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New Ideas In Backgammon



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Customer Reviews

This book will take its place on my bookshelf next to Magriel's Backgammon and Robertie's two-volume Advanced Backgammon. The material is exceptional in all respects. First of all, this is a book of 104 problems that have been systematically selected to give experts fits. In fact, in every case a majority of 11 experts (the game's actual player, the two authors, plus a panel of 8) failed to find the correct move. Additionally, the correct moves have been validated by extensive human and computer analysis, so this book doesn't have the "error rate" that other books have. The authors are world-class players and world-class teachers of backgammon, so the writing is clear and crisp. A fantastic book.

This is a fantastic book for the intermediate and advanced player. The authors skillfully dissect 104 difficult positions, pointing out even the most subtle aspects. It is this careful observing and weighing, done out-loud, that makes this book so valuable. In the end, you learn much more than the solutions to these specific problems -- you learn how to reason about all future postions you encounter.

This is a book of problems whose solutions are deceptive. I think all were gotten wrong by a majority of strong players polled. Just about everyone gets the cover problem wrong, as I did. So the book's starting point is that appearances can be deceptive in backgammon, and we have to train ourselves to look beneath the surface. The analysis by Kit Woolsey and Hal Heinrich, two of the world's best players and theoreticians, is extremely insightful. These guys are both true backgammon

intellectuals who nevertheless express themselves simply and clearly; there's nothing mysterious in what they say. But what they say is profound. Every player from novice to world-class expert will benefit from reading this book.

One of the only two comprehensive books on "modern (= "computer-enhanced," via neural network programming) backgammon" written in the past 20 years. (The other is "501 Problems in Backgammon," by Bill Robertie.) Buy both, use the problems in Robertie's book as a "homework assignments" and the discussions by Woolsey and Heinrich for their enlightening clarifications, and your game will improve several good notches.

Backgammon is wildly popular these days with Internet tournaments (and those kind you have to roll the dice in) mobbed. You can have a lot of fun playing this game without sinking your teeth into the subtleties of the difficult problem positions in "New Ideas." If however, you would like to actually WIN one of these competitions - your chances would be greatly improved by taking up the challenge this book offers. Woolsey and Heinrich are able to verbalize how to make these difficult decisions and the concepts they introduce are widely applicable.

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