

28th pittsburgh championships

## ROBERTS TOPS DAVIS IN PITTSBURGH

Doug Roberts showed why he is now ranked second in the ABT all-time standings by defeating a top-ranked field of 78 players at the 28th Pittsburgh Championships. Director Steve Hast enjoyed record attendance of 194 main event players at his 17–19 February tournament held at the Holiday Inn Hotel nearby the main airport. As is a part of every Pittsburgh tournament, the food-and-drink (and fun!) was continuous.

After stopping a determined Petko Kostadinov (SC) in the semifinals, Doug faced backgammon giant Malcolm Davis in the 13-point title match. Halfway through the first game, a dispute developed. During Malcolm's turn, he noticed Doug was handling his dice. Malcolm asked him to leave the dice in his cup and Doug made no promises. Director Steve Hast was called and after deliberation, instructed Doug to follow proper etiquette and not touch his dice during Malcolm's turn. Doug agreed, but match tension increased.

Malcolm made only two blunders the entire match. The first was a checker play:

13-point finals. Doug Roberts (Black) and Malcolm Davis (White) are tied at 1–1. **WHITE TO PLAY 3-1.**

Davis chose the attack play of 11/8, 4/3\*. Playing quietly with 5/1 or 4/1, 2/1 is much better. Roberts capitalized by hitting with 3-1 from the bar. When Malcolm danced, Doug was too good to double and eventually won two points to take a 3–1 lead.

Davis's next blunder was understandable. On four occasions during the match Malcolm doubled early and was rewarded when Doug dropped each preemie. But



Doug Roberts takes a bow upon winning the Champ title as wife Wanda looks on.

Malcolm couldn't slip this cube by Doug:

13-point finals. Doug Roberts (Black) leads Malcolm Davis (White) 7–3. White on roll. **CUBE ACTIONS?**

The game developed into a race, and some timely sets gave Doug a late redouble/ pass and a solid 9–3 advantage.

From here, Doug watched Malcolm

**OOPS!** Last month's CHICAGO POINT (Issue 180) was incorrectly labeled March 2006 (instead of Jan./Feb. 2006). To keep the issues chronological, we are labeling this newsletter March 15. The next issue will be April 2006.—Ed.

spin the cube in the final four games of the match. Malcolm stole the first two games when Doug dropped easy takes (making the score 9–5). But Doug took Malcolm's last two doubles winning both for a 13–5 victory, over \$5,000 in cash, and the lead in the 2006 ABT points race

Congrats to Arlene Austin (PA) for her big win over Roz Ferris (IL) in Advanced division. Also to Peggy Neubig (NJ) who won the 35-player Novice title.

In the side events, Bob Glass (CA) defeated Sean Garber (IN) in the Grandmaster Jackpot, Ray Glaeser (OH) topped Ray Foglerund (CA) in the Masters Jackpot. The Open Doubles went to Bill Finneran (VA) & Gary Fries (VA), Jeb Horton won the Pittsburgh Memorial Cup, and Chicago's Carger Mattig won the Quickie. *Complete results and photos on page 6. Δ*

## ABT TOP THREE FOR 2005



Congratulations to the American Backgammon Tour's best for 2005. From left, Phil Simborg (2nd), Neil Kazaross (1st), and Stepan Nuniyants (3rd). Marble trophies were presented to the three champions prior to the Pittsburgh tournament on 18 February.

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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## BG GOING TO THE DOGS?

Our backgammon board is always open, but it is still tough to get a game. That's because our two dogs Emily and DeDe seem to love the game as much as we do. They first jump up on a chair, and then the table in order to snuggle in for a nap on the playfields. Thought you might enjoy the picture!—*Alyce Wallen & Connie Sychowski; Channahon, Illinois*



## CLEANING CORK BOARDS

I have an old Crisloid cork board that needs a good cleaning. Any suggestions?—*Garry, via Internet*

[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.*

Mar 11	Drew McCulloch Memorial, Sansone's Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Mar 11	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Mar 11*	2006 Colorado State Championship, Cadillac Jack's, Denver, Colorado	719/574-5598
Mar 11	Springfield Series #5, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/622-9447
Mar 12	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Mar 12	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/784-8132
Mar 12	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Gambits Bar, Marriott Hotel, Dayton, Ohio	937/890-2536
Mar 12	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/945-1257
Mar 16*	Third Thursday Bonus (Ohio State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Mar 17-19	<u>2006 Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle, Lisle, Illinois</u>	773/583-6464
Mar 19*	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's Lounge, Cranberry Twp., PA	412/826-1334
Mar 26*	Miami Valley Doubles, Gambits Bar, Marriott Hotel, Dayton, Ohio	937/890-2536
Mar 26	23rd Fleet Underwood Memorial, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Apr 1*	Springfield Series #6, Ned Kelly's Steak House, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Apr 1*	Metro North Saturday Swiss #1, Crash Landing, Warren, Michigan	313/330-7803
Apr 2*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Purple Hotel, Lincolnwood, Illinois	773/583-6464
Apr 2*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Apr 2*	13th Annual FIBS Spring Tournament, via computer modem	e-mail: <a href="mailto:fibs@escoffery.com">fibs@escoffery.com</a>
Apr 5*	Kansas City Club Monthly, Harpo's, Kansas City, Missouri	816/561-4330
Apr 7-9	<u>Ohio State Championships, Airport Marriott Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio</u>	330/268-4610
Apr 8*	Atlanta Chouette Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Apr 8*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Apr 9*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/945-1257
Apr 16*	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's Lounge, Cranberry Twp., PA	412/826-1334
Apr 16*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Gambits Bar, Marriott Hotel, Dayton, Ohio	937/890-2536
Apr 22*	Springfield Series Grand Finale, Lap's Sports Bar, Springfield, Illinois	217/622-9447
Apr 23-30	BG Masters Cruise, Carnival Cruise, Miami, Florida to Caribbean	888/972-6339
Apr 24-25*	IBA Live In Vegas Tournament, Fiesta Henderson Station Casino, Nevada	360/715-2913
Apr 26-30	22nd Nevada State Tournament, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
May 1*	Desert Shores Invitational, Desert Shore Club House, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/255-9918
May 26-29	<u>26th Chicago Open, Oak Brook Hills Resort &amp; Hotel, Oak Brook, Illinois</u>	847/674-0120
Jun 9-11*	<u>Los Angeles Open, Sheraton Gateway Hotel, Los Angeles Airport, California</u>	818/901-0464
Jun 30-Jul 3	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton Novi Hotel, Novi, Michigan</u>	810/232-9731
Jul 28-30	<u>Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin</u>	608/516-9109
Jul 28-30	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	585/396-0969
Aug 10-13	<u>13th Georgia Championships, Marriott Atlanta Perimeter Center, Atlanta, GA</u>	770/333-1876
Aug 17-20*	<u>Florida State Championships, Fort Lauderdale Marriott North, Florida</u>	954/249-1416
Sep 1-4	<u>54th Indiana Open, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana</u>	317/255-8902
Sep 29-Oct 1*	<u>Pacific Northwest Championships, Holiday Inn SeaTac, Seattle, Washington</u>	253/856-7513
Oct 6-8*	<u>Illinois State Championships, Holiday Inn City-Centre, Peoria, Illinois</u>	309/699-6005
Dec 1-3*	<u>California State Championship, Sheraton Gateway, Los Angeles Airport, CA</u>	818/901-0464

### OUTSIDE USA

Mar 9-12	11th Kaiserbrunnen-Cup, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-48190
Mar 11-12	British Time Trials, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	441634-840592
Mar 11-12*	Glendi Greek Festival, Ellis Park, West Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia	61841-2836266
Mar 23-26	2nd Thüringen Cup BG & Poker, Salzunger Hof, Bad Salzungen, Germany	49521-64314
Mar 30-Apr 2*	4th Torneo Città di Cavalese, Bellavista Hotel, Cavalese, Italy	39328-3380725
Mar 30-Apr 2	Tegernsee Open, Hotel zur Post, Bad Wiessee, Germany	49711-48190
Mar 31-Apr 2*	St. Moritz Championship, Badrutts Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	4161-2710137
Apr 1-2	Play65 British Open, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Apr 7-9*	Mind Games Ascona (Chess & BG), Hotel Ascona, Ascona, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Apr 8-9	Gammonitis League Tournament, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	447900-983038
Apr 8-14	1st Trophée du Mont-Blanc, Latitudes Hotel du Golf, Arc, France	33672-008957
Apr 12-17*	18th Nortic "Wide" Open, Casino Marienlyst, Helsingør, Denmark	4533-363601
Apr 28-May 1*	6th City of Jesolo Tournament, Park Brasilia Hotel, Jesolo, Italy	3941-5211029
Apr 29-May 1*	Gammonitis League Tournament, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	447900-983038
May 6-7*	County Cups Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
May 18-21*	18th WBF European Championship, Velden Casino, Velden, Austria	39331-923537
May 25-28*	12th Oslo Open, Vika Atrium Hotel, Oslo, Norway	4791-601277
May 27-28*	15th Città di Torino, Maison Musique, Rivoli, Turin, Italy	39349-648868
Jun 1-4*	2nd Aix les Bains Open, Casino Grand Cercle, Savoie, France	336-62467001
Jun 2-4*	Austrian Masters Finale, Café Heine, Vienna, Austria	43664-2404285
Jun 3-4*	Hilton Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Jul 6-9*	2nd Lucien Barrière Gold Cup & Cannes Open, Cannes, France	392-69018168
Jul 10-16*	31st World Championship, Fairmont Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 954/527-4033

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

*It's an easy process. First apply a mild hand soap to a wet sponge. Wash the grimy cork but don't scrub so hard as to remove any paint from the pips. When the surface looks clean, use a sponge with water only and remove all the soap. Towel off any excess water and let the board dry overnight.*

*Buy a small can of fast-drying polyurethane (we use the clear semi-gloss finish) and apply a liberal coat with either a small paint brush or a throwaway sponge brush. Let dry overnight. Some people like a second coat, but don't apply any more than two coats or your surface will become too hard and the dice will tend to spin like a top.—Ed.*

## CLUBS DEALING WITH SLOW PLAY

At the last two meetings of the Arizona Backgammon Club (where I attend), we

have been plagued by extremely slow play, especially by one particular player. This gentleman agonizes over every move in his 5-point match and it took well over an hour to complete. Needless to say, many first-timers and visitors find the club unattractive, most of whom aren't able to stay out until the wee hours just to play a couple of matches.

Do you have any suggestions on time limits for 5- and 7-point matches? We also have the capability of using chess clocks, but I'm not sure how that works.—Dan Pelton, Phoenix, Arizona

Our club has had some challenges with long matches. Several members have asked about using clocks. I found an article at [chicagopoint.com](http://chicagopoint.com) about the rules that is clear. Additionally, I am considering buying some clocks for our tournament this year. I have two questions that, hopefully, you can help me with.

1. What brand and type of clock do you

recommend? I found a number of different styles on the web with a wide range of prices.

2. How do you create a level playing field between players when one of them is experienced playing with a clock and the other player has never used one? A friend of mine played in a tournament that used clocks and it really hurt his game.—Clyde Jones, director, Pacific Northwest Championships, Seattle, Washington

*In response to both of the letters, we also have time problems at the Chicago Bar Point Club, and you are right: one slow player can ruin it for everyone. Any match that is delaying the tournament gets clocked. Furthermore, if we know one player to be painfully slow and the opponent requests a clock, we honor that request. One slow player can not be allowed to spoil the evening for the majority.*

*The current US Clock Rules at [www.chicagopoint.com/bgclockrules.html](http://www.chicagopoint.com/bgclockrules.html) suggest putting six minutes per point on each player's clock. As an example, for a 5-point match, players get 30 minutes a side. But for weekly club play, we put five minutes per point on the clock (each player gets 25 minutes for a 5-point match).*

*Buy a digital Bronstein clock because after they are set in accordance with the rules, when a player's flag falls, he loses the game. With a standard clock, the rules are more complicated.*

*As far as some players having more clock experience, the same could be said for playing backgammon. We find that after a few clocked matches, players become comfortable with the mechanics.*

[Continued on page 7]

 <b>AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2006</b> 							
Compiled through 19 Feb. 2006 after 2 events							
(Upcoming events: Midwest Championships, Ohio State)							
Doug Roberts	26.56	Matt Miner	5.64	Peggy Neubig	3.57	D.J. Oles	1.52
Ken Fischer	17.78	Roz Ferris	5.64	Ray Fogelund	2.83	Scott Johnston	1.47
Petko Kostadinov	14.54	Sal Chehayeb	5.57	Bill Finneran	2.83	John Grayson	1.47
Stepan Nuniyants	14.54	Carlos Azcarate	4.44	Chris Martin	2.82	Beth Raby	1.25
Arlene Austin	12.25	Peter Beling	4.44	Nayan Shah	2.82	Wayne Wiest	1.03
Chuck Bower	11.59	Bill Bartholomay	4.32	Henry Gray	2.82	Kate Elmore	0.99
Malcolm Davis	11.59	Gregg Cattanach	4.24	Mark Haley	2.00	Doug Johnson	0.99
Michael Battaglia	8.00	Norm Hansen	4.00	Gale Pollock	1.79	Stephan Liss	0.71
Mark Rozans	5.65	Cole Parker	4.00	Steve Harris	1.79	Antoinette Rodi	0.63
Richard Munitz	5.65						

 <b>CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB</b>				COMPILED THRU 28 FEB.			
<b>2006 PLAYER OF THE YEAR</b>							
Tak Morioka	5.82	Bill Keefe	2.74	Wayne Wiest	1.20	Dave Cramer	0.72
Gary Kay	5.48	Paul Baraz	2.72	Albert Yakobashvili	1.08	Adrian Rios	0.72
David Rockwell	5.20	Boris Dekhtyar	2.52	Jerry Brooks	1.08	Peter Kalba	0.64
Herb Roman	4.12	Georgina Flanagan	2.12	Mike Wolock	1.08	Michael Ginat	0.56
Linda Rockwell	3.68	Roger Hickman	1.92	Russ Lyutek	0.96	Arlene Levy	0.48
Bill Davis	3.64	Oleg Raygorodsky	1.88	Bob Steen	0.96	Doug Rodgers	0.48
Bill Bartholomay	3.64	Mark Murray	1.84	Dave Settles	0.92	Judy Zager	0.48
Phyllis Smolinski	3.28	Vlad Genkin	1.44	Alice Kay	0.88	Tony Santori	0.48
Steve Klesker	3.00	Carter Mattig	1.32	Kwong Chan	0.72	Elaine Andrews	0.48
Tim Mabee	3.00	Sargon Benjamin	1.28	Eric Johnson	0.72	Ken Tibbs	0.48
Phil Simborg	2.84	Larry Goldstein	1.28	Richard Stawowy	0.72		

**GARY KAY & HERB ROMAN** tied for first in the January points race with 3.12 points each. Steve Klesker placed third with 2.52 points.

**TAK MORIOKA** stormed back in February to retake the BPC leadership by earning 3.36 points. Runner's-up were David Rockwell (3.20) and Phil Simborg (2.84).

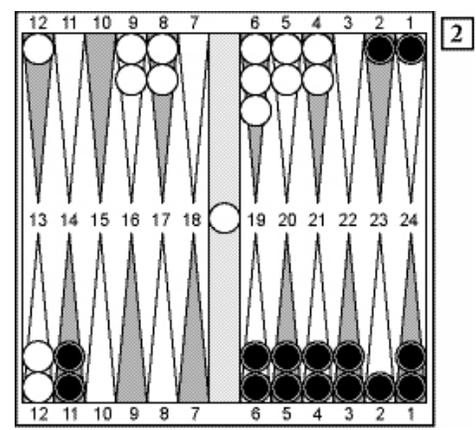
If you finish in the top 20 for 2006, you will be entered in a drawing for over \$300 worth of valuable merchandise. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st—Trophy + \$150, 2nd—\$100, 3rd—\$50. 1st through 20th—one ounce solid silver dollar. 1st through 6th—Invitation to participate on the Chicago Bar Point Club team in the 2007 Illinois State Challenge Cup.

your move

## PROBLEM #316

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.**



ASK  
DANNY

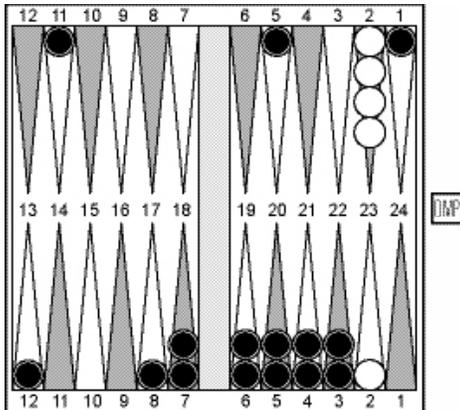
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## OVER-THE-BOARD VS. AFTER-THE-FACT SNOWIE ANALYSIS

*Dear Danny: In a recent local club tournament, I faced the following problem:*

Tournament double match-point.  
**BLACK (X) TO PLAY 5-3.**



*I found this to be a very difficult problem with many possible answers. After about two minutes, I made what I thought to be the best play. Things didn't work out so well for me and I lost the match.*

*When I got home, I spent the next week studying this position. I rolled out the top 12 plays 1000 times each using Snowie 4.4 (3-ply, precise, full rollouts) and it turned out that I made the 10th best play. Before I share the rollout results with you, I would appreciate your best effort in attempting to solve this problem over the board. What should be considered? What can be ruled out?*

*You may or may not get the correct answer. What will be helpful to me is the thought process that should be followed in solving complex problems of this nature.*

*After I get your answer, I will send you the full rollout results and ask you to comment on whether or not the data presents any new insight into coming up with a solution to the problem. (To be continued.)—Student of the Game*

**DEAR STUDENT:** Here's how I view Black's priorities:

- (1) To keep White's straggler from escaping.
- (2) To lock White's straggler up by building a full prime.
- (3) To be able to hit if White's straggler escapes to the outfield.

While acting on these priorities, Black must keep a man on White's 1-point as a potential return hitter if White is forced to hit with an ace, and as a hitter of last resort if White's straggler escapes and navigates the outfield safely. This rules out all plays that flee from the 24-point.

Hitting loose on the 2-point serves Priority (1) and would be desirable (White cannot escape immediately with a 6, and may reenter disadvantageously on the 1-point) if Black could keep a 5-prime and avoid leaving disastrous double-hit returns, but alas, Black's 5-3 does not let him do so. That rules out all hitting plays.

The constructive plays that remain are those which serve Priority (2) by placing spares along Black's prime as attackers and builders for the 2-point and those which serve Priority (3) by spreading hitters in the outfield.

The blot on Black's 8-point is a double-edged sword. Although it serves Priority (2) both as a builder for the 2-point and as a slot for the 8-point itself, it also increases the potency of White's 6s. This blot risks letting White escape *with tempo*, hitting as he runs, rendering Black's 2s, as well as some combination rolls, ineffective for return hits.

My play is 20/15, 8/5. This spreads another hitter in the outfield, and lifts the blot without sacrificing hitting and pointing potential.—DK

**DEAR DANNY:** Here are the rollout results (1000 full rollouts of the top 12 answers at 3-ply, precise). Additionally, because the top four plays were so close, I rolled each of those out a total of 2000 times:

Play	Win %	Equity
20/17, 12/7	43.4%	-0.131
20/12	43.3%	-0.134 (-0.003)
20/15, 12/9	43.2%	-0.136 (-0.005)
20/15, 14/11	43.1%	-0.138 (-0.007)
20/15, 8/5	42.5%	-0.150 (-0.019)
14/11, 12/7	42.4%	-0.153 (-0.022)
12/4	42.3%	-0.154 (-0.023)
20/17, 14/9	42.0%	-0.160 (-0.029)
20/17, 7/2*	41.8%	-0.163 (-0.032)
14/11, 7/2*	41.7%	-0.164 (-0.033)
14/6	41.7%	-0.165 (-0.034)
12/9, 7/2*	41.6%	-0.169 (-0.038)

*So it looks like you picked the fifth best choice, although none of the 12 plays amount to a huge error. By looking at this data and assuming that it is accurate, what conclusions can be drawn regarding the preferred checker positioning?—Student of the Game*

**DEAR STUDENT:** Your rollouts confirm the undesirability of hitting loose with the 5, and the desirability of advancing the man on the 20-point to the outfield. I can see the merits of the third and fourth plays, which keep the blot on the 8-point; the rollout results suggest that this "double-edged sword" cuts more deeply in Black's favor, which doesn't really surprise me. Frankly, however, I do not see why the first two plays produce the best results.

The second play puts two hitters on the same point instead of spreading them. The first play brings a hitter to the 17-point, where it is less effective than on the 15-point, while removing a hitter from the 12-point. Its main merit lies in putting a spare along Black's 5-prime. That would sway me if the spare were on an inside point, but the spare is on the Black's bar-point, which Black should be willing to break in order to point on White's blot.

What the first two plays have in common is keeping White from hitting twice except with double-6s (which are devastating anyhow), a merit they share with my choice, 20/15, 8/5. Is preventing double hits on 2 of White's 36 rolls of overriding importance? If so, then the third and fourth plays should not rank as highly as they do, and the seventh play, 12/4, should rank more highly.

A partner in a doubles match could easily talk me into 20/15, 12/9 or 20/15, 14/11, but I don't think anyone could talk me into playing 20/17, 12/7 or 20/12. Is it my personal limitation, or is there a limit to human insight into backgammon in general?

Chthonic, the masterly bridge robot, expresses scorn for human bridge players. Perhaps the backgammon robots have similar scorn for human backgammon players.—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](mailto:bg@chicagopoint.com)*



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**BACKGAMMON ON BOARD VIII**

# Deucedly Difficult!

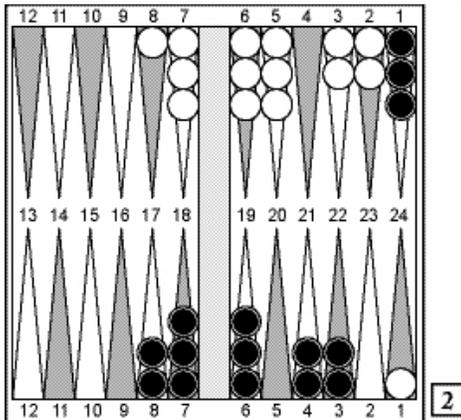


BY JAKE JACOBS



The Thai Open 2006 is behind us. While I don't blame you for rushing to a phone to make reservations for next year, why not first pause for a moment to look at this problem:

**POS. 1.** 13-point match tied at 10 to 10. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-2.**

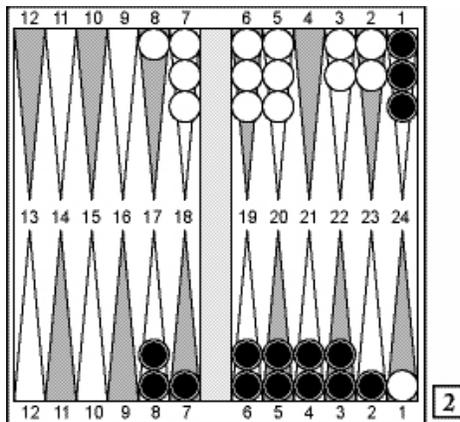


The Consolation finals had reached a score of 10–10 to 13. Martyn Nadoll of Germany had doubled earlier, and Italy's Fabrizio Losordo was in trouble. Double-deuces is a good roll, if not the double Fabrizio was hoping for. He chose to play 7/5(2), 7/3. Bruno Orsuni and I were kibitzing, and both of us preferred 7/5(2), 3/1(2)\*. This position looks like a classic timing problem. Black has three men back, the lesser prime, and faces the immediate threat of White completing a six-prime. Blitzing seems mandatory.

Obvious as it seemed, rollouts are always a nice means of confirming the obvious, and provide a numeric "pat on the back" when our intuition is proved correct. They are also a fine wake-up when intuition is proved wrong, as was the case here.

As it turns out neither Fabrizio's play nor mine is even a top candidate. The preferred play is: 7/5(2) (we all got that right!), 6/2, which leaves both the bar-point and the deuce slotted:

**POS. 2.** 13-point match tied at 10 to 10. Snowie likes playing 2-2: 7/5(2), 6/4...

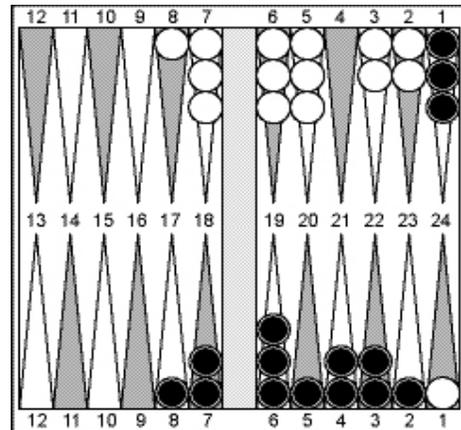


Snowie thinks it is still a prime-vs.-prime, and instead of my "desperation blitz hitting play" of 3/1(2)\*, it makes the "desperation priming play" of slotting twice. Before moving on there is one more thing to be said about desperation blitzes. They will stop White from making the prime on this roll . . . unless she enters with 1-1 or 2-2. But they also stop her from killing builders when those rolls were fated to come out of her cup.

Also interesting is the correct play at

either DMP or at a "gammon-go" score like 2-away, Crawford:

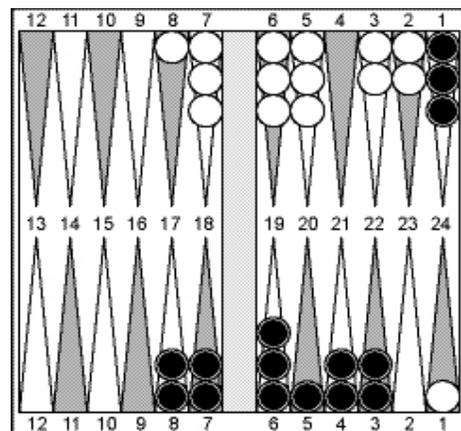
**POS. 3.** At gammon-go or DMP, Snowie likes playing 2-2: 8/2, 7/5...



That Black loses more gammons with this play (making it inferior at most scores) is clear. What surprises to me is that Black wins the most games and gammons playing this way. Usually the 5-point is too important to forego, but this is an exception. Slotting the 5-point instead of making it has benefits. If not hit, we have a good chance of making our own 5-point, but if we break out bar we are unlikely to remake it. Also, by keeping the bar, we duplicate 1s and 4s, and cause 6s (except 6-1 and 6-4) to play somewhat awkwardly for White.

Is blitzing never right? Sometimes it is:

**POS. 4.** Score is irrelevant. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-2.**



The correct play here is 7/5, 7/1\*; no other play is close. By comparing this example with our original, we can take away the idea that in tight places like these, purity and efficient checker use are both crucial. Switching points to hit is neither pure nor efficient. Here we hit because after making the 5-point, playing 7/1\* is simply the most efficient use of that checker; the acepoint is "where it goes."—*Jake Jacobs* Δ



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## PITTSBURGH... [From page 1]



*Arlene Austin (L) and Roz Ferris toast the beginning of the Advanced finals.*



*Pittsburgh Grandmaster champ Bob Glass*

### 28TH PITTSBURGH CHAMPIONSHIPS

CHAMPIONSHIP (78): 1-Doug Roberts (MA), 2-Malcolm Davis (TX), 3/4-Richard Munitz (NY) / Petko Kostadinov (SC); 1C-Chuck Bower (IN), 2C-Mark Rozans (LA), 3C/4C-Bill Finneran (VA) / Ray Foglerund (CA); 1LC-Stepan Nuniyants (WA). ADVANCED (81): 1-Arlene Austin (PA), 2-Roz Ferris (IL), 3/4-Henry Gray (MO) / Nayan Shah; 1C-Matt Miner (NY), 2C-Chris Martin (PA), 3C/4C-John Grayson (MI) / Scott Johnston (IN); 1LC-Sal Chehayeb (MI). NOVICE (35): 1-Peggy Neubig (NJ), 2-Steve Harris (PA), 3-D.J. Oles (NC); 1C-Gale Pollack (FL), 2C-Stephen Liss (PA). GRANDMASTER JACKPOT (16): 1-Bob Glass (CA), 2-Sean Garber (IN). MASTERS JACKPOT (32): 1-Ray Glaeser (OH), 2-Ray Foglerund (CA), 3/4-Gregg Cattanach (GA) / George Nader (FL). AMATEUR JACKPOT (32): 1-Betty Coppic (FL), 2-Matt Miner (NY), 3/4-Joe Miller (OH) / Phil Smith (NC). LIMITED JACKPOT (16): 1-Rock Hackshaw (NY), 2-Beth Raby (VA). OPENDOUBLES (29 teams): 1-Bill Finneran (VA) & Gary Fries (VA), 2-Harvey Gillis (WA) & Bill Riles (TX), 3/4-Betty Coppic (FL) & Carter Mattig (IL) / George Nader (FL) & Herb Roman (IL). LIMITED DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Steve Kenney (DE) & Sandy Mintz (DE), Mark Gordon (MD) & Barry Silliman (MD). PITTSBURGH MEMORIAL CUP (12): 1-Jeb Horton (NC), 2-Howard Shirey (OH). THREE RIVERS AMATEUR CUP (16): 1-John Greci (PA), 2-Alan Grunwald (NJ). BLITZ (96): 1-Carol Joy Cole (MI), 2-Gary Fishman (FL). EARLY ELIMINATION TOURNEY (8): 1-Rock Hackshaw (NY). QUICKIE #1 (64): 1-Carter Mattig (IL), 2-Eric Johnson (IL). QUICKIE #2 (32): 1-Charlie Cole (VA), 2-Randy Armstrong (IL).

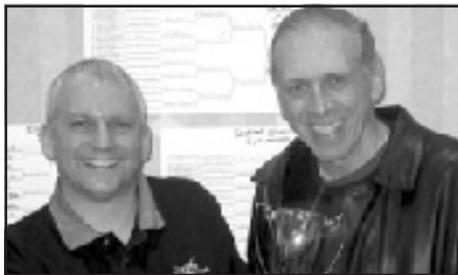
## FISCHER & GARTNER BIG WINNERS IN CAROLINA



*Ken Fischer*

Backgammon players from across the country converged on the Hilton Hotel in Charlotte, NC to kick off the 2006 ABT at the 6th Carolina Invitational. Jeb & Robin Horton did a wonderful job hosting a record 105 players to their event, now in its sixth year.

The big winners were 2004 Japan Open winner Ken Fischer (CA) who defeated Petko Kostadinov in the finals and Perry Gartner (NJ) who bested Harvey Gillis in the Masters finals. It was Perry's fifth straight time cashing in a major event. Δ



*Perry Gartner (R) receives the Queen City Masters Cup from director Jeb Horton.*

### 6th CAROLINA INVITATIONAL

OPEN (53): 1-Ken Fischer (CA), 2-Petko Kostadinov (SC), 3/4-Peter Beling (VA) / Carlos Azcarate (FL); 1C-Stepan Nuniyants (WA), 2C-Bill Bartholomay (IL); 1LC-Gregg Cattanach (GA). ADVANCED (42): 1-Michael Battaglia (NJ), 2-Norm Hansen (GA); 1C-Cole Parker (TX), 2C-Mark Haley (Canada), 3C/4C-Kate Elmore (GA) / Doug Johnson (FL); 1LC-Wayne Wiest (IL). NOVICE (10): 1-Beth Raby (VA), Antoinette Rodi (FL); 1C-D.J. Oles (NC). QUEEN CITY CUP (30 + 2 rebuys): 1-Perry Gartner (NJ), 2-Harvey Gillis (WA), 3/4-Bill Riles (TX) / Stuart Thomson (GA). CARDINAL CLASSIC (27): 1-Ken Larsen (NC), 2-Rainer Stachowitz (VA). BLITZ (32): 1-Stepan Nuniyants (WA). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Julian Haley (SC) & Mark Haley (Canada), 2-Danielle Bastarache & Mike Corbett (FL). QUICKIE (64): 1-Bill Versaw (PA), 2-Stuart Thomson (GA). \$25 WARMUPS #1 (8): 1-James Roston (NY). #2 (8): 1-James Bray (TX). \$50 WARMUP (4): 1-Ken Fischer (CA). \$100 WARMUP (8): 1-Alex Tarumianz (TN). \$100 JACKPOT (8): 1-Bill Versaw (PA). SKUNK DICE: 1-Patty Geoffroy (MA)... \$520 was raised for the Gastro-Intestinal Research Foundation in memory of Howard Ring.

## AMALGAMATION

Sunday bimonthly Bar Point Club tournaments will now be held at the Purple Hotel in Lincolnwood. Check "Illinois Action" and **Carol Joy Cole's** calendar for more details... Do you know any young backgammon players (8th grade or younger)? If so, bring them to the Midwest Championships March 17-19. We're giving away \$500 in iPods and precious metals. The entry fee is only \$10 and thus far, only 13 kids are signed! Match format is best 4-out-of-7 games with no cube, gammons, or BGs... Condolences to the family and friends of **Rudy Emmelot** (Missouri) on his 7 January passing at the age of 81. Rudy, a frequent visitor to the Bar Point Club, played in seven Midwest Championships during the 1990s. **Herb Avram** (Maryland), World War II veteran, former CIA employee, chess life master, and pioneer in the digital court reporting industry, died 15 January. He was 92. For years Herb defied his age by playing in Championship events across America. He will be greatly missed. Also passing in recent months were **John Gdowik** (Florida) and **Bobbi Layne Palmer** (Florida) who worked at the Los Angeles Cavendish Club in the 1980s... 1994 BG world champion **Frank Frigo** (KY) and **Chuck Bower** (IN) have written a "Snowie-style" football program that is designed to assist coaches in making the best moves given the situation. They have demonstrated their revolutionary program for seven pro football teams. Check it out at: [www.pigskinrevolution.com](http://www.pigskinrevolution.com)... **Dave Settles** tied **Roger Hickman's** dubious record of drinking four large milkshakes during a Bar Point Club Tuesday evening event at the Purple Hotel. Yikes... Oops! We forgot an area Player of the Year in our last issue. **Don Marek** (IL) was the Pub Club's top player for 2005... A number of backgammon players can be found in the Internet Movie Database including **Jake Jacobs** (AZ) and **Richard Armbruster** (CA), but did Bar Point Club players realize that our own **Bob Steen** (IL) is also listed? Check out [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)... Chicago's **Fred Chamanara** lost \$100,000 of his own money in Game Show Network's "High Stakes Poker" series. Fred was up \$40,000 after the first week, but lost over \$120,000 to **Johnny Chan** the following week knocking him out of the game... **Marcy Sloan** (IL) wrote in to remind of this great **Ralph Waldo Emerson** quote: "Shallow men believe in luck. Strong men believe in cause and effect." Δ



# BG Peeves

By Larry Liebster



## LEARNING TO LOSE

Although I do not believe in intelligent design, I find myself embracing many Eastern philosophy tenets. The earth is a school and our experiences are all lessons to be learned. Therefore, when I get the same numbers repeated on my dice, I say to myself, "I must be needing some experience in playing these numbers." This is in keeping with the principle that when you are given lemons, make lemonade. In other words, when bad things happen, look for a benefit. I try to apply my energy in this

direction rather than complain about my bad luck.

In my backgammon experience, I have been given way too many opportunities to ponder the benefits of losing. Yet my conclusion is that since we are all put on this earth to learn, losing can still be gainful.

How?

I don't like to lose.

It hurts my pocketbook.

It hurts my ego.

So, what advantage is there to losing?

Since I am a senior, I have already begun to lose some speed, some strength, some balance, etc. I have also lost both parents, and am seeing a loved sister slowly being lost to Alzheimer's. Isn't that enough losing?

This is the point. No matter what a person's state of being, he will lose something, until the final loss . . . of his own life. These "lessons" are given so that we can learn to lose.

What does that mean?

Watch the reaction of some players when they roll poorly and get beat in a tight match. See how they become emotionally involved. They'll yell that backgammon is unfair and complain of being cursed. Others will blame their loss on a spectator.

I hate watching this. It is childish and shows no class.

I tell the complainers how bad it looks, and they respond that they are just stating the facts: "I was jokered by a 17-to-1 shot. Why does this always happen to me?"

Should they stop because I am bothered? I would like to think they would, but that is not always the case. Some of these people are products of the Dr. Benjamin Spock (the pediatrician who wrote a child-rearing book) generation. Spock said not to traumatize children. Practice the permissive approach. Give them what they want, when they want it. Unfortunately, when some of these children didn't get what they wanted, they threw tantrums.

As a pediatric dentist, I am privileged to be one of the first contacts a child has with an activity that might be uncomfortable. Although some cry during the procedure, I believe, and try to reinforce the belief, that they are more powerful than they thought and have the makings of a hero, which I define as those who perform difficult tasks in spite of their fear.

We have already discussed that as the years go by, we will lose faculties, friends, and family. A benefit to this is our comparative realization that we are still here to experience life. The larger benefit would be learning to accept our losses with grace, style, and dignity. Once this behavior is cultivated, we can recover much quicker and continue with our lives with less emotional stress and more joy.

So remember the next time you're in a backgammon match: even the best players lose. And obviously, nobody lives forever. Let us develop habits—both in life and over the board—that allow us to enjoy our journey to the fullest.—Larry Liebster Δ

## LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

Look for more on time clocks in next month's CHICAGO POINT.—Ed.

### BEST BACKGAMMON SOFTWARE

I would like to know which is the best computer backgammon software? It seems like the three most talked-about are GNU, JellyFish, and Snowie. Is one of these programs considered "top of the line," or is backgammon simply too sophisticated for computers to solve due to the fact that the best play is not always based on math.—Jerry, Via Internet

Considering that both PC and Mac versions of GNU can be downloaded for free, it is clearly your best deal. GNU plays world class (as do the other programs) and is good for problem analysis. The one problem is that GNU has a very unfriendly user interface.

JellyFish was the premiere commercial backgammon software for many years until

Snowie came on the market. (Get a free copy of JellyFish Light from [chicagopoint.com/links.html](http://chicagopoint.com/links.html))

If you can afford the \$380 price tag, Snowie 4 is definitely the way to go. It is relatively easy to use and is an outstanding tool for problem and match analysis. Spend a few months with Snowie and your game will definitely improve.—Ed.

### ORIGIN OF BEAVER & RACCOON

Can you tell me where the terms "beaver" and "raccoon" come from? I have a bet that says that the person cubed was such an eager beaver to take the cube it simply got shortened to beaver. I have no guess about raccoon.—Phil Simborg, Chicago, Illinois

We remember reading in an early backgammon book that the term "beaver" (immediately flipping over an offered double to the next higher level while keeping the cube) came about because of the way a beaver flips his tail. Can any of our readers offer anything more on the derivation of BG terms "beaver" or "raccoon"?—Ed.

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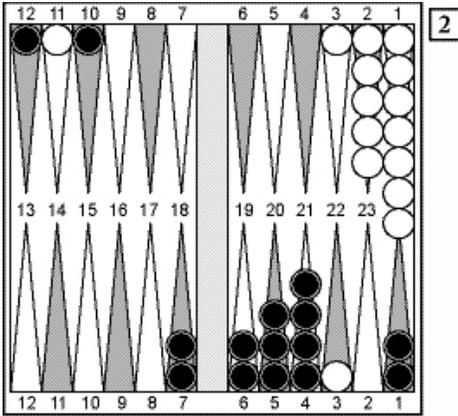
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**PROBLEM #315  
ANALYZED**

by Dana Nazarian

11-point match. White leads Black 6 to 4. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-3.**



**W**ay to fire! What now? You can make a case for a dozen different plays that fall into one or more of these four options:

- 1. Hope that White doesn't leap and blitz on the next exchange.** Something like 15/6 or 13/7, 5/2.
- 2. Stick with the outfield trap plan.** 7/4, 7/1.
- 3. Force White to hit you by putting blots in front of her back checker. You can do this by leaving a blot on either or both the 7- and 9-point.** Examples include (15/9, 5/2); (15/9, 4/1); (15/9, 13/10); and (7/1, 5/2).
- 4. Blitz now with 6/3\*.** The desperate option; break a point to hit. 15/9, 6/3\* or 13/7, 6/3\*.

The first two options are quieter positional plays. The next two invite a slugfest of blots. Which approach is correct?

With option 1, White fails to leap over a 4-prime about 45% of the time, after which I'd estimate Black's winning chances at 80%. This scenario gives  $(45\%) \times (80\%) = 36\%$  wins for Black. When White does leap, Black hits about 33% of the time, and brings that one home maybe 80%. That adds 15% more wins  $(55\% \times 33\% \times 80\% = 15\%)$  for a total of 51% wins.

With option 2, the math is similar. White fails to leap over a 3-prime about 25% of the time, after which I'd estimate Black's winning chances at only 70% (one of Black's vital spares is now buried on the ace). This scenario gives  $(25\%) \times (70\%) = 17\%$  wins for Black. When White does leap, Black now hits more often with the extra outfield coverage (about 66%), and brings that one home maybe 70% (again

one spare is out of play) which adds  $(75\%) \times (66\%) \times (70\%) = 35\%$ . Adding this scenario, Black's cubeful winning chances are 52%.

The positional plays are a tad better than a coin toss. Can slugging it out be worse? Logically, the answer is "no." If it's a blot-hitting contest, Black should be the easy favorite with the better board and much better flexibility. White's advantage is being on roll, but not so much as to offset White's weaknesses. Reject options 1 and 2 on this basis.

If you don't trust these estimates (and I certainly wouldn't!), look at theme. Black's better board, better flexibility of spares, a big race deficit, and no cube access are all factors screaming for a more confrontational and aggressive approach.

To wit, option 3 has a lot going for it. Getting hit isn't so bad since Black is behind in the race anyway, so shooting for the juicy blot on White's 3-point or playing the recirculation game gives Black two more potential ways to win. In short, even after hitting, White has lots of work to do before claiming. And if White doesn't leap, Black's attack should be easy. The big risk of course is leaving White a 5 to leap without hitting.

Could the crazy hitting play of 6/3\* be even better still? Consider these factors:

- All of the reasons for option 3 apply to option 4 as well; but if Black hits, White will have even more work to do since White is generally not hitting back or fleeing with as much tempo from the bar.
- Although Black is temporarily trashing his board, it's still only one less inner point than option 3.
- White fans 25% of the time which means she can neither escape nor clean up any blots. This is huge.
- Consider the gammons! At this score, match equity dictates that gammons trade off equally in both directions (winning vs. losing). In fact, the hitting play results in 7% more gammon wins while only risking 2% more gammon losses—a significant consideration.

And last, but certainly not least...

- How often do you get the chance to make these crazy plays that might actually be right?

About four years ago, Jake Jacobs told me "A long time ago when I was less known, I used to make the 'break a point to hit' play so that I could become famous; but now that I write about backgammon so often, I don't need to do it any more."

I think Jake was kidding, but the story

was inspiring.

Given all these factors, 6/3\* is right. For the 6, we must choose between 15/9 and 13/7. 15/9 is more flexible with extra covers (or counterattack) for both the 3-point and vital 6-point. At first, 13/7 doesn't seem right because it triplicates Black's own aces when White fans, gives less outfield coverage, and stacks three spares on the same point. But the flexibility is good enough and triplication is somewhat of an illusion because if White fans, Black is very happy to hit the second checker with an ace.

Maintaining the contact with White's outfield blot simultaneously increases Black's gammon chances while minimizing the gammons against (three blots instead of four). 13/7, 6/3\* is the best play, with 15/9, 6/3\* a close second. A distant third is 15/9, 5/2 and all others are massive blunders. (Note: a 3-ply Snowie analysis is not sufficient to properly analyze this one.)

This play is different in position, but thematically the same as a two-way back game; try to win frontwards, but maximize contact and recirculate to gain an advantage if the first strategy fails. And never forget the gammon factor!

I faced this roll and play deep into the consolation round of the 2005 Chicago Open. I must admit thinking about what Jake told me for a split-second as I hit with 6/3\* (although admittedly I played 15/9 for the 6). My opponent fanned and I won a gammon on my way to cashing in the tourney.

And Jake's prophecy held true: I ended up writing about it.—*Dana Nazarian* Δ

**ILLINOIS ACTION**

Bill Davis  
773/583-6464  
Peter Kalba  
312/316-1432

Tuesday, 6–7 p.m. at The Purple Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood. 847/677-1234.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at The Purple Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood. 847/677-1234.

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB: Tournaments Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at Ned Kelly's Steak House, 1603-A Morrissey Drive, Bloomington. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967).

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wednesday, 6:30 P.M. at Capitol Teletrack, 1766 W. Wabash Ave., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

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

PUB CLUB: Tournaments Thurs., 6:45 P.M. at Playoffs Bar, 720 E. North Ave., Carol Stream. Tim Mabee (630/606-2388).

PEORIA BG CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/689-1964).

**WINNER'S  
CIRCLE**



**JAN.-FEB. 2006**

•**South Australia Monthly KO** (Adelaide, South Australia; 3 Jan.)... OPEN: 1-Angelo Ali, 2-Nick Papadopoulos.

•**Swiss Championships** (Baden, Switzerland; 6-8 Jan.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (64): 1-Roland Ekström, 2-Walter Busath (GER), 3/4-Alberic Fragniere / Georges Grünbaum; 1C-Claus Weissbarth (GER), 2C-Naghizadeh Asghar; 1LC-Marco Benetti. QUALIFIER (16): 1-Adrian Wiedemeir, 2-Werner Rupp. TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP (16 teams): 1-Züri-Wien Express: Georges Grünbaum, Peter Grünbaum, Togias Hellweg (GER), 2-MagicStone I: 1-Rolf Flury, Gian-Reto Iseppi, Jürg Sommerhader. 1-POINT CHAMPIONSHIP (64): 1-Roland Ekström, 2-Peter Grünbaum. TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS (8): 1-Adrian Wiedemeier, 2-Rino Mathis. BEGINNER (8): 1-Yvo Zraggen, 2-André Knutti. GRAND CASINO CHAMPIONSHIP (20): 1-Udo Kindler, 2-Laura Nobile; 1C-Rico Fussenegger, 2C-Rolf Vetsch.

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Copley, OH; 8 Jan.)... OPEN (8): 1-Mike Vasilatos, 2-Bob Koca (PA).

•**New England Club Monthly** (Somerville, MA; 8 Jan.)... OPEN: 1-Herb Gurland, 2-Howard Rosenthal, 3/4-Walter Trice / Roger Rondeau; 1C-Nora Luna, 2C-Joe Moore.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 8 Jan.)... OPEN (12): 1/2-Mike Corbett / Perry Gartner (NJ). ADVANCED (9): 1-Neal Rosensweig, 2-Eli Turgell.

•**Friday The 13th Tournament** (Los Angeles, CA; 13 Jan.)... DOUBLES: 1-Azzam & Nicole Masarani, 2-J. P. Deleurme & Ceci Pedroza; 1C-Norm Wiggins. BLACK CAT TOSS: Tom Gillen. BLACK CAT HUNT: Judy Gedigian... *If it's Friday the 13th, it's a tournament at Richard Armbruster's home.*

•**Northwest Indiana Club Monthly** (Porter, IN; 14 Jan.)... OPEN: 1-John O'Hagan, 2-Tom Wade.

•**Play65 Bright 'N' Breezy** (Brighton, England; 14-16 Jan.)... OPEN (91): 1-John Hurst, 2-Mike Grabsky, 3/4-Mike Greenleaf / John Samuel; 1C-Julian Fetterlein, 2C-Barry McAdam, 3C/4C-Mark Heidenfeld / Mike Mann; 1LC-Tony Walters, 2LC-Peter Bennet, 3LC/4LC-Rachel Rhodes / Chris Ternel. TIDAL WAVE (64): 1-Nicky Check, 2-Martin Barkwill, 3/4-Lawrence Powell / Myke Wignall. FRIDAY WARM-UP (40): 1-Dave Motley, 2-Malcolm Robertson, 3/4-Tony Walters / Neil Webb. £100 JACKPOT (8): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-Chris Ternel. £50 JACKPOT (8): 1/2-Nicky Check / Adrian Jones. DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Belgian Waffles, 2-The Odd Couple. TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER (21): 1/2-Tony Lee / Myke Wignall, 3-Neil Webb.

•**Miami Valley Club Monthly** (Dayton, OH; 15 Jan.)... OPEN (6): 1-Mike Rezai, 2-Roger Foster.

•**Pittsburgh Monthly** (Cranberry Twp, PA; 15 Jan.)

... OPEN (7): 1-Abbas Zaltash, 2-Bud Bowers.

•**Houston Ed Chambers Memorial** (Houston, TX; 21 Jan.)... OPEN (20): 1-Phyllis Davidson, 2-Al Johnson, 3/4-Kerry Blodgett / Scott Ward; 1C-Bill Riles, 2C-Patrick Lee.

•**Gammon Associates Tournament of Champions** (Los Angeles, CA; 29 Jan.)... OPEN (24): 1-Patrick Gibson, 2-Azzam Masarani, 3/4-Frank Ley / Jim Wark.

•**Kansas City Club Monthly** (Kansas City, MO; 1 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-James Worley, 2/3-David Eaton / Eric Barr.

•**Bill's Backgammon Battle at Bailey's in Ballston** (Ballston, VA; 4 Feb.)... OPEN (8): 1-Rainer Stachowitz; 1C/2C-Jeb Horton (NC), Gary Fries.

•**Springfield Series #4** (Springfield, IL; 4 Feb.)... OPEN (19): 1-Rob Farmer, 2-Michael Flohr; 1C-Dave Settles, 2C-J.A. Miller; 1LC-Roger Hickman. TAKI HOLD'EM QUALIFIER: Jim Zimmerman.

•**Jarvis Trophy Tournament** (Coventry, England; 4-5 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Martin Hemming, 2-Myke Wignall; 1C-Chris Gibbins, 2C-Matthew Fisher. FRIDAY WARMUP (8): 1-John Slattery, 2-John Gilbertson. £50 JACKPOT (8): 1/2-Nicky Check / Chris Ternel. POKER (9): 1-Myke Wignall, 3-Rosey Gilbertson.

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Copley, OH; 5 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Mike Vasilatos, 2-Paul Berg (MI).

•**South Australia Monthly KO** (Adelaide, South Australia; 7 Feb.)... OPEN #1: 1-Claudie Tromp, 2-Emmanuel Lavrentiadis. #2: 1-John O'Grady, 2-Angelo Ali.

•**Arizona Club Monthly** (Phoenix, AZ; 7 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Dave Perkins, 2-Gary Crain, 3-Elisan Moywzoon.

•**Kansas City Club Classic** (Kansas City, MO; 11 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Eric Barr, 2/3-Carl Hill / Vincent Ward.

•**Houston Columbia Memorial Tournament** (Houston, TX; 11 Feb.)... OPEN (14) 1-Dr. James Bray, 2-Mary Morse, 3-Kerry Blodgett, 4-Scott Ward; 1C-David Kurjan, 2C-Gary Fomby

•**Northwest Indiana Monthly** (Porter, IN; 11 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-John O'Hagan, 2-Linda Seamon.

•**Gammonitis League Tournament** (Bristol, England; 11-12 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Peter Bennet, 2-Tim LIne, 3/4-Brian Barber (USA) / Edwin Turner; 1C-John Broomfield, 2C-Ray Tannen, 3C/4C-John Clark / Juana d'Ferrer; 1LC-Martin Barkwill, 2LC-Alan Beckerson. TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER: 1-Andrew Sarjeant, 2-John Leavey, 3-Walter Busato. £25 JACKPOT (4): 1-John Slattery. £50 JACKPOT (8): 1/2-Ray Kershaw / Roland Herrera / Tony Walters. £100 JACKPOT (4): 1/2-John Slattery / Chris Ternel.

•**Bar Point Doubles Club Championship** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 12 Feb.): OPEN (16 teams): 1-Linda & David Rockwell, 2-Peter Kalba & Phyllis Smolinski; 1C/2C-Elaine Andrews & Ken Tibbs / Bill Davis & Judy Zager.



David & Linda Rockwell receive their crystal cube trophies from director Peter Kalba.

•**Greater Columbus Monthly** (Hilliard, Ohio; 12 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Chris Yep, 2-Mary Hickey.

•**So. Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 12 Feb.)... OPEN (10): 1/2-Alan Martin / Dimitri Vesselinov.

•**South Australia Open** (Adelaide, South Australia; 26 Feb.)... OPEN (24 +8 buy-backs): 1-Chris Benham, 2-Angelo Ali. CONSOLATION TOURNEY (64): Emil Andrawos, 2C-John O'Grady. Δ

**BUTCH & MARY ANN MEESE  
STEP DOWN AS HBC DIRECTORS**

After more than 20 years of running the Hoosier Backgammon Club, Butch & Mary Ann Meese have turned over weekly club management to Sean Garber. The Meeses took over Hoosier directorial duties from Ralph Roberts and interim director Larry Strommen in 1984.

Roberts ran all but one of his annual Indiana Open events at the Indianapolis Athletic Club. Directing their first major tournament, the Meeses ran 32nd Indiana Open at the Adam's Mark Hotel in April 1984. They will be running the 54th Indiana Open over Labor Day weekend at the Sheraton Suites Hotel.

In their last Hoosier Newsletter, Butch and Mary Ann composed this open letter:

"We are truly blessed to have made so

many friends over the past 20 years. We want to give a big thanks to all who have contributed their articles to the newsletter. We could not have done it without you all. We wish Sean much luck and will continue to support the club. See you over the board."—*Butch & Mary Ann Meese*



Sean Garber is well know on the national backgammon tournament scene. Since 2005, Sean has been a finalist in four regional Masters events, winning two (Midwest, Wisconsin). Best wishes, Sean. Δ

## CHALLENGE CUP TO BAR POINT CLUB FOR 3RD STRAIGHT YEAR

By Ed Zell

The Chicago Bar Point Club has won the 26th Illinois Challenge Cup. It was the club's third straight victory in the intrastate competition held annually since 1981. The event rolled off 26 February at the Purple Hotel in Lincolnwood.

The BPC won in relatively easy fashion by jumping out to a 14-4 record after three rounds of play. They then lost their first four matches in round four to give the other clubs (Pub Club, Winnetka, Peoria, Bloomington, and Springfield) some hope. But a strong 6-2 finish in the final eight matches gave them their 3-peat as BPC director Bill Davis won the clincher.

Congratulations to Peoria's Faddoul Khoury and David Rockwell of the Bar Point Club both of whom won all five of their matches and split the \$440 side pool. David's accomplishment was even more impressive considering he was playing

in the #1 slot thus facing the best player from each of the other five clubs. Rockwell moved up and Carter Mattig was added to the BPC team when a home emergency forced Tak Morioka to cancel the morning of the tournament.

Congratulations to Paul Baraz who got his name on the cup for the first time. Both Bill Davis and Herb Roman won



The Bar Point Club team huddles around the Illinois State Challenge Cup. Left to right: Phyllis Smolinski, David Rockwell, Carter Mattig, Herb Roman, Bill Davis, Paul Baraz. [Photo by Ed Zell]

for the fourth time, and this was Phyllis Smolinski's third imprint. David Rockwell and Carter Mattig both won for a second straight year—a rare achievement by these two deserving backgammon experts.

Bloomington won second place when Randy Armstrong of Springfield defeated Joe Szwedo of the Pub Club in the last match of the day.—Ed Zell Δ

### 26TH ILLINOIS STATE CHALLENGE CUP

**1—Bar Point Club 20-10** (D. Rockwell, H. Roman, B. Davis, P. Baraz, P. Smolinski, C. Mattig). **2—Bloomington 16-14** (J. Zimmerman, G. Michaels, M. Flohr, J. Dammeyer, D. Cornwall, M. King). **3—Pub Club 15-15** (D. Marek, J. Szwedo, M. Murray, T. Mabee, C. Frazin, E. Risch). **4/5—Peoria 14-16** (M. Doueih, M. Khouri, F. Khoury, S. Will, F. Malouf, G. Bessler)/ **Sangamon Valley 14-16** (J. Jennings, R. Armstrong, S. Lefferts, M. Plog, S. Garber, W. Kuester). **6—Winnetka 11-19** (L. Goldstein, T. Chibnik, B. Chibnik, N. Banoff, B. Levinson, J. Rubin).

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