

*illinois state championships*

## POTTLE & MORTUK WIN IN ILLINOIS

### Frank Talbot regains ABT lead

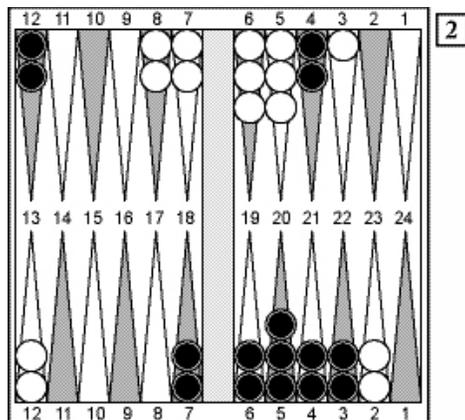
Wisconsin's Sam Pottle came from behind to defeat fellow Madison Backgammon Club player Stan Livingston 15-13 and win the Illinois State Championship. The 8-10 October event drew 82 main event players to the P re Marquette Hotel in downtown Peoria, Illinois. Ed Zell directed the tournament ably assisted by staffers Sue Will and Sue Oliver.



2004 Illinois State Champion Sam Pottle.

Trailing 6-12, Pottle scored five of the next six points to reduce Livingston's lead to 13-11. After Pottle had doubled in the 14th game, he faced a critical 6-1 play:

Illinois State 15-point Open finals. Sam Pottle (Black) trails Stan Livingston (White), 11 to 13. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-1.**



Sam thought for a while before playing 21/15, 5/4. In fact, 21/14 rolls out superior (it's less likely to be hit and there's more "2" duplication), with Sam's play just a fraction ahead of the third candidate 13/6. Things got interesting when Stan responded with 4-4, hitting and making two inner board points. But Stan was never able to extricate his two back checkers and Pottle went on to win a doubled gammon and the match. Another fine finish for Sam Pottle who was the Land of Lincoln Masters champ in 2001.

Chalk another great tournament for Michigan's Emil Mortuk (MI) who has cashed 10 times in regional events this year. In Illinois, Emil bested Ray Foglerlund (CA) in the Land of Lincoln Masters and was a runner-up in the Open Consolation finals.

### ABT UP FOR GRABS

Frank Talbot's Open Consolation victory over Mortuk earned him just enough

[Continued on page 6]

### ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

CHAMPIONSHIP (32): 1-Sam Pottle (WI), 2-Stan Livingston (WI); 1C-Frank Talbot (MI), 2C-Emil Mortuk (MI); 1LC-David Rockwell (IL). INTERMEDIATE (32): 1-Don Marek (IL), 2-Jack Fagan (MO); 1C-Ron Wagner (IL), 2C-Cliff Mayoh (IL); 1LC-Larry Whittenburg (IL). NOVICE (18): 1-Derek Orendorff (IL), 2-Tim Johnson (IL); 1C-George Ramia, 2C-Dave Settles (IL); 1LC-Michael Redenbaugh. LAND OF LINCOLN MASTERS (13): 1-Emil Mortuk (MI), 2-Ray Foglerlund (CA). LINCOLN/DOUGLAS DOUBLES (12): 1-Stan Livingston & Ilia Guzei (WI), 2-Carter Mattig & Venus Paxson (IL). CAPITOL PUNISHMENT BLITZ (48): 1-Tim Mabee (IL), 2-Neil Kazaross (IL). DOWNTOWN PEORIA QUICKIE (32): 1-Carter Mattig, 2-Michael Plog. SPRINGFIELD OPEN (32): 1-Jim Zimmerman (IL), 2-Milad Doueih (IL); 1C-John Jennings (IL), 2C-Ed Bauder (IL). TAKI-BOARD TOURNAMENT: 1-Carol Joy Cole (MI).

## HE PLAYED "NIGHT AND DAY"

Here's a 1937 photo of Cole Porter playing backgammon in Hollywood, California. Few people know America's renowned songwriter was also a backgammon aficionado. The lyrics to his 1934 song "Thank you so much Missus Lowsborough" mentions the game.

But based on this photograph, Porter wasn't much of a player. He clearly missed a double/drop prior to his roll.

"De-Lovely," a biography depicting Cole Porter's life, is currently finishing its theatrical run and will soon be released on video. Δ



# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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## SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT

Can you please give me your opinion on a Rules question?

Traditionally, each player's "inner table" was to be nearest the closest source of light. I believe this rule was codified early in the 20th century by the New York Bridge and Backgammon Club. Edmund Hoyle's 1873 rules were silent on the inner table question.

The US Tournament Rules suggest that seating, direction of play, etc. are governed by dice rolls. But it is not clear whether the "nearest source of light" rule has been done away with. Since most tournaments are held in hotels with overhead lighting, some would argue the question is moot. However, I've always understood the rule to suggest that natural light supersedes artificial light. Thus, in a hotel-based tournament, if you are seated near a window, and it's daylight, as often happens in Las Vegas at the Riviera Hotel, for example, I would say the inner

[Continued on page 3]

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole  
810/232-9731  
[cjc@tir.com](mailto:cjc@tir.com)

\*Denotes new or revised listing

### NATIONAL

*American Backgammon Tour events underlined.*

Oct 15-17	<u>Florida State Championship, Sheraton Suites, Fort Lauderdale, Florida</u>	954/564-0340
Oct 17	12th Annual Fall Tournament on FIBS, via computer	E-mail: <a href="mailto:david@escoffery.com">david@escoffery.com</a>
Oct 18*	Pittsburgh Backgammon Mixer, Dave & Buster's, Homestead, Pennsylvania	412/823-7500
Oct 21	Third Thursday Bonus (Minnesota Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Oct 23	Atlanta Mini-Blitz Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Oct 24	Miami Valley Monthly, Holiday Inn McKenna's Grille, Fairborn, Ohio	937/864-1748
Oct 29-31	<u>2004 Minnesota Open, Mystic Lake Casino, Prior Lake, Minnesota</u>	651/699-6758
Oct 30	Double Trouble Tournament, New York Chess & BG, New York, New York	212/869-6057
Oct 30*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/688-9722
Oct 31	Ace Point Club Monthly, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/888-2231
Nov 2	Arizona Club Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/279-0215
Nov 5	22nd Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Clarion Hotel, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Nov 6*	Springfield Series #1, Damon's, Springfield, Illinois	217/528-0117
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
Nov 13*	Turkey Trot Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Nov 14*	South Florida Monthly, NorthRidge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Nov 18*	Third Thursday Bonus (California State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Nov 20*	Atlanta Fall Doubles Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Nov 20*	Double Trouble Tournament, New York Chess & BG, New York, New York	212/869-6057
Nov 21*	Austin Club Bimonthly Tournament, JC's Steakhouse, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Nov 21*	Miami Valley Monthly, Holiday Inn McKenna's Grille, Fairborn, Ohio	937/864-1748
Nov 21*	New England Club Bonus, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	508/829-3283
Nov 21	26th Flint Area Club Championships, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Nov 28*	Ace Point Club Monthly, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/888-2231
Dec 3-5	<u>California State Championship, Airtel Plaza Hotel, Van Nuys, California</u>	818/901-0464
Dec 4	Bar Point Saturday Bimonthly, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Dec 4*	Springfield Series #2, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/528-0117
Dec 7*	Arizona Club Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/279-0215
Dec 11*	Tournament of Champions, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Dec 12*	Miami Valley Monthly, Holiday Inn McKenna's Grille, Fairborn, Ohio	937/864-1748
Dec 12*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	508/829-3283
Dec 12*	South Florida Monthly, NorthRidge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Jan 14-16	<u>5th Carolina Invitational, Hilton University Place, Charlotte, North Carolina</u>	704/814-0850
Jan 23-30	Backgammon On Board VII, Star Princess, Ft. Lauderdale to E. Caribbean	773/583-6464
Feb 6*	Bar Point Doubles Championship, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Feb 13*	25th Illinois State Challenge Cup, Damon's, Springfield, Illinois	217/528-0117
Feb 18-20	<u>27th Pittsburgh Championships, Holiday Inn, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</u>	412/823-7500
Mar 18-20	<u>2005 Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Lisle, Illinois</u>	773/583-6464

### OUTSIDE USA

Oct 14-17	Munkebjerg Scandinavian Challenge, Casino Munkebjerg, Vejle, Denmark	4529-724214
Oct 19-20	Giants Double Consultation, Casino Barrière, Enghien-les-Bains, France	491715-422222
Oct 20-24	2nd Lucien Barrière Open, Casino Barrière, Enghien-les-Bains, France	491715-422222
Oct 23-24	Gammonitis 2nd Birthday, Sundridge Park, Bromley, England	447900-983038
Oct 23-24	Swiss & Casino Baden Championships, Casino Baden, Baden, Switzerland	41794-015811
Oct 30-31	12th Irish Open Championship, Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, Ireland	35316-030891
Nov 1-6*	1st Caribbean Open, Casino Royale, Sonesta Maho Beach, St. Maarten	3926-9018168
Nov 4-7	24th Swedish Open, Clarion Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	4686-523033
Nov 6-7	Townharbour Trophy, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Nov 12-14	Backgammon Live in London 2004, Spice Island & YHA, London, England	442077-001798
Nov 13-14*	XXX Finnish Open, Sporttime, Helsinki, Finland	3515-068061
Dec 1-5*	Cancun Invitational (private event), Ritz Carlton, Cancun, Mexico	775/829-8403
Dec 4-5	United Kingdom Finals, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Dec 4-5	2nd SBA Goes Germany/Open/Doubles, Waadtländerstube, Thun, Switzerland	41794-811318
Dec 11-12	Gammonitis Christmas Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England	447900-983038
Dec 27-30	1st Weihnachtopen, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
Jan 15-16*	Bright 'n' Breezy, Hilton West Pier Hotel, Brighton, England	441522-888676
Jan 28-30	3rd Cotswold Fireside BG & Hold'em Poker, Crown Inn, Blockley, England	441453-821479
Feb 5-6*	Jarvis Trophy, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Feb 10-13	10th Kaiserbrunnen-Cup, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
Feb 19-20*	Gammonitis Tournament, Ramada Jarvis Grange Hotel, Bristol, England	447900-983038
Feb 24-27*	2nd Braugold Cup, Salzungen Hof, Bad Salzungen, Germany	4952-164314
Mar 5-6*	Slattery Scottish Open, Hanover Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Mar 23-28	17th Nordic "Wide" Open, Hotel Scandic, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

table would have to be the side of the board closest to the window.

What's your take on this?—Paul Wick, Farmington, Pennsylvania

"Shades of Gray" columnist Danny Kleinman answers: Presumably, the lighting is adequate no matter on which side the home boards are. It matters not whether the outer courts or the inner courts are lit slightly more, as players must see all courts clearly. Conceivably, the dice may be read more easily on the better-lit side of the board, but if

each player rolls to his right, one player will be slightly better able than another to see his own dice. That's exactly why, in case of conflicting wishes, the players should roll for it.—Yours, Danny

## WHY MENTION RACE?

In reading your September article on Philip Smith's Atlanta victory you stated that he was the victim of a terrible crime where deception was used. I think you made a good point about things not always being as they appear, but there was no real need to mention the race of the perpetrators. This is the type of crime that crosses all racial and ethnic boundaries.—Howard Ring, Northbrook, Illinois

The criminals responsible for the crime against Mr. Smith are still at large. Specifically for our Carolina readers, we identified the race of the perpetrators (one white female and two black males) with the express intention of exposing their scheme and increasing the chance of their capture.—Ed.

## ANOTHER MISPLAYED ACE

On page 4 of the the September CHICAGO POINT in the article on Kazaross vs. Swan, you comment "... and Wally tossed 4-1 making his 3-point." What you fail to mention is that this is a major blunder. With an equal race and a blot on Kazaross's 8-point, the obvious and correct play is 7/3, 24/23—pressuring the blot and seeking to escape with a 6 if the 8-point is not made next time.

Playing correctly would have given Swan a perfectly correct take of Kazaross's double. Yet another misplayed ace with

[Continued on page 4]



### AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2004

Top 100 through 10 October after 14 tournaments  
(Remaining events: Florida St., Minnesota Open, California St.)



Frank Talbot	37.53	Charlie Cole	11.18	Steve Mellen	5.88	Sandy Barnes	3.37
Ray Foglerlund	36.63	Betty Coppic	11.04	Neil Garvie	5.75	Dan Cramer	3.20
Neil Kazaross	35.12	Dan Grogan	10.80	Mark Anshus	5.60	Jack Fagan	3.19
Malcolm Davis	28.87	Philip Smith	10.72	Ernie McCombs	5.27	David Rockwell	3.18
Walter Trice	23.53	Brent Cohen	10.23	Kate Elmore	5.20	Spencer King	3.13
Bob Stringer	22.88	Norma Shyer	9.83	Geoff Arnold	5.20	Joann Feinstein	3.01
Wayne Jeffcoat	22.72	Doug Roberts	9.48	Jordan Lampe	5.08	Randy Reiff	3.01
Lucky Nelson	22.69	Stepan Nuniyants	9.33	Rob Maier	5.08	Ed Hoskins	3.00
Emil Mortuk	21.40	Alan Fenster	9.28	Steve Brown	4.86	Kat Dennison	3.00
Faddoul Khoury	21.40	Arnold Freeman	9.09	Ilia Guzei	4.80	Dan Kiurski	3.00
Gregg Cattanaach	17.47	Jason Lee	9.09	Sassan Kamali	4.55	Roger Hickman	3.00
Lloyd Upper	15.50	Eric Johnson	8.47	Norm Wiggins	4.55	Joan Hac	2.92
Bill Versaw	15.33	Vadim Musaeayan	7.61	Bear Lumbra	4.24	Joe Feldman	2.92
Bob Glass	15.33	David Rubin	7.56	Asad Zaltash	4.24	Dave Settles	2.79
Dave Wetzell	13.64	Mary Franks	6.89	Phil Simborg	4.16	Richard Martin	2.71
Michel Merlitti	13.44	Mary Hickey	6.80	Milad Doueihy	4.16	Dean Adamian	2.70
Petko Kostadinov	13.20	David Haddad	6.80	Ben Elliott	3.96	Bill Landry	2.60
Sam Pottle	12.81	Wally Swan	6.65	Jim Hall	3.88	Mark Murray	2.60
Bill Minser	12.81	Don Marek	6.42	Ed Bennett	3.88	Cem Aslan	2.59
Ron Wagner	12.67	Stan Livingston	6.42	Arman Karamian	3.78	Bruce Ballance	2.52
Mark Antranikian	12.25	Tak Morioka	6.40	Joe Sylvester	3.78	Danielle Bastarache	2.50
Mike Corbett	12.02	Woody Woodworth	6.22	Chuck Bower	3.78	Akemi Ota	2.16
Alan Robinson	11.61	Carl Sorg	6.20	Bruce Russell	3.44	Kevin Kelly	2.12
Denny Leatherman	11.50	Don Faix	6.20	Brad Rundersen	3.40	Rich Catalano	2.12
Brian Barber	11.20	Darin DuMolin	6.00	Stuart Thomson	3.40	Julian Haley	2.12



### CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB

#### 2004 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED  
THRU 30 SEPT.

Bob Zavoral	25.92	Bill Bartholomay	8.72	Bill Keefe	2.32	Josh Riddell	0.84
Tak Morioka	22.32	Steve Klesker	8.08	Tom Meyer	2.24	Cookie Frazin	0.80
Gary Kay	16.24	Alice Kay	8.04	Royal Robinson	2.24	Rick Sorci	0.80
Herb Roman	15.84	Adrian Rios	7.88	Mark Phillips	2.16	Kathy Sorci	0.80
Carter Mattig	15.16	Bob Steen	7.28	Ron Washington	2.04	Amy Trudeau	0.72
Bill Davis	14.92	Norma Shyer	7.20	Kwong Chan	2.04	Roy Cohen	0.72
Ken Bond	13.64	Joann Feinstein	6.76	John Jennings	1.92	Robert Ring	0.72
David Rockwell	13.64	Mark Murray	6.60	Ken Tyszko	1.92	Brooke Gottshall	0.72
Tim Mabee	12.08	Roger Hickman	6.52	Roland Dieter	1.88	John Stryker	0.72
Phil Simborg	11.60	David Marcus	6.12	Felix Yen	1.76	Harry Cohn	0.72
Phyllis Smolinski	11.48	Georgina Flanagan	5.72	Jake MaandeKok	1.64	Paul Klein	0.64
Mike Sutton	11.40	Peter Kalba	5.20	Bill Stegich	1.52	Gaby Kairouz	0.64
Jacob Moreno	11.04	Les Moshinsky	5.12	Neil Kazaross	1.52	Will Hare	0.64
Joe Auszmann	10.20	Paul Franks	4.16	Tim Carroll	1.44	Romeo Kap	0.64
Val Zimnicki	10.08	Mary Franks	4.04	Dave Cramer	1.20	Mike Bandman	0.64
Paul Baraz	10.00	Wayne Wiest	3.88	Barbara Levinson	1.04	Vince Bennett	0.60
Lucky Nelson	9.88	Michael Peters	3.64	John O'Connor	1.04	Ken Tibbs	0.60
Joe Wollick	9.48	Arlene Levy	2.96	Nora Luna	1.04	Jay Bleiman	0.56
Howard Ring	9.00	Eric Johnson	2.72	Mark Swanson	0.96	Spencer King	0.56
Linda Rockwell	8.88	Elaine Kehm	2.56	David Rubin	0.96	Jolie Rubin	0.24

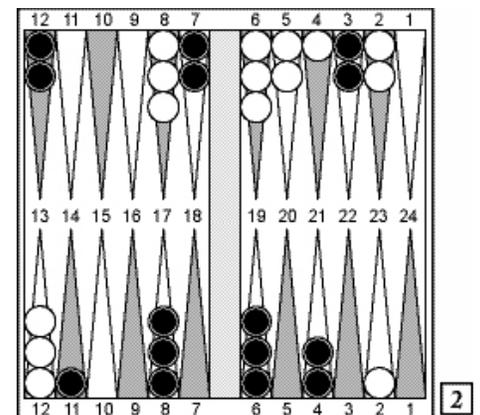
**KEN BOND** placed in every September tournament to win 3.32 master points and September monthly honors. Lucky Nelson (2.76) and Bob Zavoral (2.32) were runners-up.

your move

## PROBLEM #304

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

5 point match. Black leads White, 3 to 1.  
**BLACK TO PLAY 6-5.**



# DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS

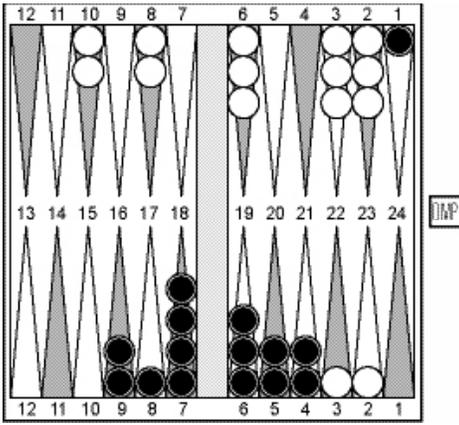


© 2004 by Danny Kleinman

## A "PRIME" CONSIDERATION

**D**ear Miss Lonelyblots: I enjoy playing matches on the Internet with my friend in Denmark. Once a year, we play a 15-point match for \$100. After battling down to the wire, I had a deceptively easy play to make at double match-point:

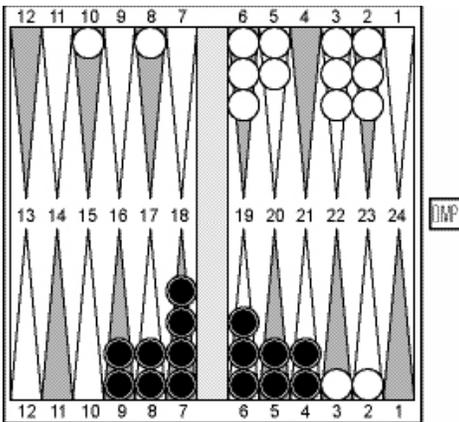
15-point match. Black and White are tied at 14-14. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-4.**



I played around with a variety of hitting moves on my side of the board for about a minute. But wait. I don't need a gammon. Why not just run my straggler from the 24-point to the 8-point and complete a 6-prime? Duh!!

My opponent then rolled 5-3 making his 5-point and I was faced with a tough choice:

15-point match. Black and White are tied at 14-14. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-5.**



I decided to make my points in order hitting with 9/3\*, 8/3. My opponent rolled—you guessed it—6-2 from the bar!

From here, I rolled like a jagged rock and never had a chance.

My Danish friend told me he was surprised that I gave him four hitting numbers. "You must make your ace-point!" he chortled.

Must I, Miss Lonelyblots?—*One Hundred Dollars Lighter*

**DEAR LIGHTER:** Making a prime is only part of the job. Rolling the prime home is the other part. By playing 24/8, you give White aces to anchor, and run the risk of later shots, when he is likely to have made a fourth inside point. Pointing on the 3-point and hitting loose on the 2-point while advancing in White's board may look riskier, but it is slightly better, even in this case when gammons don't matter. You obtain a 4-to-3 advantage in inside points, keep White from anchoring (except with 2-2 or 1-1), and threaten to cover the 2-point with 30 of your rolls next turn if White doesn't hit. Though I can sympathize with your priming play, 7/3\*(2), 6/2\*, and then playing either 24/20 or 9/5 is better.

Having made your prime, your job was to roll it forward. Again, the "safe" play

(making the 1-point as your friend suggested) is safe only in the short run. 7/1, 6/1 puts two men out of play and strips your prime of all but one spare, producing a stripped position with substantial shot jeopardy to follow. Your play, despite leaving four shots immediately, was slightly safer in the long run. In the future, beware of making the 1-point when you have gaps in your board, and beware of positions with seven points anywhere, as they're generally inflexible.

You paid an inordinate price for failing to attack with your double-4s—a fairly small error. And after you correctly moved 9/3\*, 8/3, getting hit by White's proverbial 2-6 from the bar didn't have to be fatal. Don't kick yourself for making a good attacking play when the real reason for your loss was (you said it) "rolling like a jagged rock" later.—*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](mailto:bg@chicagopoint.com).

## LETTERS...

*(Continued from page 3)*

significant consequences!—*Chris Bray, London, England*

Thanks, Chris. See our "Play an Ace Quiz" on page 7 of this issue.—*Ed.*

## THE CAPITOL SHOOTING

Perhaps some of your Chicago players heard about the security guard that was shot and killed at the Illinois State Capitol last month. His name was ("The Wildest") Bill Wozniak, a friend of mine for 30+ years.

Bill never joined or played with our Springfield club, but many moons ago, he was one of the first people I played backgammon with. As recently as last year, he was running sound for our band & jamming flute solos in the background.

Rats.—*Greg Tomlin, Pleasant Plains, IL*

## PLAYING THE IN-LAWS

I love playing backgammon and I'm interested in playing with others who enjoy the game instead of always playing my father-in-law! As a beginner, I'm a little intimidated at jumping into something that is exclusively for professionals. Could you please send me information about coming events at your club?—*Gregory Berger, via E-mail*

Things could be worse, Gregory. You could be playing your mother-in-law!

The Bar Point Club welcomes you a Tuesday night tourney at the Clarion Hotel in Chicago. Pay your \$10 entry before the 7:00 p.m. cutoff and you're guaranteed two matches. Additionally, our annual Fall Trophy Tourney on Friday, November 5 (6:30 pm at the Clarion) will have two divisions of play and plenty of action. Hope to see you at an upcoming event.—*Ed.* Δ



## ILLINOIS ACTION

 <p><b>Chicago</b></p> <p>Bill Davis 773/583-6464</p> <p>Peter Kalba 312/316-1432</p>	<p>Tuesday, 6:00 P.M. at the Clarion Hotel, 5615 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago; 773/693-5800.</p> <p>Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at Champs Sports Bar, 17 W. 517 Roosevelt Rd., Oakbrook Terrace; 630/691-1888.</p>
<p>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).</p>	<p>BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tournaments Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at Damon's Grill, 1701 Fort Jesse Road, Normal. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967).</p>
<p>SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wed., 6:15 P.M. at Damon's Grill, 3050 Lindbergh Blvd., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).</p>	<p>WINNETKABG CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Chibnik (847/446-0537).</p>
<p>PEORIABACKGAMMON CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/674-0557).</p>	

## NUNIYANTS WINS A THRILLER IN SEATTLE

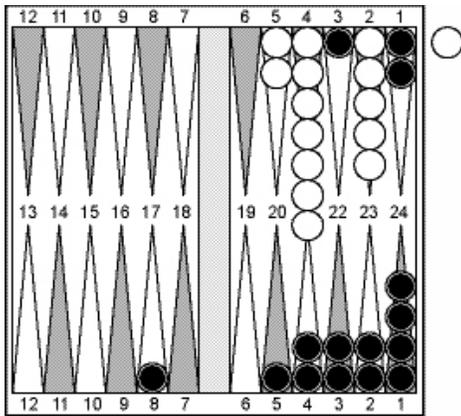
Fogerland defeats Kazaross to grab September ABT lead

Seattle, Washington. What a great city to visit. And what a great tournament to have attended 24–26 September at the Muckleshoot Casino in neighboring Auburn. Clyde Jones directed the 48-player ABT event assisted by Puget Sound Club members Randy Merriman, Tim Ferrell, Trina Smith, Ruthann Ferrell, Brenda Merriman, Rob North, and Casey Ferrell.

In the Open tournament, Stepan Nuniyants of Renton, Washington defeated Ray Fogerlund en route to the finals. His opponent was fellow Washingtonian Mark Antranikian. It was a wild 13-point finals with Mark on top throughout the match until the score reached 12-all.

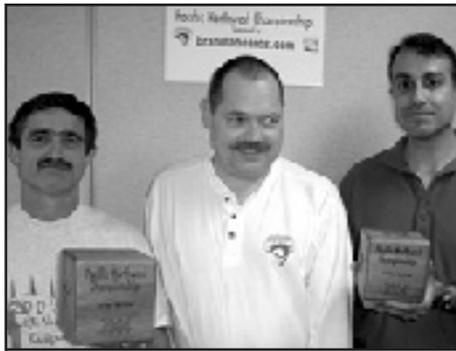
The deciding game, which was recorded and entered into Snowie, underscores why backgammon is the cruelest game. Although both players ranked high in their Snowie evaluation (Stepan: world class, Mark: expert), Mark made a critical error that may have cost him the match:

13-point Pacific Northwest Open finals. Stepan Nuniyants (Black) and Mark Antranikian (White) are at double match-point. **WHITE TO PLAY 2-1.**



Antranikian played 5/3\*, 5/4, clearing the 5-point but leaving a hard-to-clean up blot on the 3-point. Instead he should play 5/3\*, 4/3. It isn't even close giving away almost 7% match equity. Nuniyants missed the first two shots at the repeating 3-blot before hitting on his third attempt. At this point, Mark had six pieces off and was still a big favorite. But Stepan continued to corral Mark's lone straggler.

Although Stepan never closed out that



Tournament director Clyde Jones (center) presents the unique doubling cube trophies to Open winner Stepan Nuniyants (L) and Mark Antranikian.

checker, he was able to scamper in and start bearing off as Mark experienced severe entry failure dancing nine times in a row. Congrats to Stepan Nuniyants, the Pacific Northwest's inaugural champ.

The other excitement of the match was a match-up to determine the ABT leader of 2004. The Open Consolation pitted Ray Fogerlund (CA) vs. Neil Kazaross (IL). A win by Ray would move him just ahead of leader Neil with only four tournaments to go. And that's what happened as Ray prevailed 11–5.



Darin DuMolin (AZ) moves towards his first regional trophy in the Intermediate division.

In other results, Darin DuMolin (AZ) topped Kat Dennison (WA) in the Intermediate, Patrick Gibson (CA) & Ruth Robbins (WA) bested Neil Kazaross & Emil Mortuk (MI) in the Doubles, and the beautiful added prize Brahma Backgammon Board went to Sean Cearly (WA).

Clyde wishes to thank Ray Fogerlund for his entertaining Friday seminar and Peter Kalba for raising over \$4000 in the Calcutta Auction. He also thanks fellow directors Patrick Gibson, Bill Davis, and Carol Joy Cole for their support. The only inconvenience was having the hotel room a few miles from the playing room (although shuttles were frequent). Clyde will be working to correct this problem in time for the 2005 tourney. Δ



Ray Fogerlund put a "bounty" on Neil Kazaross at the Pacific Northwest Championships. The poster reads: **WANTED!** Neil Kazaross (AKA An-Neil-ator). American Backgammon Terror #1. **REWARD(S):** Beat Neil in this ABT event: \$10. Knock Neil out of this event completely: \$20. By order of the Korn County Sheriff. (Coolrey)



Directors Ruth Robbins (WA) and Patrick Gibson (CA) bask in their big doubles victory over Neil Kazaross & Emil Mortuk.

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAMPIONSHIPS

OPEN (21): 1-Stepan Nuniyants (WA), 2-Mark Antranikian (CA); 1C-Ray Fogerlund (CA), 2C-Neil Kazaross (IL). INTERMEDIATE (27): 1-Darin DuMolin (AZ), 2-Kat Dennison (WA); 1C-Ed Hoskins (WA), 2C-Sharon Rich (WA). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Patrick Gibson (CA) & Ruth Robbins (WA), 2-Neil Kazaross (IL) & Emil Mortuk (MI). SASQUATCH QUICKIES (32): 1-Bret Marzolf (WA). MOUNT ST. HELEN'S CHALLENGE (16): 1-Petko Kostadinov (SC). PUGET SOUND BLITZ (56): 1-Neil Kazaross (IL). \$50 SUNDAY JACKPOT (8): 1-Petko Kostadinov (SC). BRAHMA BOARD DRAWING WINNER: Sean Cearly (WA).

## ILLINOIS STATE...

[Continued from page 1]

points to edge ahead of Ray Fogerlund and Neil Kazaross (IL) in the closest 2004 ABT points race ever (see ABT standings, page 3). Frank's #1 position looked to be short lived when Neil Kazaross took a 4-2 Crawford lead against David Rockwell (IL) in the Open Last Chance finals. Then Rockwell rallied to extinguish the An-Neilator's burning desire for the top spot . . . at least until the next ABT event.



Neil Kazaross (L) lost to David Rockwell in the Open Last Chance finals. Had Neil won, he would have passed Ray Fogerlund (background, 2nd from left) and Frank Talbot (far right) in the ABT standings.

### ADDITIONALLY . . .

Director Ed Zell's daughter Clare opened the Auction program with a fine rendition of the National Anthem. Then professional auctioneers Greg Feller and Michael Plog

took over with an entertaining auction.

Wayne Wiest (IL) won the 50/50 drawing of which \$170 was donated to the American Cancer Society. And the Taki-Board drawing/tournament was won by Flint director Carol Joy Cole (MI).



Wayne Wiest and Carol Joy Cole begin their battle in the Taki-Board giveaway tourney. CJC won the \$850 board.



Left: Land of Lincoln Master's Champ Emil Mortuk. Right: Peoria Quickie champ Carter Mattig. Carter and Venus Paxson (pictured) were Doubles runner's-up.



Holding a 4-cube in the 11-pt. Intermediate finals vs. Jack Fagen, Don Marek, leading 4-0, ponders redoubling to 8.

Congratulations to all of the other winners including Illinoisans Don Marek (Intermediate) and Derek Orendorff (Novice). And "job well done" to Ed Zell for an outstanding effort directing his first American Backgammon Tour event. Next year the Illinois State Championship is scheduled to be in Springfield with a return to Peoria in 2006. Stay tuned for the official word. Δ

## AMALGAMATION

Illinois State Challenge Cup dates are set. The event will be Sunday Feb. 13 at Damon's in Springfield... We have been informed that the Chicago Point website is being blocked from certain governmental viewers as too "provocative." How can that be?... **Cliff Mayoh** (IL) is on the mend following his second total hip replacement at the Mayo Clinic... The Pittsburgh Backgammon Association is promoting our game with a free "Backgammon Mixer" at Dave & Busters on Monday, Oct. 18. What a great way to recruit new players... **Louise Goldsmith** is involved with the very private Cancun Backgammon Invitational 1-5 December at the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Call 775/829-8403 for more information... Another warm weather tourney coming 1-6 Nov. is the WBF 1st Caribbean Open in St. Maarten with \$30,000 guaranteed prize money. **Marco Fornasir** (Italy) is the director. Details are at [www.gammonville.com](http://www.gammonville.com) which will cover the event...

Congratulations to Madison players **Bill Minser** and **Beth Martinson** who will marry on 16 October... Remember the Bar Point Club's Fall Trophy Tourney will be FRIDAY NIGHT, 5 Nov. at the Clarion Hotel. Download a flyer from [www.chicagopoint.com/bpc.html](http://www.chicagopoint.com/bpc.html)... Attendance for Backgammon on Board VI Caribbean Cruise is near 40. Join us for the action by registering now! Call **Sue Will** at 309/699-6005... Visiting the Bar Point Club in September: **Kurt Thompson** (MN) and **Angel Georgiev** (IN)... You can read a great interview with former backgammon player **Gustav Jacobsen**, now known as **Gus Hansen** at: [www.worldpokertour.com/playerslounge/featured/](http://www.worldpokertour.com/playerslounge/featured/). In the article, **Bill Robertie** (MA) and **Chuck Bower** (IN) are quoted. Additionally, Gus discusses why BG players excel in poker. "I think actually backgammon players are a little more objective than poker players generally are. So I think actually backgammon players have a little edge when they come to poker because they have a little more objectivity. They look at things a

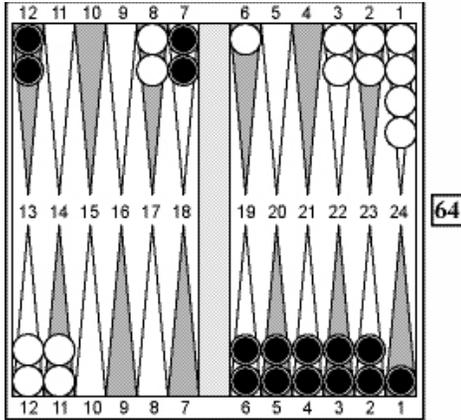
little more clearly than poker players."... **Greg Tomlin** (IL) reports on the passing of a longtime Sangamon Valley player **Tom Teague** (IL). Tom died last week on his 61st birthday in his sleep. He participated in several Illinois State Challenge Cups, and his self-published book on Route 66 was well received... **John Jennings** (IL), a claims agent for Allstate, is working ultra-long hours following three hurricanes in Florida. But he'll still find time to make it to the Florida State Championships 15-17 October in Fort Lauderdale... **Tom Bracy**, quarterback for the New England Patriots is an avid backgammon player. **Seth Wickersham** writes for ESPN magazine: "Brady walks into the Patriots locker room with his own backgammon board, like he's some kind of pro. He's not. His teammates joke that he's won as many backgammon games as Super Bowls. 'And when I kick his ass,' says backup quarterback **Damon Huard**, 'he throws the board on the floor.'"... Finally, from **David Yoffie**: "If you're playing your competitor's game, you're going to lose." Δ



# PROBLEM #303 ANALYZED

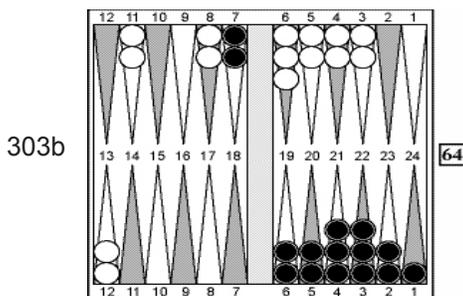
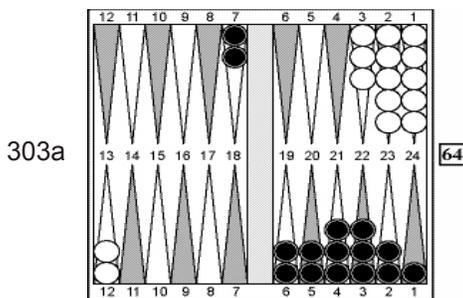
by Jake Jacobs

Match to 7 points. No score. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.**



When Bill sent me this problem he added the biographical information that the original Black, an intermediate-level player, had played 6/1, 5/1. If perchance that player is breathlessly waiting to learn whether his play was the best choice: Resume breathing sir! It wasn't, and we don't want that brain deprived of any more oxygen.

Breaking the board to hold some other part of the position is a frequently abused ploy. If one opts to do so, preserving as much of the board as possible is usually correct; the better breaking play is 6/1, 6/2. Though better, the play is still not good. Breaking the board is done when there are no reasonable alternatives; breaking the board is necessary if the alternatives mean ceding a hopeless race, or exposure to extreme jeopardy. For instance:



In both cases Black should play 6/1, 6/2. Black's problem is that he has conflicting goals: he would like to exert as much holding pressure on White as possible, yet at the same time he is very much in the race and would like to make plays that cater to winning when he does not hit. Black is, after all, down just four pips after this play (94-90) and given White's acepoint stack, Black may hope that his own pips will bear off more efficiently.

Once we have decided to preserve our board, there remain four candidate plays:

- (a) 18/13, 18/14      (c) 13/8, 13/9
- (b) 18/9                (d) 13/4

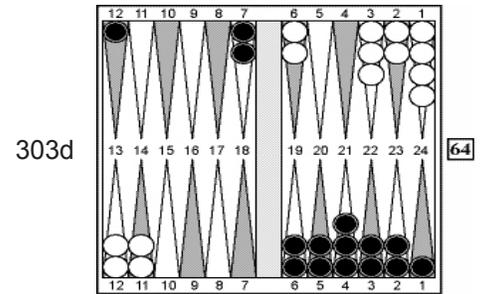
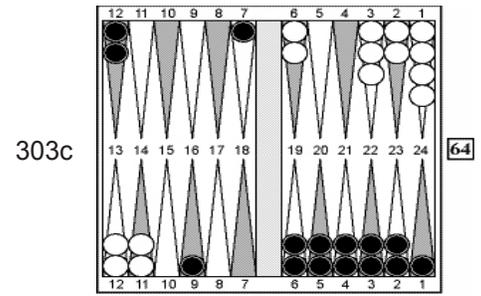
The first two are best if it were a pure race; that is to say, if White will *never* hit Black. But the first of these almost completely eliminates Black's chances of ever hitting White, and with the race so close, that is not an option to cede if we can avoid it. It turns out that in most variations if Black does choose to leave the bar point, he should run with only one checker, not both.

Black can keep the bar point, however, and has a play that exposes him to no shots, while at the same time not hurting his racing chances: clearing the midpoint. I would expect a majority of players to reflexively play 13/8, 13/9, and perhaps they are right, but let's look a little deeper. Two features are apparent in this particular position: first, that White is completely stripped, so clearing the midpoint gives him breathing room by releasing pressure on White's 14-point; second, White's three point board and loose blot make it risky for her to hit Black. If Black leaves the bar point White has 28 shots at his blot, but seven leave (at least) a direct shot on White's 6-point, and 13 allow White to hit and lift, but leave three open points and multiple fly shots. Even seven of the eight numbers that might hit and cover give Black immediate fly shots and two open points on which to enter.

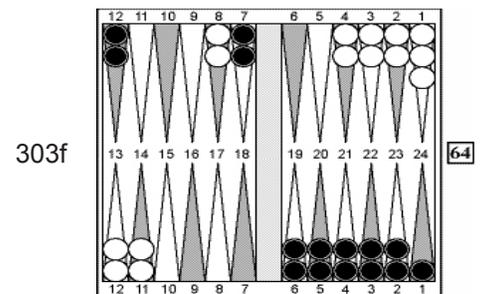
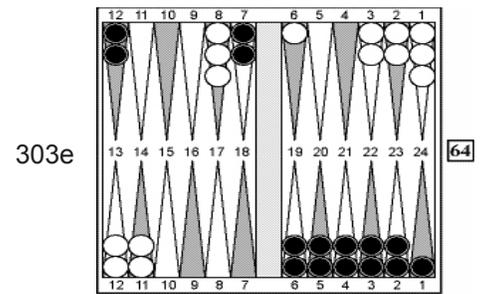
If Black leaves a blot on the midpoint, White has only 20 shots, but this is somewhat deceptive. Most of the "extra" shots White has at a bar point blot she will never use (e.g. hitting on the bar point with 5-2 leaves Black with 23 shots at three blots which translates to a double-out). In fact, even with a hit and cover number like 2-2 White does better to ignore the hit and play 13/9(2). When the blot is on the midpoint, White will happily hit and cover with five numbers—1-6, 2-2, 2-6—and play safe with the rest. When the blot is on the bar point White hits, less happily, with 1-1, 6-1, and 6-2, so Black's chances of being hit are actually *greater* when he leaves the mid!

Does that settle the matter? Not quite.

When Black leaves the bar point, he is more or less committed to running on the next roll, but when he holds the bar point he can bring his last checker from the mid, keeping most of his options open.



These variations arise after each of Black's plays and White responds with 5-2. Black does slightly better in 303c to run 18/9 instead of clearing his mid; either way he is a bare favorite winning about 52% of his games and almost no gammons. In 303d Black plays 13/7, 4/1 and is a solid favorite, winning about 59% of his games with nearly 10 of the 59 being gammons. From this we see that 13/4 is the play that keeps the most pressure on White, while risking little for Black. To reinforce this, I include two more variations that show when it is right to run with 18/9, and when it is right to play safely by clearing the mid.



[Continued at right]

**WINNER'S CIRCLE**



AUG.-OCT. 2004

- 1st Rotterdam Beach Tournament** (Rotterdam, Netherlands; 20-22 Aug.)... MASTERS (29 + 3 rebuys): 1-Rogier van Gemert, 2-Sander Lyloff (Denmark), 3/4-John Slattery (Scotland) / Misja Alma; 1C-Tore Fredriksen (Norway), 2C-Paul Gilbertson (England); 1LC-Paul van Rooijen, 2LC-Phillip Visjager. INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Anthony Fawcett (England), 2-Leon Weyl, 3/4-Myke Wignall (England) / Rosey Bensley (England); 1C-Ali, 2C-Rob Willems; 1LC-Zoe Cunningham (England). BEGINNER (8): 1-Duncan Rousson, 2-Brittne Freijer; 1C-Diane Li. WARM-UP: 1-Guido Hehmann (Germany), 2-Seong Lee (Denmark). SUPER JACKPOT: 1-Francois Tardieu (France), 2-Kasper Nielsen (Denmark). DOUBLES: 1-Marcel van Toor & Paul van Rooijen, 2-Francois Tardieu & Arnoud Mattern (France).
- 32nd Hawaii State Championships** (Honolulu, Hawaii; 21 Aug.)... OPEN (21): 1-Dan Price, 2-Tim Moore; 1C-Damien Scott.
- Backpacker Trophy Tournament** (Davenport, England; 4-5 Sep.)... OPEN (39): 1-Rebecca Bell, 2-John Thomas, 3/4-Jon Sharpe / Kerry Jackson; 1C-Tony Lee, 2C-Anne Pocknell; 1LC-Zoe Cunningham, 2LC-Vince Poil. SUICIDE! (32): 1-Ken Gibson, 2-Uldis Lapikens. FRIDAY WARM-UP (16): 1-Steve Lynch, 2-Jeff Barber. DOUBLES (8): 1-Bermuda Shorts, 2-V Max. POKER (12): 1-Steve Lynch.
- Red, White, & Blue Open** (Houston, TX; 11 Sep.)... OPEN (16): 1-Gary Fomby,

- 2-Brian Nenninger, 3/4-Paul Money / Tom Wright; 1C-Allen Hubenak, 2C-Al Johnson.
- Ohio State Monthly** (Canton, OH; 12 Sep.)... OPEN: 1-Mike Vasilatos, 2-Farhad Forudi.
- South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 12 Sep.)... OPEN (8): 1-Mke Corbett, 2-Les Boyd. INTERMEDIATE (7): 1/2-Carlos Azcarate / Danielle Bastarache.
- Kansas City Club Monthly** (Westport, MO; 16 Sep.)... OPEN (6): 1-Al Morrone, 2/3-James Worley / Eric Barr.
- 25th Viator Invitational Cup** (La Jolla, CA; 18-19 Sep.)... OPEN (26): 1-Eliot Bean (CA), 2-Bob Wachtel (CA); 1C-George Photias (NV), 2C-John Rockwell (CA).
- Miami Valley Monthly** (Fairborn, OH; 26 Sep.)... OPEN (5): 1-Roger Foster, 2-Jeremy Weyland... *The Miami Valley Club has dropped its Thursday meeting dates, Sunday monthly events will continue.*
- Bar Point Saturday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 2 Oct.)... OPEN (9): 1-Phil Simborg, 2-David Rockwell, 3/4-Peter Kalba / Don Marek; 1C/2C-Don Marek / Tim Mabee. INTERMEDIATE (4): 1-Dave Settles, 2-Wayne Wiest. Δ

**'PLAY AN ACE' ANSWERS...**

[From Quiz on page 7]

*Scoring Explanation:* Each possible play was fully rolled out on "Snowie 4" a minimum 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 your play doesn't appear, it was wrong by 0.100 or more 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

**Problem 1**

- 5/4\* (20 points) *Phil's pick*
- 23/22 (13 points)
- 6/5 (12 points)

**Problem 2**

- 2/1 (20 points)
- 6/5 (18 points) *Phil's pick*
- 4/3 (15 points)

**Problem 3**

- 3/2 (20 points)
- 9/8 (17 points)
- 24/23 (11 points)
- 4/3 (1 point) *Phil's pick*
- 6/5 (1 point)

**Problem 4**

- 8/7 (20 points)
- 6/5\* (18 points) *Phil's pick*
- 22/21 (12 points)

**Problem 5**

- 6/5 (20 points)
- 2/1 (18 points)
- 22/21 (15 points)
- 4/3\* (10 points) *Phil's pick*

**Problem 6**

- 13/12 (20 points) *Phil's pick*
- 11/10 (18 points)
- 9/8 (16 points)
- 7/6 (15 points)
- 2/1 (5 points) Δ

**PROBLEM 303...**

[Continued from page 8]

White's seven extra pips make it correct for Black to run with 18/9 in position 303e. In 303f, the fourth inner board point makes it wrong to leave shots, and Black plays 13/8, 13/9.

*Summing up:*

- (1) Avoid breaking your inner board unless the situation is desperate;
- (2) If your opponent has a very weak position, consider leaving a blot behind to put pressure on him if it can be done at very little risk to you; and
- (3) If winning the race, run from the back; otherwise run from the front. — *Jake Jacobs* Δ




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- (d) Prize Money: Winning Team-60%, 2nd Place-20%, 3rd/4th-10% each.

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Howard Markowitz: 702/893-6025

E-mail: [howard114@cox.net](mailto:howard114@cox.net)

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