

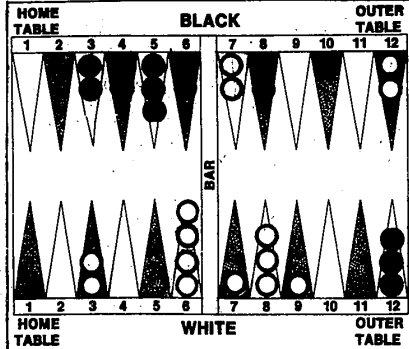
backgammon

Michael Kloian

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 point blot. This play seems favorable at first, but as closer look reveals that it could prove fatal. If white hits black, white would be forced to leave three open blots — one on the bar 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 36 combinations do it). Black has a stronger home board, which is a sure threat if white is hit. On the other hand, white cannot hope to contain black. If hit, white will be in serious trouble, and if white fails to re-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. White's best chances of winning this game are by quickly building his home board to prepare for 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 455-7798, or write to Box 589, Plymouth MI 48170.

Star for 3 decades performing in Canton

By Nick Charles special writer

One of the most versatile and enduring talents of the last three decades will share his music with Canton Township's Center Stage audience at 8:30 p.m. Monday.

The man who has proved himself to be a true superstar is Leon Russell. It has been said that Russell's music is gospel, rock, rhythm and blues, bluegrass, country and even pop. The truth of the matter is that Russell is capable of writing all these types of music and has done so.

The talented pianist 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, Bonnie Bramlett. The song was recorded by Rita Coolidge, Joe Cocker (on his "Mad Dogs and Englishmen" album) and The Carpenters' 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 George Benson and appeared on his 1976 album "Breezin'." 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 with the help of mandolins, fiddles, banjos and dobros, all played by the New Grass Revival Band on Russell's 1991 live album on Paradise/Warner Bros. Records.

preview

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