

michigan summer championships

TALBOT TRIUMPHS IN NOVI

Steve Mellen Wins Michigan Masters

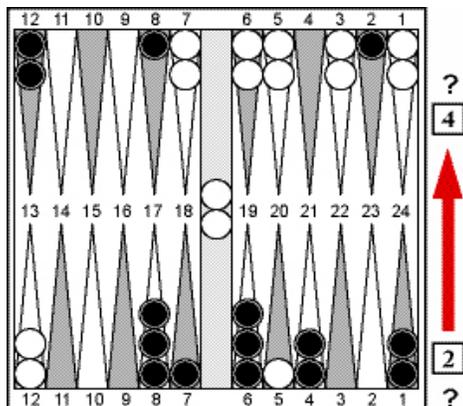
The Michigan Summer Championships is one title that has eluded backgammon giant Frank Talbot . . . until this year. Two wins in a row vs. runner-up Bill Versaw (Pittsburgh) earned Frank the title, over \$7,000, and 31.11 points. That's enough to vault him into second on the 2004 American Backgammon Tour.

Flint Area director Carol Joy Cole's mega-event, held 1-4 July at the Sheraton Novi, is always one of the friendliest and best attended tournaments in the US. This year, 177 players competed in three divisions of play, highlighted by a huge 92 player Open field (with 100% return). The staff of John Carrico, Mary Ann Meese, Troy Longman, and Woody Woodworth executed their tasks flawlessly, and auctioneer Peter Kalba raised a record \$20,000+ in the Calcutta.

After losing to Bill Versaw in the undefeated bracket finals, Frank Talbot remained confident. Two wins later (vs. Joe Sylvester and Canadian Michel Merlitti), the experienced Frank had a second chance at Versaw, a rookie in the Open division. And even though Talbot would need two 13-point victories in a row, oddsmakers made him even-money to win the title.

The first match was a 13-0 cakewalk, including this 8 point swing in game four:

13 point finals (Match #1). Frank Talbot (Black) leads Bill Versaw (White), 4-0. Black on shake. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Michigan Summer Champ Frank Talbot.

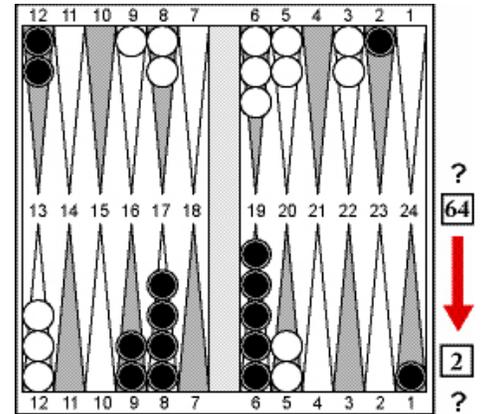
Is Black too good to double here? Not good enough? And if cubed, can White possibly take?

When Frank doubled, nearly all of the spectators thought that Bill had a stone-cold drop. In fact Bill's take was clearly correct. Unfortunately, this is backgammon, and when Frank rolled home a recubed gammon, match #1 was effectively over.

The rubber match went right down to

the wire. Trailing 4-5 and on shake, is Bill supposed to double here?:

13 point finals (Match #2). Bill Versaw (White) trails Frank Talbot (Black), 4-5. White on shake. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Once again, the cube action of both players was perfect: double/easy take. This

(Continued on page 4)

STAR-GAMMON. CAN YOU FIND TWO PROBLEMS?



François Rosa sent us this photo of his new patented invention "Stargammon"—standard backgammon for three players. For more info, e-mail: francoisrosa@tele2.fr.

To Atlanta director Dave Cardwell's question, "Can anyone identify the two major problems in this picture?", Steve Kovach answered: "No, I don't know their names."

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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SUNCOAST CLUB RESPONSE

Regarding Michael Edge's June letter about his bad experience visiting the Suncoast Backgammon Club, I apologize on behalf of myself and the chouette players who offended him. The most vocal chouette player, a pool player who is a bit paranoid of hustlers, had been drinking and was overly apprehensive of letting a stranger into the game. Naturally, this doesn't excuse foul language.

As for myself, I was playing Hearts when Mr. Edge approached me. I'm sorry that I didn't step away for a minute, talk with him, and try to get him into the chouette.

I would like to continue to be listed as a club and backgammon contact person for the Clearwater, Florida area. I suggest that new players call me in advance of their visit at (727) 424-9019 so that I can properly greet them and buy them a drink.—*Bob Carpenter, director Suncoast Backgammon Club, Palm Harbor, Florida*

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

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

*Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

Jul 15	Third Thursday Bonus (Indiana Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 17	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Jul 17	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Jul 18	Austin Club Bimonthly Tournament, JC's Bar & Grill, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Jul 18	4th Battle of Bull Run, Best Western Tyson's Westpark, McLean, Virginia	703/396-7224
Jul 18*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Buffalo Wild Wings, Hilliard, Ohio	614/771-0981
Jul 24	Double Trouble Tournament, New York Chess & BG, New York, New York	212/869-6057
Jul 24	Georgia Warm-Up & Qualifier, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Jul 24*	Backgammon By the Bay Bonus, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/688-9722
Jul 25	Ace Point Club Monthly, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/888-2231
Jul 25*	Miami Valley Monthly, Holiday Inn McKenna's Grille, Fairborn, Ohio	937/864-1748
<u>Jul 30-Aug 1</u>	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	<u>585/396-0969</u>
<u>Jul 30-Aug 1</u>	<u>Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin</u>	<u>608/516-9109</u>
Aug 1	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, Ohio	330/268-4610
Aug 3	Arizona Club Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/279-0215
Aug 5*	Miami Valley Monthly, Holiday Inn McKenna's Grille, Fairborn, Ohio	937/864-1748
Aug 7-8*	11th Annual Summer Cooker, Hast residence, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	412/823-7500
Aug 8	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Aug 8*	South Florida Monthly, NorthRidge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
<u>Aug 12-15</u>	<u>11th Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Hilton Garden Inn, Atlanta, GA</u>	<u>770/333-1876</u>
Aug 14*	Hot as Hades Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Aug 14*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Aug 19*	Third Thursday Bonus (Illinois State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Aug 21*	Double Trouble Tournament, New York Chess & BG, New York, New York	212/869-6057
Aug 21*	32nd Hawaii State Championship, Elks Club, Honolulu, Hawaii	808/922-2674
Aug 21*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Sep 3-6	51st Indiana Open, Sheraton Hotel & Suites, Indianapolis, Indiana	317/255-8902
Sep 18-19*	25th Jon Viotor Invitational Cup, Viotor residence, La Jolla, California	818/901-0464
Sep 24-26*	Pacific Northwest Championships, Muckleshoot Casino, Auburn, Washington	253/856-7513
Oct 2*	Bar Point Saturday Tournament, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Oct 8-10	Illinois State Championships, Pere Marquette Hotel, Peoria, Illinois	217/528-0117
Oct 15-17	Florida State Championship, Sheraton Suites, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Oct 29-31	2004 Minnesota Open, Mystic Lake Casino, Prior Lake, Minnesota	651/699-6758
Nov 6-10*	Las Vegas Pro Am, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 10-14*	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Dec 3-5	54th Gammon Associates Invitational, Location TBA, Los Angeles, California	818/901-0464
Dec 4*	Bar Point Saturday Tournament, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Jan 23-30	Backgammon On Board VII, Star Princess, Ft. Lauderdale to E. Caribbean	773/583-6464

OUTSIDE USA

Jul 12-18	29th World Championship, Grand Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 212/222-7177
Jul 20-25	Riviera's Challenge II, Palm Beach Partouche, Cannes, France	33142-618080
Jul 24-25	9th Liverpool Open, Liverpool Bridge Club, Liverpool, England	44152-2888676
Aug 7-8	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, England	44152-2888676
Aug 7-8	2nd Nagoya Open, Nagoya Kowan Kaikan, Minato-ku, Nagoya, Japan	813-33733814
Aug 7-8*	Schwaben-Cup goes Franken (Open Air), Ramada, Nürnberg, Germany	49711-486190
Aug 14-15	Gammonitis Rollout Trophy, George Ramada Hotel, Solihull, England	44163-4304908
Aug 19-22	BG on the Beach/7th Friuli Championship, Grado Beach, Gorizia, Italy	39269-018168
Aug 20-22*	1st Rotterdam Beach Tournament, City Beach, Rotterdam, The Netherlands	31650-818573
Aug 21-30	8th MindSports Olympiad, Manchester Conference Centre, England	44170-7659080
Sep 3-5	Mittleuropa Championship, HIT Park Hotel, Nova Gorica, Slovenia	392-69018168
Sep 4-5*	Backpacker Backgammon Trophy, Hanover Hotel, Daventry, England	44152-2888676
Sep 11-12	2nd Antwerp Open, Antwerp, Belgium	31650-818573
Sep 11-12	Stavanger Open, Cementen Pub, Stavanger, Norway	4751-590940
Sep 20-23	2nd Tango Tourney, Iguazú Grand Hotel, Puerto Iguazú City, Argentina	5411-43736138
Sep 30-Oct 3	11th German Open, Hotel GlockenSpitze, Altenkirchen, Germany	49521-64314
Oct 9-11*	Sandy Osborne Trophy, Hanover Hotel, Daventry, England	44152-2888676
Oct 9-11*	Japan Open, Nakano Sun Plaza, Tokyo, Japan	813-33733814
Oct 14-17*	Munkebjerg Scandinavian Challenge, Casino Munkebjerg, Vejle, Denmark	4529-724214
Oct 19-20*	Giants Double Consultation, Casino Barrière, Enghien-les-Bains, France	49171-5422222
Oct 20-24*	2nd Lucien Barrière Open, Casino Barrière, Enghien-les-Bains, France	49171-5422222
Oct 23-24*	Gammonitis 2nd Birthday, Ramada Jarvis Hotel, East Grinstead, England	44163-4304908
Oct 23-24*	Swiss & Casino Baden Championships, Casino Baden, Baden, Switzerland	4179-4015811
Oct 30-31*	12th Irish Open Championship, Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, Ireland	3531-6030891

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

TWISTGAMMON

The 2004 version of the World Boardgaming Championships which hosts tournaments in 150 different board games will add Backgammon to its offerings this year

with the addition of "Twistgammon"—a new Backgammon variant with a more strategic flavor. (See ad at right.)

The World Boardgaming Championships are held August 3–8 at the Hunt Valley Inn in Hunt Valley, Maryland. The Twistgammon event begins Thursday, August 5 at noon. For more information on the WBC, see www.boardgamers.org.—



Mike Friess, CEO, Far Out! Games, Inc.,
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AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2004

Top 100 compiled through 4 July after 8 tournaments
(Upcoming events: Thousand Islands, Wisconsin State)



Ray Fogerlund	31.96	Vadim Musaelyan	7.61	Chuck Bower	3.78	Kathy Sorci	1.99
Frank Talbot	31.11	Mark Antranikian	7.58	Joe Sylvester	3.78	Arlene Austin	1.98
Bob Stringer	22.88	David Rubin	7.56	Arman Karamian	3.78	Cookie Frazin	1.7
Wayne Jeffcoat	22.72	Michel Merlitti	7.56	Ron Wagner	3.49	Troy Will	1.69
Lucky Nelson	22.69	Philip Smith	6.91	Brad Andersen	3.4	Alex Rosenberg	1.68
Malcolm Davis	22.22	David Haddad	6.8	Sandy Barnes	3.37	Kwong Chan	1.59
Gregg Cattanach	17.47	Mary Hickey	6.8	Ernie McCombs	3.37	Petko Kostadinov	1.55
Bob Glass	15.33	Tak Morioka	6.4	Dan Cramer	3.2	Ron Sanders	1.55
Bill Versaw	15.33	Don Faix	6.2	Spencer King	3.13	Tom Machaj	1.53
Dave Wetzell	13.64	Carl Sorg	6.2	Roger Hickman	3	Abdul Alchalabi	1.5
Neil Kazaross	13.6	Neil Garvie	5.75	Dan Kiurski	3	Philip Little	1.38
Mike Corbett	12.02	Mark Anshus	5.6	Joe Feldman	2.92	Ed Johnson	1.3
Alan Robinson	11.61	Rob Maier	5.08	Joan Hac	2.92	Susan Lindauer	1.16
Denny Leatherman	11.5	Jordan Lampe	5.08	Richard Martin	2.71	Akemi Ota	1.16
Emil Mortuk	11.33	Steve Brown	4.86	Dean Adamian	2.7	Becca Thompson	1.1
Brian Barber	11.2	Ilia Guzei	4.8	Cem Aslan	2.59	Susan Hathaway	1.01
Dan Grogan	10.8	Norm Wiggins	4.55	Bruce Ballance	2.52	Joe Davidson	1.01
Brent Cohen	10.23	Sassan Kamali	4.55	Danielle Bastarache	2.5	Matt Little	1
Norma Shyer	9.83	Asad Zaltash	4.24	Bill Minser	2.4	Lawrence Miller	0.98
Doug Roberts	9.48	Bear Lumbr	4.24	Dave Settles	2.32	Jane Lasarenko	0.94
Betty Coppic	9.14	Milad Doueihy	4.16	Julian Haley	2.12	Wanda Roberts	0.75
Jason Lee	9.09	Phil Simborg	4.16	Rich Catalano	2.12	Joe Szewedo	0.73
Arnold Freeman	9.09	Ben Elliott	3.96	Kevin Kelly	2.12	Stacy Turner	0.67
Eric Johnson	8.47	Ed Bennett	3.88	Patty Geoffroy	2.08	Alex Miller	0.63
Faddoul Khoury	7.62	Jim Hall	3.88	Jonah Seewald	2.08	Les Moshinsky	0.63

A MOTHER OF AN ERROR

Problem #1 from Jake Jacob's "Mother Of All Quizzes" in the June Point has several errors:

1. The position itself is incorrect, as White's spares are on the 4- and 3-points, not the 5- and 2-points. (The correct position is on the facing page as Pos. 10 in Nack Ballard's fine "Rumble At The Riv" article.)
2. Jake's answer of 9/3, 8/3 can't be correct as Black has no checkers on the 9-point. Regardless, 9/3, 8/3 would indicate a roll of 6-5, not the 5-4 in the problem and in the actual match.
3. In Jake's answer he notes that "... if White's spares were on the 5- and 1-point ..." This can't be correct either, as a White spare on the 1-point would be a blot instead.
4. Regarding this position, Nack said that

[Continued on page 6]



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2004 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 30 JUNE

Bob Zavoral	16.80	Linda Rockwell	6.48	Mark Murray	3.04	John O'Connor	1.04
Tak Morioka	13.44	Joann Feinstein	6.28	Eric Johnson	2.72	Nora Luna	1.04
David Rockwell	13.04	Steve Klesker	5.92	Arline Levy	2.48	Mark Swanson	0.96
Carter Mattig	11.28	David Marcus	5.64	Bill Keefe	2.32	Cookie Frazin	0.80
Gary Kay	11.00	Bill Bartholomay	5.60	Tom Meyer	2.24	Rick Sorci	0.80
Tim Mabee	10.64	Ken Bond	5.44	Mark Phillips	2.16	Kathy Sorci	0.80
Herb Roman	9.84	Alice Kay	5.32	Ron Washington	2.04	Amy Trudeau	0.72
Joe Wollick	9.48	Les Moshinsky	5.12	Paul Franks	1.92	Roy Cohen	0.72
Mike Sutton	9.40	Bob Steen	5.12	John Jennings	1.92	Robert Ring	0.72
Phyllis Smolinski	9.32	Roger Hickman	4.72	Ken Tyszko	1.92	Brooke Gottshall	0.72
Bill Davis	9.16	Joe Auszmann	4.68	Roland Dieter	1.88	Mary Franks	0.72
Val Zimnicki	9.00	Peter Kalba	4.48	Royal Robinson	1.76	John Stryker	0.72
Phil Simborg	8.08	Jacob Moreno	4.44	Felix Yen	1.76	Paul Klein	0.64
Adrian Rios	7.88	Paul Baraz	4.20	Bill Stegich	1.52	Gaby Kairouz	0.64
Norma Shyer	7.20	Michael Peters	3.32	Tim Carroll	1.44	Will Hare	0.64
Lucky Nelson	7.12	Wayne Wiest	3.32	Dave Cramer	1.20	Jay Bleiman	0.56
Howard Ring	6.96	Georgina Flanagan	3.16	Barbara Levinson	1.04		

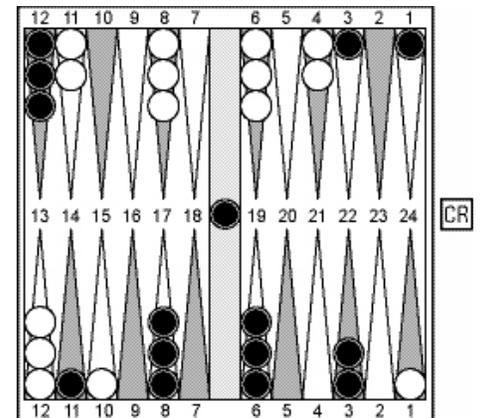
LINDA ROCKWELL won her second Sunday double point tournament in a row to earn 3.68 points and take June Player of the Month honors. Les Moshinsky was second with 3.52 while Adrian Rios and David Rubin tied for third with 3.44.

your move

PROBLEM #301

to be analyzed by Antonio Ortega

7 point match. Black trails White 5–6 Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-2.**



ASK DANNY

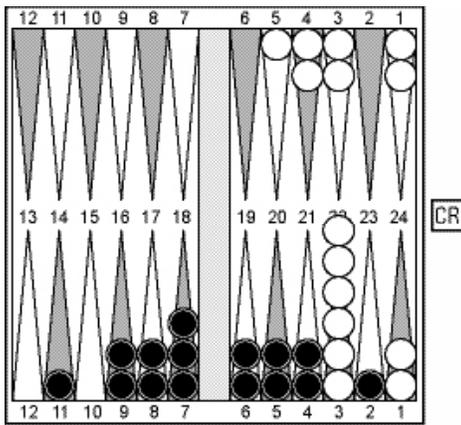


© 2004 by Danny Kleinman

BEAR-IN TACTICS

Dear Danny: Perhaps you will be able to enlighten two new backgammon players. I was playing a five point match online against my friend Jim who lives in another state. Trailing 3-4 Crawford, I was bearing in for a potential gammon (and match) win when . . .

5-point match. Black trails White 3-4 Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.**



I played 11/5, 8/4 giving Jim a direct 5 shot. Sadly, Jim threw double 5s, I danced, Jim picked up the second checker, I danced again, and Jim went on to win one of the sickest games I've ever been involved in.

After the match, Jim thought I should have simply cleared the 8-point with 8/2, 8/4. He said that at least I wouldn't have lost any ground following the 5-5 shake, and picking up two checkers would have been impossible. It's true that when Jim hits, I can only hit back with any 5 and 2-3 (13 shots), so maybe I should have played safer. (Or perhaps 11/5, 9/5 might have worked better.)

Anyway, how would you have handled this position over the board.—*Still Uncertain*

DEAR STILL: Over the board, it's dollars to doughnuts that I would have cleared the 8-point and made the 2-point, just as your friend Jim would. "Why leave a shot needlessly?" I would think . . . if we consider the few seconds we take for a roll like this over the board to be thought.

However, whether or not you get hit is virtually irrelevant in this position. Two other things are far more important.

- (1) Joker control.
- (2) Further wrecking of White's structure.

Any play that breaks the 8-point, whether or not it leaves a shot, resurrects

White's killed 5s, letting him spring a man on any 5, and making his double-5s a joker.

So if you give the position more than cursory thought, you will look for a play that doesn't break the 8-point. 11/5, 9/5 is one such play, but it resurrects White's killed 6s, letting him spring a man on any 6, and making his double-6's a joker.

The other such play is 11/5, 6/2, the play favored by 1440 Snowie rollouts (3-ply, full). I admit that I wouldn't have found this play over the board . . . except, perhaps, on Easter Sunday. 11/5, 6/2 resurrects White's 5s, but in a way that helps you, not White, for any 5 except 5-3 will require him to break his ace-anchor—his most valuable asset in a back game. After 11/5, 6/2, White's good rolls are 3s, and his double-3s is a joker. However, the double-3s joker is not nearly as powerful as the double-5s or double-6s joker White will get if you break your 8-point or 9-point.

Thus there are two strong reasons to play the unorthodox 11/5, 6/2: the joker you give White is less potent, and (more important), you force White to play 5s destructively.—Yours, Danny Δ

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

TALBOT...

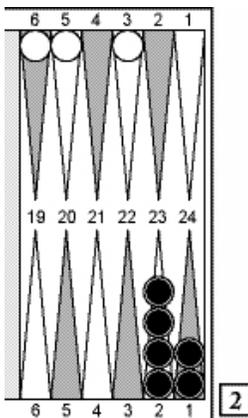
[Continued from page 1]

time, it was Versaw who won an important gammon to take an 8-5 lead. But a rally by Talbot sent the fight to double match-point. In a complicated final game, Frank prevailed to win one of the trophies he had generously donated to the tournament.

THE MICHIGAN MASTERS fielded 32 players and paid \$15,000 in prize money. Steve Mellen (NY) and Perry Gartner (NJ) were the combatants in the finals.

Here's a swing position from the 13-point match with Steve Mellen (Black) trailing Perry Gartner (White) 4 to 5 and holding a 2-cube. Black is on roll. **SHOULD BLACK RE-CUBE?**

[See page 5]



New Yorker Steve Mellen ponders a move in his Masters finals vs. Perry Gartner (NJ).



Three cheers to GamesGrid Blitz winner Julie Hayward of Canada.



Director Carol Joy Cole is flanked by Novice winner David Settles (IL) and Intermediate victor Denny Leatherman (CO).



A "Pair of Peters" won the Doubles: Peter Beling (VA) & Peter Kalba (IN).



Bob Zavoral challenges you to take . . .

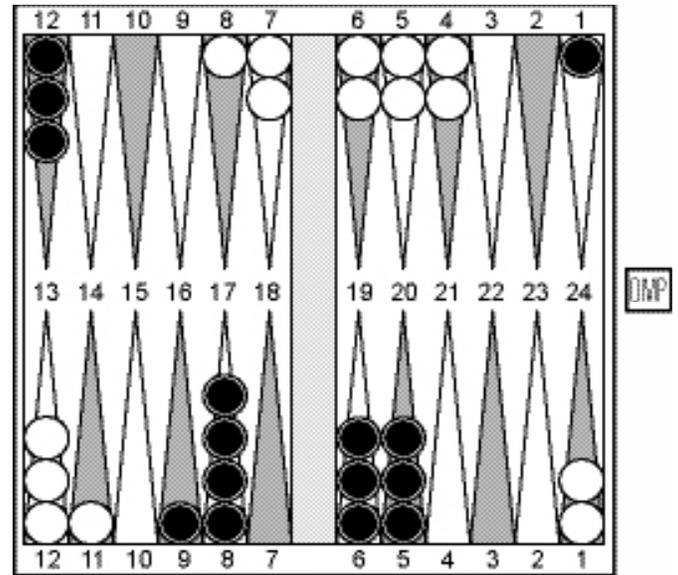
THE “2-SOMETHING” QUIZ

Chicago Bar Point Club Player of the Year and boardmaker extraordinaire Bob Zavoral thinks he can outscore you in the “2-Something” Quiz. There are 6 positions to consider and each position is worth a maximum 20 points. With 120 total points available, Bob scored 77. But he still thinks it’s good enough to top your result.

It’s double match-point and Black has rolled a “2-something.” Write down your choice of plays for the six possible rolls containing a deuce. Then check your answers on page 10 and total up the points.

So you think you can outscore Bob Z? *GET REAL.*

Double match-point. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-SOMETHING.**



- 2-1: _____
- 2-2: _____
- 2-3: _____
- 2-4: _____
- 2-5: _____
- 2-6: _____

Mellen correctly rolled on taking two pieces off. Gartner then tossed a 5-1. 5/off is easy. But then Perry took almost two minutes determining that 6/5 was superior to 3/2 (by one roll). He could have saved brain cells by using Danny Kleinman’s “Rule of 2.7.” Space your last two checkers as close to 2.7 pips apart and you can never be wrong. In the actual case, Perry had to choose between checkers on the 5- and 3-points (2 pip spacing) and the 6- and 2-points (4 pip spacing). 2 is closer to 2.7 than it is to 4 and hence the correct choice.

With four checkers remaining, Steve recubed and Perry was forced to take. Steve took two off, but Perry came up one pip short rolling 4-3 to fall behind 8-5. Steve eventually won the match 13-9 for a \$10,000 payday.

Congratulations to the Intermediate victor Denny Leatherman (CO), the Novice champ David Settles (IL), and all of the other winners shown at right.

And congratulations to Carol Joy Cole for another outstanding tournament. Δ

MICHIGAN SUMMER BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS

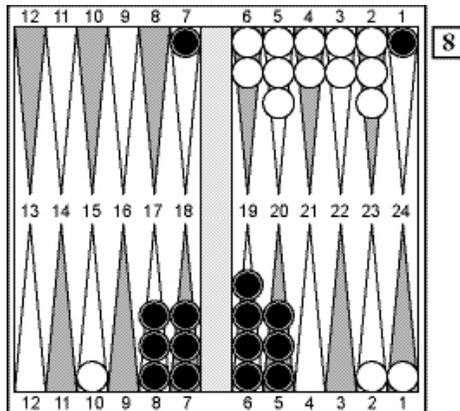
OPEN (92): 1-Frank Talbot (MI), 2-Bill Versaw (PA), 3-Michel Merlitti (Canada), 4/5-Faddoul Khoury (IL) / Joe Sylvester (MO); 1C-Bob Glass (CA), 2C-David Rubin (IL), 3C/4C-Chuck Bower (IN) / Mike Corbett (FL). INTERMEDIATE (64): 1-Denny Leatherman (CO), 2-Neil Garvie (Canada), 3-Dan Kiurski (MI); 1C-Alan Robinson (Canada), 2C-Roger Hickman (IL), 3C/4C-Abdul Alchalabi (MI) / Philip Smith (GA). NOVICE (21): 1-Dave Settles (IL), 2-Akemi Ota (Japan/MI); 1C-Susan Lindauer (MI), 2C-Gail Newburn (GA). MICHIGAN MASTERS (32): 1-Steve Mellen (NY), 2-Perry Gartner (NJ), 3/4-Emil Mortuk (MI) / Ed O’Laughlin (FL). GAMESGRID BLITZ (128): 1-Julie Hayward (Canada), 2-Ron Wagner (IL). OPEN DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Peter Beling (VA) & Peter Kalba (IL), 2-Sal Chehayeb (MI) & Dan Kiurski (MI), 3/4-Dave Brotherton (MI) & Frank Talbot (MI) / Len Dangremond (MI) & Dan Grogan (MI). LTD. DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-John Bashian (OH) & Joe Maize (MS), 2-Charlotte & Dan Mowczan (MI). SUMMER FREEZE-OUT (32): 1-Greg Merriman (MI), 2-Steve Hast (PA). FIRECRACKER JACKPOTS \$500 (4): 1-Ray Fogerlund (CA). \$200 (16): 1-Greg Merriman (MI), 2-Michael Ginat (Australia/CO). \$100 (16): 1-Bud Bowers (PA), 2-Sal Pittelli (Canada). \$20 DETROIT QUICKIES #1 (64): 1-Peter Beling (VA), 2-Howard Rosenthal (MA). #2 (64): 1-Jack Kissane (NY), 2-Jim Curtis (IN). #3 (64): 1-Bill Davis (IL), 2-Phil Simborg (IL). \$10 DETROIT QUICKIES #1 (64): 1-Ed King (OH), 2-Ed King (OH). #2 (16): 1-Gail Newburn (GA), 2-Eric Johnson (IL). EARLYBIRD JACKPOTS \$50 (16): 1-Abbas Zaltash (PA), 2-Peter Beling (VA). \$25 (16): 1-Neil Garvie (Canada), 2-Joe Maize (MS). JOHN BRUSSEL MEMORIAL JACKPOT (32): 1-Sal Chehayeb (MI), 2-Denise Berkowitz Merlitti (Canada). \$400 was raised for the family of Ed Bauder of Illinois. WARM-UPS \$50 (24): 1-John Carrico (MI), 2-Dave Brotherton (MI), 3/4-Paul Berg (MI) / David Todd (MO). \$30 (32): 1-Denny Leatherman (CO), 2-Irv Gold (MI), 3/4-Osman Guner (CA) / Mike Rezai (OH). \$20 (11): 1-Lois Merriman (MI), 2/3-Fran Miller (OH) / Dave Settles (IL).



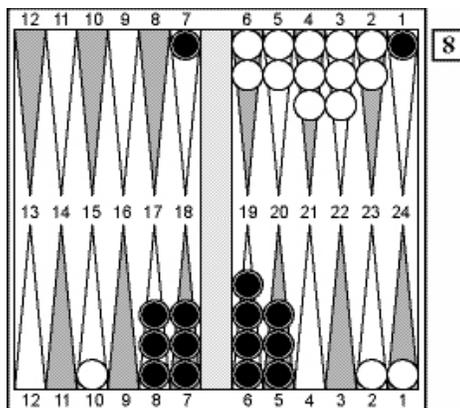
Moms know! They see a mess and they don't wonder: *Was it the dog? Was it your younger brother? Could it have been a poltergeist?* Nope, they know who did it, every time. It seems I made a mess last month in the "Mother of All Quizzes." I could claim that Bill goofed when he typeset it, or that someone mixed up my position cards. I could blame it on the poltergeist. (They come bundled with the rest of the software provided by Microsoft; how else to explain the performance of this operating system?) I could claim all that, but Mom wouldn't buy it. After I clean it up for you folks I have to go stand in the corner for an hour!

Consider these two positions . . .

Error Position 1. Black trails White 8-13 to 23. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.**



Correct Position 1. Black trails White 8-13 to 23. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.**



Error Position 1 (on the top) is as it appeared in my quiz, while Correct Position 1 (on the bottom) is the position as it *should* have appeared. In my "Answers," the recommended move should have been 8/3, 7/3 (rather than the impossible 9/3, 8/3). 8/3, 7/3 is correct if White's spares are on the 4- and 3-point; the "duplication" I refer to in my answer now exists. To make matters more confusing in my explanation, I referred to the difference if White's spare were on the "5- and 1-point," when I meant the "5- and 2-point." What, Mom? Another hour in the corner? Sigh! Okay.

The concepts of duplication and diversification are dear to the hearts of all players who have read Magriel's book. They are also mostly misapplied. Kibitz any intermediate players' chouette and you'll hear plenty of blithering about how the Captain should be duplicating on this roll or diversifying on that, when some other fundamental principle such as running, pointing, or hitting clearly applies. Which makes the pair above a bit of a curiosity.

If Black uses his 5-4 to make the deuce, he hits a White blot which usually trumps other considerations such as keeping his points part of the same potential six-prime (by making the 3-point instead). But making the 3-point is a blunder when White's spares are on the 5 and 2. White's numbers would be diversified allowing him to step up with deuces and 3s, and hit loose with

1s and 4s. Pointing duplicates White's entering 4s and 1s, and is thus correct. And when White's spares are on the 4 and 3, making the 3-point becomes correct, as it neatly duplicates White's numbers: 2s and 3s to hit, 2s and 3s to step up, whereas pointing would partly diversify them, duplicating only White's entering 3, and diversifying White's entering 4.—*Jake Jacobs* Δ

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

the duplication of 2s and 3s was "pivot" to the position. Jake said he and Senk "... believed the duplication of 2s and 3s was irrelevant ..." Hmm. Think I'll go with Nack on this one. :-)

What is really important here is when can Mr. Jacobs send me the 7 points for my correct answer of 7-2*, 6-2? Mom refuses to give me the top score I deserve until she sees a mea culpa from Jake!—*Tom Wright, Director, Houston Backgammon Club*

Jake Jacobs responds: Mom says you can have the 7 points, and a cookie as well for helping to clean up the mess. See "Messing With Mom" on page 6 of this issue.—J.J.

X-PHOTO CONTEST

The Charlotte Backgammon Club would have provided you with another Creative Photo Contest entry [see page 9 for the winners—Ed.], but we didn't think Mary Lou's idea for "cocked dice" would make it past the censors.—*Jeb Horton, director, Charlotte Backgammon Club* Δ

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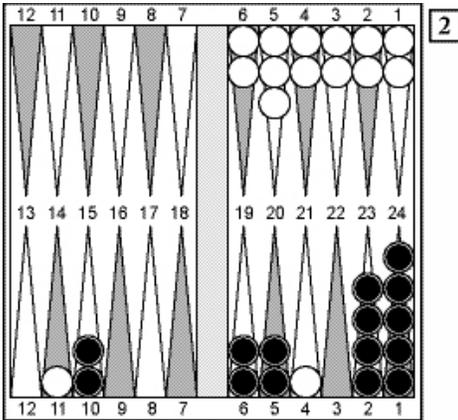
Tuesday, 6:00 P.M. at the Clarion Hotel, 5615 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago; 773/693-5800.
 Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at Champs Sports Bar, 17 W. 517 Roosevelt Rd., Oakbrook Terrace; 630/691-1888.

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 Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at Damon's Grill, 1701 Fort Jesse Road, Normal. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967).
 SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wed., 6:15 P.M. at Damon's Grill, 3050 Lindbergh Blvd., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).
 WINNETKABG CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Chibnik (847/446-0537).
 PEORIABACKGAMMON CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/674-0557).

**PROBLEM #300
ANALYZED**

by Kit Woolsey

Match to 7 points. Black trails White 4 to 6. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-1.**



If getting gammoned hurt Black, he could think about the non-hitting play of 10/9, 9/3. This would leave only one blot for White to pick up. It would still be a pretty weak play, since it leaves more shots than the other candidates and fails to put White on the bar in a position where White could still win the race. With gammons only helping Black, this play is not a serious contender.

The other candidates involve playing

10/4*. There are four possible aces. 10/9 leaves 15 shots (all 4s, 3-1, and 3-6). The others leave 13 shots (5/4 leaves all 5s and 3-2, 4-3 leaves all 3s and 4-6, and 2-1 leaves all 4s and 3-1). That doesn't mean we can eliminate 10/9, but two extra immediate shot numbers is a pretty big strike against the play. The future cleanup would have to be considerably superior to the other plays to justify leaving those two extra shot numbers in a position where getting hit is virtually all that matters.

4/3 has the advantage that on seven of White's non-hitting numbers, she will be forced to enter behind the inner board blot. That won't be a claim for Black, but he will be better off. However, even if that happens, Black will still be leaving a shot on 6-6, 6-5, and 2-1. These are fewer shots than will be left in other variations, so if the choice is close when White flunks, this may be the deciding factor.

The most common relevant variation occurs when White flunks. The question then is how many rolls permit Black to get safe. There is no shortcut answer to this. It is simply a matter of counting. We will look only at direct shots since they are the big ones. If it turns out to be close, we can examine indirect shots.

After 10/9, Black leaves a shot if he rolls 6-6 (a triple shot), 6-5, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2, 6-1, 5-5, 5-4, and 5-3. Since this play also leaves two extra immediate shots, it is now clear we can eliminate it.

After 5/4, Black leaves a shot if he rolls 6-2, 5-5, and 5-3. Remarkably enough, that is all. That's pretty good. The key is that by switching to the 4-point, Black gives himself a safe landing place for a 6.

After 4/3, Black leaves a shot on 6-6 (a triple shot), 6-5, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2, 6-1, 5-5, 5-4, and 4-4. Clearly all these shots more than make up for the better position if White enters without hitting.

After 2-1, Black leaves a shot on 6-6, 6-5, 6-4, 6-3, and 5-5. Not quite as good as the shifting play. In addition, the shifting play makes a lower point, so future clearing will be easier. For example, suppose White enters with a 3 and Black brings everybody home and clears the 6-point. It will now be a safer position than if Black had played 2/1, since the 4-point will be easier to clear safely than the 5-point.

10/4*, 5/4 wins hands down. This really shouldn't come as a surprise. It is thematic when breaking down one's board to fill in the lower points and avoid leaving gaps on these lower points. That, plus an immediate landing place for a 6, likely Black's worst number, makes it clear that this is the best play.

Running through these calculations isn't difficult. The key is to see the shifting play in the first place. It has been built into our thinking that once we have a good point we maintain it, and this bias often causes us to overlook profitable shifting plays such as in this position.—Kit Woolsey Δ

AMALGAMATION

Thanks to **Peggy Froh Asseo** (IL) for a captioned pic of the Midwest BG Championships staff in the recent *Animal Crackers* Anti-Cruelty Society magazine. To date, we have raised nearly \$34,000 for the ACS... He finished "Troy" and is wrapping up "Ocean's 12," but an article in the 11 July New Jersey *Home News Tribune* says that **Brad Pitt** and wife **Jennifer Aniston** still have time for their obsession: backgammon. "It gets a little vicious when we play," Brad admits... CHICAGO POINT contributing editor **Antonio Ortega** (Costa Rica) is back in action following cataract surgery. He'll solve Problem 301 in the August issue... **Gayle Wolf** (MI) is moving better after an operation on her foot... Peoria (IL) director **Ed Zell** sadly reports that there will be no "Summer Sizzler" picnic and tournament this year. If you need a Central Illinois backgammon fix, remember the Illinois State Championships (ABT) in Peoria 8-10 October... "Gramma" **Carol Joy Cole** (MI) happily reports that her grandson **Ian Joseph**

Cole is strong enough to come home following a three month premature birth hospital stay... It's with great excitement that **Clyde Jones** (WA) announces the 1st Pacific Northwest Championships (an ABT event) 24-26 September at the Muckleshoot Casino outside of Seattle, Washington. Hurry! ATA's air fare sale to Seattle expires 22 July... Many sad June and July deaths to report: Former Michigan BG player and poker author extraordinaire **Andy Glazer** (CA) died of complications from a blood clot. He was 48. **Charles Peres**, a regular at Gammon's of Chicago in the 1980s, died in Arizona. **Myrtle Brickman** (FL), a 30-year player from the old College Park Club in Maryland, died at the age of 85. Las Vegas tournament staffer **Ed Bauder** (IL) lost his 47-year-old wife **Debbie** to breast cancer. **Jim Opre** (IL), one of only four players to have attended all 21 Midwest Championships, lost his 28-year-old daughter **Francesca** to a hit-and-run driver. And **Randee Simborg** (IL) lost her mother **Lorraine Shapiro**... Talk about disrupting a game: West Bend, Wisconsin police officer **Mike Ribble** and his wife were playing backgammon in a bar six weeks ago

when they heard a car plunge 15 feet from a bridge and land in Washington County river. Ribble and a couple other bar patrons were able to rescue the two car passengers... If you're looking for a quality backgammon table, contact **Robert Neumann** (ranwood@att.net). \$1200 gets you a real beauty, complete with a **Bob Zavoral** (IL) playing surface. You can check them out at enemann.home.att.net/ranwood... CHICAGO POINT contributing editor **Jake Jacobs** (AZ) is a member of the Arizona Mystery Writers group. Check out one of his short stories "Killing Grandpa" in the anthology *A Way With Murder* available at www.xlibris.com... Speaking of Jake, his brother **Rick Munchkin** finished second in a recently-televised Blackjack tournament on the Game Show network... It was nice to see former Chicago players **Barry Epstein** and **Mike Wolock** return to the Chicago Bar Point Club for tourney play... Finally, this poetic suggestion from **Phil Simborg** (IL): If too often you are getting gammoned, perhaps your moves should be examined. Don't just complain about the dice. It's often wrong, and never nice. Δ

WINNER'S CIRCLE



MAY-JUL. 2004

•**2004 Michigan Club Challenge** (Flint, MI; 15 May)... 1-Grand Rapids Club, 2-Flint Area Club, 3-Metro North Club, 4-Plymouth Club.

•**Hoss Benefit Tourney** (Grand Rapids, MI; 23 May)... OPEN (24): 1-David Emerson, 2/5-Carol Joy Cole / John O'Hagan / Rudy Silich / Mark Swanson... \$640 raised for John "Hoss" Sturk (Grand Rapids BG Club host) who is recovering from a stroke.

•**Hoosier Sunday** (Indianapolis, IN; 23 May)... OPEN (16): 1-Larry Strommen, 2/3-Rick Steele / Gabe Stiasny.

•**Arizona Club Monthly** (Phoenix, AZ; 1 Jun.)... OPEN (6): 1/2-Jake Jacobs / Bob Shackman.

•**Rotterdam Open** (Rotterdam, The Netherlands; 4-6 Jun.)... OPEN (24): 1-Hans Liby (NOR), 2-Paul Bayens (BEL); 1C-Rogier van Gemert , 2C-Shinichio Kaneko (JPN); 1LC-Paul van Rooyen. INT./BEGINNER (6): Geert. Friday Warm-up: 1-Tore Fredriksen, 2-Bert van Kerkhove.

•**BIBA Hilton Trophy** (Davenport, England; 5-6 Jun.)... OPEN (38): 1-Nodar Gagua (RUS), 2-Steve Pickard; 1C-Martin Hemming, 2C-Tim Mooring; 1LC-Jane Oxley. SUICIDE! (16): 1-Simon K. Jones. 2-Mick Vacarey. FRIDAY WARMUP (16): 1-Nodar Gagua, 2-David Markwick. DOUBLES (5): 1-Smack the Cube. £50 JACKPOT (8): 1/2-Peter Bennet / Nodar Gagua. POKER EVENT: 1-Mick Vacarey.

•**Ohio State Monthly** (Canton, OH; 6 Jun)... OPEN (13): 1-Howard Shirey, 2-Jim Slomkoski.

•**Schwaben-Cup Goes Franken** (Nürnberg, Germany; 10-13 Jun.)... MASTERS (16): 1-Gerhard Schmid; 1C-Andreas Peschel. OPEN: 1-Manfred Hollenderer, 2-Gerhard Schmid; 1C-Eddy, 2C-Dimitrios Pappas. INTERM. (15): 1-Heribert Lindner, 2-Roland Sauter; 1LC-Hans Weber, 2LC-Matthias Jörg. 1-POINTER (32): 1-Jürgen Lenz. SPECIAL 1-POINTER: 1-Manfred Hollenderer, 21-Nong Simon.

•**53rd Gammon Assoc. Invitational—ABT** (Los Angeles, CA; 11-13 Jun.)... OPEN (50): 1-Wayne Jeffcoat, 2-Jason Lee, 3-Norm Wiggins; 1C-Arnold Freeman, 2C-Sassan Kamali. ADVANCED (32): 1-Mark Antranikian, 2-Sandy Barnes; 1C-Ernie McCombs (TX), 2C-Alex Rosenberg. SUPER 32 (32): 1-Doug Mayfield, 2-Perry Firooz, 3/4-Todd Crosner / Joe Russell. DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Patrick Gibson & Frank Ley, 2-Nancy Bretzfeld & John Rockwell. 2-POINT QUICKIES (48): 1-Judy Collins... A big attendance increase. Director Patrick Gibson expects his two annual ABT events to move to a Los Angeles hotel location in the near future.

•**1st Midnight Sun Open** (Luleå, Sweden; 11-13 Jun.)... OPEN (13): 1-Arne Nordhei (NOR), 2-Mikko Paajala (FIN); 1LC-Niko Nurmi (FIN). JACKPOT (8): 1-Arne Faaren (NOR).

•**Father's Day Open** (Houston, TX; 12 Jun.)... OPEN (22): 1-Mary Morse, 2-Allen Hubenak, 3/4-Ira Hessel / Gary Olesen; 1C-Paul Money, 2C-Jim Wood.

•**Miami Valley Sunday** (Fairborn, OH; 13 Jun.)... OPEN (4): 1-Nima Emami; 1C-Larry Buckingham.

•**Rocky Mountain Tourney** (Denver, CO; 13 Jun.)... OPEN (15): 1/2-Marc Brosseau / Bruce Penrod, 3/4-

Michael Ginat / Greg Kurrell.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 13 Jun.)... OPEN (14): 1-Mike Corbett, 2-José Farca.

•**Peter Bennet's 50th Birthday/Gammonitis** (E. Grinstead, England; 19-20 Jun.)... OPEN (37): 1-Martin Barkwill, 2-Steve John, 3/4-Alan Beckerson / Steven Rimmer; 1C-Shinichio Kaneko, 2C-Dave McNair; 1LC-Martin Hemming, 2LC-Ray Tannen. £50 JACKPOT: 1-Geoff Conn, 2-Peter Bennet. TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER: 1-John Leavey.

•**Keren Di Bona Memorial Trophy** (Hinckley, England; 2-4 Jul.)... OPEN (32): 1-Ann Pocknell, 2-Peter Bennet, 3/4-Ken Gibson / David Nathan; 1C-Martin Barkwill, 2C-David Nathan; 1LC-Steve Rimmer, 2LC-Paul Statter. SUICIDE! (26): 1-Uldis Lapikens, 2-Emmanuel Di Bona, 3/4-Richard Biddle / Simon K. Jones. FRIDAY WARM-UP (16): 1-Martin Hemming, 2-Richard Biddle, 3/4-John Slattery / David Sanders. £50 JACKPOT (8): 1-Martin Hemming, 2-Ann Pocknell. DOUBLES (6): 1-The Pyjama Game. Δ

contest results

CREATIVE BACKGAMMON PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

The results are in and the top five Creative Backgammon Photo Contest winners are shown below. CHICAGO POINT awarded \$200 in cash and prizes to the winners.

Thanks to the directors who participated in voting: Dean Adamian (MI), Randy Armstrong (IL), Trudie Chibnik (IL), Carol Joy Cole (MI), Alberto da Pra (Italy), Marco Fornasir (Italy), Patrick Gibson (CA), Steve Hast (PA), Butch & Mary Ann Meese (IN), Michael Strato (Canada), Tom Wright (TX), and Ed Zell (IL).

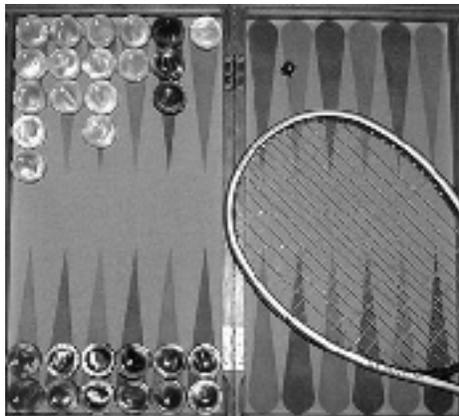
The top three spots were separated by only three votes! Δ



3. "Grizzly Chou" by Wolfram Sauer



4. "Stacking Checkers" by Mary Downing



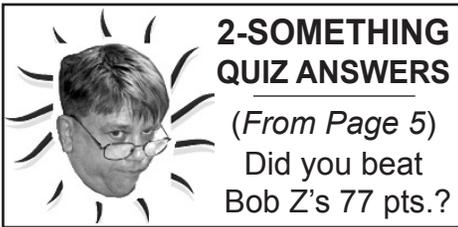
1. "Game-winning Ace" by Jeb Horton



2. "Leave it to Beaver" by Robin Horton



5. "My Favorite Chouette" by Jeb Horton.



2-SOMETHING QUIZ ANSWERS

(From Page 5)
Did you beat
Bob Z's 77 pts.?

Scoring Explanation: Each possible play was fully rolled out on "Snowie 4" a total of 720 times (3-ply, precise, live cube not available). Once Snowie determined the best play, others were ranked against it.

Points are awarded on a sliding scale for errors up to a magnitude of -0.099 as shown in the following table. (Snowie's default parameter for a "blunder" is -0.110.) If you play doesn't appear, it was wrong by more than 0.100 and worth zero points.

0 to -0.004 = 20	-0.050 to -0.054 = 10
-0.005 to -0.009 = 19	-0.055 to -0.059 = 9
-0.010 to -0.014 = 18	-0.060 to -0.064 = 8
-0.015 to -0.019 = 17	-0.065 to -0.069 = 7
-0.020 to -0.024 = 16	-0.070 to -0.074 = 6
-0.025 to -0.029 = 15	-0.075 to -0.079 = 5
-0.030 to -0.034 = 14	-0.080 to -0.084 = 4
-0.035 to -0.039 = 13	-0.085 to -0.089 = 3
-0.040 to -0.044 = 12	-0.090 to -0.094 = 2
-0.045 to -0.049 = 11	-0.095 to -0.099 = 1

2-1

24/23, 13/11* (20 points) *Bob Z's pick*
9/7, 8/7 (5 points)
24/22, 9/8 (3 points)
6/4, 5/4 (2 points)

2-2

24/22, 13/11*/9, 8/6 (20 points)
13/11*, 8/6/4, 6/4 (10 points) *Bob Z's pick*
24/22, 8/6/4, 6/4 (9 points)
24/22, 13/11*, 9/5 (7 points)
13/11*/9/7, 9/7 (4 points)

2-3

24/22, 9/6 (20 points)
24/22, 8/5 (14 points)
13/11*, 9/6 (11 points)
13/11*/8 (8 points)
13/11*, 8/5 (7 points) *Bob Z's pick*
24/22, 13/10 (4 points)

2-4

24/22, 13/9 (20 points)
24/22, 9/5 (6 points)
8/4, 6/4 (2 points)

2-5

24/17* (20 points) *Bob Z's pick*
Hope you didn't miss this one!

2-6

13/7, 9/7 (20 points) *Bob Z's pick*
24/16 (18 points)
13/11*/5 (16 points)
13/11*, 9/3 (4 points)
24/22, 9/3 (3 points)
9/3, 5/3 (1 point) Δ

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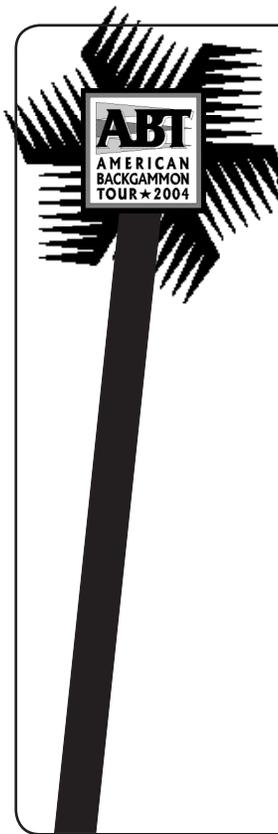
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