

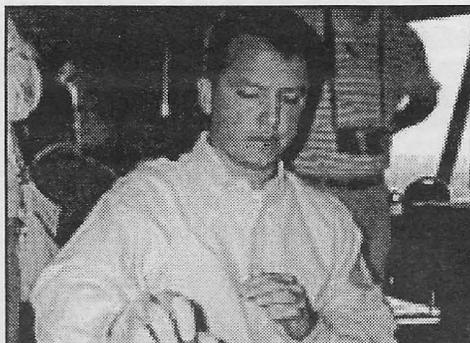
2002 illinois state championships

JENNINGS AND KAZAROSS GOVERN ILLINOIS BG

Sonya Sidky Wins Intermediate

Illinoisans John Jennings and Neil Kazaross were the big winners at the 2002 Illinois State Championships. The event was held at the beautiful Hilton Hotel in the Illinois state capitol of Springfield 11-13 October. Randy Armstrong directed.

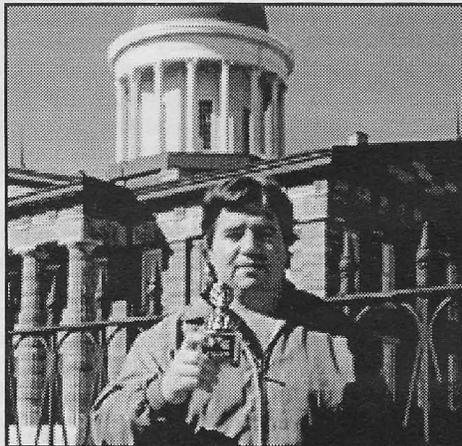
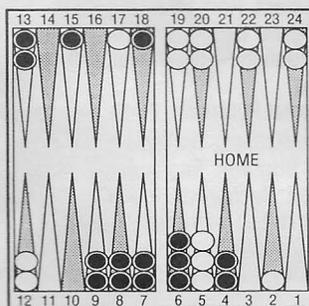
After advancing past Madison Club director Tom Machaj at double match-point in the semifinals, Jennings faced his toughest opponent, David Todd, now residing in Missouri. What should have been a very tight 15-point battle turned into a blowout. John rattled off the first 11 points and went on to capture the state title 15-2.



John Jennings rolling to victory.

Another masters event, another victory for Chicagoan Neil Kazaross. The An-Neil-ator defeated Sean Garber to win a bust of Abraham Lincoln in the Land of Lincoln Masters. Neil's first round match against John Jennings proved to be the most interesting. With Neil ahead 9-7 in the 11-point match, the following cube came his way:

11-point
Masters. Neil
Kazaross
(Black) leads
John
Jennings
(White), 9-7.
White on roll.
CUBE
ACTION(S)?



Neil Kazaross (standing in front of the old Illinois State Capitol) displays his Land of Lincoln masters trophy.

Should John have doubled this position?
Should Neil take?

In fact for money, it's right to beaver the cube! Neil correctly took was able to win what at first, looks like a scary take.

[Continued on page 10]

ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

OPEN (29): 1-John Jennings, 2-David Todd (MO); 1C-Jim Curtis (IN), 2C-Faddoul Khoury; 1LC-Randy Reiff

INTERMEDIATE (20): 1-Sonya Sidky (WI), 2-Lee Pflugrad (WI); 1C-Vadim Musaelyan (NC), 2C-Terry Leahy; 1LC-Don Marek

LAND OF LINCOLN MASTERS (8): 1-Neil Kazaross, 2-Sean Garber (IN)

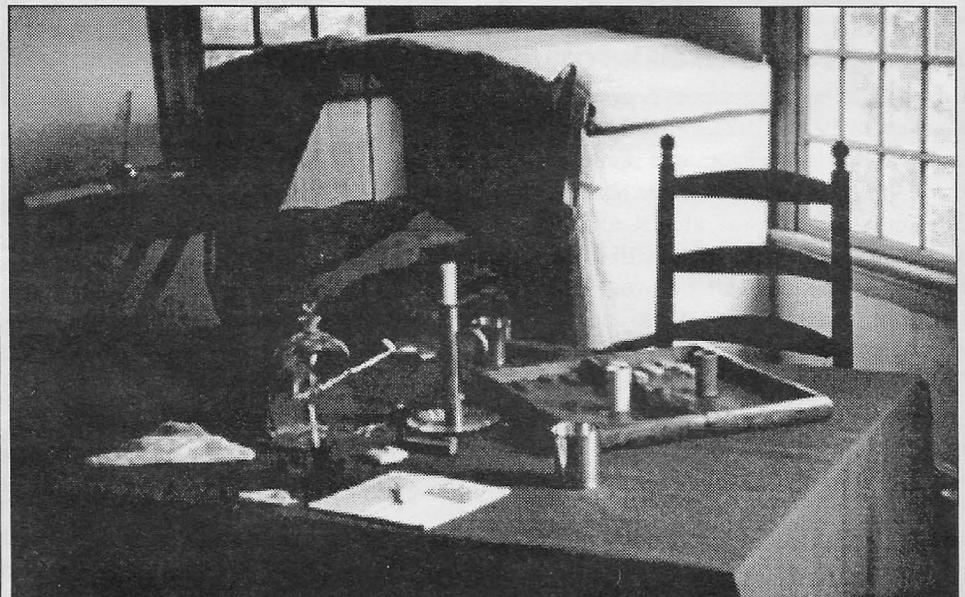
DOUBLES (12): 1-Peter Kalba & Darrell Marcus, 2-Carol Joy Cole (MI) & Tak Morioka

CAPITOL PUNISHMENT (32): 1-Sean Garber (IN), 2-Jena Rooney

GENDER BENDER LADIES EVENT (4): 1-Jena Rooney

SPRINGFIELD OPEN (24): 1-Mike Flohr, 2-Mark Jennings; 1C-Larry Whittenburg, 2C-Vadim Musaelyan (NC); 1LC-Jim Zimmerman

WASHINGTON'S GAME



On their trip to Morristown, New Jersey, Tom and Darcey Brady Wade visited the Ford Mansion where George Washington was headquartered during the 1779-80 winter of the Revolutionary War. Shown above is a room in the mansion where Washington and his aides might have played backgammon. Δ

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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IN SEARCH OF 1970S BG INFO

I'm an Oak Park writer/poet beginning a novel set in 1970s Chicago and I need to research the 70s backgammon scene. I learned to play back then in the bars on Division Street and was, at best, a rank beginner. 25+ years later I'm still a beginner and barely play at all, but would like to dust off my backgammon game and talk to/interview some players who were around in disco-era Chicago. Any suggestions as to where I might start, places I could hang out, players/clubs who might tolerate my presence and some questions? I'd be grateful for any info you could send my way.—*Cynthia Quam, via Internet*

Why don't you drop by some Tuesday night at the Bar Point Club. We have an average 40 players and there are at least 7 or 8 that could help you.—Ed.

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
810/232-9731
cjc@tir.com

* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

Nov 12	20th Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Nov 16	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Nov 16-20	Pro-Am Championship, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 17	New England Bonus Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Nov. 20-24	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 21*	Third Thursday Bonus (California), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Nov 23*	Northwest Indiana Gammon Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Nov 24*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-0842
Nov 24*	Milwaukee Club Monthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	414/962-8549
Dec 1	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyways Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/252-7755
Dec 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer GZMedallion@gammonzone.net	
Dec 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer tournaments@cyberarts.com	
Dec 3*	"Dinner for the Winner" Monthly, TableRock Brewpub, Boise, Idaho	208/342-8865
<u>Dec 6-8</u>	<u>50th Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Dec 7*	Springfield Series #2, Caboose Smokehouse, Bloomington, Illinois	217/528-0117
Dec 7*	Universal Mall Bimonthly Series #6, All the King's Men, Warren, MI	313/381-6639
Dec 8*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Shattuck Hotel, Berkeley, California	831/688-9722
Dec 8*	Hoosier Sunday Tournament, Arni's Restaurant, Indianapolis, Indiana	317/255-8902
Dec 8*	South Florida Monthly, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Dec 14*	Tournament of Champions, Triple Crown Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Dec 15*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Dec 15*	Atlanta Holiday Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Dec 19*	Third Thursday Bonus (Boston Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Dec 21*	Northwest Indiana Gammon Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Dec 21*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
<u>Dec 27-29</u>	<u>Ace Point Holiday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York</u>	<u>212/753-0842</u>
Dec 29*	Milwaukee Club Monthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	414/962-8549
Jan 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer GZMedallion@gammonzone.net	
Jan 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer tournaments@cyberarts.com	
Jan 4*	Springfield Series #3, Wildlife Sports Bar, Springfield, Illinois	217/528-0117
Jan 16-20	2nd Boston Open & Masters Jackpot, Hyatt Harborside, Boston, Mass.	781/641-2091
Jan 17-19	<u>3rd Carolina Invitational, Holiday Inn Woodlawn, Charlotte, North Carolina</u>	<u>704/814-0850</u>
Feb 1-8	BG on Board VI, Ft. Lauderdale/ St. Maarten/St. Thomas, Golden Princess	773/583-6464
Feb 9*	Bar Point Doubles Championship, Champs Sports Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/583-6464
Feb 22*	Springfield Series #4, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/528-0117
Feb 23*	23rd Illinois State Challenge Cup, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/528-0117
<u>Feb 14-16*</u>	<u>25th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Radisson, Pittsburgh, Penn.</u>	<u>412/922-8400</u>
<u>Feb 27-Mar 2*</u>	<u>Southern Open, Sleep Inn, Atlanta, Georgia</u>	<u>270/333-1876</u>
<u>Mar 21-23*</u>	<u>20th Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Lisle, Illinois</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
Mar 30*	20th Fleet Underwood Tournament, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731

OUTSIDE USA

Nov 15-17*	High Rollers Event, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, Leicestershire, England	44152-2888676
Nov 16-17	9th & 10th Ranglistenturniere, Kaiserbrunnen Hotel, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Nov 16-17	27th Finnish Open Championships, Club Ascot, Helsinki, Finland	35850-5930139
Nov 22-24	2nd Praia de Forte Open, Salvador, South Bahia, Brazil	55719-1357820
Nov 23-24	Danish Championships 2002, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601
Nov 23-24	Swiss Championships, Hotel Krafft am Rhein, Basel, Switzerland	4161-4812755
Nov 24	Toronto Club Masters, Smilin' Jack's, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Nov 29-Dec 8	World Grand Jackpot & Championship, Mövenpick, Tangier, Morocco	Israel: 97252-581329
Nov 30-Dec 1*	Eliters Open/BG & Cribbage, Billard Le Scratch, Laval, Quebec, Canada	450/686-7665
Dec 7-8	United Kingdom Finals, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Dec 8*	Toronto Club Monthly, Smilin' Jack's, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Dec 10-15	2nd Cancun Open, Ritz Carlton Hotel, Cancun, Mexico	Germany: 49911-409505
Dec 12-14	1st Itaparica Open, Salvador, South Bahia, Brazil	55719-1357820
Dec 13-15*	The Balcanic Cup, Bucuresti Hotel, Bucharest, Romania	4021-2112617
Dec 14-15	Michael Rose Trophy with Gammonitis, Premier Lodge, Brighton, England	44127-3261073
Dec 21-22	11th & 12th Ranglistenturniere, Kaiserbrunnen Hotel, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Dec 26*	Christmas Tournament, Pattaya, Thailand	6638-251461
Dec 27-29	5th Süddeutscher-Cup & Series Finale, Hotel Pyramide, Fürth, Germany	49711-486190
Jan 1-6	8th Thailand Open, 19th Hole Super Pub, Pattaya, Thailand	6638-251461
Jan 4-5*	Bright'n' Breezy, Hilton Metropole Hotel, Brighton, England	44152-2888676
Jan 5-7	World Grand Jackpot, Grand Marriott Hotel, Bucharest, Romania	Israel: 97252-581329
Jan 7-12	World Cup Challenge VII, Grand Marriott Hotel, Bucharest, Romania	97252-581329
Jan 13-19*	The Cup of Nations, Bucuresti Hotel, Bucharest, Romania	4021-2112617
Jan 24-26*	High Rollers Event, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, Leicestershire, England	44152-2888676
Jan 31-Feb 2*	Dutch Open, European Go Cultural Centre, Amstelveen, The Netherlands	316-55377395

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

MAX TO THE RESCUE

With regard to Ian Flint's letter in last month's POINT asking about Tim Holland.

According to his former wife Lona, Mr. Holland can be found daily at the Regency Whist Club in New York City. Lona is a fortune teller at the Desert Passage shopping mall in the Las Vegas Aladdin Hotel.

I have provided the Chicago Point Online website with a classic collection of

pictures from the golden age of backgammon (The Tim Holland shot appeared in October and is now archived as Photo #003).



Lona and Tim Holland circa 1980.

Check out a "new" old photo every Wednesday at: www.chicagopoint.com/maxpix.html.—Michael Maxakuli, Las Vegas, Nevada

BACKGAMMON MONEY GAME MACHINES?

Can you tell me if any Atlantic City casinos have backgammon machines that play for money? Can you compete head-to-head against individuals like a blackjack table? If not, where can one play for money?—*Joe B., Via Internet*

As far as we know, there are no backgammon machines that play for money anywhere in the world. You can play BG for money online at many locations including: www.truemoneygames.com. Our website

[Continued on page 4]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2002

Top 100 compiled through 3 Nov. 2002 after 16 events
Finishing out 2002: 50th Gammon Assoc. Invitational, Ace Point (NY) Holiday



Steve Sax	37.21	Fred Kalantari	11.20	Jeff Lentchner	6.03	Dana Nazarian	4.09
Ed O'Laughlin	34.37	Denise Hemingway	10.59	Jerry Godsey	6.00	Odin Chenault	4.09
Chuck Bower	27.00	Arman Karamian	10.59	Malcolm Davis	6.00	Dan Lewis	4.00
Paul Klein	22.88	Ray Woo	10.03	Jerry Padova	6.00	Sonya Sidky	4.00
Doug Mayfield	22.88	Linda MacLean	10.02	Wally Wolf	5.89	Renée Rosenbloom	3.90
Jeremy Bagai	22.69	Bob Holyon	9.46	Bill Robertie	5.88	Brian Barber	3.78
Ray Fogelund	20.45	David Todd	9.18	Perry Gartner	5.88	Boris Mindich	3.76
Bill Versaw	18.92	Kit Salisbury	8.33	Len Dangremond	5.75	Ilia Guzei	3.59
Jim Curtis	18.45	Sho Sengoku	8.18	Sam Yoyen	5.50	Marvin Widenhouse	3.53
Dan Grogan	18.11	Bruce Brown	7.22	Bill Choi	5.45	Matt Reklaitis	3.38
Mike Friedman	17.72	Vadim Musaelyan	7.00	David Rogers	5.40	Linda Rockwell	3.29
Dennis Culpepper	16.99	Joanne Reid	6.95	Bill Bartholomay	5.29	Joann Feinstein	3.25
Chris Stanford	15.00	Steve Maas	6.86	Chen-Fu Yu	5.29	Pete Lewandowski	3.25
Walter Trice	14.88	William Chu	6.76	Jolie Rubin	5.20	Stan Livingston	3.20
Emil Mortuk	13.95	Abbas Zaltash	6.67	Jeff Acierno	5.18	Michael Flohr	3.14
Joe Freedman	13.78	Jim Price	6.50	Marianne Gatenby	5.17	Mark Kushinsky	3.13
Jeb Horton	13.65	Lloyd Lindauer	6.36	Eric Johnson	5.11	Paul Weaver	3.11
Mary Hickey	13.49	Richard del Furia	6.30	Hank Chesko	4.99	Petko Kostadinov	3.06
Bob Glass	13.49	Rudy Langenbach	6.30	Neil Kazaross	4.86	Rich Munitz	3.00
Keith Kuligowski	12.50	Bud Bowers	6.29	Dave Cardwell	4.80	Wally Watson	3.00
Al Jones	12.00	David Rubin	6.25	Al Tesoro	4.71	Stuart Thomson	2.99
John Jennings	11.60	Chris Wilson	6.19	Bob Wilensky	4.19	Wally Swan	2.99
Owen Black	11.44	Bill Davis	6.18	Greg Lilley	4.19	Doug Johnson	2.99
Takis Sakkalis	11.36	Kate Elmore	6.18	Kurt Schurecht	4.16	James Roston	2.99
Barry Murphy	11.36	Russ Hoser	6.13	Frank Talbot	4.16	Merrill Schragger	2.94
						Dave Wetzell	2.94



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2002 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 31 OCT.

Lucky Nelson	22.12	Peter Kalba	6.76	Steve Klesker	2.40	Nora Luna Righter	0.96
Joe Wollick	21.16	Wayne Wiest	6.20	Jerry Brooks	2.40	Jason Fishbein	0.88
Bob Zavoral	18.26	David Araiza	6.12	Michael Peters	2.40	John Brussel	0.88
Herb Roman	15.80	Val Zimnicki	5.88	Doug Rodgers	2.40	John Jennings	0.88
Tim Carroll	13.20	Joann Feinstein	5.64	Joe Auszmann	2.16	Ilia Guzei	0.80
Steven Coren	13.04	Bill Davis	5.04	Fred Badagnani	2.16	Aaron Ashmann	0.80
Carter Mattig	12.64	Mark Murray	4.92	Roz Ferris	2.12	Tia Bailey	0.64
Tim Mabee	11.20	David Wells	4.80	David Rubin	1.92	Terry Weiss	0.64
Phyllis Smolinski	11.08	Alice Kay	4.80	Karen Meyer	1.88	Don Marek	0.64
Mike Sutton	10.08	Richard Stawowy	4.48	Roger Hickman	1.84	John Stryker	0.60
Tak Morioka	9.98	Paul Lombardo	4.36	Arline Levy	1.52	Ronora Stryker	0.60
Ed Buerger	9.44	Eric Johnson	4.08	Georgina Flanagan	1.52	Gary Kay	0.60
Bill Bartholomay	8.88	Dave Cramer	3.84	Roland Dieter	1.44	Kendra Welsey	0.56
Glenn Martells	8.60	Paul Friedman	3.72	Henry Gray	1.44	Sakura Sugawara	0.56
Mitch Pomper	8.48	Bill Keefe	3.52	Howard Ring	1.38	Erik D. Erland	0.56
Don Jayhan	8.48	Darrell Marcus	3.32	Jon Viotor	1.28	Reginald Porter	0.56
Paul Baraz	8.46	Royal Robinson	3.28	Bill Sandman	1.28	Bob Stringer	0.56
Bob Steen	8.24	Paul Franks	3.20	Brian Barber	1.28	Jim Roland	0.48
Norma Shyer	8.20	Mary Franks	3.12	Elaine Kehm	1.20	Ken Tyszko	0.48
Rory Pascar	7.96	Barbara Levinson	2.76	Lindsay Mattig	1.16	Erik A. Erland	0.40
Richard Lloyd	7.92	Ken Tibbs	2.56	Scott Richardson	1.12	Joe Szvedo	0.40
Tim Serges	7.04	Tom Meyer	2.48	Femi Owiku	1.04	Steve Neidecker	0.40
Ken Bond	7.04	Kim Smith	2.40	David Hart	0.96	Scott Zucker	0.24

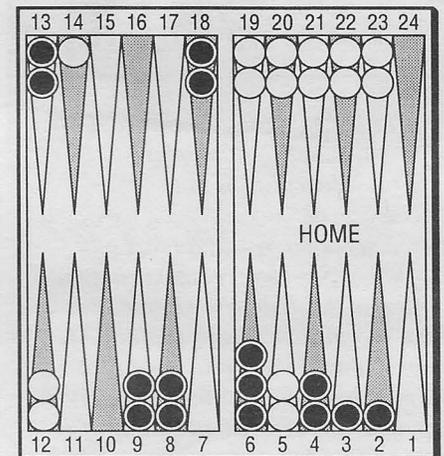
TAK MORIOKA led the October charge to Player of the Month earning 3.90 points. Finishing second and third respectively were Joe Wollick (3.00) and Paul Baraz (2.78).

your move

PROBLEM #286

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

5-point match. Black leads White, 1 to 0.
BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.



ASK DANNY



© 2002 by Danny Kleinman

PLUG THE HOLE?

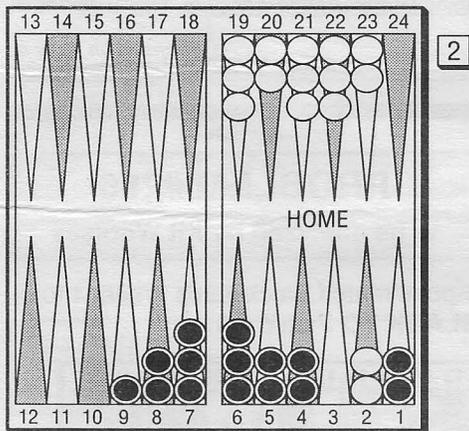
Dear Danny: I have trouble with leaving shots. It seems that when I do, I always get hit.

[Stop right there! If your blots were sure to get hit, you should give up backgammon right away, for the cards are stacked (or should I say the dice are loaded?) against you. Even world champions are forced occasionally to leave game-winning shots, but when they do, they incur no more than 31% risk of immediate loss. If you, in contrast, are *certain* to lose, that handicap is impossible to surmount.

Fortunately, what you say isn't true (unless you really are playing with loaded dice). However, you are still handicapped severely, for your paranoid *belief* that it is true keeps you from leaving a shot when doing so is right.—DKJ

So when I rolled a 6-2 in the following position, I knew what to do:

9-point match. Black and White are tied at 4 to 4. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



9/1 was the easy play for me. And when my opponent rolled 4-1 (which would have hit), I felt justified playing safe.

After I won the game despite leaving a later shot, my opponent said I had blundered. "9/3, 7/5 is clearly right. Plug the hole now and the dam won't burst later."

What's your take on this position? I would probably make the same play at double match point or for money, but now my opponent has created an inkling of doubt in my mind.—Uncertain

DEAR UNCERTAIN: You've taken a right first step in starting to doubt, listening to your (obviously more experienced) opponent's opinion and soliciting mine. Your second step should be to accept the assumption that the dice are fair. Your third step should be to focus not only on your fear of getting hit and the probability of that happening, but also on the costs when your opponent hits and the benefits when he does not.

Let's start with the benefits. The gap in your board creates a continuing danger of blotting. After moving 9/1, you'll blot on 6-4, 6-3, 5-5, 5-4 and 5-3 next. Other 5s and 6s will also play badly, piling more men still on your 1-point, which acts as a magnet, sucking in more and more of your checkers, stripping your points, creating new gaps. The more men you put out of play on your 1-point, the less ammunition you will have for the battles that may occur when you do get hit or for attacking a blot your opponent leaves when he breaks anchor. In contrast, after moving 9/3, 7/5, you'll be poised to make your 3-point with most 5s and some of your small numbers, reducing your future danger.

Now let's consider the costs of moving 9/3, 7/5. If you get hit, you may dance upon your opponent's strong board. However, your opponent still has two men behind your 5-prime, and only one is at the edge. Though he may be able to spring both men with a prompt 6 followed soon by an ace and another 6, he'll often fail. Then he may weaken and break his strong board, perhaps leaving a vulnerable blot of his own. In some scenarios, you'll pick up a third man, pounce on a blot in your home board, and win a gammon.

Without attempting any calculations, I'll judge that the large benefits of the bold play when you don't get hit exceed the modest costs when you do get hit. Call it "the voice of experience" talking.

If you judge otherwise, that's okay. You won't always be able to weigh benefits against costs accurately in complex positions, especially in the heat of play when you can't take forever to move. However, the more you attempt such comparisons, and the more willing you are to consider leaving blots, the better your game and your chances of victory will become. All I ask is that you try.—Yours, Danny Δ

Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: Ask Danny, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155 or send e-mail to: bg@chicagopoint.com

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

(www.chicagopoint.com) lists other playsites at "Gammon Links." Or you can check out an extensive list of weekly action at the "USA Clubs" link.

Additionally, weekend events offer major tourney competition as well as head-to-head action. For an up-to-the-minute event listing, check out Carol Joy Cole's international tournament calendar at: www.chicagopoint.com/calendar.html.—Ed.

A PDF QUESTION

Why not convert CHICAGO POINT to a PDF file and send it out that way. It would surely be quicker and more efficient from both points of view.—Brian Walker, U.K.

The Madison (Wisconsin) BG Club has a very nice newsletter in PDF format. Check out: cic.chem.wisc.edu/bg/thedouse.htm

Although we have a website, we haven't gone the PDF newsletter route because we feel it would be too difficult to control subscriptions. Also, after 151 hard copy issues, we don't want to break the string! But it is a lot of work and who knows? Maybe someday we'll take your advice.—Ed.

GOING BACK IN TIME

I discovered an interesting site called the Internet Archive Wayback Machine (www.archive.org/index.html). Type in www.chicagopoint.com and you will find they have stored many back issues of the online POINT (and some "Point Girls") way back to 1996.—Mel Leifer, "Gammon Links" editor, Germantown, Maryland Δ

Anniversary
Edition

2003 MIDWEST
BACKGAMMON
CHAMPIONSHIPS

21-23 March 2003

Wyndham Lisle Hotel
Lisle, Illinois

(630) 505-1000 • (800) WYNDHAM

FRED GEHLHOFF DIES

Suffers Brain Hemorrhage While Playing Backgammon

Fred Gehlhoff, know as "Fredly" to many FIBS online backgammon players, died 8 November 2002 at a hospital in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He was 51.



Fred Gehlhoff displays the "opening ball" he caught at the 1999 Midwest Championships Calcutta auction.

As they would often do, Gehlhoff and Rhonda Young were playing backgammon on the evening of 6 November at their home in Kingsford, Michigan. Gehlhoff took a break, complaining of a severe headache. Rhonda massaged Fred's head, but the pain only worsened. She then went to get him a cold compress, but when she returned, he had suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage.

Gehlhoff was airlifted by helicopter to a hospital in Green Bay, but the damage was in the brain stem area and judged to be inoperable. On Friday morning, November 8, the decision was made to remove him from life support.

A long-time chess player, Gehlhoff made the switch to backgammon in the late 1980s. An avid tournament player, he competed in 12 straight Midwest Championship events between 1990 and 2001. Fred moved up to the Championship level after winning the 1999 Chicago Open Intermediate title. In December 2000, he was a runner-up to Kit Woolsey in the Backgammon On Board V Caribbean Master's Jackpot.

FIBS director David Escoffery reports that Fred Gehlhoff's most recent success was an Open Consolation victory in the 2002 FIBS Spring event. Δ

AMALGAMATION

Terrorism claims a backgammon tournament. **Antoinette-Marie Williams** (NY) reports that the 2nd Bali event set for 30 March–2 April 2003 has been canceled... Condolences to the family and friends of **Steve Avery** who passed away at a political rally 3 November. Steve was an east coast tournament promoter in the 1980s... Madison (WI) Club director **Tom Machaj** has firmed up the dates for the 1st Wisconsin State Championships: 25–27 July at the Radisson in Madison... Visiting the Bar Point Club in October: **Frankie Farjood** (CA), and **Yan Boond** (Netherlands)... She started serving Bar Point Club players at Pat's Pub. Then she moved with us to the Golden Flame. Last month we welcomed back our longtime waitress **Rose Gecht**. It's great to have you with us again, Rose!... **Dave Cardwell** (GA) announces a new ABT event for 2003: The Southern Open. It will be held 27 Feb.–2 Mar. in Atlanta, Georgia. Dave notes that this will be the first tournament will all events (except for short jackpots and doubles) will be clocked... Type in "backgammon" into the Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com) and you come up with two movies: Backgammon ("Backgammon—survival of the misfits"), and Emotional Backgammon

("Love is like a game of backgammon... you take your chances."). The first is a US picture, the second comes from the UK... **Shel Segal** of Minnesota gives us a very nice line: "Justice does not play backgammon." How true... CHICAGO POINT wishes all our subscribers a very happy holiday season and wonderful new year. Our next issue will be mailed out in early January. Δ



ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis
773/583-6464
Peter Kalba
773/252-7755

Tuesday, 6:00 P.M. at Clarion Hotel, 5615 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago; 773/693-5800.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at Anyway's Chicago Grill & Bar, 5 E. Roosevelt Rd., Oakbrook Terrace; 630/932-9323.

PUB CLUB: Tourn. Mon., 7:00 P.M. at Danny's Grill and Bar, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Joe Wollick (847/942-2068).

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Caboose Smokehouse, 608 W. Seminary, Bloomington. Rob Farmer (309/821-9766).

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wed., 6:30 P.M. at Brewhaus, 617 E. Washington, Springfield. Ben Zemaitis (217/483-4028).

WINNETKA BG CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Chibnik (847/446-0537).

T/P BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 6:30 P.M. at Java Oasis; 2240 S. Michigan, Chicago. J.A. Miller (312/719-1245).

PEORIA BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/674-0557).

The Charlotte Backgammon Club presents the 2003

Carolina Invitational

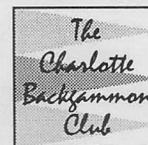
- Open, Intermediate and Novice divisions of play
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jeb@carolina.rr.com



The Carolina Invitational will be the first stop on the 2003 American Backgammon Tour. Enjoy Charlotte's beautiful weather while getting an early jump on the ABT points race!

For complete information including a printable flyer, visit our website:
<http://home.carolina.rr.com/backgammonclub/ABT.html>



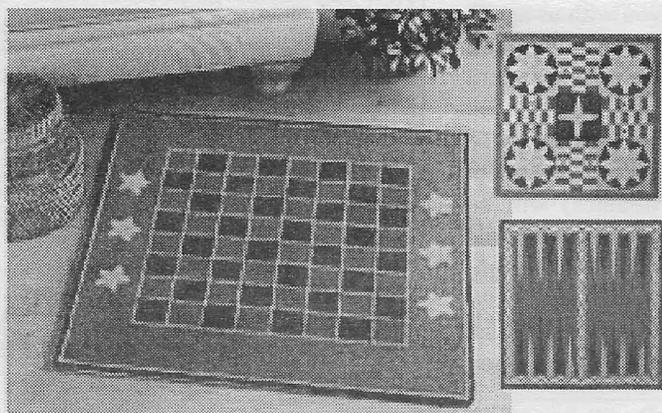
Marcy's BG Holiday Gift Ideas

by Marcy Sloan

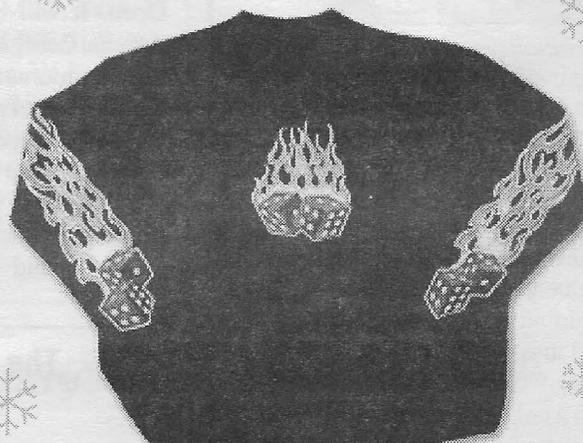
Marcy Sloan (Northbrook, IL) has sent us the following backgammon-related gift ideas that she found while surfing the Internet. If you don't find something you like here, try eBay!—Ed.



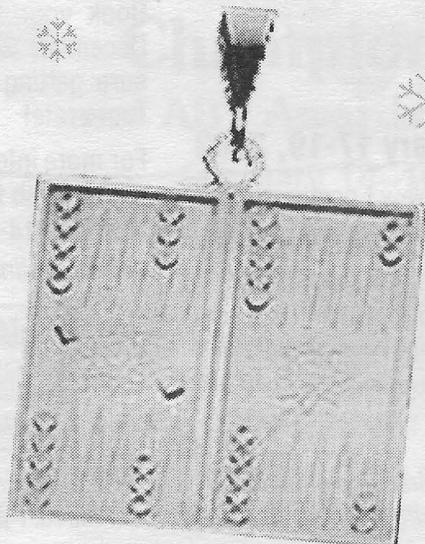
Backgammon is my bag, baby! This game pits the very groovy Austin Powers, the world's most eligible secret agent, against his arch-enemy, Dr. Evil. Features a shagadelic carrying case made of blue velour (just like Austin's suit), dice, cups, and doubling cube. \$47.98. www.johnsonsmith.com (Item 26000).



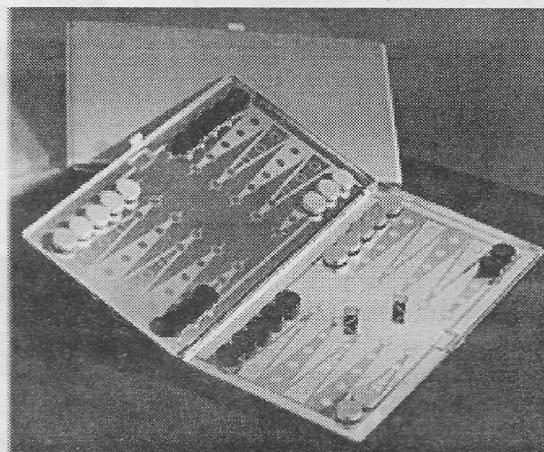
If you're 'board' with ordinary rugs, take a chance on these colorful, hand-hooked wool designs. They'll liven up your floor and add a playful accent to your décor. Perfect for the den, family room, or game room. 30" x 30". \$57.50. www.paragongifts.com (Item XA7214A).



Your dice are on fire with this Flaming Dice T-Shirt. \$15.98. Available from www.johnsonsmith.com (Item 25598).



14K gold backgammon charm. 8 gm. 1-1/8" x 1". \$120. www.charmjewelry.com/p71.html



Brushed aluminum game board and magnetic game pieces. 4" x 6.5". \$19.00. Available from www.casualivingusa.com (Item 257743).

Really!

A BACKGAMMON QUIZ

by Duane Jensen

Hal Heinrich stood upon the chair and peered into the viewfinder of the camera pointed down at the backgammon board. It was the pre-JellyFish™ era and Hal was recording another tournament match to add to his massive database for analysis at a later time. After adjusting the camera's field of view to include the entire board, Hal asked the players to use his large white and black dice because they stood out clearly on the videotape.

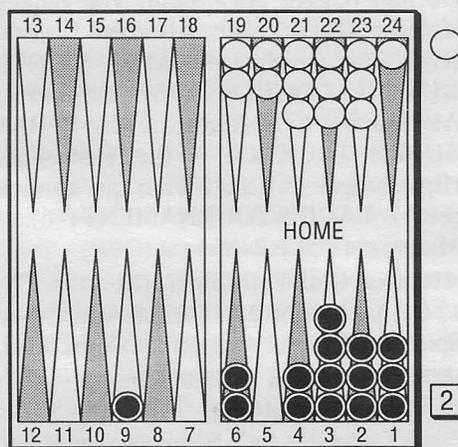
When Hal was confident the recording was working properly, the experts began their match. Then the two of us walked over to an open board and sat down. Hal picked up a dice cup and began twirling it in his hands while we talked a little "backgammon." I told him that I'd begun playing my opening 5-3 differently. I no longer made the 3-point, but now brought two men down from the midpoint. I felt it was better to concentrate on building the opponent's 5- and 4-points first. Hal listened patiently before expressing a different opinion: "I like building the 3-point."

I tried to sway Hal with some additional arguments for playing 13/10, 13/8 when Hal interrupted me stating, "I really like making the 3-point!"

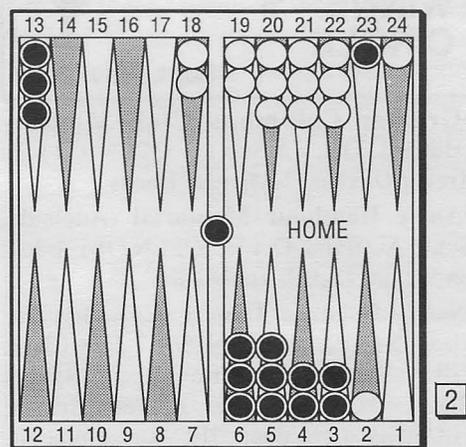
The way Hal said "really," stopped me in my tracks. Sure, the Canadian master has won one more World Championship than I have, but that fact isn't what shut me up; it was the way he said "really." He was gently but firmly telling me to stop wasting my time with a new way to play a decent opening roll. I've always built the 3-point since that talk with Hal.

In the money game positions that follow, Black is always on roll with a 2-1 to play. I have not included any lengthy explanations justifying my answers (shown on page 10), but I will tell you that I really like my plays.—Duane Jensen. Δ

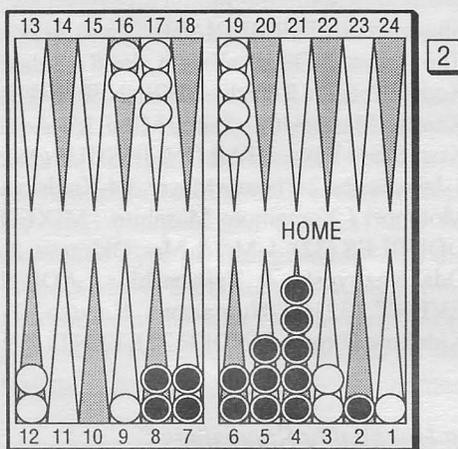
Problem 1. Money Game. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



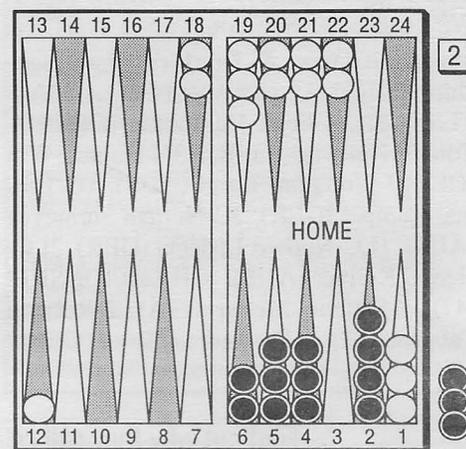
Problem 4. Money Game. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



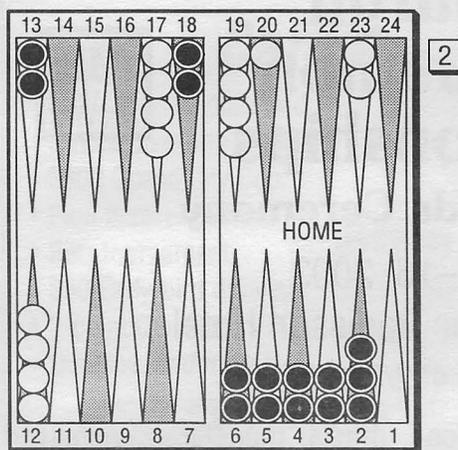
Problem 2. Money Game. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



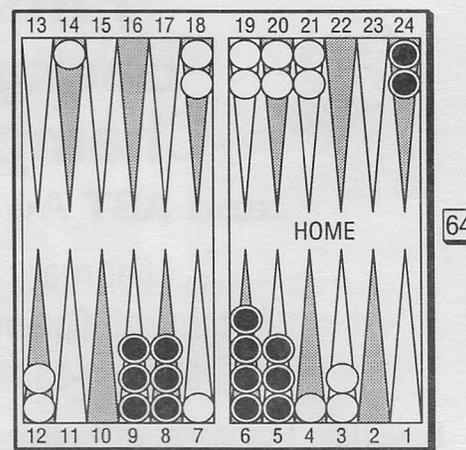
Problem 5. Money Game. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



Problem 3. Money Game. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



Problem 6. Money Game. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



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who did what

WINNER'S CIRCLE



Sept.-Nov. 2002

•**Greater Columbus Club Monthly** (Hilliard, OH; 15 Sep.)... OPEN (11): 1-Trevor Dierkes, 2-Michael Haney.

•**Angie Hambour Memorial** (Adelaide, South Australia; Oct.)... OPEN (16): 1-Justin Freytag, 2-Bill Toubakaris.

•**Sandy Osborne Trophy** (Coventry, England; 5-6 Oct.)... OPEN (56): 1-John Clark, 2-Ray Tannen, 3/4-Tony Lee / Rachel Rhodes; 1C-Steve Hallet, 2C-Peter Bennet; 1LC-Mike Greenleaf, 2LC-Roy Hollands. SUICIDE! (64): 1-Matthew Fisher, 2-John Slattery, 3/4-Rebecca Bell / Lawrence Powell. FRIDAY KO (20): 1-Peter Christmas, 2-John Slattery. DOUBLES (9): 1-W07, 2-Dice To See You, To See You Dice.

•**Austrian Open & Doubles Championship** (Seefeld, Austria; 10-13 Oct.)... MASTERS (47): 1-Peter Heitmuller (GER), 2-Tobias Hellwag (GER), 3/4-Rainer Witt (GER) / Wolfgang Kargl (AUS); 1C-Thomas Lumpert (GER), 2C-Nurhan Surmeyan (AUS); 1LC-Norbert Lisiecki (GER), 2LC-Heimo Krainer (AUS). CHAMPIONSHIP (47): 1-Stefano Merler (ITA), 2-Roberto Catalano (ITA), 3/4-Andreas Born (GER) /

Jurgen Orłowski (GER); 1C-Sauter (GER), 2C-Giuseppe Ricciardi (ITA); 1LC-Gehard Duenzel (GER), 2LC-Martin Von Behren (GER). BLITZ (16): 1-Norbert Lisiecki (GER), 2-Tunc Hamarat (AUS). CONTINENTAL DOUBLES (16): 1-Shino & Alexandra (ENG), 2-Tardieu & Rived (FRA). SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-Michael Higsberger (AUS), 2-Francois Tardieu (FRA). LADIES TOURNAMENT (16): 1-Marinova (BUL), 2-Afchani (GER).

•**Houston Club Fall Classic** (Houston, TX; 12 Oct.)... OPEN (25): 1-Jack Erwin, 2-Rod Sprouse; 1C-Daniel Verduzco, 2C-Josh Danart.

•**8th Japan Open & 32nd Championship** (Tokyo, Japan; 12-14 Oct.)... JAPAN OPEN (38): Frank Talbot (USA), 2-Nishikawa Kiyokazu, 3/4-Jake Jacobs (USA) / Tezuka Hirohisa; 1C-Kunishima Motonori; 2C-Thomas Meyer. CHAMPIONSHIP (32x4): 1-Shimada Makoto, 2-Nagai Seiichi, 3/4-Sumi Yuji / Hasegawa Shunsuke. INTERMEDIATE (22x4): 1-Don Thompson, 2-Funatsu Taichi, 3/4-Tonodaki Kodai / Koizumi Kouichi. BEGINNER (64): 1-Kamiya Masatoshi, 2-Saitou Mimi, 3/4-Aoki Kou / Satou Yuya. STAR ONLINE CUP (16): 1-Jake Jacobs, 2-Thomas Meyer, 3/4-Kunisima Motonori / Yamamoto Masahito. MIXED DOUBLES (32): 1-Mr. & Mrs. Okimasu, 2-Oda Kazuyoshi & Takahashi. LADIES EVENT (32): 1-Numazawa Kazuko, 2-Kidokoro Hitomi. UNDER 22 EVENT (11):

1-Sugishita Syuhei. ONE POINT MINI-MATCH (128): 1-Nasu Masahiko. FINAL CHANCE (48): 1-Kidokoro Hitomi, 2-Terao Kanta. QUIZ CONTEST (60): 1-Frank Talbot.

•**Northeast Regional—ABT** (Latham, NY; 18-20 Oct.)... OPEN (12): 1-Jerry Padova, 2-Rich Munitz; 1C-Wally Watson. INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Dan Lewis, 2-Mark Kushinsky; 1C-Donny Lomuto. NOVICE (5): 1-Susan Foster, 2-Stewart Pemberton. DOUBLES (8): 1-Doug & Wanda Roberts, 2-Walter Trice & Karen Chung.

•**10th Irish Open** (Dublin, Ireland; 26-27 Oct.)... OPEN (66): 1-Jim Johnson, 2-Brendan Burgess, 3/4-Stuart Mann / David Startin; 1C-Wayne Felton, 2C-Eamonn Keogh, 3C/4C-Nicole Toboury / Adam Stocks. FRIDAY JACKPOT (16): 1-Nicole Taboury, 2-Paul Christmas. TEAM: 1-Dave Coyne, David Startin & Geoff Conn, 2-Ralph Eskinazi, Jeff Ellis & Brendan Gasparro.

•**Ace Point Monthly** (New York, NY; 27 Oct.)... OPEN (8): 1-Karen Davis. INTERMEDIATE (6): 1-Ray Javadi; 1C-Bo Kapral.

•**Springfield Series #1** (Springfield, IL; 9 Nov.)... OPEN (19): 1-Randy Reiff, 2-William Hutchison; 1C-Larry Whittenburg, 2C-Sue Oliver; 1LC-Ed Zell.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 10 Nov.)... OPEN (8): 1-Leon Shore, 2-Lee Genud. INTERMEDIATE (11): 1-Danielle Bastarache, 2-A. C. Connor. Δ

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Join us for a weekend of backgammon excitement. Monday, February 17 is President's Day

Pittsburgh Schedule of Events

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2003

1:00 pm Registration Opens
2:00 pm Early Masters & Amateur Jackpot
2:30 pm Open Doubles (Early Section) & Blitz
6:00 pm Doubles Tournaments
7:00 pm Amateur Jackpot (2nd section)
7:30 pm Masters Jackpot (2nd section)
9:30 pm Pizza (play continues)
11:30 pm Registration Closes

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2003

9:00 am Bagels & Coffee. Regist. Opens
10:00 am Registration Closes
10:15 am ABT Awards Presentations, Door Prizes, Calcutta Auction (Champion & Advanced Divisions)
12:00 pm Play Begins (Champion & Advanced)
1:00 pm Novice Event Begins
5:00 pm Dinner Break
7:15 pm Play resumes
8:00 pm Pittsburgh & Three Rivers Cup entries accepted
10:00 pm Hoagies (play continues)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2003

9:30 am Doughnuts & Coffee
10:00 am Tournament play resumes
11:00 am Pittsburgh Memorial Cup & Three Rivers Amateur Cup tournaments
11:30 am 8-Player Jackpots
12:00 pm Micro Blitz Playoffs (time approx.)
1:00 pm Finals—Main Event (time approx.)

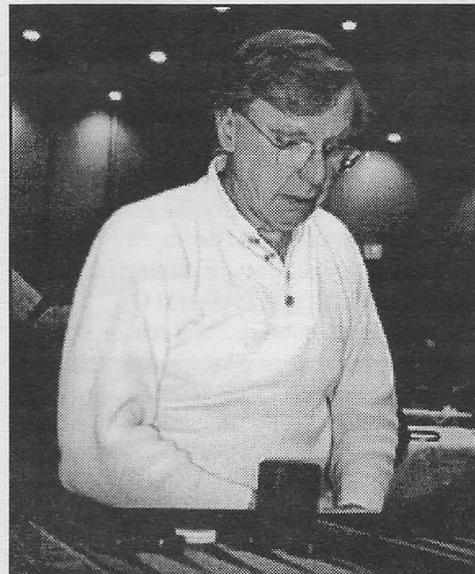
MAYFIELD AND SAX WIN IN MINN.

Mystic Lakes Casino Is Great Venue

An American Backgammon Tour event held at an Indian Casino. What a terrific idea!

Such was the thinking of Fred Kalantari and Steve Brown who made the above concept a reality with the 2002 Minnesota Open. The event was held at Mystic Lakes Casino 40 minutes outside of Minneapolis 1-3 November. They were rewarded with a 47% attendance increase over 2001.

Big winner for the weekend was Doug Mayfield (CA) who captured the Open title and placed second in the Masters event. Doug's opponent in the finals was the irrepressible Richard del Furia (MN). This was Richard's third Minnesota Championship finals in as many years (he won in 2001).



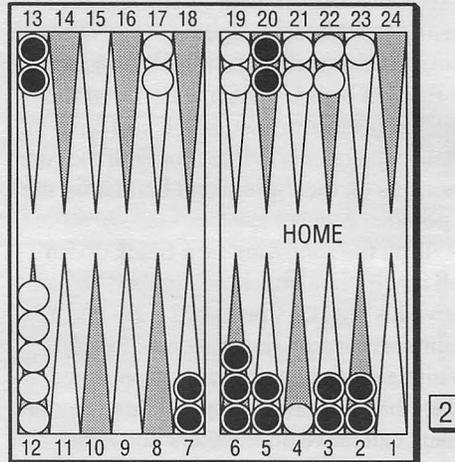
Doug Mayfield ponders a very difficult 4-3 play at double match-point in the Open finals vs. Richard del Furia.

The 15-point finals was a real battle with the lead changing hands six times. In the end, at double match-point, Doug faced a very difficult 4-3 play. [Diagram shown above right.]

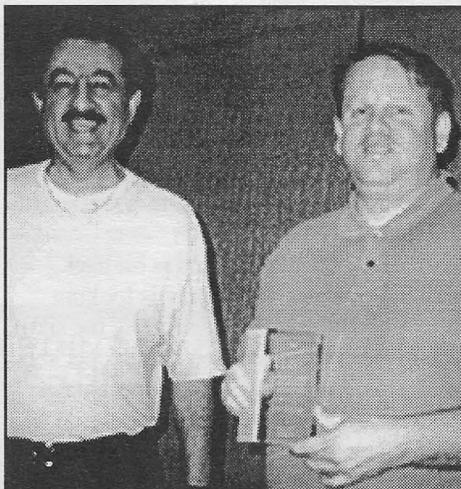
After much thought, Doug hit on the 4-point (7/4*, 7/3). Richard danced, but Doug couldn't cover, rolling 5-5 (20/10 twice). Richard then missed on his second attempt and when Doug covered, the game was effectively over. Kudos to Doug Mayfield on a great weekend.

Congratulations also to Masters winner Steve Sax (CA) who is having an incredible

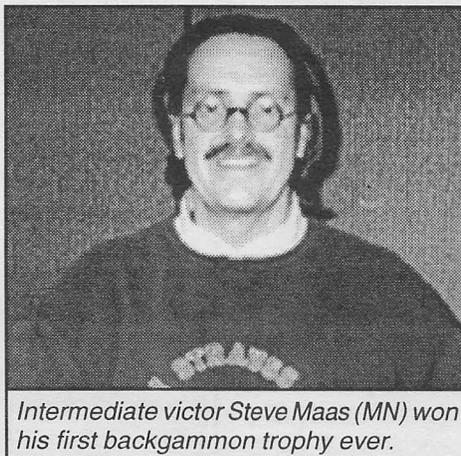
15-point Minnesota Open finals. Doug Mayfield (Black) and Richard del Furia (White) tied at 13-all. Double match point. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.**



2002. Steve is odds-on to win this year's American Backgammon Tour with only two remaining events. In addition, he's placed or won at least six other non-ABT events this year.



Fred Kalantari awards Steve Sax (right) yet another trophy (this time in the Masters) in what is proving to be a banner year for the Californian.



Intermediate victor Steve Maas (MN) won his first backgammon trophy ever.

Other winners include former Minnesota State director Steve Maas (MN) who showed he can also play by capturing the Intermediate title and his first trophy ever. Richard del Furia and Rudy Langenbach (WI) edged Bill Davis (IL) and Andy Natale (IL) the Doubles, and Steve Brown found time away from director duties to win the \$1,000 Jackpot.

Congrats to all and to the Minnesota Club for an outstanding tournament. Δ

MINNESOTA OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

OPEN (30): 1-Doug Mayfield (CA), 2-Richard del Furia (MN); 1C-Rudy Langenbach (WI), 2C-Bob Holyon (WI).

INTERMEDIATE (28): 1-Steve Maas (MN), 2-Merrill Schrager (WI); 1C-Dave Wetzell (MN), 2C-Judy Field (MI).

NOVICE (10): 1-Sonja Ach (MN), 2-Molly Brown (MN); 1C-Phil Little (MN).

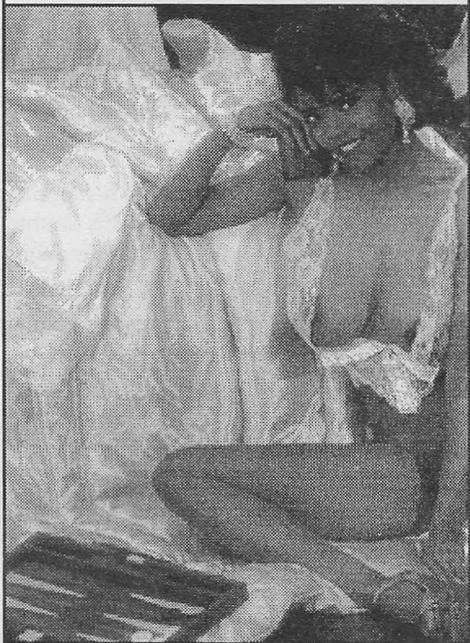
MASTERS (16): 1-Steve Sax (CA), 2-Doug Mayfield (CA).

\$1,000 JACKPOT (4): 1-Steve Brown (MN). DOUBLES (16): 1-Richard del Furia (MN) & Rudy Langenbach (WI), 2-Bill Davis & Andy Natale (IL).

MINI-BLITZ (32): 1-Steve Sax (CA)

2 POINT MINI-MATCH (64): 1-Sean Garber (IN).

WHEN IT'S CORRECT TO BE STRIPPED IN THE BEAROFF



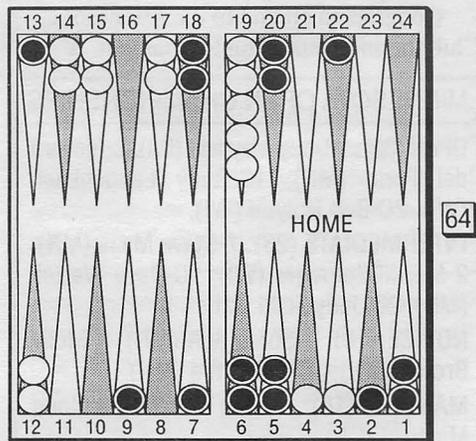
Need a set of rules for strip backgammon? Check here: www.geocities.com/hardskillz/stripback.html.

Don't get overconfident with your opponent (pictured above). You still have to beat her out of a camisole, shoes, bracelet, and a pair of earrings!

PROBLEM #280 ANALYZED

by Steve Sax

Match to 7 points. Black and White are tied at 2-2. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-3.**



Thankfully my Snowie 4 arrived the same week I was asked to analyze Problem 285. But rather than use “Cliff’s Notes” to find the right play, I’m going to try something novel. I’m going to *reason* my way to the correct move and only then use Snowie 4 to see if I’ve thought about it correctly.

The cube is in the middle and both players need five points to win the match. I don’t see the cube being a factor after any reasonable play, so what we have here is a middle game checker move with some interesting and varied choices.

There are three possible choices, all quite different in nature. Choice A is simply to make the bar point and lifting the outfield blot (13/7, 9/6), Choice B is double hitting (9/3*, 7/4*), and choice C is making the midpoint (22/13). There are some other

legal choices that I like a lot less. (Watch one of them be the right choice—LOL.)

Choice A (13/7, 9/6) is a passive waiting play. Making the bar and lifting the blot leaves Black up 13 pips in this holding position. White now figures to run out with one or both checkers or if lucky, anchor up in Black’s board. Thus a majority of the time on his next move, Black will have the chance to attack a White blot with the two checkers on the 7-point and builder on the 6-point.

If on the following turn Black doesn’t roll an efficient attacking number, he can move his checkers on the 22-, 20- and 18-points with surprising freedom. Since White’s outfield points are stripped and Black has White out-boarded three-to-one, Black can move all numbers but 3s off those points. And since 3s are good attacking numbers in his home board, Black gets nice diversification of his numbers.

Black’s overall strategy after play A is to wiggle his back pieces forward into his opponent’s and then his own outfield, keeping a potential blitz option as a wild card.

Choice B is to go for the blitz immediately which has an initial success rate of 25%. This is not to say that if you double hit and are hit back you lose, or conversely if you double hit and are missed, you instantly win, but that first roll will be critical in determining the future winner of the game.

If Black double-hits and is hit back, three out of four times White is looking pretty good as she will be sending the sixth, perhaps seventh, and often eighth checkers back. This is a pretty ugly prospect since you have your ace-point made.

If Black is missed by one of White’s nine dancing numbers, he then has aces, deuces, 9s 10s and 11s to cover. However all of these covering numbers still leave him

with one and sometimes two blots in his home board with limited future coverage.

Black is far from a cube when he double hits and White fans, and when Black is hit with the 27 numbers, he is in far worse shape.

A third option would be Choice C, running to the midpoint and leaving two blots in jeopardy of being hit by 3s, 4s, 5s, and 6s.

Your 13-pip lead is history after this play and you give up tempo along with your race lead if you choose this play. The upside of play C in making your midpoint is of limited value as a single blot on the 13-point exhibits almost as much pressure on White’s stripped midpoint as the made point does.

A couple of other plays like hitting off the midpoint 13/4* or 22/16, 7/4* seem like half-hearted choices with little promise of being the best move.

I’m picking Choice A as the best play. I like maintaining my race lead and taking a chance at working my way through the paper tiger gauntlet of stripped points in White’s outfield.

If you don’t think White has to be on his best behavior being out-boarded and behind in the race, you would be wrong. Backgammon, after all, is a race and if you can find a way to simplify the game and get to that point you should do so.

Now let’s see if my reasoning coincides with “The Great and Powerful Oz.”

Amazingly enough, I did reason correctly (assuming Snowie is correct) that the best Choice was A (13/7, 9/6). Second best was B, double hitting (my second choice too). In point of fact, Play A is best by so much that you should return the silver medal if you made play B. The other assorted plays came in far behind and are not important enough to note exactly where.

Remember the major criteria, which make Choice A best. You have a race lead and a superior board. Don’t gratuitously give those away by making a weak attack or an unnecessary anchor. —Steve Sax Δ

ILLINOIS...

[Continued from page 1]



Hats off to Illinois State Doubles champs Darrell Marcus and Peter Kalba.

In other results, Sonya Sidky prevailed over fellow Madison (Wisconsin) Club player Lee Pflugrad in the Intermediate division, Michael Flohr won the Springfield Open, and it was Peter Kalba and Darrell Marcus over Carol Joy Cole & Tak Morioka in the Lincoln/Douglas Doubles.

Another great tourney by the Sangamon Valley BG Association. Δ



Intermediate champ Sonya Sidky.

Really! Answers

(From page 7)

1. 6/5, 6/4
2. 8/7, 8/6
3. 13/11, 2/1
4. Bar/24*, 13/11
5. 6/5, 6/4
6. 24/23, 24/22

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Visit our tournament website: www.playmaker-world.com/bucharest

Masters Tourney & Warm-up 5-7 January 2003

Masters entry: \$2,500 + \$150 reg.

11 January: Masters finals on closed-circuit television with commentary.

Tournament Particulars

World Cup VII Entry fees:

Championship \$900

Intermediate \$300

Beginner \$150

Registration fee all divisions: \$150

Discount Travel Rates

PEDROZA TRAVEL CENTER

369 Fairfax Avenue, Suite 7

Los Angeles, CA 90036

800/237-1597 • 323/651-1931

Fax: 323/651-1982



Tournament Director

Abraham Eitan

Tel.: +972-52-581-329

Fax: +972-3-751-6912

eitanbg@zahav.net.il

To receive an invitation, contact

CHICAGO POINT at 773/583-6464.

bg@chicagopoint.com

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(Please mention the tournament. The regular room rate is \$225/night.)

*Number of rooms for tournament participants are limited. Reserve early!

Registration must be made directly through the Bucharest Marriott Hotel:

Tel: (40) 21-403 2002

Fax: (40) 21-403 2001

marriott.bucharest@marriott-hotels.com