

37th indiana open

ROBERTS' STREAK ENDS ON A "SPECIAL KAY" DAY

Nothing lasts forever. That's what Chicago's Gary Kay taught 1989 Nevada State Champion Doug Roberts (Mahopac, NY) March 19 at the Indiana Open in Indianapolis. Kay's two victories in the Championship finals ended Roberts 13 match winning streak that began in Reno January 12. The Hoosier Backgammon Club's 37th annual drew record attendance for directors Butch and Mary Ann Meese—125 main event entries.

Roberts reached the finals of the double elimination tourney by direct route with six straight wins. Kay, a former U.S. Open singles and doubles champ, took the scenic tour, stopping for a loss to Harry Cohn along the way. This meant that Kay needed to defeat Roberts twice to claim prize and Calcutta money totaling near \$5000.

Kay took a 7-3 lead in the first 11 point match with all games ending via one-level cube turns. A doubled gammon win for Kay in the next game gave each player one loss to set up the "final" finals.

Gary Kay, who spent a portion of his 14 years in backgammon writing for *Las Vegas BG Magazine*, *Gammon* and *Backgammon Times*, maintained the upper hand in the second match. With skillful cube decisions, he cultivated a 10-7 (Crawford) lead through 12 games. Kay then survived a Roberts gammon scare in game 13 to win 11-7. (*Editor's note: The last game, recorded by Walter Trice of Holden, MA, was particularly exciting and is presented with Dean Muench annotation on page 3.*)

For the second year in a row, Paul Franks of Chicago captured the Intermediate title. This year, Ed King (Plain City, OH) was his victim. Open division players will be exposed to Franks' game at the Midwest Championships later this month.

Chicago had a third major winner with Yamin Yamin in the Indy \$500. Yamin

bested Indy Classic \$500 winner Frank Talbot to win a good chunk of the \$8000 high roller prize money. Δ

The complete results:

37TH INDIANA OPEN

OPEN (56): 1st Gary Kay (IL); 2nd Doug Roberts (NY); 3rd Harry Cohn (IL); 1st/2nd Cons. Frank Talbot (MI) and Ed O'Laughlin (NJ); 3rd/4th Cons. Jim Baroff (DC) and Gene Chait (IL).

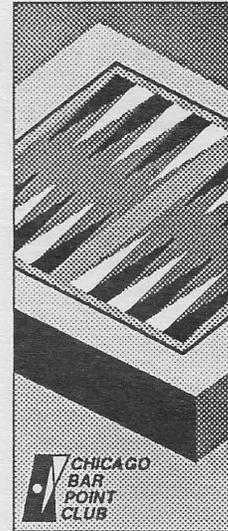
INTERMEDIATE (50): 1st Paul Franks (IL); 2nd Ed King (OH); 3rd Steve Hast (PA); 1st Cons. Carol Falk (MI); 2nd Cons. Phil Barrett (IL); 3rd/4th Cons. Larry Deckel (KY) and Greg Varbanov (IN).

NOVICE (19): 1st Louis Steiner (PA); 2nd Mary Franks (IL); 1st Cons. Darcey Brady (IN); 2nd Cons. Fred American (NY).

DOUBLES (32): 1st Joe Sylvester (MI) & Mike Charison (MI); 2nd Dean Adamian (MI) & Mike Nelson (MA); 3rd/4th John Carrico (MI) & Carol Joy Cole (MI); 3rd/4th Wanda Mortuk (MI) & Len Loder (MI).

INDY \$500 (16): 1st Yamin Yamin (IL); 2nd Frank Talbot (MI).

OPEN MicroBLITZ (64): Bob Holyon (WI). LTD MicroBLITZ (64): Steve Hast (PA).



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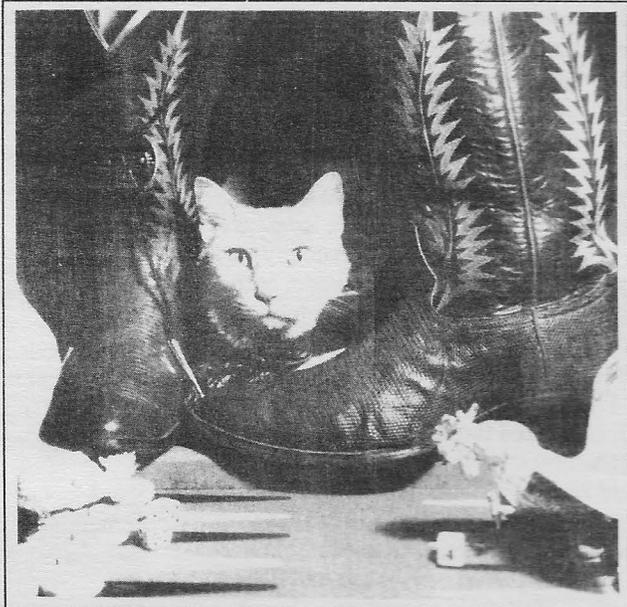
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"PUSS AND BOOTS"—BACKGAMMON STYLE

Artist John Demian's latest photo effort is titled "Boots on the Bar." It's a cock fight of a different kind with Boris the Cat (decked out in a bandanna) kibitzing the match through a pair of cowboy boots.

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John Demian
3308 N. Damen Avenue
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A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

c/o Chicago POINT
2726 W. Lunt Avenue
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IN DEFENSE OF NNBA RULINGS

I found Malcolm Davis' discussion last month criticizing the Reno tournament ruling committee totally unconvincing. Does Mr. Davis mean to say that White, an "admittedly inexperienced player," would have automatically redoubled after taking a cube with the score shown? Does he feel that White was lying when indicating confusion and uncertainty as to whether the cube had been turned initially? Does Black's emphatic assertion that he did not double make it so? I would not have taken the time to write had I not personally seen two other difficult decisions made, at the same tournament by the same committee, with diplomacy and skill to the satisfaction of both parties.

I have found Reno to be a very fine, well organized tournament. Mr. Davis' statement that "nobody on the committee could really have thought the cube had been turned initially" and his implication that the decision reached was anything but the "best effort" at being "fair and honest" is unfair. He should apologize.—*Doug Amenda, Phoenix, AZ*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

coming attractions



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

Apr 8	Springfield Open, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Apr 9	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
Apr 9	Pittsburgh Sunday Tournament, Parkway Center Inn, Pittsburgh, PA	412/241-1301
Apr 12-17	April in Tahoe, Hyatt Lake Tahoe, NV	800/327-3910
Apr 14-16	1989 Midwest Championships, Holiday Inn, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	312/338-6380
Apr 15	College Park Spring Open, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	703/620-3239
Apr 15-16	International BG Ass'n Tournament, Palm Hotel, W. Palm Beach, FL	305/527-4033
Apr 16	NEBC Monthly, Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Apr 20	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Apr 20-23	Byblos European Championship, Hotel Byblos, Saint-Tropez, France	061 50 58 16
Apr 21-25	Australian Open Championship, Hyatt, Sydney, New South Wales	02/929-0273
Apr 28-May 1	North German Championship, Hamburg, W. Germany	040/270-1166
Apr 30	Celebrities Tournament, Celebrities Lounge, Houston, TX	713/495-2240
May 5-7	Rochester Backgammon Ass'n Tournament, Rochester, NY	716/442-8221
May 5-7	Granite State Open & NE Team Champs, Woodbound Inn, Jaffrey, NH	603/924-3844
May 7	Central Illinois BG Club Tournament, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon, IL	309/692-6909
May 14	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
May 18	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
May 18-21	Championship of Great Britain, Palace Hotel, Douglas, Isle of Man	0624/851-045
May 19-21	Austrian Tournament, Casino Bregenz, Austria	08341-12 825
May 21	Pittsburgh Sunday Tournament, Parkway Center Inn, Pittsburgh, PA	412/241-1301
May 26-29	10th Annual Chicago Open, Westin Hotel O'Hare, Rosemont, IL	312/674-0120
May 26-29	Boston Symph. Orch. Benefit, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Jun 9-11	Austrian Tournament, Casino Velden, Austria	08341-12-825
Jun 11	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Bagwells, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
Jun 11	New England Club Finals & Year-end Tournament, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Jun 11	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
Jun 21-25	U.S. Open & Master's Invitational, Nugget Hotel/Casino, Reno, NV	702/826-1984
Jun 25	Pittsburgh Sunday Tournament, Parkway Center Inn, Pittsburgh, PA	412/241-1301
Jul 7-9	Internat'l Backgammon Tournament, Hotel Royal, San Remo, Italy	01847/99-91
Jul 9	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
Jul 10-16	World Championship of Backgammon, Monte-Carlo, Monaco	301/299-8264
Jul 15-16	College Park Summer Championship, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0603
Jul 28-30	Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Aug 7-13	Green Mountain Festival, Ascutney Mtn. Resort, Brownsville, VT	305/527-4033
Aug 13	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
Sep 1-4	National Labor Day Tournament & Club Challenge, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435

GRIZZLY VICTIMS

I'm not submitting an answer to Dean Muench's "Grizzly" Bear-off Contest because it would be unfair for me to do so, since Dean and I are in close touch. We've already discussed #2 and #4, and #1 appears in one of my books. But Dean did want to bet me I wouldn't get as many as 8 of 9 right (I didn't want his money and I declined).—*Danny Kleinman, Los Angeles*

Say Muench. Why don't you give us something hard to work on?—*Fred Kalantari, Edina, MN*

Danny Kleinman, backgammon's top theoretician, managed 7 correct answers

and would have lost Dean's wager. Fred Kalantari missed 5 out of 9. Turn to page 5 for the "Grizzly" details.—Ed.

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

The best players enter the optional side pool at our semimonthly tournaments and we never have a collusion problem. The top year end finishers at our club win prizes; hence everyone always tries to protect their win percentage and annual point score.

Joe Monro wrote about multileveled side pools last month and the editor countered with the possibility of one player

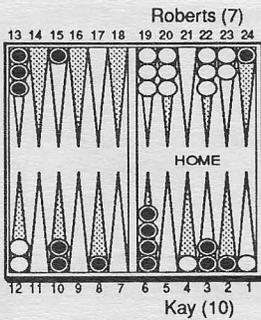
(Continued on page 6)

THE LAST GAME

Annotated by Dean Muench

1989 Indiana Open. 11 pt. Open finals. Gary Kay leads Doug Roberts 10-7 Crawford:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| KAY (10) | ROBERTS (7) |
| 1. — | 4-3 12/15, 1/5 |
| 2. 5-3 8/3, 6/3 | 5-2 5/12 |
| 3. 3-2 13/10, 24/22 | 5-3 17/22*, 19/22 |
| 4. 6-5 Bar/20/14 | 5-2 12/14*, 12/17 |
- At this score, Roberts should be playing for a gammon. I would have used the '5' to hit a second checker (19/24*).*
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 5. 5-3 Bar/20, 13/10 | 5-2 15/20*/22 |
|----------------------|---------------|
- A horrible play. Roberts shouldn't care if he gets gammoned. Rather than safe the 20-blot, play full steam ahead with 12/14.*
- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 6. 6-2 Bar/23, 24/18 | 6-4 12/18*, 19/23* |
| 7. 5-3 Bar/20, — | 3-2 18/20*/23 |
- It's probably better for Roberts to make the 5-point. Even if hit, at least he'd have a solid position.*
- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 8. 6-5 Bar/20, — | 3-1 17/20*, 19/20 |
| 9. 4-2 Bar/21, — | 4-1 17/21*, 14/15 |
| 10. 5-1 Bar/24, — | 5-2 15/20, 17/19 |
- I hit for sure. You don't want Kay anchoring on your 4-pt. My preference is 17/24*.*
- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 11. 6-4 Bar/21*/15 | 6-2 Bar/2, 1/7 |
| 12. 5-1 8/7*/2* | |
- A necessary play. Kay hits two and bites the bullet. What purpose would building his 5-pt. serve if he ends up with three men swinging against Roberts closed board?*
- | | |
|--|------------------|
| | 4-1 Bar/4, Bar/1 |
|--|------------------|



Move #13. HOW SHOULD KAY (LEADING 10-7 CRAWFORD) PLAY 4-1?

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 13. 4-1 8/4*, 2/1* | |
|--------------------|--|
- Also necessary. Kay has good chances to anchor if he's hit and a lot to gain if he's missed. Making the 2-pt. gives Roberts too much of a free swing.*
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 14. 5-5 6/1, 10/5(2), 15/10 | 3-2 Bar/2, — |
| 15. 2-1 6/4, 10/9 | 3-1 No play |
| 16. 3-3 5/2*(2), 13/10, 24/21 | 6-3 No play |
- It's obviously better to give Roberts the 35-to-1 5-5 instead of any anchoring '2.'*
- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| | 5-2 Bar/5, — |
| 17. 5-1 21/15 | |
- Kay should have played 13/8, 9/8 to avoid the double 5 annihilation. Besides, the 8-pt. could prove valuable later on.*
- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 18. 6-5 15/9, 10/5* | |
|---------------------|--|
- In this situation, the hit is correct. The alternative play (15/9, 13/8) leaves Roberts three blots with several good 5's anyway.*
- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| | 4-2 No play |
| 19. 3-1 9/5 (Close-out) | |
- Kay goes on to win the match 11-7. Δ*

prevention

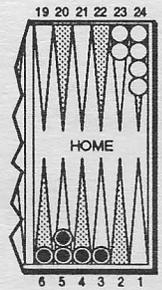
HASTY PLAYS



by Duane Jensen

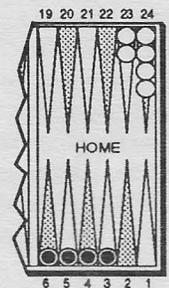
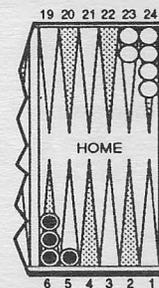
How should Black play 6-4 in this bear-off?

He should take two men off, of course. Did you have to analyze the position carefully before deciding on your move? Probably not. You used the general axiom



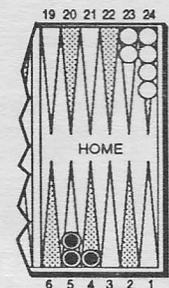
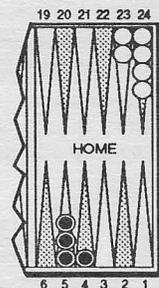
“ALWAYS BEAR OFF TWO MEN IF POSSIBLE” as a guide to the correct play. Another “axiom” I use in bear-offs is: “IF THE WHOLE ROLL IS REQUIRED TO BEAR OFF A SINGLE MAN, THEN PERHAPS THE ROLL SHOULD BE USED TO CREATE BETTER CHECKER DISTRIBUTION.”

Example 1: BLACK TO PLAY 3-2



Black wins 66.22% of these games by creating better distribution (6/3, 6/4). With 5/Off, Black wins slightly less: 65.73%.

Example 2: BLACK TO PLAY 3-2



Here, Black does better to bear a checker off (5/Off). He wins 85.34% compared to 82.83% when he plays 5/2, 5/3.

It might appear that this axiom has little value because it doesn't tell how to play the roll; however it does wave a red flag warning me to study the position and not just move on reflex alone. Players like myself, prone to making hasty plays, need all the axioms and reminders we can create. Δ



1989 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU MAR. 31

CHRIS KENIK	9.04	PHYLLIS SMOLINSKI	2.32	Jill Ferdinand	0.80
TAK MORIOKA	7.68	JEFF KANE	1.92	Mike Cyrkiel	0.72
DAVID LIBCHABER	6.52	DON JAYHAN	1.64	Dave Cramer	0.72
DEAN MUENCH	5.64	Kathy Bauder	1.64	René Wojtysiak	0.64
GARY KAY	4.96	Dave Rockwell	1.60	Bob Holyon	0.64
DEEB SHALATI	4.48	Arlene Levy	1.56	Mark King	0.64
SARG SERGES	4.16	Mark Anshus	1.52	Harry Hayward	0.56
NORMA SHYER	4.00	Gary Keyes	1.52	Rich Siebold	0.56
ALICE KAY	3.56	Yamin Yamin	1.48	Ed Buerger	0.48
STU KATZ	3.52	Gene Chait	1.20	Craig McCullough	0.30
ALAN STEFFEN	3.36	Bill Keefe	1.04	Mark Hicks	0.28
BOB ZAVORAL	3.28	Dan Judd	0.96	Richard Stawowy	0.28
BILL DAVIS	2.76	John Spatafora	0.94	Joan Hegg	0.24
JOHN DEMIAN	2.72	Joe Koucharian	0.88	Trudie Stern	0.16
JOANN FEINSTEIN	2.60	Jim Pappas	0.80	Leslie Lockett	0.16
ARNOLD ZOUMER	2.56	Ken Bond	0.80	Dianne Cyrkiel	0.12
RALPH LEVY	2.52	Ron Stur	0.80		

Dean Muench went 11-2 on the month—including a 10 match winning streak and two tourney victories—to win 4.12 points and top honors for March. Chris Kenik (3.72) nearly matched Dean's record with a 10-2 month, two victories and an 8 match winning streak (that's alive going into April). Stu Katz placed third with 2.56 points.

If you finish in the Top 20 for 1989 (capitalized names on list), you'll be entered in a drawing for over \$200 worth of valuable merchandise including a Sony cordless telephone. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st—Trophy + \$150; 2nd—\$100; 3rd—\$50. 1st thru 20th—cherrywood die box. 1st thru 6th—Invitation to participate on the Chicago Bar Point Club team in the 1990 Illinois State Challenge Cup.

DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS



WANTED: CONFIDENCE

Dear Miss Lonelyblots: I have intently studied backgammon for the past three years. I've read all of Robertie's and Kleinman's books, and played out Kent Goulding's "Backgammon With The Champions" series. When kibitzing a match between two experts, I have no trouble seeing and understanding the correct move. The problem is that I have a terrible tournament record.

Oftentimes, I feel intimidated by my opponent and when people start watching my game, it becomes difficult to concentrate. If I can get over these bad feelings and play up to my level, I know I'll be a winner. But that's easier said than done. What do you suggest?—Lacking Confidence

Dear Lacking: You find it hard to concentrate? How do you think I feel, with the *Chicago POINT* posing problems beyond my competence and exposing me to the ridicule of first one sister and then another? I'm tempted to turn your question over to them, but the one who calls herself "Doctor" Lonelyhearts isn't a real doctor, only a Ph.D., and the other—well I better not say anything more about Xaveria or the name of my whole family will be mud.

So I'll just pretend that neither they nor my editor are looking over my shoulder and answer to the best of my ability.

You say you often feel intimidated by your opponents. If they do anything to intimidate you, call the tournament direc-

tor. Intimidation (physical or otherwise) has no place in backgammon. You have the right to play unhurried, undistracted and unmolested. No opponent may make hostile remarks or gestures, snicker at your moves, talk while you are thinking, nor try to rush you into hasty moves or cube actions. Such unsportsmanlike conduct demands a warning from the director, and if persistent, penalties and ejection.

You say that spectators disturb your concentration. Again, any offensive behavior warrants removal. Spectators may not hover over you, blow smoke in your face, talk or whisper to each other about your supposed errors, root audibly or visibly for your opponent, nor display delight in your misfortunes.

Perhaps, however, your spectators and opponents alike are well-behaved and the source of your troubles lies within. Perhaps you suffer from performance anxiety, which afflicts so many of us under different names: "stage fright," "writer's block" (take that, Antoinette—how many columns have you turned out lately?) and "impotence" (take that Xaveria!). Instead of thinking about the activity (the speech you are making, song you are singing, idea you are expounding, pleasure you are receiving from your lover) itself, you ask busily, "How'm I doing?" The more you worry, the less well you perform.

How can you improve? It's not easy, because you're required to do a negative—not to worry. To appreciate the difficulty, try not to think of an ELEPHANT. But you can play certain mind games with yourself. Think of yourself as playing not an opponent but a position. That's exactly what you are doing except in doubling situations where you must anticipate a

particular opponent's cube reactions. Imagine that you are not playing a game but solving one of the *POINT*'s monthly problems. Let the backgammon board become your universe temporarily.

Plimpton Cup winners David Leibowitz and Russell Sands credited "meditation" for much of their success, claiming that this practice produced favorable rolls. I doubt it. I credit talent, study and concentration. But I do not doubt that "meditation" served them well in shutting out thoughts and stimuli external to backgammon. Perhaps similar methods may work for you.—Miss Lonelyblots Δ

Do you have a backgammon-related question for Miss Lonelyblots involving people problems, game etiquette or the play itself? Write to: Dear Miss Lonelyblots, c/o Chicago POINT, 2726 W. Lunt Avenue, Chicago, IL 60645. The most stimulating query will be answered bimonthly.

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Dean Muench's

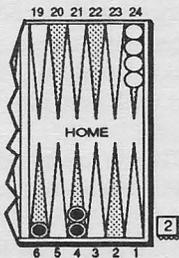
"GRIZZLY" BEAR-OFF CONTEST RESULTS

The Grizzly clawed dozens of entrants in the toughest BG contest of all time. The average score was 3.44 correct. Walter Trice of Holden, MA and Malcolm Davis of Dallas, TX were the only two entrants to get all 9 right. By

random draw, Walter wins \$100 and the Bearoff1 Computer Bearoff Package including Bearsearch. Program author Dean Muench will also send Malcolm the package as a runner-up award. See page 7 to order Bearoff1 package.

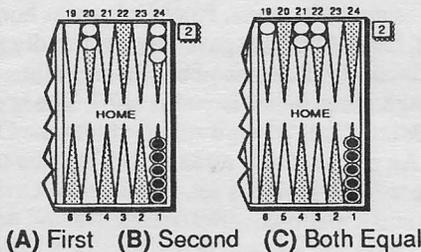
1 What is the expectancy (in points) for Black?

- (A) -0.0987654321×2
- (B) 0
- (C) $+0.0987654321 \times 2$
- (D) None Of The Above



Choice (B) is correct. This is the only position among the 850,084 5-men vs. 5-men and less bear-off positions that yields an expectancy of zero.

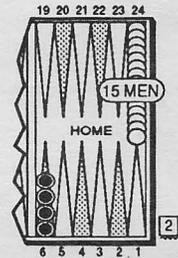
2 Which position is better (expectancywise) for White?



- (A) First (B) Second (C) Both Equal
- (B), the second position is better for White even though it is 7 pips worse in count. White's:
 Exp. (A) = $-0.7878086419753085 \times 2$
 Prob. (A) = $+0.1060956790123457$
 Exp. (B) = $-0.7781635802469135 \times 2$
 Prob. (B) = $+0.1071673525377230$

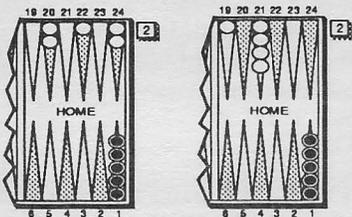
3 What is the correct cube action for both Black and White?

- (A) No Redouble
- (B) Redouble/Take
- (C) Redouble/Drop
- (D) Redouble/Either Take or Drop



(A), it is *too good* to redouble! A roll of 6-6 would yield a gammon for Black while no possible combination of rolls would allow the non-roller to take the redouble on the next roll.
 Non-double exp. = $+1.0277777777777778 \times 2$
 Double exp. = $+2.0$

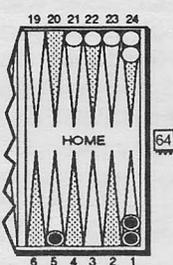
4 Which position is better (expectancywise) for White?



- (A) First (B) Second (C) Both Equal
- (B), the second position is better for White even though it is 7 pips worse in count. White's:
 Exp. (A) = $-0.8049554183813441 \times 2$
 Prob. (A) = $+0.0975222908093279$
 Exp. (B) = $-0.7995970507544580 \times 2$
 Prob. (B) = $+0.0953789437585735$

5 What is the correct doubling decision for Black?

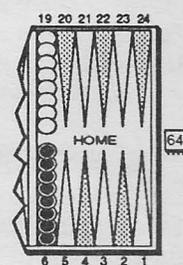
- (A) Double
- (B) No Double
- (C) Either Of The Above



Choice (C) is correct. Since every possible sequence of numbers leaves White with a drop on her next roll, the expectancy = $+1.0$ whether doubling or not. (Note: theoretically correct, but in practice this is a double.)

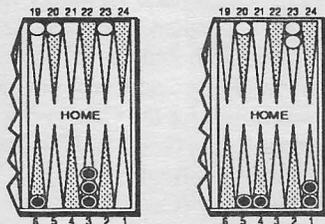
6 What is the correct doubling decision for Black?

- (A) Double
- (B) No Double
- (C) Either Of The Above



(B), it is not a double.
 Black's non-double exp. = $+0.424993$
 Black's double exp. = $+0.331430$
 (Note: This position is not a double even if both players have only 5 men on their 6-point.)

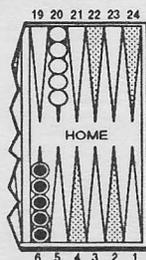
7 Tournament double match pt. Which position(s) favors Black?



- (A) First (B) Second (C) Neither (D) Both
- (A) favors Black.
 (A) Black probability = $+0.5000058422452654$
 (B) Black probability = $+0.4999945754796863$

8 Tournament double match point. Who is favored?

- (A) Black
- (B) White
- (C) Both Equal

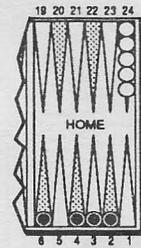


Choice (B) is correct. White will win just over half of the time = $+0.5045363760831722$ probability.

9 Tournament double match point. Black to play an ace.

- (A) 6/5
- (B) 4/3
- (C) 3/2
- (D) 2/1

Order Black's four possible plays from best to worst.



The correct order is: **A D C B**
 Prob. (A) = $+0.8204583666742874$
 Prob. (D) = $+0.8009515270156988$
 Prob. (C) = $+0.7826568691891480$
 Prob. (B) = $+0.7812779825864959$
 (Note: A D B=C was acceptable for those players who misunderstood the rules and thought White was on roll.)

LETTERS...

(Continued from page 2)

buying a victory from his opponent if it meant winning a huge side pool. Given the opportunity, what's wrong with making a deal in a major tournament? After all, you took a calculated risk to reach that position in the first place. (A very interesting ethical problem.)—*Ed Maslansky, Silver Spring, MD*

NOT RAY'S "REAL WORLD"

If people took seriously Danny Kleinman's advice that you need a capital of 200 units at non-trivial stakes to play backgammon ("Backgammon In The Real World," March 1989), then we'd go back 30 years to the time when backgammon was played in a few swank men's clubs and nowhere else.

Sure, if you catch a pigeon like Diana Dialacube, you may need a capital of 200 to maximize your expected gain. But you don't refuse to play her if you haven't got the 200. You either get a backer, as in Danny's story, or sacrifice some equity by making tight cube decisions. The point is, you're still going to win.

I hold to my belief that a capital of 50 units is enough to join any chouette where your play is at least as good as the average.—*Ray Kershaw, London, England*

DEPENDS WHO YOU TALK TO

Cheers to the NNBA for dropping the sexist female figure from their most recent Reno tournament invitation—*Carol Joy Celo, Flint, MI*

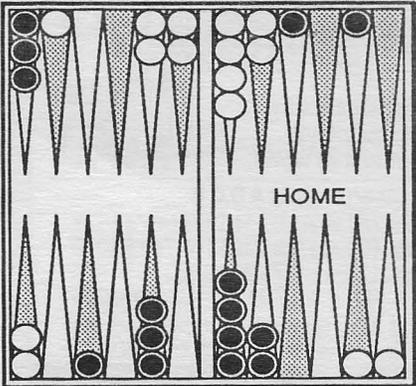
Jeers to the NNBA for dropping the sexy female figure from their most recent Reno tournament invitation—*Ed. Δ*

your move

PROBLEM #146

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**

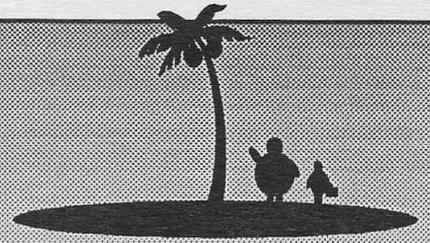
13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24



12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Solberg's Choice

by Duane Jensen



This tale happened during the last Backgammon On Board Caribbean cruise. One sunny afternoon, Peter Kalba was horsing around with friends on the rear deck of the ship. One of his pals gave Peter a friendly shove causing Peter to slip and fall over the rail. Instinctively, he reached out for the railing but missed, instead grabbing Orris Solberg's backgammon board from his arms. The board was useless in preventing the fall, so both Peter and Orris's board splashed into the Caribbean.

An excited Orris screamed, "Hey you turkey. That's my board!", and dove into the sea to rescue his precious set. Fortunately, Orris and Peter rescued the board by dog-paddling to a small, palm-covered deserted island nearby.

The warm sun and breezes quickly dried them but also made them thirsty. Peter said to Orris, "It'll be several hours before they return to pick us up. I heard that you're an agile trisexual, Orris. Why don't you scamper up that palm tree and pull down a couple of coconuts for us to drink?"

Orris replied, "I'm a triathlete, not a trisexual, Peter. Why don't you get the coconuts? Can't you just belly-bump the tree trunk and shake out a few?"

Sensing a stalemate, Peter suggested a game of backgammon to determine who would fetch the coconuts. But when they opened the backgammon board, they saw that seawater had turned it to mush. Also, only a single die was left.

What could they do with one die? Rolling "high die" would be too boring. Peter came up with an interesting idea. "Each of us will roll the die, alternating rolls and adding the point total as we roll. A player wins if he rolls a number which makes the total EXACTLY 13. A player can also win if his opponent rolls a number which puts the total OVER 13. If I roll a 6 and you roll a 5, the total is 11. If I then roll a 2, the total is 13 and I win. If I roll a 3, 4, 5, or 6 the total is over 13 and you win."

Orris said, "I'll play you, but who rolls first?"

Peter answered, "To be fair, I'll let you choose, Orris."

SHOULD ORRIS ROLL FIRST OR MAKE PETER ROLL FIRST? IF YOU MUST ROLL FIRST, WHICH IS YOUR BEST AND WORST NUMBER? Δ

(Solution on page 8)

who did what

WINNER'S CORNER



Jan.-Feb. 1989

BG-Ski Happening (Seefeld, Austria; Jan. 20-22)... Championship: 1st Philip Marmorstein; 2nd Matthias Stieger; 1st Cons. H. Johanni. Beginner: 1st A. Born; 2nd J. Ehlerding; 1st Cons. C. Hager... Marmorstein is the reigning World Champion.

Pittsburgh Charity Tournament (Pittsburgh, PA; Feb. 3-5)... Open (22): 1st Jack Kissane (NY); 2nd Charlie Cole (WV); 1st Cons. Joe Sylvester (MI); 2nd Cons. Jerry Kane (NJ). Intermediate (22): 1st Dennis Leatherman (PA); 2nd Dennis Cupp (OH); 1st Cons. John Bashian (OH); 2nd Cons. Mike Rezai (OH). Doubles: 1st Les Bart (MD)/Carl Miller (MD). Pittsburgh \$500: 1st Joe Sylvester (MI); 2nd Harry Zilli (VA).

Bar Point Sunday (Chicago, IL; Feb. 12)... Open (24): 1st Jeff Kane (WI); 2nd Sarg

Serges (IL); 3rd/4th Bob Holyon (WI) and Mark Anshus (WI); 1st/2nd Cons. Mike Cyrkiel (IN) and Gary Keyes (IL). Limited (12): 1st Ed Buerger (IL); 2nd Joan Hegg (IL); 3rd/4th Leslie Lockett (IL) and Trudie Stern (IL); 1st Cons. Mark King (WI); 2nd Cons. Dianne Cyrkiel (IN).

Fleet Underwood Memorial (Flint, MI; Feb. 12)... Open (32): 1st Sandy Kaplan; 2nd Sandy Glassman. Intermediate (30): 1st Carl Mitchell; 2nd Carol Falk. Novice (6): 1st Paul Pero; 2nd Carol Levine... \$700 was raised for the Cancer Society (in memory of Eddie Grad) and the Bret Underwood trust fund.

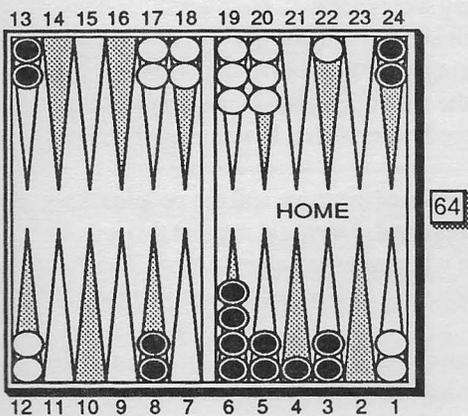
NEBC Monthly (Cambridge, MA; Feb. 19)... A Div. (37): 1st Elaine Colokathis; 2nd Walter Trice; 1st Cons. John Koonmen. B Div. (17): 1st Ed Miller; 2nd Patrice Pisano; 1st Cons. Andy Costigan.

NY/NJ Regional (Long Island, NY; Feb. 19)... Championship: 1st Ralph Goldberg; 2nd Dave Sporn; 1st Cons. Antoinette Williams. Intermediate: 1st Jim Maloney; 2nd Roni Zemsch. Δ

PROBLEM #145 SOLVED

by Joe Sylvester

1989 Nevada State Championships (Reno, NV). Match to 5 points. M. Shahidi (White) leads Joe Sylvester (Black) 2 to 1. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



It is rare to have such an instructive problem with so many possible choices, yet a survey of 11 leading experts at the recent

Nevada State Championships yielded six different responses. Here are the options for this extremely complex problem:

- (A) 24/22*, 4/3
- (B) 24/22*/21
- (C) 24/22*, 6/5
- (D) 24/23, 6/4
- (E) 6/5, 6/4
- (F) 6/4, 8/7

Play (A) is clearly the worst of the choices. If White enters, Black has his checkers out of position to continue an attack in his inner board. If White fans, White has a trivial take (22% take point) now that Black has no immediate threat of making his 4-point.

Play (B) leaves White 16 return hits off of Black's 4-point and three additional (2-1 and 1-1) off of White's 4-point. When White misses, Black can cash and when White hits, White's 1's, 2's and 4's needed to enter are duplicated on the other side of the board to hit a second checker on the 4-point. When White hits, Black has the 21-point slotted and good position to make his best anchor.

Play (C) is a seemingly natural play. Like (B), there are 16 returns to hit off of Black's 4-point. In addition, 2-1 and 1-1 hit in Black's inner board, though not as effectively as in (B). There are 1-5's and 2-5's which now hit back on White's 3-point, but these should be discounted for Black now has a tremendous pressure double. Since missing means a "pass" for White, the difference between (B) and (C) is whether you want to be better positioned for the return hit (C) or to make a better

advanced anchor (B). There are not enough returns gained by playing 6 to 5. Play (B) gets the nod here.

But what if Black doesn't hit? Play (D) gives Black a formidable four point board and freezes a builder on White's 8-point. However the split lends itself to a blitzing attack where either side could bring about a pressure double.

Play (E) still gives Black his 4-point board but does nothing to pressure White's 8-point or threaten White with additional exiting numbers as (D) does. Being the trailer in the match, Black should desire the volatility that (D) gives him over (E) since White cannot use the full value of a doubled gammon swing that a subsequent cube would provide.

Play (F) is the most dynamic of our six choices. This play gives White only 11 viable ways to hit (discount 1-5 as White should drop if Black cubes after being hit here), and in the event of a hit, Black has many returns on the bar- and 1-point (a minimum of 18!). If White misses, the threat of five points in a row leading to a prime-vs.-prime position (the least desirable type of position in a short match for a leader because he can't use the full value of a doubled gammon swing) produces a pressure-filled double that many would pass. Quite a double-edged sword!

If I feel my opponent will pass at this point because the neon (gammon-for-match) sign is lighting up in his head, I'll clearly make Play (F). And since in many of the no-hit sequences, White doesn't cover his 3-point smoothly (i.e. 5-4, 4-3, etc.), I believe (F) to be superior to (B). Δ

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PUB CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 7:30 PM at Fiddler's, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Ed Bauder (312/985-1568).

SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASS'N: Tournaments Tuesday, 6:15 PM at On Broadway, 210 S. Broadway, Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

WINNETKA BG CLUB: Tournaments Weds., 7:00 PM at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Stern (312/446-0537).

CENT. ILL. BG CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 PM at Peoria Pizza Wks, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Sue Will (309/692-6909).

NORTH CLUB: Daily side play at 4747 N. Peterson (Room 402), Chicago. Howard Markowitz (312/286-8417).

Solberg's Choice...

(Solution from page 6)

Orris should roll first making him a 51.6% favorite. The best first roll is a 3 (54.7% favorite). The worst first roll is a 6 (44.6% underdog).

If it's your turn to roll, here are your winning chances at specific point totals:

12-16.7%	8-59.8%	3-45.3%
11-30.6%	7-66.5%	2-46.4%
10-42.1%	6-55.4%	1-48.6%
9-51.8%	5-49.0%	0-51.6%
	4-45.9%	

AMALGAMATION

The Hoosier Backgammon Club and Louisville Backgammon Club have announced a joint venture for Labor Day—the National Labor Day Tournament to alternate locations between Indianapolis and Louisville (this year in Indy). The tournament will also include a Club Challenge event. More details to follow... According to documentation included in **Dean Muench's** bear-off program "Bearoff1," it would take a good home computer 100 years to completely solve a bear-off where each player started with 15 men on their 6-point. It's **Tak Morioka's** opinion that, "If anyone does it, you'd have to say they're really determined."... With 20 years past experience as a detective on the New York Police force, **James Roston** is now solving backgammon problems... Backgammon makes the TV Soaps: Millionaire **Palmer Cortlandt** sent his handyman to get the chauffeur **Sloan** for some backgammon on "All My Children" March 20... Congratulations to **Dick Nelson** (Peoria, IL) who won this year's Sangamon Valley BG Association Winter Series. His award was a hand-crafted **Al Imm** backgammon board... The Cavendish West Club of Los Angeles has a new owner-**Jerry Gould** and manager-**Jerry Jarvis**. Best of luck to them in reorganizing backgammon tournaments in their area... Get-well wishes go out to Flint BG Club director **Carol Joy Cole** resting up from surgery and former New Hampshire director **Steve Avery** recovering from two heart attacks... Call **Kathy Posner** the **Perle Mesta** of Chicago. Her "One Year—One Month" wedding anniversary party for Chicago weatherman **John Coleman** and his bride

inner game

TAKGAMMON



by Tak Morioka

THE WALL

I am an architect, the designer of castles and moats. This work provides me the freedom to travel and explore. My most recent excursion took me into the land of "Best" to a town called "Play." It appeared to be a quiet, secluded haven in the middle of a green valley—an ideal place to stay the night and rest my weary legs.

I slept peacefully until awakened by a loud commotion outside my window. People were shouting and screaming. I heard the thundering hooves of horses and the clang of metal striking metal. It was a raid! I ran out into the streets and saw men swinging their swords. Houses were set ablaze and blood splattered everywhere. It was a miracle, but I lived through the night.

In the dawn's light, I saw the smoldering remnants of the town and the people sifting through what remained. I asked them what had happened. They told me that this was a common occurrence. The marauders would come whenever they were hungry. They would burn and pillage, killing anyone who resisted. They were like parasites, keeping their hosts alive.

But now the townspeople were angry. With raised fists, they went to their leaders for action. Aware of my presence in their village, the leaders came to me for advice.

I surveyed the damage. It would take a lot of work. But to my surprise, they didn't want me to rebuild their homes. Instead, they wanted to build a fortification to keep out the raiders. They wanted a wall twenty feet high to surround their town. "After all," they said, "No one could possibly scale those heights." But there was a problem: they didn't have enough bricks. They had only half of what was needed to complete the job. They were certain they could get more but it would take time.

Many of the townspeople offered their advice. Some told me that the raiders usually came from the Northwest and if the mighty wall was built on the north and west side, this would turn them back. Others said they came from the South, and a few suggested the East. Posed with this problem, how would you go about building the wall? Δ



Fortune Cookie

The Competitive Maxim: Show me what you do know, not what you don't.

Cheryl at *America's Bar* on March 27 drew a swarm of Chicago celebrities... **Stu Katz** deserves much of the credit for the \$45 to \$35 Holiday Inn room rate reduction at the upcoming Midwest Championships (April 14-16; Oakbrook Terrace, IL). **Stu** discovered the "Great Rate" promo at Holiday Inns across the country in a *Chicago Tribune* travel section... Backgammon tournaments aren't the only thing *Louisville Gammon Gazette* editor **Larry Deckel** directs. He just returned from Charleston, SC where he directed the play "Where the Lilies Bloom" for the Young Charleston Theater Company. Previously, **Larry** has worked in France, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Poland as company director for the U.S. Information Agency and Actor's Theater of Louisville... Hoosier Club director **Butch Meese** has prepared a beginner's handout on the fundamentals of backgammon. If you're interested in a copy, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Hoosier Backgam-

mon Club, 7620 Kilmer Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46256... Former House of Backgammon director and *Faces* nightclub promoter **Phelicia Krakow** invites all her friends to the *Kit Kat Klub*, 3170 N. Sheridan in Chicago. What about holding an evening backgammon tournament there this summer?... *Time* magazine makeup editor **Charlotte Quiggle** uses her knack for puzzle solving to piece together each weekly issue. "As a kid, I seldom lost at bridge. That's why I got the job," proclaims **Quiggle**. *Time's* executive VP **Robert L. Miller** warns, "We don't recommend challenging her at backgammon, either."... Former Chicago BPC player **Greg "I'll never get married" Shore** and **Anna Muscardin** are engaged. The couple, currently living in Rome, Italy, plan a fall 1990 wedding... And finally, in the "Life just ain't fair" department, **Duane Jensen** quips: "When life's addictions were passed out, **Wade Boggs** got 'sex'—I was stuck with backgammon." Δ