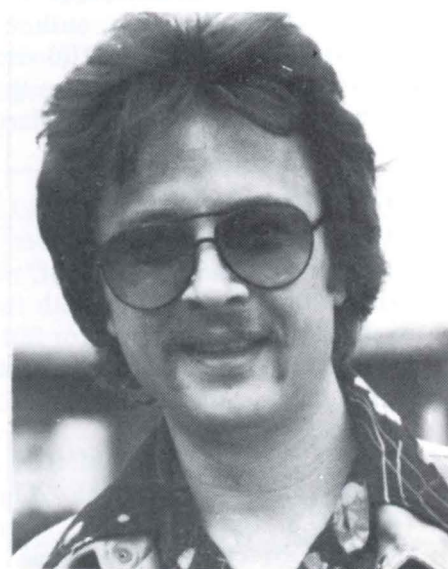
Longtime LVBCer KIM KELSEY currently the toast of the news media as a result of her thesis on "Las Vegas Sex Statistics"... DAVID LEAN enjoying celebrity status with his imaginative TV commercials... TONY MANCARI fully recovered from serious operation... No use reporting on the SUZY CREAMCHEESE odyssey—she has been in town two weeks in the last three months; business must be booming!... JIMMY MATAYA was featured on the cover and interviewed in *Billiards Magazine*. Sounds like the Ali of pool... RED and GENNIE McILVAINE's *Las Vegas Newsletter* is new, bright and informative. Very much worth subscribing to if you want to keep up with what's happening in Vegas... MARY ISON in and out of town doing some photography... FRANK MERANTO and Co, new owners of old Gibby's, now called Bogie's. And speaking of discos, PRINCE OBOLENSKY this month opens a super disco and backgammon club in Aspen... Montreal's LaFolie

BITS

disco features super light show, video and backgammon. LaFolie owner, DAVE DEBEER, a frequent LV visitor and excellent backgammoner... LVBC supporter, MIKE MOODY, candidate for City Commissioner... HANFORD SEARL, LVBC columnist and *Billboard* Las Vegas correspondent, promoted by that mag to L.A. office... ED SEIDNER gone to Scottsdale, Arizona for good... KIM SHARP sharp saleslady with US Home Realty, gives special attention to LVBCers... Mayfair Club, N.Y. not the same without LOUISE GOLDSMITH; Cavendish Club, L.A. not the same without GEORGE BASSMAN... Another JUBILATION mistake—the loss of MARK TANN as PR Director... HENRY WATTSON fugitive in



NED DAY - PATRICIA JUDICE



DR. MICHAEL JONAK



ANDREA WALLER - LYDIA SASSOON



MARY ISON



KIM KELSEY



TERRY BELLAK

California after being busted with GABE HORWITZ for gambling at his very own Pacifica Tournament. A real Keystone Kop affair! . . . Under the modern woman category KAREN WOLFSON sitting box at MGM Craps . . . Thank you BUD-DY BERKE for beautiful self-portrait. Always glad to receive artistic portraits of friends suitable for framing . . . Pacifica Tournament unintentionally scheduled on same date as the Louisville Tourney . . . JOE DWEK, JEAN-NOEL GRINDA, JOHN Y. BROWN in LV just for fun . . . JACK ZWERNER in LV to play in LV Country Club Racquetball Tournament. Won it

in tough match against HERB TOBMAN . . . Talented SANDY CLARK now starring in "Pinups at the Movies" at the Sahara. By far the best Lounge Show in Vegas . . . If you haven't heard anything: REX BRUSH off to Chicago and a new seat on the commodities market . . . MARK CALLAS and Energy, first group booked into all new Atlantic City Caesars Palace . . . BILLY INCARDONA on love boat Caribbean Cruise with friends . . . Mattel's new backgammon computer games to carry endorsement from SID JACKSON's American Players Assn .

(Continued page 19)



GARY PITAK & RIP TAYLOR



ALAN MARGULIES - MARK CALLAS - MICHAEL MAXAKULI



LINDA KRUEGEL



BARON VERNON BALL



KAREN WOLFSON

BACKGAMMON LIBRARY

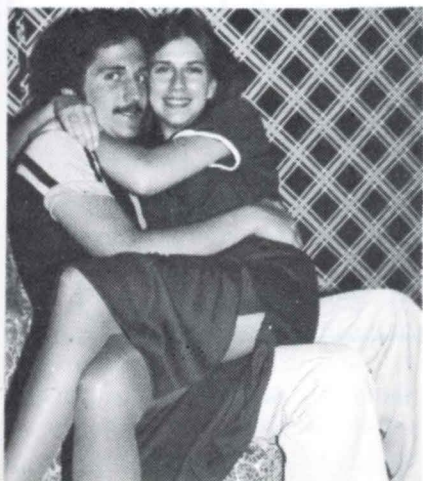
TITLE	* BOOKS OUT OF PRINT	AUTHOR	YEAR	PUBLISHER	PRICE
<i>An Introduction to Backgammon</i>		P. Magriel	'77	Times Books	\$7.95
<i>Backgammon</i>		R. Clay	'77	McKay	3.95
* <i>Backgammon</i>		B. Cooke/J. Bradshaw	'74	Random House	8.95
* <i>Backgammon</i>		M.F. Hopper	'41	Barnes	1.00
<i>Backgammon</i>		A. Obolensky/T. James	'69	MacMillan	6.95
<i>Backgammon!</i>		Prince Kansil	'75	Hippocrene Bks	2.95
<i>Backgammon</i>		P. Magriel	'76	Times Books	20.00
<i>Backgammon</i>		D. Stern	'75	Galahad	7.95
<i>Backgammon Book</i>		O. Jacoby/J.R. Crawford	'70	Viking	10.00
<i>Backgammon Calculator</i>		J. Moffett	'74	Doubleday	1.95
* <i>Backgammon Elementary Moves</i>		F.Y. Flintom	'40	Winning Way	.50
<i>Backgammon For Blood</i>		B. Becker	'74	Dutton	8.95
<i>Backgammon For People Who Hate to Lose</i>		T. Holland	'77	McKay	9.95
<i>Backgammon For Profit</i>		J. Dwek	'75	Wiedenfeld	10.00
<i>Backgammon Games & Strategies</i>		N. Tzannes/B. Tzannes	'76	Barnes	1.50
<i>Backgammon: How to Play & Win</i>		D. Carter	'73	Holloway House	1.50
* <i>Backgammon in 20 Minutes</i>		H. Thorne	'30	Dutton	1.00
<i>Backgammon: (Know the Game Ser.)</i>		W.H. Copeland	'75	British Bk Ctr.	2.50
* <i>Backgammon of Today</i>		J. Longacre	'30	Winston	1.00
<i>Backgammon Quiz Book</i>		Prince Kansil	'78	Playboy	2.50
<i>Backgammon Rules & Rulings</i>		A. Obolensky	'74	MacMillan	6.95
* <i>Backgammon Standards</i>		W. Walling/W. Hiss	'30	Simon & Schuster	1.90
* <i>Backgammon Tactics</i>		H. Thorne	'31	Dutton	2.00
<i>Backgammon: The Action Game</i>		A. Obolensky/T. James	'69	Collier	7.95
<i>Backgammon, The Cruellest Game</i>		B. Cooke/J. Bradshaw	'75	Allen	5.95
<i>Backgammon, The Modern Game</i>		T. Reese/R. Brinig	'75	Allen	7.95
<i>Backgammon - The Quick Course to Winning</i>		D. Stern	'73	Drake	7.95
<i>Backgammon - The Way to Play & Win</i>		W.B. Gibson	'74	Harper	5.95
<i>Backgammon to Win</i>		L. Hattersley	'74	Award Books	1.50
* <i>Backgammon Up-to-Date</i>		B. Point	'31	De LaRue	
* <i>Beginner's Book of Modern Backgammon</i>		R.A. Bond	'32	Sears	1.00
<i>Beginning Backgammon</i>		T. Holland	'73	McKay	7.95
<i>Beginning Backgammon: A New & Pleasurable Method of Learning by Playing Against the Master</i>		T. Holland	'75	Crown	
<i>Better Backgammon</i>		T. Holland	'74	McKay	7.95
<i>Book of Backgammon</i>		O. Jacoby	'79	Porter	12.50
<i>Challenger Backgammon</i>		R. Bowden	'77	Sports Center	3.00
* <i>Clermont Book of Backgammon</i>		D. Dor-el	'75	Queen Anne Press	4.95
* <i>Comic Backgammon</i>			'31	Rudge	3.50
* <i>Complete Backgammon</i>		W.L. Richard	'31	Cosmopolitan Bk	2.00
<i>Fell's Guide to Winning Backgammon</i>		W.B. Gibson	'74	Fell	2.95
<i>Five Popular Games of Backgammon</i>		N. Frantzis	'79	Exposition	6.00
<i>Goren's Modern Backgammon Complete</i>		C.H. Goren	'74	Doubleday	7.95
* <i>Harrap's Easy Guide to Backgammon</i>		J.T. Goldsmith	'75	Harrap	2.25
<i>How Good Are You at Backgammon?</i>		N. Tzannes/V. Tzannes	'74	S & S	9.95
* <i>How to Play Backgammon</i>		R. Hoyle	'31	Laurie	
* <i>How to Play Modern Backgammon</i>			'30	Ogilvie	.10
* <i>How to Play the New Backgammon</i>		L. Hattersley	'30	Doubleday	1.00
* <i>Laws of Backgammon</i>		Racquet/Tennis Club	'31	Scribner	.25
<i>Lee Genud's Backgammon Book</i>		L. Genud	'74	Price/Stern/Sloan	3.95
* <i>Modern Backgammon</i>		F. England	'30	De LaRue	
* <i>Modern Backgammon</i>		G. Nicholas	'28	Holt	1.50
* <i>Modern Backgammon in a Nutshell</i>		P.N. Gatsos	'30	Rose	.50
* <i>New Backgammon</i>		E.C. Boyden	'30	Harcourt	1.50
<i>New York Times Book of Backgammon</i>		J.O. Jacoby/M.Z. Jacoby	'73	Quadrangle/NY Tm	7.95
<i>Paradoxes & Probabilities</i>		B. Cooke	'78	Random House	8.95
<i>Play Backgammon Tonight</i>		D. Thompson	'76	Gamblers Bk	2.00
<i>Playboy's Book of Backgammon</i>		L. Deyong	'77	Playboy	20.00
* <i>Primer on Modern Backgammon</i>		R.A. Bond	'36	Caspar	1.00
<i>Teach Yourself Backgammon</i>		R. Clay	'78	McKay	3.95
<i>Underhanded Backgammon</i>		A. Prager	'77	Hawthorn	4.95
<i>Vanity Fair's Backgammon to Win</i>		G. Mabardi	'31	Liveright	4.95
<i>Win at Backgammon</i>		M.F. Hopper	'72	Dover	1.50
<i>Winning Backgammon</i>		M. Lawrence	'76	Pinnacle Books	1.50
* <i>Winning Backgammon</i>		G. Nicholas/C.W. Vaughan	'30	Appleton	1.50

BACKGAMMON BITS

(Con't)

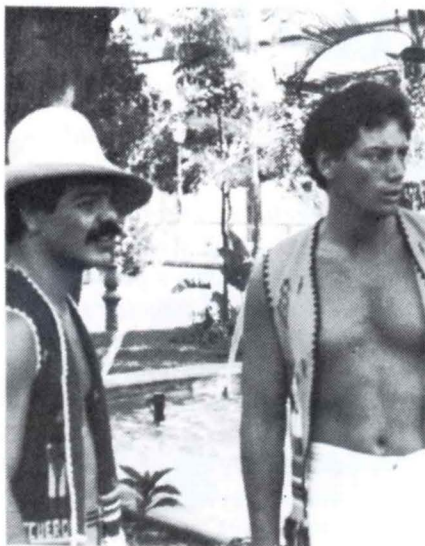


SANDY & CHARLIE CLARK



PATRICK AMICO - MARCY DEKAYSER

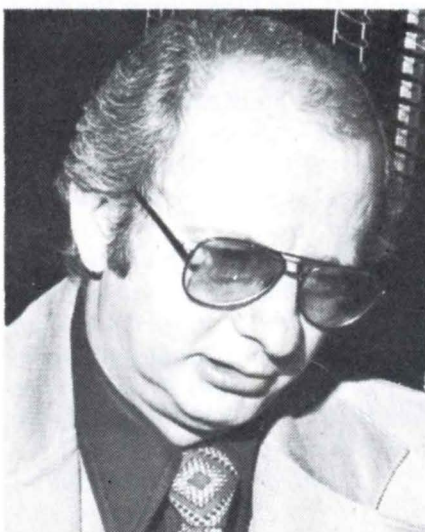
... PAT-RICK AMICO, LVBCer, brilliant dancer and escort to the 45 beauties featured on the "Miss All-American Girl" TV contest... Did you know that in 1976 TONY GOBLE won five straight major tournaments—an unprecedented feat that will probably never be duplicated... Look for a special full issue on backgammon in the *Gambling Times Magazine*, soon!



BILLY INCARDONA - EGGIE



SUZY CREAMCHEESE



MIKE VAN DUSEN



ELI BRUSH

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

Mailing Label or OLD Address Here:

name (please print)	zip or country
address	city state or province

NEW Address Here:

name	(please print)
address	
city	state or province zip or country

Mail to Las Vegas Backgammon Club
9457 Las Vegas Blvd. S. #58
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

LIVING on LOVE

EDITOR'S NOTE: Our editorial dated Feb. '79 Vol. IV No. VI, title LIVING ON LOVE dealt with the problems of the struggling regional promoter. The small Backgammon Club Operator is torn between the desire and necessity to promote backgammon, and the gut feeling that his good-will is being taken advantage of by the promoters of major backgammon tournaments. The *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine* received an avalanche of replies to the editorial. Below we are printing three of the more interesting comments. It is obvious to us that the agonizing will continue and a final decision will be hard to come by.

NATIONAL BACKGAMMON LEAGUE
Chicago, Illinois

Let me first state that I support the basic concept of your editorial wholeheartedly. I have promoted approximately 20 major backgammon tournaments at NBL clubs in the past year — three-fourths of them on the national level. Only one event, the Las Vegas extravaganza, offered a monetary incentive to register players. My promotional costs can easily be calculated: (20 tournaments) x (10 photocopies) x (\$.10 per copy) = \$20.00.

This total obviously does not include the value of my time and effort in making the copies available to our members.

I have done this promotion for a number of reasons. Primarily, I want NBL players to be made aware that such tournaments exist. I assume that all interested individuals will eventually learn of the events anyway. Therefore, I want my club to be the one to inform them. In that way, the NBL takes on a double purpose — as a place to play and as an information source of current backgammon happenings.

It is true that only about 20% of our players have any desire to enter the larger tourneys. Still, the other 80% like to know what's going on in the backgammon world. This is understandable. I play golf on a weekly basis. Although I will never consider entering the U.S. Open, I'm still

interested in the event and the eventual tournament results.

At our clubs, current tournament flyers, along with the NBL newsletter, are always prominently displayed on the director's desk. It's important for our players to be made aware that something beyond the NBL exists — bigger and more exciting.

My philosophy toward the local club is that a player, by participating in the weekly tournaments, will develop certain match skills that can not be learned in money games. If one looks upon the local clubs as a classroom for learning, then the major tournaments become the "final exams". Players must know what the backgammon world has to offer so that they never feel like they're in a rut on a dead end street.

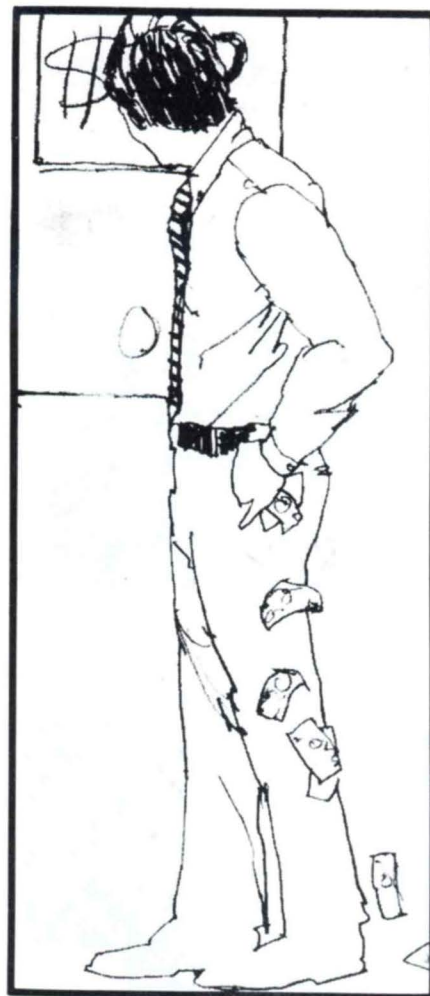
The fact that much of my work in backgammon goes unrewarded doesn't currently bother me. I am aware that major promoters benefit from my actions. I also realize that they are not asking me to do their promotion.

As I stated at the beginning of this letter, I support the concepts of your resolution. Still, I will continue to display tournament literature until I feel that the NBL is being "used".

If someone by fate, profits from my work, that's one thing; but if someone TRIES to profit off my work without a fair monetary compensation, that's a different story. I will not be taken advantage of.

Your editorial has caused me to think deeply about my policies of non-compensatory promotion at the NBL clubs. I understand that without a monetary incentive it is probably unwise to work for a profiteering national backgammon organizer. However, can it benefit backgammon to work against him?

BILL DAVIS



CAMPBELL BRIDGE & BACKGAMMON STUDIO, Campbell, California

I am very STRONGLY in favor of our organization doing something to promote the involvement and benefits of regional tournaments.

I have encouraged and sought out all materials for my club members; as I have felt that exposure to the larger world of backgammon is a must for its growth and as well as for my continued growth.

The hours that I have given with little reward have been many; the benefits few.

I believe that stronger action than just a resolution is in order. If we are an organization that is going to have an impact, then

making that weight felt, eventually, must be a must. I would be willing to give mention to all tournaments that were in a reasonable distance from my club, provided that some benefit would befall on me. Since I send out a newsletter, there would be a definite benefit for a regional promoter. I realize that backgammon is not organized as is bridge; therefore, at this time little can be done with any clout. But, then again, a letter such as the one you have written to the associate club, directed to other backgammon associations, might yield some positive value.

MARTIN MILLER

NORTHERN NEVADA BACKGAMMON ASSN, Reno Nevada

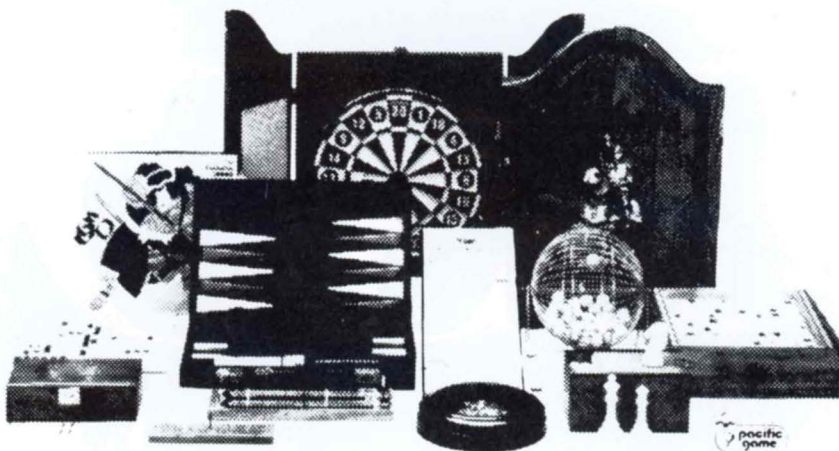
I read with interest your editorial of February 1st, concerning curtailing our activities on behalf of money-making ventures unless there is some monetary compensation. The way I see it is this — few of our club members entertain the idea of entering a national or international tournament at some posh resort. In the past, when I have mentioned national tournaments to our members, shown them brochures, etc., their response has been underwhelming.

If we had a percentage of our members going to promoted tournaments, I would consider asking for a kickback from the promoter for every bona fide member who entered, but unfortunately such is not the case. Most of our players are not interested in backgammon beyond the local level.

By mentioning major tournaments to our members, I feel I am merely promoting backgammon. If they seriously considered entering, I would seriously consider a kickback.

Since our little club is seriously considering a major regional tournament sometime this year, this national resolution would affect us if we were to send you or other clubs promotional material. Lets face it, all the director has to do is bring his members' attention to the tournament by leaving the promo-

We are pleased to announce the Grand Opening of another Game Keeper.



The GAME KEEPER — a zoological park of domestic and imported games. A place where you can find a rare striped Backgammon or see the majestic Chess. Shapely Box games and sly as a fox Strategy games can be observed cavorting with coy puzzles and nubile books. For the more adventurous there are accessories for all games on display in our natural wood habitat. Pets to take home and play.

The Game Keeper

The Meadows Las Vegas

tional material in a readily accessible place or a line or two in their newsletter or magazine.

Jim, the assistant director, offers a final note concerning your proposal to adopt a resolution to protect local/regional clubs from "corporation" promoters. The idea is an excellent one! First, such a resolution would serve as a unifying force for all the associate clubs, "a solidarity of purpose". Second, this resolution would alert outside promoters to the fact that WE, the associate clubs, are aware of the value of our efforts, and that monetary compensation for this effort should definitely be part of their promotional budgets.

Third, and here we take a big step in the annals of backgammon history in America — the drafting of such a resolution might well serve as the impetus to form a truly NATIONAL backgammon organi-

zation, an organization like that of the U.S. Chess Foundation.

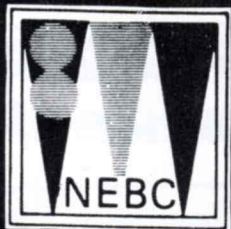
It has become obvious within the last few years that backgammon has supplanted chess as being the number one board game in America, so why not form a single officially recognized backgammon organization under whose auspices ALL national tournaments would be held, regardless of who puts up the "big money".

We hope our thoughts on the promotion of backgammon may be helpful in your tireless efforts at strengthening and promoting the ever-growing community of backgammon players.

BILL O'BRIEN

P.S. I found the rake in the Chicago Tournament to be exorbitant! It appeared that the rake was about 50% or more. There otta be a law!

☆☆



BSO

BACKGAMMON BENEFIT



**Black
& White**

Everything you have ever heard about Boston is true. They do things properly. The 2nd Annual Boston Symphony Orchestra Backgammon Club was a very proper event. None of the pomp and circumstance was missing.

Francesca Parkinson, director of the NEBC orchestrated the schedule of events like a maestro. There were brunches and buffets, cocktail parties and seminars, rules committees, plenty of directors, cocktail services, news media coverage, good equipment, closed circuit TV, and most important of all an outstanding awards ceremony.

This tournament was operated so well that it almost seemed to be a Lewis Deyong affair. And in fact, it was. The Lewis Deyong trademark was apparent. Acting as an honorary overall director, he provided the charm and efficiency that made this a special event. His retinue of titled aristocracy lent an air of elegance to the tournament. His cute English accent and collection of French interjections created warmth. His promotional ability provided a first class sponsor and

took the financial pressures off the NEBC.

The sponsor was Black & White Scotch. They gave more than money. Representatives from that label and Heubelein were there making sure things went well. Mickey Wiernasz, director of sales, and J.E. Corr Jr, vice-president marketing were everywhere promoting good will. They personally hosted the awards ceremony which featured VIPs from the Boston Symphony, many, many trophies, television coverage, and free Black & White Scotch.

The trophies depicting a black and white dog on a pedestal went to 1st place William Robertie, 2nd place Elen Jacoby Lee, 3rd place Melvin Drapkin and James Nykoff.

Winners and losers were equally pleased. The tournament possessed both responsibility and equity. Everyone enjoyed themselves and hated to see the event end. They lingered over goblets of free Black & White commenting on how smooth the scotch was. "Almost as smooth as Lewis Deyong," someone said.

THE DEMONS OF CHANCE

by Jim Roderick

Before anyone touches the dice,
the orbs of luck rattle and dance
through the visions of players—
Doublets, Blots and Double
Shots await
anyone and everyone who lets
fly the dice;

And indeed they fly —
from deep within the harboring
cups
the unexpected and expected
bounce forth,
simultaneously, in the purest of
spontaneity
they play their game with the
contestants;

The contestants, expert and novice,
female and male,
warriors of chance with but an
iota of skill
compared to the luck:
play the dice
play the game
play each other
and exhort both the god of
probability

(that cruel, *cruel* deity) and the
demon

of chance to usher off the last
checker;

And the game, the game rages into
tournament —

consolation and last chance,
groans of 17 to 1, entry failure,
missed

double shots . . . and gammons
whispers and exclamations:

"Tomchin lost,
who the hell is O'Brien?"
bittersweet the room;

The few got fewer —

money and luck get together —
dice, cubes, checkers, boards get
hotter

as the fortunes of play twist and
turn,

grabbing the soul . . . releasing
the soul;

Finally, it is over —

you've won as much as you can
you've lost as much as you can
but Backgammon is not over . . .
some leave, some stay
but none of us escape (nor want
to)

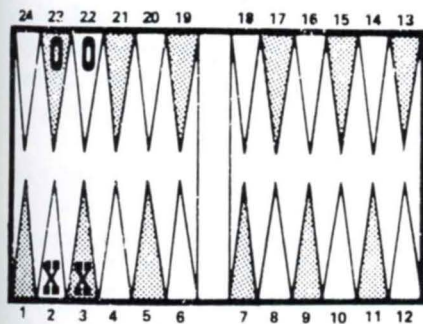
the pursuit of the demons, and
saints,
of chance.

SUPERCUBE II

By DAVE THOMPSON

In the last issue, we looked at a position in which a player could accept a double, in spite of having less than a 25% chance to win, because he could deprive his opponent of a certain amount of equity in the game, by doubling him out.

This issue we'll look at a similar position in which a player is less than 25% to win, but can still accept a double because a certain percentage of the time, he can expect to play as a substantial favorite when the game is being played for higher stakes.



In the above position, X will win immediately if he rolls any number that doesn't include a one, or 25/36 of the time. If he fails to win this roll, he will have a second chance to win if O also rolls a one, a combination of events that will occur $(11/36)^2$ of the time. X's total chances then are $25/36 + (11/36)^2 = 1021/1096 = 78.8\%$, which normally is high enough to win immediately since X will always be entitled to his 11/36 of

equity (he can't be doubled out).

But look what happens to X if he does miss. Since O will double and X must accept (he's only 26 to 10 to lose), *cube at four*. As it happens, that will occur just often enough that O should accept the double.

The proof is somewhat long and involved, but can be understood by anyone who has a familiarity with determining settlement values. Let's take the standard position of men on the 5 and 2 points against a man on the 1 point. Most experienced players know that a settlement is figured by the formula $19-17$ over 36 to C , where C is the value of the cube. In this example if the cube is at 2 a fair settlement would be $1/9$ of the stake.

Mathematicians recognize the foregoing formula as the one for *mathematical expectation*. In the last example, the first player's expectation was $1/9$ of whatever he and his opponent were playing for.

When a player is confronted with the decision of whether or not to accept a double, he can very often decide correctly on the basis of this same concept of expectation. If his expectation is greater by accepting, then he should decline.

A very obvious application of this concept is the one in which one player is a 3 to 1 favorite and turns the cube. If the second player declines, he gives up 1 unit. If he accepts, his expectation is $-3/4$

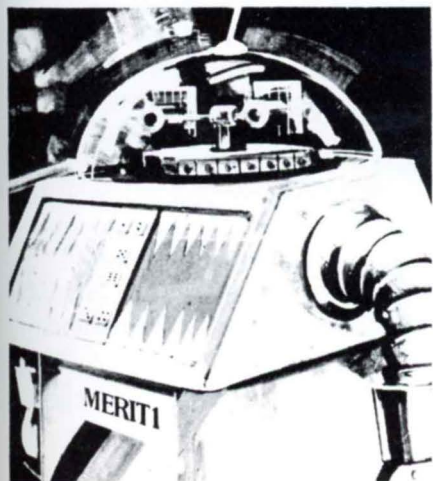


$1/4)^2$, which also is -1 unit. Just as we already know from other methods and other proofs, it's borderline as to whether to accept a double when one is a 3 to 1 underdog.

Returning to the diagrammed position, what is O's expectation whenever he accepts the double? Since he loses 2 units when X wins immediately, loses 4 when both roll 1's, and wins 4 when X rolls a 1 and he gets off, his total chances (or expectations) are:

$$-2(25/36) - 4(11/36)^2 + 4(11/36)(25/36) = 1184/1296$$

which, being less than 1 unit, means that O should accept. In other words, O does better by playing at an expectation of $-1184/1296$ than he does by giving up 1 full unit. ☆☆



THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CHALLENGE

July 15 1979 at Monte Carlo will welcome a new and unique participant to the world of tournament backgammon. That is the date set for the appearance of Merit I, the first gammonoid. At the conclusion of the Merit World Backgammon Championships the gammonoid will challenge the 1979 Champion. The stake: (donated by Merit and Intelligence Systems Limited) \$5000, winner take all. This match is to be shown on National Television.

A gammonoid, such as your potential opponent Merit I, is a walking, speaking robot, programmed by computer experts (including current World Champion Paul Magriel) to play backgammon at the highest level.

The programme was designed by Dr. Hans Berliner, a leading computer research scientist at the Carnegie Mellon Institute, Pittsburgh, Penn. U.S.A. His speciality is a branch of computer expertise called Artificial Intelligence. He explains it briefly as follows:

"Artificial Intelligence is a sub-field of computer science concerned with producing machine behaviour which, if it came from a human, would be considered intelligent. Work in Artificial Intelligence has been going on for over 25 years, the Carnegie Mellon is one of the top centres in the world. Much important research has been done there, including the simulation of human cognition, systems that can understand continuous human speech, systems that can interpret visual scenes and many others (including chess and backgammon). In a recent test of 100 games against the best commercially available micro-processor game our Artificial Intelligence programme won 76% of the points."

The backgammon capacity of Merit I has been programmed through Artificial Intelligence. A great deal of scientific knowledge has gone into the programme. The challenge match can help to answer a fascinating question. Is Artificial Intelligence superior to human intelligence?

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NEW

DICE:

Electronics has infiltrated one of man's oldest pastimes. Now backgammon and board game enthusiasts can cast their dice electronically. The *Dice* is a brand new electronic way to "roll" the dice with the touch of a fingertip. Introduced by Dimensional Designs, Ltd of New York, players simply touch two golden spots, the dice "roll" and two lighted dots appear in oval spaces numbered one through six. The next roll appears instantly when the spots are touched again. Doubles are indicated when just one space is lighted.

Programmed to produce the exact traditional dice, the numbered dice are battery-operated, compact and ideal for travel. The *Dice* with numbers is distributed exclusively in the United States by Dimensional Design Ltd., New York for \$20.00.

TRAVEL BOARD:

Backgammon enthusiasts take heart! A cure for chronic stiff necks caused by playing the game on conventional, face-to-face boards in planes, cars and restaurants, is now available.

Side by side backgammon boards make it possible for two people to play backgammon comfortably. According to designer, Bruze Zemby, "The new side-by-side board is the answer for travelers and also makes teaching the game much easier. Because the player's home and outer boards are placed side by side, rather than across from one another, the pieces move in one direction only."

The new *Travel Board* is offered by Backgammon International, Ltd., New York. \$35

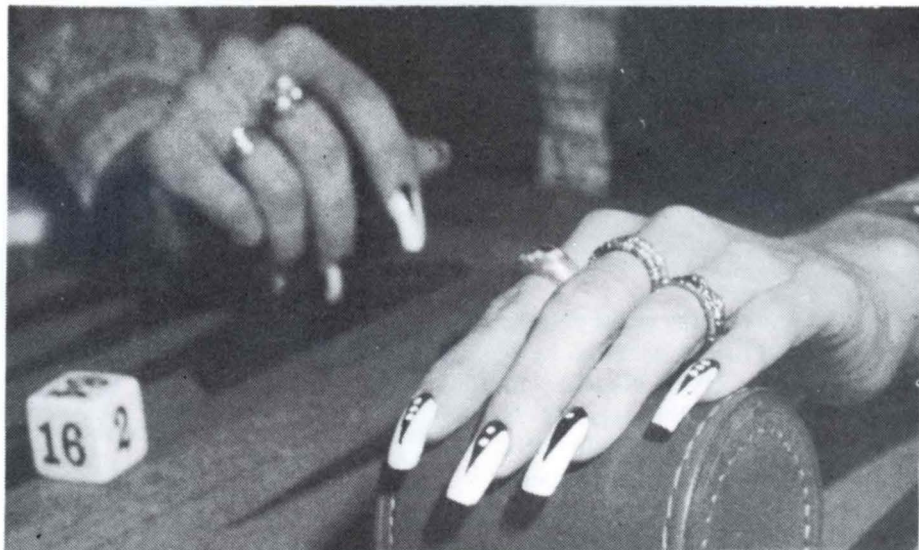


What's the Answer?

PRODUCTS —

BACKGAMMON NAILS: ▶

The height of fashion in the backgammon society world is no longer the Gucci board, but "*Backgammon Nails*" by Chic Lady. The stylish backgammon player can coordinate pip colors to match any outfit. Backgammon Nails is an exclusive concept of Michelle Sudbury, operator of Chic Lady (2797 S. Maryland Parkway, L.V.). The nails can be extended and are not only beautiful, but also durable. For appointment call (702) 731-CHIC. \$40



TOURNAMENT BOARD:

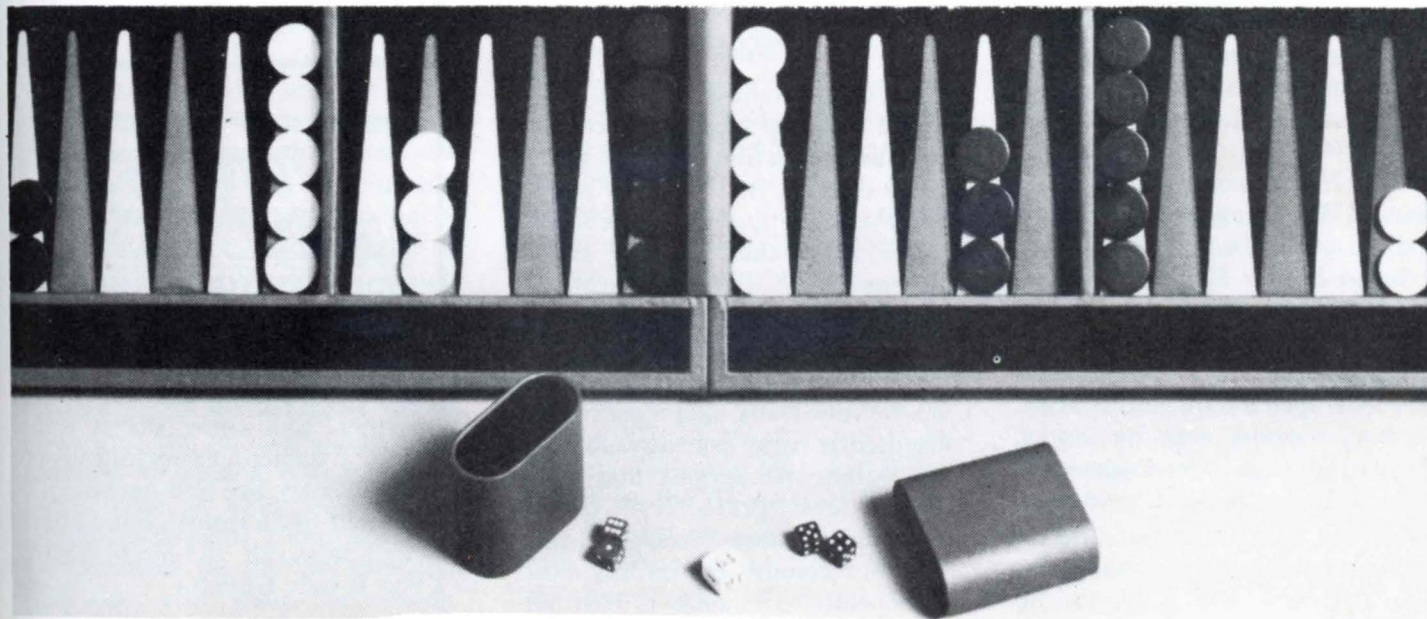
Larry Sonne¹, designer and manufacturer of many of backgammon's finer offerings, has been hard at work on another innovative product. He is about to go into production on a low-cost, tabletop, tournament-type backgammon board with materials and design to maximize utility, durability, and esthetics.

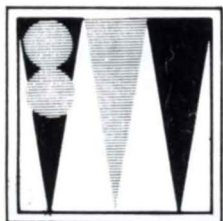
The board is one-piece construction. The playing fields are replace-

able, which makes it highly desirable from an economic standpoint. Both the interior and exterior of the board clean up easily. The low profile and unique stacking feature will make transportation and handling a breeze. The board is also light-weight, a boon to shipping expenses as well as handling. The *Tournament Board* will be available in a wide range of colors and can be permanently embossed with

the logo of your tournament, club or establishment. The board will also have the unique ability to survive some of the milder ravages of weather (sun, rain, etc.).

Larry says the Tournament Board will be available sometime in June '79 and will be very competitively priced. Contact Larry Sonne¹ at Nova Enterprise, P.O. Box "N", Okemos, MI 48864, (517) 349-1753.





NEBC

3 YEARS OLD

by Francesca Parkinson

NEBC is now three years young; we celebrated Friday evening, February 23 at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Over 100 enthusiastic players enjoyed a round-robin tournament, a superb dinner, birthday cake and champagne.

NEBC represents every state in New England and has members from almost every state in the Union. We pride ourselves on our cooperative association with all clubs in our area and that our tournaments are considered the finest. Sixteen of our members were in the winner's circle at the World's in Nassau and have placed whenever participating in a larger tournament.

NEBC is a non-profit club; we have donated to Channel 2 (the educational TV station), the Jimmy Fund, and because of our Massachusetts Open, Jacoby Cup Event for the Benefit of the Children's Hospital Medical Center, we were able to contribute \$2,500.

Last November we had our 1st Annual BSC Backgammon Benefit and are proud to say that we contributed \$4,392.50 to the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We are the first and only group that the Board of Trustees has ever allowed to hold an event, open our own BSO-NEBC banking account, sign the checks, and are even prouder because we were invited to make this an annual event!

Our 2nd Annual BSO Backgammon Benefit is being sponsored by Black & White Scotch with Lewis

Deyong as tournament director. This is an invitational event and limited to NEBC members or special invitees. Black & White Scotch is also guaranteeing a minimum donation of \$7,500 to BSO.

NEBC has no salaried officers, all work is volunteered except for our paid tournament director, Bill Morrill (who does a superb job), Cecile Yew, scorekeeper and Pat Silva, office staff.

Francesca and Bobby Parkinson started the Cape Cod Backgammon Club five years ago. This is now ably handled by presidents Jacqui and Bernie Flynn. NEBC also has vice-presidents Henry Nickerson and Kermit Kimball; treasurer Frances T. Vallone; secretary Jacqui Flynn and a very supportive tournament committee and board of overseers. Countless hours are dedicated to presenting *backgammon* in the very *best* way possible.

Our proudest achievement is the calibre of member! *Good play* is the prime thought and goal, ladies and gentlemen participating in a courteous manner and in the very best sporting way!

Every club must be aware of the single bad apple and remove it from the barrel. Backgammon has to be above the careless move (always in the player's favor), the bad check (always a deposit not recorded), and the player who is only interested in winning (no matter how!). Every club must stress:

What's important is *how you play!*

We feel that NEBC has attained its fine reputation because we always thought first — "*What's best for the game and our members?*"

We know that we may sound "corny", that we are far from the glamour of Las Vegas, but, the future of Backgammon is in the far corners of every state, played in homes and clubs, and must not be frightened away by unscrupulous promoters. We suggest that clubs screen new "promoters" before recognizing them. We suggest that conduct committees inform reputable clubs of members that are deleted — regardless of reason. ☆☆

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Patrick Amico
David Anderson
Gary Berland
Jo Berland
Bill Bowen
Chris Campbell
Brigitte Capitali
Kenneth Cothren
Powell Crichton (Lifetime)
Frank DeLapo
Peter Denger
Karen Falzarano
Don Galante
Allan Gindes
Ira H. Hecht
Ron James
David Lean
Frank Lyles
Sibyl Maius
bil Mannina
Mehran Mazdyasni
Jack McKenzie
Paulette Murray
Mitch Norman
Bill O'Mahoney
Herb Pfeffer
Ray Solozor
Jim Stern
Kathy Strong
Doug Thayer
Suzanne Thayer
Bill Toberman
Tony Virginia
Douglas Wilcox



Every other THURSDAY 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.

PROFILE PAGE...

ROBERT PERRY

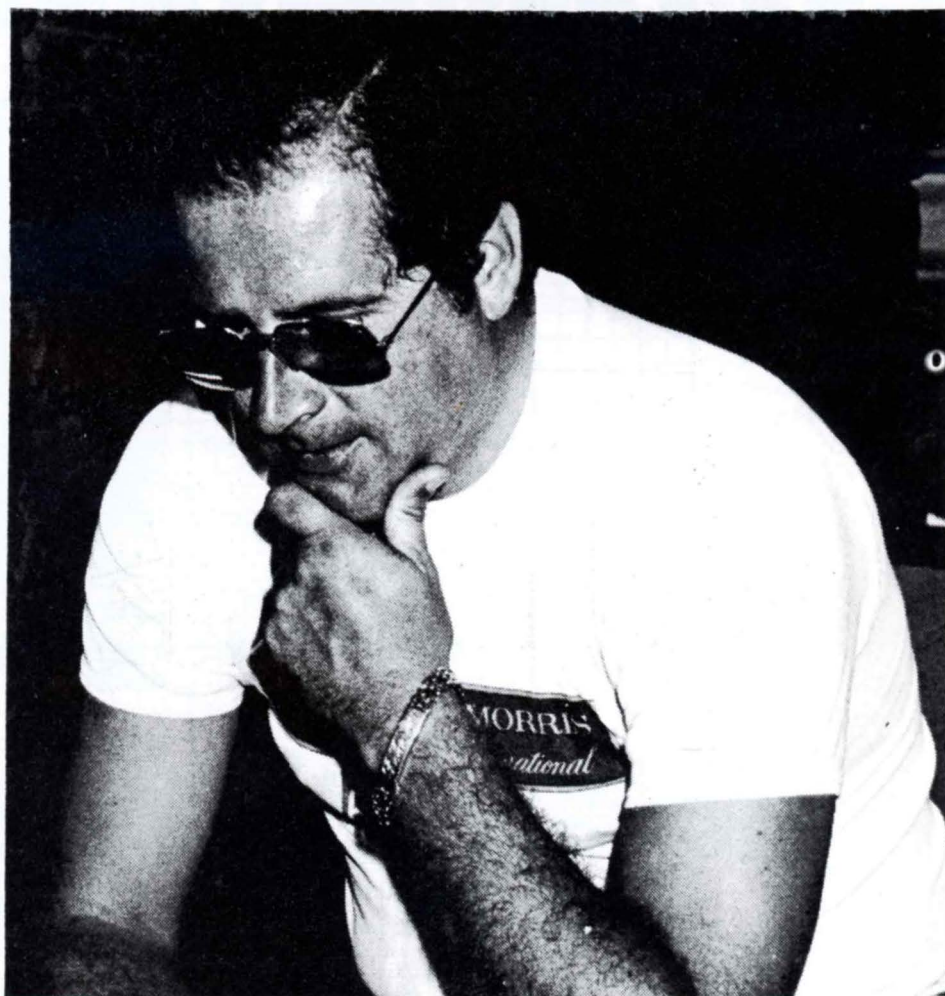
Merit European Backgammon
Championship
Director

My backgammon involvement started in 1975. After an unsuccessful and brief association with Princess Mary Obolensky, I was approached by Lewis Deyong and asked to assist with the running of the Philip Morris International European Backgammon Championship in Monte Carlo in July of 1976. Following that event, Philip Morris asked me to sign an agreement with them as a consultant for the game of backgammon. This is a position that I still hold and during this period of time I have tried and succeeded in instigating new tournaments and this year the Merit European Backgammon Championship.

I have a contract with Charles Stewart & Co. (Kirkcaldy) Ltd., a promotional subsidiary of Philip Morris, which calls for me to direct the Merit Championship. This championship is entirely my responsibility and is run and operated along the guidelines discussed and agreed between Charles Stewart & Co., its representatives and myself.

With the inevitable BACK-BITING and GOSSIP as to who owns or started this, that, and the other in backgammon, I am happy to put the following on record: Of the five events which make up the MEBC only one venue was a backgammon tournament held prior to 1977. This was the Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, a tournament originated by the late Dr. Walter Krader.

Some 10 months before his untimely death, he had asked me to take over the running of this tournament to enable him to spend more time on other business. At every other venue I have arranged tournaments for the first time and for next year, plans are already well advanced for more interesting and new venues.



Whilst gambling and Las Vegas are synonymous, I have tried where possible to stay away from casinos and hold tournaments in holiday resorts which offer participants the chance of backgammon without the temptation to *blow their brains* in the casinos. Inevitably, many people welcome this and almost without exception, they thoroughly enjoy the tournaments.

Thanks to having a sponsor for the tournaments directed by me in Europe, I am able to stick to my golden rule, i.e., no deductions, return 100% of what is put in by players. Not only that, \$10,000 is added by the sponsors of the MEBC. Not for me, obligatory third-rate dinners or, for that matter, surcharges for not staying in the tournament hotel, but for players. Judging by the numbers that par-

ticipate in tournaments run along these lines, it pays dividends.

A great friend and fellow organizer, Roland JaKober from Geneva, follows the same principles and his tournaments always reflect this in their attendance. Each year in Europe, attendance has been increasing by approximately 25%, which means the formula must be correct.

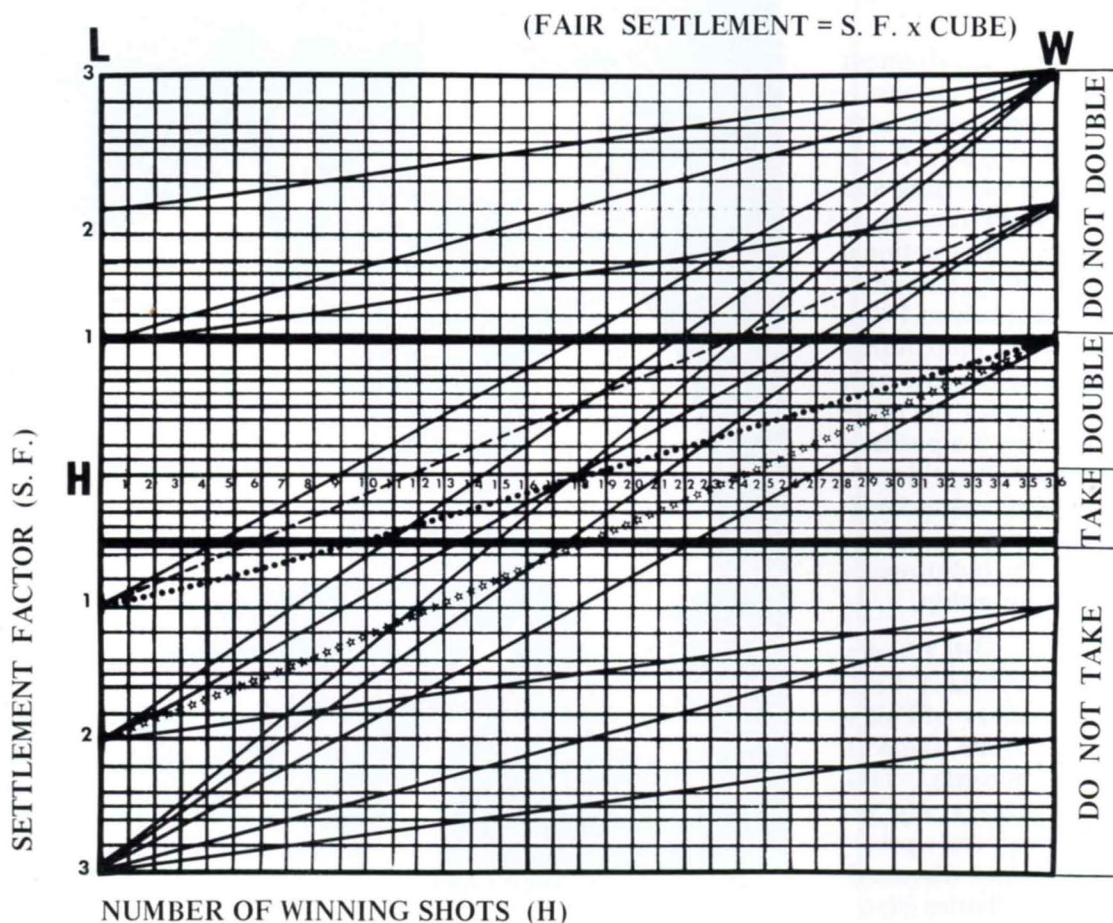
I personally play very little backgammon, although I love the game. I play in perhaps one or two tournaments per year and have yet to experience THE LUCK so often talked about to enable me to take the winner's spoils. More satisfying for me is to run a successful tournament for others and, if that is the case, I consider it a success for myself.

☆☆

SETTLEMENT FACTORS

Figure 1

by Mel Leifer



This is a preliminary draft of a study concerning settlements and their relation to doubling decisions. My report shows one derivation of the "3-to-1 underdog" rule for "takes" and discusses how these odds are changed for the situations where either player may win or lose a gammon or backgammon.

The graph entitled "Figure 1. Settlement Factors" summarizes all the results of my study. To illustrate its use: assume, for example, that a backgammon game comes down to an end game position where the outcome (win or lose) will be determined by the next roll of the dice.

Let's assume you have a double shot (20 winning rolls). If neither player is likely to be gammoned,

the exact fair settlement is found on the dotted diagonal line running between L=1 and W=1 at the point above the horizontal numbered line where H=20. Reading across we see the settlement factor is about +1. Now multiply .1 times the value of the cube (c) to obtain the fair settlement you should *collect*. $.7 \times 4$ or, rounding off, 3 points as a fair settlement.

The wider lines on Fig. 1 represent the boundaries for takes and doubles. It is correct strategy to fold when doubled if the settlement factor for your position is below the lower wider line (at -.5). Double, if your settlement factor is above the horizontal numbered line in simple one roll end game positions, where surrendering the

cube will not significantly reduce your winning percentage. If you have a chance to win a gammon or backgammon and the settlement factor for your position is found *above* the upper thick line (at 1.0) your position is too good to double. Play on for the extra points if you are sure your opponent will refuse to accept a double.

The doubling decision guidelines derived from simple one roll end game positions may be extended to more long range positions earlier in the game. But extreme care must be exercised in such projections when possession of the cube is critical to the outcome of the game and in those exceptional cases, where the generalized odds guidelines cannot be applied exactly. ☆☆



LAS VEGANS

You've often heard the name and wondered who she is. Well wonder no more. The lady above is the glamorous and talented Suzy Creamcheese: fashion designer extraordinaire, Nevada woman's backgammon champion, and striking model for her own designs.

Suzy, from Hollywood originally, had designing in her blood as a girl, making improvements on her dolls' clothing.

Later she designed costumes for the original Whiskey-A-Go-Go and takes credit for the first paper dress and the first electric dress. She made soda cracker earrings for Gypsy Rose Lee,

with whom she hosted a talk show in San Francisco. Her store is now located in the Mini-Mall.

Suzy and her designs have appeared on Johnny Carson and Merv Griffin and she has been nominated for Coty awards and the American Design award. Eleanor Lambert Benson of Women's Wear Daily named her one of America's top ten designers. And her garments have been worn by Elvis, Shirley MacLaine, Cher, Phyllis George, Ann-Margret, and Lola Falana.

How did she get the name? Off a package of Philadelphia cream cheese. Sounds better than cheddar . . . and is tastier.

☆☆

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CAESARS PALACE



DR CUBE

by David Eig

PROBLEM No. 1

X to play 1-1

Your first instinct will probably be to move both checkers from X24 to X23 for the first 2. (I know mine was.) A closer inspection reveals that to win this game, X must have his barpoint. Three of his 1's can be used to make the barpoint, and the 1 from 6-5. By creating a 5-point prime, O may have to break his prime, if he doesn't roll a 6. There is in fact, an advantage to being on the 24 point over the 23 point and that is, whenever O rolls a 5 without a 6, he will be forced to break his bar and leave a shot, unless the 5's are paired. Splitting the back men from 24 to 23 is also a possibility, but too dangerous with the cube in the middle.

PROBLEM No. 2

X to play 5-1

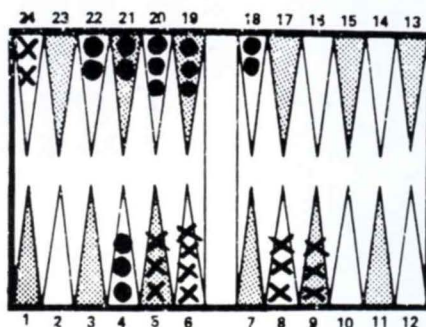
"Look ahead" is the key to this problem. Although X can play safe by moving X5-X4 and X6-X1, this is incorrect. By playing safe, X strips himself of builders on the 5 and 6 points. All of his builders will be stacked on the 7 and 8 points, which would be wrong because those are the points X wants to clear first. If X plays safe, all 5's and 6's will be sucked up to the 1 point and some of the 5's will leave a shot, and break the 6 point as well. The correct play is X7 all the way to X1, and leave a shot at the 4 point NOW, while O still hasn't developed a board!

PROBLEM No. 3

Should X Double?

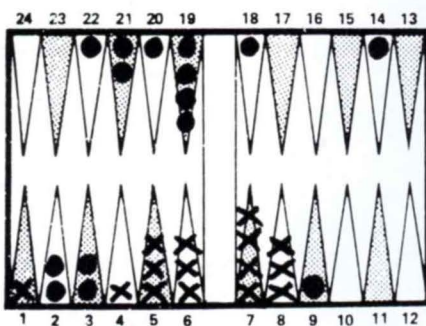
Good question! X is a strong favorite here, regardless of O's 6 points. X has the timing and should he make a prime of his own (and he is a huge favorite to do so), then X should win easily, without O either escaping one checker

64



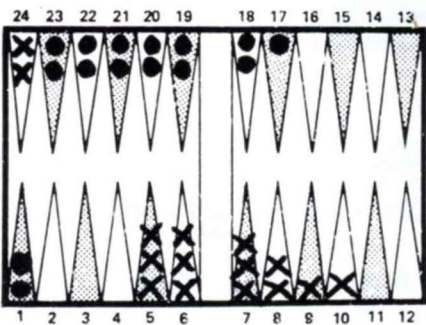
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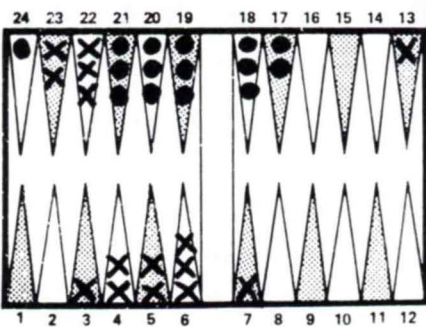
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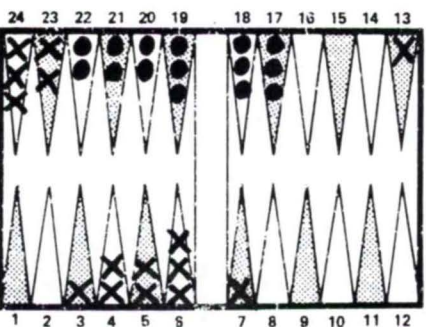
3

2



4

2



5

or making an advanced point up to the prime X has constructed.

DOUBLE 4's play somewhat dangerously, 5's awkwardly, and 6's will put O in a position to re-double.

O will need a 2 after X makes the 4 point, and in some cases a 1. After that it will be touch and go. Without the 2 or 1, O's chances become somewhat prohibitive, as all the other numbers will break the bar, therefore — DOUBLE!

PROBLEM No. 4

O Doubles, should X accept?

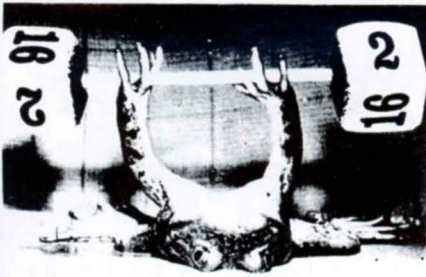
X is in a 2-3 backgame and has a spare checker on the 3 point ready to escape with any 6, another free checker on the 13 point and seems to be well timed. The way to assess your position in a backgame is by seeing if your timing is good, so you won't have to crash your board when you get a shot. In this position, TAKE without a shadow of a doubt.

PROBLEM No. 5

O Doubles, should X accept?

Although problems No. 4 and No. 5 appear similar, they are different in two very big ways. The first is that the spare checker is on the 1 point and will have much difficulty in freeing itself before X crashes his board. The major difference however, is in the fact that X has a 1-2 backgame and not a 2-3. The 1-2 is an excellent backgame when it is timed well and that's the catch, it is very rarely timed well. The reason the 1-2 doesn't seem to hold its timing is because it keeps its opponent from playing his big numbers and consequently his prime holds, while the 1-2 goes sour. The 2-3 however is a SELF-TIMED backgame that forces its opponent to play his big numbers which all get sucked to the ace point like a vacuum. This 1-2 is poorly timed, and thus the reason why X should DROP this cube.

DAVID EIG is available for lessons — if interested, contact LVBC office 361-3910.



FUN FACTS

The Romans played a form of backgammon called LUDUS DUO-DECIM SCRIPTORUM – the 12 line game.

The word “backgammon” probably came from the Welsh words “back” (little) and “cammum” (battle).

Others claim the word is formed from two Saxon words “baec” (back) and “gamen” (game).

The French call backgammon Tric Trac, an alliteration.

An old writer paused to reflect that backgammon “has even been a game for the higher classes and has never been vulgarized or defiled by uneducated people.”

WHO WON?

Here we go again, harping on the importance of a scheduled Awards Ceremony after a tournament. It is a small investment in time and money, in relation to its importance.

The Pacifica Hotel Tournament (LA) ended with a whimper, not a bang! No one knew or cared who won. However, we did hear that the unlikely team of Michael Maxakuli and Morris Fox won the doubles.

U.S. Open Tournaments are noted for ending in ANTI-CLIMAX! But, someone managed to smuggle out the names of the winners. Our agent reported: 1st Place—Jeff Mervis, 2nd Place—Craig Chellstorp, Doubles—Dave Ashley/Sam Wilson. Of course, our agent then swallowed the evidence!

The Thursday night bowling league gets more publicity for its champions and they only play for beers!

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"BEHIND CLOSED DOORS"

LEWD CUBE

Sex and backgammon go hand in hand. If Hugh Hefner plays backgammon there must be something sensuous about the game. We have a terrific collection of pornography where backgammon boards are used as props. Our favorite is the "Behind Closed Doors" series of 60 risqué backgammon poses. "Behind Closed Doors" is a \$30.00 Marriage Manual with 2,000 photographs by Robin Schwartz published by Materia Medica of New York.

We've heard that there is someone who is collecting backgammon sex stories. You know the kind "I'll play you a seven point match for \$200. I'll pay if I win and you trade if you lose!" or "I was blinded by the light bouncing off her shiny breasts and suddenly there they were — double sixes!"

This collection contains a feature story which appeared in a New York scandal sheet. In this article which profiles Paul Magriel, a former lover (L.G.), claims that not only is he a master of the boards but also of the beds. She is quoted as saying, "All we did was play backgammon and have sex."

But, we have the best sex story of all and it's true. It goes like this:

Southern California playboy and backgammon enthusiast meets modest Northern California female backgammon promoter. The setting is the beautiful Lake Tahoe, during the U.S. Open Backgammon Tournament. It's cold outside so they decide to play backgammon at one or the other's room. It turns into an all night session highlighted by fine wine, imaginative doubles and occasional beavers. The game is over; the deed is done.

Next day the sun is shining. The playboy is softly whistling to himself as he watches some friends chouette. Suddenly, the Reno police are everywhere. The playboy is handcuffed and dragged away to jail on rape charges. Among other things, the outraged lady was married.

We are waiting with bated breath for the sequel. And you thought that you had heard the ultimate hard-luck backgammon story!

☆☆

BACKGAMMON CLUB OF OMAHA

The founder of the Omaha Backgammon Club, Jay Wallin, has resigned and headed for sunny California. But, don't worry about the future of backgammon in Omaha; the club is stronger than ever — over 250 members, tournaments every Sunday at Rusty Scrapper, a state-wide Cancer Benefit Tournament, and a new affiliate, the Lincoln Backgammon Club.

The spark plug of this activity and growth is Carolyn Caniglia, former treasurer of the club and a pure backgammon enthusiast.

When we talked to Carolyn, she was busy helping organize the regional tournament that would include Minnesota, Missouri and Iowa, along with Nebraska.

The president of the club is Terry Petersen. We are glad that he picked up the dropped baton and is leading the backgammon parade in Omaha. New mailing address for the club is 11423 Taylor St., Omaha, NB 68164 (402) 330-3333.

IT PAYS TO PLAY

TOP 10 LAS VEGAS PLAYERS

1. Craig Chellstorp
2. David Eig
3. Mike Van Dusen
4. Don Hiatt
5. Vartan Sarkissian
6. Gary Ford
7. David Hershleder
8. Munchkin
9. Dave Ashley
10. Ed Green

Backgammon GOES TO COLLEGE

by Sid Jackson



Four hundred colleges and universities participated in the 1st Annual ACU-I Intercollegiate Backgammon Competition. During February and March, the local finalists represented their schools at 15 regional backgammon tournaments as part of the recreational competition programs organized by the Association of College Unions-International.

Backgammon now becomes the 10th student participation program provided nationally by the ACU-I. Bernard J. Pitts, a faculty member at Oregon State University, is the national ACU-I director for both the Table Soccer and Backgammon competition programs.

Mr. Pitts invited the American Backgammon Players Assn. to establish and administer an ongoing collegiate backgammon program. The Players Association subsequently established a collegiate division, which provided coordination for all facets of the event.

With the first season concluded successfully, the information received from various colleges indicates that twice as many schools will participate in next year's national competition.

As usual the active backgammon organizers were indispensable (such as Carol Cole in Flint, Bill Davis and Sarge Sergis in Chicago, and

the ubiquitous Nick Maffeo). Vito Esparo came through like the cavalry at the last instance when another game distributor forgot his enthusiastic commitment to provide sets for the regionals — one week before they were to start. Backgammon International supplied each event and prize sets as well!

The Chicago National Backgammon League and Pipmasters in Portland provided their newsletter readers city-wide information and reports. They are just examples of the many clubs who know that "the more the merrier" works — that is, if you're a club that works at it!

It is getting easier to find regular backgammon columns in the big city papers. In addition to the popular bridge and backgammon columns syndicated nationally by Alfred Sheinwold, Oswald Jacoby and Omar Sharif, there are weekly features by such active local tournament operators as *The Buffalo News's* Jerry Nathan (Festival Backgammon Club); *The Boston Globe's* Bill Robertie (New England Backgammon Club); *The Seattle Times's* and *The Portland Oregonian's* Ted Barr (Pacific Northwest Backgammon Assn.)

UNLV Winner — KIM KELSEY.

Quips

By David Eig (Dr. Cube)

Ready answers to brow-beating remarks, or, neutralization of verbal abuse as a winning tool:

Q. YOU TOOK THIS DOUBLE?

A. No, I'm playing it out because of masochistic tendencies.

Q. DO YOU WANT TO PLAY IT OUT?

A. Does a 6-1 make the bar point?

Q. AND THEN HE ROLLED DOUBLE 4's FROM THE BAR, CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?

A. NO!

Q. HOW COULD I HAVE POSSIBLY LOST THIS GAME?

A. Does the word "butcher" have any special significance to you?

Q. AT ANY RATE, WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF LOSING THIS GAME?

A. 53.7% give or take .1% either way, of course.

Q. ONLY I CAN FAN ON A 2-pt. BOARD LIKE THIS!

A. You're right! John, I've never fanned on a 2-pt. board, have you, Steve?

Q. WELL HERE'S MY 5 and THAT'S A 2.

A. Well here's the cube and that's a drop.

Q. I SEE THE 4 BUT JUST PLAY ANY GOOD 1. (heh, heh)

A. No good 1's, your roll. (heh, heh)

Q. BOY, ARE YOU LUCKY!

A. OH?

Q. DON'T YOU EVER DANCE?

A. Not since the two-step went out.

1st Person:

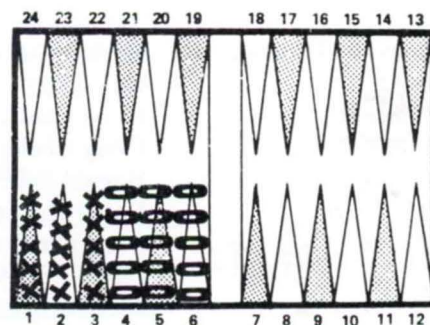
"Which side do you like, X or O?"

2nd Person:

"You and your propositions, you always say yours are original. Well, it just so happens that I've seen this one before!"

1st. Person:

"Not this one, that's X's inner board!"



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LAS VEGAS TOURNAMENT RESULTS

DATE	OPEN CLASS	INTERMEDIATE
Jan 23 (Doubles)	Loraine Hepburn/Mike Sherman	
Jan 28	Mike Sherman	Richard Kiskis
Feb 4	Bob Ciaffone	Chris Campbell
Feb 6 (Doubles)	Michael Maxakuli/Mike Van Dusen	
Feb 11	David Hershleder	Harry Fritz
Feb 18	Sam Wilson	Steve Johnson
Feb 20 (Doubles)	Dave Ashley	
Feb 25	Chris Campbell	Ron Karr
March 4	Munchkin	Andrea Slinker
March 6 (Doubles)	Michael Maxakuli/Mike Van Dusen	
March 11	David Eig	Patrick Amico
March 18	Craig Chellstorp	Paulette Murray
March 19	Craig Chellstorp	Doug Thayer
March 22 (Doubles)	Harold Seif/Paulette Murray	
March 25	David Hershleder	Henry Ehrenhaft
April 1	Craig Chellstorp	Alan Margulies
April 5 (Doubles)	David Eig/Wayne Drogseth	
April 8	Richard Kiskis	John Liakos
April 15	David Eig	Patrick Amico

LVBC 34



Poker

Have you heard that there have been poker games at the Dunes' Poker Room where over a million dollars has changed hands per session? It's true.

It is also true that many of their same poker players amuse themselves during slow periods, by playing backgammon for small stakes—like \$100 a point! ★★★

The 10th Edition of the World Series of Poker is coming up April 21 - May 24. The Binion's Horseshoe is of course, the host Casino and Eric Drake will again be the director. Eric, a LVBC enthusiast, always manages to accommodate an errant backgammon game if a highroller requests it. ★★★

Speaking of Eric, it is rumored that he's about to take over the operation of the Silverbird Poker Room. ★★★

In the "how to win a million" department, we've heard there is a book recently published that rivals the excellence of the already legendary *Doyle Bronson Poker Book*.

Bobby Baldwin's *Winning Poker Secrets* (B & G publishing \$9.95) is the title of the book. It is written and co-ordinated by Michael John Caro. Bobby, you might remember, is the youthful looking poker champion who has dazzled the poker world with his brilliant and knowledgeable play. Yea, but does he play backgammon? ★★★

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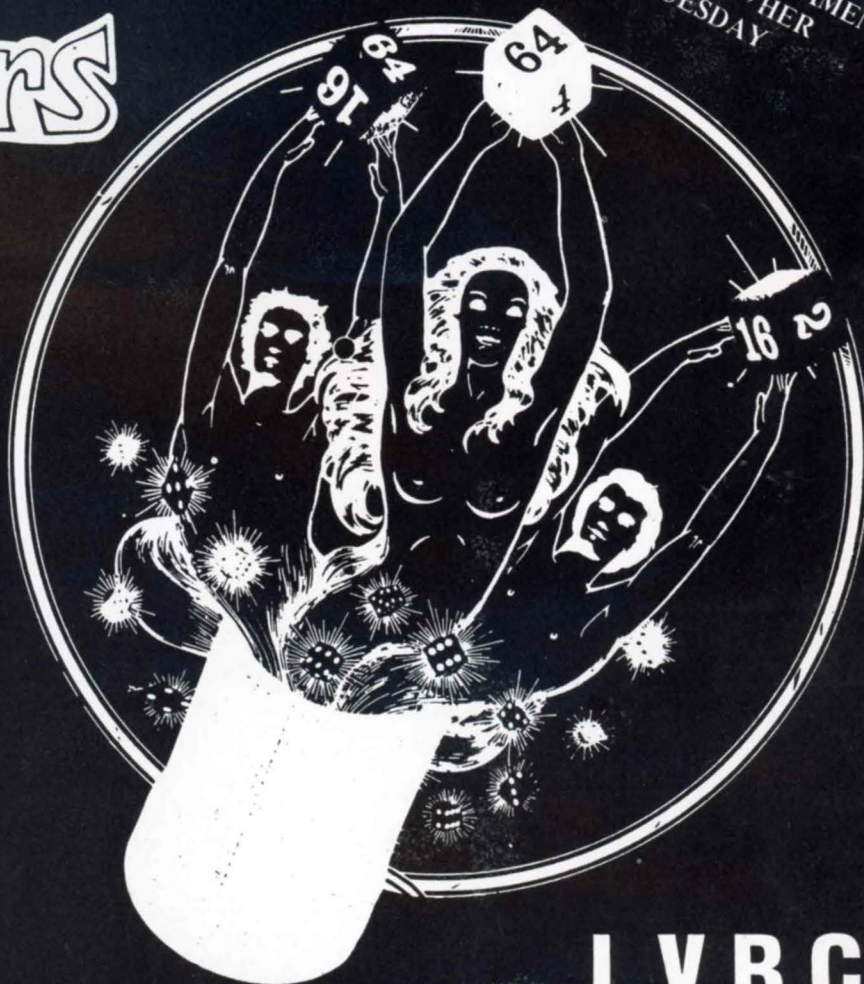
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