

michigan summer backgammon champs

MUNITZ & KALANTARI SHINE IN MICHIGAN

Richard Munitz (NY) has won the Michigan Summer Championships by way of the second chance bracket. Munitz bested undefeated champ Peter Kalba (IN) 13-5 and 11-4 to top the huge 89-player field and jump into first place on the American Backgammon Tour.

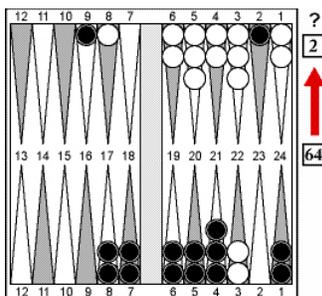


Michigan Summer Champion Richard Munitz on a roll in the finals.

Carol Joy Cole's annual "summer vacation" event welcomed over 200 players to the Sheraton Novi. Sponsorship by True-Moneygames, Snowie, and GamesGrid allowed 100% return in the Open, Intermediate, and Novice divisions.

Munitz, who reached the semifinals earlier this year in Pittsburgh, lost to BPC codirector Peter Kalba in the undefeated semifinals. But he remained determined, winning four in a row to gain a second shot at Kalba. The first match was fairly uneventful with Munitz cruising to a 13-5 victory. The rubber match had no huge swings, either; but some cautious cube play by Kalba certainly contributed to his loss:

11-point Michigan Open deciding match. Richard Munitz (Black) leads Peter Kalba (White) 2-0. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Munitz correctly doubled; however Kalba worried about getting a third man sent back and passed. There are relatively few gammons in this position, and with Kalba actually ahead 7 pips in the race and Munitz behind a 4-prime, this is an easy take (0.286 blunder to drop).

Although Kalba dropped another easy take trailing 4-7, he deserves much credit with an outstanding seven match run in the undefeated bracket.

\$10,000 MICHIGAN MASTERS

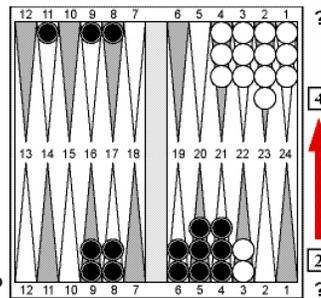
Minnesota expert Fred Kalantari has played more poker than backgammon over the past six months; however his big win in the 32-player Michigan Masters field proved he's still got what it takes. After



Michigan Master Fred Kalantari with tourney director Carol Joy Cole.

defeating Richard Lloyd (TN), Bob Glass (CA), Ken Fischer (CA) and Karen Davis (NY), Fred faced Brent Cohen (PA) who was having a great tournament (he also cashed in the Open). But experience came to the forefront in the 11point finals when Fred recubed to 4 in the following position:

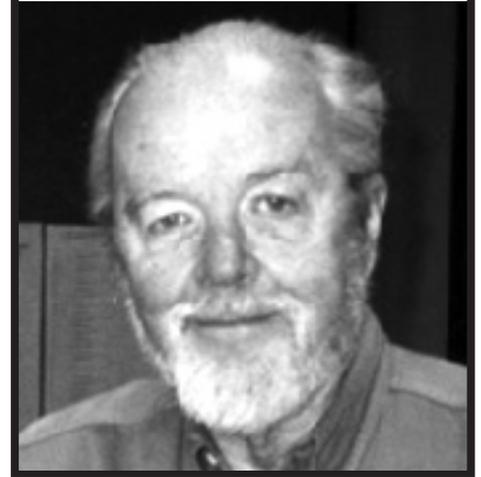
11-point Michigan Masters finals. Brent Cohen (White) leads Fred Kalantari (Black), 2-1. Black recubes. **SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



This is a stone cold drop, but Cohen took (a 0.468 blunder). A Snowie rollout shows Fred winning nearly 79% of the games of which over 20% are gammons.

[Continued on page 6]

LARRY STROMMEN 1932-2006



Larry "The Diceman" Strommen, long time player and distributor of precision dice and doubling cubes died at his home in Indianapolis, Indiana 13 June. He was 74.

After graduating from the University of Wisconsin with a BS in Electrical Engineering, Strommen joined Bell Telephone Labs creating 12 patents. He earned an MBA from the University of Indiana in 1970. He retired in 1983 at which time he became involved with backgammon.

Larry Strommen ran the Hoosier Backgammon Club for a short time in 1984. He also directed a few regional tournaments in the mid-1980s. Larry attended the premiere Midwest Championships in 1984 and played the event 23 consecutive years, winning the Advanced Division in his final MBC appearance in 2005. He also contributed occasional articles to CHICAGO POINT, most of which stressed the importance of using precision dice.

Regarding his other backgammon accomplishments, Larry was the first to modify the well-known Crisloid board (adding cork inserts, brass corners, and trip lip cups). With the help of his sons, he re-typeset all of Danny Kleinman's backgammon books. He machined doubling "logic-cubes" with a specific turning sequence to the next highest multiplier. He also was the first person to replace the "64" on the cube

[Continued on page 5]

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS



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REMEMBERING BOBBIE

I was saddened to read of Bobbie Shifrin's passing. Bobbie and I were good backgammon friends and she was an ideal doubles partner. If the Guinness Book of World Records had an entry for most consecutive sets of double-5s, Bobbie would have a claim. — *David Cramer, Chicago, Illinois*

Bobbie Shifrin's passing was very sad news. I really liked Bobbie. She was always very kind to me and my family. — *Ed Zell, Director, Peoria Backgammon Club, Illinois*

I'm very sorry to hear of Bobbie's death. I really got to know her when we all went to Costa Rica for the Tournament of the Americas. She and I were always friendly after that. I hope she was enjoying life right up to the very end! — *Gayle Wolf, Troy, Michigan*

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
810/232-9731
NEW: cjc@flintbg.com

*Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Jul 16	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/784-8132
Jul 16	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's Lounge, Cranberry Twp., PA	412/826-1334
Jul 20*	Third Thursday Bonus (Florida State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 28-30	Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin	608/516-9109
Jul 28-30	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	<u>585/396-0969</u>
Aug 1*	Arizona Club Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/279-0215
Aug 2*	Kansas City Club Monthly, Harpo's, Kansas City, Missouri	816/916-6599
Aug 5*	Metro North Saturday Swiss #4, Crash Landing, Warren, Michigan	313/330-7803
Aug 6	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Purple Hotel, Lincolnwood, Illinois	773/583-6464
Aug 6*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Aug 7*	Roy's Monthly Tournament, Restaurant Roy, Santa Barbara, California	805/966-5636
Aug 12*	Hot As Hades Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Aug 12*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Aug 13*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Gambits Bar, Marriott Hotel, Dayton, Ohio	937/890-2536
Aug 15*	Phoenix Free Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/296-4307
Aug 17*	Third Thursday Bonus (Indiana Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Aug 19*	Kansas City Anniversary Classic, Harpo's, Kansas City, Missouri	816/916-6599
Aug 19*	Austin Club Saturday Bimonthly, Doubletree Hotel, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Aug 20*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/784-8132
Aug 20*	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's Lounge, Cranberry Twp., PA	412/826-1334
Aug 26*	Backgammon By the Bay, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/688-9722
Aug 17-20	<u>Florida State Championships, Fort Lauderdale Marriott North, Florida</u>	<u>954/249-1416</u>
Sep 1-4	<u>54th Indiana Open, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Sep 15-17*	<u>NEW DATES: 13th Georgia Championships, Embassy Suites, Atlanta, GA</u>	<u>770/333-1876</u>
Sep 23-24*	Jon Viator Invitational Cup, Jon Viator's residence, La Jolla, California	818/901-0406
Sep 29-Oct 1	<u>Pacific Northwest Championships, Holiday Inn SeaTac, Seattle, Washington</u>	<u>253/856-7513</u>
Oct 6-8	Illinois State Championships, Holiday Inn City-Centre, Peoria, Illinois	309/699-6005
Oct 20-22*	11th Minnesota Open, Comfort Inn, Bloomington, Minnesota	612/718-2613
Nov 1-5	2006 Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 5-9*	2006 World Doubles Championship, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 10*	Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Purple Hotel, Lincolnwood, Illinois	773/583-6464
Dec 1-3	California State Championship, Sheraton Gateway, Los Angeles Airport, CA	818/901-0464
Jan 20-27	Backgammon On Board 8, Princess Cruise, Los Angeles to Mexican Riviera	773/583-6464

OUTSIDE USA

Jul 10-16	31st World Championship, Fairmont Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 954/527-4033
Jul 14-16	Festival of Games Czech Open, CEZ, Pardubice, Czech Republic	420466-535200
Jul 18-21	3rd Nations Cup, Palm Beach Casino, Cannes, France	336-62467001
Jul 20-23	Riviera IV Tournament, Palm Beach Casino, Cannes, France	336-62467001
Jul 22-23	Danish Mixed Doubles, Foreningshuset Strandlyst, Humlebæk, Denmark	4561-331133
Jul 29-30	11th Liverpool Open, Liverpool Bridge Club, Liverpool, England	441514-283082
Aug 5-6*	Bergen Club Bymesterskap, Dreggen Hotel, Bergen, Norway	4791-636423
Aug 5-6	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Aug 11-13	BG Sommerfestival, Hotel GlockenSpitze, Altenkirchen, Germany	49521-64314
Aug 19-20*	Gammonitis Live Challenge Finals, Thistle Brand Hatch, Dartford, England	441634-840592
Aug 19-28	10th MindSports Olympiad Backgammon, Manchester, England	441522-888676
Aug 23-30	Bristol International Festival of Backgammon, Clifton, Bristol, England	441179-756349
Aug 26-27*	Oslo Bymesterskap, Kristiania Bar & Café, Oslo, Norway	4791-601277
Aug 31-Sep 3	16th Mitteleuropa Championship, HIT Casino, Nova Gorica, Slovenia	390331-923537
Sep 1-3	Franken-Cup Open-Air, Hotel Daucher, Nürnberg, Germany	49711-486190
Sep 9-10	Backpacker Backgammon Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Sep 9-10	4th Antwerp Open, Café Den Bengel, Antwerp, Belgium	32475-256734
Sep 16-17	Gammonitis League Tournament, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	441634-840592
Sep 20-24	1st Portuguese Open & Grand Prix d'Estoril, Casino Estoril, Portugal	491715-422222
Sep 29-Oct 1	Norwegian Championship, Vika Atrium Hotel, Oslo, Norway	4791-601277
Sep 30-Oct 1*	East Cost Movers & Shakers Tournament, Byron Bay, NSW, Australia	614113-564838
Oct 5-8*	European Doubles & 9th Austrian Open, Hotel Vernoika, Seefeld, Austria	390331-923537
Oct 6-9	12th Japan Open, Nakano Sunplaza, Tokyo, Japan	817-55775016
Oct 7-8*	Sandy Osborne Memorial, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Oct 14-15*	Gammonitis 4th Birthday, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	441634-840592
Oct 24-27*	2nd European Doubles Championships, Enghien-les-Bains, France	491715-422222
Oct 26-29*	4th Lucien Barrière Open d'Enghien-les-Bains, Enghien-les-Bains, France	491715-422222
Oct 30-Nov 3*	3rd Caribbean Open, Casino Royale, Sonesta Maho Beach, St. Maarten	39331-923537
Nov 1-5*	3rd OWL-Cup / Kaiserbrunnen Open / Amateur-Cup, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
Nov 2-5*	13th German Open, Hotel GlockenSpitze, Altenkirchen, Germany	49521-64314
Nov 2-5*	26th Swedish Open, Scandic Ariadne Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	468-6523033

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

ONLINE CHEATING VIEWPOINTS

I read your editorial in the June 2006 CHICAGO POINT regarding online cheating in backgammon. I have been a backgammon player both online and at live tournaments for over 15 years. I take offense to your

editorial on so many levels, the least of which being my employment with online backgammon sites over most of those years.

For starters, your editorial is based on hearsay. Your naming of any individuals with a disclaimer of possible innocence is clear conviction in the mind of most players nonetheless. Your step by step outline of how to use a computer program to cheat left me speechless. Your sensationalistic

reporting will perpetuate thoughts of cheating to players that have never had cheating in their minds or in their hearts.

Over the years, tournament backgammon rules have been revised to account for most possible situations that could occur to cheat at a live tournament. I am not denying the possibility of some player's intentions to cheat online. I am disillusioned, however, by your assumption that most people will attempt to cheat and that unless you play someone you know, you will be cheated. Where are your facts? Your editorial proved nothing.

Backgammon has been my love on line and at live tournaments. I have made wonderful friends over the years. I have played honest people on line and at live tournaments. I have also played egotistical, cheating and unscrupulous players both on line and at live tournaments. I am thrilled to still be a part of on line backgammon and I know for a fact that the programmers for on line sites work very hard to detect use of bot like programs to play and have been very successful in detecting cheating on line. Your sensationalistic journalism could easily upset the backgammon community at large. However, it will never stop me from playing on line for money no more than it would stop me from playing at a live tournament.

Our programmers feel very confident in their ability to weed out the few individuals who you feel are rampant in the community. If they haven't been rampant, you've done your share to encourage them to cheat on line.

There is a place for all of us to thrive

[Continued on page 6]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2006

AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2006

Top 100 through 3 July 2006 after 7 tournaments
(Upcoming events: Wisconsin, 1000 Islands, Florida, Indy, Georgia)



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2006

Richard Munitz	34.65	Barry Murphy	7.20	Pete Esposito	3.68	Greg Smith	1.67
Ken Fischer	28.13	Sal Chehayeb	7.11	Peggy Neubig	3.57	Michael Boughton	1.63
Doug Roberts	26.56	Faddoul Khoury	6.48	Nancy Takala	3.52	Dan Kiurski	1.60
Gregg Cattanaach	25.04	Bruce Russell	6.40	Eric Barr	3.26	Dean Schneider	1.60
Stepan Nuniyants	24.94	Carlos Azcarate	6.27	Dan Cramer	3.15	Zaven Dolik	1.58
Bob Glass	24.00	Ted Chee	6.00	Mark Weiner	2.97	Jack Fagan	1.54
Richard Lloyd	20.68	Harvey Gillis	6.00	Ken Johnson	2.97	Antoinette Rodi	1.52
Peter Beling	19.22	Sal Pittelli	5.96	Neil Garvie	2.94	D.J. Oles	1.52
Perry Gartner	17.63	Mario Savan	5.94	Mike Rezai	2.92	John Grayson	1.47
Peter Kalba	14.78	Robert Lessard	5.77	Gary Fishman	2.92	Scott Johnston	1.47
Petko Kostadinov	14.54	Michael Edge	5.77	Bill Finneran	2.83	Ron Wagner	1.39
Arlene Austin	12.25	Mark Rozans	5.65	Ray Fogelund	2.83	Garry Kallos	1.09
Nick Maffeo	12.00	Roz Ferris	5.64	Henry Gray	2.82	Michael Flohr	1.09
Malcolm Davis	11.59	Stuart Katz	5.29	Nayan Shah	2.82	Wayne Wiest	1.03
Chuck Bower	11.59	J.A. Miller	5.28	Chris Martin	2.82	Doug Johnson	0.99
Rose Sheedy	11.54	Sean Garber	5.28	Keene Marin	2.72	Kate Elmore	0.99
John Jennings	10.72	Steve Sax	5.20	Jesse Eaton	2.60	Kathleen Schuler	0.98
Mark Donaldson	10.24	Elayne Feinstein	5.12	Stewart Pemberton	2.56	Scott Erickson	0.92
Dana Nazarian	9.11	Mary Hickey	5.06	Christopher Yep	2.30	Brendan Winslow	0.92
Tak Morioka	8.83	Beth Raby	4.42	Mark Haley	2.00	Pat Winslow	0.88
Sam Pottle	8.83	Bill Bartholomay	4.32	Jack Takala	1.83	Jamie Lind	0.88
Matthew Miner	8.20	Cole Parker	4.00	Marlene Murphy	1.80	Stuart Tennant	0.83
Michael Battaglia	8.00	Norm Hansen	4.00	Steve Harris	1.79	Stephen Liss	0.71
Brent Cohen	7.39	Bill Minser	3.91	Gale Pollack	1.79	Anton Schragel, Jr.	0.68
Joe Freedman	7.39	Doug Mayfield	3.78	Bill Chibnik	1.79	Bill Schragel	0.55



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB

2006 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 30 JUNE

David Rockwell	15.68	Albert Yakobashvili	4.92	Willis Elias	2.92	Marcia Karen	1.08
Tak Morioka	14.14	Bob Steen	4.88	Ken Bond	2.88	Mike Sutton	0.88
Herb Roman	14.12	Wayne Wiest	4.56	Glenn Martells	2.76	Tom Harrison	0.76
Phil Simborg	10.84	Georgina Flanagan	4.52	Richard Stawowy	2.64	Kwong Chan	0.72
Steve Klesker	10.68	Bill Keefe	4.50	Peter Kalba	2.16	Dave Cramer	0.72
Gary Kay	10.32	Mark Murray	4.48	Russ Lyutik	2.16	Martha Ghio	0.72
Tim Mabee	7.80	Mike Wolock	4.40	Vlad Genkin	2.16	Ryan Anderson	0.64
Bill Davis	7.48	Alice Kay	4.24	Larry Goldstein	2.00	Ron Washington	0.52
Linda Rockwell	7.28	Boris Dekhtyar	4.16	Elaine Kehm	1.80	Doug Rodgers	0.48
Bill Bartholomay	6.92	Arlene Levy	3.92	Efim Leiberman	1.60	Judy Zager	0.48
Phyllis Smolinski	6.88	Carter Mattig	3.56	Jerry Brooks	1.48	Tony Santori	0.48
Eric Johnson	6.76	Sargon Benjamin	3.48	Steve Mellen	1.44	Elaine Andrews	0.48
Oleg Raygorodsky	6.56	Les Moshinsky	3.44	Dave Settles	1.40	Ken Tibbs	0.48
Bob Zavoral	6.08	Rory Pascar	3.28	Ken Tyszko	1.20	Tony Garcia	0.48
Roger Hickman	5.92	Alex Owen	3.16	Felix Yen	1.20	Nora Luna Righter	0.36
Paul Baraz	5.76	Amy Trudeau	3.12	Adrian Rios	1.12	Michael Peters	0.16
Michael Ginat	5.20						

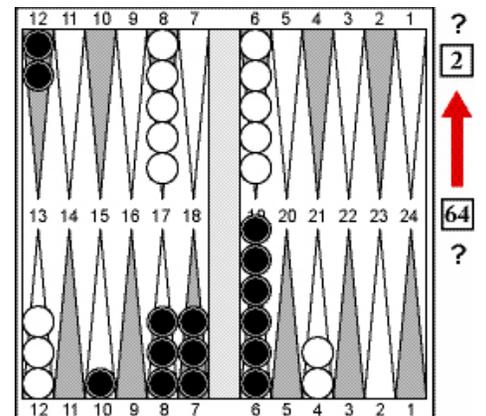
HERB ROMAN won the last tourney of June to win monthly honors with 3.84 points. Steve Klesker and newcomer Rory Pascar placed 2nd/3rd with 3.28 points each.

your move

PROBLEM #320

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

7-point match. Black leads White, 5 to 0. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



SHADES OF GRAY

A RULES AND RULINGS COLUMN

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BUYBACKS AND ABT POINTS

Neil Kazaross, ABT 1994, 1999, and 2005 Player of the Year, writes to oppose awarding ABT points to tournaments that include buybacks. I shall intersperse comments (in this typeface) with each of the issues he raises.—DK

Dear Danny: Beginning this fall, the Las Vegas tournaments will be part of the American Backgammon Tour. Unfortunately, I understand, the event will employ the same buyback format it has used the past few years. As a 3-time ABT winner, I am emphatically against buyback tournaments. I understand that master point awards are only based on the original number of entrants, but why give the players with deep pockets more chance to win ABT points? A weaker player who knocks a strong player out of the main flight should not have to face that same player in the main flight a second time.

I agree emphatically. It is unfair for a player who has means and opportunity to reenter to be crowned "champion" despite losing a match, while others who lose a match are eliminated. However, for purposes of awarding ABT Points, "wins" by players who reenter may be discounted, perhaps by treating these "wins" (or "places") as if they had been earned in the Consolation, while increasing proportionally the ABT points earned by Main Flight winners who did not reenter.

With the Las Vegas buyback format, only one match is played on Thursday with all the first round losers redrawn into the Consolation division on Friday. Using a normal tourney format, the event could start on Friday meaning that individuals who work for a living would need one less vacation day to attend the tournament.

Sympathy for those who work for a living, one of the tenets of avowed communists Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, is contrary to U.S. Government policy and may soon be defined as treasonous, giving aid and comfort to the enemy. However, I shall show mercy towards you, Neil, and report you neither to the Department of Homeland Security nor to the Depart-

ment of Justice for prosecution.

This is my understanding of the current Las Vegas buyback policy:

If the number of original entrants in the Championship or Intermediate division is between 96 and 127, then buybacks are allowed up to 128 players. Last year's Championship entry fee was \$500 less a 10% rake. The reentry fee for first round losers was $70\% \times \$450 = \315 , 90% of which was added to the prize pool. The 70% figure was chosen because 70% of the prize pool is earmarked for that flight.

Now you are talking not about ABT Points, Neil, but about money equities. Let buybacks (if allowed) be subject to constraints. Let them be rake-free, so that the tournament promoter neither gains nor loses by permitting or encouraging them, but the players benefit. Let the price of a buyback (in an event with a \$500 entry fee and a 70% share in the prize pool) be \$350 (a discount beyond 30% offers a better bargain for reentrants and is thus unfair to original entrants), all of which is added to the event's prize pool. Then entrants whose winning chances are reduced by the buybacks will be compensated by a modest increase in their money equities.

There is a major problem with the Calcutta Auction. Bidders don't know which of the players will definitely buy back, might buy back, or will definitely not buy back. Knowing this information is critical in evaluating the Auction field strength. Without it, the bidding is in the blind! Why anyone would even bother to bid under these circumstances is beyond me.

This problem will disappear by making a rule that any player wishing to buy back must pay the entry and buyback fee prior to the Calcutta Auction. Those players will have an asterisk placed beside their name on the Auction sheet. A player who wins his first-round match, or who loses but for lack of an available slot cannot reenter, receives a full refund of his buyback fee.

Finally, buybacks are sold on a first-come, first-serve basis, opening up the chance for manipulation. For example, with only a few buyback slots available, it would be good strategy for a player trailing by a wide margin to forfeit his match and guarantee a reentry, especially if he was chasing ABT points. Conversely, a weak player bat-

ting a strong player would be wise to kill the strong player's reentry chances by dragging out the match so that if he did win, the strong player couldn't buy back.

Precluding such manipulation is simple. After all of the initial first round matches have been completed, hold a random draw for the available reentry spaces among first round losers who have paid the advance buyback fee.

So in short, I am probably one of the players with the most to gain from buybacks, yet I am extremely opposed to allowing this format into ABT events since they aren't fair for everyone and can distort the player's chances of winning ABT points. Trust me—buybacks improve my chance to win points, and the reentry fee has no effect on my wallet.

I commend you for putting fairness above personal gain.

That is my take, Danny. What is yours? Do you think the Las Vegas buyback system is fair with regard to awarding ABT points?

No.

Can anything be done about the problems that I have outlined?—Neil Kazaross, Barrington, Illinois

Yes.—Yours, Danny Δ

Address ruling questions to: Shades of Gray; c/o CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155 or e-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com.



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, 6:00 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).

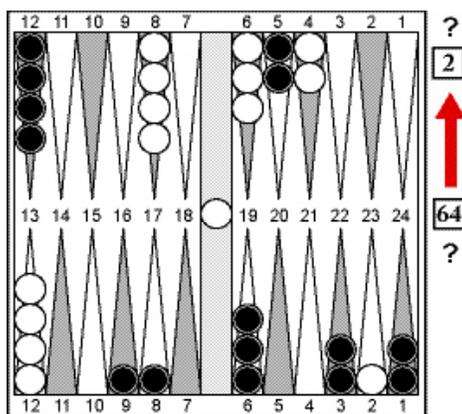
WINNETKA BG CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at Winnetka Community House, 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Chibnik (847/446-0537).

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).



Match to 7 points. Black leads White, 4 to 1. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



LARRY STROMMEN...

[Continued from page 1]

with a “1.”

But Larry Strommen will be best remembered for his precision dice. For years, Strommen supplied Carol Joy Cole’s Backgammon Boutique with precision dice. He also made precision dice for European distributors including some major tournaments such as the Paris Open. As Larry put it in a letter to CHICAGO POINT just weeks prior to his death:

“The sale of precision dice proved to be my most profitable venture and I dare say I did a lot for the game there. The final item of making a finish cut that formed a polished surface on the corners was a real breakthrough in machining.”

Larry Strommen is survived by his sons Randolph, Douglas, and Michael; his brother Robert, a sister Myrtle, and five grandchildren. Memorial contributions can be made to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Δ

Leading 4–1, Black sent over this cube. It looks like White’s pass cost him a good opportunity to get back into the match. Snowie says it’s “No double, take.” But Black had success by doubling. So his double was either “pretty bad,” or “very, very good.” It all depends on Black’s state of mind when he doubled.

A 720 3-ply, precise Snowie rollout of the position shows:

No double 0.648
Double, take 0.511 (–0.137)
Double, pass 1.000 (+0.352)

For money, Snowie says this is a clear “Double, take.” Personally, I’m leery about taking this type of position where my opponent holds my 5-anchor with blitzing possibilities. But this is a match to 7 points. Leading 4–1, why would Black send the cube over now? Because he knew it was not a double before this? Or did Black just roll 5-5 followed by a White fan?

I am guessing it was the latter. Leading the match and searching for a way to end it, Black saw White slump in his chair, or heard him sigh. Black sent it over, sensing White’s resignation. If that was Black’s thinking, it was pure genius!

Otherwise, the cube kind of sucks because Black’s obvious threat is to win a gammon and at this score, he should just roll on for the G and forget about doubling. If things go well Black will be ahead 6–1

Crawford. If not, White will have a good chance to win the game, and won’t need much excuse to use the redoubling leverage Black has handed him.

Congratulations to Black on his well-timed double—he obviously read his opponent right! However, only Black knows *why* he doubled. And if, when Black explores his feelings, his reason isn’t “because I knew White was going to drop,” then Black has made a big mistake! This type of thing is probably causing Black to lose matches that he was cruising in. It is not enough to sense when you are ahead in the position; you must have a controlled fear of all eventualities.

If the sequence goes double/take, and you win a gammon, it won’t mean much to you. After all, that was your clear threat, right? But after your opponent takes, then redoubles in an even game and you roll your worst number causing you to get gammoned in an unlikely sequence . . . you’ll remember that swing for months!

It’s a risk/reward thing. Not doubling lets you gammon (and torture) your opponent, reaching 91% match equity. But doubling risks your entire lead because when het turns this one around, you will almost always lose the game on 4 and now you will be behind.

Moral of the story: Double only the passers—not the takers!—Ray Foglerlund

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MICHIGAN...

[Continued from page 1]

And that's just what happened. Fred jumped ahead 9-2 eventually winning 11-6.

OTHER EVENTS

Congrats to other main winners including Intermediate Champ Rose Sheedy (IN) and Novice victor Beth Raby (VA). Also to Doubles victors Ken Fischer (CA) and Harvey Gillis (WA). And congratulations to CJC and staff for another grand 4th of July weekend. Complete results: Δ

MICHIGAN SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIPS

OPEN (89): 1-Richard Munitz (NY), 2-Peter Kalba (IL), 3-Brent Cohen (PA), 4/5-Bill Minser (WI) / Dana Nazarian (CA); 1C-Peter Beling (VA), 2C-Joe Freedman (VA), 3/4-Faddoul Khoury (IL) / Richard Lloyd (TN). INTERMEDIATE (64): 1-Rose Sheedy (IN), 2-Michael Edge (SC), 3-Gary Fishman (FL); 1C-Robert Lessard (Canada), 2C-Mike Rezai (OH), 3C/4C-Sal Chehayeb (MI) / Jack Fagan (MO). NOVICE (29): 1-Beth Raby (VA), 2-Zaven Dolik (MI); 1C-Greg Smith (WV), 2C-Stuart Tennant (Canada). MICHIGAN MASTERS (32): 1-Fred Kalantari (MN), 2-Brent Cohen (PA), 3/4-Karen Davis (NY) / Kit Woolsey (CA). GAMESGRID BLITZ (128): 1-Andy Palumbo (NY), 2-Mary Hickey (OH). SNOWIE FREEZE-OUT (32): 1-Alan Gold (WI), 2-Gregg Cattanach (GA). HOWARD RING MEMORIAL JP (32): 1-Jack Fagan (MO), 2-Karen Davis (NY), 3/4-Ray Glaeser (OH) / Frank Talbot (MI). (\$400 raised for Gastro-Intestinal Research Foundation.) \$50 EARLYBIRD JP (16): 1-Herb Roman (IL), 2-Peter Beling (VA). \$30 EARLYBIRD JP (16): 1-Steve Sherbel (MI), 2-Jerry McMahon (NC). OPEN DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Ken Fischer (CA) & Harvey Gillis (WA), 2-Ray Foglerlund (CA) & Marianne Gatenby (Canada), 3/4-Boris Dekhtyar (IL) & Gil Tittley (Canada) / Fred Kalantari (MN) & Petko Kostadinov (SC). SATELLITE DOUBLES (12 teams): 1-Sal Chehayeb (MI) & Joe Feldman (MI), 2-Jerry McMahon (NC) & Jeff Nitschke (MN). LTD. DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Patty Geoffroy (MA) & Steve Sherbel (MI), 2-Bob Bartolone (IL) & Dave Settles (IL). \$200 FIRECRACKER JP (16): 1-Nora Luna Righter (MA), 2-Bruce Hall (NC). \$100 FIRECRACKER JP (16): 1-Andy Palumbo (NY), 2-Perry Berlinski (MI). \$20 DETROIT QUICKIE #1 (64): 1-Rob Kandell (MI), 2-Bill Davis (IL). #2 (64): 1-Eden Windish (Canada), 2-Mike Sharp (CA). #3 (32): 1-Cole Parker (TX), 2-Mike Sharp (CA). \$10 DETROIT QUICKIE #1 (64): 1-Larry Buckingham (IN), 2-Rob Kandell (MI). #2 (32): 1-Lee Pflugrad (WI), 2-Bob Hickey (OH). \$50 WARM-UP (30): 1-Mike Corbett (FL) / Ray Foglerlund (CA). \$30 WARM-UP (32): 1-Gil Tittley (Canada), 2-John Grayson (MI), 3/4-Rick Todd (MI) / James Worley (MO). \$20 WARM-UP (13): 1-Bruce Weiner (MI), 2-Marianne Gatenby (Canada), 3-Woody Halbritter (MI). \$50 AFTER TOURNAMENT (22): 1-Larry Liebster (NJ), 2/4-Ray Foglerlund (CA) / John Grayson (MI) / Bill Minser (WI). \$20 AFTER TOURNAMENT (12): 1-Bruce Weiner (MI), 2/3-Marianne Gatenby (Canada) / Reggie Harvel (MI).

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

and thoroughly enjoy the game of backgammon.—Roz Ferris (“TheRose”), Arlington Heights, Illinois

There is no doubt that online backgammon is booming and as we said in our editorial, it definitely “has a future.” We sincerely hope that Ms. Ferris’s statement about her online programmers “weeding out cheaters” is accurate.—Ed.

I have been playing online backgammon for money for many years. During that time, I have run across a number of cheaters. We used to have a great chouette on FIBS year ago, but that broke up when a study of one of the players showed a direct correlation between his major decisions and those of JellyFish. More recently, as you pointed out, other solid evidence of on-line cheaters has emerged.

So the question I am often asked is, “If you know there are many cheaters and it’s easy to cheat, why do you play online for money?” The answer is twofold:

1. I enjoy it, and
2. I win money.

The main reason I win is because I avoid playing with really good players. Whether they cheat or whether they are just really good doesn’t matter to me. I know that I can’t beat them. So after a game or two, I can tell if someone knows the game as well or better than me, and I put them on my “do not play” list. It’s that simple.

Another reason to play online is that

many sites (such as BackgammonMasters.com) give lots of added money to their tournaments, and I’ve won my share. They also give big bonus money for doing well in a specific room, and I’ve cashed this way, too.

Your warning to people about the cheaters is a real service to backgammon: it should tell everyone to beware. It certainly has prevented me from playing anyone I don’t know and trust for larger stakes. The only thing I would like to add to your editorial is that I have seen demonstrations proving that some people are sharp enough and fast enough to use JellyFish and Snowie very quickly and there is no way to know they are cheating as a result of any delay. And as you stated, if they’re smart (unlike the individual mentioned in your article), they will intentionally make a few errors to keep you guessing.—Phil Simborg, Chicago, Illinois

TAKGAMMON ONLINE

I congratulate you on republishing Tak Morioka’s timeless insights (every Wednesday at chicagopoint.com/takgammon.html), and his philosophy contained therein!—Roland Dieter, Deerfield, Illinois

Takgammon is back. God help us.—Yamin Yamin, Wilmette, Illinois

CHOUETTE QUESTIONS

Where do I find the rules for Chouette play? Is there only one cube or can each player have an individual cube?—Moir Bowman, via Internet

Lots of good Chouette information can be found at Tom Keith’s *Backgammon Galore* (bkgm.com/rules/chouette.html).—Ed. Δ



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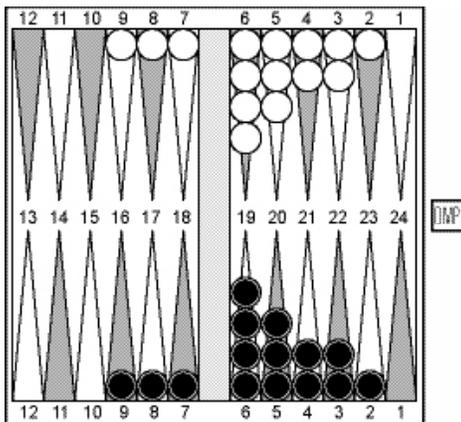
24TH – 29TH OCTOBER 2006

SYMMETRY

by Duane Jensen

Symmetry is pleasing to the eye whether we see it in a human shape or in large structures like the Taj Mahal or the Parthenon. Symmetry is common in backgammon. The opening position is symmetrical, and you often see symmetrical positions throughout a game. Lazy pip-counters savor symmetrical positions because they only need to count one side. The racing position shown in the next column formed when both players broke their midpoints with a 6-4:

Sample position. Double match-point with Black on roll. Estimate Black's winning percentage.



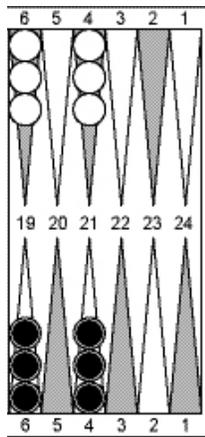
If it's double match point, how many wins will the player on roll record? This position should not require calculation! This should be a mini-bench mark in the backgammon part of your brain:

In cubeless racing positions with equal pip counts, the roller wins 60% of the games.

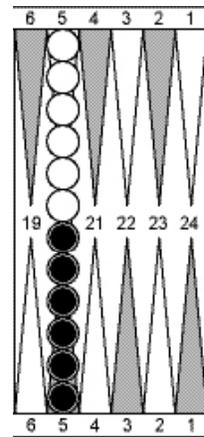
The 60% figure isn't perfect but it's close in most positions with the same pip counts—not just symmetrical positions.

Once the bearoff has begun, the roller will win *more* than 60% of the time in symmetrical positions. In the following symmetrical positions, the roller has at least 65% winning chances. All the positions have six checkers with both sides in a symmetrical position. With Black on shake in all 12 positions, see if you can select which of the 12 yields the most wins at double match-point and the one that yields the least. I've labeled the positions as I see them. [Answers are upside down shown at right.]—Duane Jensen Δ

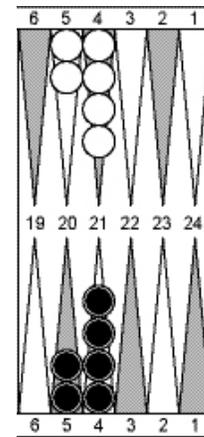
1. The Goalpost



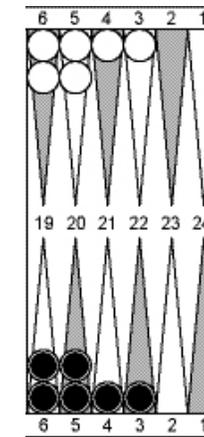
2. The Flagpole



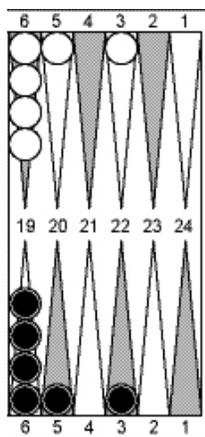
3. Phil Helmuth's Chair



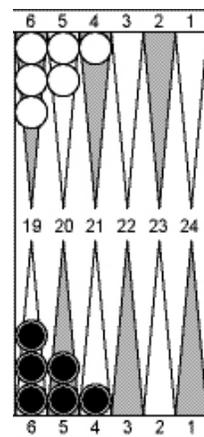
4. Phil's Helmuth's Chair (after a bad poker beat)



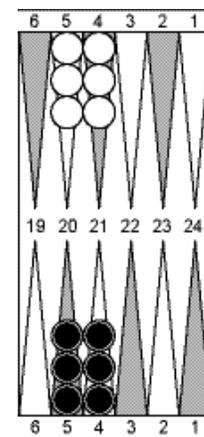
5. The Putter & Golf Ball



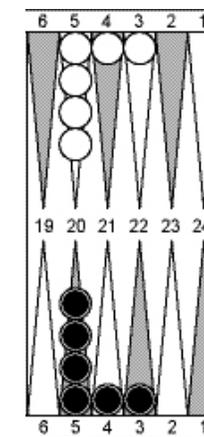
6. The Wedge



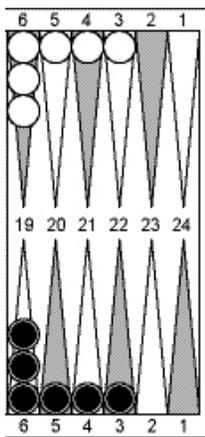
7. The Coke Can



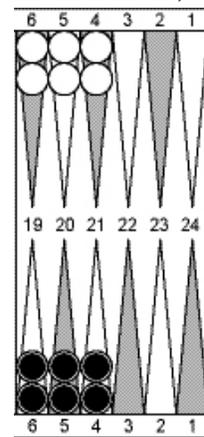
8. The Letter "L"



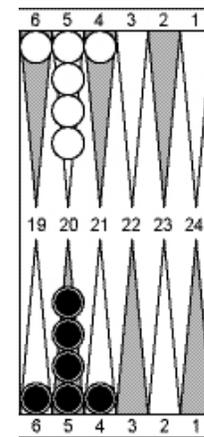
9. The Lounge Chair



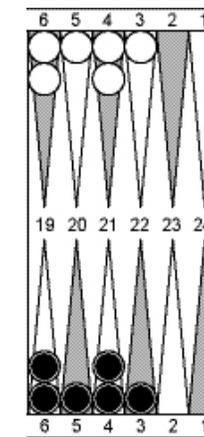
10. The Budweiser 6-pack (viewed from above)



11. The Penis (Croquet Mallet)



12. The Bobsled

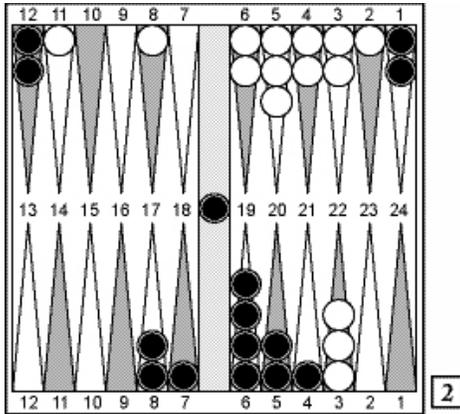


Positions and Win Percentages

- 1. The Flagpole – 66.3%
- 2. The Letter "L" – 66.1%
- 3. The Goalpost – 66.1%
- 4. The Bobsled – 66.1%
- 5. Phil Helmuth's Chair – 66.1%
- 6. The Wedge – 65.9%
- 7. The Coke Can – 65.9%
- 8. The Lounge Chair – 65.8%
- 9. Phil Helmuth's Chair (after a bad poker beat) – 65.8%
- 10. The Putter & Golf Ball – 65.6%
- 11. The Penis (Croquet Mallet) – 65.5%
- 12. The Budweiser 6-Pack (viewed from above) – 65.4%

**PROBLEM #319
ANALYZED**

by Neil Kazaross

7 point match. Black leads White 5 to 2.
BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.

With only two reasonable moves, this looks like an easy problem. However, the decision between bar/23*, 24/23 and bar/24, 6/4 is by no means easy. The decision is further complicated by the score since it makes Black's gammon and BG losses more costly in terms of match equity than they would be for money (where all points won have equal value). I'll spare the reader from the math, as we all know that it isn't good to get gammoned on a 2-cube when the four points lost gets your opponent to Crawford; or to be BG'ed when it costs the entire match.

So with all this in mind, how does one attempt to solve this problem at the table, where he cannot bring a bot to help? Let's first look at the simple play of entering and covering the 4-point. Now White has only 11 shots at the fourth checker, but she has 28 shots to cover her 2-point, which leaves Black with three guys behind a 5-prime and facing a 5 point board. Four jokers hit and cover and leave Black in dire straights. No roll this turn can crack White since 5-5 doesn't play fully. But, if White covers without hitting, Black can close his own 5-prime with 17 numbers, and that should give him some decent winning chances if White cannot soon hop a checker with a 6. However, Black's 5-prime will then be more outside and White will soon have killed 5s and may not crack quickly.

Things don't look all that great for Black with this play, but at least White's bar point isn't likely to be closed and maybe Black can spring a checker with his own 6.

OK. Now lets take a look at hitting and

making the 23-point. This leaves White 21 shots to send back a fourth checker, which often leads to a fifth getting sent back as well. Hitting gives White a 3-3 that damages her blocking structure somewhat, but if Black dances after White's forced bar/22, 4/1*(2), 11/8, he may quickly be in real trouble. By hitting, Black refuses to get pinned to his 24-point and also, if missed, may have plenty of counter play vs. four checkers back. Black may be able to salvage some kind of superior defensive position, but still, if return hit, may end up cracking even if he makes a 1-2 backgame. Finally, one must consider that the big bonus for hitting is when White rolls one of her four dancing numbers.

There's much to consider between the two very different plays. I asked myself which play wins more total games, and to me, it looks like hitting and making the 23-point wins somewhat more. Now, which play loses more gammons? Well, probably hitting does, since it can get really bad after a return hit followed by a dance, but it didn't seem like a major difference to me. Since, winning the game at this score is somewhat more valuable than saving the gammon (gammon cost is slightly less than 0.70), this caused me to slightly prefer making the 2-point. I was completely unsure which play lost more BG's. Thus, with as much as I possibly could consider, I preferred hitting and covering the 23-point by about 0.025 (swayed by those yummy four dancing numbers).

All this conjecture is fine, but what do the bot rollouts say? I ran a 2-ply rollout with GNU which will play the checkers according to score, and Bill Davis ran a basically equivalent strength, 3-ply precise full rollout with Snowie 4.5. My work doing this write-up became much more complicated when the rollouts preferred different plays! GNU's rollout has covering the 4-point as best by 0.038 while Snowie's has hitting and covering the 23-point best by 0.014. Note that, paradoxically, each bot when evaluating, prefers the opposite play!! Clearly this is a close decision, and it is up to me to try to interpret the results.

GNU's rollout has the 23-point winning 1.4% more games, but losing 3.9% more

gammons, and 0.7% more BG's. Snowie's has the 23-point winning 2.6% more games, while losing 3.2% more gammons and losing 0.4% fewer BG's. Note that each play wins approximately 40% of the time while losing about 30% gammons, so Black's game is not at all hopeless.

I believe that the BG difference is explained due to the fact that Snowie plays the checkers for money, rather than according to score. In GNU's rollout, covering the 4-point loses only 2.6% BG's while in Snowie's it loses 4.0%. With checker play according to score, GNU simply runs away to avoid BG losses when it sees enough of them to deem running away correct when considering overall match equity. This may explain some of the difference between the rollouts, but not all.

In both rollouts, covering the 4-point won the same amount of games (39.2%) but in Snowie's rollout hitting won 1.2% more games than in GNU's. I feel that this difference may be due to checker play according to score, since White at this score can still make any play he wants to maximize winning chances, and not worry that it may backfire and result in him getting gammoned. White, when he's hit and misses his return shots and the game goes sour, can sit back forever when he cannot be gammoned. So with GNU's checker play according to score, I suspect White is more able to maximize his winning chances when hit here.

Taking all this into account, you may suspect that I think the technically correct play, by a slight amount, is to enter on the 24-point and cover the 4-point. This is the case, since I find it truly hard to argue with a high level rollout using checker play according to score. However, I think the more complicated play is to hit and make the 23-point. Is skill factor enough to sway the decision or is it counterbalanced by the fact that the better player doesn't want to be gammoned more often and lose 4 points? Hmm, this seems a close decision, but again I find it hard to argue with a 0.038 difference, so armed with the instructive rollout results, I think it very slightly best to play bar/24, 6/4 with this roll.—Neil Kazaross Δ

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•**Hilton Trophy Tournament** (Coventry, England; 3-4 Jun.)... MAIN (26): 1-Paul Gilbertson, 2-David Nathan, 3/4-Chris Ternel / Tim Mooring. CONSOLATION (26): 1-Carter Mattig (US), 2-John Slattery, 3/4-Rosey Bensley / Chris Ternel. LAST CHANCE (32): 1-Roland Herrera, 2-David Startin, 3/4-Tim Line / Adrian Jones. EXTERMINATOR (32): 1-George Hall, 2-Rosey Bensley, 3/4-Jeff Barber / Uldis Lapikens. FRIDAY WARM-UP (8): 1-Mardi Ohannessian, 2-Paul Gilbertson. POKER (10): 1-Martin Hemming, 2-John Slattery, 3-Nigel Merrigan.

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Copley, OH; 4 Jun.)... OPEN: 1-Stephen Benjamin, 2-Paul Berg (MI)

•**Arizona Club Monthly** (Phoenix, AZ; 6 Jun.)... OPEN: 1-David Hilton, 2-Pete Campbell, 3-Brian Comer.

•**Kansas City Club Monthly** (Kansas City, MO; 7 Jun.)... OPEN (11): 1-Eric Barr, 2-

Danny Magariel.

•**Los Angeles Open—ABT** (Los Angeles, CA; 9-11 Jun.)... OPEN (60): 1-Bob Glass (CA), 2-Nick Maffeo (CA), 3-Harvey Gillis (WA); 1C-Richard Lloyd (TN), 2C-Ted Chee (CA). ADVANCED (27): 1-Mario Savan (CA), 2-Mark Weiner (CA); 1C-Ken Johnson (CA), 2C-Michael Boughton (CA). LIMITED (7): 1-Jamie Lind (CA), 2-Denise Bonfilio (CA); 1C-Christina Cooley (CA). SUPER-32: 1-Jason Lee (NV), 2-Rich Lloyd (TN), 3/4-Mark Antranikian (CA) / Malcolm Davis (TX). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Ray Foglerlund (CA) & Jim Wark (CA), 2-Bruce DiMattia (CA) & Edward Donigian (CA). 2-POINT QUICKIES (48): 1-Saul Meir (CA). \$50 JACKPOT #1 (8): 1-Patrick McCormick (CA). \$50 JACKPOT #2 (8): 1-Paul Gedigian (CA).

•**Houston Father's Day Open** (Houston, TX; 10 Jun.)... OPEN (15) : 1-Ana Mancino, 2-Kerry Blodgett, 3/4 Ira Hessel/John Shakori; 1C-Al Johnson, 2C-Gary Fomby.

•**Gammonitis League Tournament** (Oxford, England; 10-11 Jun.)... OPEN (19): 1-Jon Barnes, 2-Chris Ternel, 3/4-Peter Bennet/David Fall; 1C-Alan Beckerson, 2C-Julian Fetterlein, 3C/4C-Mike Heard/Martin Hemming; 1LC-John Broomfield, 2LC-Mike Heard. TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER: 1-Paul Gilbertson, 2-John Clark, 3-Rosey Bensley.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 11 Jun.)... OPEN: 1-Mike Corbett, 2-Karen Davis.

•**2nd Belgian Open** (Oostende, Belgium; 14-18 Jun.)... OPEN (32): 1-Masayuki Mochizuki (JPN), 2-Jürgen Orlowski (GER), 3/4-Francios Tardieu (FRA) / Andreas Humke (GER); 1C-Lars Trabolt (DEN), 2C-Julian Fetterlein (GBR); 1LC-Mike Heard (GBR). ADVANCED (16): 1-Paul Baeyens (BEL), 2-Georgy Balkandjiisky (BUL), 3/4-Peter Blachian (GER) / Andry Markov (BUL); 1C-Nigel Merrigan (GBR); 1LC-Paulus Van Rooyen (NED). INTERMEDIATE: 1-Jeroen Romme (NED), 2-Vladimir Todorov Georgiev (BUL), 3-Dorothy Lee (GBR), 4-Carla Doumard (FRA). AMATEUR: 1-Bart Germonprez (BEL). BENELUX-BATTLE: 1-Andreas Humke & Sven Rümcker (GER), 2-Julian Fetterlein & Peter Bennett (GBR). PRESIDENT TOURNAMENT: 1-Poul Lindberg (DEN). PARTYGAMMON CHALLENGE: 1-Dr. Akbar Soltani (IRI), 2-Pia Jeppesen (DEN), 3/4-Sven Rümcker (GER) / Michel Sneoual (MON). SUPER JACKPOT: 1-Alain Babilion (FRA). AFTER TOURNAMENT: 1-Peter Blachian (GER), 2-Lars Trabolt (DEN).

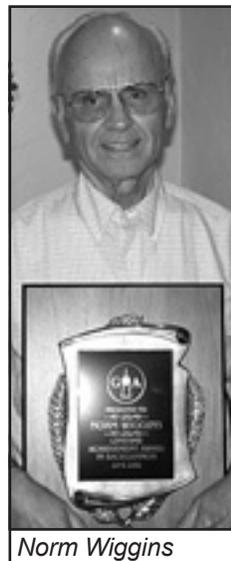
•**Kansas City Club Monthly** (Kansas City, MO; 6 Jul.)... OPEN (8): 1-Kathleen Schuler, 2/3-Scott Shaper / Bill Yancey. Δ

AMALGAMATION

Visiting the Bar Point Club in June: **Nora Luna Righter** (MA), **George Panagakis** (CA). And Bar Point Clubbers welcome back **Rory Pascar** to Chicago... Ladies? Do you have what it takes to be "Miss Gammon 2007"? Check out the new BG



website gammonlife.com and find out. Publisher **Stephen Pearson** (Great Britain) is fortunate to have **Michael Strato** (Canada) as Editor. Sponsored by partygammon.com, it's quite a site with contributors including **Walter Trice** (MA), **Mary Hickey** (OH), **Paul Money** (GBR), **Gregg Catanach** (GA), **Paul Magriel** (NV), **Nack Ballard** (CA), **Paul Weaver** (AL) and more!... **Roland Dieter** (IL) is donating a \$15 door prize every week at the Winnetka



Norm Wiggins

Backgammon Club. Play and win this summer, Wednesdays at the Winnetka Community House. Check out "Illinois Action" (on page 4) for the time and location... Congratulations to **Norm Wiggins** (CA) who was awarded a "Lifetime Achievement Award in Backgammon" by **Patrick Gibson** and the Gammon Associates Club...

It's official. The Madison (WI) Backgammon Club will host the Labor Day tournament starting in 2007... **Joe Feldman** (MI), who won over \$25,000 in an online tournament a few months ago, qualified for a \$10,000 seat at the World Series of Poker later this month. And amazingly, he did it in his free time while attending the Michigan Summer Championships!... The June *Chicago Magazine* featured a sidebar on BPC player **Ron Washington** (IL) and

how he can be found playing chess at the lakeside chess pavilion just south of the North Avenue beach house. To quote Ron, "I'm a hustler. I'm not a fun guy." We think



Dave Groner

you're fun, Ron!... Condolences on the May passing of Hoosier Backgammon Club player **Dave Groner**. He was 55... The New England Backgammon Club is now playing Wednesdays at Anatolia Restaurant, 251

Cambridge in Cambridge, MA. Speaking of the club, congrats to the NEBC's seasonal champion **Matt Reklaitis**... **Dan Pelton** informs us that the Arizona Backgammon Club-USBL will henceforth be known as the Phoenix Backgammon Club-USBL. Get all the US Club info at chicagopoint.com/usclubs.html... Finally, from **Orison Swett Marden**: "The golden opportunity you are seeking is in yourself. It is not in your environment; it is not in luck or chance, or the help of others; it is in yourself alone."... Have a nice summer. We'll see you in September. Δ

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