the #3

Since LASFS members are addicted to exotic varieties of poker I will describe (in part) one of the most mind rotting and confusing variants I have ever heard of. Basically what it amounts to is this: You play high-low split in any of its many variations. At the end everybody declares either high, low, or high-low. The pot is then divided as follows: The best low hand and the worst low hand among those declaring low each take a quarter of the pot, the best high hand and the worst high hand among those declaring high each take a quarter of the pot. If someone goes high-low he must either have both the best high (among those declaring high) and the best low or else he must have the worst high and the worst low. If he has the best high and low (or the worst) he gets half the pot. If he has both the best and worst lows and the best and worst highs he gets the whole pot. This game can get very complicated indeed, depending on what rules you play concerning low hands, etc. For example suppose that you play, for low , that aces are low and that straights and flushes don't count. Suppose player A has a five high straight. (A-2-3-4-5) He may well go high-low. Suppose he does and that after the final betting is over and everybody puts their cards up he sees that there are two people going high and one person going low and that the people going high have two-pair and a full-house and that the person going low has a K low (without an A.) Clearly he is beaten for best high-low. The question is: Can he claim worst high-low by counting his Ace as high (thus breaking the straight) so that he has an Ace high which is both worst high and worst low. The most playable procedure is to rule that your hand must play as the best possible it can in whatever direction you declare. This, however, leaves open the question of whether you must pick your best five in seven card stud. One possibility is to have another round of betting after the show in which everybody simultaneously picks five cards.

A few remarks on strategy in case anybody is crazy enough to try this. If there are two players left both should declare high-low. If there are more than two players you should flip a coin (i.e. randomly choose) to decide which way to go regardless of what you have. The point is that if you have the best high you have the worst low and vice versa so that you automatically get half of the pot. Your hope is that nobody will go the way you do and thus get half the pot. Your chances of this are best if nobody knows what you are going to do.

Sundry comments on 333 and 334.

De Jueves: Yes I am afraid I do talk in Old High Mathematics. Don't worry, though, I can say very peculiar things in ordinary english also.

Anything: The full version of the cache a czech story runs as follows: During the recent troubles (there are always recent troubles) a czechoslovakian midget

fled over the border to Hungary. He stopped at a farmhouse and asked the farmer, "Please, sir, could you cache a small czech?" The farmer was perfectly willing to shield a political refugee but was not willing to shield a common criminal so he replied, "Well, OK, as long as it isn't a robber czech."

Fuzzily Have you explained about the various advertising campaigns that WTBS used to run such as Apple Gunkies, General Food Corporation, and the Nocturnal Aviation corp.? You may have and it slipped by me, but , if you haven't, they defintely bear repeating.

Sundry: I followed the various attempts to explain precession with interest. Actually precession isn't too bad - it can be explained without resort to equations in a way that is physically clear. What I have never seen done is to explain why a gyroscope doesn't fall down without invoking mathematics. Physics texts (at least any I've seen) don't seem to manage and everybody whom I know who has tried to come up with an explanation in clear english has failed.

    The other evening Marsha and I went out to eat at a nearby restaurant a few blocks up the street. As we were sitting there we heard the name "Eliot Shorter" We looked over where the name came from and saw a table full of people sitting around listening to one chap who was describing an incident. This chap went on to describe Eliot as being 6'8", about 300 lbs, and a science fiction fan. He then went on to tell about the incident in Santa Monica when a waiter, after great delay, brought Eliot a glass of milk with crud floating in the top. When Eliot objected (remember this is the strangers rendition and not mine) the waiter went over to a nearby pitcher of milk, poured the glass into the pitcher, poured a new glass from the pitcher, and brought it back over to Eliot whereupon Eliot picked up the waiter and threw him halfway across the room.

    Naturally we were sitting there with our ears perked and listening with great interest. As he finished his narration Marsha leaned over and said, "I was there, and you're exaggerating." Booinggg!!! The table broke up in laughter. The stranger reared back in his chair in surprise and said, "Why you're Marsha, huh, huh, Brown." Marsha corrected him on the last name and the amenities were exchanged. The mysterious stranger turned out to be Al Snider who publishes Crossroads. Al attends Brown University and was up in Cambridge on a debate team trip. Our running into each other was totally mundane and coincidental. As we left Al was muttering to himself that he was going to be paranoid for weeks now.