

The position diagrammed above oc-curred at the weekly novice tourna-ment held at the Cavendish North Backgammon Club, White is on play and had rolled a 3-2.

There are a number of alternatives open to white but only three need be examined. They are, one, covering the losse man on white's 7 point by moving all the way from the 8 point; two, playing the 3 from this 6 point and the 2 from this 5 point, thereby making white's 3 point; and, three, playing 7 to 4 and 8 to 8 points. Let us consider each of these cholees in turn.

of these choices in turn.

First of all, by making his 1 point, white builds a 5-point board and doesn't leave any loose men. This doblous quest for safety is the trademark of most beginners.

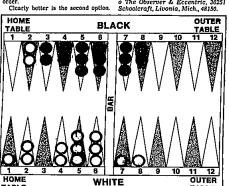
In this situation it is the least desirable alternative. Since white is unlikely to get a shot on his next roll (only double 5s by black leave a shot), he should be more concerned about how he will play his next couple of rolls.

BY BUILDING the 1 point now, white creates a position that is destined to deteriorate. Whenever white rolls a number with a 6 or 5 before be is able to move his back man, he will be forced to play additional men to his 1 or 2 point and be faced with the prospect of having to break his 6 or 5 point in short order.

Clearly better is the second option.

By inaking his 3 point, white now has 5point prime of his own in case of the
double 5 micacle by black.
However, most of the timing problems that go along with the previous
play remain. It is unlikely that white
will be able to play for 2 rolls without
treaking his board. Should this happen
his chances of winning after getting a
shot and hitting it are exceedingly slim.
Bringing both men in from his outer
board serves a vital function for white.
If black retains his blocking position
for a couple of rolls, white will no longer have any 6s to play. By killing his
own 6s, white has the best chance of
keeping his board intact.
After bringing one man to his 6 and
one to his 4 point, who did welcome
and progress. Notice that after the
recommended play white will make his
1 or 3 point with any number that
doesn't include a 6 and that all his best
numbers start with 6.
White's winning prospects from this
position are exceedingly slim as be
must first get a shot at black and then
must hit it while he still has a good
home board. But white can retain his
board through adort play, and so long
as he keeps his board integrity, his
meager hopes stay affive.

Questions about backgammon cun be directed to Mike Giordano, c/ o The Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich., 48150.





TABLE

## Brecht comedy

TABLE

Uriah Shelley (Da-vid P. Drobot, right) coerces Galy Gay (Michael Kumor) to change from a peaceable civillan to a foroclous warrito a foroclous warri-or in Bertolt Brecht's comedy with song, "A Man's a Man." The Studio Theatre production opens at 8 p.m. Jan. 13 at Wayne State.

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## Second runs Panzenhagen

Deck the halls with . . . "The Greatest Story Ever Told" (1965), in two parts at 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday on Ch. 50. Originally 141 minutes.

They made the story of Jesus as only Hollywood could (or would) — with a star-studded cast of silver screen kingpins dotting the epic venture. Look for Van Heflin, Ed Wynn, Claude Rains, Jose Ferrer, Sidney Politer, Ava Gardner, Shelley Winters and even John Wayne in period dress alongside a cast of regulars that includes Max Von Sydow (as Himself), Charlton Heston, Carroll Baker and Dorothy McGuire. Even though the stars are distracting, the film has its epic, awe-inspiring moments. But generally it a reflection of its director, George Stevens, who's responsible for such piodding efforts as "Shane" and Glant, incidentally, the feights of different prints of the lilm vary from 141 to 225 minutes.

WHAT'S IT WORTH? A ratings guide to the movies 

Ch. 50, will take four hours to show the picture, but that's no real indication of which print they have in store.

Rating: \$2.60.

"The Bells of St. Mary's" (1945), oon Friday on Ch. 9. Originally 126

minutes.

The sequel to "Going My Way" is at its best when sparks of forbidden romance fly between priest Bing Crosby and nun flagrid Bergman. Director Leo McCarey never exploits the relation-

Rating: \$2.95

"Boys Town" (1938), I p.m. Friday on Ch. 50. Originally 96 minutes. When Spencer Tracy won an Oscar for his portrayal of Father Fianagan, the founder of Boys Town in eastern Nebraska, he took the award, inscribed it with the following, and sent it to the man who colned the phrase "There are no bad boys". "To Father Edward J. Flanagan, whose great human qualities, timely simplicity, and inspiring courage were strong enough to shine through my humble effort." Mickey Rooney and Henry Hull also star. Rating: \$3.

"Scrooge" (1970), 9:30 a.m. Saturday on Ch. 20. Originally 115 minutes.

Versallie Albert Finney gives this musical adaptation of the Charles

Dickens story his best ahot, but unin-spired songs, music and direction mar, the effort. Still, it's a pity that Ch. 20 is squeezing the film into a 90-minute time slot. Rating: \$2.25.

Rating \$2.25.

"It's a Wonderful Life" (1947), 11:15
p.m. Saturday on Ch. 9, Originally,
129 minutes.
Perhaps the key to Frank Capra's
success is his pacing, "Wonderful Life"
like many Capra illms, is fooliahly sentires on quickly paced that the viewer
can't think twice about what he's winensed before another lavish sequence
strikes and duils the senses. Before yoknow it, you're sucked in by this diabolical schematic, and you're thoroughly
enjoying the movie. James Stewart,
Lionel Berrymore, Thomas Mitchell
and an incredibly young and beautiful
Dona Reed star.
Rating: \$3.30. Rating: \$3.30.



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