

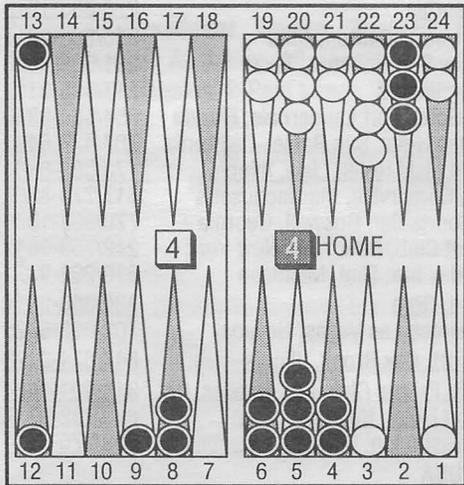
Prose about the Pros

Grandell & Balbi Win Big in Vegas

by Jake Jacobs



\$115,000 Las Vegas Pro-Am Doubles winners Jerry Grandell and Armando Balbi. [Photo by Diane Varner.]



Suppose you are wondering about those two cubes in Pos. 1. Here's the thing.

When I draw a diagram, I usually use a black cube if Black is doubling or owns the cube, and a white cube if White is doubling (or owns the cube). The color helps you, the reader, know what's going on. In real life, the cube stays one color no matter who has it. So consider my puzzlement when I walked up and saw this board, with a 4-cube sitting on it, and both sides lost in thought.

[Continued on page 7]

las vegas open

CURTIS LUCAS'S SHIP COMES IN

Stuart Hosen wins Super Jackpot

71-year-old Curtis Lucas has prevailed in Las Vegas . . . and we're not talking about the Senior's Tourney! The retired Navy aircraft engineer from Dallas, Texas saw his ship come in at the Las Vegas Open Championship leaving such players as Emil Mortuk, Fred Kalantari, and Mike Senkiewicz in the wake. The event was staged 20–24 November at the Riviera Hotel by the Nevada Backgammon Association. Howard Markowitz directed assisted by an able staff.



2003 Las Vegas Open champ Curtis Lucas. [Photo by Diane Varner.]

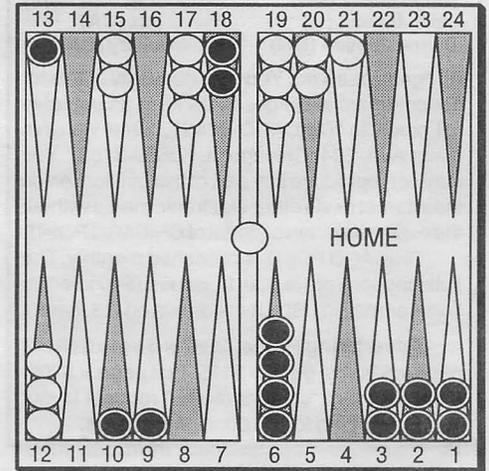
Lucas had a successful Intermediate run in 2000 and 2001 winning in Vegas and Prague and capturing the Consolation in Paris. He was also a finalist in the 2001 Illinois State Championships Open division. So although Snowie ranked him as an "Intermediate," Curtis Lucas knows how to win.

The 17-point finals against New Yorker Reza Rezaian is case in point. Although given less than a 30% chance of winning (according to Snowie), Lucas steered his dice to a 13–8 lead after 10 games. That's when the tide changed for Rezaian. He won eight of the next ten points to grab a big 16–15 Crawford lead.

Trailing for the first time in the match, Curtis would need two wins in a row unless

he could grab a gammon. And that's the direction the game was taking when . . .

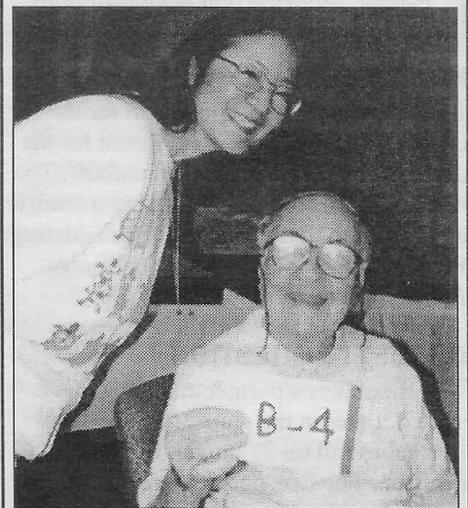
Las Vegas Open 17-pt. finals. Curtis Lucas (Black) trails Reza Rezaian (White), 15–16, Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.**



Lucas defensively kept the 18-point with 13/9, 10/4. Playing "anchors away"

[Continued on page 4]

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HERB!



On 24 January 2003, Herb Avram of Maryland will be 90-years-old. Give him your regards the next time you see him at a tournament.

Here, Herb is holding a card with Michigan director Carol Joy Cole at his side reminding us: "Age B-4 beauty!"

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Bill Davis

3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue 504
Chicago, IL 60659-3155

Tel: 773/583-6464 ♦ Fax: 773/583-3264

E-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com

www.chicagopoint.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Carol Joy Cole (MI) Danny Kleinman (CA)
Mary Hickey (OH) Antonio Ortega (C.R.)
Jake Jacobs (IL) Steve Sax (CA)
Duane Jensen (MN) Kit Woolsey (CA)

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LETTERS

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HEARTFELT THANKS

I wish to thank you all so much for the cards and messages of condolence for the death of my soulmate, Fred Gehlhoff. The backgammon community is truly a family and I want to thank you all for considering Fred and I members.—*Rhonda Young, Fairfield, Iowa*

CHOUETTE QUESTION

The Box takes a partner and the game is started. Later in the game, the Box faces five cubes (all on 2) and has to make a decision. The Box decides to drop, but his partner decides to take the cubes and play. The partner wins the game. Q1. What becomes of the points the Box forfeits? Q2. How many points total does the partner win?—*Cecil, via Internet, New York*

Jake Jacobs answers: The partner may

[Continued on page 10]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



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

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Jan 11*	New Year's Special, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Jan 12*	Backgammon by the Bay Monthly, Shattuck's Hotel, Berkeley, California	510/655-6788
Jan 12*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Jan 12*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, Ohio	330/866-2811
Jan 12*	South Florida Monthly, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	654/564-0340
Jan 16*	Third Thursday Bonus (Pittsburgh), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
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>
Jan 18*	Northwest Indiana Gammon Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Jan 18*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Jan 19*	Austin Club Bimonthly Tournament, JC's Bar & Grill, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Jan 25*	Atlanta 2002 Awards Tournament, Mazy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Jan 25*	Backgammon by the Bay Saturday, Gigi's Bakery, Scotts Valley, Calif.	510/655-6788
Jan 26*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-0842
Jan 30*	Flint Club Awards Party & Tournament, Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Feb 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer	GZMedallion@gammonzone.net
Feb 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer	tournaments@cyberarts.com
Feb 1-8	BG on Board VI, Ft. Lauderdale/St. Maarten/St. Thomas, Golden Princess	773/583-6464
Feb 4*	"Dinner for the Winner" Monthly, TableRock Brewpub, Boise, Idaho	208/342-8865
Feb 8*	Universal Mall Bimonthly #1, All the King's Men, Warren, Michigan	313/381-6639
Feb 8*	Valentine's Day Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Feb 9*	G/A Tournament of Champions, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, California	818/901-0464
Feb 9	Bar Point Doubles Championship, Champs Sports Bar, Oakbrook Terr., IL	773/583-6464
Feb 9*	Backgammon by the Bay Monthly, Shattuck's Hotel, Berkeley, California	510/655-6788
Feb 9*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, Ohio	330/866-2811
Feb 9*	South Florida Monthly, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	654/564-0340
Feb 14-16	<u>25th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Radisson, Pittsburgh, Penn.</u>	<u>412/922-8400</u>
Feb 15*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Feb 20*	Third Thursday Bonus (Midwest), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
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
Feb 23*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Feb 23*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-0842
Feb 27-Mar 2	<u>Southern Open, Sleep Inn, Buckhead, Georgia</u>	<u>270/333-1876</u>
Mar 2*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, Ohio	330/866-2811
Mar 8*	Idea of March Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Mar 8*	Springfield Series #5, Wildlife Sports Bar, Illinois	217/528-0117
Mar 9*	South Florida Monthly, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	654/564-0340
Mar 15*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Mar 21-23	<u>20th Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Lisle, Illinois</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
Mar 23*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Mar 29*	Atlanta Chouette Tournament, Mazy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Mar 30*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-0842
Mar 30	20th Fleet Underwood Tournament, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Apr 11-13*	<u>9th Ohio State Championships, Cleveland, Ohio</u>	<u>330/866-2811</u>
Apr 30-May 4*	20th Nevada State Tournament, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
May 23-26*	<u>24th Chicago Open, Oak Brook Hills Resort, Oak Brook, Illinois</u>	<u>847/674-0120</u>
Jun 6-8*	<u>51st Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Jul 3-6*	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Hilton Hotel, Novi, Michigan</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Jul 25-27*	<u>1st Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Inn, Madison, Wisconsin</u>	<u>608/276-8144</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Jan 5-12	World Cup Masters & Challenge VII, Grand Marriott, Bucharest, Romania	97252-581329
Jan 12*	Toronto Monthly, Smilin' Jack's Bar & Grill, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Jan 13-19*	POSTPONED: 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
Feb 9*	Toronto Monthly, Smilin' Jack's Bar & Grill, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Feb 18-23*	Gran Casino Open, Santa Ponsa Country Club, Mallorca, Balearics, Spain	49711-486190
Feb 22-23*	Everyman Mindsports Trophy, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44127-3261073
Feb 23*	Toronto Masters, Smilin' Jack's Bar & Grill, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Mar 3-9*	4th Paris Masters & Open, Concorde Lafayette, Paris, France (tentative)	336-07551516
Mar 8-9*	Slattery Scottish Open, Bradford Hilton Hotel, Bradford, England	44152-2888676
Mar 9*	Toronto Monthly, Smilin' Jack's Bar & Grill, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Mar 13-16*	Partouche Trophy, Palm Beach Casino, Cannes, France	Spain: 34950-133009
Mar 21-23*	Hi-Rollers Event, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, Leicestershire, England	44152-2888676
Apr 5-6*	British Open, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Apr 24-27	2nd Velden Open, Casino Velden, Velden, Austria	392-69018168



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2002

Top 100—Final Standings after 18 tournaments
194 players earned points



Steve Sax	37.21	Takis Sakkalis	11.36	Chris Wilson	6.19	Bob Wilensky	4.19
Ed O'Laughlin	34.37	Barry Murphy	11.36	Bill Davis	6.18	Greg Lilley	4.19
Chuck Bower	27.00	Fred Kalantari	11.20	Kate Elmore	6.18	Kurt Schurecht	4.16
Paul Klein	22.88	Denise Hemingway	10.59	Russ Hoser	6.13	Frank Talbot	4.16
Doug Mayfield	22.88	Arman Karamian	10.59	Jeff Lentchner	6.03	Dana Nazarian	4.09
Jeremy Bagai	22.69	Ray Woo	10.03	Jerry Godsey	6.00	Odis Chenault	4.09
Ray Fogerlund	20.45	Linda MacLean	10.02	Malcolm Davis	6.00	Art Benjamin	4.09
Norm Wiggins	20.45	Bob Holyon	9.46	Jerry Padova	6.00	Jerry Hays	4.02
Bill Versaw	18.92	David Todd	9.18	Karen Davis	6.00	Dan Lewis	4.00
Jim Curtis	18.45	Kit Salisbury	8.33	Wally Wolf	5.89	Sonya Sidky	4.00
Dan Grogan	18.11	Sho Sengoku	8.18	Bill Robertie	5.88	Renee Rosenbloom	3.90
Mike Friedman	17.72	Nick Maffeo	8.18	Perry Gartner	5.88	Brian Barber	3.78
Dennis Culppepper	16.99	Bruce Brown	7.22	Len Dangremond	5.75	Boris Mindich	3.76
Chris Stanford	15.00	Vadim Musaelyan	7.00	Sam Yoyen	5.50	Ilia Guzei	3.59
Walter Trice	14.88	Joanne Reid	6.95	Bill Choi	5.45	Marvin Widenhouse	3.53
Emil Mortuk	13.95	Steve Maas	6.86	David Rogers	5.40	Matt Reklaitis	3.38
Joe Freedman	13.78	William Chu	6.76	Bill Bartholomay	5.29	Linda Rockwell	3.29
Jeb Horton	13.65	Abbas Zaltash	6.67	Chen-Fu Yu	5.29	Joann Feinstein	3.25
Mary Hickey	13.49	Jim Price	6.50	Jolie Rubin	5.20	Pete Lewandowski	3.25
Bob Glass	13.49	Bill Papa	6.44	Jeff Acierno	5.18	Stan Livingston	3.20
Neil Kazaross	13.04	Lloyd Lindauer	6.36	Marianne Gatenby	5.17	Michael Flohr	3.14
Keith Kuligowski	12.50	Richard del Furia	6.30	Eric Johnson	5.11	Mark Kushinsky	3.13
Al Jones	12.00	Rudy Langenbach	6.30	Hank Chesko	4.99	Paul Weaver	3.11
John Jennings	11.60	Bud Bowers	6.29	Dave Cardwell	4.80	Petko Kostadinov	3.06
Owen Black	11.44	David Rubin	6.25	Al Tesoro	4.71	Five tied with	3.00

STEVE SAX IS 2002 ABT PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Steve Sax (CA) combined a second place finish in the Chicago Open with a big Indiana Open win to edge runner-up Ed O'Laughlin 37.21 to 34.37 and claim 2002 American Backgammon Tour Player of the Year

honors. It was a fantastic year for Steve whose list of victories (in addition to his ABT results) included Masters and Blitz in Minnesota, Director's Cup in Indy, Mini-match in Chicago, Doubles in Los



Steve Sax at the 2002 Indiana Open.

Angeles, and a Jackpot in Las Vegas.

Sax, a contributing editor to *Gammon Village* and CHICAGO POINT, is ranked 20 in the world by his peers in the most recent *Giants of Backgammon* Listing. He is truly deserving of the 2002 accolades he receives.

Finishing second was Ed O'Laughlin (FL) who won both Pittsburgh and Georgia. The third place finisher, was Indiana's Chuck Bower who earned all of his 27.00 points on the strength of an 81-player Michigan Summer Championships victory.

The top three finishers will be awarded their distinctive trophies 14-16 February at the Pittsburgh Championships. Complete 2002 ABT results are at left. Δ



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2002 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

FINAL STANDINGS
101 players earned pts.

Lucky Nelson	26.72	Joann Feinstein	7.60	Keith Kuligowski	2.56	Jason Fishbein	0.88
Joe Wollick	26.50	Tim Serges	7.04	Tom Meyer	2.48	John Brussel	0.88
Bob Zavoral	20.54	Alice Kay	6.72	David Rubin	2.48	John Jennings	0.88
Tak Morioka	17.92	Eric Johnson	6.48	Kim Smith	2.40	Phyllis Shapiro	0.88
Herb Roman	17.48	Mark Murray	6.20	Jerry Brooks	2.40	Tia Bailey	0.64
Tim Mabee	13.24	David Araiza	6.12	Joe Auszmann	2.16	Terry Weiss	0.64
Tim Carroll	13.20	Bill Davis	6.00	Fred Badagnani	2.16	Don Marek	0.64
Steven Coren	13.04	Paul Lombardo	5.64	Arline Levy	2.16	Andy Natale	0.64
Ken Bond	12.68	Richard Stawowy	5.20	Roz Ferris	2.12	Bobbie Ivanova	0.64
Carter Mattig	12.64	David Wells	4.80	Lenny Loder	2.00	Kent Williams	0.64
Phyllis Smolinski	12.36	Barbara Levinson	4.64	Karen Meyer	1.88	John Stryker	0.60
Ed Buerger	11.12	Bill Keefe	4.40	Georgina Flanagan	1.52	Ronora Stryker	0.60
Rory Pascar	10.96	Michael Peters	4.24	Roland Dieter	1.44	Gary Kay	0.60
Bob Steen	10.64	Roger Hickman	4.24	Henry Gray	1.44	Kendra Welsey	0.56
Paul Baraz	10.50	Paul Franks	3.92	Howard Ring	1.38	Sakura Sugawara	0.56
Mike Sutton	10.08	Ilia Guzei	3.84	Jon Vietor	1.28	Erik D. Erland	0.56
Don Jayhan	9.68	Dave Cramer	3.84	Bill Sandman	1.28	Reginald Porter	0.56
Wayne Wiest	9.44	Darrell Marcus	3.32	Brian Barber	1.28	Bob Stringer	0.56
Norma Shyer	9.08	Royal Robinson	3.28	Elaine Kehm	1.20	Jim Roland	0.48
Bill Bartholomay	8.88	Doug Rodgers	3.12	Lindsay Mattig	1.16	Erik A. Erland	0.40
Glenn Martells	8.60	Mary Franks	3.12	Scott Richardson	1.12	Joe Szwedo	0.40
Paul Friedman	8.52	Aaron Ashmann	3.04	Ken Tyszko	1.12	Steve Neidecker	0.40
Mitch Pomper	8.48	Steve Klesker	2.88	Femi Owiku	1.04	Amy Trudeau	0.40
Peter Kalba	8.44	Phil Martorelli	2.76	David Hart	0.96	Harry Carter	0.40
Val Zimnicki	8.12	Ken Tibbs	2.56	Nora Luna Righter	0.96	Scott Zucker	0.24
Richard Lloyd	7.92						

November Player of the Month: **PAUL FRIEDMAN**, on the strength of his victory in the Fall Trophy Tourney, captured 4.80 points and November honors. Tak Morioka (4.34) placed second and Ken Bond (3.72) finished third.

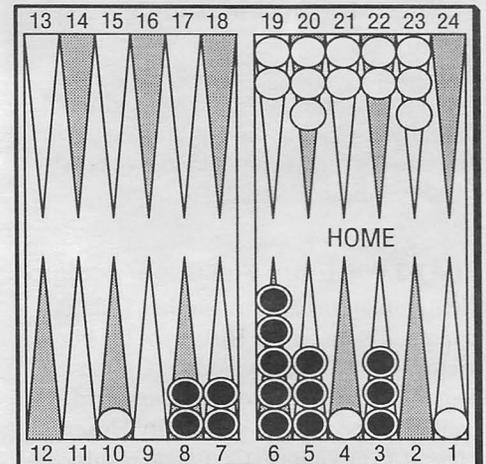
December Player of the Month: **LUCKY NELSON** won the last two tournaments of 2002 to earn 4.00 points and win Player of the Month and Year. Joe Wollick and Tak Morioka were runners-up with 3.60 points each.

your move

PROBLEM #287

to be analyzed by Mary Hickey

Match to 5 points tied at 4-4. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-2.**



DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS



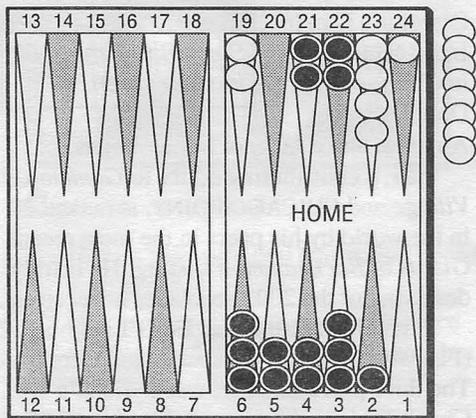
© 2003 by Danny Kleinman

'DOUBLES' TROUBLE

Dear Miss Lonelyblots: My friend and I are both new to the tournament scene. Recently we played in our first Doubles tournament. It was fun at first, but at double match-point, we had a very unpleasant situation. We were Black, and he was rolling the dice and moving the checkers.

Tournament double match-point.

BLACK TEAM TO PLAY 6-3.



My partner reflexively ran off the 3-anchor (22/13). Before I was able even to cry "Wait!" he picked up the dice. We were punished when Black rolled 5-3. Instead of a double shot, we had a single shot and needed a 3 to stay alive. He rolled a 6-2

and it was "game over."

Please tell my partner how wrong he was. Do you think the team member on roll should always have the final say? I think this rule is bad for teamwork.—Peeved Partner

DEAR PEEVED: I would have made the play you favor, 21/12, as reflexively as your partner made his play. In general, to maximize shot chances one should break the more advanced anchor, not the deeper one. A blot on the deepest occupied point is very lonely indeed.

In particular, the significant swings in this position occur when White rolls 5-3, 5-2 or 3-3. As you noticed, White's actual 5-3 left 11 shots after your partner's play but would have left 21 shots after yours. Had White rolled a 5-2, in contrast, your play would have yielded 17 shots while your partner's play would have yielded 21. That's a net gain of 12 shots in 1296 sequences for your play on these rolls.

We must also take White's 3-3 into consideration. After your partner's play, White's 3-3 leaves 11 shots while your play leaves none. Superficially, that virtually equalizes the shot chances of the two plays and makes it a toss-up between them. However, the chance that White will roll 3-3 actually favors your play, which keeps White from bearing any men off and retains the shot chances that you have in the position, which are slightly higher than 11 in 36.

So over all, the gain from your play is slightly more than 12 shots in 1296. Against that, some of White's 3s, 6-3 and 4-3, leave shots at two blots (on his 1-point

and 3-point) after your partner's play (but not after yours). Shots at the blot on the 1-point, though they duplicate the aces you can use to cover your own inside blot, are especially potent because they sometimes let you hit the blot on the 3-point too. Thus despite the greater frequency with which your play lets you hit shots, your partner's play is about equally good and may even be slightly better.

Regardless, your partner was wrong to lift his dice so quickly. It is not only discourteous, but also foolish not to give a teammate time to suggest an alternative move. Why play doubles at all except to be able to consult? Though I cannot tell whether your partner's haste in lifting his dice was intentional (from disrespect) or inadvertent (from inattention), you'd be wise to choose a different partner next time.

However, it is right for the rules to give the roller the final say on moves. Else disagreements between partners could be endless, which would be fair to neither the opponents nor the tournament. Rules cannot protect against everything. Rules should protect against the actions of an opponent, but (except in cases of dumping and other grievous offenses) not against the actions of a partner—Miss Lonelyblots Δ

Do you have a backgammon-related question for Miss Lonelyblots involving people problems, game etiquette or the play itself? Write: Dear Miss Lonelyblots, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155 or e-mail bg@chicagopoint.com.

CURTIS LUCAS...

[Continued from page 1]

with 18/8 is clearly better at this score because even when White enters and hits (except with 4-4 and 5-5), he faces the extremely dangerous jeopardy of being rehit with one or two additional blots exposed.

Not to worry. Reza danced and Curtis tossed 4-4, making his 5-point and eventually closing out his unlucky opponent to win a gammon and \$22,000 in prize money.

The \$3,000 Entry Fee Super Jackpot

Congratulations also to another \$22,000 winner, Texan Stuart Hosen for his big victory over Mike Svobodny (CA) in the Super Jackpot. Considering the world class caliber of the field, it was easily Hosen's biggest-ever victory. Complete results: Δ

LAS VEGAS OPEN

CHAMPIONSHIP (119): 1-Curtis Lucas (TX), 2-Reza Rezaian (NY), 3/4-Emil Mortuk (MI) / John O'Hagan (IN); 1C-Ary Nogueira (Brazil), 2C-Danilo Sahione (Brazil), 3C/4C-Saeed Karimi (TX) / Michael Meyburg (Germany); 1LC-Rafael Lopez de Lara (Mexico), 2LC-Lars Bentzon (Denmark). INTERMEDIATE (127): 1-Jerry George (TX), 2-Bob Fleck (NV), 3/4-Alain Azoulay (France) / Ken Bronstein (WA); 1C-Quentin Krueger (Canada), 2C-Boris Dekhtyar (Georgia/NJ), 3C/4C-Paula Estacolchic (Argentina/CA) / Emil Sepasy (CA); 1LC-Martin Short (ND), 2LC-Bill Papa (CA). BEGINNERS (52): 1-Tomiaki Nakajima (Japan), 2-Saad Henein (CA), 3/4-Pete Campbell (TX) / Cheryl Anderson (CA); 1C-Ron Hedington (WA), 2C-Stewart Pemberton (NY); 1LC-Robert Appell (CA), 2LC-Gerhart Duenzel (Germany). SUPERJACKPOT (16): 1-Stuart Hosen (TX), 2-Mike Svobodny (CA). LTD JACKPOT (16): 1-Jes Bondo (Denmark), 2-Paul Franks (NV). LTD JP OVERFLOW (14): 1-Lars Bentzon (Denmark), 2-Azzam Masarani (CA). MINI-MATCH EVENT (256): 1-Roger Gabrielson (CA). SENIORS EVENT (128): 1-Ron Bruns (CA), 2-Joe Moore (MA). DOUBLES (64 TEAMS): 1-John Gamalielson & Tom Taylor (WA), 2-Mark Ferrin & Bill Piland (OR). BLITZ (368): 1-David Levy (CA), 2-Raymond Rickard (FL). SATURDAY JACKPOT (29): 1-Steve Sax (CA), 2-Nick Maffeo (CA). GAMESGRID NACKGAMMON CUP (47): 1-Francois Tardieu (France), 2-Henning Frick (Germany). \$50 AFTER TOURNAMENT TOURNAMENT (28): 1-Nicole Taboury (France), 2-Dean Adamian (MI). \$20 AFTER TOURNAMENT TOURNAMENT (18): 1-Robert Appell (CA).

Backgammon Clubs in North America

Information for this listing has been obtained directly from the featured backgammon clubs. Changes are inevitable and we suggest that you always call before attending. CHICAGO POINT would like to maintain an accurate listing of USA Backgammon Clubs online at: www.chicagopoint.com/usclubs.html. Please send club information, including new clubs and club closings and updates to: **CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr 504; Chicago, IL 60659. 773/583-6464. Fax: 773/583-3264. E-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com**

WEST

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT [E-MAIL]	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Gammon Associates	Acapulco Cantina	Burbank, CA	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Patrick Gibson (pgibsonmfic@adelphia.net)	818/901-0464	7641 Orion Avenue; Van Nuys, CA 91406
"	A.R. Private Club	Los Angeles, CA	Sunday-2:00 PM	"	818/901-0464	"
Imperial Valley Backgammon Club	Downtown Chiropractic	El Centro, CA	1st Thursday monthly-7:00 PM	Doyle Pritchard (drbackjack@hotmail.com)	760/353-3045	707 State Street; El Centro, CA 92243
Sacramento Backgammon Club	Player's Sports Pub & Grill	Fair Oaks, CA	2nd & 4th Tuesday-6:30 PM	Doug Wilson (dbwilson@pacbell.net)	530/756-4872	3016 Bryant Place; Davis, CA 95616
Backgammon Club of San Diego	Embassy Suites Hotel	La Jolla, CA	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Adrian Costa (acosta@diversa.com)	619/223-1689	4914 Del Monte Avenue; San Diego, CA 92107
Redwood Empire BG Association	Embassy Suites Hotel	San Rafael, CA	3rd Saturday monthly-10:30 AM	Timothy Jaxon (jaxon@sonic.net)	707/477-6430	7171 E. Hurlbut Avenue, Sebastopol, CA 95472
"	Flatiron Grill	San Rafael, CA	2nd Wed. monthly-6:30 PM	"	707/477-6430	"
Backgammon By The Bay	Gigi's Bakery & Cafe	Scotts Valley, CA	4th Saturday monthly-11:45 AM	Beth Skillman (beth@backgammon.org)	831/688-9722	308 Arthur Avenue; Aptos, CA 95003
"	Shattuck Hotel	Berkeley, CA	2nd Sunday monthly-1:00 PM	"	831/688-9722	"
Aloha State Backgammon Club	Players Sports Club	Honolulu, HI	Friday-7:00 PM	Fred Collins (fcollins@hawaii.rr.com)	808/294-7475	1171 Akipola Street; Kailua, HI 96734
Boise Backgammon Club	TableRock Brewpub & Grill	Boise, ID	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Tami Jones (boisebackgammon@hotmail.com)	208/342-8865	812 E. Bannock A; Boise, ID 83712
Backgammon Club of Las Vegas	Elks Lodge	Las Vegas, NV	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Michael Maxakuli	702/732-9483	750 Royal Crest Circle 357; Las Vegas, NV 89109
Nevada Backgammon Association	Riviera Hotel & Casino	Las Vegas, NV	Go to: www.nvbg.com	Howard Markowitz (howard1@lvcm.com)	702/893-6025	2620 S. Maryland Pkwy, Box 230; Las Vegas, NV 89109
Puget Sound Backgammon Club	Wizards Restaurant/Casino	Seattle, WA	Tuesday-7:30 PM	Ruth Robbins (ruthles5@attbi.com)	425/226-3120	12611 155th Ave. SE; Renton, WA 98059

CENTRAL

Bloomington-Normal BG Club	Ride The Nine	Bloomington, IL	Monday-6:00 PM	Rob Farmer (rdfarmer@hotmail.com)	309/821-9766	1306 North Main Street; Bloomington, IL 61701
Chicago Bar Point Club	Clarion Barcelo Hotel	Chicago, IL	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Bill Davis (bg@chicagopoint.com)	773/583-6464	3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659
"	Champs Sports Bar	Oakbrook Terrace, IL	Sunday bimonthly-11:45 AM	Peter Kalba (bg@chicagopoint.com)	773/252-7755	2510 W. Iowa Street; Chicago, IL 60622
T/P Backgammon Club	Java Oasis	Chicago, IL	Wednesday-6:30 PM	J. A. Miller (jamman328@yahoo.com)	312/719-1245	P.O. Box 8630; Chicago, IL 60680
Peoria Backgammon Club	Peoria Pizza Works	Peoria, IL	Thursday - 6:30 PM	Ed Zell (bg@thezells.com)	309/674-0557	2009 W. Clarke Avenue, West Peoria, IL 61604
Sangamon Valley BG Association	Brewhaus	Springfield, IL	Wednesday-6:30 PM	Ben Zemaitis (bzemaiti@fgi.net)	217/483-4028	301 Estes Park Drive; Chatham, IL 62629
"	Wildlife Sports Bar	Springfield, IL	1st Sat./Nov. to Apr.-11:30 AM	Randy Armstrong (randya@insightbb.com)	217/528-0117	2012 N. 20th Street; Springfield, IL 62702
Pub Club	Danny's Grill & Bar	Villa Park, IL	Monday-7:00 PM	Joe Wollick	847/942-2068	268 Kosan Circle; Streamwood, IL 60107
Winnetka Backgammon Club	Winnetka Community House	Winnetka, IL	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Trudie Chibnik (winnbackgammon@aol.com)	847/446-0537	740 Ballantrae Drive B; Northbrook, IL 60062
Hoosier Backgammon Club	Neon Johnny's	Indianapolis, IN	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Butch & Mary Ann Meese (indybg@comcast.net)	317/255-8902	1008 Tuckahoe Street; Indianapolis, IN 46260
Northwest Indiana BG Association	VFW Hall	Porter, IN	Saturday monthly-1:30 PM	Charlie Halberstadt (chbug@yahoo.com)	219/785-2082	P.O. Box 84; Westville, IN 46391
Flint Area Backgammon Club	Days Inn	Flint, MI	Thursday-7:00 PM	Carol Joy Cole (cjc@tir.com)	810/232-9731	3719 Greenbrook Lane; Flint, MI 48507
Grand Rapids Backgammon Club	Garden Room Cafe	Grand Rapids, MI	Tuesday-7:00 PM	John Drexel (info@grbg.org)	616/647-9965	4845 Brookgate Drive NW; Comstock Park, MI 49321
Plymouth Backgammon Club	Box Bar & Grill	Plymouth, MI	Wednesday-7:30 PM	Dean Adamian (Dean3491@hotmail.com)	734/981-5706	42954 Barchester; Canton, MI 48187
Troy Backgammon Club	Mr. B's Restaurant	Troy, MI	Monday-6:30 PM	Sal Chehayeb (allthekingsmench@aol.com)	248/219-5624	P.O. Box 99432; Troy, MI 48099
Universal Backgammon Series	All The King's Men Chess	Warren, MI	Saturday bimonthly-11:00 AM	Ed Mandell (allthekingsmench@aol.com)	586/558-4790	All the Kings Men; Univ. Mall; 28760 Dequindre; Warren, MI 48092
Twin Cities Backgammon Club	Little Wagon	Minneapolis, MN	Thursday-7:00 PM	Steve Brown (scbrown@visi.com)	651/699-6758	1369 Scheffer Avenue; St. Paul, MN 55116
Greater Columbus Backgammon Club	Lucky's Grille	Hilliard, OH	3rd Sunday monthly-1:30 PM	Michael Haney (gcbbc@columbus.rr.com)	614/771-0981	5289 Bonner Drive; Hilliard, OH 43026

(Continued on opposite side)

CENTRAL (continued)

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT (E-MAIL)	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Ohio State Backgammon Club	Thirsty Dog Brewery	Canton, OH	Sunday monthly-1:30 PM	Joe Miller (osbc@neo.rr.com)	330/966-2811	6633 Lake-O-Springs; Canton, OH 44718
"	Boulevard Tavern	Cuyahoga Falls, OH	Wednesday-6:30 PM	"	330/966-2811	"
Dallas Backgammon League	IHOP	Addison, TX	Wednesday-7:45 PM	Tom Wheeler (malcolm3@ix.netcom.com)	972/484-3038	3705 Pageant Place, Dallas, TX 75244
Austin Backgammon Association	JC's Bar and Grill	Austin, TX	Mon-7:30 PM; Sun bimonthly-12:30 PM	Jackie Seiders-Smart (jseiders@austin.rr.com)	512/261-8518	30 Hightrail Way, Austin, TX 78738
Houston Backgammon Club	Sansone's West Oaks Bar	Houston, TX	2nd Saturday monthly-1:00 PM	Tom Wright (tomw64@hotmail.com)	281/556-0428	14147 Lost Meadow Lane; Houston, TX 77079
West Texas Backgammon Club	Big Daddy's	Odessa, TX	1st & 3rd Saturday-12:30 PM	Joe Tucker (wtxbc@yahoo.com)	915/366-1631	3313 Sherbrook Road; Odessa, TX 79762
Madison Backgammon Club	J.T. Whitney's	Madison, WI	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Tom Machaj (machaj@charter.net)	608/276-8144	P.O. Box 45405; Madison, WI 53744
Milwaukee Backgammon Club	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Rudy Langenbach (milwbg@webtv.net)	414/962-8549	PO Box 511671; Milwaukee, WI 53202

NORTHEAST

Beltway Backgammon Club	Promenade Cardroom	Bethesda, MD	Twice Sunday monthly-12:00 PM	Barry Silliman (sillybaz@beltwaybg.org)	202/777-2641 x1375	P.O. Box 612; Walkersville, MD 21793
New England Backgammon Club	Holiday Inn	Somerville, MA	Wed-7 PM, Sun monthly-12:30 PM	Brad Mampe (mamps@mindspring.com)	617/779-8209	185 Chestnut Hill Avenue 2; Brighton, MA 02135
New Jersey Backgammon Club	Bergen Bridge Club	Bogota, NJ	Friday-7:00 PM	Fred Fado (qcamm@america.com)	973/537-9128	670 Mt. Hope Avenue; Wharton, NJ 07885
Mid Jersey Backgammon Club	Town and Country Inn	Keyport, NJ	Thursday-7:30 PM	Mike Battaglia (mike_battaglia@hotmail.com)	732-492-7123	P.O. Box 662; Spring Lake, NJ 07762
Ace Point Backgammon Club	Clubroom	New York, NY	Daily-1:00 PM, Tour. Sun. monthly	Alan & Lourdes Steffen (asteffen@nyc.rr.com)	212/753-0842	41 E. 60th Street; New York, NY 10022
New York Chess & Backgammon	Clubroom	New York, NY	Daily-11 AM, Tour. Sun.-2 PM	Steve Manning (nycb@newyorkchessandbackgammon.com)	212/869-6057	120 W. 41st Street 4; New York, NY 10036
Backgammon Board of Rochester	Bagel Bin Café	Rochester, NY	Sunday monthly-1:00 PM	Bob Hoey	585/461-2619	226 Ashbourne Road; Rochester, NY 14618
Pittsburgh Backgammon Club	Toby's Restaurant	Forest Hills, PA	Thursday-8:00 PM	Steve Hast (pghsteve1@aol.com)	412/823-7500	3560 Ridgewood Drive; Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Harrisburg Backgammon Club	Elephant & Castle Pub	New Cumberland, PA	1st Sunday monthly-12:00 noon	Steve Shoemaker (nls132@comcast.net)	717/545-4546	6261 S. Highlands Circle; Harrisburg, PA 17111
Tyson's Corner Backgammon Club	Doubletree Hotel	Falls Church, VA	Monday-7:00 PM	Bill Etue (billetue@aol.com)	703/620-3153	11833 Shire Court 1A; Reston, VA 22043

SOUTH

Suncoast Backgammon Assoc.	New York, New York Lounge	Clearwater, FL	Monday & Friday-6:00 PM	Drew Giovanis (dgiovan1@tampabay.rr.com)	727/726-1398	25350 US Hwy 19 N 67; Clearwater, FL 33763
South Florida Backgammon Club	Sheraton Suites	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Sat.-1 PM; Sun. monthly-12 N	Elayne Feinstein (BGINFla210@aol.com)	954/564-0340	659 W. Oakland Park Blvd.; Oakland Park, FL 33311
Orlando Backgammon	Mulligan's	Orlando, FL	Tuesday-7:30 PM	David Thomas (dlt@iag.net)	386/736-0502	P.O. Box 803; Deland, FL 32721
Atlanta Backgammon Association	Barnacles Restaurant	Doraville, GA	1st & 3rd Monday-7:30 PM	Dave Cardwell (BGINGA@mindspring.com)	770/333-1876	111 Radford Circle SW; Marietta, GA 30060
"	Sidelines Grille	Marietta, GA	1st & 3rd Thursday-7:30 PM	"	770/333-1876	"
"	Mazzy's Sports Bar & Grill	Roswell, GA	Last Sat. monthly-12:00 noon	"	770/333-1876	"
Louisville Backgammon Club	Utopia International Café	Louisville, KY	1st & 3rd Thursday-6:30 PM	Quint McTyeire (hnm@gdm.com)	502/896-9783	4906 Crofton Road; Louisville, KY 40207
Charlotte Backgammon Club	O'Charley's	Charlotte, NC	Monday-6:30 PM	Jeb Horton (jeb@carolina.rr.com)	704/814-0850	2217-D Matthews Township Pkwy 128; Matthews, NC 28105
Triangle Backgammon Club	Irregardless Cafe	Raleigh, NC	Last Monday monthly	Steven Holtzer (sholtzer@nc.rr.com)	919/217-1199	1012 Tarford Place; Knightdale, NC 27545
Nashville Backgammon Club	Sam's Place	Nashville, TN	Wednesday-6:45 PM	J.P. White (info@nashvillebackgammon.com)	615/824-9461	114 Dorcas Drive; Hendersonville, TN 37075

CANADA

Backgammon Vancouver	Vancouver Bridge Club	Vancouver, BC	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Mark Cohen (markcohen@shaw.ca)	604/261-2345	6207 Balsam Street, Vancouver, BC, V6M 4C4, Canada
Nat'l Capital Backgammon Club	Bobby's Bar & Restaurant	Gloucester, ON	1st Sunday monthly-11:00 AM	Eden Windish (rlsard707@rogers.com)	613/741-2530	396 Bangs St.; Ottawa ON, K1K 2N6; Canada
Toronto Backgammon Club	Smilin' Jack's	Toronto, ON	Daily-7PM, Tour 2nd Sun monthly-2PM	Vladimir Dobrich	416/722-9709	106 Wells Street; Toronto ON, M5R 1P3; Canada

PROSE...

[Continued from page 1]

I looked at the score—3-3 in a 17-point match. Hmm, that didn't help! Later, I showed this to various players, and asked "Who is on roll?" Neither side should redouble, so the answers split. Most players leaned toward White redoubling, since he has 15 powerful shakes, and wins a lot of gammons . . . if he wins. The others decided that, if whichever side they chose was on roll, Black stood better overall. In fact, Black really is close to a proper redouble, as he wins about 2/3, and nearly 30% of the times he wins, he wins a gammon.

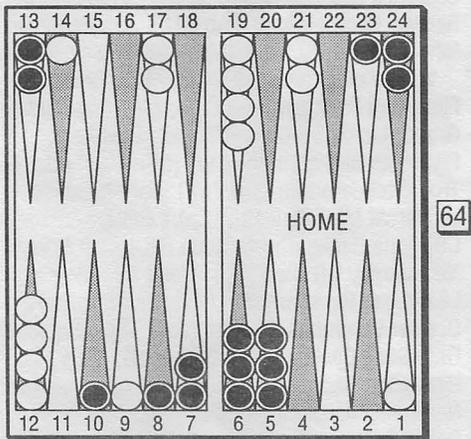
In real life it was Black redoubling, as I learned when White passed!

Welcome to the ProAm Invitational. From November 16-24, Howard Markowitz and a top-flight staff staged a huge tournament at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas. By combining the ProAm with the Nevada State Championships, Howard was able to draw hundreds of players, including most of the world's best.

(Though the three Chicagoans voted into the Giant 32 were all absent. Notes from your mothers, gentlemen!)

The ProAm Invitational is played in a doubles tournament format. The entry is \$13,000, and the teams willing to cough up that kind of dough are made up of some of the best players in the game.

Pos. 2. 17-pt. match. Black leads White 11-8. BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.

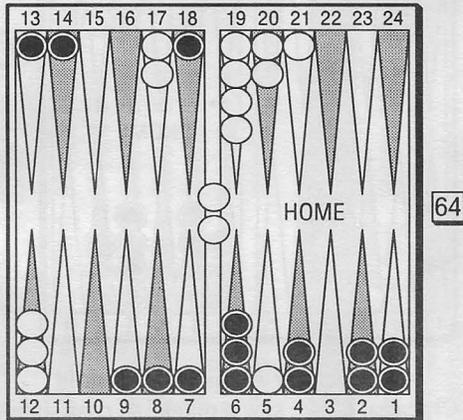


Armando Balbi, Jerry Grandell, Stu Hosen, Steve Sax. After paying \$13,000, how'd you like to face one of them!? At this board, those four were facing each other, Armando and Jerry acting as the Boys from Brazil (Jerry is an honorary member), while Stu and Steve formed the Red-Headed League. Armando and Jerry (Black) led 11-8 to 17 when Jerry rolled 6-4. I see at least five plays to think about: hitting on the 14-point; bringing two down;

hitting twice; making the 4-point; or making the acepoint.

The last play is also the worst play. Of the hitting plays I would lean toward bringing two men down as it leaves the fewest returns and gives you six builders for the 4-point. But all the hitting plays are blunders. Building the 4-point is best. (Armando and Jerry actually played 24/14*.)

Pos. 3. 17 pt. match. Black leads White, 15-10. BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.

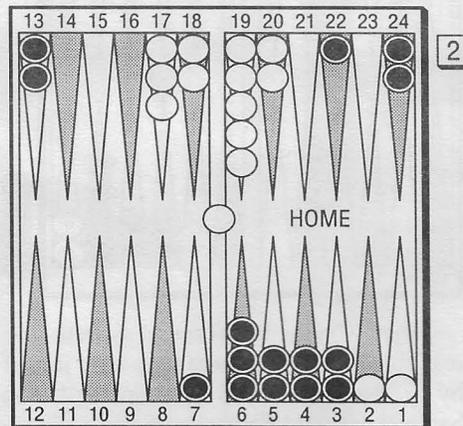


Argentinean great Leo Fernandez, and his partner, Portugal's Jose Salema, were in comfy shape in their match with Hammond & Svobodny, when Leo rolled this 5-4.

There are two things that are true: (1) the best play to win the game is to make the 3-point; and (2) if you make the 3-point, when you win, you'll almost always win a gammon.

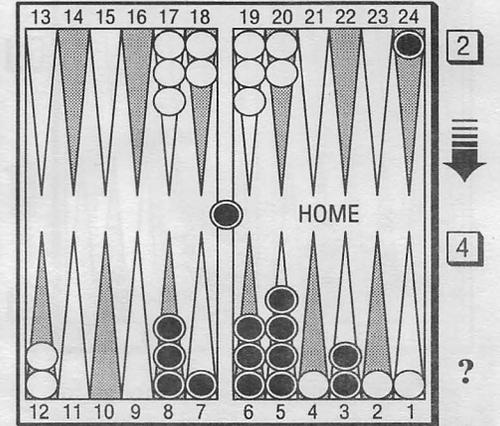
So, make the 3-point? No! If you hit (14/5* is the best way), White will have three men up against a four-point board. On his side, he has only a two-point board, and a blot. Meanwhile the cube is still available to you. Pointing wins 87.8%, and hitting 86.5%, so hitting costs only 1.3% wins. Meanwhile, though pointing wins 71.2% gammons, hitting grabs 76.9%. Leo and Jose pointed, but won a gammon and the match anyway.

Pos. 4. 17-pt. match. Black leads White 8-4. BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.



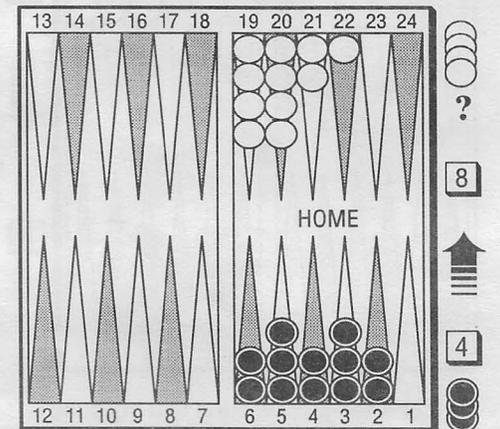
Great players make for great problems. Unfortunately, because there were so many good matches, I couldn't watch all of them! Someone showed me this position, and I know it came from a match between X-22 and Falafel, but who was rolling, and how they played it, I cannot tell you. The debate was between 6/2*, 24/23 and 6/2*/1*. In discussing it 6/2*, 22/21 and 6/2*, 13/12 were mentioned in passing. Actually, both of those latter two are better than splitting the acepoint. All three are inferior to the double hit.

Pos. 5. 19-pt. match. White leads Black 5-4. WHITE ON ROLL. CUBE ACTIONS?



I've remarked on this before: top players have bigger cubes. The triple shot and the prime might scare lesser players, but Donald Kahn and his partner Kit Woolsey (author of the brand new *Encyclopedia of Backgammon*) correctly took, and were "rewarded" when they reached:

Pos. 6. 19-pt. match. White leads Black 5-4. Black recubes. SHOULD WHITE TAKE?



Black has one extra man, but a seven pip lead. It turns out that his cubeless probability of winning is exactly 76%. White's takepoint is slightly higher than normal, at 26%, and his recube is somewhat crippled, since Black only needs about 14% winning chances to take a 16-cube.

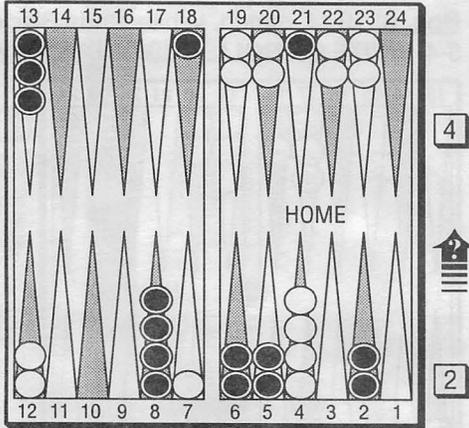
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PROSE...

[Continued from page 7]

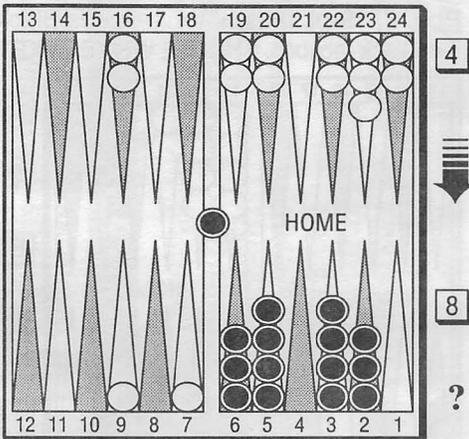
But cube efficiency is pretty high in races, and White has a proper take. I put the quotes around "rewarded" up above, because Leo and Jose took, and won eight points. Kahn/Woolsey nearly pulled off a long post-Crawford rally, before being stopped 15-19.

Pos. 7. 19-pt. match. Black leads White 8-7. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



If an 8-game isn't giddy enough for you, how about a 16? Martha Ghio and Kent Goulding (Black) don't have quite enough here to redouble, since their opponents have a better board. Herb Gurland and Ed O'Laughlin had no trouble taking, and no trouble redoubling here.

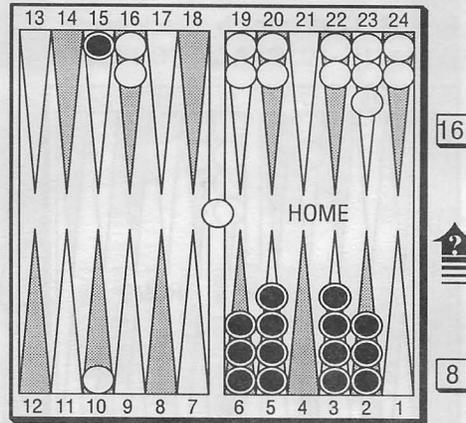
Pos. 8. 19-pt. match. Black leads White 8-7. White redoubles. **TAKE FOR BLACK?**



The knee-jerk reaction to a big cube is that the takepoint must be lower than normal. In fact, the one point lead is enough to raise Black's takepoint to almost 27%. Meanwhile, the recube is severely crippled since White only needs about 9% to take on 16. The seven pip race lead puts this right on the money border and a big pass at the score, but Martha and KG misguessed over the board. White rolled 6-3,

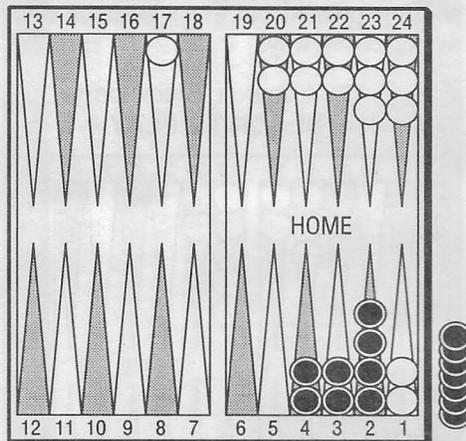
and chose the slightly inaccurate 16/10, 18/15. The tradeoff seems to be two extra building numbers, for only one extra shot, but in fact 4-4 is still a joker for Black, so 18/12, 16/13 is best. The difference isn't huge, but it is big enough, especially when Black rolls 4-6 off the bar!

Pos. 9. 19-pt. match. Black leads White 8-7. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



At Riverview Amusement Park in Chicago, I once saw a magician pass sheets of metal through a box occupied by his assistant. Paying an extra quarter, I was allowed to mount the stage, and peek over the top of the box. Inside I found the woman, extremely skinny and extremely flexible, had managed to solve the improbable geometry problem by fitting into a very narrow space. Given the small doubling window, and the likelihood of the position being too good, fitting a cube in here would require some magic. But this is a magical position, and the correct action is double/take. Needless to say it didn't go that way at the table, and after rolling a 5, Martha and KG played on and won a gammon.

Pos. 10. 23-pt. finals tied at 22-all. **WHITE ON ROLL...**



They won their next round as well, reaching the finals, where they were joined by Armando Balbi and Jerry Grandell, who had just defeated Fernandez/Salema via a

16-game of their own. After a thrilling seven hour final (if *that* isn't an oxymoron), it all came down to this. With White on roll, Black's chances are up to 97.2%, but a just small enough 5-2 followed by the double shot-leaving 4-3, and 97.2% quickly dwindled away to zero.

Congratulations to Armando and Jerry, 2002 ProAm winners!—*Jake Jacobs* Δ

LAS VEGAS PRO-AM DOUBLES

OPEN (21 teams): 1-Jerry Grandell (Sweden) & Armando Balbi (Brazil), 2-Kent Goulding (MD) & Martha Ghio (NY), 3/4-Leo Fernandez (Argentina) & José Salema (Portugal) / John Rockwell (CA) & Jim Aita (CA) & Danielle Rager (CA).

SPECIAL \$2,000 JACKPOT (8): 1-Armando Balbi (Brazil), 2-Jerry Grandell (Sweden).

2002 PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

NATIONAL (Alphabetized by State)

American Backgammon Tour: *Steve Sax* (CA)
 Gammon Associates (CA): *Rudy Citrom*
 Redwood Empire BG Club (CA): *Bob Stringer*
 South Florida Backgammon Club (FL): *Don Heinsler*
 Atlanta Backgammon Assn. (GA): *Greg Cattanach*
 Chicago Bar Point Club (IL): *Lucky Nelson*
 Pub Club (IL): *Joe Wollick*
 Peoria Backgammon Club (IL): *Ed Bauder*
 T/P Backgammon Club (IL): *Roger Hickman*
 Winnetka Backgammon Club (IL): *Joe Wollick*
 Sangamon Valley BG Assn. (IL): *Ben Zemaitis*
 Bloomington-Normal BG Club (IL): *Ed Bauder*
 Hoosier Backgammon Club (IN): *Jim Curtis*
 Northwest Indiana BG Club (IN): *Tom Wade*
 Louisville Backgammon Club (KY): *Frank Frigo*
 Beltway Backgammon Club (MD): *Barry Silliman*
 New England BG Club (MA): *Nora Luna-Righter*,
Wizard of Wednesday Night: Herb Gurland.
 Flint Area Backgammon Club (MI): *Rick Todd*
 Grand Rapids BG Club (MI): *Jim Slomkoski*
 Plymouth Backgammon Club (MI): *Dean Adamian*
 Troy Backgammon Club (MI): *Sal Chehayeb*
 Universal Mall Series (MI): *Art Gillis*
 Charlotte Backgammon Club (NC): *Jeb Horton*
 New Jersey BG Club (NJ): *Boris Dekhtyar*
 Las Vegas Backgammon (NV): *Jeff Burdsall*
 Greater Columbus BG Club (OH): *Drew Robinson*
 Ohio State Backgammon Club (OH): *Mary Hickey*
 Pittsburgh Backgammon Club (PA): *Bill Versaw*
 Nashville Backgammon Club (TN): *Rollow Mickle*
 Dallas Backgammon League (TX): *Malcolm Davis*
 Houston Backgammon Club (TX): *James Bray*
 West Texas Backgammon Club (TX): *Joe Tucker*
 Puget Sound BG Club (WA): *John Gamalielson*
 Madison Backgammon Club (WI): *Brad Anderson*

INTERNATIONAL

World Champion: *Mads Andersen* (Denmark)
 European Champion: *Katja Sophie Spillum* (Norway)
 Italian Champion: *Matteo Di Napoli*
 National Capital BG Club (Canada): *Eden Windish*
 Backgammon Vancouver (Canada): *Robert Chow*
 BIBA Grand Prix Championship (UK): *David Startin*
 BIBA Ranking Championship (UK): *Tony Lee*

AMALGAMATION

The added bonus prize at the upcoming 20th Anniversary Midwest Backgammon Championships (21–23 March at the Wyndham Lisle) is **Tak Morioka's** (IL) Taki-Retro backgammon board with antique bakelite checkers valued at \$1250. Go to www.chicagopoint.com/mbc.html for the details... Visiting the Bar Point Club in Nov./Dec.: **Bob Gekas** (CA), **Katya Ileva** (IN), **Tom Hanlon** (CT), and **David Williams** (OH)... **Terry Valentine** (AZ) reports that on November 13th, **Grace Osborn**, 89, died at Tucson, AZ. Grace had joined the Tucson Backgammon Club in 1997 as a beginner, but finished the '98 season in 7th place overall... This month, the Chicago Bar Point Club loses **Ken Bond** and **Joann Feinstein** to warmer climates until March. Ken is off to Ft. Lauderdale, while Joann and husband Jerry will be in Acapulco... Watch for the May release of a new book by **Kit Woolsey** (CA): *Understanding Backgammon*. In the book, Kit analyzes errors from the perspective of Boise Backgammon Club director **Tami Jones** (ID), and average intermediate player... Pub Club director **Joe Wollick** (IL) is looking into opening a second Chicagoland club on Thursday nights. T/P Club director **J.A. Miller** (IL) is also looking for a new location and possible day change... Congratulations to European Championships director **Marco Fornasir** upon his 16 December marriage to **Anita Guerra** in Milan, Italy... Former Chicago expert **Kathy Posner** was featured in the 17 November Chicago Sun-Times. She is selling her 2.5 million dollar condo at 100 E. Huron (a gift from a wealthy friend). The catch—you also have to buy her Ferrari F355 Spider convertible. Reach Kathy at posnercondo@aol.com... **Joaquin Phoenix** is another celebrity backgammon fan. In between work, he likes to “swim, read scripts, and play backgammon.” **Tomas Arana** who plays a Roman soldier in *Gladiator* describes Joaquin as a “. . . zany, very disciplined actor who sleeps little and is an excessively good backgammon player—I lost money to him.”... **Liz Barker** is making a name for herself in the United Kingdom, aside from recording matches, directing tournaments, and editing the newsletter *Make Your Point*, she also is webmaster for the site: www.gammonitis.com... Finally, it was baseball legend **Branch Rickey** who said, “Good luck is what is left over after intelligence and efforts have combined at their best. . . Luck is the residue of design.” Good luck in 2K3 from CHICAGO POINT. Δ

bpc player of the year

HE'S LUCKY, AND HE'S GOOD!

Lucky Nelson lived up to his name winning last two tournaments of the year to edge Joe Wollick by 0.22 points and become the Chicago Bar Point Club's 2002 Player of the Year. In late November, Lucky held a slim lead over Joe Wollick who was going for a Chicagoland “Triple Crown”: Player of the Year at the Pub Club, Winnetka Club and Bar Point Club. Lucky's pre-planned two week vacation in Aruba was the opening Joe needed. When Lucky returned, Joe had earned enough points to take the lead.

With only two weeks to go and Joe ahead by 2.56, Lucky would need to cash twice. The two faced each other in round one of the Masters event on 17 December. Joe won and went on the split the Masters earning 1.44 points. But Lucky lost quick enough to get into the Open event (with only two minutes to spare!) and went on to win outright collecting 2.08 points.

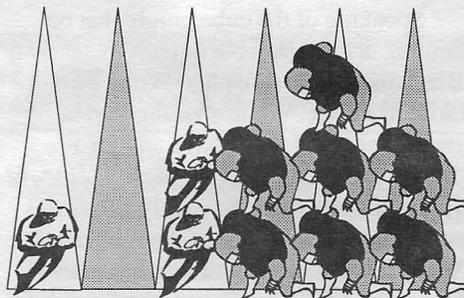
On a special post-Christmas 26 December meeting, Lucky could only win with an outright victory and no points for Joe. The round-of-eight was



Lucky Nelson. 2002 Chicago Bar Point Club Player of the Year.

critical as the two competitors faced each other. Lucky prevailed the hard-fought battle and went on to defeat Peter Kalba and Herb Roman to complete a nine match win streak. He celebrated his incredible accomplishment by buying drinks for the house at our 2 January tournament.

Lucky, Joe, 3rd place finisher Bob Zavoral, and the other Top 20 of 2002 will be honored at the BPC Awards Night 14 January. Join us and have a free drink on the Bar Point Club. Δ



BG/Superbowl Action Ideas

Looking for ways to merge backgammon with Superbowl Sunday? Try these:

1. **CUBE FOOTBALL.** Make a bet on the game with your friend at the established line. During any commercial break, you can double your opponent who must either take, pass, or beaver the cube before the start of the next play. Score a gammon if your team “beats the spread” by 14 or more points. To make it more interesting, you can win a gammon without cubing.
2. **PLAYING FOR POINTS.** Make a football bet with your friend at the established Vegas line. Then, an hour prior to kickoff, play him for half-points instead of money up until kickoff time. For example, if the Vegas line makes your team a +6 point underdog and you win 14 points at backgammon, your team now is getting +13 points. Δ

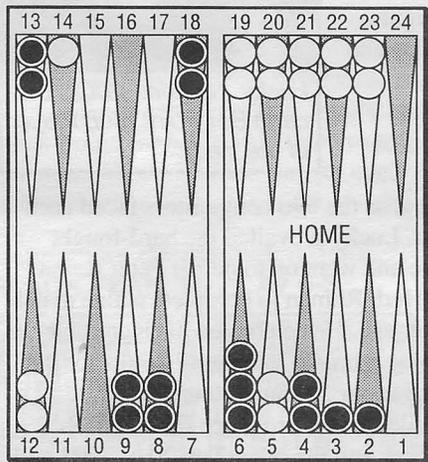
JOHN BRUSSEL MINUS 70 POUNDS



It was nice to have backgammon auctioneer extraordinaire John Brussel at the last Chicago Bar Point Club tournament of 2002. John, who has been battling an extended illness, looked better than ever as a result of his 70 pound weight loss.

**PROBLEM #286
ANALYZED**

by Kit Woolsey

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

Black has three possible approaches:

- (1) He can play safe and tear up his board with 6/2, 4/1
- (2) He can keep everything in one piece and leave one blot and one direct shot with 9/2 or 13/10, 13/9
- (3) He can go all out with 18/14*, 6/3.

We can eliminate 9/2 and 13/10, 13/9 simply because they have to be worse than the safe play. 9/2 or 13/10, 13/9 leave a crushing direct shot, and don't gain Black much if he survives the shot. Black loses a valuable point, and he will have the same problems of clearing the back anchor in the future. These plays do keep Black's position in one piece better than 6/2, 4/1 if White misses, but the cost if White hits so outweighs this gain that the completely safe play has to be superior.

How do things look after 6/2, 4/1? Pretty ugly. Black's board is a wreck, and he is unlikely to be able to put it back together quickly. White will be able to play where she wants with complete freedom, and Black will be unable to hit a shot until he is able to clean up the blots in his inner board. Still, Black is far from lost. He is only a little behind in the race, and his checkers are safe for now. He will probably be able to clear either the 9- or 8-point next turn while he waits for the doubles he needs to bring his outfield checkers home. Meanwhile White will have to do something, and any move White makes will release some of the pressure on Black's fragile position. Most likely White will

break off the back anchor in the next roll or two while she can do so safely. The likely result is that Black will wind up with a bar-point holding game a little behind in the race. He will be an underdog, but there will be plenty of play left.

Now let's look at the big play: 18/14*, 6/3. Clearly if White hits back, Black is in very serious gammon danger. Is it worth the risk in order to put White on the bar against a three-point board and gain substantially in the race?

First, let's count White's hitting rolls so we know what kind of risk we are talking about. Any 2, 1-1, 1-6, and 5-6. That comes to 16 shot numbers. White has nine flunks, and 11 rolls which enter but don't hit.

We know what happens when White hits. Suppose White misses. Black will be in decent shape, but he will be far from a claim. He will have three blots to worry about, and White still has that huge board. Even if Black cleans up those blots, White will have plenty of chances from his 5-point holding game, with both shot-hitting and race potential. Black may eventually close in on a decent cube, but he has a long way to go before he reaches that point.

Speaking of the cube, might that be coming across the table quickly? Clearly if Black makes the safe play, White isn't close to a cube. White's racing lead is small, and she doesn't have any great threats. However, if Black plays 18/14*, 6/3, it is another story. Suddenly White has some huge threats—16 of them in fact. If White hits back, she will lose her market by a mile. This is sufficient justification for White to turn the cube immediately. Black would still have a take since he would be in good shape if White missed, but White would nevertheless have a strong double.

Slow death or quick death? If it were just a question of that, then maybe the gambling hitting play would be right. However, as we have seen, Black is far from dead if he plays safe. He is a little behind in the race, but only a little behind, and he can probably continue to play safe. It isn't necessarily slow death at all. The hitting play, on the other hand, definitely risks quick death, and doesn't automatically win the game when it works. These considerations point to discretion being the better part of valor. Black should play 6/2, 4/1 and hope to roll a timely doubles later on.

Big plays are often called for in inferior positions, particularly when they are likely to win the game if they work or if the position is pretty hopeless without the big play. Since neither is the case here, it is time for the small play.—Kit Woolsey Δ

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

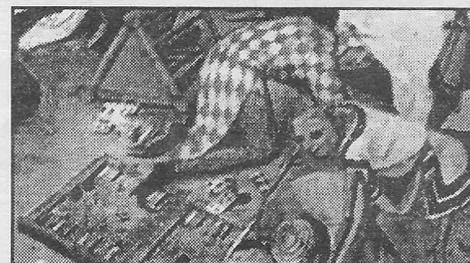
take for the full value. Local rules sometimes require the Box to roll, but he cannot consult. The Box pays his partner 2.5 points and gets out. Therefore, if the partner wins the game, he is +12.5.—Jake Jacobs

PAPER PREFERENCE

Enclosed is my renewal for another 12 issues of the POINT. Please don't go entirely to an Internet edition. I speak for your older subscribers who prefer a newspaper edition. So to you and your wonderful contributors, keep up the good work.—Jaakko Salava, Helsinki, Finland

TOO LATE

Greetings from my trip to the Museo Del Prado in Spain. Hell doesn't appear from this picture ("The Triumph of Death") to be a very pleasant destination. But it may be too late for us.—Dave Cramer, Chicago, Illinois



Above is the backgammon portion of the picture. The complete painting is at: <http://museoprado.mcu.es/prado/img/muerteg.jpeg> —Ed.

PLEXIGLASS SET FROM PARIS

I recently found a new plexiglass locking briefcase backgammon set. "Made in Paris" is on the tag with the keys. The guy at the flea market who I bought it from said it is 40 years old from a store called "Dapy." It looks very high end. Do you know anything about this set or its value?—David Weissman, via Internet

We'll ask our readers, Dave.—Ed.

ARCHIVING MAX'S OLD PHOTOS

Nice looking web site [chicagopoint.com]. At "Max's Backgammon Photo Album," how were you able to construct the "thumbnail" photos with captions in the "Archives" section? Yours is by far the best page of it's kind I've seen.—Milo Sutton, via Internet
We use "Web Album Wizard" for the Macintosh computer. It's really quite simple and a great way to store photos in an album format.—Ed. Δ

WINNER'S CIRCLE



Oct.-Dec. 2002

•**24th Flint Area Club Championship** (Flint, MI; 20 Oct.)... OPEN (28): 1-Jim Price, 2-Dion Hogan, 3/4-Paul Berg / Dan Grogan. INTERMEDIATE (18): 1-Mike Charison, 2-Geoff Petz, 3/4-Brad King / Steve Sherbel. NOVICE (8): 1-Michael Margosian, 2-Steve Homrighaus (OH).

•**22nd Swedish Open** (Stockholm, Sweden; 31 Oct.-3 Nov.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (61): 1-Stefan Berger, 2-Karsten Bølge, 3/4-Fredrik Reinholdson / Patrick Underoth; 1C-Tore Fredrikssen, 2C-Jan Bergström. INTERMEDIATE (40): 1-Bo Adler, 2-Björn Edström, 3/4-Örjan Näsbom / Rasoul Ghasemi; 1C-Liz Johansson / Martin Alm. BEGINNER (16): 1-Bahram Khalagi, 2-Daniel Hök; 1C-Robert Jonnarth, 2C-Lena Selin. DOUBLES: 1-Sven-Olav Noren & Börje Sundbom. SUPER JACKPOT: 1-Petter Bengtsson, 2-Pavel Bielewicz.

•**Turkey Trot Open** (Houston, TX; 9 Nov.)... OPEN (27): 1-Allen Hubenak, 2-Chris Stanford; 1C-James Bray, 2C-Claude Hargraves.

•**Townharbor Trophy** (Coventry, England; 9-10 Nov.)... OPEN (56): 1-John Clark, 2-Julian Fetterlein, 3-Stuart Mann, 4-Rodney Lighton. FRIDAY KO (16): 1-David Nathan, 2-Mike Wignall. DOUBLES (16): 1-Doppio Gioco, 2-Lucky Dice.

•**Hilton International Spring Tournament** (Adelaide, So. Australia; 10 Nov.)... OPEN (19): 1-Nick Begakis, 2-Paul Lewis, 3/4-Johan Eriksson / Peter Geelen.

•**20th Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney** (Chicago, IL; 12 Nov.)... OPEN (30): 1-Paul Friedman, 2-Ilia Guzei (WI), 3/4-Bob Steen / Tak Morioka; 1C-Ken Bond, 2C-Lenny Loder. INTERMEDIATE (32): 1-Keith Kuligowski, 2-Michael Peters, 3/4-Phyllis Shapiro / Eric Johnson; 1C-Paul Lombardo, 2C-Ken Tyszko. 1-POINT TOURNEY (32): 1-Mark Murray, 2-Paul Baraz.

•**Ramadan Tournament** (Abu Dhabi, UAE; 13-15 Nov.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (64): 1-Roger Chediac, 2-Ali Ataf, 3-Charles Abi Abboud, 4-Raaed Towaiji ... *Open to United Arab Emirates residents only.*

•**27th Finnish Open** (Helsinki, Finland; 16-17 Nov.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (32): 1-Petri Pietilä, 2-Kari Hotakainen; 1C-Jyri Lammi, 2C-Simo Suhonen. INTERMEDIATE (21): 1-Ville Kivioja, 2-Markus Pekki; 1C-Kimmo Seppälä, 2C-Tuomas Viskari. LAST CHANCE (9): 1-Arto Alenius, 2-Kari Salonpää... *Results sent by Tapio Palmroth.*

•**Greater Columbus Club Sunday** (Hilliard, OH; 17 Nov.)... OPEN (7): 1-Drew Robinson, 2-Howard Shirey.

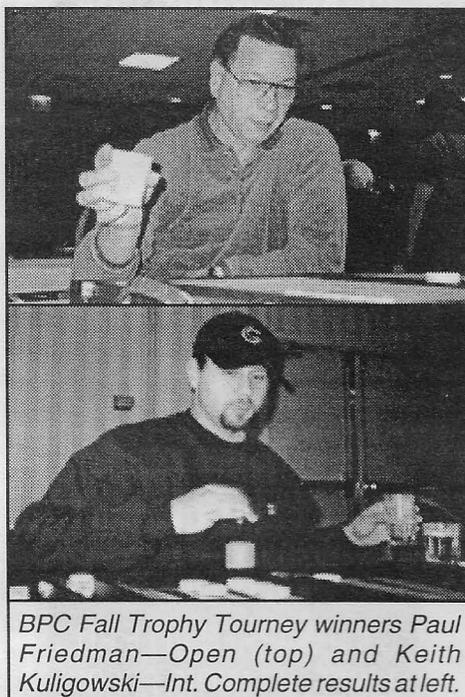
•**Danish Championship 2002** (Copenhagen,

Denmark; 23-24 Nov.)... OPEN (128): 1-Tue Rex, 2-Jens Neregaard, 3/4-Lars Bønding / Morten Daugbjerg; 1C-Christian Raith, 2C-Steffen Lundstrøm.

•**Ace Point Monthly** (New York, NY; 24 Nov.)... OPEN (7): 1-Jeremy Bagai (PA), 2-Richard Munitz. INTERMEDIATE (7): 1-Carlos Prado Salgado, 2-Joe Hickey; 1C-Joseph Jemal. NOVICE (4): 1-Lee Nevo; 1C-Mickey Lajoie.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 1 Dec.)... OPEN (12): 1/2-Tim Mabee / Joe Wollick; 1C-Ken Bond, 2C-Ilia Guzei. INTERMEDIATE (14): 1/2-Barbara Levinson / Phil Martorelli; 1C-Michael Peters, 2C-Amy Trudeau.

•**World Grand Championship** (Tangier, Morocco; 2-8 Dec.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (44): 1-Tobias Hellwag (Germany), 2-Jakov Nepomniagutchi (Russia), 3/4-Phil Laak (USA) / Jose Salema (Portugal); 1C-David Wells (USA), 2C-Volker Sonnabend (Germany); 3C/4C-Ricardo Malas (Spain) / Peter Naguib (Germany); 1LC-Anatoly Machulsky (Russia), 2LC-Shimon Yanien (Israel). INTERMEDIATE/BEGINNER (10): 1-Martin de Bruin (USA/Spain), 2-Carsten Byrn (Denmark), 3/4-Michu Milkov (Russia) / Kazuko Numazawa (Japan). TANGIER CASINO KICKOFF: 1-Kenji Shimodaira (Japan), Shimon Yanien (Israel). \$500 JACKPOT: 1-Peter Heitmüller (Germany), 2-Andreas Humke (Germany). SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-David Wells (USA). DOUBLES: 1-Andreas Humke & Sven Rumcker (Germany). WORLD GRAND JACKPOT: Cancelled... *Great equity event! Tobias Hellwag won \$100,000 which was the amount added by Casino de Tanger. The Casino has promised another similar event this year. Abraham Eitan directed.*



BPC Fall Trophy Tourney winners Paul Friedman—Open (top) and Keith Kuligowski—Int. Complete results at left.

•**Springfield Series #2** (Bloomington, IL; 7 Dec.)... OPEN (29): 1-Sean Garber, 2-Ed

Bauder; 1C-Fouad Malouf, 2C-Randy Armstrong; 1LC-Greg Michaels.

•**BIBA's UK Finals** (Coventry, England; 7-8 Dec.)... OPEN (59): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-John Clark, 3/4-Jim Johnson / David Startin; 1C-Ray Tannen, 2C-Rachel Rhodes. SUICIDE! (64): 1-Simon Kennedy-Rose, 2-John Slattery. CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS (6): 1-Ray Tannen, 2-David Startin. FRIDAY NIGHT KO (22): 1-Mike Greenleaf, 2-Ray Tannen. DOUBLES (10): 1-Can't Count, Won't Count, 2-Harfur Chance.

•**South Florida Sunday Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 8 Dec.)... OPEN (8): 1-Michael Rayner, 2-Raymond Rickard. INTERMEDIATE (8): 1/2-John Gdowik / David Menkes.

•**2nd Cancun Open** (Cancun, Mexico; 10-15 Dec.)... OPEN: 1-David Jaffe.

•**Armbruster's Friday the 13th Tourney** (Los Angeles, CA; 13 Dec.)... MIXED DOUBLES (7): 1-Jodell & Jerry Hays, 2-Carla & Patrick Gibson. SINGLES: 1-Ceci Pedroza. BLACK CAT TOSS: 1-Paul Armbruster.

•**Eric Johnson's Birthday BG Bash II** (Bolingbrook, IL; 14 Dec.)... OPEN (16): 1-Femi Owiku, 2-Val Zimnicki; 1C-Elaine Andrews-Smith, 2C-Harry Carter. 2-POINT QUICKIE (32): 1-Femi Owiku, 2-J.A. Miller... *Eric won in th chouette which lasted until 6:00 p.m. the next day! J.A. Miller directed.*

•**50th Gammon Associates Invitational—ABT** (Los Angeles, CA; 6-8 Dec.)... OPEN (45): 1-Norm Wiggins, 2-Nick Maffeo, 3-Art Benjamin; 1C-Neil Kazaross (IL), 2C-Jerry Hays. ADVANCED (17): 1-Bill Papa, 2-David Taniguchi; 1C-Rick Huffman, 2C-Jay Cordes. LIMITED (7): 1-Daniel Bryant, 2-Mindla Fajtlowicz; 1C-Chinh Pham. SUPER-32 (28): 1-Sho Sengoku, 2-Ray Foglerlund, 3/4-Brian Barber / Bob Glass. PAST CHAMPS (16): 1-Joe Russell, 2-Ray Foglerlund. DOUBLES (12): 1-Saul Meir & John Rockwel, 2- Jeff Burdsall (NV) & Philip Williams (MN), 3-Judy Collins & Rudy Citrom. 2-POINT QUICKIES (40): 1-Carter Mattig (IL), 2-Saul Meir, 3-Jerry Hays.

•**Gammonitis Michael Rose Trophy** (Brighton, England; 14-15 Dec.)... OPEN (23): 1-Tom Duggan, 2-John Broomfield; 1C-Dod Davies, 2C-Brian Busfield. BUY BACK KNOCKOUT: 1-Nicky Check, 2-Peter Bennet. FRIDAY NIGHT KNOCKOUT: 1-Ray Tannen... *Gammonitis webmaster Liz Barker's first effort at directing a major event.*

•**Ace Point Holiday Tournament—ABT** (New York, NY; 27-29 Dec.)... OPEN (12): 1-Karen Davis, Steve Elkin; 1C-Mark Kaczmarczyk. INTERMEDIATE(12): 1-Carlton Chin, 2-Jonathan Kaplan; 1C-Stewart Pemberton. NOVICE (4): 1-Eileen Regan; 1C-Rose Chin. DOUBLES (8): 1-Richard Munitz & Antoinette-Marie Williams, 2-Vicki Ondis & Stewart Pemberton. JACKPOT (8): 1-Ron Salzer. KICKOFF (30): 1-Jonathan Kaplan. Δ

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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

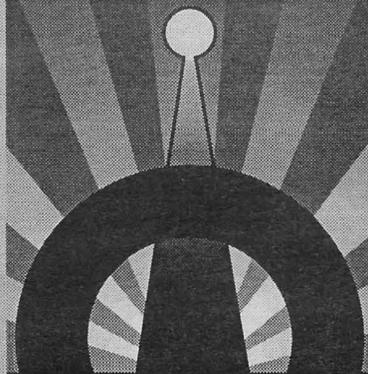
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2003

- 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.)

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