

# Backgammon-quartet

BY WALTER L. RICHARD

■ For centuries Backgammon has been a game for two players. In recent years a feature has been added called Chouette, which permits one player to pit himself against two or more opponents. A partnership, or four-handed game of Backgammon, however, has never before been properly developed. In all the attempts which have been made, each of the four contestants was supposed to play for himself. Confusion was rampant, and the games took an unconscionable time to finish.

"Backgammon-Quartet", is, however, a form of Backgammon for four players which is simple, easy to learn, and which takes no longer to play than regular Backgammon. It is, in effect, a partnership contest, in which two games of Backgammon are in progress at the same time; one member of a pair opposing one member of an opponent pair in a mutually played game, while his partner engages the other opponent in a second game. But, since identical dice throws govern play in both of the games, neither side receives the benefit of better dice throws than those on the other side of the Quartet Board.

■ Backgammon-Quartet is played upon a board thirty inches square, which is the exact size to fit over a standard bridge table. This board is divided obliquely from the upper left-hand corner to the lower right-hand corner by a partition one-quarter of an inch high, thus forming two separate game boards.

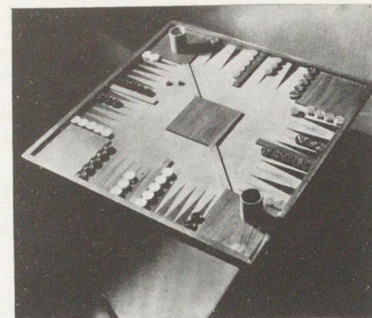
North and West are partners, South and East are partners. Thus, opponents face each other at a forty-five degree angle, instead of sitting directly opposite each other, as at the ordinary Backgammon table.

The set-up of the men and the play throughout the games are the same as in regular Backgammon; with the exceptions that no automatic or voluntary doubling is allowed; no player may give advice to his partner; and the scoring is different. Otherwise, the Official laws for Backgammon govern all play.

To start play, each of the four players throws a single die; the highest die thrown denotes the player who shall be dice-caster throughout the game, the other caster to be his partner who shall cast on the other side of the partition. The two casters having been decided, each throws again a single die, and the one throwing the higher number, makes the first move in his board by playing the pips on the face of his die, and the die of the other caster. For example, should South win the first throw, he moves, and the player sitting directly opposite, (North) who is the opponent of the caster's partner, (East), moves according to the same throw of the dice in his game on the other side of the dividing line or partition. Play alternates throughout the game, the next caster, (East), throwing and moving simultaneously with the player directly across the table and facing him, (West). This eliminates the luck element in the dice throws, as members of each team have the same throws.

The winner is the player who, after moving all his men into his inner table, bears them off the board, according to his dice throws. At this point all four contestants cease playing.

The winner then scores fifteen points for game. In addition, he scores one point for each man remaining in his own opponent's

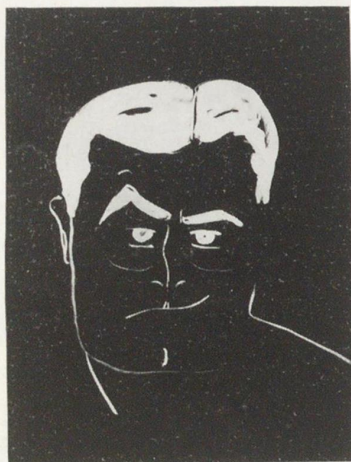


BACKGAMMON-QUARTET BOARD

inner table, two points for men remaining in his opponent's outer table, three points for opponent's men in the winner's outer table, four points for opponent's men in the winner's inner table, and five points each for opponent's men on the bar. In a like manner, the count of his partner's opponent is added to this winning score. The score of the winner's partner is counted by the same method—but it is deducted from the winner's score. This net total denotes the points won by the winner. He and his partner are each credited with this amount, and each of the adversaries loses this amount.

■ Should a member of both teams win on the same dice throw, the method of counting is not affected.

This system of scoring appears complicated at first. In reality it is very simple. There are seldom many men left in either game when play ceases. It is surprising that over a period of many hundreds of games, the count averages slightly under twenty points per game, and rarely exceeds a total of forty. **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Walter L. Richard, inventor and patenter of Backgammon-Quartet, is the author of *Complete Backgammon*.



RICHARD BARTHELMESS BY THE AUTHOR

By DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, JR.

■ When you have met Richard Barthelmess once, you will either call him "Mr. Barthelmess" for the rest of your life, or you will eternally address him as "Dick".

There is about him an air of diffidence that is hard to penetrate. In fact he sees to it that unless he pleases, one doesn't. He gives one the impression of being either brimming to the edge with conceit, or possessing an impenetrable shyness.

Curiously enough he is tainted with neither. He is, on the contrary, thoroughly self-conscious. He suspects that the curiosity directed toward him is born of a critical and destructive scavengery. This feeling in no way resembles self-pity. As a matter of fact, he possesses a pardonable pride in relation to his accomplishments, and to the length of time he has prolonged his career. Because of this attitude, so easily misinterpreted by strangers and

## Richard Barthelmess

casual acquaintances, he is not generally liked. He has been thought by many to be inexcusably rude or smug, but that is wholly the workings of his self-conscious philosophy. He feels that if he doesn't strike first, somebody else will. Another thing one must take into consideration, if one were to analyze him, is the fact that for well over a decade he has held on to an enormous popularity—a popularity that, in this business, is symbolized by a sly coquette, a fleeting and unreliable shadow of the artist himself.

Being in this position subjects him continuously to public scrutiny. Myriad eyes are focused microscopically on his every move, and occasionally he rebels. He has a passionate desire to be known by his work alone and not by his private life. This desire often leads him into embarrassing difficulties—for his press agent. (Continued on second page following)