

Your Las Vegas Open  
Champion?  
It's...



They were all there: Snellings, Zaltash, Ballard, Heinrich, Goulding, Russell, Sylvester, Cohn, Magriel, Woolsey, Senkiewicz, Marmorstein and Malcolm Davis. All ready to do battle at the 1995 Las Vegas Open. Clarine of Beverly Hills, CA was ready, too.

The biggest tournament of 1995 (and effectively the U.S. Open), the Nevada Backgammon Association's annual bash was held 16-20 August at the Riviera Hotel. Nearly 300 players attended and by all accounts, were treated to an outstanding event directed by Howard Markowitz and an all-star staff. There were no complaints with the penthouse playing room at the Riviera, either . . . except for the small earthquake that shook the players while they were shaking their dice.

Clarine, who runs club play at her home every day (her phone number is on her



Clarine ponders a double in the finals against Phil Laak. [Photo by Steve Sax]



Nevada Backgammon Association Director Howard Markowitz couldn't be happier to present Clarine with the Las Vegas Open champion's trophy.

calling card above. Note the "lucky" point that she borrowed from us!), defeated an ultra-strong field of 123 to win five-figure prize money in what she described as the biggest tournament of her life.

"I was really excited through the entire event," recalled Clarine. "I was very focused. I didn't do any outside gambling or backgammon side play. It didn't hurt me any, I guess."

But her focused concentration *did* hurt Costa Rican Champ Bob Glass, eventual Open Consolation winner Dick Cather, German expert Rainer Birkle and others who quietly fell in the main flight to the woman who was the first director of the Cavendish West Backgammon Club in backgammon's salad days.

Clarine's final opponent was Phil Laak of San Francisco. Laak, who for a short time, legally changed his name to "Ultraman," played ultra-tough backgammon. His victims included Bill Phipps and Hossein Zafarian (both at double match-point), and Boston expert Herb Gurland.

How do you sleep the night before the biggest match of your life? "I was really nervous and high strung," admitted Clarine. "I was bouncing off the walls. I didn't know how to sleep with all the

[Continued on page 5]

43rd indiana open

## HARRY BROWN WINS INDY

Harry Brown of Birmingham, MI has caddied for all the professional golfers including Tom Watson. Now Harry steps into the limelight with a big win over Doug Roberts at the Indiana Open.

Butch & Mary Ann Meese directed the event that saw attendance surge to 114 players—a 30% increase over 1994. The Ramada Inn East in Indianapolis was the venue for the 1-4 September Labor Day weekend.

Harry survived a very tough battle against Ray Baker (GA) in the semifinals to reach Roberts who went 8-0 in the Swiss movement format. Roberts second place finish lifted him into the American Backgammon Tour lead through nine events. Complete results on page 9. Δ

## BACKGAMMON'S NEW WORLD CHAMPION



Hats off to David Ben-Zion of Israel. In July, Ben-Zion defeated a field of over 250 world-class players in Monte Carlo to become Backgammon's 1995 World Champion. [Photo by Harald Johanni]

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

**c/o CHICAGO POINT**  
**3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504**  
**Chicago, IL 60659-3128**

## THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CONTROVERSY

[Regarding the Monte Carlo World Championship between Israelis David Ben-Zion and Josef Tissona,] they should have played slower—maybe contrived an early doubled gammon or two. We would then have been spared the disgraceful exhibition described in your August issue.—*Donald Kahn, Salzburg, Austria*

The Monte Carlo passes are worse than I thought. I would guess JellyFish underestimated White's side in Positions #1 and #4. These positions and perhaps others are not even proper initial doubles.—*Mario Madrigal, Costa Rican Backgammon Association*

## RESPONSE FROM A (FEMALE DOG)

I was disgusted and outraged by your recent "It's a Dog's Life" caption contest. How dare you offend us, the poor defenseless canine population. My masters tell me

[Continued on page 3]

coming attractions

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BACKGAMMON
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27
28 29 30 31

by Carol Joy Cole  
 810/232-9731

\* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

### NATIONAL

- Sep 17 Greater New York Club Monthly Tournament, Ramada Inn, Woodbury, NY 718/341-3779  
 Sep 17\* Northern Ohio Club Monthly Tournament, Andrew's Brew, Akron, OH 216/996-2811  
 Sep 21 Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI 810/232-9731  
 Sep 22 1995 FIBS Fall Tournament, via computer modem on Internet e-mail: davide@sco.com  
 Sep 24 Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Three Dollar Cafe, Atlanta, GA 770/441-2074  
 Sep 24 CIBC Annual Open Backgammon Tournament, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon, IL 309/686-6662  
 Sep 24 Austin Sunday Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX 512/261-8518  
Sep 29-Oct 1 Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, NY 716/442-8221  
 Sep 30\* New York City Open, New York Chess & BG Club, New York, NY 212/302-5874  
Oct 6-8 1995 Nation's Capital Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD 301/530-0603  
 Oct 8 Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL 312/252-7755  
Oct 11-15 5th Illinois Champs/America Cup, Sheraton North Shore, Northbrook, IL 708/945-7801  
 Oct 15 New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA 617/643-8154  
 Oct 18 RSCARDS Fall 1995 Computer Modem Tournament, GENie 800/638-9636  
 Oct 19 Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI 810/232-9731  
 Oct 22 Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Three Dollar Cafe, Atlanta, GA 770/441-2074  
Oct 27-29 Autumn Gran Prix, Embassy Suites Hotel, La Jolla, CA 619/294-2007  
 Oct 29 Greater New York Club Monthly Tournament, Ramada Inn, Woodbury, NY 718/341-3779  
Nov 3-5 Backgammon In The Berkshires, Oak & Spruce Center, South Lee, MA 603/863-4711  
Nov 10-12 NY/NJ BG CO-OP Big Apple Series, Oritani Hotel, Hackensack, NJ 201/833-2915  
 Nov 14\* BPC 13th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL 312/583-6464  
 Nov 16 Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI 810/232-9731  
 Nov 19 New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA 617/643-8154  
 Nov 19 17th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI 810/232-9731  
 Nov 19 Greater New York Club Monthly Tournament, Ramada Inn, Woodbury, NY 718/341-3779  
 Nov 24-25\* "No Turkey" Thanksgiving Tournament, Best Western Hotel, Akron, OH 216/966-2811  
Nov 24-26 1995 Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Doubletree Hotel, Atlanta, GA 770/441-2074  
 Nov 25 Northern Ohio Tournament, Boulevard Sports Cafe, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 216/966-2811  
Dec 1-3\* 35th Gammon Associates Invitational, Holiday Inn, Woodland Hills, CA 818/901-0464  
 Dec 3 Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL 312/252-7755  
 Dec 3 Beltway Club Jackpot Tournament, Promenade Cardroom, Bethesda, MD 301/530-0604  
 Dec 17 New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA 617/643-8154  
 Dec 17 Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Three Dollar Cafe, Atlanta, GA 770/441-2074  
 Jan 17\* RSCARDS Winter 1996 Computer Modem Tournament, GENie 800/638-9636  
 Jan 19-22 Backgammon On Board III, Miami to Key West cruise tourney on NCL 312/252-7755  
 Jan 27 Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL 312/583-6464  
Feb 16-18 18th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA 412/823-7500  
Mar 8-10\* Commerce Casino Invitational, Los Angeles, CA 818/901-0464  
Mar 22-24 1996 Midwest Championships, The Drake Oakbrook, Oak Brook, IL 312/583-6464  
 Apr 24-28\* Nevada State Championships, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, NV 702/893-6025  
 Aug 11-18 World Cup V and U.S. Open, Harvey's Hotel Addison, Dallas, TX 301/299-8265

### OUTSIDE USA

- Sep 15-17\* 9th British Festival & Internat'l Cup of Great Britain, Hemel Hempstead 44161-9453741  
 Sep 23-24\* 4th Roskilde Open, Kulturhuset, Roskilde, Denmark 4542-37 20 33  
 Oct 1-5\* 2nd German Open, Hotel Am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany 49521-64314  
 Oct 6-8\* Asian Championships, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong 852-234 567  
 Oct 14-15 Sandy Osborne Memorial Tournament, Hilton Hotel, E. Midlands, England 44522-546993  
 Oct 14-15\* Åbne Fynsmesterskaber, Fyns BG Union, Odense, Denmark 4566-13 62 38  
 Oct 21-22\* Frederiksberg Open '95, Frederiksberg BG Klub, Copenhagen, Denmark 4531-59 11 18  
 Oct 21-22\* 3rd Irish Championships, Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, Ireland 3531-668 9332  
 Nov 3-5 1st Japan Open, Nakano Sunplaza, Tokyo, Japan 813-3373 3814  
 Nov 6 Hong Kong Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong 852-846 1923  
 Nov 9-12\* NRW-Meisterschaft 1995, Senator Hotel, Kaarst/Düsseldorf, Germany 49215-150 1359  
 Nov 16-19 International Tournament, Intermar Kurhotel Bad Segeberg, Germany 4930-461 9624  
 Nov 18-19 Solihull Trophy Tournament #4, George Hotel, Solihull, England 44522-546993  
 Jan 6-7\* Mary Rose Tournament, Hilton National, Portsmouth, England 44522-546993  
 Jan 16-21\* 4th Turkish Open, Conrad International Istanbul, Turkey Eitan Telefax: 9723-672 8918  
 Feb 10-11\* Jarvis Trophy Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England 44522-546993  
 Apr 5-8 Nordic "Wide" Open, Copenhagen, Denmark 4539-40 06 07  
 Apr 13-14\* British Open, George Hotel, Solihull, England 44522-546993  
 May 25-26\* County Cups Trophy Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England 44522-546993  
 Jul 8-14 Monte Carlo World Championship, Loews Monte Carlo Hotel, Monaco 3392-16 21 33

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

you annually raise money for the Anti-Cruelty Society. You of all people should

be more sensitive to the feelings of "man's best friend." Who supplied that wretched photo anyway?—*Kimba, Norridge, IL*

*Sad to say, Kimba, but your masters David and Jolie Rubin gave it to us!*—*Ed.*

## ART'S INVOLVEMENT WITH DOUBLE... NOW?

I was surprised to find my name mentioned in the advertisement for the book *Double... now?* by James Lortz. My interaction with Mr. Lortz consisted solely of providing him with an alternative derivation of one of his formulas many years ago. My name being mentioned in the advertisement is wholly undeserved and should not be construed as an endorsement of the book.—*Art Benjamin, Pasadena, CA*



## AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1995

Top 100 through 4 Sept. 1995 after 10 tournaments  
(Next 2 events: Towpath Inn, Turin, NY and Nation's Capital, Bethesda, MD)



Doug Roberts	29.11	Ray Fogelund	9.03	Kit Woolsey	4.50	Bob Lumbra	2.35
Harry Cohn	29.00	Blake Sorem	9.00	Joe Freedman	4.49	Art Benjamin	2.26
Mike Colgan	22.88	Dean Adamian	9.00	John Smulders	4.38	David DeVries	2.14
Abbas Zaltash	22.80	Peter Kalba	7.77	Dean Muench	4.16	Glenn Swanson	2.14
Walter Trice	21.69	Jack Takala	7.50	Howard Ring	4.16	Lou Florio	2.13
Harry Brown	21.53	Toni Wuersch	7.25	Randy Douthat	4.12	Patti Beadles	2.08
Joe Russell	21.01	Jake Jacobs	7.25	Paul Symington	3.90	Steve Baksic	2.08
Odis Chenault	20.83	Bruce Pollack	6.47	Elijah Miller	3.83	Priscilla Sullivan	2.06
David Rubin	19.91	Joe Sylvester	6.40	John Jennings	3.75	James Kasarjian	2.00
Dave Williams	18.90	Wally Wolf	6.16	Alan Steffen	3.75	Lee Pflugrad	1.99
Bob Paris	16.50	Richard Armbruster	6.12	Wally Watson	3.75	Cecilia Pedroza	1.85
Homer Hector	14.50	Herb Gurland	5.78	Bill Davis	3.63	Wayne King	1.60
Paul Magriel	14.50	Mike Pettigrew	5.75	Frank Talbot	3.63	Austin Healy	1.56
Maurice Barie	14.24	Martin Lee	5.60	Mike Friedman	3.63	Janice Newman	1.56
Nora Luna	13.79	Bob Green	5.58	Jeff Kane	3.51	Takis Sakkalis	1.56
Jim Muirhead	13.25	Paul Franks	5.29	Frank Dickerson	3.32	Jim Roston	1.54
Todd Doucet	12.31	Milad Doueihy	5.20	Bill Rudd	3.20	Paul Paris	1.54
Judy Brown	12.18	Ed Johnson	5.00	Mike Rezai	3.06	Beverly Banowitz	1.41
Gene Entel	11.73	Jim Forbes	4.95	Pete Ryder	2.79	Lisa Brooks	1.29
Ray Baker	10.59	Pat Gibson	4.94	Troy Longman	2.79	Mary Kuchenbrod	1.23
Arnold Zousmer	10.40	Bill Hodes	4.66	Airan Friedman	2.76	Al Mason	1.17
Paul Zebbing	9.90	Randall Witt	4.66	Jolie Rubin	2.60	Edward Heiman	1.14
Hal Heinrich	9.45	Dorn Bishop	4.56	Jerry Smith	2.60	Johnnie Roberts	1.06
Chuck Stimming	9.33	Bob Koca	4.50	Gayle Wolf	2.44	Fred Bement	1.02
Clarine	9.03	William Counts	4.50	Ed Buerger	2.40	Gary Tong	0.92

## CENTRAL ILLINOIS BACKGAMMON HISTORY

Is there any way you could look back to find our past Central Illinois Club annual tourney winners? The tournament has been held in different months from May to October. There are literally no records kept down here and with no CIBC newsletter, you are our best hope! I'd be grateful if you could give it a try. Thanks!—*Linda Woods, director, Central Illinois Backgammon Club*

*Our first listing of a Central Illinois Club event is the 2nd Annual at Bradley University in Peoria on 8 Oct. 1983. Sue Will and John Heggen co-directed with newly-crowned World Amateur Champ Joe Sylvester taking first place. We have the subsequent years for you, but does anyone have information about the 1st Annual CIBC tournament?*

*Note: The 14th Annual CIBC Open will be held on Sunday, 24 September at the Sly Fox Pub in Lacon, IL. To make it a weekend of fun, Cliff Mayoh will host a picnic*

[Continued on page 4]



## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1995 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU 31 AUG.

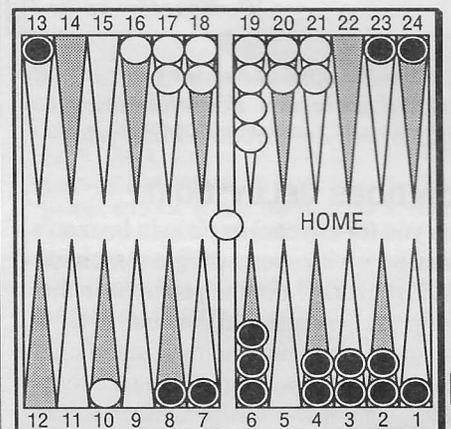
Harry Cohn	24.92	Peter Kalba	5.20	Nan Feiber	1.76	René Wojtysiak	0.76
Neil Kazaross	22.00	Nora Luna	5.12	Dave Cramer	1.68	John O'Hagan	0.72
Tak Morioka	12.88	Reggie Porter	4.90	Marcy Sloan	1.68	Mike Flohr	0.72
Jake Jacobs	11.64	Jeff Kane	4.56	Stu Katz	1.68	Ali Morovati	0.64
Tim Mabee	11.56	Mary Franks	4.48	John Brussel	1.60	David Rockwell	0.64
John Demian	10.84	Bobbie Shifrin	4.48	John Stryker	1.60	Jay Ward	0.64
Gary Kay	10.20	Jolie Rubin	4.44	Elijah Miller	1.52	John Meyers	0.64
Paul Franks	10.16	Alan Zimmerman	4.16	Mojie Shishineh	1.52	Larry Strommen	0.56
Herb Roman	9.24	Georgina Flanagan	3.76	Elaine Kehm	1.48	Jerry Smith	0.54
Richard Lloyd	9.20	Bill Davis	3.56	Jon Hartman	1.28	Barbara Levinson	0.48
David Rubin	8.88	Yamin Yamin	3.12	Jerry Brooks	1.04	Tom Fahland	0.40
Alice Kay	7.90	Leslie Lockett	2.96	Jill Ferdinand	1.00	Monica Miller	0.40
Arline Levy	7.52	Alex Itkin	2.96	Bruce Pollack	0.96	Mark Murray	0.34
Ed Buerger	6.56	Paul Friedman	2.82	Marty Tatosian	0.96	Mark Zoll	0.32
Frankie Farjood	6.44	Ralph Levy	2.80	Earl Risch	0.88	Patrick Desmond	0.32
Harold Seif	6.40	Sarg Serges	2.80	Gregg Westrick	0.88	Willie Franklin	0.32
Paul Klein	6.24	Norma Shyer	2.48	Mitch Pomper	0.88	Arlyne Simon	0.24
Phil Simborg	6.24	Ken Bond	2.40	Richard Stawowy	0.88	Kurt Warning	0.24
Phyllis Smolinski	6.00	Stuart Thomson	2.40	Roger Smith	0.88	Vinton Knarr	0.24
Joann Feinstein	5.88	Paul Ruterma	2.08	Roland Dieter	0.88	Stan Kucharz	0.18
Bill Keefe	5.84	Roz Ferris	2.00	Wilcox Snellings	0.88	Tim Carroll	0.16
Don Jayhan	5.76	Dean Muench	1.92	Andy Krenitz	0.84	V.W. Zimnicki	0.16
Amy Valerio	5.44	Andy Bittman	1.84	Howard Ring	0.80		

The 'AnNeilator' is on the move. Neil Kazaross wins CBPC August Player of the Month honors with 5.68 points. Harry Cohn (3.60) and Boston's Nora Luna (2.56) finished 2nd/3rd.

your move

## PROBLEM #217

Match to 9 points. Black leads White 4 to 2. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



**ASK DANNY**



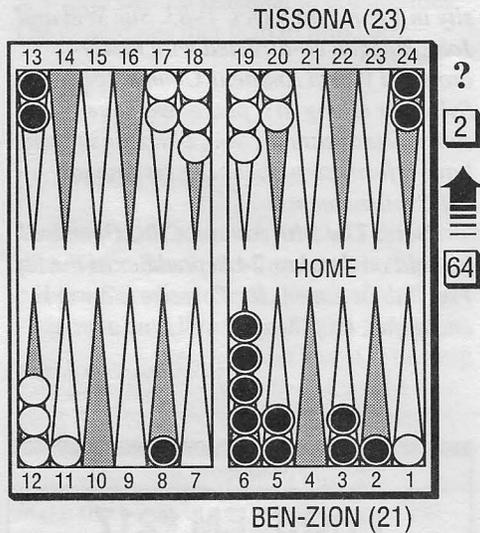
© 1995 by Danny Kleinman

**'PASSAGE' TO VICTORY?**

**D**ear Danny: I find it very hard to believe that any individual could reach the finals of the World Championship in Monte Carlo, take a 22-18 lead in a 25-point match, and then totally fall apart. I'm talking about Josef Tissona of Israel and the five doubles he passed against his countryman David Ben-Zion (see Aug. 1995 CHICAGO POINT). Ben-Zion eventually won the match—played in less than two hours—25 to 23.

Trailing 23-21 in the 25-point finals, David Ben-Zion (Black) doubled Josef Tissona (White). Tissona dropped.

2592 JellyFish rollouts confirm that in money play, when Black mistakenly doubles, White has an easy beaver.



*I know you have investigated bridge scandals in the past. Do you have any opinion about this incident?—Nonbeliever in New York*

**DEAR NONBELIEVER:** Yes, I have an opinion. I saw the same six positions you did. I thought David Ben-Zion's doubles in Positions 1, 2, 3 and 4 premature, and Josef Tissona's passes so absurd as to raise immediately the suspicions of dumping that you express. Though I would take Position 5 and pass Position 6, both looked very close, so I draw no inference from Tissona's opposite decisions in these two positions.

The "scandals" in bridge were cheating accusations that I investigated by examining records of the deals themselves. Essentially, the crucial evidence in such cases consists of clearly abnormal actions taken by the player which make sense only in the light of information about his partner's hand which has not been revealed by bids or plays and cannot be inferred by bridge logic. An abundance of such actions confirms illicit transmission of information. In contrast, failure to take marginally unusual yet highly profitable actions which would be clearly indicated by knowledge of particular features of partner's hand shows that those features are not being signaled illicitly.

Dumping is harder to prove or disprove than cheating. Players always have a motive to cheat, but rarely a motive to dump. In backgammon as well as bridge, even experts sometimes err. Fatigue plays a roll. Early in the day's first match, gross misjudgments of positions by top players would astound me; in a later match they would not. Moreover, Tissona's four gross cube errors might stem from just a single misconception: a gross overestimate of the

caution in taking appropriate to nursing a lead near the end of a match. Is there any record of Tissona's cube actions with similar leads in other matches?

To prove dumping, you need evidence of motives and payoffs. How could it profit Tissona to come in second instead of first? It's a long road from reasonable suspicion to informed opinion to firm conclusion, and I don't have the evidence to travel it.

To confirm your suspicions, you'd need evidence that the payoff for Ben-Zion's win exceeded the payoff if Tissona had won, and that Tissona received enough of the Ben-Zion payoff to induce dumping.

That can happen if a player owns a larger share of an opponent than of himself in a Calcutta. For this reason, a Calcutta should be under the supervision of a tournament director with the power to compel swapping of shares in affected matches.

That can also happen if a tournament "bookmaker" operates with fixed odds, giving bettors on longshots an incentive to bribe favorites, and the bookmaker an incentive to bribe longshots. For this reason, any bookmaking should likewise be under the supervision of a tournament director, and the odds should be determined as in pari-mutuels rather than by handicappers (no matter how knowledgeable).

Unless and until these measures are taken, there will always be occasional undetected dumping, occasional mistaken suspicions of dumping, and times when not enough evidence has been obtained to warrant publishing derogatory opinions.—*Yours, Danny Δ*

*NEXT MONTH, we print the last game of the Monte Carlo World Championship with Danny Kleinman providing his commentary where necessary.—Ed.*

**LETTERS...**

*(Continued from page 3)*

*Saturday the 23rd at Jubilee College State Park. All are invited. For information, call Linda Woods at 309/686-6662.—Ed.*

**HOW DOES 'JELLY' DO IT?**

Can you (or anyone) explain in layman's terms, how a computer program such as JellyFish works? For the positions in the Monte Carlo article, did it actually run through 2592 games and then report on the results? Also, how long does it take to roll out 2592 games?—*Henry Schwartz, Pompano Beach, FL*

*Neil Kazaross responds: JellyFish is a neural network program that has attempted to learn the most successful way to play backgammon by rolling through hundreds of thousands of games against itself. It is the strongest backgammon program on the market today.*

*How long it takes to roll out 2592 games depends on the speed of the computer. For example, in complex early game positions, it typically takes 2 to 2 1/4 seconds to complete the game on a 486-66 Mhz. On the Pentium-90 Mhz machine, it takes 3/4 to 1 second. Races and other end-game positions are much quicker.*

**DIFFICULT TIMES IN ARGENTINA**

Sorry to report that due to economic problems

in our country, this year's Buenos Aires Open and South American World Cup have been cancelled. We hope to hold both events again in 1996.—*Claudio Salamone, Argentina Backgammon Association*

**LONG TIME SUBSCRIBER**

I've been enjoying CHICAGO POINT for about 12 straight years now. Here's for two more years.—*Martin Brown, Austin, TX*

*We started CHICAGO POINT in June 1988, Martin. You go back with us through Chicagoland Backgammon Newsletter (1983-1988) and even a few years of Gammon's of Chicago newsletter (1980-1983).*

*Thanks for the memories.—Ed. Δ*

# CLARINE...

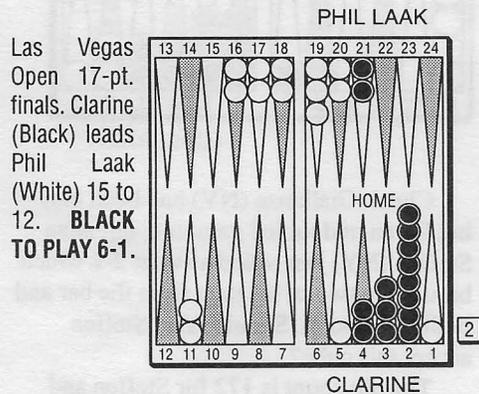
[Continued from page 1]

adrenaline running through me. Fortunately, I ran into a friend and got a Valium."

The Sunday finals began at high noon. Oddsmakers made the match a pick and that's how the 17-point conflict transpired: Phil took an early 2-0 lead, Clarine went on top 3-2, Phil regained his advantage at 4-3, and in game 14, Clarine fought back to go ahead 10-9.

With Clarine leading 15-12 and dozens of spectators encircling the arena, the deciding 21st game rolled out of the cup. Phil opened 4-3 bringing two men down, Clarine made her bar with 6-1, Phil replied with 3-1, making the 5-point, and Clarine tossed 6-1 playing 13/7, 6/5.

With his two back men aiming at a blot four pips away, Laak aggressively doubled and Clarine made the easy take. The game swung back and forth many times eventually leading to the following tough move:



Clarine gave herself a chance to get lucky by making the ultra-big play of 21/15, 2/1\*. Phil danced with a 4-3, Clarine followed with a 6-2, covering her ace-blot and escaping 21/15. Laak fanned again, and again, and again. This gave Clarine enough time to bring both her men home and start the bearoff. In the end, Laak was presented with one final back door shot, but missed. The six hour dice-duel was over.

Clarine remained humble in victory. "What can I say? I feel blessed to have won it. I played my best but I also had to be lucky. Someone once told me, 'You learn to play good and then you play good until you get lucky.'"

**IN OTHER EVENTS**, Mike Senkiewicz (NY) held off Nack Ballard (CA) to win \$22,800 in the Super Jackpot, Jay Whitehead (CA) topped Antonio Ortega (CR) in the Limited Jackpot, Mehdi Faraji (NV) won among the Intermediates, Sally & Kit Woolsey (CA) captured the doubles, and Jim Hickey (GA) won the Blitz. Complete results at right. Δ



Nack Ballard (left) enters from the bar against eventual Super Jackpot Champion Mike Senkiewicz. [Photo by Steve Sax]

## 1995 LAS VEGAS OPEN

**CHAMPIONSHIP (123):** 1-Clarine (CA), 2-Phil Laak, 3/4-Rainer Birkle (Germany) / Herb Gurland (MA); 1C-Dick Cather (TX), 2C-Dean Adamian (MI), 3C/4C-Thomas Kong (Hong Kong) / Hal Heinrich (Canada)

**INTERMEDIATE (108):** 1-Mehdi Faraji (NV), 2-Maurice Barie (MI), 3/4-Ron Bruns (CA) / John Brooks (OK); 1C-Bob Sahagian (NJ), 2C-David Fletcher (AZ), 3C/4C-Jorge Salazar (Mexico) / Randy Douthat (CA)

**BEGINNER (46):** 1-Muni Savyon (MA), 2-Nicole Masarani (CA), 3/4-Diego Lewi (CA) / Fernando Milia (Argentina); 1C-Bill Mertes (AZ), 2C-AI Lumder (WA)

**COMBINED LAST CHANCE (255):** 1-Frank Talbot (MI), 2-Tom Keisler (CA), 3/4-Jack Kissane (NY) / Dorn Bishop (CA)

**SUPER JACKPOT (16):** 1-Mike Senkiewicz (NY), 2-Nack Ballard (CA), 3/4-Armando Balbi (Argentina) / Malcolm Davis (TX)

**LIMITED JACKPOT (16):** 1-Jay Whitehead (CA), 2-Antonio Ortega (Costa Rica)

**SATURDAY SPECIAL SUPER JP (16):** 1-Joe Monro (MI), 2-Wilcox Snellings (NV)

**SATURDAY SPECIAL LIMITED JP (16):** 1-Ralph Stowell (MN), 2-Dave Williams (CA)

**DOUBLES (64):** 1-Sally & Kit Woolsey (CA), 2-Jeff Acierno (NY) & Abbas Zaltash (PA)

**BLITZ (432):** 1-Jim Hickey (GA), 2-Ed Schau (WA)

**SLOT MACHINE TOURNEY:** 1-Ron Coffin (CA), 2-Mary Ann Meese (IN)

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Registration fee .....\$25  
Optional pool .....\$100 (100% return)  
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Tournament begins ..... 1:30 P.M.

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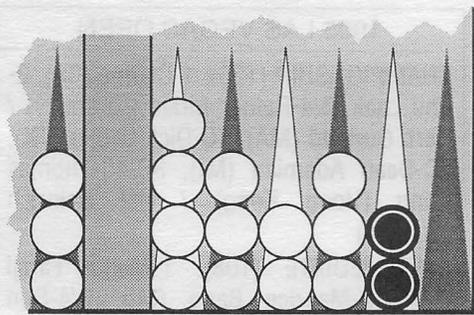
**GAMES PEOPLE PLAY:** Tourn. Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Alexander's, 3101 E. 79th St., Chicago. J.A. Miller (312/734-9430).

**BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB:** Tourn. 1st, 3rd, 5th Tuesday, 6:15 P.M. at Ride The Nine, 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Lane O'Connor (309/454-1947)

**WINNETKA BG CLUB:** Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Stern (708/446-0537).

**CENTRAL ILL. BG CLUB:** Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Uncle Bill's Smokehouse, 7929 N. Knoxville Ave., Peoria. Linda Woods (309/686-6662).

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## Playing from the 2-pt.

by Duane Jensen

**H**ugh Sconyers defeated me, eliminating me from the tournament. I don't remember details such as the year or the city in which the tournament was held, but I remember feeling bad about making a poor cube decision.

While today the details have slipped my mind, at the time, I felt the sting of losing. The pain was not like a hammer blow to my thumb, but more like the surgical twisting of an acupuncture needle into my temple.

Since I'm an experienced loser in backgammon, this was a relatively painless and bloodless defeat. A few onlookers offered some mild criticism and *sympathy* . . . comments like "Don't feel too bad. I've done bonehead things like that myself."

Joe Sylvester strolled over and sat on the edge of one of the long playing tables. Joe had time to kill because he was between matches. I had time to kill because I was between tournaments.

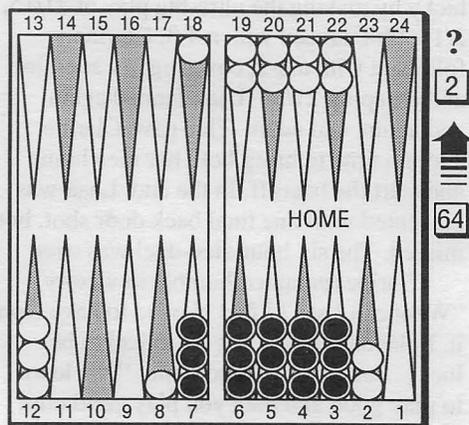
As Joe began to speak, a small gathering of masters and minions formed a circle around him. His topic of the moment was the neglected 2-point anchor. Joe declared that the deuce point anchor is nearly as successful as an ace point game for two reasons. First, Joe emphasized an obvious but important point. You're gammoned less often from the deuce point than from the ace point.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, many opponents bear off incorrectly against a 2-point anchor. They play too passively and timidly—too concerned with breaking the back points instead of ripping checkers off the board as they should. When they finally leave a shot and get hit, they don't have enough men off to win the game.

Joe felt the deuce point game has much to offer, and too many players drop winnable 2-point games.

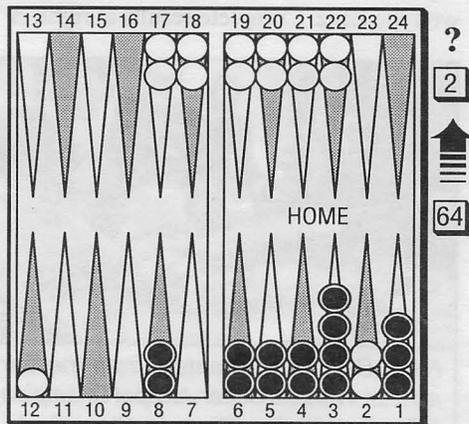
**IF YOU'RE ANCHORED** on your opponent's 2-point, what assets must you have to accept a double. Here are three example positions:

### POSITION #1



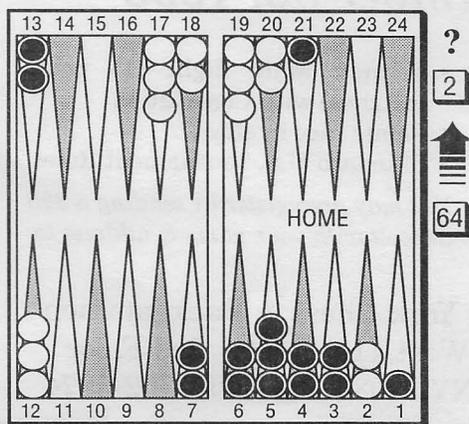
In this position, White has *good timing* for a 2-point game, but White doesn't have enough going for her to accept a double. She needs something extra . . . another asset besides good timing.

### POSITION #2



In Position 2, White has good timing and Black has some bad rolls. White gets immediate shots if Black rolls 6-1, 6-3, 6-4, or 6-5. Other rolls such as 4-1 play poorly because Black must break a point prematurely. The potential for *immediate shots and awkward plays* for Black is enough to give White a take.

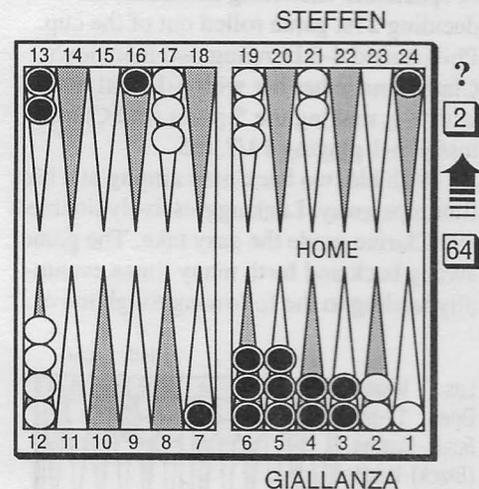
### POSITION #3



Here White has the opportunity to *go forward* by trapping the Black checker on his 4-point. White still has contact with Black's midpoint and may get *fly-shots* there or *hits in the outfield*. These additional opportunities give White enough equity to accept a double.

**NOW LET'S LOOK** at three positions from actual tournament play:

**POSITION #4:** Chuck Giallanza (Black) vs. Alan Steffen (White). Black doubles. Should White take?



Chuck Giallanza (NV) had been playing for an undoubled gammon, but Alan Steffen (NY) just rolled a sweet 2-2 which brought in two of his men from the bar and built his 4-point. Should Alan Steffen accept this cube?

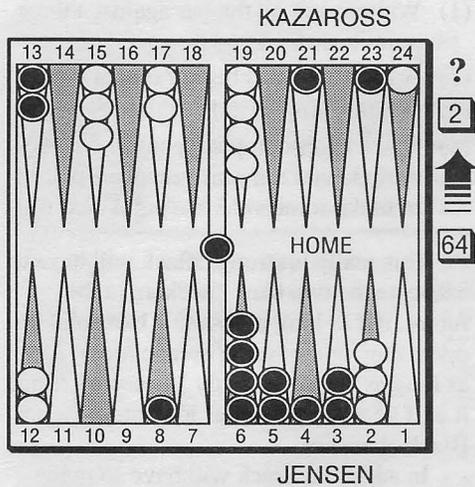
The pip count is 172 for Steffen and 120 for Giallanza—a difference of 50 pips which gives Steffen excellent timing for a 2-point holding game. He will get a number of fly-shots in the outfield as Giallanza brings his men home. Steffen also has the opportunity to trap a checker behind his developing prime.

On the surface, it appears that Steffen has enough assets to accept the cube, but there is a problem. Steffen's blot on Giallanza's ace point is vulnerable to attack. When the checker is hit or pointed on and Steffen fans a few times, Giallanza gets a great opportunity to escape his back straggler from Steffen's ace point.

In addition, when Steffen *does* bring in the man on the bar, he often exposes another checker which gets hit. With a fourth man back, Giallanza will win many more gammons.

Steffen's ace-blot is a liability in this position. He should not accept the cube. If his ace point blot was instead on the deuce point anchor, Steffen would have a take.

**POSITION #5:** Duane Jensen (Black) vs. Neil Kazaross (White). Black doubles. Should White take?

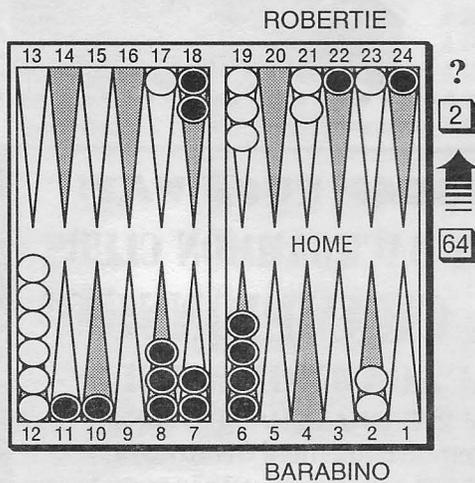


This position looks like a mess for Neil Kazaross (IL). He's behind in the race. He has no inside points. He has "started" his own ace point with a blot. I have a good board and am threatening to improve it.

Now for White's good news: I am on the bar, and numbers with a "6" play awkwardly. Neil has opportunities to go forward using his 6-, 8-, and 10-points to the start of a prime which may trap or impede my men. The timing isn't spectacular for a 2-point game, but Kazaross will also get a good share of wins by hitting a checker in the bearoff.

As ugly as it looks, I think the position is a take. Look upon this as a *blind date take*: it may not be attractive, but you still have to take it to the dance.

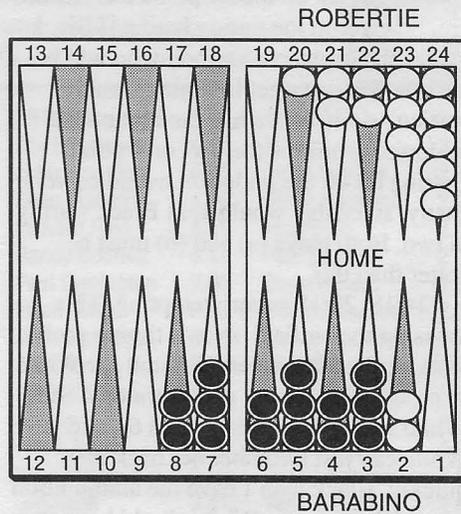
**POSITION #6:** Rick Barabino (Black) vs. Bill Robertie (White). Black doubles. Should White take?



Roy Friedman's *World Class Backgammon, Move By Move* contains several 2-point games. This position from Match 2, Game 1 involves a cube decision.

Bill Robertie's (MA) timing is average at best, especially if Rick Barabino (NY) doesn't hit blots and send more men back. To illustrate, look at a possible future position after each player has rolled 84 pips:

**POSITION #6A:** Each side has moved 84 pips.



After equivalent rolls for each player, Robertie is left with a weak crumbling board. If Barabino can be lured or coerced into hitting blots instead of building inside points, it's a take for Robertie. If Barabino is a determined prime-builder, Robertie should pass.

In this case, your cube decision may be based on your knowledge of the opponent's ability or style of play. How would he play 6-1, for example? Would he hit two blots or build the 5-point? If he hits two, he's playing right into your hands by giving you better timing and more weapons in his empty inner board.

Roy Friedman has decided through analysis and roll-outs, that this position is a "...close take." I'm more pessimistic, but I'll defer to Roy's more thorough analysis of the position. Δ

Next Issue: The Monte Carlo Finals.

## Backgammon MAGAZIN

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## AMALGAMATION

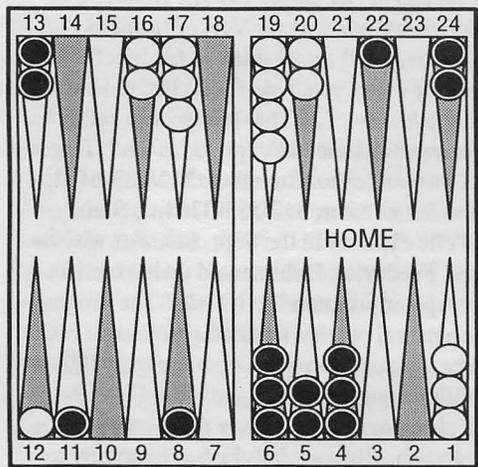
Congratulations to **Tak Morioka** (IL) who on 29 August at the Chicago Bar Point Club, surpassed the 500 Chicagoland master point mark. Area master point compilation began in 1974. Tak started playing at Gammon's of Chicago in December 1979... Believe it or not, Pub Club director **V.W. Zimmicki** (IL) has never had a cola drink in his life. "I tried one sip in my youth and didn't like it. I haven't had one since..." The three month call-forwarding time has expired, so don't forget our new telephone number: 312/583-6464; and fax number: 312/583-3264... **Stein Welle** explains in the Sept. *BibaFax* why he and **Frederick Dahl** named their excellent computer program "JellyFish." The program is a neural net that simulates a biologic brain. The human brain contains more than 100 billion neurons. The size of JellyFish's brain is closer to that of a lower organism—like a jellyfish. "But our JellyFish is hopefully a better backgammon player than the jellyfish you find in the sea." [You can say that again! —Ed.] Incidentally, the 24-page Sept. *BibaFax* newsletter (No. 31) has the conclusion of a great interview of **Neil Kazaross** (IL) conducted by **Mike Fujita** (CA). To order this issue as a sample, send \$6 to the editor: **Michael Crane**; 2 Redbourne Drive; Lincoln LN2 2HG, England... A public "thank you" to my parents **Marion & Bill Davis** and brother **John** who for the past seven years, have assisted in collating and folding the POINT, then stuffing and sealing the envelopes so that all issues can be mailed out on the same day... Visiting the Bar Point Club in August: **Peter Heitmuller** (Germany) and **Nora Luna** (MA)... Attention Chicago area BG players: **Alyce Wallen** (IL) sent us another play location that appeared in the *Daily Herald*. Lake Barrington Watersports Center owner **Malcolm Reid** (IL) has thrown a 1950s airplane fuselage into Pepper Lake for use by diving enthusiasts. Inside the plane, backgammon tables will be available for divers. No doubt the expression "Your play is all wet," will take on new meaning... **Kathy Posner** (IL) was on **Tom Roesser's** WLS Talkradio roundtable discussion 27 August. Kathy was introduced as Comm2 CEO and a republican activist. One of Kathy's more controversial opinions: "I think prostitution should be made legal. All these years I've been doing it for free—I'd be happy to take money for it..." Finally, we have a regular feature of Amalgamation following Las Vegas backgammon tournaments: **Bobbie Shifrin** (IL) hit a Royal Flush poker machine jackpot. Ho hum. Another Chicagoan, **Jill Ferdinand**, was equally fortunate. Δ

last month's position

# PROBLEM #216 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

Match to 9 points. White leads Black, 8 to 6 Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.**



**B**lack has rolled a pretty good number with several reasonable possibilities. The candidates that leap to mind are:

- (a) 22/12\*
- (b) 24/18, 22/18
- (c) 13/7, 11/7
- (d) 8/2, 6/2 (Clearly inferior)

The match score may make a difference here. Since Black has three points to go and it is the Crawford game, Black should for all intents and purposes, play as though he is in a double match-point battle. The only gain from a gammon is that it would take away White's free drop. A backgammon would be very nice, but they are too rare to think about at this point. Thus, Black must make the best play to win the game and forget about anything else.

If gammons counted, it wouldn't be

close. 22/12\* would stand out. Sending a fourth checker back and gaining outfield control would substantially increase Black's gammon chances. However, with only winning important, another play may be better.

13/7, 11/7 looks pretty, but it just isn't the right idea. Even though White has three checkers stuck on the 24-point, she isn't in great danger in the timing battle. If Black makes the offensive bar-point, he will be the one who may get in timing trouble, particularly if White hits the blot on the midpoint or makes the bar- or 4-point. Getting hit on the midpoint would be very costly, since that would split Black's army in two. Both plays (a) and (b) must be better than this.

24/18, 22/18 is very tempting. This locks up the outfield, avoids timing problems, and makes it very difficult for White to produce a winning game strategy. Still, White would have a few good 6s, and if White can just unlimber her back men quickly, Black won't have the ammunition to put White away. White would have to scramble for a while, but White does have a decent offense in place. If something good happened, she would be ready to take advantage immediately.

It looks like the hitting play of 22/12\*

may well be the correct choice, even with gammons not mattering. This play does four very valuable things:

- (1) White is put on the bar against a three point board.
- (2) A fourth White checker is sent back.
- (3) White's army is split in two.
- (4) Black takes complete control of the outfield and remains very well-placed to make some valuable point next roll.

This really is strong. Black will have to extricate the two back checkers in the future, but as long as White's bar-point is open, they will have an escape route. And as long as White has only 11 men up front, it will be difficult for her to contain the Black checkers.

In addition, Black will have so many men in the outfield that he'll be able to handle awkward rolls for a long time while waiting to escape the back men. 24/18, 22/18 is strong, but I have to give the nod to the hitting play.

In complex positions, the importance of hitting and taking control of the outfield cannot be over-emphasized. In Problem #216, White's only decent free checker is on the midpoint. By eliminating that checker, Black takes full control of the game. Δ

Registration deadline extended

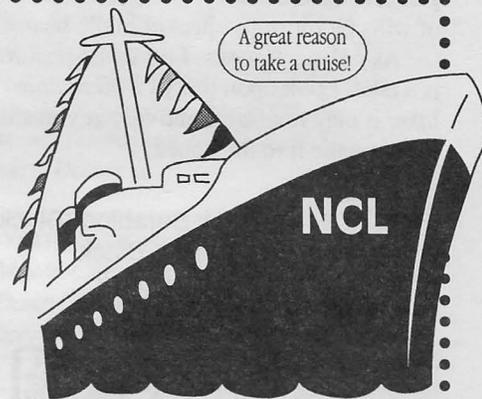
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*who did what*

### **WINNER'S CORNER**



**Jun.-Sep. 1995**

**Wansbeck Trophy Tourney** (Newcastle, England; 17-18 Jun.)... OPEN (20): 1-Kam Verma, 2-Roger Porter, 3-Martin Barkwill, 4-Michael Crane.

**RSCARDS Summer 1995 Tournament** (GEnie computer service, Jul.-Aug.)... OPEN (15): 1-Steven Pleva (CT), 2-Marty Gross (MA), 3/4-Jean Lazaridis (PA) / Jerry Lacy (TX), 5/8-John Jennings (IL) / Dan Shirley (NY) / Steve Vintner (CA) / Rudolph Silich (MI).

**1995 Argentine Championship** (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Aug.)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Verónica Dabul, Celia Mauas, Marcelo Belaustegui, Joaquin Viejobueno. JUNIOR WINNERS: Claudia Cueto, Antonio Kepaptsoglou, Carlos Eder, Alejandro Sucharsky. BEGINNER WINNERS: Bimdlá Fajtlowicz, Alfredo Sued, Rina Hamoui, Pablo Cafaro.

**Hong Kong Monthly** (Hong Kong; 7 Aug.)... OPEN: 1-Marc Mostacci, 2-Don Rae; 1C-Tim Throsby, 2C-Steve Nelson. CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Glen de Guzman, 2-Ronnie Nutzati; 1C-Sunil Balani, 2C-Olivia Lee.

**34th G/A Invitational** (Woodland Hills, CA; 11-13 Aug.)... OPEN (31): 1-Dave Williams, 2-Mike Thunstrom; 1C-Dorn Bishop, 2C-Jake Jacobs (IL), 3C/4C-Rudy Citrom / Dennis Rutkowski. LIMITED (14): 1-Patrick McCormick, 2-Jeffrey Rodgers; 1C-Florin Draghiciu. SPECIAL 32 (32): 1-Elliott Bean, 2-Dave Williams, 3/4-Bob Glass / Joe Russell. DOUBLES (16): 1-Ray Fogelund & Patrick Gibson, 2-David MacBryde & Paul Stokes. SPEEDGAMMON KO's: #1-Odis Chenault / Phil Laak, #2-Harry Cohn, #3-Sassan Kamali.

**Steve Hast's 3rd Summer Cooker** (Hast residence, Pittsburgh, PA; 13 Aug.) OPEN (18): 1-Ali Haddad, 2-Steve Hast; 1C-Jeffe Boats. NOVICE (7): 1-Bret Marzolf.

**SAC Trophy Tournament** (Solihull, England; 26-27 Aug.)... OPEN (102): 1-Stephen Turner, 2-Tim Wilkins, 3-Paul Turnbull, 4-Dave Clifton. FRIDAY NIGHT KO (24): 1-Peter Ozanne, 2-Paul Lamford. DOUBLES (20): 1/2-Monica & Alan Beckerson / David Bridges & Merrill Diplock. TOP LADY: Alison Jones. BETTER LUCK: Richard Wuckovich.

**43rd Indiana Open—ABT** (Indianapolis, IN; 1-4 Sept.)... OPEN (48): 1-Harry Brown (MI), 2-Doug Roberts (MA), 1C-Ray Baker (GA), 2C-Paul Franks (IL). ADVANCED (42): 1-Chuck Stimming (IN), 2-Bill Hodes (IN); 1C-Randall Witt (TN), 2C-Nora Luna (MA). IN-

TERMEDIATE (16): 1-Elijah Miller (IL), 2-Gayle Wolf (MI), 3-Pricilla Sullivan (MI). NOVICE (8): 1-Lisa Brooks (OK), 2-Kyle Muench (IL). MASTER'S JP (16): 50%-Jake Jacobs (IL), 25%-Doug Roberts (MA), 25%-Ray Baker. AMATEUR JP (32): 1-Chuck Bower (IN), 2-Randall Witt (TN), 3/4-Harold Branch (KY) / Larry Strommen (IN). DIRECTOR'S CUP (16): 1-Butch Meese (IN), 2-Joe Miller (OH). DOUBLES (32): 1-Jim & Jamie Curtis (IN), 2-Frank Frigo (KY) & Mike Fujita (CA), 3/4-Jeff Acierno (NY) & Phil Laak (CA) / J.A. Miller (IL) & Jim Roston (NY). SPEED-GAMMON (16): 1-Jon Stephens (OH). OPEN MICROBLITZ (128): 1/2-Mike Fujita (CA) / Karen Davis (NY). LTD MICROBLITZ (32): 1-Lisa Brooks (OK). Δ

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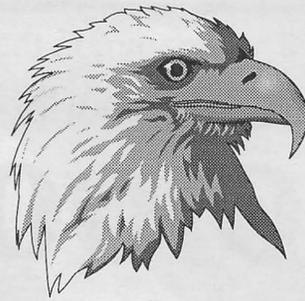


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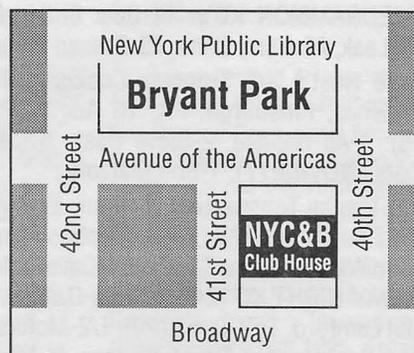
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