

## BG MASTERS PULLS THE PLUG Fails to honor signed contracts Four ABT events effected

BackgammonMasters.com has pulled out of US Backgammon sponsorship breaking legally signed contracts in the process. The California Open (Dec. 1-3), Carolina Invitational (Jan. 12-14), Pittsburgh Championships (Feb. 16-18), and Southeast Championships (May 4-6) were all advertising 100% return and/or added monies in their invitations. All of the events have canceled their advertised added monies and issued a public apology for the reversal. Backgammon Masters spokesman Giora Tal was twice offered the opportunity to comment on the abrupt action, but did not respond.

In an e-mail sent to California Open registrants just five days prior to his 1-3 December event, director Patrick Gibson wrote:

"I just received some BAD NEWS. BackgammonMasters.com has gotten legal advice regarding their participation in the USA marketplace. They have withdrawn (canceled) all contracts with the USA-based backgammon tournaments and will NOT have a presence at these events . . ."

The new US Internet gaming law will not be enforced until later in 2007. Additionally, BGM is presently doing nothing to stop US players from participating at their site other than posting the following disclaimer:

"Backgammon is a skill game. In some countries and regions, online skill games for money are not allowed. We recommend you check with your local authorities before you play. If skill-gaming is not legal in your region, we will not be held responsible for any damages you incur. We urge you to verify the legality in your region or country before you make your first deposit."

Nevada Backgammon Association director Howard Markowitz was the initial contact for Backgammon Masters. Although not employed with the company, Markowitz brokered the initial deals

between BGM and the tournament directors in Chicago, Wisconsin, Florida, Indiana, Pittsburgh, Charlotte, and Atlanta. When asked to comment on the US pullout, Markowitz cited the new US Internet gaming law and what Backgammon Masters perceived to be a lack of dedication on the part of some directors regarding their promotion of the company.

But Markowitz did not consider that a valid excuse for BGM's actions stating for the record, "I found the fact that they broke contracts appalling."

Roz Ferris (IL) was the North American Representative for BGM. After relaying the bad news to the effected directors in late November, her employment was terminated. When asked to comment on the entire situation, Ferris said, "I consider the whole thing a farce."

The following attendance chart could be the real reason for BGM's quick exit. It shows that with the exception of the Indiana Open (Butch & Mary Ann Meese's farewell tournament as directors), Backgammon Masters' added money in 2006 was of no value with regard to increasing player attendance when compared to 2005:

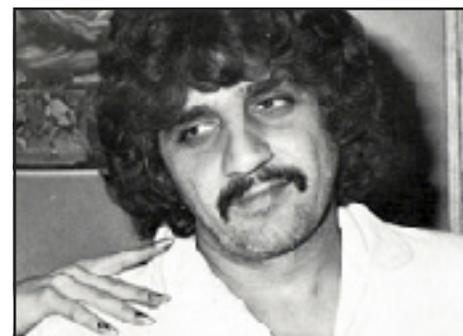
Event	Main Event Attendance	
	2005	2006 (BGM)
Nevada State	162	159
Chicago Open	96	85
Wisconsin State	68	73
Florida State	103	92
Indiana Open	100	147
Las Vegas Open	225	234

The late Michael Maxakuli, former publisher of the *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine*, had a negative impression of BGM following the April Nevada State Championships—their first sponsored event. In June 2006, Maxakuli wrote CHICAGO POINT suggesting a tongue-in-cheek exposé on the promoters and their playsite:

"Why don't you let your readers know who and what Backgammon Masters are? Let me suggest two headlines for you: 'Backgammon Etiquette: The Correct Way to Pass Out Baseball Caps'. Or possibly 'Backgammon Virtual Reality: Graphics Are Enough.'" Δ

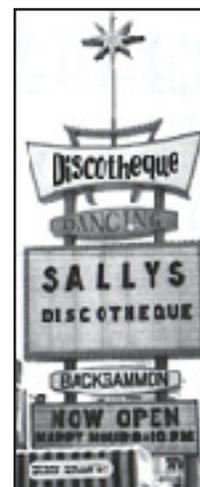
## MICHAEL MAXAKULI 11/14/1944–12/11/2006 A backgammon icon since the 70s

Michael "Max" Maxakuli, backgammon publisher, club director, and expert player is dead. He was 62.



Michael Maxakuli in 1980. This and all other photos were scanned from old Las Vegas Backgammon Magazines.

Born in Albania, Max grew up in Windsor, Canada before his family moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There he attended high school and some college at the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee). He later owned a nightclub while working as an entertainment promoter. But in the early 1970s, Max craved a larger stage and moved to Las Vegas just prior to the backgammon boom. Soon,



he was directing the Las Vegas Backgammon Club which met on the strip at Dirty Sally's Discotheque.

Maxakuli began printing the *Las Vegas Backgammon Club Newsletter* in 1974. The publication went to magazine size in March 1978 and by September 1978, the issue was full glossy with a new name: *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine*. In 1980, worldwide circulation was stated as 20,000. Maxakuli remained the sole publisher until December 1980

[Continued on page 8]

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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## REMEMBERING MAX

Who among us old-timers does not remember Michael Maxakuli? Max was a celebrity and a giant in the Backgammon community. His photo collection alone saves him a place in Backgammon history ([chicagopoint.com/maxpix.html](http://chicagopoint.com/maxpix.html)). He voted last year in the "Giants of Backgammon." I've played against him in tournaments and chouettes.

Backgammon owes him. This is a sad day.—*Yamin Yamin, Wilmette, Illinois*

With Michael Maxakuli's passing, we have lost a wealth of backgammon history and one of the most colorful characters in the game.—*Carol Joy Cole, Editor, Flint Area Backgammon News, Michigan*

Sad news. Max was a backgammon icon who contributed a lot to the game and kept us all entertained.—*Nack Ballard, Richmond, California*

[Continued on page 3]

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

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

\*Denotes new or revised listing

### NATIONAL

*American Backgammon Tour events underlined.*

Jan 12-14	7th Carolina Invitational, Hilton University Place, Charlotte, North Carolina	704/814-0850
Jan 13*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Jan 13*	Ed Chambers Memorial, Dugout Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/687-1673
Jan 14*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Univ. of Dayton Kennedy Union, Dayton, Ohio	937/864-1748
Jan 14*	New York Tournament, Cavendish Bridge Club, Manhattan, New York	212/222-7177
Jan 14*	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Jan 18*	Third Thursday Bonus (Pittsburgh), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jan 20	Austin Club Saturday Bimonthly, Doubletree Hotel, Austin, Texas	512/471-7258
Jan 20*	Phoenix Free Monthly, Glendale Gaslight Inn, Glendale, Arizona	602/296-4307
Jan 20-27	Backgammon On Board 8, Princess Cruise, Los Angeles to Mexican Riviera	773/583-6464
Jan 21*	New England Monthly, Dockside Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Jan 21*	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's, Cranberry Twp., Pennsylvania	412/760-8363
Jan 27*	Backgammon By the Bay, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/261-4583
Jan 28*	Colorado Monthly, La Loma Restaurant, Denver, Colorado	720/979-3620
Jan 28*	Dayton Monthly Free Roll-USBL, Barnes & Noble, Beavercreek, Ohio	937/890-2536
Feb 3*	Bar Point Doubles Club Championship, Ramada Plaza, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Feb 4*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Feb 5*	Arizona Club Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/279-0215
Feb 7*	Kansas City Club Monthly, Harpo's, Kansas City, Missouri	816/916-6599
Feb 10*	Backgammon By the Bay, Peking Express, Berkeley, California	831/261-4583
Feb 10*	Columbia Memorial, Dugout Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/687-1673
Feb 10*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Feb 10	Springfield Series, Ned Kelly's Steakhouse, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Feb 11	Illinois State Challenge Cup, Ned Kelly's Steakhouse, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Feb 11*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Univ. of Dayton Kennedy Union, Dayton, Ohio	937/864-1748
Feb 11*	New England Monthly, Dockside Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Feb 11*	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Feb 15*	Third Thursday Bonus (Midwest), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Feb 16-18*	Lucky Horseshoe Gammon (Yahoo event), Binion's, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/240-6646
Feb 16-18	29th Pittsburgh Championships, Holiday Inn, Moon Twp., Pennsylvania	412/823-7500
Feb 24*	Backgammon By the Bay, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/261-4583
Feb 25*	Colorado Monthly, La Loma Restaurant, Denver, Colorado	720/979-3620
Feb 25*	Dayton Monthly Free Roll-USBL, Barnes & Noble, Beavercreek, Ohio	937/890-2536
Mar 3	Springfield Series, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/622-9447
Mar 23-25	2007 Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Lisle, Illinois	773/583-6464
Apr 1*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Ramada Plaza, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Apr 13-15	13th Ohio State Championships, Airport Marriott Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio	330/268-4610
May 4-6	1st Southeast Championships, Holiday Inn Dunwoody, Atlanta, Georgia	678/982-3203
May 23-27*	23rd Nevada State Tournament, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
May 25-28*	CANCELLED: 28th Chicago Open, Oak Brook Hills Resort, Illinois	847/674-0120
Jun 8-10*	Los Angeles Open, Location TBA, Los Angeles Airport, California	818/901-0464
Jul 5-8	32nd Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton, Novi, Michigan	810/232-9731
Aug 3-5	Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York	585/396-0969
Aug 31-Sep 3	Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin	608/516-9109

### OUTSIDE USA

Jan 13-14	10th Birthday Bright 'n' Breezy, Holiday Inn Seafont, Brighton, England	441522-888676
Jan 13-14*	Rhein-Neckar-Cup 2006 Finale, Maxim's, Mannheim, Germany	496204-620396
Jan 21-25	PartyGammon.com Million, Atlantis, Paradise Island, Bahamas	<a href="mailto:info@partygammon.com">info@partygammon.com</a>
Jan 26-28	5th Cotswold Fireside Tournament, Bear of Rodborough, Stroud, England	441453-821479
Jan 26-28*	3rd Oulu Open 2007, Bar & Café Milou, Oulu, Finland	358405-806916
Feb 3-4	Jarvis Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Feb 17-18*	Gammonitis League Tourney, Malvern Abbey, Worcestershire, England	441634-821107
Feb 21-25	Groupe Partouche Trophy, Palm Beach Casino, Cannes, France	33147-587179
Mar 10-11	Slattery Scottish Open, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Mar 24-25*	British Time Trials Tournament, Falstaff Hotel, Warwickshire, England	441634-821107
Mar 30-Apr 1*	2nd Tegernsee Open, Hotel zur Post, Bad Wiessee, Germany	49711-486190
Mar 31-Apr 1	British Open, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Apr 5-9	19th TrueMoneygames Nordic Wide Open, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601
Apr 14-15*	3rd Annual Backgammon X, Spread Eagle, Croydon, England	442086-884296
Apr 28-May 1*	7th City of Jesolo Tournament, Lido di Jesolo, Venice, Italy	393283-380725
May 5-6	County Cups Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
May 11-13*	19th WBF European Championship, Velden Casino, Velden, Austria	390331-923537
May 17-20*	2nd Portuguese Open & Grand Prix d'Estoril, Estoril (Lisbon), Portugal	491715-422222
May 24-27*	3rd Aix-les-Bains Open, Casino Grand Cercle, Savoie, France	336-60639726
May 25-28*	Xciting-Cup, Mercure Hotel, Köln/Cologne, Germany	49711-486190
Jul 9-15*	32nd World Championship, Fairmont Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 954/527-4033

# LETTERS...

*[Continued from page 2]*

## PAPER PREFERENCE

Enclosed is my renewal for two years of

CHICAGO POINT. By the way, what is your estimation of how many subscribers would prefer reading your entire newsletter on-line? Personally, I enjoy reading the paper form. Please keep it that way! — *Jaakko Salava, Helsinki, Finland*

*We intend to keep the newsletter format of the POINT unchanged, Jaakko. Thanks for being a loyal subscriber from the beginning. — Ed.*

## KUDOS TO CARTER

I read with great interest and amusement, Carter Mattig's account of his loss to Falafel in the Las Vegas Open finals. Reading how unlucky Carter was in the final game of the 17 point match could make one think he was the unluckiest guy in the world. So I called Falafel, and four others that Carter beat in the tournament, and asked them if they thought Carter was lucky to get as far as he did.

All of them told me that Carter was not particularly lucky; that he played better than anyone in the tournament; and that he deserved every win he got. (And if you believe that . . . I've got a bridge to sell you that I am sure you would love!)

It was a fun article anyway. — *Phil Simborg, Chicago, Illinois*

## FEED THE NEED

I give in. I have to have a subscription to your ChiPoint newsletter. I will pay by PayPal, if that's OK. — *Keene Marin, Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

*No problem, Keene. Just go to [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com) and electronically send \$30 (or \$50 for two years) to [bg@chicagopoint.com](mailto:bg@chicagopoint.com). — Ed.*

## FOLLOWING BPC ONLINE

I enjoyed following the exciting Chicago Bar Point Club master point race and your

*[Continued on page 4]*

# AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2006

Top 100—Final Standings after 17 tournaments  
206 players earned points

Richard Munitz 58.56	Mark Donaldson 11.68	Sal Chehayeb 7.11	Bill Kennedy 4.81
Gregg Cattanaach 49.62	Malcolm Davis 11.59	Tolga Ece 6.80	Arkadiy Tsinis 4.60
Ken Fischer 47.40	Rose Sheedy 11.54	Raymond Rickard 6.66	Iancho Hristov 4.52
Stepan Nuniyants 36.16	Ray Foglerlund 11.42	Dennis Culpepper 6.64	Joe Miller 4.52
Falafel Natanzon 35.42	Sean Garber 11.28	Faddoul Khoury 6.48	Yuri Millman 4.44
Bob Glass 29.06	John Jennings 10.72	Emil Mortuk 6.44	Tim Lawless 4.44
Fred Kalantari 27.72	Aram Kouleyan 10.12	Walter Trice 6.44	Beth Raby 4.42
Doug Roberts 26.56	David Todd 10.10	Bruce Russell 6.40	Bill Bartholomay 4.32
Richard Lloyd 20.68	Alan Robinson 9.90	Carlos Azcarate 6.27	Peggy Neubig 4.21
Petko Kostadinov 20.26	Saul Meir 9.64	Ted Chee 6.00	Cole Parker 4.00
Peter Beling 19.22	Azzam Masarani 9.64	Thomas Meyer 6.00	Norm Hansen 4.00
Marv Porten 18.48	Neil Garvie 9.38	Harvey Gillis 6.00	Bill Minser 3.91
Perry Gartner 17.63	Dana Nazarian 9.11	Mario Savan 5.94	Jim Pokela 3.91
Steve Sax 16.45	Lee Wood 9.05	Robert Lessard 5.77	Jolie Rubin 3.83
Art Moore 16.21	Wayne Wiest 8.86	Michael Edge 5.77	Doug Mayfield 3.78
Carter Mattig 16.13	Tak Morioka 8.83	Mark Rozans 5.65	Justin Nunez 3.70
Peter Kalba 14.78	Sam Pottle 8.83	Roz Ferris 5.64	Frank Ley 3.70
Jeff Nitschke 14.64	Christopher Yep 8.74	Tami Jones 5.59	Pete Esposito 3.68
Chuck Bower 14.58	Charles Toots 8.40	Stuart Katz 5.29	Gary Schachtschneider 3.66
Matthew Miner 13.39	Michael Battaglia 8.00	J.A. Miller 5.28	Michael Flohr 3.56
Sal Pittelli 12.56	Paul Armbruster 7.40	Robert Appell 5.28	Nancy Takala 3.52
David Rubin 12.38	Brent Cohen 7.39	Jeb Horton 5.21	Butch Meese 3.36
Arlene Austin 12.25	Joe Freedman 7.39	Elayne Feinstein 5.12	Andy Palumbo 3.36
Mark King 12.01	Steve Brown 7.32	Mary Hickey 5.06	Sam Orandle 3.36
Nick Maffeo 12.00	Barry Murphy 7.20	Kathy Sorci 4.89	Jesse Eaton 3.32

# CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB

2006 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

FINAL STANDINGS  
81 players earned points

Herb Roman 34.36	Rory Pascar 8.56	Alex Owen 3.88	Judy Zager 0.88
Tak Morioka 27.90	Alice Kay 8.48	Les Moshinsky 3.68	Mark Ostrovsky 0.80
David Rockwell 26.68	Georgina Flanagan 8.44	Nora Luna Righter 3.32	Tom Harrison 0.76
Phil Simborg 25.32	Dave Settles 8.40	Amy Trudeau 3.12	Efrem Coley 0.72
Bill Davis 21.64	Mike Wolock 8.00	Richard Stawowy 2.64	Dave Cramer 0.72
Steve Klesker 19.32	Jacob Moreno 7.84	Russ Lyutik 2.16	Martha Ghio 0.72
Gary Kay 18.00	Jerry Brooks 7.80	Vlad Genkin 2.16	Jordan Sanders 0.68
Tim Mabee 17.80	Michael Ginat 7.60	Adrian Rios 2.00	Michael Battaglia 0.68
Albert Yakobashvili 17.12	Wayne Wiest 7.36	Vince Bennett 1.92	Ryan Anderson 0.64
Linda Rockwell 17.04	Mike Sutton 7.16	Don Marek 1.84	Phil Martorelli 0.60
Paul Baraz 16.96	Carter Mattig 7.16	Elaine Kehm 1.80	Jolie Rubin 0.56
Eric Johnson 14.52	Bill Keefe 6.94	Cookie Frazin 1.76	Ron Washington 0.52
Bob Zavoral 13.76	Peter Kalba 6.12	Kwong Chan 1.52	Mike Pufpaf 0.48
Oleg Raygorodsky 12.56	Sargon Benjamin 5.72	Steve Mellen 1.44	Doug Rodgers 0.48
Ken Bond 12.56	Willis Elias 5.60	J.A. Miller 1.40	Tony Santori 0.48
Bob Steen 12.20	Christopher Shanova 5.36	Ken Tyszko 1.20	Elaine Andrews 0.48
Bill Bartholomay 11.80	Arlene Levy 5.00	Felix Yen 1.20	Tony Garcia 0.48
Phyllis Smolinski 11.44	Boris Dekhtyar 4.80	Ken Tibbs 1.12	Daniel Lillian 0.32
Larry Goldstein 10.92	Efim Liberman 4.72	Wright B. George 1.12	Kamau Jibri 0.24
Roger Hickman 10.24	Glenn Martells 4.36	Marcia Karen 1.08	Michael Peters 0.16
Mark Murray 9.32			

NOVEMBER: Winning the Fall Trophy Tourney catapulted **TIM MABEE** into November Player of the Month with 5.76 points. 2nd was Herb Roman (4.72) with 3rd place won by Dave Settles (3.28).

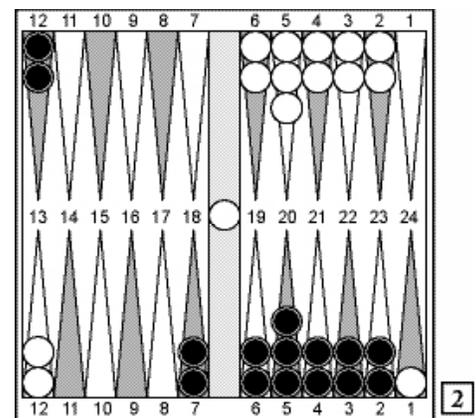
DECEMBER: **HERB ROMAN** finished 2006 on a high note earning 5.84 December points. Runner's-up were Albert Yakobashvili and Linda Rockwell who won 5.36 points each.

*your move*

## PROBLEM #324

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

5-point match. Black leads White 1-0.  
**BLACK TO PLAY 6-3.**



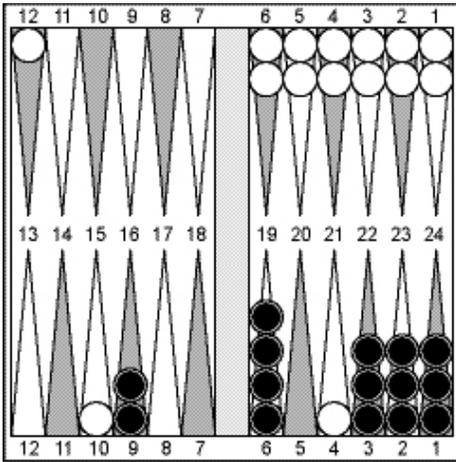
ASK  
DANNY

© 2007 by Danny Kleinman

## PLAYING ACCORDING TO THE SCORE

Dear Danny: I have only been playing backgammon for about 8 months and have a question regarding a specific position:

5 point match. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



Match score considerations are what I find confusing regarding this position. In a match to 5 points, how would you move at the following scores?

- (A) Black and White are tied at 1 to 1. White holds the cube at 2.  
 (B) Black leads White 4-0, Crawford.  
 (C) Black and White are tied at 2-2. The cube is in the center.

*I am unable to determine the reasons for making a particular move at these scores. Is there something specific I should be looking for?—Puzzled by the Score*

**DEAR PUZZLED:** Yes, there is something you should be looking for: the cost of gammons at each score, as well as your prospects after each of the two plausible plays.

9/3, 6/4\* minimizes shots, as only direct 4s hit, but leaves an extra blot. If White rolls a 4, she will have excellent chances to pick up a second blot and win a gammon. About one-third of White's hits figure to result in gammons.

9/3, 9/7 minimizes blots, and creates a nearly gammonless position, but leaves two extra shots, as both direct 3s and 2-1 hit. Each play leaves about the same future shot jeopardy. 9/3, 6/4\* risks a blot on three rolls next, 6-4 and 6-6, but only if White dances (16 rolls). 9/3, 9/7 risks a blot

on only two rolls next, 5-5 and 6-6, but it incurs this risk on all of White's 23 missing rolls except 6-6. Note, however, that 6-6 is a good roll for White if she has not been hit: she will bring her two outfield men home and her back man to the outfield, giving her significant racing chances. However, if White is on the bar, her 6-6, like other dancing rolls, will give you a small gammon threat, as you are a favorite to cover the 4-point and make a five point board.

If gammons were cost-free, as at double match-point, it would be clear to minimize shots. But now let's take the score into account:

(A) With White owning the cube at 2, gammons weigh heavily, as they win the match outright without any wasted points. Of the 11 games in which White hits after 9/3, 6/4\*, she will win slightly less than four gammons (let's assume four). However, of the 16 games in which White dances, you will win slightly less than two gammons (let's assume two).

So 9/3, 9/7 saves you a *net* of about two gammons in 36 games, but gives White two more game-winning shots. Although gammons weigh heavily at this score, *game-swings* still outweigh them. Although it is close, you should give the nod to 9/3, 6/4\*.

(B) At Crawford-even, gammons cost very little. Your opponent's goal is to get to the next higher *odd* number of points, so it hardly hurts at all for you to be gammoned and lead 4-2 instead of 4-1 post-Crawford.

At this score, it is not even close: minimize shots, 9/3, 6/4\*, to maximize your chances of winning the game and the match.

(C) When each side needs three points for the match and the cube is unturned, gammons weigh heavily, though not so heavily as when they win the match outright, for they bring the winner to the Crawford game, where he is about a 75% favorite to win the match, instead of providing only a 3-2 lead that makes him no more than a 60% favorite to win the match.

If the cube were frozen at 1, then 9/3, 6/4\* would be better than 9/3, 9/7 by a slightly greater margin than in (A). But the cube is alive, leading me to wonder: why didn't you cash with the cube before rolling? Now you must consider the cube actions of each player. You will cash if White doesn't hit, so the small gammon chance you obtain by hitting means nothing. If White hits, she can cash, but if you have a second blot, her gammon threat is so good that she should play on for a gammon, keeping the cube in reserve in case she incurs future jeopardy. Now the nearly four games in which White wins gammons after you play 9/3, 6/4\* slightly outweigh your two extra wins, so 9/3, 9/7 is slightly better than 9/3, 6/4\*.—*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*

## LETTERS...

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weekly updates at [www.chicagopoint.com/bpc.html](http://www.chicagopoint.com/bpc.html). Keep up the good work.—*Neil Kazaross, Barrington, Illinois*

## PRAISE FOR PHIL &amp; DUANE

The articles by Duane Jensen and Phil Simborg were both outstanding. Jensen's made me laugh and reassess some of my past pondering on the skill vs. luck debate—and will certainly make me think twice before trying to recruit pain-sharers the next time I hit a patch of "bad luck."

Phil's article should be reprinted on the back of every chouette sheet and made "required reading" for chouetting newcomers as well as all of us who tend from time to time to forget or ignore the basics of chouette survival.

Thank you, Duane and Phil.—*Mark Murray, Des Plaines, Illinois*

Congratulations to Phil Simborg on the

extremely well written CHICAGO POINT article 'How to Win in Chouettes'!!!

As I began to read your article, I was skeptical that it would fall into one or more of the following categories I have found pertain to literature about games/sports which are often associated with wagering:

—*Misinformation* (due to inexpert or outdated knowledge)

—*Disinformation* (whose nefarious purpose is to create a larger body of potential income)

—*Empirical Results* (which are common knowledge and easily evolved)

—*Entertainment via Raconteur* (which has its worth, but does not increase the skill set of the reader)

Instead I feel that your article virtually fell into categories often striven for, but seldom achieved, even though the author often advertises the article as having these properties—Lo and behold it was DIDACTIC and HONEST!!!—*Leonard Loder, Wheeling, Illinois Δ*

# Backgammon Clubs in North America

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

## WEST

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT (E-MAIL)	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Arizona Backgammon Club	Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub	Phoenix, AZ	1st Monday monthly-7:00 PM	Pete Campbell (arizonabackgammon@webtv.net)	602/279-0215	928 E. Berridge Lane; Phoenix AZ 85014
Phoenix Backgammon Club - USBL	Glendale Gaslight Inn	Phoenix, AZ	3rd Saturday monthly-12:00 PM	Dan Pelton (dpeltoni@yahoo.com)	602/296-4307	2605 N. 36th Street G7; Phoenix, AZ 85008
Gammon Associates	Acapulco Cantina	Burbank, CA	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Patrick Gibson (pgibsonmfic@adelphia.net)	818/901-0464	7641 Orion Avenue; Van Nuys, CA 91406
"	A.R. Private Club	Los Angeles, CA	Sunday-2:00 PM	"	"	"
Backgammon Club of San Diego	Coast Cafe/Embassy Suites	La Jolla, CA	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Tom Fahland (tom_fahland@yahoo.com)	858/472-1516	558 Summer View Circle; Encinitas, CA 92024
Backgammon By The Bay	Peking Express Restaurant	Berkeley, CA	2nd Saturday monthly-12:00 PM	Ted Chee (ted_chee@yahoo.com)	831/261-4583	137 La Mesa Drive; Salinas, CA 93901
"	Britannia Arms Pub	Cupertino, CA	4th Saturday monthly-1:00 PM	"	"	"
Restaurant Roy Backgammon	Restaurant Roy	Santa Barbara, CA	1st Monday monthly-7:00 PM	Roy Gandy (roy@restaurantroy.com)	805/966-5636	7 W. Carrillo Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Boulder County Backgammon Club	C.B. & Potts Restaurant	Broomfield, CO	1st & 3rd Thursday-7:00 PM	Maia Khan (maia@bcbbackgammon.com)	720/979-3620	2276 Waneka Lake Trail; Lafayette, CO 80026
Colorado Backgammon Assoc.	La Loma Restaurant	Denver, CO	4th Sun. except Sep. & Dec.-1 PM	"	"	"
Denver Backgammon Club	Bennigan's	Denver, CO	2nd & 4th Thursdays-7:00 PM	Lynda Clay (LFClay@excite.com)	303/791-0271	5516 Samuel Peak; Highlands Ranch, CO 80130
Aloha State Backgammon Club	Elks Club	Honolulu, HI	Friday-7:30 PM	George Quillin (georgeq@hawaii.rr.com)	808/922-2674	2999 Kalakaua Avenue 501; Honolulu, HI 96815
Backgammon Club of Las Vegas	Jackson's Bar & Grill	Las Vegas, NV	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Jason Lee (jee@vegasbg.net)	702/301-4987	1154 Heavenly Harvest Pl. #1; Henderson, NV 89002
Nevada Backgammon Association	Riviera Hotel	Las Vegas, NV	Event dates: www.nvbg.com	Howard Markowitz (howard114@cox.net)	702/893-6025	3131 Espanol Drive; Las Vegas, NV 89121
Puget Sound Backgammon Club	Wizards Restaurant/Casino	Burien, WA	Tuesday-7:30 PM	Ruth Robbins (ruthles5@comcast.net)	425/226-3120	12611 155th Ave. SE; Renton, WA 98059

## CENTRAL

Pub Club	Playoffs Sports Bar & Grill	Carol Stream, IL	Thursday-6:45 PM	Tim Mabee (tim.mabee@experian.com)	630/606-2388	224 Split Oak Road; Naperville, IL 60565
Chicago Bar Point Club	Ramada Plaza Hotel	Chicago, IL	Tues.-6:30 PM, Sun. bimonthly-12 PM	Bill Davis (bg@chicagopoint.com)	773/583-6464	3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659
Bloomington-Normal BG Club	Ned Kelly's Steak House	Bloomington, IL	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Michael Flohr (mflohr0925@verizon.net)	309/662-7967	707 Broadmoor Drive; Bloomington, IL 61704
Peoria Backgammon Club	Peoria Pizza Works	Peoria, IL	Thursday-6:30 PM	Ed Zell (bg2007@thezells.com)	309/224-9579	9019 N. Picture Ridge; Peoria, IL 61614
Sangamon Valley/BG Association	Capitol Teletrack	Springfield, IL	Wednesday-6:30 PM	Randy Armstrong (randya@insightbb.com)	217/528-0117	2012 N. 20th Street; Springfield, IL 62702
Sangamon Valley Springfield Series	Various locations	Central Illinois	1st Sat/Nov to Apr-11:30 AM	"	"	"
Winnetka Backgammon Club	Winnetka Community House	Winnetka, IL	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Trudie Chibnik (winnbackgammon@aol.com)	847/446-0537	740 Ballantrae Drive; Northbrook, IL 60062
Hoosier Backgammon Club	Buffalo Wild Wings	Indianapolis, IN	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Sean Garber	317/241-0605	1824 N. Auburn Street; Speedway, IN 46224
Northwest Indiana BG Association	VFW Hall	Porter, IN	2nd Saturday monthly-1:30 PM	Charlie Halberstadt (chbug@yahoo.com)	219/617-5566	P.O. Box 84; Westville, IN 46391
Flint Area Backgammon Club	Days Inn	Flint, MI	Thursday-7:00 PM	Carol Joy Cole (cjc@flintbg.com)	810/232-9731	3719 Greenbrook Lane; Flint, MI 48507
Grand Rapids Backgammon Club	Cascade Roadhouse	Grand Rapids, MI	Tuesday-7:00 PM	John Drexel (j.drexel@comcast.net)	616/647-9965	4845 Brookgate Dr. NW; Comstock Park, MI 49321
No. Michigan Backgammon Club	Horizon Bookstore	Petoskey, MI	Thursday-7:00 PM	Bob Townsend (drtownsend@msn.com)	231/622-2040	1691 Townline Road; Petoskey, MI 49770
Plymouth Backgammon Club	Box Bar & Grill	Plymouth, MI	Wednesday-7:30 PM	Dean Adamian (Dean3491@hotmail.com)	734/981-5706	42954 Barchester; Canton, MI 48187
Twin Cities Backgammon Club	Pracna on Main	Minneapolis, MN	Thursday-7:00 PM	David Minikus (dminikus@comcast.net)	612/718-2613	6300 Phoenix St.; Golden Valley, MN 55427

(Continued on opposite side)

**Backgammon Clubs In North America***(Continued from opposite side)***CENTRAL (continued)**

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT (E-MAIL)	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Rochester Minnesota BG Club	American Legion Hall	Rochester, MN	Wednesday-5:30 PM	Ray Bills (ray@us.ijm.com)	507/280-8956	618 23rd Street NE; Rochester, MN 55906
Kansas City Backgammon	Harpo's	Kansas City, MO	1st Wed. (6:30 PM) or Sat. (1:30 AM)	Eric Barr (eric@kcbckgammon.com)	816/916-6599	421 E. 65th Street; Kansas City, MO 64131
Kansas City BG Club—USBL	Lew's Grill & Bar	Kansas City, MO	2nd & 4th Tuesday-6:30 PM	Kathleen Davis (kathleen@veridicus-associates.com)	913/706-1125	11835 Roe 105; Leawood, KA 66211
Ohio State Backgammon Club	Spagnetti Warehouse	Akron, OH	1st Sunday monthly-2:00 PM	Joe Miller (osbc@neo.rr.com)	330/288-4610	1066 Winston Street; Akron, OH 44314
Miami Valley Backgammon Club	Univ. of Dayton—Kennedy Union	Dayton, OH	2nd Sunday monthly-1:00 PM	Roger Foster (MVBackgammon@voh.rr.com)	937/864-1748	4151 W. Eron Drive; Eron, OH 45323
Dallas Backgammon League	IHOP	Addison, TX	Wednesday-8:00 PM	Tom Wheeler (zwheel@sbcglobal.net)	972/484-3038	3705 Pageant Place; Dallas, TX 75244
Austin Backgammon Association	Doubletree Hotel	Austin, TX	Mon.-7:30 PM; 3rd Sat.-12:30 PM	Jackie Seiders-Smart (jackies@ausin.rr.com)	512/261-8518	30 Hightail Way; Austin, TX 78738
Houston Backgammon Club	Dugout Sports Bar & Grill	Houston, TX	2nd Saturday monthly-1:00 PM	Tom Wright (tomw64@hotmail.com)	281/687-1673	14664 Perthshire Road F; Houston, TX 77079
Madison Backgammon Club	J.T. Whitney's Pub & Brewery	Madison, WI	Tuesday-6:30 PM	Tom Machaj (tom.machaj@medisonbg.com)	608/516-9109	5821 Tolman Terrace; Madison, WI 53711
Milwaukee Backgammon Club	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	2nd Wednesday-7:00 PM	Bob Holyon (bhole64@yahoo.com)	414/672-8359	911 S. 11th Street; Milwaukee, WI 53204

**NORTHEAST**

Beltway Backgammon Club	Promenade Cardroom	Bethesda, MD	18 Sundays/year-12:00 PM	Barry Silliman (sillybazz@beltwaybg.org)	240/674-7222	P.O. Box 612; Walkersville, MD 21793
New England Backgammon Club	Dockside Restaurant	Malden, MA	Wed.-7 PM; Sun. mthly-12:30 PM	Herb Gurland (propoye@juno.com)	781/324-0892	62 Newman Road; Malden, MA 02148
Mid Jersey Backgammon Club	Town & Country Inn	Keyport, NJ	Thursday-7:30 PM	Alan Gurnwald (alan205@aol.com)	732/588-2988	205 Doe Trail; Morganville, NJ 07751
Midtown Backgammon & Chess Club	Club Room	New York, NY	Daily-12 PM; Tur. Sun.-2:30 PM	Beverly Flowers (flowers_beverly@hotmail.com)	212/575-2003	265 W. 37th Street 303; New York, NY 10018
Times Square Backgammon & Chess	Bryant Park	New York, NY	Daily except Sun.-12 PM; April-Dec.	Victor Ashkenazi (victorashkenazi@yahoo.com)	973/204-6932	1021 Harmon Cove Towers; Secaucus, NJ 07094
Pittsburgh Backgammon Club	Hartner's Restaurant	Cranberry Twp., PA	3rd Sunday Monthly-1:00 pm	Bud Bowers (budsmail@zpbzoom.net)	412/760-8363	P.O. Box 13; Wexford, PA 15090
Berks County BG Club—USBL	Bar-B-Q Pit	Sinking Spring, PA	Tuesday monthly-7:00 PM	Rick Reisch (treisch@comcast.net)	610/334-7150	320 Swampbridge Road; Denver, PA 17517
No. Virginia Backgammon Club	Bailey's Pub & Grille	Arlington, VA	Monday-6:45 PM	Bill Pow (bill_22003@hotmail.com)	703/577-1927	9310 Hedgeford St.; Manassas Park, VA 20111

**SOUTH**

Suncoast Backgammon Association	New York, New York Lounge	Cleanwater, FL	Monday & Friday-6:30 PM	Bob Carpenter (5point@verizon.net)	727/771-6544	1801 Eastlake Rd. 12E; Palm Harbor, FL 34685
South Florida Backgammon Club	NorthRidge Raw Bar/Restaurant	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Sat.-1 PM; Sun. mthly-1 PM	Elyane Feinstein (Bginfla210@bellsouth.net)	954/249-1416	649 W. Oakland Park Blvd. 108A; Oakland Park, FL 33311
Atlanta Backgammon Association	Landmark Sidedoor Lounge	Atlanta, GA	Monday-7:00 PM	Dave Cardwell (info@BGINGA.com)	770/333-1876	111 Radford Circle SW; Marietta, GA 30060
Louisville Backgammon Club	Fox and Hound Pub & Grille	Louisville, KY	1st & 3rd Tuesday-6:30 PM	Quint McTyeire (inm@gdm.com)	502/587-3672	4906 Crofton Road; Louisville, KY 40207
Charlotte Backgammon Club	O'Charley's	Charlotte, NC	Tuesday-6:30 PM	Jeb Horton (jeb@carolina.rr.com)	704/814-0850	2217-D Matthews Twp Pkwy 129; Matthews, NC 28105
Charleston Backgammon Society	O'Charley's	N. Charleston, SC	Monday-7:00 PM	Brett Meyer (bmbmeyer@comcast.net)	843/532-5426	8058 Long Shadow Ln.; N. Charleston, SC 29406
Nashville Backgammon Club	Sarni's Place	Nashville, TN	Wednesday-6:45 PM	J.P. White (jpwhtie3@bellsouth.net)	615/824-9461	114 Dorcas Drive; Hendersonville, TN 37075

**CANADA**

Natl'l Capital Backgammon Club	Bobby's Bar & Restaurant	Ottawa, ON	1st Sunday mthly-10:00 AM	Eeden Windisch (eden-windish@rogers.com)	613/741-2530	396 Bangs St.; Ottawa ON, K1K 2N6; Canada
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## 2006 ABT PLAYER OF YEAR: RICHARD MUNITZ

Richard Munitz of Suffren, New York has won the American Backgammon Tour points race for 2006. His 58.56 total points were earned in five events across the United States:

Pittsburgh Championships (PA): Semifinalist  
Michigan Summer Championships: 1st  
Thousand Islands Tournament (NY): 1st  
Georgia Championships: 1st  
California State: Consolation Semifinalist

Only after prevailing in Michigan did Munitz believe that his winning the Tour was within the realm of possibility. His two additional victories in New York, and Georgia equals Neil Kazaross's "hat trick" accomplished in 1995.

Prior to 2006, Richard had only a scattering of points in 1998, 2001, and 2002. Now his 72.58 total ranks him 24th on the ABT all-time listings. Commenting on his 2006 performance, Munitz said, "It was one heck of a year. I enjoyed the competition right up the the last tournament."



2006 ABT Player of the Year Richard Munitz at the Michigan Champs.

Second place goes to Gregg Cattanach of Doraville, Georgia. Cattanach earned a respectable 49.62 points—enough to win the Tour in many previous years. Gregg placed in four events including wins at the Midwest Championships and the Florida State. His steady play over the past four years has resulted in an ABT ranking of 10th all-time.

The third place finisher with 47.40 points, Ken Fischer of Oxnard, California, also won three events in 2006: Carolina, Ohio and California. Ken's final victory at the California State Championship in December moved him from sixth place into a trophy position. In 13 previous seasons, Fischer had played in only a few events gathering 1.50 points. [Check out the final 2006 ABT standings on page 3.—Ed.]

All three finishers will receive their first-ever marble ABT trophies at the upcoming Pittsburgh Championships during the Calcutta Auction on 17 February. Δ

## HERB ROMAN WINS BAR POINT CLUB POINTS RACE

Herb Roman rallied in the last three months of 2006 to win the Chicago Bar Point Club points race going away. 2005 Player of the Year Tak Morioka (27.90) finished second and David Rockwell (26.68) was third.



Herb Roman had an outstanding last three months to Win BPC 2006 honors.

Rockwell led the race until October 24 when Tak Morioka surpassed him. But Herb Roman was just too hot down the stretch. Between 17 October and the end of the year, Herb earned points in 11 out of 13 play-dates winning 14.40 of his 34.26 points in the run.

The Chicago Bar Point Club will honor its Top 20 for 2006 at our new location, the Ramada Plaza Tuesday 9 January. More than \$1,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded. Δ

### 2006 CBPC PLAYERS OF THE MONTH

January: **Gary Kay/Herb Roman**  
February: **Tak Morioka**  
March: **Paul Baraz**  
April: **Tak Morioka**  
May: **Bob Zavoral**  
June: **Herb Roman**  
July: **Jacob Moreno**  
August: **Phil Simborg**  
September: **Christopher Shanova**  
October: **Tak Morioka**  
November: **Tim Mabee**  
December: **Herb Roman**

## CHICAGO OPEN CANCELLED

Joann Feinstein retires as Director  
Las Vegas takes Memorial Day weekend



Joann Feinstein has officially announced her retirement from directing The Chicago Open. The event, first held in 1980, is officially cancelled for 2007. Chicago Open co-director Howard

Markowitz stated: "I wasn't so willing to continue Chicago on my own. We discussed running the event with a couple of other people. They weren't ready to do it so soon, and Joann unequivocally said she was done." Mr. Markowitz will retain the Memorial Day weekend for his Nevada State Championship which will be held 23–27 May 2007 at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas.

Ms. Feinstein's first effort at staffing a major tournament came at the 2nd Chicago Open in 1981. She co-directed the same event with Mr. Markowitz beginning in 1989 until 2006. In 1991 she and Howard formed the Prime Backgammon Club of Chicago (the club remained active for over four years). That same year, she also began serving as a staff member of the Nevada Backgammon Association tournaments and will continue working NBA events in 2007.

A successful player ranked 10th all-time in Chicagoland and 117th all-time in the ABT, Ms. Feinstein will continue to play in a limited number of events annually. Δ



Joann awards Sal Pittelli the 1st Intermediate trophy at the 2006 Chicago Open.



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## MAXAKULI...

[Continued from page 1]

when he partnered with financier Joel Rettew. His girlfriend Linda Kruegel (also from Milwaukee) was the editor in charge of layout and design.



Michael Maxakuli in the best of times (1981) with Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine editor Linda Kruegel.

Beginning in late 1978, Maxakuli used the *LVBM* to network backgammon clubs throughout the world. By 1982 his “American Association of Backgammon Clubs” had attained a zenith of 80 associate clubs in 30 states and six countries making him a very powerful figure.

*LVBM* continued regular publication until the Spring of 1982 with numerous



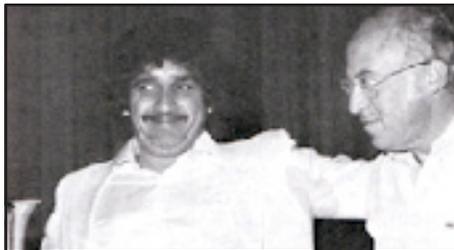
Las Vegas BG Magazine Logo

celebrities of the era gracing the cover playing backgammon such as Charlie Callas, Connie Stevens, Tina Turner, Liberace, James Daren, and Don Adams.

1981 was the best backgammon year of Michael Maxakuli's life. His magazine was riding high, he was in a close relationship with Linda, and he won over \$100,000 in three major tournaments (Turnberry Isle runner-up, Desert Inn Invitational winner, Las Vegas Holiday winner). At the conclusion of the year, Les Levi wrote this about Maxakuli in the *Backgammon Times* newspaper:

“Animated and articulate, Max has a good many opinions on a good many subjects and throughout, he engages in the unusual habit of punctuating sentences with a squirt of green breath mint. Once in a while, he pulls a long, thin cigar out of a tin container stuck in his boot. He seems bent on winning, although he is reluctant to be optimistic.”

But things started to unravel for Max



Director Lewis Deyong (R) awards Max \$64,000 for his 1981 Desert Inn victory.

in 1982. His magazine lost financing and ended publication in Spring 1982, his girlfriend left him, and he was abusing alcohol and drugs leading to an eventual run-in with the law.

But Max came back and continued to make his mark on the backgammon scene winning the Las Vegas Open in 1996. And in April 2006, he won the \$1000 Limited Jackpot event at the Nevada State Championship. In 2002, Maxakuli collaborated with [chicagopoint.com](http://chicagopoint.com) to post a number of his old photographs from backgammon's golden age. (They are permanently posted at [www.chicagopoint.com/maxpix.html](http://www.chicagopoint.com/maxpix.html)) Additionally, he remained the figurehead of the current Las Vegas Backgammon Club until his passing.



From left, *LVBM* co-publisher Joel Rettew, Joe Dwek, Joe Suzyn and Max at the 1981 Monte Carlo World Championship.

Max's last tournament appearance was at the Las Vegas Open in November 2006. *Flint BackgammonNews* editor Carol Joy Cole commented that he seemed quite energetic. “We knew he wasn't in the best of health, but this happened sooner than I expected.”

In fact, Max had not been doing so well for a few weeks. When Las Vegas Club player Dick McCall (who had been in close touch) couldn't get a hold of him for a couple of days the second week of December, he went over to Maxakuli's apartment and had the building manager use a pass key to enter the premises. Max had died on his couch with the television still playing.

Michael Maxakuli is survived by two sisters, Vivian Yanko and Barbara Maxwell. The backgammon world will long remember Max who made incredible contributions to our game. His colorful personality will definitely be missed.—*Bill Davis* Δ

## 2006 WORLDWIDE PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

### NATIONAL (Alphabetized by State)

American Backgammon Tour: Richard Munitz (NY)  
Arizona Backgammon Association: Dave Perkins  
Phoenix Backgammon Club (AZ): Dave Perkins  
Gammon Associates (CA): John Rockwell  
BG Club of San Diego (CA): Tom Fahland  
Backgammon By The Bay (CA): Ted Chee  
Boulder County BG Club (CO): Maia Khan  
Denver BG Club (CO): Tom Christner  
South Florida BG Club (FL): Steve Flam  
Atlanta BG Association (GA): Dave Cardwell  
Bloomington-Normal BG Club (IL): John Bare  
Chicago Bar Point Club (IL): Herb Roman  
Pub Club (IL): Don Marek  
Peoria Backgammon Club (IL): Milad Doueihy  
Sangamon Valley BG Assn. (IL): Randy Armstrong  
Winnetka Backgammon Club (IL): Bill Chibnik  
Hoosier Backgammon Club (IN): Sean Garber  
Louisville BG Club (KY): Tom Swisher  
Beltway BG Club (MD): Ed Maslansky  
New England BG Club (MA): Matt Reklaitis  
Flint Area BG Club (MI): Gary Fritzsche  
Grand Rapids BG Club (MI): Mike Darooge  
Plymouth BG Club (MI): Dean Adamian  
Metro North BG Club (MI): Dan Kiurski  
Twin Cities BG Club (MN): Jesse Eaton  
Rochester Minn. BG Club (MN): Mark Donaldson  
Kansas City BG (MO): James Worley  
Kansas City BG Club—USBL (MO): Kathleen Davis  
Las Vegas Backgammon Club (NV): Cy Yehros  
Charlotte BG Club (NC): Vadim Musaelyan  
Greater Columbus BG Club (OH): Chris Yep  
Ohio State Backgammon Club (OH): Paul Berg  
Miami Valley BG Club (OH): Roger Foster  
Berks County BG Club—USBL (PA): Norm Kaye  
Charleston BG Society (SC): Brett Meyer  
Nashville BG Club (TN): Rollow Mickle  
Dallas BG League (TX): Tom Wheeler  
Houston Backgammon Club (TX): Scott Ward  
No. Virginia BG Club (VA): Rainer Stachowitz  
Puget Sound BG Club (WA): Ned Cross  
Madison Backgammon Club (WI): Keene Marin

### INTERNATIONAL (Alphabetized by Country)

World Champion: Philip Vischjager (Holland)  
World BG Association: Andreas Humke (Germany)  
European Champion: Michel Serrero (France)  
Nat'l Capital BG Club (Canada): Alan Robinson  
Italian Champion: Piergiorgio D'Ancona  
BIBA Grand Prix (UK): David Startin  
BIBA Ranking (UK): Jeff Barber  
Gammonitis Rating Champ (UK): Walter Busato  
Gammonitis Live Challenge Champ (UK): John Clark

# To hit, or not to hit? QUIZ

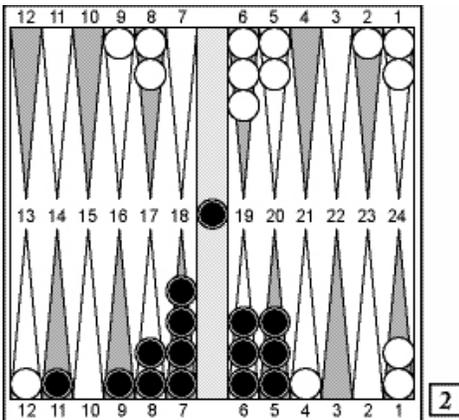


By Bill Davis

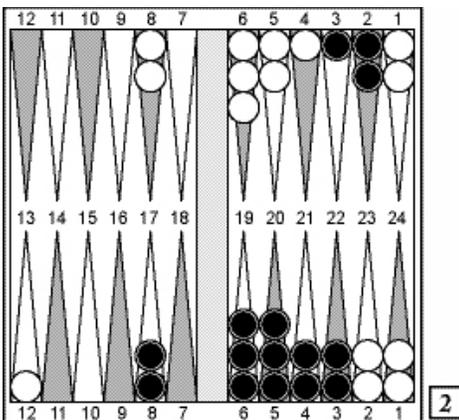
I recently played a 5-point match against Snowie. Leading 4–2 post-Crawford in a particularly interesting game, four problems arose where the question was whether I should or shouldn't hit.

You won't have to do too well to improve on my score: I got every one wrong! So here is the setup. Pick either the hitting or non-hitting play in each position and see how well you do. I'm nearly certain that you won't get them all wrong, but I don't think you'll get them all right, either.—*Bill Davis* Δ [QUIZ ANSWERS ARE ON P. 10]

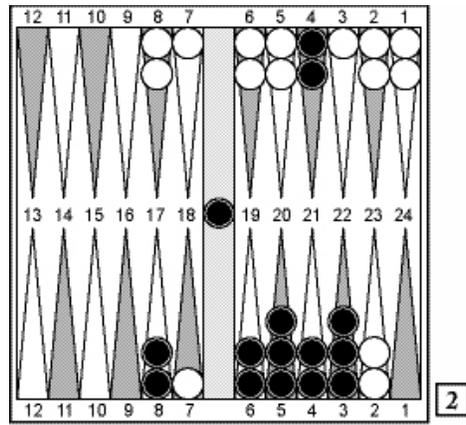
1. Black leads 4–2 in a match to 5 points. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-2.**



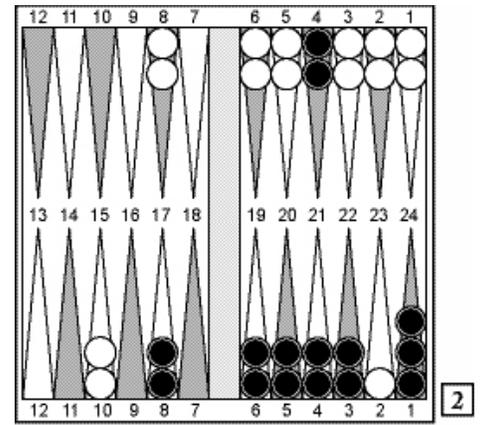
2. Black leads 4–2 in a match to 5 points. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**



3. Black leads 4–2 in a match to 5 points. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**



4. Black leads 4–2 in a match to 5 points. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-2.**



## Come to Colorado in 2007

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Hilton Garden Inn—Denver International Airport

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Tournament Director: Maia Khan

Email: [info@ColoradoBG.org](mailto:info@ColoradoBG.org)

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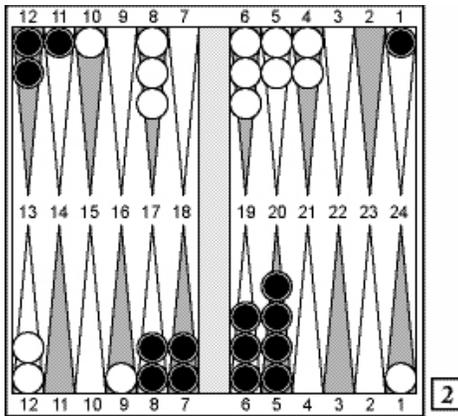
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**PROBLEM #323  
ANALYZED**

by Mary Hickey

5-point match. Black leads White 4 to 2.  
**BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.**

**B**lack has many choices here, but the basic problem is one as old as our game's precursors played in ancient Mesopotamia: Hit or not?

If Black doesn't hit, whether the game is for money or at this "Gammon Save" match score, he should play the simple 14/7. Making the 2- or 10-point has no relevance to his game plan and leaves a double shot for far too little reason. If he does hit, 13/10\*, 14/11 stands out because it keeps Black's distribution diverse while leaving White the fewest return shots from the bar. The rest of this discussion will concern only these two top contenders in their class.

For money, owning the cube could incline you toward caution, and an effort to creep up to a powerful and efficient recube later. The problem with that approach is that the opponent is well set up to make her bar point right now, expanding her block to a solid five points. If she fails to do that, she may connect her two backward men with 6-2 or 5-3, or run the man on her 16-point around into position as a builder for next time.

Meanwhile, you too are threatening to build a five point block, but if you don't succeed quickly, you may lose the priming battle. You are at a bit of a disadvantage there, because your existing block is "front-loaded." This puts you under more pressure to build your next point in line quickly, since you can't just play around with your rolls that fail to do anything. If your builders were farther back, your big rolls (the worst for priming battles) would make points at the front of your block, while small rolls would allow you to shift

your builders around without compromising your existing structure.

These problems with the gradual approach are sufficient to make the hitting play correct for money. A 3-ply Snowie 3 rollout using the strongest settings shows a 0.056 advantage (0.042 cubeless) for the hit, which wins both more games and gammons; but as might be expected, loses more gammons, also.

With a money advantage that small, and with gammons both ways a significant factor, we need to ask if the advantage perhaps changes to the quieter play at the actual match score. Having Snowie adjust the results of the money rollout to the actual score produces a whopping 0.118 advantage for 14/7, but that doesn't take into account that both players will play various later moves differently because of the lopsided value of gammons to each of them at this score. To allow for these differences in play as best the bot is able to discern them, I ran a 3-ply "according to score" rollout at the same strong settings as the money rollout.

A comparison of the two profiles for the 14/7 play, at score and for money, suggests that White does a good job taking appropriate risks for added gammons at the match score. She gets 0.7% more gammons in exchange for 0.5% losses. After the hitting play, the profiles suggest that at the score, Black pulls in his horns on the attack a

little sooner than he did for money, since he wins 0.5% fewer (meaningless) gammons and loses 0.1% fewer match-losing gammons. He also manages to pull off 0.1% more wins, which typically isn't the case at a score where he must play cautiously.

Why do the profiles suggest that after the quiet play, White succeeds better than Black at achieving her objectives at the score; but after the hitting play, it is Black who performs better at "play according to score"? I believe it is because *after the quiet play, White has the initiative, but after the hitting play, Black does*. You can't pursue your objectives or formulate winning game plans when most of your moves are either forced or nearly forced. This factor is large enough to eat up almost all of the 0.118 difference we would see favoring 14/7 at the score if it were played exactly the same as for money by both sides. What remains, according to the rollout, is a pull of only 0.016 toward 14/7 at the score.

You can disagree with this result, since future bots that play better at various scores (and for money, too, for that matter) may very well reverse it. What we can take away from this problem is the importance of the initiative in score-based play. A play that concedes the initiative to your opponent may still be correct, as it appears may be the case here, but when in doubt it's best to keep both your hands on the wheel.—  
*Mary Hickey* Δ

**"TO HIT OR NOT TO HIT?" ANSWERS...**

[From quiz on page 9]

*Results have been determined on the basis of 1440 3-ply, precise full Snowie 4.5 rollouts for each position. The Snowie default differential for an error is 0.030 and a blunder is 0.110. The correct answer is shown in bold.*

**Problem 1 (1440 rollouts)—NO HIT**

**Bar/22, 11/9** is best. It loses 22.4% games including 4.3% gammons  
Bar/23\*, 7/4\* loses 24.5% games including 7.0% gammons (-0.094)  
Bar/23\*, 9/6 loses 29.0% games including 5.7% gammons (-0.160)

**Problem 2 (1440 rollouts)—HIT**

**22/21\*, 8/4** is best. It loses 32% games including 6% gammons  
22/18, 5/4 loses 31.3% games including 8.7% gammons (-0.039)  
22/18, 6/5 loses 31.9% games including 9.0% gammons (-0.058)

**Problem 3 (1440 rollouts)—HIT**

**Bar/21, 8/7\*** is best. It loses 29.6 games including 9.3% gammons  
Bar/21, 5/4 loses 34.1 games including 7.6% gammons (-0.056)

**Problem 4 (1440 rollouts)—NO HIT**

**8/4, 8/6** is best. It loses 53.6% including 10.5% gammons  
8/2\* loses 47.1% including 17.4% gammons (-0.029)



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**WINNER'S CIRCLE**



NOV. 2006—JAN. 2007

•**2nd Targu Ocna Open** (Ocna, Romania; 10-12 Nov.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (25+3 rebuys): 1-Aurel Ionescu, 2-Dorin Vianu, 3/4-Catalin Duscuiu / Eran Iticovici (ISR); 1C-Cristian Antohe, 2C-Anghel Oana; 1LC-Ionut Cocica. INTERMEDIATE (38+6 rebuys): 1-Marius Pietrariu, 2-Viorel Gheorghiu, 3/4-Neculai Bântu / Bogdan Kozma-Peti; 1C-Costache Cernat; 1LC-Ronen Iticovici (ISR). BEGINNERS (40+8 rebuys): 1-Ion Motoc, 2-Marcel Bodoiu, 3/4-Ion Ciobanu / Zolfagnari Siamak (IRN); 1C-Vasile Grajdeanu, 2C-Todor Popescu; 1LC-Cezar Antohe. LADIESTOURNAMENT: 1-Nela Filip. 1-POINT TORNEO DEL PRES. (128): 1-Traian Antohe, 2-Ion Nica. FAIR PLAY PRIZE: Dennis Bordan.

•**Backgammon Live in London 2006** (London, ENG; 10-12 Nov.)... TRIC TRAC TOURNOS (59 entries in 7 events) - Winners: Fanika Petkovska, Matte Juggler, Pernille Nemmo (DEN), Jörg Schwiemann (GER), Mike Bailey, Martin Birkhan (GER), Richard Biddle. JACKPOTS (48 entries in 6 events) - Winners: Mike Bailey, Jörg Schwiemann (GER), Simon Morecroft, Steve Grundy, Eric Maillebiau (FRA), Crispin Duke. WEEKEND KO (35): 1-Steve Grundy, 2-Crispin Duke. SINGLES KO (64): 1-Monica Beckerson, 2-Dave Treacy; *Plate 1*-John Broomfield, Carol Lems (HOL); *Plate 2*-Paul Lamford, Jon Samuel; *Plate 3*-Dorothy Lee, Ferguson Cooney. ON BOARD KO's (96 entries in 12 events) - Winners: Andrew Sarjeant, Fanika Petkovska, Caroline Stafford, Suzy Crabb, Jon Samuel, Martha Littlehailes, John Broomfield, Steve Grundy, Vicky Gilbert, Vanessa Broomfield, Matte Juggler, Nicky Check. ON SHORE KO's (16 in 2 events) - Winners: Neil Foston, Dave Treacy. DOUBLES KO (20 teams): 1-*Merman* (John Ingamells & Uldis Lapikens), 2-*Lucky Devils* (Jon Kinsey & Adam Tansley). OLYMPIAD KO (32): 1-John Broomfield, 2-George Miliadou, 3-Steffie Rohan; 1C-George Hall, 2C-Carol Lems (HOL); 1LC-Danny Gallagher, 2LC-Alexander Polden. SUICIDE: 1-Tom Duignan, 2-Alan Beckerson, 3-Martin Blatman (GER). TRIC TRAC TOURNO: 1-Paul Lamford, 2-Dorothy Lee, 3-Mike Bailey. SATELLITE #1: 1-Matte Juggler, 2-Crispin Duke, 3-Sue Keeble. #2: 1-Natalie Favre (SWZ), 2-Sue Keeble, 3-Michelle Fisher. THE HUSTLER'S HAVEN (84): 1-Jon Samuel. PHIL SIMBORG QUIZZES (84): 1-Martin Birkhan (GER) 2-time winner. THE GANG TOURNAMENT (22): 1-Irving Czechowicz. THE CHAMP O' CHAMPS (84): 1-John Broomfield.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Fort Lauderdale, FL; 12 Nov.)... OPEN (8): 1-Mike Corbett, 2-Neil Rosensweig.

•**Phoenix BG Club Monthly—USBL** (Glendale, AZ; 18 Nov.)... DOUBLE ELIMINATION (7): 1-Robert Salem, 2-Terry Valentine. ROUND ROBIN (6): 1-Robert Salem, 2-Dave Perkins.

•**Houston Turkey Trot Open** (Houston, TX; 18 Nov.)... OPEN (14): 1-Tom Wright, 2-Dave Kurjan; 1C-Alan Sheeks, 2C-Scott Ward.

•**Danish Championships 2006** (Copenhagen, DEN; 18-19 Nov.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (160): 1-Allan Westermann, 2-Christian Skjæran, 3/4-Andreas Becher / Søren P. Olsen; 1C-Steen Granbech, 2C-Kim Valeur.

•**18th City of Venice Tournament** (Venice, ITA; 30 Nov.-3 Dec.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (42): 1-Massimo Moretti (ITA), 2-Maya Peycheva (Bulgaria), 3/4-Piergiorgio D'Ancona / Fabrizio Lo Surdo; 1C-Giuseppe Rigon, 2C-Philip Vischjager (Netherlands); 1LC-Giorgio Castellano,

2LC-Giuseppe Ricciardi. INTERMEDIATE (28): 1-Sandro Mescola, 2-Filippo Vincensilao, 3/4-Luca Boni / Christian Zenkner (GER); 1C-Udo Geib (GER), 2C-Andrea Riebler (Austria); 1LC-Dino Visentin. AMATEUR (32): 1-Thomas Althaus (GER), 2-Dierk Lemke (GER), 3/4-Ricardo Bernascone / Sergio Riboldi; 1C-Stefano Battain, 2C-Marco Conte; 1LC-Michele Comerci. UISP "NO MONEY" (28) #1: 1-Michele Comerci, 2-Angela Plebani. #2: 1-Shadi Azizian, 2-Nathalie Henry. #3: 1-Umberto Vianello, 2-Sergio Riboldi. FIDELITY: 1-Jessica Gabbai, 2-Claudia Angeletti. "DAVIS CUP" DOUBLES (18 teams): 1-Mattia Ballarin & Sergio Fragiaco (ITA), 2-José Salema (Portugal) & Chiva Tafazzoli (IRN/GER). SWING (24): 1-Hamzar Nar (TUR), 2-Stefano Chiosi, 3-Marc Steyvers (Spain). ITALIAN CIRCUIT PLAYOFF: 1-Giorgio Castellano, 2-Alfonso Sara, 3/4-Guido Flamigni / Francesco Mauri.

•**California State Championship—ABT** (Los Angeles, CA; 1-3 Dec.)... OPEN (53): 1-Ken Fischer (CA), 2-Saul Meir (CA), 3-Steve Sax (CA); 1C-Azzam Masarani (CA), 2C-Bill Kennedy (CA), 3C/4C-Jeb Horton (NC) / Richard Munitz (NY). ADVANCED (37): 1-Paul Armbruster (CA), 2-Frank Ley (CA); 1C-Justin Nunez (CA), 2C-Edward Donigian (CA), 3C/4C-Matt Armbruster (CA) / Albert Lee (CA). LIMITED (6): 1-Jennifer Faulk (CA), 2-Denise Bonfilio (CA); 1C-Christina Cooley (CA). CHILDREN'S EVENT (1): 1-Lindsay Mattig (IL). SUPER-32 (32): 1-Zafer Yasa (CA), 2-Stepan Nuniyants (WA), 3/4-Doug Mayfield (CA) / Joe Russell (CA). 2-PT QUICKIES: 1-Ted Chee (CA). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Mark Antranikian (CA) & Ted Chee (CA), 2-Niel Borden (CA) & Matthew Miner (NY). OVERFLOW DOUBLES (4 teams): 1-Claudia Imatt (CA) & Howard Markowitz (NV).

•**Springfield Series #2** (Peoria, IL; 2 Dec.)... OPEN (18): 1-Fouad Malouf, 2-John Bare; 1C-Terry Leahy, 2C-Jared Miller; 1LC-Mark King. TAKI HOLD'EM QUALIFIER: Sean Garber (IN).

•**Gilbertson UK Finals** (Coventry, England; 2-3 Dec.)... OPEN (39): 1-Mick Butterfield, 2-Rogier Van Gemert, 3/4-Ron Havenhand / Ed Turner; 1C-Paul Watts, 2C; 1LC-Ian Tarr, 2LC. SNOWBALL (8): 1-Bob Bruce, 2-Jeff Barber. CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS (7): 1-Paul Gilbertson, 2-Martin Hemming. FRIDAY KO (10): 1-Tim Line, 2-Julian Fetterlein. TEAM (11): 1-Brian Lever, 2-Ed Turner & Ian Tarr. POKER (16): 1-Myke Wignall.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Lincolnwood, IL; 3 Dec.)... OPEN (22): 1-Herb Roman, 2-Cookie Frazin, 3/4-Paul Baraz / Mark Murray; 1C-Linda Rockwell, 2C-Albert Yakobashvili.

•**South Australia Monthly KO** (Adelaide, So. Australia; 5 Dec.)... OPEN: 1-Nick Begakis, 2-Claudie Tromp.

•**Miami Valley Monthly** (Dayton, OH; 10 Dec.)... OPEN (8): 1-Roger Foster, 2-Gary Weiss.

•**New England Backgammon Club Monthly** (Malden, MA; 10 Dec.)... OPEN (15): 1-Herb Gurland, 2-Nora Luna; 1C-Jim McKenna, 2C-John Smidt.

•**So. Florida Monthly** (Fort Lauderdale, FL; 10 Dec.)... OPEN (12): 1/2-Gary Fishman / Neil Rosensweig.

•**Phoenix Backgammon Club Monthly—USBL** (Glendale, AZ; 16 Dec.)... OPEN (9): 1-Dave Perkins, 2-Dan Pelton, 3-Pete Campbell.

•**Bloomington-Normal Club Playoffs** (Bloomington, IL; 3 Jan.)... TOP 10 OPEN: 1-Jim Zimmerman, 2-David Berndt; 1C/2C-Terry Leahy / John Bare.

•**South Australia Monthly KO** (Adelaide, So. Australia; 2 Jan.)... OPEN: 1-John Papadopoulos, 2-John Schulz.

•**Springfield Series #3** (Springfield, IL; 6 Jan.)... OPEN (19): 1-Michael Flohr, 2-John Bare; Michael Plog, Jena Jennings; 1LC-Scott Johnson (IN). TAKI HOLD'EM QUALIFIER: Randy Armstrong.

**AMALGAMATION**

The Bar Point Club has a new Tuesday night location: Ramada Plaza at 5615 N. Cumberland in Chicago. Actually this is the old Clarion Hotel where we played through February 2005. Hope to see you some Tuesday or at the BPC Doubles Tourney 3 February... For the first time in 24 years, **Carol Joy Cole** (MI) will not be working the pirate-themed Midwest Championships 23-25 March. Instead she will be attending a dinner for her son **Chris** who is being inducted into the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame. 2006 Illinois State Champ **Mark King** will replace Carol... Condolences to the family and friends of former New England player

**Belle Pronman** (MA) who died 26 November of a brain tumor. To read about her amazing life, Google "Belle Pronman Memorial"... Visiting the Bar Point Club in Nov/Dec: **Glen Arnold** (NE), **Paul & Mary Franks** (NV)... [Gammonlife.com](http://Gammonlife.com) announced the winner of their "Miss Gammon 2007" contest. She is 23-year-old **Stephanie Kardos** of Toronto. Her first official appearance will be at the PartyGam-



Miss Gammon 2007

mon Backgammon Million in the Bahamas later this month... Check out the first "backgammon only" search engine on the Internet: <http://search.extreme-backgammon.net>... According to a story at [www.packers.com](http://www.packers.com), one of the Green Bay Packers favorite locker room pastimes is backgammon. Now the team has an elaborate marble table set to play on donated by **Scott Carlson** of Marble Essence, Inc. Offensive lineman **Mark Tauscher** commented: "It [*backgammon*] gets pretty competitive. Guys don't like to lose." If they felt the same way about football, they'd be in the playoffs... **Andy Bell** (UK) of World Series of Backgammon Enterprises informs us of some slick backgammon videos at [youtube.com](http://youtube.com). To find them, search out "world series backgammon"... Best wishes to new Gammonitis "Make Your Point" editor **Clare Riley** (UK) who replaces **Liz Barker** this month... First it was Indiana, then the Chicago Open, and now **Clyde Jones** in Seattle says it is unlikely that he will run another event. But good news in that **Maia Khan** has announced the Colorado State Championships to be held 28-30 September in Denver... The first issue of *Double: The Backgammon Lifestyle Magazine* will be out by 1 February according to publisher **John Wallis** (FL). To receive a copy, e-mail John at: [jwallis@sunnygrp.com](mailto:jwallis@sunnygrp.com) or call 868/663-6677... Perhaps Edward Gibbon's quote will lessen your bad luck complaints: "The winds and waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators." Δ



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