



Outdoor musical

Dianne Fyding is Mabel Norman, the silent-film star, Ed Guest (right) is Mack Sennett, the director, and Keith Leppard is William Desmond Taylor, a rival producer/director of Sennett in the St. Dunstan's Guild production of "Mack & Mabel." The musical about making movies with Keystone cops and bathing beauties will be presented at 9

p.m. on Friday-Sunday and on June 4-6 at St. Dunstan's outdoor Greek Theatre on Lone Pine Road, west of Woodcraft at Cranbrook School, Bloomfield Hills. The show is written in the form of flashbacks, beginning in 1938 and going back to 1911.

table talk

SIDEWALK CAFES are in season, at last, with warm sun to make the day enjoyable. Chuck Muer's Sidewalk Cafe will open Monday, offering salads, sandwiches and soups on the Jefferson Avenue porch of the Hotel Pontchartrain in downtown Detroit. The cafe will be open from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays. The "Arcade" salad, which originated at Muer's Charley's Crab in Dayton's Arcade Square, will be on the menu. A salad bar inside Le Cafe offers do-it-yourself salads. Other salads are fresh fruit in a pineapple boat or tuna salad in a ripe tomato. Gazpacho and French onion soups and ham, salami, roast beef and tuna sandwiches will be on the menu again. Beverages include beer and wine, along with other choices. Ice cream cones are the dessert specialty.

backgammon

Michael Kiolan

of the American Backgammon Club

● **THE CRUELEST GAME** let about the game by observing your column. Long ago, you mentioned backgammon to be a cruel game. Now I can relate to that!

In this position, I (white) rolled a great 3-2, hit black on the 8 point and covered my open checker on the 2 point. Black rolled a double 1 and soon had three of my checkers on the bar. With the cube on 2, I bet a gammon and four points. Luck or not, it isn't fair! Backgammon is the cruelest game!

I certainly will agree. At times, backgammon can be a cruel and unfair game. But what goes around will come around and one way to make certain that it doesn't come around too often is to learn a few key principles of backgammon strategy.

One principle that relates to white's position here is to hold your anchor (a point you occupy in your opponent's home board) as long as you can without putting your game in jeopardy until the proper time comes to leave. There is an old backgammon cliché, "holding means survival and survival means holding."

In this position, by hitting black on the 8 point, white would be leaving 23 ways for black to get off the bar and hit or slot on white. Often a player may purposely plant a checker in his outer board to tempt his opponent into vacating his anchor.

Of course, before purposely leaving a blot, you must correctly analyze the position and assess the benefits or pitfalls. Also, before hitting your opponent's blot, you must correctly assess the benefits or pitfalls of hitting.

In this position, white has a positional edge over black due to timing. White would do best to improve his home board by moving the checker from the 7 to the 2 point. This move also slows white's timing. Within two rolls, black will be breaking the 11 point or will try to leave the white 5 point, at which time white will have a chance to hit and possibly redouble the cube.

Had this situation been a desperate one, hitting would certainly be in order. The American backgammon Club will host a tournament June 7 at the Plymouth Hilton Inn beginning at 6 p.m. For more information, contact the club at 459-5776.

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



Earth ball

The Barn Theatre troupe and an earth ball celebrate the universal theme of the musical "Hair," opening June 5 at the Barn Theatre on the Oakland University campus near Rochester. Ticket information is available by calling 377-2245.

Michigan Rep offers 3 plays

Michigan Repertory '81 will offer three productions by the University of Michigan Department of Theatre and Drama this summer. George Bernard Shaw's "Misalliance" will open the season on June 3-6 in the air-conditioned Power Center for the Performing Arts in Ann Arbor.

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