



backgammon

Mike Giordano

of the Cavendish North backgammon club

Mike Giordano, our new backgammon columnist, is a vice president of Cavendish North in Southfield, a backgammon club which opens daily at noon and stays open as long as people want to play.

Giordano, 38, has been active in tournament play for the past five years and says backgammon is a game that's attractive to the losers as well as the winners.

"It's easy for the loser to say he

lost because he was unlucky," says Giordano. "There's no clear distinction between a beginner and an expert."

• A TIME FOR ACTION

White rolls a 6-5. On the first or second roll of the game, most players would automatically run a man from the opponent's 1 point to safety on the 12 point with this roll. Making such an

move would be a mistake in this position. Even though it is only white's second play of the game, it is not too soon to stop to consider the position and how it is likely to develop. If we do run with a back man, what will the opponent do on his next turn?

If he rolls well, black will make his 5, 4 or 7 point, but more often than not he'll roll some less desirable number and bring two men (including the man on our 11 point) into his outer table. These men will then be poised to build blocking points in front of our remaining man on the black 1 point. If he does this, we may roll a magical 6, 9 or 10 to hit him. But in the real world, we are rarely that lucky. So what can we do?

By anticipating the opponent's line of play, we may find a better play for our 6-5. By playing a 6 from the black 1 point to his 1 point, we can apply pres-

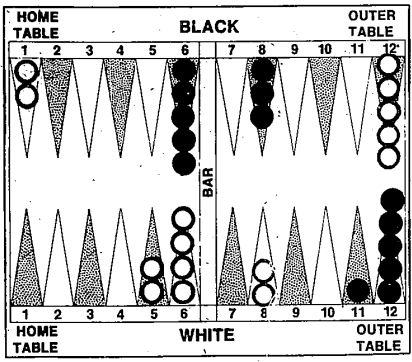
sure throughout black's half of the board. That would leave us no better's than to play from the black 12 point to the white 8 point.

It is true that this man left exposed on the black 7 point is quite likely to be hit, but even then white can expect to hit him back almost half the time. Such an exchange would greatly benefit white as he would gain ground in the race by hitting the opponent's advanced man while leaving his own back ward man hit. White also would gain a positional advantage since black is more likely to get trapped by white's board than vice versa.

This recommended 6-5 play often leads to a flurry of action, with both sides being hit and hitting back — a situation much to the liking of the player who is behind in the race and who hasn't gotten away with his back men.

The time to look for this type of play is when the opponent has escaped both his back men and you have two or more men back in his home table. If you also have the better board (more points built in your home table), that should provide an added incentive to shake the bushes a little and create some action.

Questions about backgammon can be directed to Mike Giordano, c/o the Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.



'Little Whorehouse' to play Ann Arbor

"The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," New York's hit Broadway musical, will play at 8 p.m. April 23-25 at the Power Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Matinees will be at 2 p.m. April 24-25.

The show will be the last in the Professional Theatre Program's "Best of Broadway" series for 1982. Tickets

start at \$14 and are available at the PTP Ticket Office in the Michigan League. For charge card orders and further information call 764-0450.

"The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" tells in song and dance the rousing story of a campaign to close the famous Chicken Ranch bordello in La Grange, Texas. In reality, the spirited campaign led by a fervently civic-

minded TV newsmen successfully forced the closing of the bordello in 1973.

The production features a full cast of New York professional actors including Darleight Miller as Miss Mona Stangley, the feisty madame who runs the Chicken Ranch, and Jason Byce as the vigilante TV newsmen who campaigns to close it down.

When the show opened in 1973, Time magazine lauded it as Broadway's "best musical of the season." Writing for the New York Post, Clive Barnes declared it "a fun new musical, full of gusto and a wealth of comic detail, and music with a bustle."

The show is choreographed by Broadway showmen Peter Masterson and Tommy Tune.

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(F-11C, *6C, R, W, G-4B)S15A



wine

Richard Watson

Grapes from Lake becoming popular

Ask any person interested in California wines today to name its major wine-growing regions and he/she will mention Napa, Sonoma, Monterey, Mendocino and, if sharp, San Luis Obispo. Perhaps a couple of others.

Chances are, one that will not be named, however valid, is Lake County. Ask the same question two years from now and in all probability Lake will be included, such are the changes about to occur there.

Located immediately north of Napa and east of Sonoma and Mendocino, the county at the turn of the century was a major viticultural region. Phylloxera and, even more, Prohibition changed that and, until the early 1970s, Lake was a region of fruit and nut trees.

The onset of the wine boom in the early 1970s saw the beginning of viticulture there again. Some of the early growers initially banded together to form a cooperative, Konoceli Cellars, an effort that did little to establish the credibility or prestige of the region.

THE WINERY that did the most to acquaint the world with Lake County in the middle of the '70s, and it continues today, is Mendocino-based Petzer Vineyards. The latter half of the decade saw Petzer providing releases of Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel and Johannisberg Riesling sporting the Lake County appellation.

The vineyard's acceptance, especially for the first two, has signaled to the world that Lake County is coming back as a legitimate viticultural area.

The late 1970s saw the bonding of a second winery in the area, Lower Lake Winery. Its limited distribution of blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon has done little toward enhancing the prestige of the county, but its wines have merit.

However, the event that will soon make people take notice of Lake Coun-

ty has its origins in the late 1960s. Then the Hawaiian-based family of Magoons acquired the entire Guenoc Valley, some 23,000 acres, just a few miles and a mountain range above Calistoga in Napa.

Using the consultation skills of the Raymond family (then of Beringer), experimental test plots were planted of Cabernet, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon.

IN TIME a winery was developed, one of some 54,000 square feet (described in a trade publication, recently as "the best-designed winery") it had seen in "all of California" to accommodate its rapidly increasing grape development.

Application was made to the ATF that has resulted in the Guenoc Valley becoming a distinct appellation, the only instance in California where an entire viticultural region can be claimed by a single winery.

The goal of the Magoons is to be in the 100,000-cases-a-year level by the mid-1980s, adding Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Franc, Petite Sirah and Zinfandel to its repertoire from its now extensive plot of 250 acres planted to grapes.

Its first releases will be in the fall of this year, and it has already been signed by a national distributor. Winemaker Orville Magoon (honest) will make big wines in a big winery in a big way. He acknowledges that his domain already contains three microclimates that may in time be planted to some 10,000 acres.

It seems believable that the name Guenoc (Indian, meaning "land of flying wild birds") Winery will be soon one of those instant success stories later this year, forcing us to acknowledge that another valley name must be added to the more tradition names of Napa, Sonoma, et al.

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