

There was some drinking there, but the same could be said about a number of other dinners and the Club finally said, "You will have to pay for what you get."

At that the Wednesday nighters decided to go to the Brook Club, but they made no financial arrangements in advance and when the bill came in each man had to pay at least twenty dollars. This was about 1954 and the Wednesday night was finally called off. Incidentally, the play there was undoubtedly better than the afternoon games at the Club.

Backgammon is one of the very old games. Surtees, the early English writer, says it was played in England as early as the tenth century, and a game very similar was played by the Romans many years before that. There is no record of when it was first played at the Club, or rather the preceding clubs, but the Racquet and Tennis Club has for many years enjoyed a leadership in this game among the clubs around here. Meetings have long been held at the Club from time to time and the Club rules were determined here for a number of clubs. Every year we hold a championship backgammon tournament and since 1925, with some exceptions, the backgammon championship has been recorded. There have also been one or two more tournaments.

The present game is played by doubling and may be due to Jack Wemple who, about 1925, introduced the doubling game. I was told that Wemple invented it, but at least one writer on subject says it came from Scotland or England. Madison Avenue was not quite as publicity conscious in those days, so we are not told for sure, but at least I believe that Wemple introduced it to the clubs with which the Racquet has been connected.

It might be thought that backgammon is mostly luck, more so than in bridge. That may be so, but it is interesting to note that for the first three years the championship was won by W. Whitewright Watson. This is in the record that brings us to 1928, which was unrecorded after that until 1936. In 1937, the championship was won by Barclay Douglas and in 1938 by Witherbee Black. There was no record for '39 and '40. In '41, Allen G. Wellman carried off the prize and Charles G. West in '42. In 1943 and 1944 there was no record, and in 1945 the champion was Louis De Vallombrosa who also won it in 1951. In 1946 it was Andre De Coppet; in '47, John W. Griswold; and in 1948 and 1950, Barclay Cooke

who was well known for his backgammon prowess. In 1949, the championship went to Edwin Paul Shattuck; and in 1952, to R. H. R. Loughborough. In 1953 Grant B. Schley took it; and in 1954, Gordon B. Leib. After that came Beverley Bogert in 1955; then Robert Lee Gill, 1956; then Benjamin F. McGuckin in 1957; and Ira J. Williams, Jr., in 1958 and 1959. T. S. Bassett won in 1960.