



backgammon
Mike Giordano
of the Cavendish North backgammon club

● **DUPLICATING THE NUMBERS**

In the example, white rolls a 3-1. White is substantially ahead in the race and is threatening to advance his back men for an easy win. He would, of course, prefer to have rolled a two to hit on the black 3 point or to bring his

HOME TABLE
1 2 3 4 5 6
1 2 3 4 5 6
HOME TABLE

BLACK
7 8 9 10 11 12
7 8 9 10 11 12
WHITE
7 8 9 10 11 12
7 8 9 10 11 12
WHITE

OUTER TABLE
1 2 3 4 5 6
1 2 3 4 5 6
OUTER TABLE

cause we would be killing a prospective builder for our 4 point.

A second play is worth considering — to clear the 9 point entirely by moving to the 7 and 5 points. This would give us an extra man on the 7, 6 and 5 points with which to close out the 4 point on a subsequent roll. The main drawback to this line lies in the prospect of black hitting one of our loose men. If we must play the next roll from the bar, the outcome of the game will be largely determined by whether black can cover his 3 point before white hits him and escapes.

The third play, advancing the man on black's 7 point, will reduce the chances of being hit by coming closer to the threatening opponent. Because white must avoid being hit to maintain his lead in the race, he adopts this last line. The only question is how far he should advance from black's 7 point. By coming all the way to black's 11 point, we leave only two and double ones to hit. By coming to the black 10 point, we leave three, 2-1 and double ones to hit. However, you will see that black needs three to cover his loose man on his 3 point and also to advance in white's board. In other words, three will play well for black no matter what white does. By staying on the black 10 point, white can completely duplicate his opponent's good numbers. If black rolls a three, he would be faced with the Hobson's choice of either hitting or covering his 3 point.

After finding the duplication of three, most backgammon players would congratulate themselves and push the one from the 6 to the 5 point. A truly fine player would play from his 8 to his 7 point for his one. This play gives white an extra builder for his 4 point in case he doesn't get hit on the next roll.

Wine writers are asked a lot of questions by people who are generally interested in upgrading their own appreciation. While some questions are quite esoteric, others are common to many. Let's tackle the more-frequently-asked queries.

How long can wine be kept once opened? If refrigerated, three or four overnights will be safe. If kept on the kitchen shelf, as most reds are, two are safe and three probably okay, presuming the top is firmly sealed. All wines will soften and lessen in time, of course, but these parameters are usually dependable.

What are the best red and white ordinary wines to buy? Presuming the word "jug" means availability in 1.5 liter bottles, I would today recommend the new August Sebastiani Mountain Chablis (about \$4.50) as my white and, easy choice, the Monterey Vineyards '78 Classic Red Wine (about \$8) for a red.

Why is wine so expensive? Compared to what? Actually, the cost of wine today has risen less than our rate of inflation.

But wine is hard to make, requiring a huge initial investment before any return is realized. Land, labor, buildings, massive equipment, barrels, sales and many more things contribute, and all are subject to the spiraling of our economy.

However, when all is said and done,

Open reds will keep safe several nights on shelf



wine
Richard Watson

some wine clearly is too expensive. To explain these, try "ego" and "greed." This business has those elements in it, too.

What are the best wineries to visit in California? Mondavi (best tour), Beringer (most interesting history and caves) and Sterling (good self-conducted tour) all from Napa. In Sonoma, Sebastiani, Buena Vista, Simi and Pedroncelli get my vote.

How should wine be stored and for how long? Store wine on its side (to keep the cork moist and firm), in a cool, relatively stable environment. The most critical element in wine storage is the absence of temperature fluctuation. Continued warmth is better than alternate warmth and cold. Heat

merely accelerates aging while dramatic temperature change lures wine out.

Drink wines no more than two years beyond their vintage date, except three or four for Chardonnay. Drink reds as follows: Beaujolais (1-2 years), Zinfandel (2-4 years), Pinot Noir and Burgundy (3-7 years), Petite Sirah and Rhones (5-8 years), Cabernet Sauvignon and Bordeaux (5-10 years), and any Italian wines made from the Nebbiolo grape, i.e. Barolo, Spina, Gattinara and Barbaresco (6-10 years).

What Michigan wines do you recommend? The only winery that makes wine competitive with the French, German and California standards in the southwestern corner is Tabor Hill. (Note: "competitive" does not mean "equal to.") In the Traverse City-Leelanau area, Mawby and Good Harbor are both worth drinking, and sometimes Boskypel can be close by, though hard to find, are the very promising efforts from Kalkaska Mountain.

St. Julian, Warner and Bronte, all big producers in the southwestern corner, serve only a regionalized, rather feral-tasting group of wines.

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