

backgammon
Michael Klolan
 of the American Backgammon Club

HITTING

Often during the course of a game, you are given an opportunity to hit your opponent. Most often it is correct to hit. But occasionally it is not.

Hitting, blocking and running is what backgammon is all about. There is much to learn about the concept of hitting.

In this position, black rolls double fours. How would you move?

Hitting white on the 10 point with a checker from the 3 point is a consideration, but not a priority. With this play, black does not improve his overall position.

A more effective distribution is to move both checkers from the 11 to the 7 point, and two checkers from the 12 to the 9 point, creating a four-point black in front of white.

There are many sound reasons for this move. White has gained a forward

anchor (4 point) and could have escaped with relative ease. Also, black has not yet made any home board points. This move should enable him to close the 5 and 3 points.

The four-point block is very effective in stopping white from running. Now if white decides to run a back checker with any 6, black has plenty of "ammo" to land on his head.

Another advantage to this move is that white still has a weak home board. With no builders (except the 6 point) bearing in on black, there is virtually no threat. Before white can do anything about recifying this, black will have created a stronger position — hopefully, a position strong enough to double white out of the game.

For more information, contact the American Backgammon Club at 459-5776, or write to Box 599, Plymouth 48170.

HOME TABLE						BLACK						OUTER TABLE					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
[Diagram]						[Diagram]						[Diagram]					
HOME TABLE						WHITE						OUTER TABLE					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
[Diagram]						[Diagram]						[Diagram]					

"The Searchers" (1956), 8 p.m. Monday and Tuesday at Cranbrook Institute of Science, 500 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills, phone 645-3635. \$5. Running time 119 minutes.

John Ford directed John Wayne in three films that form a western trilogy: "Fort Apache" (1948), "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949) and "Rio Grande" (1950). In the films, Wayne — who ages with the American West — plays a cavalry officer understanding of Indian culture and tradition and abhorred by the ongoing slaughter of Indians.

In "The Searchers," Wayne's character is the antithesis of the cavalry officer. He's an embittered man who hates Indians — the renegade sort shown in the film and, by inference, all Indians and all non-whites. He would deny Indians peace in the hereafter. And he would rather kill his niece, who has been kidnapped by Indians, than allow her to return to white society, because he believes she has been "tainted" by the red man.

Some critics have called "The Searchers" a racist film, because it seems to glorify Wayne as a cutthroat bigot. Perhaps that's credit to the splendid direction of Ford, who doesn't resort to mood music or trite editing techniques to depict Wayne as a villain. Instead, Ford lets the actor speak for himself. At film's end, Wayne is the one who is cast out of society, destined to be alone always.

"The Searchers" is part of the Cranbrook P.M./Evening Classics series. Tickets, \$5 at the door, include the film, discussion moderated by Elliot Wilhelm of the Detroit Film Theatre, and gourmet dessert with coffee served at 7:30 p.m. Rating: \$3.95.

"The Blues Brothers" (1979), 7 p.m. today in Tirrel Hall, Room J-294, Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College, Farmington Hills, phone 476-9400. \$1.

If Dan Ackroyd and John Belushi betrayed their Blues Brothers characters by not taking the roles seriously, this film would smack of "Amos 'n' Andy" and not be half so good. Fortunately,

second runs
Tom Panzenhagen

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

Bad \$1
Fair \$2
Good \$3
Excellent \$4

they do take themselves very seriously, which makes the movie that much better. Several musical scenes are outstanding. One has the dancing Brothers plus a church full of dancers keeping frantic time to a James Brown number, another features Aretha Franklin at her mellifluous best. Rating: \$3.10.

"Laura" (1944), 8:30 a.m. Friday on Ch. 20. Originally 88 minutes. Otto Preminger directed and Dana Andrews and Clifton Webb star, but it's Gene Tierney who fills the screen with a mystical radiance. A good mystery with lyrical score by David Raskin. Rating: \$3.20.

"It's a Wonderful Life" (1947), 11:45 p.m. Monday on Ch. 9. Originally 129 minutes.

Frank Capra's tribute to the embattled little man is as optimistic and sentimental as any of his films. However, Jimmy Stewart, as a small-town banker who stands up against the town boss, overacts and is interchangeably too ecstatic, then vitriolic. Capra needs a steady force like Gary Cooper to anchor his emotional films. Donna Reed also stars. Rating: \$2.80.

"Cat Ballou" (1965), 8 p.m. Wednesday on Ch. 50. Originally 96 minutes. Lee Marvin has had an amazing career. For years he played the heavy in

of Nat King Cole and Stubby Kaye as the wandering minstrels. Jane Fonda also stars. Rating: \$3.15.

"Castle on the Hudson" (1940), 12:30 Wednesday night on Ch. 50. Originally 77 minutes.

John Garfield and Ann Sheridan are the quintessential '30s couple: ruggedly handsome (not pretty), gruff, been there and back. Here they team with Pat O'Brien in director Anatol Litvak's ever since has handled drama and comedy — even the musical "Paint Your Wagon" — very well. "Ballou" is a fun film, thanks, in part, to the appearance

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ABBEY 2
 Paul Newman
 Eric Aster
"FORT APACHE, THE BRONX" (R)

ABBEY 3
"ALTERED STATES" (R)

ABBEY 4
"THE DOGS OF WAR" (R)

FAIRLANE 1
 Four Mile at Telegraph
 661-7200

Richard Pryor
 Gene Wilder
"STIR CRAZY" (R)

FAIRLANE 2
 Lily Tomlin
"THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN" (PG)

MAPLE 1
 Old West at Telegraph
 855-5555

Elizabeth Taylor
 Rock Hudson in
 Agatha Christie's
"THE MIRROR CRACK'D" (PG)

MAPLE 2
"KAGENUSHA" (R)

MAPLE 3
 Mary Tyler Moore
 Donald Sutherland
 6 Academy Award
 Nominations
"ORDINARY PEOPLE" (R)

NORTHLAND 1
 J.L. Hudson at Woodward
 Center 559-2556

"ALTERED STATES" (R)

NORTHLAND 2
"TRIBUTE" (PG)

Stars Fr
 Academy Award Nomination
"INSIDE MOVES" (PG)

OLD ORCHARD 1
 On Orchard Lake Road
 4949-12 Mile 933-2733

Paul Newman
 10 Stars
"FOR APACHE, THE BRONX" (R)

OLD ORCHARD 2
 Lily Tomlin
"INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN" (PG)

OLD ORCHARD 3
"THE MIRROR CRACK'D" (PG)

Stars Fr
 8 Academy Award
 Nominations
"ELEPHANT MAN" (PG)

TERRACE 1
 30400 Plymouth Road
 Near Macquette 933-1717

Robert DeNiro
"THE RAGING BULL" (R)

TERRACE 2
 Academy Award
 Nomination
"INSIDE MOVES" (PG)

TOWNE 1
 Greenfield Rd. N. of 10 Mile
 958-8700

"THE DOGS OF WAR" (R)

TOWNE 2
 Lily Tomlin
"INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN" (PG)

'Luv' will keep audience amused

By BARBARA MICHALS

Like a comic valentine, "Luv" tickles the funny bone while it assails human foibles. The current production by St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook offers lively, amusing views of love's permutations.

The Murray Schisgal comedy concludes its run with performances at 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday at St. Dunstan's Playhouse on the grounds of Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills.

Harry Berlin (Morris Weinner), a sort of wilted flower child, is about to jump off a bridge when he is spotted in the nick of time by his old college chum Milt (Keith Lepard). Catching up on their recent histories, Milt confesses that despite his prosperous appearance he is miserable because his wife Ellen

review

(Bonnie Cook) won't give him a divorce to enable him to marry his new flame.

Since Harry confesses he has never known real love, and since Ellen would like a more enthusiastic lover, Milt decides he will solve all their problems by getting Harry and Ellen together. Despite the apparent success of his plan, the second act finds all three characters still feeling miserable.

WITH HIS weebone appearance, ruffled hair and ill-fitting rags, Morris Weinner's Harry succeeds in per-

sonifying failure. Harry has roamed the world in a futile search for the answers to life's mysteries ever since the day a passing dog picked him out of a crowd, raised its leg and let him have it.

A born loser, Harry has no idea how to respond to love when it is handed to him. Though his marriage to Ellen is surely doomed to failure (they all love mainly on the strength of a mutual preference for flamenco guitar-playing over classical guitar), there is something appealing in his wide-eyed naivete.

Keith Lepard's Milt is all brass and bluster. A part-time dealer in second-hand bric-a-brac, Milt deals with love like it is a commodity to be bought and sold. He is selfish and grasping, the least sympathetic of the three, but Lepard succeeds in keeping Milt a

comic bungler rather than a repugnant schemer.

As Ellen, Bonnie Cook's delivery is nicely polished, and she has a strong stage presence. Ellen is torn between her normal sexual desires and her superior intellect which makes her dissatisfied with every man she has ever known. Which she must submerge to satisfy the other part of her.

Co-directors William Everson and Nancy Scott keep the laughs coming smoothly, partly from some great one-liners and partly from the broad physical comedy of characters wrestling, bellowing love songs, and even jumping off bridges.

Everson also designed a strikingly realistic set. The lights of the Manhattan skyline form a background for the pedestrian walkway of a New York bridge, its pillars laden with graffiti.

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