

Casino school in Leysin

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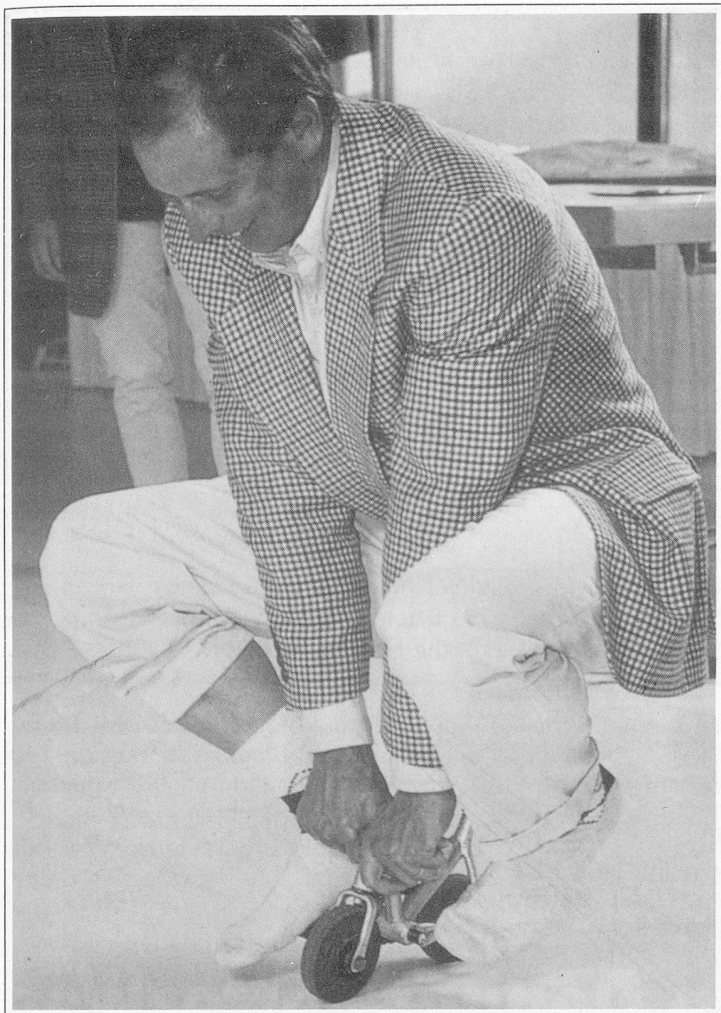
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FASTEST CYCLIST ON EARTH

When Tony Rominger, the Swiss professional cyclist recorded the world's fastest one hour speed race last year in the covered cycle-track in Bordeaux where he clocked an average speed of 53,8 km, he did not do it on the tiny bicycle shown on the picture. Nevertheless, he thought that this 48cm high bicycle was great fun although somewhat uncomfortable.

Picture on left: Tony Rominger in a more relaxed mood on his toy-bike.

Picture below: Tony Rominger in full flight during his record breaking run.



CASINO SCHOOL IN LEYSIN

Leysin, the once well known resort for the cure of tuberculosis, has made many attempts over the years to shake off this connotation and to sell itself as a modern holiday resort for healthy people. Although most old sanatoriums have long since been pulled down or transformed into modern resort hotels, the old view that Leysin is a place where only sick people go to get cured is still lingering on.

Music festivals and sports venues staged in Leysin attracted a certain amount of world attention, but only temporarily, then Leysin went back again into the doldrums.

Today Leysin boasts over 8000 tourist beds, but most of the time many of

them are empty. The dream of turning Leysin into a super holiday resort has gone. The big hotel chains are deserting Leysin and the local banks who have lent the money are in disarray as they cannot drop Leysin without losing a fortune. So de luxe hotels like the world famous Belvedere have been demoted to cater for budget tourists with the hope of attracting a larger clientele.

But a new venture that has given new hope to the people in Leysin has been started: a school for casino employees. The idea came from the 68 year old Henri Corboz who had started his career in the Australian hotel industry. He then went to Las Vegas and later created the Chateau Royal, the first casino hotel in Nouméa, before returning to Switzerland in 1974 where he became involved with the development of the tourist trade in Leysin.

His latest grand project is to create and operate a large school in Leysin to teach people all the ins and outs of the casino trade. His idea is rather topical as it is expected that 6 new Swiss casinos should open between 1997 and 2000.

But Henri Corboz looks beyond Switzerland for his business. Strangely as it may seem, there is no casino school anywhere in Europe. Until now, the individual casinos preferred to train their own staff, but this principle is changing

now and several casinos are interested in Corboz's idea. Another interested partner is the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, the only casino school so far in the world which teaches over 5000 students a year.

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