BACKGAMMON FOR THE DRAGON

Loading Instructions

The Backgammon Programme is loaded in two parts.

First Type

CLOAD "BKGM"

Press the 'Enter' key.

When the first part is loaded then either:-

a) Stop the tape, type run and then press play.

b) If your cassette player is under autocue simply type run.

The computer will respond by displaying a welcome board indicating the colours of the players, how they are stacked etc. and will invite you to select (B) for Black and White or (C) for Colour. Now press B or C.

Playing Instructions

The screen will now show you the controls which are as follows:-

SPACE BAR	This will throw the dice
P	This will pass shot to the computer
RIGHT ARROW	Will move the curser to the right
LEFT ARROW	Will move the curser to the left
I	Will show you the instructions
G	Will return you to the game
U	Will lift up from your position
D	Will set you down in position
B	Will take from the bar to position
O	Will bear you off the board
Z	Press when you are unable to move

The screen will invite you to select S for you to start or C for the computer to start.

Now press S or C.

The screen will now display the backgammon board.

If you select a position to move from and you wish to change it just enter the new move from position and the old one will be cancelled.

If you wish to move more than one piece from a location enter the move from the position once and then enter the move to position in turn.

The game is very simple to play but your skill and tactics are an important part which can only be developed with practice. If you are unfamiliar with the game, study the rules of play.

Do not forget to turn the sound up.

Good luck and may the best man win.

HISTORY OF BACKGAMMON

Backgammon is the English version of an ancient european game known in several forms from Iceland to the Mediterranean. "Tables" as it was once called has been traced back to the tenth century, and by the time of the Crusades it was a well established tavern pastime in many countries. Excesses followed, and for hundreds of years Church and State turned their faces against the immorality of gaming at Backgammon with laws which, in England, were enforced until late in Elizabeth I's reign. It was not until early forms of playing cards had finally supplanted Backgammon as the principal means of heavy betting that the older game was allowed to re-establish itself.

The two centuries following the death of Queen Elizabeth, however, saw the heyday of Backgammon. No less than six versions of the game were popular by the end of the sixteenth century; Cotton's The Complete Gamester' published in 1675 extended the list, and in early Hanoverian times the sport was a great favourite with the clergy. Its ultimate decline was caused by the rapidly growing popularity of brisker games, but Bakgammon has never completely died, and for skill and relaxation it remains second only to Chess itself.

RULES OF BACKGAMMON

The rules of Backgammon are intricate but I give them here in detail since they are not always easy to come by. Each player's general object is to gather his men into his own Home Table, and to "bear off" the pieces one by one until he has cleared his colour from the board. In doing this he may block or take his opponent's pieces in accordance with particular rules.

The direction of movement is always the same: from the enemy's Home Table into his Outer Table, then across to the friendly Outer, and Home. Doublets (3-3, 4-4 & C.) count twice their face value, and wherever possible a throw must be played in full.

The constant aim in play is to "Make Points" by bringing two or more pieces to rest on the same Point. This blocks an opponent from moving to that point and secures the pieces themselves from attack. The opposite of a Made Point is a "Blot", that is to say a Point containing a single piece. A Blot is vulnerable, and if an opponent is able to throw the correct number to hit it with one of his men the exposed piece is "taken up" and placed on the bar between the Tables. Here it rests, and its owner can make no further moves until the piece has been successfully restarted on its journey from his opponent's Home Table.

"Bearing Off": Once all fifteen pieces are within his Home Table a player may "Bear Off"; for this purpose the points in the Home Table are numbered from the edge from 1 to 6, and one or both of the numbers on the dice may be used to remove a piece from the corresponding Point on the board. For example if a 4 - 3 is thrown, the 4 would allow one piece to be borne off from the fourth Point and the 3 would do the same for the third Point. Either or both of the throws may be taken as a normal move if tactics demand it. If no points higher than the third were filled, however, the 4 might be used to bear off from the highest occupied Point.

Doubles again count twice, and they may be taken as one, two or fgur separate moves according to convenience.

The first player to clear his men from the board wins. But in Backgammon there are three grades of winning, the "Hit", the "Gammon" and the "Backgammon". The Hit indicates a close game, one in which the loser himself had reached the stage of Bearing Off. If a Gammon Bearing Off has not been reached, while in a Backgammon the loser still has men within his opponent's Home Table when the game ends.

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