# Rome's addiction invades suburbs

Backgammon, the game on the other side of the checker board, has come into its own.

The favorite of the jet-set has filtered down to thess glamorous circles as players realize this is the best board game going. For excitement and speed, backgammon has no equal, they claim.

Backgammon players from Mt. Clemens to Giraltar are zeroing in on Plymouth, the bone of the American Backgammon Ciub, Inc., the foremost cithe of its kind in the tri-county area.

First tournament of the fall season will be Sun-cithed in the Plymouth Hilton Inn, Northwille Road at Five Mile. Registration is slated for 2:30 pm. and play will begin at 3. There will be three classes of play. Open, with an entry fee of \$8, amature, \$6, and beginner, \$4.

Annual membership to the club is \$15 and card Amusal membership to the club is \$15 and card admitted to backgammon clubs across the nation admitted to backgammon clubs across the nation.

Persons wishing more information about the club or the tournament can call Michael Kloian, 459-5776.

A conversation with Kloian, one of the founders.

A conversation with Kloian, one of the founders of ABC and Scotty Flora, charter member, revealed their fascination with the game.

A BACKGAMMON player is seldom without a board. They play on their lunch hours, before din-ner, after dinner, by appointment, or at the drop of

ner, after gray on men finant notes, before un-ner, after dinner, by appointment, or at the drop of a hat.

The boards vary in price from a Kmart model to one priced as much as \$3,000 or more. They may be printed on a handkerchief or a bath mat. There are the magnetic models that fit into a vest pocket, and tables that are beautiful pieces of furniture. The boards that fold into an attractive piece of hand luggage are familiar to backgammon players the world over.

world over.

Jim and Scotty Flora were aboard ship, on their
way from Copenhagen to Sweden, when a small boy
spotted her case.

"Do you play backgammon?" he asked.
"He was Danish and about 11-years-old," said
Mrs. Flora. "And in spile of a language barrier, we
and no difficulty when we played backgammom."

She also played with the captain of a Greek



Scotty Flora's collection of backgammon poards includes a Mexican coffee-table-sized leather board complete with matching chairs. (Staff photo by Gary Caskey)

cruise ship. Evidently backgammon is big in the Mediterranean area. HISTORIANS do not know the precise origin of the game. Earliest game boards resembling the contemporary game were unearthed by archeologists in Biblical sites in Asia Minor. Tombs of Egyptian pharoahs and queens reveal they had their own personalized boards. They played their game with a dice box and the Romans and Greeks

used a box as they developed their own versions of backgammon.

The Romans were responsible for the game spreading throughout Europe. According to an article in "Gammon," a new magazine devoled to backgammon, the game was forbidden. Play was limited even in America when players became so involved in play they were "negligent and delelict in their duties."

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The first international tournament was held in 1984. Now there is a regular circuit that players follow around the world. The prize pools are larger than those at the major golf tournaments.

There are people who make their living playing backgammon.

The recent Monte Carlo competition was a selection. The Puerto Rico tournament was a huge success. The Chicago Cup is coming up. Next hig one in this, country is the World Amateur Backgammon Championship Nov. 28 to Dec. 2 with a total prize pool that could reach \$500,000. It will be at the Dunes in Las Vegas, Nev. The winner gets 50 percent of the total prize pool.

Michael Kloian and the Floras plan to attend. Entry fee is \$500 for the open and \$400 for the amateur.

THE ABC was organized in January of this year. There was no club in the metropolitan Detroit area, the nearest being in Flint.

The first meeting was in February when 75 persons turned out for a party at the local Veteraon of Foreign Wars building. There were free lessons, punch and quiethe Lorraine.

The club met once a month through June. There were two meetings in July and three in August. As word of the new club circulated, players came from a wider radius.

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Since arrangements have been made with the Hilton to host the Sunday meetings; the club is ready for expansion and larger tournaments.

A round-robin tournament is being planned for 6:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 30. Unlike the elimination tournament, the round robin allows players to continue through the entire tournament.

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### OU honors actor, civic leader

Two eminent professors — a noted to ref educational relations for General actor and lecturer, and a Pontiac busiMotors, doctor of science; and Harold ness and civic leader — were among A. Cousins, Pontiac businessman and those who received honorary degrees at Oakland University commencement searcises last weekend.

In addition, three OU alumni were The 2 pm. ceremony in Baldwin Pavilion on the campus in Rochester honored approximately 800 OU students and to the institution. All three who completed their course work in have served on the association's board offerctors.

July or August. Receiving honorary doctorates were:

Lew Ayres, film actor and lecturer on world religions, Harry Bober, found-er of the International Center of Medi-eval Art and professor in the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, doctor of humanities degrees; Kenneth A. Meade, Franklin, adjunct professor of engineering at OU and former direc-

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of directors.

Receiving distinguished alumni sorvice awards were Detroit aftorney David B. Lewis, class of 1955, current chairperson of th Oakland University Board of Trustees, Rochester real estate man R. James Girardot, class of 1968; and Susan McKelvey, class of 1971. Ms. McKelvey, a resident of Rochester, is in the Marketing Department of Community National Bank.

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