

caesars tahoe tournament

O'LAUGHLIN STRIKES IN TAHOE

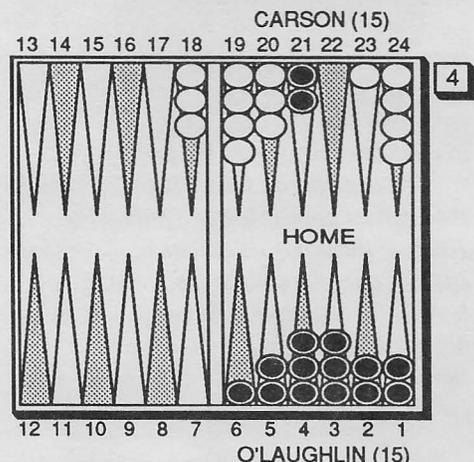
Cather Grabs Open

Ed O'Laughlin struck pay dirt at the Caesars Colossus Backgammon Tournament in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and this time it was the mother lode. On the heels of his National Labor Day victory in Indianapolis, the systems analyst from Brigantine, NJ bested a field of 45 world-class players to win the top prize of \$50,000. The Northern Nevada Backgammon Association's first-ever Lake Tahoe tournament, held October 4-8 at the beautiful Caesars Tahoe Hotel/Casino, proved to be a huge success. 315 gladiators from across the globe clashed in four divisions of play.

O'Laughlin and Mike Carson (Wynwood, PA) began their 25 point big-bucks battle in the Stevens Peak side room under the watchful eyeball of closed circuit television. 50 feet away in the main playing room, American experts Kit Woolsey, Paul Magriel and Kent Goulding provided an entertaining analysis of the action.

The two finalists traded small leads three times during the first 15 games. Then in game 16, with the match tied at 15-all, rousing action transpired. With the cube on 4, Mike was able to reach the following position against Ed's holding/racing game:

25 pt. finals tied at 15-all. Carson (White) rolls 6-6 against O'Laughlin (Black).



Double 6. A great shake! You could see Carson begin to mentally warm up the 8-cube. But an "instant replay" double 6 by O'Laughlin cooled things down enough to stave the doubler. O'Laughlin then proceeded to outroll his shell-shocked opponent and gain an important 19-15 edge. All Mike could do was request a dice mix.

O'Laughlin lost the next game, but then won a doubled gammon. Although, the 23-16 lead was described as "nearly insurmountable," Carson refused to roll over. Within 4 games, he balanced the ledger at 23-all.

At this point, the following dialogue between the two competitors transpired:

O'Laughlin: "Do you want to hedge? I mean \$50,000 for first, \$20,000 for second... a 2 point match for \$30,000?"

Carson: (Pauses as if preparing to speak, but says nothing.)

O'Laughlin: "I only ask as a courtesy."

Carson: (Pauses) "I'd be satisfied to just play it."

And play it they did. In an extremely thrilling final game (*Ed. note: see page 5 for the annotated battle*), O'Laughlin outlasted his tenacious opponent and laid claim to Caesar's gold.

(Continued on page 3)

CAESARS TAHOE TOURNAMENT

CAESARS COLOSSUS (45): 1st Ed O'Laughlin (NJ); 2nd Mike Carson (PA); 3/4 Shimon Kagan (ISR) and Mika Lidov (NY).

OCTAVIUS' OPEN I (126): 1st Dick Cather (TX); 2nd John O'Hagan (IN); 3/4 Jim Baroff (DC) and Mike Carson (PA); 5/8 Bob Ciaffone (NV), Malcolm Davis (TX), Marc Gardner (NY), Chuck Giallanza (CA).

OPEN II: 1st Antoinette Williams (NY); 2nd Bill Davis (IL); 3/4 Joe Russell (CA) and Wilcox Snellings (PA).

OPEN III: 1st Cliff Pappas (AZ); 2nd Frank Frigo; 3/4 Munchkin (CA) and Paul Pavlides (NC).

ANTONY'S INTERMEDIATE I (146): 1st Mike Colgan (CA); 2nd Kevin McDonough (AZ); Jeffrey Hu (CA); Steve Lentz (VA); 5/8 Gilbert Bouloodian (CA), Bob Faucon (MD), Bill Galvin (WA), Dave Williams (CA).

INTERMEDIATE II: 1st Sam Ahmed (CA); 2nd Buddy Ashmore (CAN); 3/4 Stu Katz (IL) and Kati Pratt (TX).

INTERMEDIATE III: 1st Ed Chambers (TX); 2nd Mario Sequeira (PORT); 3/4 Marc Ingensoso (WI) and Murray Work (CA).

NERO'S NOVICE I (39): 1st Martin Donabedian (CA); 2nd Laura Nugent (CA); 3/4 James Roston (NY) and Tony Zandonatti (CA).

NOVICE II: 1st Alicia Abud (MEX); 2nd Rudi Markovich (CAN); 3/4 Mehdi Faraji (CA) and Judy Tower (CA).

NOVICE III: 1st Bev Sandler (FL); 2nd Scott Tilson (MD).

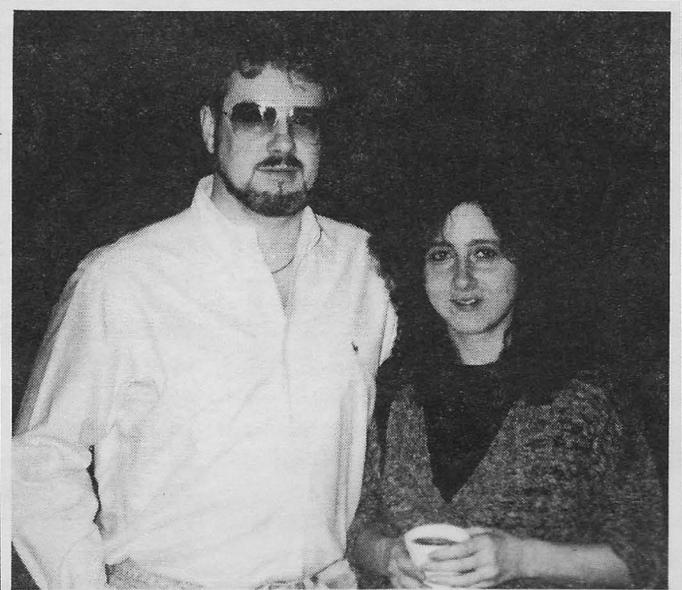
ROMULUS & REMUS' DOUBLES (64): 1st Alice Kay (IL) & Wilcox Snellings (PA); 2nd Dick Cather (TX) & Ismet Demirel (TURK); 3/4 Ray Baker (CA) & Bob Glass (CA); 3/4 Al Senter (CA) & Doug Wilson (CA).

CLEOPATRA'S KICKOFF (512): 1st Alan Steffen (WA); 2nd Howard Robinson (FL); 3/4 Stuart Hosen (TX) and Dick Cather (TX).

THE REIGNING KING AND QUEEN OF BACKGAMMON

1989 Monte-Carlo World Backgammon Champion Joe Russell (CA) poses with world runner-up, Mika Lidov (NY) at the Caesars Tahoe tourney last month.

In Lake Tahoe, Joe reached the semifinals of the Open II flight while Mika was a semifinalist in the Caesars Colossus. Δ



CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

c/o Chicago POINT
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BUT HOW MUCH IS SUBTRACTED?

Last month's Caesars Tahoe tournament advertised 100% entry return with \$20,000 added prize money split among the Open (\$13,000), Intermediate (\$6,500) and Novice (\$500) divisions. Sounds like a good deal, right? Then how is it that two of the three "added money" divisions provided the players with negative equity? High registration fees are the culprit.

Let's look at a breakdown of the amount collected vs. the amount returned:

Division	Collected	Returned	Net +/-
Open	\$58,590	\$63,400	+\$4,810
Intermediate	\$32,120	\$32,050	-\$70
Novice	\$3,900	\$3,425	-\$475

The Amount Collected = [Number of players x (Entry fee + Registration fee)]. The Amount Returned = [(Number of players x Entry fee) + Added money].

So in fact, as a result of the 100%-raked registration fees, only the Open division offered any real "added money": \$4810 added to be exact.

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

Nov 7	Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Pat's Pub, Norridge, IL	312/338-6380
Nov 10-12	NY/NJ Co-op Fall Tourney, Rocking Horse Ranch, Highland, NY	201/833-2915
Nov 11-12	Danish Open Championships, Hotel Marina, Vedbæk, Denmark	45/31 22 46 00
Nov 12	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
Nov 16	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Nov 17-19	Children's Hospital Benefit, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Nov 17-19	Gammon Associates Invitational, Stouffer Concourse, Los Angeles, CA	818/901-0464
Nov 19	11th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Sheraton Inn Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Nov 19	Austin Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/490-6538
Nov 23-26	Teacher's European Open Championships, Casino de Deauville, France	01-376 3033
Nov 24-26	I.B.A. Getaway, Howard Johnson Resort Hotel, Deerfield Beach, FL	305/527-4033
Nov 30-Dec 3	9th International Tournament, Casino Monte Picayo, Valencia, Spain	441 20 24
Dec 1-3	Regency Benefit Tournament, Regency Whist Club, New York, NY	313/232-9731
Dec 2	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Dec 3	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Bagwells, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
Dec 4	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	3-689918
Dec 10	Toronto Monthly Tournament, Le Spot, Ontario	416/267-2815
Dec 10	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Dec 21	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Dec 30-Jan 1	Last of 1989/First of 1990, Loew's Hotel, New York, NY	305/527-4033
Jan 6	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Jan 9	Chicago Bar Point Club Awards Night, Pat's Pub, Chicago, IL	312/338-6380
Jan 14	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Jan 17-21	7th Nevada State Championship, Peppermill Hotel/Casino, Reno, NV	702/826-1984
Jan 20	College Park Winter Open Tourney, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jan 20	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Jan 25	Flint Area club Awards Party & Tournament, Sheraton Inn Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Jan 27	Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	312/338-6380
Feb 1-4	Paradise Island Pro-Am Invitational, Bahamas	301/299-8264
Feb 3	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Feb 4	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Bagwells, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
Feb 11	7th Annual Fleet Underwood Memorial & Benefit, Sheraton Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Feb 18	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Mar 3	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Mar 8-11	Gstaad International Tournament, Hotel Palace, Gstaad, Switzerland	061/50 58 16
Mar 15-18	16th International Winter Championships, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/50 58 16
Mar 18	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Mar 23-25	1990 Midwest Championships, Holiday Inn, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	312/338-6380
Apr 6-8	38th Indiana Open, Omni Severin Hotel, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
Apr 12-15	Open Nordic Championships, Hotel Marina, Vedbæk, Denmark	45/31 22 46 00
Apr 22	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800

Don't get me wrong. The Northern Nevada Backgammon Association runs outstanding tournaments and is certainly entitled to every dollar they earn. But in the future guys, how about a little truth in advertising?—Name withheld upon request.

The N.N.B.A. responds: The above letter infers that the Northern Nevada Backgammon Association has in some way deceived the entrants of last month's Caesars Tahoe tournament. Nothing could be further from the truth. Entry inserts separately included with all invitations fully detailed the registration fees. Over 250 of the 311 players attending the event pre-registered using these forms. All other players used the

same forms at the tournament, and no one complained about the equity.

The N.N.B.A.'s pay back procedure has been consistent since its inception. Our tournaments have always returned 100% of all entry fees plus the cash added. This allows players to easily figure the prize payoffs.

The anonymous writer is trying to make the equities appear lower by applying 100% of the separate registration fee to his costs of attending the tournament. If he is looking for negatives, why doesn't he include his air fare, food and lodging to the deductions as well? The registration fee is used for tournament operations; i.e. personnel,

(Continued on page 7)

N.N.B.A. HOSTS THIRD DIRECTOR MEETING IN NEVADA

Once again, the N.N.B.A. hosted a meeting for U.S. backgammon directors, this time in Lake Tahoe October 7. A National Organization possibility was the main topic.

Although Joe Sylvester (MI) and others were strongly in favor of creating such an organization, Kent Goulding (MD) brought up a valid argument against any official action. Kent mentioned the legal ramifications that other legitimate game organizations such as ACBL (bridge) and USCF (chess) face. Both groups must employ full-time lawyers to protect their interests resulting from player lawsuits. Because of backgammon's money-oriented nature, Goulding was not persuaded to support an official organization at this time. Carol Joy Cole, Bill Davis, Butch & Mary Ann Meese and Bill Robertie concurred.

However, all attending agreed that relations among American directors has never been better, and that keeping the lines of communication open is beneficial in itself.

Special thanks to the hosts: N.N.B.A.

SUE BOYD RECOVERS FROM SERIOUS AUTO ACCIDENT

International Backgammon Association co-director Susan Boyd continues to recover from a broken back and neck suffered in a head-on car accident in mid-August. Sue, along with her husband Les, and sons Leslie (19 years) and Lindsey (14 years) were heading home to Florida by way of Annapolis following their annual Green Mountain Festival tournament in Vermont. Les Boyd describes what happened:

"I was driving down a two lane road in Delaware at about 50 MPH when suddenly, from the opposite direction, a drunken teenage driver pulled out from behind a truck at about 65 MPH and hit us head-on, wheel-to-wheel. The impact knocked us off the road and into a utility pole. It was a violent crash. The car was demolished.

"Susan suffered the worst of it. She had been sleeping in the back seat at the time. The impact drove her head into the front seat breaking her back and neck. She was hospitalized for a week. The rest of us,

including the other driver, received only minor cuts and bruises. It was miraculous. Everyone should have been killed."

"Susan is back home and coming along great. She's swimming every day and doing special exercises. We hope for an eventual 100% recovery."

O'LAUGHLIN STRIKES...

(Continued from page 1)

Dick Cather, a retired airline pilot and commodities trader from Dallas, TX was the other tournament star. Cather won the Open division defeating John O'Hagan (IN) in come-from-behind fashion, was runner-up (with Ismet Demirel) to Alice Kay (IL) and Wilcox Snellings (PA) in the Doubles, and reached the Kickoff final 4.

In the other major results, Antoinette-Marie Williams (NY) won yet another Consolation event—the Open II, Mike Colgan (CA) captured the Intermediate, Martin Donabedian (CA) was victorious in the Novice, and Alan Steffen (WA) continued a great year by winning the Kickoff.

Once again, N.N.B.A. directors Mark Richardson, Jim Roderick and Dave Heffner, with the assistance of Glenda Heffner and the Midwest's Carol Joy Cole (MI) and Mary Ann Meese (IN), ran a professional tournament with many niceties. The event was capped off by a Champaign Awards Ceremony presided over by the Baron and Baroness of Culcreuch.

The N.N.B.A.'s next tournament is set for the Peppermill Hotel January 17–21. Δ



1989 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU OCT. 31

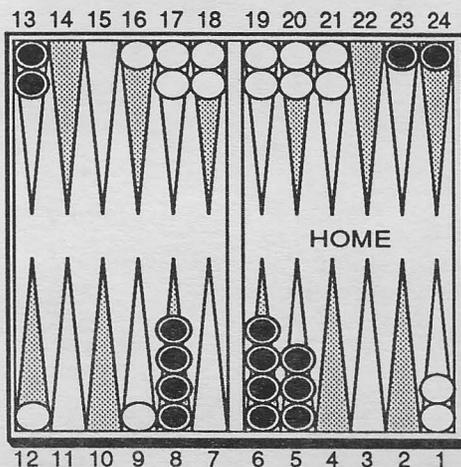
GARY KAY	25.60	John Spatafora	3.66	Joan Hegg	0.88
YAMIN YAMIN	23.00	Rich Galeba	3.44	Jill Ferdinand	0.80
TAK MORIOKA	21.64	Alan Steffen	3.36	Jim Pappas	0.80
CHRIS KENIK	15.20	Paul Johnson	2.96	Ron Stur	0.80
DEAN MUENCH	15.20	Don Desmond	2.80	Darcey Brady	0.80
DAVID LIBCHABER	10.84	Joe Koucharian	2.68	Leslie Lockett	0.76
JOANN FEINSTEIN	10.24	Kathy Rudnick	2.52	Mike Cyrkiel	0.72
STU KATZ	10.00	John O'Hagan	2.44	Carl Severino	0.72
BOB ZAVORAL	9.96	Bobbie Shifrin	2.40	Bob Vining	0.64
DON JAYHAN	9.88	Arlene Levy	2.32	Trudie Stern	0.64
V.W. ZIMNICKI	9.52	Richard Stawowy	2.28	Randall Witt	0.64
JOHN DEMIAN	9.08	Dan Judd	2.24	Howard Chow	0.64
ARNOLD ZOUSMER	8.84	Judy Brown	2.12	Harry Hayward	0.56
MARK KING	8.48	Jeff Kane	1.92	Ted Mann	0.56
LUCKY NELSON	8.36	Miles Cohen	1.92	Joe Wollick	0.48
DEEB SHALATI	8.24	René Wojtysiak	1.92	Barbara Levinson	0.32
NORMA SHYER	7.06	Wilcox Snellings	1.84	Betsy Miller	0.32
BOB HOLYON	6.72	Andy Argy	1.60	Craig McCullough	0.30
DAVE CRAMER	6.64	Mark Anshus	1.52	Elaine Kehm	0.28
ALICE KAY	6.60	Gary Keyes	1.52	Frank Callea	0.24
Ken Bond	6.32	Bill Keefe	1.36	Steve Klegon	0.24
Sarg Serges	6.28	Gene Chait	1.20	Rudy Emmelot	0.16
Ed Buerger	5.84	Mark Hicks	1.16	David Rubin	0.16
Bill Davis	5.68	Bill Hoeflich	0.96	Dianne Cyrkiel	0.12
Rich Siebold	5.04	Lenny Loder	0.96	Nabeel Juha	0.12
Phyllis Smolinski	4.52	Tad Wilson	0.96	Walter Schafer	0.12
Dave Rockwell	4.24	Herb Roman	0.92	Larry Knoll	0.12
Dan Cramer	4.08	Marv Arnol	0.92	John Brink	0.12
Ralph Levy	3.90	Paul Travis	0.88	Ahmad Assadi	0.08
Peter Kalba	3.84				

Credit JOANN FEINSTEIN with October BPC Player of the Month—her first such award ever. Joann won the Main Flight on October 3 and topped the Consolation October 10 and 31 to earn 3.80 points. That was just enough to edge runner-up Stu Katz (3.76).

your move

PROBLEM #153

11 point match. Black leads White 10 to 8, Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.**



ASK DANNY

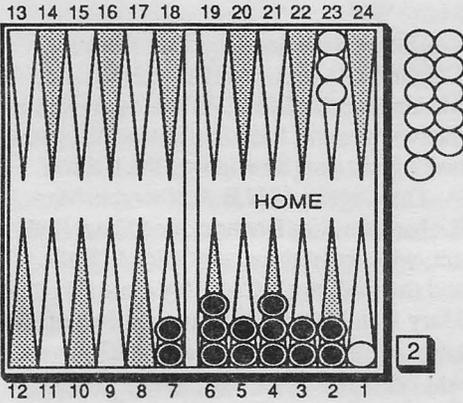


by Danny Kleinman

TO SLASH OR NOT TO SLASH

Dear Danny: Suppose Black hits a late shot in a well-timed ace-point game and eventually comes down to the following position. I'm going to show all of White's men but I'll only show 14 Black checkers because I want Black's 15th man to be a variable, placed anywhere from White's 3-point to his own 3-point:

Money game. Randomly position Black's 15th checker from the 3- to the 22-point. **BLACK TO PLAY A 3.**



It looks clear to move 22/19 with a man on White's 3-point, and equally clear to hit 4/1* with a spare on Black's 3-point. But

just where is the cut-off point? How close to home must Black's 15th man be, in other words, to make hitting on the 1-point correct?—Ed O'Laughlin, Brigantine, NJ

Dear Ed: First, let's note why 4/1* is destructive. After this loose hit, White must roll two single aces (double-aces are White's best roll) instead of one to expose a second blot. In exchange, Black gains timing (about three shakes worth) from being set back 24 pips. But the chances that White's second single ace will come within three shakes of his first (and that White won't roll saving double-aces in the interim) are only about 60%.

Because a loose hit before White exposes a second blot is destructive, Black should avoid hitting until the alternative moves are even more destructive. I don't think this is a function of how far from home Black's 15th man is, as many experts say (most guessed the cut-off at the 13-point). Instead, ask of the alternatives: (a) Will I pile a second spare on any of my points? (b) Will I make large numbers harmful next turn by stripping my 6-point? (c) Will I place a spare deep in my board, on the 2- or 3-point? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then the loose hit now is a lesser evil.

Let's try a few borderline examples. With the 15th man on the 10-point, move 10/7. You'll be forced to hit loose next turn on any 6, but meanwhile you've gained on White's single aces.

With the 15th man on the 9-point, hit 4/1* now. You don't want to play 9/6 (du-

plicating your own 5's) or 6/3 (stripping the 6-point to place a spare deep in your home board).

With the 15th man on the 8-point, move 8/5, diversifying your hitters on your higher points.

With the 15th man on the 7-point, hit 4/1*. You don't want the awkward stripping 6/3 or the duplicating 7/4.

With the 15th man on the 6-point, move 6/3. True, you don't like putting a spare so deep in your home board, but 4/1* leaves you with both spares on the same point.

With the 15th man on the 5-point, hit 4/1*. This keeps your builders diversified on your higher points; 5/2 advances too deep in your home board.

Slightly different positions call for slightly different strategies. If you had a spare on the 2-point, for example, you'd more readily hit loose with an ace to recirculate that man. Likewise, you'd more readily hit loose from a point on which you have two spares because you don't destroy a builder in doing so.

These are mere opinions, but they do take into account the goals of preventing crashing, maximizing hitting chances when White does expose a new blot, and salvaging games with a smooth bear-off when you can only close out one man.—Yours, Danny Δ

Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: Ask Danny, c/o Chicago POINT, 2726 W. Lunt Avenue, Chicago, IL 60645. Danny will answer the most interesting questions bimonthly.

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Tuesday, 7:15 PM at Pat's Pub, 4343 N. Harlem Ave., Norridge (457-1166).

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:30 at Bagwells, 4636 N. Cumberland, Chgo (625-1717).

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 The Julius, 5720 N. Knoxville, Peoria. Sue Will (309/692-6909).

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

COLOSSUS CONCLUSION

ED O'LAUGHLIN VS. MIKE CARSON

Annotated by Tak Morioka
Recorded by Butch Meese

You're at the 25 point finals of the Caesars Colossus backgammon tournament held in Lake Tahoe October 4-8. Ed O'Laughlin and Mike Carson are tied at 23-all. Here is the final game of the match. \$50,000 is earmarked for the winner with \$20,000 going to the runner-up.

Ed O'Laughlin (23) Mike Carson (23)

1. 5-2 13/8, 13/11 6-3 13/7, 13/10

A risky play dictated by the match score.

2. 4-1 11/7, 8/7 6-4 13/7, 24/20

3. 4-2 8/4, 6/4 6-6 20/2, 8/2

Mike opts for the racing play here. He all but gives up his chance to play a priming game. I prefer 20/8, 13/7(2).

4. 6-1 13/7, 6/5 2-1 13/10

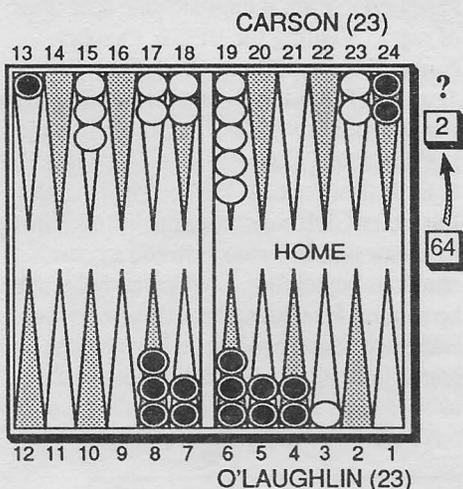
Mike is wavering on his strategy. To remain in harmony with his previous racing move, 24/22, 10/9 is appropriate. It's inconsistent to go for the prime game now.

5. 5-2 13/8, 7/5 3-2 13/10, 24/22

DOUBLE

Ed's position is very strong. He could play on for the gammon, but in doing so, he risks getting gammoned himself.

25 point finals tied at 23-all. O'Laughlin doubles. **SHOULD CARSON TAKE?**



TAKE

I personally don't think Mike has a take here. I would drop and take my 30% match equity chances trailing 24-23 Crawford.

6. 6-5 13/7, 8/3* 6-3 B/22*/16

Great roll! Ed must have taken leave of his

senses after a shot like this.

7. 6-5 B/20, 8/2 6-4 16/10, 6/2

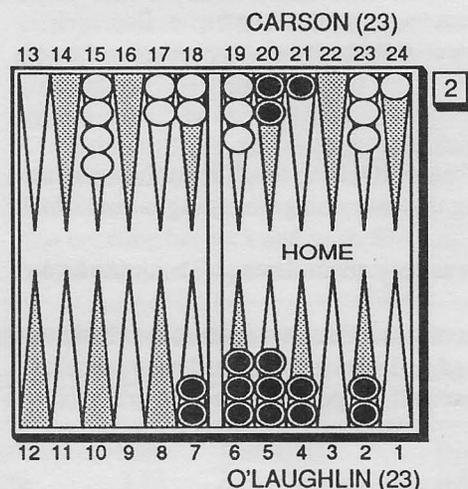
8. 6-4 8/2, 24/20

A questionable play. Ed's move protects against getting gammoned, but that's irrelevant here. The count finds Ed trailing 123-100, so racing isn't Ed's primary motivation for stepping up. Evidently Ed fears being pointed on Mike's 5-point, but is that worse than being knocked off the ace-point?

4-1 6/1*

9. 4-2 B/21, 7/5

Carson's 9th move. Double match point. **WHITE TO PLAY 4-4.**



4-4 10/6(4)

This is the most critical move of the entire game. Mike has chosen the "sympathy play." (If he loses, he can later set up the position and say, "I got to here and lost.") Instead, I prefer making two points with 8/4(2)*, 7/3(2) even though Ed an ace shot from the bar. Bearing in will prove too ugly the other way. Mike took a chance by accepting the cube in the first place. He shouldn't be afraid to take another chance now.

10. 5-5 20/10, 7/2, 6/1

A tough play. It's hard to race this position trailing 100-79 after playing double 5's. Ed's move is the most vulnerable, but also the strongest play to win. I like it.

6-5 8/3, 8/2

This headache was created by the double 4's stack play. I think Mike's right move is to cover the ace-blot by breaking the bar. This gives him future attack and/or hit-and-hide flexibility.

11. 6-2 10/4, 5/3 3-3 7/4*/1, 6/3(2)

12. 5-2 B/20/18*

A great start, but Ed's still a favorite to go back to the bar.

4-2 No play

Quite a parlay!

13. 2-1 4/3, 20/18

Making the ace-point with the 2 gives Mike too much racing equity. Ed moves off the 20-point to minimize Mike's 1-1 joker roll.

5-5 No play

14. 4-1 2/1, 18/14

15. 6-5 18/12, 14/9

16. 4-2 9/5, 12/10

Compare double 5's next if Ed had incorrectly played 12/6.

17. 6-4 10/6, 7/1

18. 5-4 5/Off, 6/2

19. 4-1 4/Off, 4/3

My belief is that you clear the 5-point in this position. Ed's play appears safer for now: Double 5's by Mike hurts him worse than double 4's, and three subsequent doubles leave an immediate shot. But most of these games are lost by getting hit in the bear-off. Down the line, Ed's play is more dangerous.

4-1 B/21, 6/5

20. 6-5 6/Off, 6/1 6-6 21/3, 6/Off
The fat lady hasn't sung yet.

21. 4-1 5/4/Off 6-3 6/Off, 3/Off

22. 6-2 5/Off, 2/Off 5-1 5/Off, 1/Off

23. 6-2 3/Off(2) 5-1 6/5/Off

24. 4-3 3/Off, 2/Off 3-3 6/3, 3/Off(3)

25. 6-3 2/Off, 1/Off 6-2 3/Off, 2/Off

26. 2-1 1/Off(2)

A \$30,000 swing here. Mike needs double 2's or better to win. Anyone have the guts to book this roll?...

6-3 Resigns



Ed O'Laughlin poses with Cleopatra following his thrilling 25-23 Caesars Colossus victory over Mike Carson.



WHOLE LOTTA SHAKEN

Bay Area POINT Subscribers Relate Their Earthquake Experiences

As a result of the October 17 San Francisco earthquake, many Bay Area backgammon players know what it feels like to be a pair of vigorously shaken dice. Here's what six Chicago POINT subscribers experienced:

Mark Harlan (Campbell, CA)

"It shook pretty damn hard. Our apartment is was only 12 miles from the epicenter (Santa Cruz Mountains). The cupboards and bookcases were shaken empty. About one-third of the dishes broke along with our grandfather clock that fell over and split in half.

"I was working on the third floor of Apple Computer's new "earthquake-proof" eight story office complex in Cupertino when it hit. The physical shaking lasted no more than 15 seconds. I experienced about 16" of lateral movement. Individuals on higher floors felt sway in excess of 3 feet. It was quite a sight. You could actually see ripples going through the floor."

Cheryl Silvers (San Francisco, CA)

"I was walking a half block from home when it began. It wasn't fun. The earthquake threw me against an apartment building. I kept thinking that everything was going to come down on me. There's really no way to describe it.

"We were lucky with our apartment. There was only minor damage. The quake broke two pictures and a cordial glass—that's all.

"We usually play backgammon in the Marina area on Tuesday nights at the Golden Gate Bar & Grill. But with the World Series scheduled, backgammon had been cancelled. The Marina was hard hit, but I understand that except for a power failure, the grill received no damage. So we'll still be able to play there."

Mike Labins (Oakland, CA)

"I was getting exercise running around the lake when all of the sudden I felt dizzy—like I was going to pass out. At first I thought it was me, but when I stopped and saw the ground moving back and forth—really moving, I knew it was an earthquake. Then cracks began appearing in the dirt path. It was very scary.

"There was no damage in my apartment. Not even a chess piece was knocked over. I was without electricity for only six hours."

Barbara Liston (San Jose, CA)

"My place survived fine. I had a couple of backgammon trophies and some dishes fall off my shelves, but that's all. Still, the scare was terrible. It was the worst I've ever, ever lived through. I've never been so frightened. Light fixtures were violently swinging back and forth and everything was rattling. I thought the whole place was going to come down."

Kit Woolsey (Kensington, CA)

"The quake closed the Pacific Exchange (where I trade) and because a lot of options were expiring that week, Mike Labins and I (among others) were zipped off to the Chicago Exchange to complete our trades.

"On Tuesday, when the earthquake hit, I was sleeping. I felt a tremor and went back to sleep. We suffered absolutely no damage. In fact, I had no idea that anything particularly serious had happened."

Stan Weiss (San Francisco, CA)

"We live in a 104 year old Victorian home that's just up the hill from the Marina. It survived the big quake of 1906 and came through this one unscathed as well.

"I'm a probation officer and was down at the Hall of Justice when it hit. I dove under a heavy desk when things started shaking and plaster began falling. We were lucky. Two blocks away, a building collapsed killing five people.

"The pictures they show on TV are the most sensational and not indicative of the overall condition of the city. We're a strong city and will rebuild to become as vital as ever." Δ

AMALGAMATION

An October check of the downtown Chicago Kroch's & Brentano's bookstore showed 78 different books on chess, 24 on bridge, 5 on Go, but only one "obsolete" backgammon book—a reprint of the 1941 *Win At Backgammon* by **Millard Hopper**... Despite a cold, **Kent Goulding's** wit was in healthy form at the Calcutta auction in Caesars Tahoe main showroom. Auctioning off the **Wendy Kaplan-Mika Lidov** team, Goulding deadpanned, "Don't get into a race against either of these two girls. If they need to shake a big set, they can do it every time!"... Here's proof that the Caesars Tahoe tournament was nonstop action: **Kati Pratt** (Dallas Backgammon League) informs us that Texans **Thomas** and **Elizabeth Hanlon** utilized their Friday dinner break to get married!... **John Brussel** (NY) returned to the University of Wisconsin (his alma mater) to play trombone in the marching band October 14th during the Wisconsin-Iowa football game. In the early '70s, John was a member of the Washington Redskins marching band... Belated congratulations to **Darrell** and **Susan Marcus** who were married at Chicago's exclusive East Bank Club September 17. Attending the ceremony was Susan's godfather Congressman **Dan Rostenkowski**... The **Baroness of Culcreuch** tells us about a backgammon set in the house on St. Helena where **Napoleon** spent the last years of his life. Did he wile away the long hours of exile playing backgammon? It should have appealed to him; it emulates the strategies of war... Visiting the BPC in October: **Norm Wiggins** (Quartz Hill, CA), **Bill Jenkins** (Delran, NJ), and **Chuck Witbeck** who presides over daily backgammon play in Panajachel, Guatemala at the **Legg's Bar & Grill** (Phone: 621-135)... The Chicago Bar Point Club welcomes back **Bob Vining** (Mishawaka, IN) who suffered a heart attack in September... Wedding bells will be ringing for Chicagoans **Dave Cramer** and **Susan Stodolsky** who became engaged in St. Croix one day before Hurricane Hugo battered the island. Dave must have offered one powerful proposal! Δ

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LETTERS...

(Continued from page 2)

equipment, printing, etc. It also provides other player benefits such as lapel pins, gifts, a sumptuous open bar and buffet, trophies and hotel room rates at half the normal cost. If the writer had wanted to be fair, he would have added the dollar value of these items back into his equity figures.

Where else does an Open division pay \$20,000 cash to the winner along with 15 other money places? We're proud to report that over the past seven years, N.N.B.A. Open division events have produced equities of 110% to 115% including the registration fees.

The Intermediate division needs little defense. Where else in this country can Intermediates receive an \$8,800 first prize and nearly 100% equity along with all the previously stated extras? In fact, if 144 instead of 146 players had registered for the Intermediate, the equity would have actually topped 100% including the registration fee.

If the readers are sincerely interested in opinions regarding the N.N.B.A.'s fairness, player equities and quality tournaments, they should ask any of the many backgammon players who return year after year and tell us, "Your tournaments are the best value for the backgammon buck anywhere."

As stated paradoxically in our Caesars Tahoe invitation this year: "More players, higher prizes; fewer players, higher equity!"
—Mark Richardson, Jim Roderick, Dave Heffner, N.N.B.A.

CLOCKING SLOW PLAY

This past year, I've found slow play to be a problem at some of the regional backgammon tournaments throughout the midwest. At the Twin Cities Backgammon Club, we've been experimenting with chess clocks to speed up exceedingly slow play. It seems to be working.—Steve Brown, Twin Cities Backgammon Club, Minneapolis, MN

Sounds like an interesting idea, Steve. See our editorial on this page.—Ed.

ENCOURAGING WORDS

Thanks for producing such a consistently entertaining and informative magazine. It's always a pleasure to receive. Keep up the good work.—Robert Bieder, Bronx, NY

editorial

TRY CHESS CLOCKS FOR MONITORING SLOW BACKGAMMON PLAY

One of the biggest problems a tournament backgammon director faces is how to deal with slow play. If not carefully monitored, one individual playing at an extremely slow pace can disrupt the flow of an entire tournament.

Who among us has not been subjected to the "Slow Player's Rolling Ritual"? First he straightens his pieces. Then he picks a few specks of lint off the board. If he's a smoker, we may watch him to enjoy a leisurely drag from his cigarette. Finally he begins shaking his dice and continues to shake 30 or more times before rolling. Playing the checkers is another ritual altogether.

Perhaps after being subjected to these antics for a game or two, you do the proper thing and call the director to request a monitor. If your complaint is judged valid, the director must either assign a staff member to the tedious job, or monitor the match himself. Assigning one worker to two players for an hour or more is a great waste of manpower. There must be a better method.

WHAT IF when an individual complained about his opponent's slow play, the director supplied the competitors with a chess clock? An equal amount of time would be put on each player's clock. And the impartial mechanical monitor would place a definitive time limit on the match, giving directors a better chance to pick up the pace of the slow brackets.

It's our guess that you wouldn't see all the lint-picking, or the marathon dice-shaking anymore, either. A player would likely use his time for the important part of the game: to decide on the right action for the given situation. That's because of the basic chess clock rule: if one of the players runs out of time before the completion of the match, he loses regardless of the score.

A TRIAL RUN. The Chicago Bar Point Club has purchased two chess clocks for limited use at our weekly tournaments beginning in November. We will only authorize use of a clock (1) if one player makes what the director deems a "valid request" based on his opponent's history of slow play, or (2) if a particular match is unduly delaying the tournament.

We want to stress that the nature of backgammon is entirely different from the game of chess. We do not advocate that chess clocks become the standard for every tournament backgammon match. In over 95% of all matches, they would just be an unnecessary burden. But when excessive slow play rears its ugly head, perhaps the chess clock is the director's most practical tool for running his tournament in a timely fashion. We'll keep you posted. Δ

Would you like a copy of the Chicago Bar Point Club's Backgammon Clock Rules? Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope (or \$1 if you're mailing from overseas) to: Clock Rules, c/o Chicago Point, 2726 W. Lunt Avenue, Chicago, IL 60645.

Backgammon & Etiquette

by Dr. John Bashian

Backgammon is one of the most fascinating games in the world. We all enjoy travelling to different cities to participate in tournaments, to meet old friends and make new ones, and to have a wonderful time.

Most players are sophisticated, friendly and fun-loving people. It is a real pleasure to compete against these individuals. Unfortunately, a few players are very poor losers who don't even have the courtesy to

shake hands (win or lose) after a match.

However it is *most* regrettable when we come in contact with losers who are sarcastic, insulting and in some cases, downright vulgar. This must not be tolerated at our tournaments.

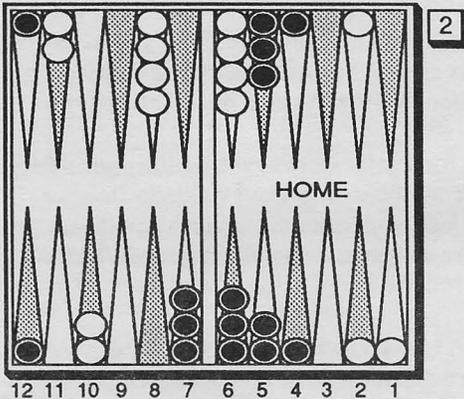
Backgammon clubs and tournaments should be a place for fun-loving and mutually respectable backgammon players to congregate. Tournament directors should reprimand ill-mannered players on their first offense, and bar second-time offenders from tourney participation for up to one year. These actions will help to maintain a friendly and sociable atmosphere in our backgammon community. Δ

**PROBLEM #152
SOLVED**

by Kit Woolsey

5 point match. White leads Black 2 to 0.
BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.

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



Black has the upper hand even though his last roll is certainly no bargain. However, Black has a very secure position with his grip on White's 5-point and White's position in disarray. How should Black use this poor roll to press his advantage?

Black is in no immediate danger, so safety is not a prime consideration. Black's immediate goals are two-fold: (1) to strengthen his board, preferably by making his 4-point; and (2) to make it difficult for White to consolidate her game. White would like to both make an advanced anchor and establish a stronger home board.

On the minus side, White has control of the outfield and better timing. If White escapes both back men, she will be a favorite, and even if she can escape one man, she'll have a decent game since Black doesn't have the ammunition available to prime or close out the remaining checker.

Putting all this together, it becomes clear that Black cannot afford to sit around and do nothing. He must attack. The obvious way to do this is 12/2*. Look at the advantages of this move over a passive move such as 13/9, 12/6:

(A) By hitting on the two point, Black temporarily stops White from anchoring there. In this position, White would much rather anchor on the 2-point than on the ace-point. The 2-point is normally a stronger defensive anchor anyway. But with Black having made the bar point, and the 8-point open, the difference between the 2-point and the ace-point becomes greater still.

(B) By hitting, Black has a chance to gain a big advantage. If White flunks (4 numbers out of 36), Black may be in position to carry through a full or partial blitz. And if White enters with 1-5, 1-6 or 2-5, Black's position will be quite strong. Even if White hits back, she has a loose man on the 2-point for Black to shoot at.

(C) By hitting, Black deprives White of a half roll. Thus, unless White rolls doubles, she cannot hope to improve her board this turn. This would not be true if Black played passively.

Note that even if White rolls well and hits one or two of Black's blots, Black is still well off in the game. Unless White rolls specifically 2-2 or 4-4, the best she can hope for is an even game after Black hits. If White rolls badly, it could get pretty grim.

There is a main theme to this problem, which occurs in many different variations:

When you have the chance to make an aggressive move which will give you a big advantage if things go well, but costs you little if things go badly, then the aggressive move is almost always correct.

A defensive anchor, better home board, more men back—all of these point to a bold play. In this position, the hit with 12/2* is the clearly indicated action. Δ

Help us create the 1990 listing of...

Backgammon Clubs In North America

It's almost that time of year. In January, we'll be updating the listing of Backgammon Clubs in North America, and WE NEED YOUR HELP! Please have your area backgammon representative send us information about backgammon in your vicinity. It might be an organized club, or perhaps just a weekly meeting place for side and/or chouette play. Here's what we need:

Club/Group Name: _____

Organized? Yes No Were you listed in 1989? Yes No

Meeting on (include day(s) and starting time): _____

Location name: _____

Location City and State: _____

Contact person: _____

Contact mailing address: _____

Contact telephone: _____

Send the above information by DECEMBER 16, 1989 to: POINT Listings; 2726 W. Lunt Avenue; Chicago, IL 60645. Or phone it in: 312/338-6380.

september contest results

**SQUIRREL CAPTION
CONTEST WINNER**



PROBLEM #201:

Squirrel doubles. Do you beaver?

Out of 34 entries in the Squirrel Caption Contest, Randy Scroggs' (Elkhart, IN) submission was judged best by our international panel of judges. He wins \$50 and an 8x10 squirrel photo engraved with his caption.

A special thanks to all the judges:

- Dean Adamian (MI), Bill Barron (TX), Linc Bedell (NH), Nicholas Begakis (South Australia), Les & Sue Boyd (FL), Chuck Breckenridge (WA), Steve Brown (MN), Bob Clay (GA), Carol Joy Cole (MI), Pat & Carla Gibson (CA), Jerry Godsey (Hong Kong), Kent Goulding (MD), Dave Heffner (NV), Mark Kaye (IL), Cinda King (IL), Butch & Mary Ann Meese (IN), Ed Pavlonis (NY), Randy Prater (TX), Kati Pratt (TX), Mark Richardson (NV), Ulf Ring (Sweden), Barry Steinberg (MD), Trudie Stern (IL), Larry Strommen (IN), George Sulimirski (England), Chris Ternel (Denmark), Ron Whitney (NJ), Julian Wilson (England).