Meadow Brook's 'Folly' never really gets going

Performances of Lanford Wil-son's romantic comedy "Talley's Folly" continue through Jan. 23 at Meadow Brook Theatre on the Oak-land University campus near Ro-chester, For ticket information call 377,2300

special writer

Meadow Brook Theatre's production of Talley's Folly," directed by Charles Nolle, is 90 minutes of puzzlement. David Regal, a strong, macho actor, dims his personality to play Matt

review

Friedman, a Jewish accountant from St. Louis; and Deanna Dunagan, who looks like everyone's ideal of a nurse's aide, tries to convince us ahe's really batty Sally Tailey.

There isn't an ounce of sexual chemistry between Regal and Dunagan—and the result of the meeting between this improbable pair is a wildly im-



I have but one New Year's resolution for backgammon players: let me keep my objectives clearly in mind and let me do my own thinking.

The position diagrammed above occurred in a weekly Sunday fournament at the Cavendish North; White had rolled a 6-2 and stopped for a moment to consider his position. Clearly he has no chance to win the game but by avoiding the gammon be would stay alive in the match.

White therefore played his forced 5 from the black 11 point to his own 8 point and quite correctly played the 2 on his inner board from his 6 to his 4 point. Now unless his opponent rolled a thouble, white would be off, the gammon as all numbers allow him to take a man off on his next toll.

Notice that if white had played more hastily and brought his town the results.

out on ans next roll.

Notice that if white had played more hastily and brought his last man in to his 6 point he would not be able to bear off a man on his next roll, if he rolled any of the following numbers: 5-4; 5-3; 4-4; 4-4; and 5-5, a total of 8 numbers put of 36 possible.

put of 36 possible.

IN OTHER WORDS, if white loses algat of his objective and reiles on some general rule such as "You can't get 'em off until you get 'em in,' or 'Aiways take as many crossovers (moving from one quadrant to the next is a crossover) as possible when trying to run off a gammon,' he would not maximize his chances.

Such axioms are fine but they can hever take the place of clear thinking.

By making the correct play white will achieve his goal 35 percent of the time, which is to say whenver his opponent doesn't roll a double. His inferi-

TABLE

or alternative of bringing his last man home, which seems to fulfill the general rules mentioned above, yields a 64 percent expectation of success. The choice should be clear.

I would like to start out the new year by thanking those readers who sent in their backgammon problems and would again like to encourage any reader with a question about backgammon to write to me in care of this paper or directly to the Cavendish Club in Southfield.

Southfield.

For all those of you who get backgammon sets for Christmas and would like a sound foundation in the fundamentals of the game, I heartily recommend the six-week series of beginners' lessons offered at the Cavendish Chub starting Jan. 17. It is probably the best bargain in backgammon at \$12 for the entire series.

ANOTHER GOOD idea for those players interested in sharpening up their game would be to compete in local tournaments. Such tournaments are held every week in Plymouth, Livonia, Filint and Southfield.

This weekend Detroiters will have a rare opportunity to see some of the finest players in the country competing in the Motor City Nationals on Friday-Sunday at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn. I understand that last-minute entries are still available in all flights tries are still available in all flights from beginners to championship.

Spectators also are welcome, so those who can't commit themselves to a weekend of backgammon can at least stop in and see what a major backgammon tournament is like.

OUTER

TABLE 11 12

Strong sexual attraction is the only thing that could have pulled this script into the realm of the barely believable. Even the sexual barely believable. into the realm of the barely believable. Even then, the script has problems that the best of actors, working at top bent, would have trouble surmounting. (I kept remembering Regal's wonderful performance as a longshoreman in "View from the Bridge" a year ago and, even more, remembering the way every the state of the performance of the state of the state

erything enexs together in the time the plays.

THE JOINTS simply don't meet in Wilson's Tailey's Folly. It's a poorly crafted plece of work. It's heavy with symbolism. The characters att in a rocking boat in a dishiergarding boathouse that looks like a gazebo. Matt altempts to less hate on the rotten wood stands of the stands on the rotten wood the "thin lee" by fally. She warms him there are makes underneads the warms him there are makes underneads to the rotten wood to be a stand on the stands by the stands of the symbols for the stands of the stands of the symbols beard through already! The set, designed by Peter W. Hicks, picks up every symbol in the play, and even adds a few. Bulltunder? That's where Moses, the saved Jewish baby, is found by the town princess, who pulls him from the water.

And, of course, Matt is a klutz, knocking skits and palls everywhere, but he can add mammoth figures like lighting and knows all about economics. Sally, the daughter of the town's leading garment manufacturer, can't add up her own savings account.

WELL, THAT isn't too unbelievable. The political conversations are the tru-ly crary ones. Matt says he is past all

"isma," believes in nothing. "War is life; life is war." Yet he will "never bring a child thot his war." Yet he will "never bring a child thot his war." Yet he will "never bring a child thot his war." As the world. I cannot think of a stronger stole world. I cannot think of a stronger stole and the world of the control of private salt. Such is fired from Sunday School for Load is fired from Sunday School for such is dear the world outside her amail Missouri town.

Oddly enough, thin as she is, Sally Talley is more bellevable tham Mait Friedman. Wilson's boyhood in a Missouri town adds a few touches of reality that simply don't carry over into the life of a Jewish immigrant.

It's as if Wilson had been memerized by tales he heard in New York of escaped refugees; considered them coloriul people, and he was going to make up an even better tale than the factual escapes we have all heard (and which are often wilder than fantasy).

Matit's tale of his boyhood escape with his uncle in 1914 rings false. And the sudden intrusion of nightculo jokes about Ben Franklin and his wife, ethnic jokes about Dotes and Italians and Jews, seems stranger than the howling dogs, rednecks in the yard and did Aunt Charlotte yakking away up in the bouse on the hill.

Title PLAY SEEMS to be taking

THE PLAY SEEMS to be taking place in some strange Southern town. There are overcross of Trusten apote and Tennesse Williams. Wilson, winning the Pulliter Prize for Talley's Folly, said, "I wish I were Faulkner, because he could get it all down."

I wish Wilson had Faulkner's knowledge of the human heart. And Faulkner's magic way with words. I am pustled as to why "Talley's Folly" won the Pulliter.



Deanna Dunagan plays Sally Talley, the female lead in "Talley's Folly" at Meadow Brook Theatro.







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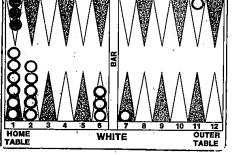
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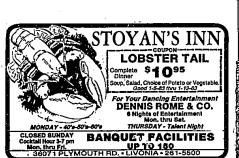


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