



backgammon

Michael Klioan
of the American Backgammon Club

SAFE PLAY OR BOLD PLAY?
In the example, white rolls a 3-1. With many playable options, what is your suggested move?

An immediate response for many players would be to hit black's 10-1. This play seems favorable at first, but as closer looks reveal that it could prove fatal. If white hits black, white will be forced to leave the open point — the 7 (the point 7) or 9 point, and one each on black's 7 and 10 points. The chances of black staying on the bar are very slim. Black could also hit white on the rebound (approximately 20 out of 35 combinations will do it).

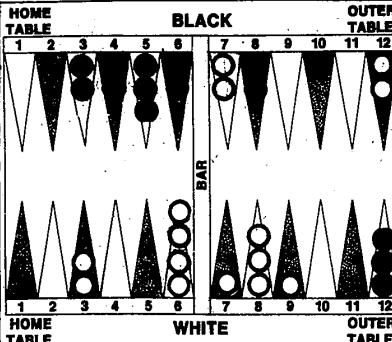
Black has a stronger home board, which is a sure hit if white is hit. On the other hand, black cannot hope to contain black. If hit, white will be to contain black.

serious trouble, and if white fails to enter black will have little difficulty hitting the remaining blots.

To avoid this situation, white should play safe by moving checkers from the 8 and 6 points to the 5 point. With the best chance, the game goes on by quietly holding his home board to secure a future hit. If black has trouble clearing the bar-point (7), white will have little difficulty containing a hit checker.

Of course, don't forget the doubling cube. If white becomes the favorite later in the game, he may offer the cube to black. Right now, neither opponent has a definite advantage, so the cube stays neutral.

For more information or ques-



tions concerning backgammon, contact the American Backgammon Club at 455-7788, or write to Box 509, Plymouth MI 48170.

Star for 3 decades
performing in CantonBy Nick Charles
special writer

has not only recorded more than 10 of his own albums but has shared some of his compositions with fellow performers.

One of Russell's best songs, "Superstar," was co-written with a talented woman writer, Billie Bradbury. The song was recorded by Billie, the Carpenter (on his "Mad Dogs and Englishmen" album) and the Carpenter's debut album on A&M records.

THE SONG became the fifth gold single for the Carpenters within eight weeks. The Carpenters also recorded Russell's "A Song for You," which became the title track of the duo's 1972 album.

An eight-minute-long ballad written by Russell called "This Masquerade" was recorded by

preview

George Benson and appeared on his 1976 album "Masquerade." The song also appears on the 1981 LP "The George Benson Collection" (Warner Bros.).

Even though Russell is capable of Top 40 tunes, it seems the kind of music he likes to perform and record himself is a cross between R&B and bluegrass. His bluegrass sound is created by a band of fiddlers, banjos and dobros, all played by the New Grass Revival Band on Russell's 1981 live album on Paradise/Warner Bros. Records.

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