

2009 pittsburgh championships

THROUGH THE LOOKING 'GLASS'

Bob Glass wins Pittsburgh
Kazaross honored as ABT champ

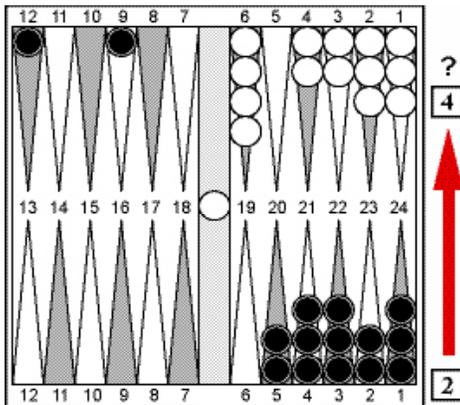
By Steve Sax

On February 22, 2009 at the Pittsburgh Airport Holiday Inn, Californian Bob Glass (#9 all-time ABT) sat down against Chicagoland's Neil Kazaross (#1 all-time ABT) in the finals of the Pittsburgh Backgammon Championships. Bob didn't have an easy draw as he faced last November's Las Vegas champion Stacey Turner (FL), Vegas Super Jackpot finalist Jeremy Bagai, and reigning Southeast champ Carol Joy Cole in his first three matches.

It didn't get any easier when Bob drew 2005 Michigan Summer champion Jeb Horton in the quarterfinals. I might have been writing this article about Jeb's victory if it weren't for Bob rolling a double on the last shake of the match to reach the semifinals.

There he played Matt Reklaitis (MA), and leading 8-6 to 11, Bob redoubled Matt in the following position:

11-point Pittsburgh semifinals. Bob Glass (Black) leads Matt Reklaitis (White) 8 to 6. Black doubles. **SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



Bob must safely bring home two checkers before Matt can enter on Bob's 6-point. Ahead five pips in the race, Bob correctly redoubled Matt. Now Matt has the tough choice of deciding whether to drop or take.

Matt passed to fall behind 6-10 Crawford with 15.7% MWC. Had he taken,



Championship winner Bob Glass (R) with new Pittsburgh director Rob Maier.

a 720, 3-ply, precise rollout shows that he could have increased his MWC to 16.6%. It was a tough decision and he said later that he didn't like the gap on his 5-point. I told him I would have taken, but I wouldn't have liked it so much, either. In the end, it was a fairly close decision.

Bob would win the Crawford game and await the winner of the Neil Kazaross/Herb Roman semifinal. Herb had a large lead in the match, but Neil is one of the toughest players around and clawed his way back to victory and a berth in the finals against his longtime friend Bob Glass.

I've been playing in tournaments since 1981 and have known Bob that long, but Bob informed me that he has played tournament backgammon against Neil since 1976, when they started playing in Bob's hometown of Providence, Rhode Island at David's Potbelly Restaurant.

Bob, who dominated his local tournament scene, was the first one of his group to get *Backgammon* by Paul Magriel. He even exploited Neil's inexperience by going into massive backgames, before anyone in his club knew how to defend against them.

Bob recalls one time that he and Neil took a train from Rhode Island to New York for the Big Apple tournament in 1978. Neither Neil nor Bob did anything, but Bob does recall Neil lecturing him on the differences between discrete and continuous races with respect to the doubling cube.

Even back then, Neil was a math wizard who took time off from his studies at Union College in upstate New York to compete in a game that some 30 years later, on the American Backgammon Tour, he would dominate.

Bob moved to Los Angeles in 1979 and

[Continued on page 6]

carolina invitational

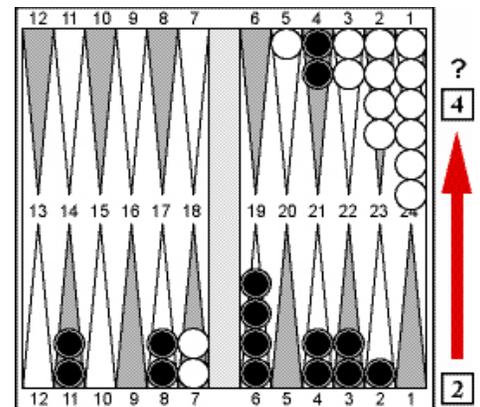
WONDERFUL LUCK HELPS ME WIN IN CAROLINA

By Neil Kazaross

To say that I had some lopsided luck in winning the Carolina Invitational (January 16-18 at the Hilton University Place in Charlotte, NC) would be putting it mildly to say the least. This was one of those magical weekends where almost everything I did worked out, and any errors I made went unpunished. The only match where an opponent even came close to winning was round 3 vs. Matt Cohn-Geier (CA), but I was quite fortunate to make a big comeback after the dinner break to advance to the quarterfinals.

The finals would prove no different as Snowie says that I had a +25 luck rating in my 13-2 win over New Yorker Rod Covlin. The following unusual position occurred after Rod ruined his board with his third useless double-4 roll of the game. Somewhat earlier in this game after making a fine early attacking double, he had me on the ropes, but two worthless 4-4s started misplacing his checkers as I anchored.

13-point Carolina Finals. Neil Kazaross (Black) leads Rod Covlin (White) 1 to 0. Black recubes. **SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



I saw that Rod was in severe danger here and that he would often get one, two, or even three checkers closed out, so I recubed to 4 and honestly expected to see

[Continued on page 4]

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

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AN HISTORICAL 'THANKS'

Your CHICAGO POINT is super! And also, I appreciate the intriguing history of our game. May you and your staff have a Happy New Year.—*Dr. Lee Hoge, Saratoga Springs, New York*

Thanks Lee. Because you don't have Internet access, we're sending you our online article "Backgammon & Doubling—Just the Facts." It sets the record straight on doubling history including the names of three individuals mentioned in writing as the potential inventor of doubling and/or the doubling cube. It also includes the first picture of a doubling cube in action (September 1930) and a number of other doubling devices.

Readers with Internet access can go to: chicagopoint.com/bgdoubling.html. If you would like a hard copy of the article, send us your name and address.—Ed.

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



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

*Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Mar 7	Springfield Series #5, Ride the Nine, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Mar 8	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Mar 8*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Panera Bread, Dayton, Ohio	937/864-1748
Mar 14*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Mar 14*	2nd Ohio Doubles Championship, Metropole Coffee, Sharonville, Ohio	513/777-7862
Mar 15*	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Cosi, New York, New York	212/222-7177
Mar 19*	Third Thursday Bonus (Ohio State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Mar 20-22	2009 Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle, Lisle, Illinois	773/583-6464
Mar 21*	New England Monthly, Dockside Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Mar 21*	Tampa Bay Club Monthly, Hampton Inn, Tarpon Springs, Florida	727/786-9133
Mar 29*	Colorado Monthly Tournament, Old Chicago, Denver, Colorado	303/791-0271
Mar 29*	Dayton Club Monthly—USBL, Barnes & Noble, Beavercreek, Ohio	937/864-1748
Mar 29*	15th Annual FIBS Spring Tournament, via computer	831/438-7947
Mar 29*	26th Fleet Underwood Memorial, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Apr 3-5	15th Ohio State Championships, Airport Marriott Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio	330/268-4610
Apr 5*	Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Holiday Inn-O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Apr 11*	New England Monthly, Dockside Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Apr 11*	Springfield Series #6, King Pin Lanes, Springfield, Illinois	217/622-9447
Apr 11*	Tampa Bay Club Monthly, Hampton Inn, Tarpon Springs, Florida	727/786-9133
Apr 12*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Apr 12*	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Cosi, New York, New York	212/222-7177
Apr 12*	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Apr 15-19	25th Nevada State Tournament, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/218-8238
May 1-3	Atlanta Spring Classic, Crowne Plaza Ravinia, Atlanta, Georgia	678/441-1005
May 15-17	2nd Annual Atlantic City Tourney, Best Western, Pleasantville, New Jersey	732/608-7100
May 22-25*	29th Annual Chicago Open, Holiday Inn Select, Rosemont, Illinois	702/218-8238
Jun 4-7	US Open—Washington DC, Doubletree, Arlington, VA ckt@world-backgammon-association.com	
Jun 12-14	Los Angeles Open, Airtel Plaza Hotel, Van Nuys, California	818/901-0464
Jul 2-5	Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton, Novi, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 24-26*	14th Minnesota Open, Courtyard by Marriott, Bloomington, Minnesota	612/718-2613
Aug 6-9	Florida State Championships, Sheraton Airport, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Sep 4-7	Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin	608/516-9109
Sep 25-27	Colorado State Championships, Hilton Airport Hotel, Aurora, Colorado	303/791-0271
Oct 9-11	Illinois State Championships, Ramada Inn, Peoria, Illinois	847/845-3579
Oct 16-18	Mid-Atlantic Championships, Marriott Berkshire, Towson, Maryland	954/564-0340
Nov 4-8	2009 Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/218-8238
Dec 4-6	California State Championship, Airtel Plaza Hotel, Van Nuys, California	818/901-0464

OUTSIDE USA

Mar 6-8	BIBA International Championship, Daventry Hotel, Daventry, England	441522-888676
Mar 6-8	New South Wales Open, Ryde Ex-Services Club, Sydney, Australia	6199-536986
Mar 7-8*	WBF-Turkiye 1st Bursa Championship, Efehan Hotel, Bursa, Turkey	905332-352555
Apr 2-5	Combination BG & Poker Tournament, Casino Seefeld, Seefeld, Austria	49711-486190
Apr 3-5	Casinorip.com British Open, Barceló Daventry Hotel, Daventry, England	441522-888676
Apr 9-13	21st Nordic Open, Marienlyst Hotel, Helsingør, Denmark	4533-363601
Apr 15-19	21st WBF European Championship & 8th Velden Open, Velden, Austria	390331-923537
Apr 24-26*	4th Strawberry Hill High Stakes Tournament, Kingston, Jamaica	876/999-0471
Apr 24-26*	WBF-Turkiye 1st Antalya Open, Santa Marina Hotel, Antalya, Turkey	905332-352555
May 8-10	County Cups Trophy, Barceló Daventry Hotel, Daventry, England	441522-888676
May 14-17	EBGT: TMG Portuguese Open, Casino Estoril, Estoril (Lisbon), Portugal	491715-422222
May 22-24*	14th Oslo Open, Bridgesenter Vest, Oslo, Norway	4797-513941
May 29-Jun 1	14th Kaiserbrunnen-Cup, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
Jun 5-7*	Austrian Masters Finale, Montesino, Vienna, Austria	436642-127412
Jun 5-7	Barceló English Open, Barceló Daventry Hotel, Daventry, England	441522-888676
Jun 11-14	3rd Braunlage-Harz-Cup, Hotel Hohenzollern, Braunlage, Germany	495204-880305
Jun 27-28*	3rd Geneve Club Open, Casino, Geneva, Switzerland	4178-7685569
Jul 3-5	BIBA World Championship, Barceló Hotel, Daventry, England	441522-888676
Jul 8-12	3rd Nice Casino Ruhl Open, Casino Ruhl, Nice, France	390331-923537
Jul 12-19	34th World Championship, Fairmont Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 212/222-7177
Jul 25-26*	14th Liverpool Open, Liverpool Bridge Club, Liverpool, England	447931-553829
Jul 29-Aug 5*	EBGT: 3rd Gogi Bukia Memorial & Georgian Open, Tbilisi, Georgia	491715-422222
Jul 31-Aug 2*	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Daventry Hotel, Daventry, England	441522-888676
Aug 15-16*	Stavanger Bymesterskap, Resept AS, Stavanger, Norway	47916-22655
Aug 21-23*	Offene Deutsche BG-Championship, Penta Hotel, Wiesbaden, Germany	49711-486190

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

Your online "Backgammon & Doubling" article is excellent—very well researched and very objective. It looks more and more like the concept of doubling may have evolved along several different lines. However, some one individual must have come up with the idea of the cube. Maybe someday we will know.—*Frank Frigo, Louisville, Kentucky*

ON THE CLOCK

I whole-heartedly agree with Chuck Bower that 2009 should be used as a year to evaluate clock usage. I will be interested to see the effect on attendance at some of the events that are pro-clock, such as the Charlotte tournament. In the 1995 & 2001 Midwest Championships where clocks were required for semifinals and finals of Championship and Advanced divisions, were these the main draw only, or also the consolation and last chance draws?

I would like to mention that Stick

Rice's site, bgonline.org is totally free to all users. Registration is required only if you wish to participate in online forum discussions. It's the best bargain around!

We experimented with clock usage tonight at our local club. The players became used to stopping the clock and leaving the dice on the board for the most part after approximately ten rolls/player. We will continue to experiment with clock usage in further events in order to continue to expose our players to proper clock play.—*Dan Pelton, Phoenix, Arizona*

I was reading on this site and other websites about clock usage in tournaments. The rules link on this site states that a player gets two minutes per match point. Other places I have read say it was five and then was changed to six minutes per point for each player with no time penalties in DMP. Which is correct? Two minutes seems very fast.—*Grant Schneider, Alexandria, Virginia*

You are confusing the time placed on a standard countdown chess clock (six minutes/point) with that of the Bronstein

(delay plus two minutes/point) clock which is now the backgammon standard. With the Bronstein clock, each player gets a 12 second delay to complete his move before his reserve time (two minutes per point) begins to count down.—Ed.

CHRIS KNAPP'S ONLINE ARTICLE

Just got a chance to read Chris Knapp's excellent first person account of his 2008 ABT "Journey" at chicagopoint.com/abtjourney.html. Lots of great stuff, and I am wiping my laughing tears on his comments about the "MFIC" at the last ABT event of the year. Carla asked why I was laughing, so I read it to her (the California State Champ section) and she began laughing, too.

Directors have to deal with "baby sitting" duties along with running the professional side of our events. We do not get "hazard pay" for doing so, but it does come with the territory. I am glad that Chris saw it as a positive.—*Patrick Gibson, director, Gammon Associates, California*

BACKGAMMON RETURNS TO HONG KONG

We are forming a club here in Hong Kong and I would appreciate if you could send me how Bar Point Club master points are calculated as mentioned online.

It's just our second meeting, and we hope to build the attendance over time. Should any of your Chicago members visit our way, be sure to let them know about us.—*Dale Brunton, Hong Kong Backgammon Club, Tel: (852) 2805-2981*

[Continued on page 7]

	AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2009	
Compiled through 22 Feb. 2009 after 3 tournaments (Upcoming events: Midwest Champs, Ohio St., Nevada St.)		

Neil Kazaross 28.50	Tom Hodous 6.00	Richard Munitz 4.25	Robert Sisselman 1.80
Bob Glass 21.00	Al Faller 5.25	Robert Regan 3.60	Beverly Flowers 1.80
Victor Ashkenazi 17.00	Ray Fogelund 5.25	Bill Pow 3.00	Luciana Abes 1.67
Petko Kostadinov 15.00	Herb Roman 5.25	Joe Eckert 3.00	Terry Seymour 1.50
Ed Johnson 10.00	Matt Reklaitis 5.25	Wanda Roberts 2.50	Harry Georgiou 1.50
Rod Covlin 9.00	Jesse Eaton 5.00	Bob Hathaway 2.50	Jon Hochberg 1.00
Philip Smith 9.00	Jon Viotor 4.50	Peter Carcier 2.50	B.R. Hall 0.94
Charlie Silverman 8.60	Boris Dekhtyar 4.25	Jason Switzer 2.50	Michael Auer 0.94
Falafel Natanzon 8.50	Pernille Rosendal 4.25	David Hamill 2.00	Jeff Moretti 0.83
Rick Barabino 8.50	Steve Sax 4.25	Sheri Peters 1.88	Joan Grunwald 0.50
Majid Jahanbani 7.20			

	CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2009 PLAYER OF THE YEAR	COMPILED THRU 28 FEB.
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Howard Markowitz 6.64	Mike Pufpaf 2.40	Paul Baraz 1.16	Tak Morioka 0.72
Lucky Nelson 5.84	Alice Kay 2.28	Oleg Raygorodsky 1.12	Roy Cohen 0.68
Herb Roman 5.04	Larry Goldstein 2.16	Jeff Fischer 1.08	Roger Hickman 0.68
Rory Pascal 4.62	Dave Settles 2.12	Nora Luna Righter 0.96	Jacob Moreno 0.64
Bill Bartholomay 3.92	Wayne Wiest 1.96	Jerry Brooks 0.96	Bill Keefe 0.64
Mike Wolock 3.40	Peter Kalba 1.92	Sonja Peacock 0.88	Lindsay Mattig 0.56
Carter Mattig 3.26	Richard Stawowy 1.56	Roz Ferris 0.80	Barry Miller 0.56
David Rockwell 2.84	Linda Rockwell 1.52	Dustin Lindgren 0.80	Gary Kay 0.56
Albert Yakobashvili 2.72	Tim Mabee 1.44	Bill Davis 0.80	Michael Minkovski 0.48
Mike Sutton 2.72	Alex Owen 1.40	Steve Klesker 0.72	Dan Cox 0.32
Bob Steen 2.40	Christopher Shanava 1.20	Scott Casty 0.72	Georgina Flanagan 0.32

January: **BILL BARTHOLOMAY** earned January honors with 3.92 points. Runner's-up were 2009 BPC Doubles champ David Rockwell (with Linda) 2.84, and Albert Yakobashvili with 2.72.

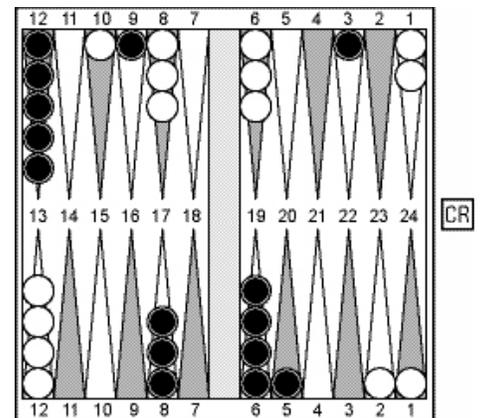
February: **HOWARD MARKOWITZ** had an outstanding February winning or splitting three of the four Masters events for 4.80 points. 2nd and 3rd were Lucky Nelson (4.16) and Herb Roman (3.12).

your move

PROBLEM #343

to be analyzed by Jake Jacobs

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



SHADES OF GRAY

A RULES AND RULINGS COLUMN

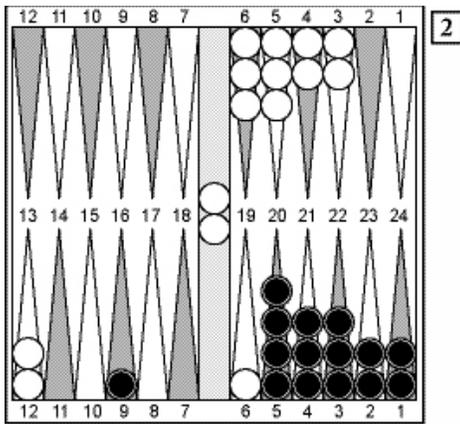
© 2009 by Danny Kleinman

2009 RULING QUIZ

All problems occurred during the past year in actual tournament play.

1. In the diagrammed position, Black rolls 3-3. He hits (9/6*) and instead of putting the white checker on the bar, he bears off both the black and white checkers placing them in the bearoff tray, then picks up the dice. White rolls a 6-2 and then notices the problem.

Black rolls 3-3 playing 9/6*, B/off 6-pt., W/off 6-pt.



A. The play stands with White's checker borne off. White can still be gammoned.

B. The play stands with White's checker borne off. White cannot be gammoned.

C. The play is impossible. Black must replay his move legally and White must reroll.

D. The play is impossible. Black must replay his move legally, but White's 6-2 roll stands.

E. The white checker is placed on the bar and her 6-2 roll stands.

2. Playing with the clock, Black makes a move, then picks up the dice as his clock continues to run. He then returns them to the board and begins to change his move. White pauses the clock and calls for a ruling.

A. Black has the option to change his move until he ends his turn by hitting the clock.

B. Black may not change his move after he picks up the dice, even though he has not hit the clock.

3. Black legally moves a checker and centers it on a point, but towards the top of the point. White claims Black is hassling him and calls the director requesting Black to move the piece to the bottom of the point.

A. As long as the piece is centered clearly on the point, it does not have to be moved.

B. Black must move his piece down to the bottom of the point.

4. It's tournament DMP of a clocked match with Black needing a double to win. With nine minutes reserve on his clock, Black states that he will use all of it shaking his dice. After one minute, White calls the director. Should Black be able use his time in this manner?

A. Yes. Black can use his clock time the way he wants.

B. No. The director should instruct Black to roll his dice within 10 seconds or risk forfeiture of the match.

5. Tied at 2-2 to 7 points, Black wins a gammon. Both players keeping score with a scoreboard only and White calls out "6-2."

Black says "What?" and White repeats the score which Black then posts on the scoreboard.

In the next (Crawford) game, Black prevails to win the match 7-2. Prior to the director posting the result, a kibitzer informs White that the gammon win at 2-2 was only worth two points because Black never doubled. White then recalls this to be true and confronts Black who doesn't disagree adding: "I asked you to repeat the score and when you insisted, I simply posted what you said twice."

The director is asked to make a ruling.

The director warns both players to keep a written score in future matches and:

A. Black wins the match 7-2.

B. Black wins the match, but the director issues him a warning to Black regarding his actions.

C. The match is resumed with Black leading 5-2.

D. The Crawford game result is voided and the match resumes with Black leading 4-2.

Answers on page 7.

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

CAROLINA...

[Continued from page 1]

him drop. Unfortunately, Rod took—a decision which both GNU and Snowie evaluations agree with, but which is quickly overturned by rollouts.

However, both bots fail to see the long term danger here which is that Rod usually cannot get his checkers home safely as he is often forced to break anchor and has almost no flexibility. A long cubeless Snowie rollout has this position as a clear 1.141 pass while a short cubeless GNU rollout has it even worse. This game is simply too hard for Rod's side to win, and he loses over 28% gammons which is slightly more than his chances to win the game.

Surprisingly, GNU on 4-ply, which is a very substantial look-ahead, is still unable to appreciate the danger (perhaps due to my open 5-point) and incorrectly thinks this position is a 0.94 take.



2009 Carolina champ Neil Kazaross.

After Rod took, I rolled 6-4 and correctly played 21/15, 6/2. Rod rolled 6-2, hitting. I then buried him with 5-4 from the bar and the blitz was on. He did manage to anchor on my acepoint with three checkers and just save the gammon.

Thanks to Directors Jeb & Robin Horton and their staff for running another fine event. I was quite happy to see that either player could insist upon using a clock for this event with the standard Bronstein two minutes per point, per side reserve time + 12 seconds/move delay time. Thus I played all six of my matches with the clock and in only one of them (my long match with Matt) did the clock result in us perhaps playing a couple of moves without extreme thought that we might have taken without the clock.

I feel that clock usage deserves some of the credit for all of the events finishing in such a timely manner. Take for example Petko Kostadinov (SC), who really was the weekend's star, winning Last Chance, Masters, and Doubles. He managed to finish all of these prior to dinner time on Sunday.—Neil Kazaross Δ

[Complete results on page 6]

True
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present



Part of



SEASON III

Estimated total payout
1,000,000 \$

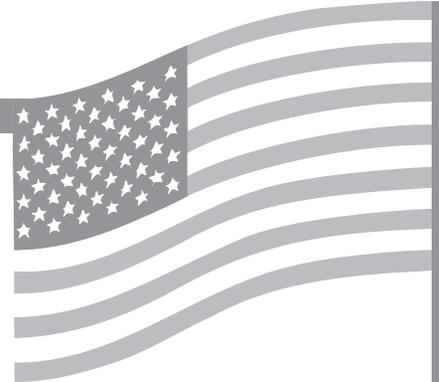
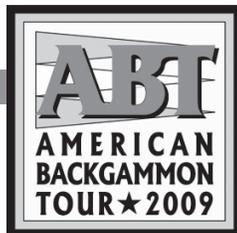
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GLASS WINS PITT...

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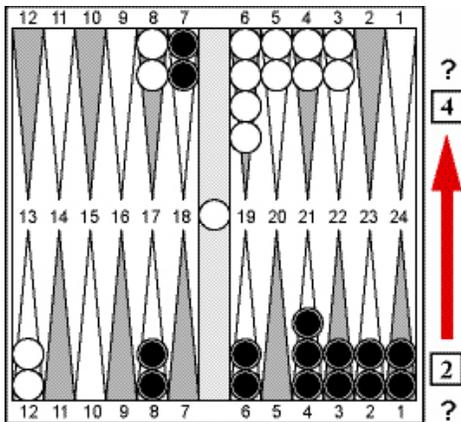
shortly thereafter, Neil moved to L.A. as well. Neil and Bob competed at the Cavenish West Bridge and Backgammon Club throughout the 1980s before Neil moved to San Diego, and then to Chicago in the 1990s.

Neil and Bob have played many matches before, but I doubt any as important as this 2009 Pittsburgh final match. I implored Bob to have someone videotape or record the match saying, "How often are you going to play Neil Kazaross in the finals of a major tournament? You want a record of this match."

Stick Rice, having successfully eliminated himself from all competition, graciously recorded the match in some code, that could rival "Enigma" and when I offered to start entering the match while it was going on, he just looked at me and said, "You think you can decipher this? Be my guest."

The match is up at Gammon Village with Stick's commentary if any of you are interested. What I found most interesting was the recube Bob gave Neil leading 5-2 to 13.

13-point Pittsburgh finals. Bob Glass (Black) leads Neil Kazaross (White) 8 to 6. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



ABT coins were awarded to the Top 10 and trophies to the Top 3 at the Saturday Auction. From left: Tim Mabee (2nd), Neil Kazaross (1st), Bob Koca (3rd).

For money, it would be a small pass; but at this score, Bob was correct to double, and Neil was correct to take. If Neil entered and had any kind of decent shot at Bob, he would redouble (effectively) for the match. In addition to that, Neil would have quite a few chances to hit a fly-shot as Bob attempted to bring his checkers around the board.

I mentioned to Bob, that I thought at the given score, he maybe should have waited until he got one of the two checkers on Neil's bar-point to his side of the board, but Bob's instincts were correct to double when he did.

Bob went on to close Neil out and nearly gammoned him for the match. The finals would continue on for several more games until Bob, leading 11-4 to 13, gammoned Neil on an undoubled cube for the match. Neil was gracious in defeat and retained his early lead in the ABT point race for 2009 over the current second place holder and new Pittsburgh Backgammon Champion Bob Glass.

The tournament ran smoothly under the guidance of new director Rob Maier and staff—Butch and Mary Ann Meese, Jeff Sutker, Tony Lopreste and director emeritus Steve Hast.

I didn't do anything in the backgammon competition wasting the only "bye"

among 63 competitors, but had there been an eating contest, I would have placed first in the "Lox and Bagels" division and in the top 10 of the "Pizza Munching" category. Pittsburgh is always a fun tournament to attend and one day, I aspire to achieve the heights of backgammon supremacy which Mr. Glass and Mr. Kazaross have set for me.—Steve Sax Δ

2009 PITTSBURGH CHAMPIONSHIPS

OPEN (63): 1-Bob Glass (CA), 2-Neil Kazaross (IL), 3/4-Matt Reklaitis (MA) / Herb Roman (IL); 1C-Petko Kostadinov (SC), 2C-Ray Foglerund (CA); 1LC-AI Faller (PA). ADVANCED (60): 1-Ed Johnson (NY), 2-Jesse Eaton (MN), 3/4-Bob Hathaway (VA) / Wanda Roberts (MA); 1C-Charlie Silverman (NJ), 2C-Peter Carcieri (OH); 1LC-Jason Switzer (PA). NOVICE (15): 1-Sheri Peters (VA), 2-B.R. Hall (NC); 1C-Michael Auer (MD). SUPER JP (4): 1-Ray Foglerund (CA). OPEN JP (32): 1-Mark Gordon (MD), 2-Jeff Acierno (NJ), 3/4-Steve Hast (PA) / Richard Munitz (NY). ADVANCED JP (32): 1-Betty Coppic (FL), 2-Denny Leatherman (CO), 3/4-Bob Hathaway (VA) / Dave Settles (IL). OPEN DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Joe Eckert (MD) & Neil Garvie (Canada), 2-Alan Grunwald (NJ) & Alfred Mamlet (MD), 3/4-Steve Burke (PA) & Bill Davis (IL) / Mark Gordon (MD) & Barry Silliman (MD). LTD. DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Bruce Ballance (PA) & Connie Tipton (PA), 2-Stevie Grund (PA) & Ryan Hast (PA). BLITZ (64): 1-Brent Cohen (PA), 2-Bill Finneran (VA). QUICKIE (64): 1-Karen Chung (MD), 2-Lucky Nelson (IL). PITT. MEMORIAL CUP (16): 1/2-Sean Garber (IN) / Stacy Turner (FL). 3 RIVERSAMATEUR CUP (16): 1-Farhad Forudi (OH), 2-Lynn Lusk (CO). THUR. WARM-UP (19): 1-Petko Kostadinov (SC), 2-Brent Cohen (PA), 3-Garry Kallos (Canada).

2009 CAROLINA INVITATIONAL

OPEN (45): 1-Neil Kazaross (IL), 2-Rod Covlin (NY); 1C-Philip Smith (NC), 2C-Jon Vietor (CA); 1LC-Petko Kostadinov (SC). ADVANCED (30): 1-Tom Hodous (WV), 2-Joe Eckert (MD); 1C-Bill Pow (VA), 2C-Terry Seymour (SC); 1LC-Harry Georgiou (GA). NOVICE (14): 1-David Hamill (NC); 1C-Jon Hochberg (GA); 1LC-Joan Grunwald (NJ). QUEEN CITY CUP (30): 1-Petko Kostadinov (SC), 2-Gregg Cattanach (GA). CARDINAL CLASSIC (30): 1-Rob Reynolds (GA), 2-Marvin Widenhouse (NC). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Michael Edge (SC) & Petko Kostadinov (SC), 2-Sal Pittelli (Canada) & David Todd (MO). QUICKIE TOURNAMENT (64): 1-Alan Grunwald (NJ), 2-Greg Bowman (KS). BLITZ (24): 1-AI Hodis (NY). \$40 SUNDAY JACKPOT: 1-Joseph Jemal (NJ). SKUNK DICE: 1-Almon Hall (NC). (\$270 was raised for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.)



Name the Backgammon Player!

Do you play on the American Backgammon Tour? If so, you should know the individual shown at left. Here are a few hints to make your identification easier:

1. She once dated Rodney Dangerfield.
2. She was a guest on Oprah Winfrey's show (prior to Oprah's move to Chicago).
3. She was a 2-day champion on the "Concentration" game show.

Answer in the April CHICAGO POINT.

RULING ANSWERS...

[From quiz on page 4]

1. (B). Having rolled after the illegal play, White can no longer demand correction, so the play stands. As White has a checker off, he cannot be gammoned, even though the checker was borne off illegally, because the illegal play was his opponent's. Had White removed his own checker from the board illegally, however, he could still be gammoned.

2. (B). Under clock rules, a player ends his turn by hitting the clock. Any lifting of the dice is to be done by the opponent after a player hits the clock. Allowing a player to lift the dice risks having him restore the dice with the wrong numbers showing. Perhaps the rules should be clearer, specifying that lifting the dice ends a player's turn even if he neglects to hit the clock.

3. (B). Hassling an opponent is not part of the game. The checkers on each point belong close to the bottom of the point.

4. (B). Clock rules are meant to avoid unnecessary slowness, not to facilitate it. A player must roll the dice promptly after shaking them adequately. Delays in rolling are not necessarily harmless. While one player is shaking, his opponent must remain alert to see what is happening. Gaby Horowitz perfected at least two techniques for cheating that I witnessed. One was simply to delay his action, whether rolling or moving, until his opponent was distracted (perhaps by a beautiful woman walking by, perhaps by a kibitzer's comment that had nothing to do with the current position); then he would quickly change the position of the checkers to his own advantage. The other was to shake repeatedly, while glancing through his dice cup to see how the dice were positioned before sliding them onto the table. Excess shaking, especially to the annoyance of an opponent, should not be tolerated; rather, it should trigger suspicion of dice manipulation.

5. (A). Presumably, had both players been keeping written scores, those scores would have been identical: 6-2 in Black's favor after the erroneously scored gammon, 7-2 in his favor, ending the match, after the next game, which White lost. Had there been a difference in the scores, the kibitzer's testimony would have been relevant, but there was no such difference.

Was the discovery of the scoring error timely? No, not after the next game was well under way, let alone finished. Given the same rolls and checker play, who can say what the outcome of that game "would have been"?

Might a double and a redouble have put the cube at 4? Might that game have ended with a double and a pass? Might the checker plays have been different, with one player trying to gammon the other and perhaps succeeding? Who knows?

So, resuming the match with a 5-2 score does not restore equity. The "table outcome" stands; Black wins the match.

Was Black wrong not to correct White's statement of the score when he knew it was 4-2 rather than 6-2?

From one point of view, yes; but not from the standpoint of the rules. No rules should make an outcome dependent on the reading of anyone's mind, Black's state of mind cannot be determined unless he confesses to it.

A comparison with another scenario may illuminate the issue. Suppose, with the score 2-2, Black had doubled White and White had reached a position with 14 men on her 6-, 5-, 4- and 3-points and one man on her 12-point, needing 6-3 on the final shake to save the gammon. White rolls a 6-3 but "sees" a 5-3 mistakenly, and moves 12/7, 7/4, conceding a gammon.

Is Black obliged to correct White's illegal play? No, and there is nothing unsporting about Black's accepting White's concession of a gammon. So, the rules do not forbid players from condoning errors by their opponents. If asked some time later about White's final shake in the game in question, we should hope, in the interests of honesty, that Black would say, "Yes, White rolled a 6-3 but played a 5-3;" but that has no bearing on the outcome (White lost 4 points).—*Yours, Danny Δ*



ILLINOIS ACTION



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

Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at Holiday Inn
O'Hare, 5615 N. Cumberland
Ave., Chicago. 773/693-5800.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON
at Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615
N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago.
773/693-5800.

CHICAGO BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION: Tournaments
Monday, 5:45 P.M. at The Parthenon; 314 S. Halsted Street,
Chicago. Carter Mattig (312/493-2911).

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB: Tournaments
Monday, 6:00 P.M. at Ride The Nine; 503 N. Prospect Road,
Bloomington. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967).

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments
Wednesday, 6:00 P.M. at Capitol Teletrack, 1766 W. Wash-
bash 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. Sue Will (309/699-6005).

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

We have forwarded your letter to former Hong Kong Club president Jerry Godsey (GA) who should be able to help with ideas for growing your club, Dale. Best of luck.—Ed.

A FOND FAREWELL

Instead of renewing my CHICAGO POINT subscription, I would like to cancel. I played Backgammon regularly for more than six years, but I decided to take an indefinite break late last year. That decision still stands. Maybe some day I'll return or I may return to one of my other favorites like Chess or Go, or I may try something completely new.

I've always enjoyed the POINT and congratulate you on the quality and reliability of the magazine! I know it takes a lot of time and effort to create it. It must be your passion for the game and the people playing it that enables you to get the work done and have fun in the process.

I wish you future good luck with your newsletter and website, playing Backgammon, and living a happy life. (Is that the right priority order?)

Thanks again for many interesting and enjoyable articles from you and all your excellent contributors.—*Wolfram Sauer, Austin, Texas*

FUN ON THE CRUISE

Just wanted to tell you and Peter Kalba how much fun the "Backgammon and Poker On Board" cruise was. I really enjoyed it.—*Jeane Eggenberger, Canton, Michigan*

Thanks Jeane. We already have seven cabins booked for "Backgammon and Poker On Board X" scheduled for January 2011. It's never too early to plan a cruise!—Ed.

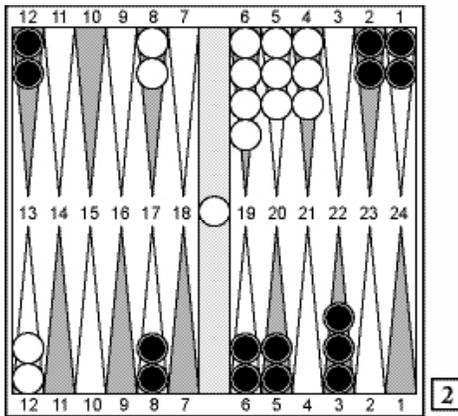
US OPEN IN JUNE

Thanks for bringing an ABT event back to the DC area. I am planning to play in US Masters (\$500 level) and the Championship division. Fortunately for me, no hotel stay is required (I live about 10 minutes from the hotel).—*Bill Finneran, Arlington, Virginia*

Thanks to World Backgammon Association director Chiva Tafazzoli for getting behind this important event. We will be on the staff along with Peter Kalba and Jeb & Robin Horton. It will be a "Clocks on Request" event.—Ed. Δ

**PROBLEM #342
ANALYZED**

by Kit Woolsey

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**

How does Black win this game? The timing for a back game is very shaky, although that might be rectified. Winning frontwards will also be very difficult, with four checkers in White's home board and a not so great offensive structure.

One possibility is to try to take advantage of White's being on the bar by going for a more advanced anchor with 23/18. This is quite dangerous. White has inner board builders which are looking for a home, and White may be willing to hit loose on the 2-point.

Even if White stays on the bar, how would Black proceed? If Black rolls a 5 to make the defensive bar point that is fine, but he doesn't dare release his last anchor in White's board to cover with a 6. And even if Black does succeed in making White's bar point safely, Black will probably not be able to contain White's back checker and will wind up playing a

very dubious bar point holding game way behind in the race.

The safest play is 13/8. But what does that achieve? It loses the midpoint, and doesn't make any headway towards building the points Black really needs.

Another possibility is to go after the 4-point: a point that Black must have if his offense is to mean anything. One way to do this is 8/7, 8/4. This threatens to make the 4-point and the bar point as well. If Black is hit, perhaps he can maneuver into a back game. If the shot is missed, perhaps Black can improve his board and contain White's back checker. Reasonable, but Black can do better.

The spare checker on the 3-point is an eyesore. It belongs on the 2-point. Black has rolled the ace which puts the checker where it belongs, arguing that 3/2 should be how Black plays his ace. If White hits, that may be a blessing, since that will considerably help Black's timing for a back game.

But what about the 4? One possibility is 13/9, 3/2. This brings a builder down to a good place. The main problem with this play is that it loses the midpoint. That midpoint is Black's lifeline for a back game. As long as Black holds the midpoint, his men will be in communication with one another. Additionally, the two checkers on the midpoint represent vital pips which can be played while waiting for White to leave a forced shot. Once Black leaves the midpoint, his army is divided. White can scoop up the other checker on the midpoint, and Black will quickly find himself out of moves and forced to crunch.

The other weakness in Black's game is his open 4-point. Black needs to make this point. This argues for 8/4 with the 4, thus making the play 8/4, 3/2. This puts Black's checkers where they belong, in addition to holding the vital midpoint.

The play may look wild, but it really isn't. Black's not trying to play a back game (although he is willing to do so if that's what the dice dictate). Black is trying to build a powerful board, with the back game being "Plan B" if White prevents Black from building the board by hitting one of the slotted checkers.

How playable is the back game? It may be quite playable if Black gets one or two checkers sent back. These checkers may stay on the bar, or they may enter and escape via the open bar point, gaining a lot in the timing battle. Also, Black might roll something like a 3-1 or 3-2 from the bar and be able to advance his back game points to a 1-3 or 2-3 back game, which will be of much help in the timing.

The 1-2 back game is the most difficult to time, since White will often stall when bearing in against it. This is normally the case when the front game player is trying to clear his bar point. Once he gets down to just the bar point in his outer board his 6s and 5s are killed, which gains him a lot in the timing battle. Here White does not own her bar point and is unlikely to make it, so the stall won't be as effective. In addition, the open bar point gives Black an easy way to recirculate any hit checker, which can be very important.

Back games should be avoided if possible. Black's goal here is to put all his checkers to use where they belong and build a strong board. But if the dice say that Black has to play a back game, he wants to get the best back game possible with good outfield presence and hit checkers freely flowing around the board. The double slot gives Black the best of both worlds. If he is hit he works on the back game. If he is not hit, he builds his board and has decent chances to win frontwards.

8/4, 3/2 is a win-win proposition.—Kit Woolsey Δ

**SANGAMON VALLEY WINS
2009 CHALLENGE CUP**

The Springfield Sangamon Valley Backgammon Club has won the 2009 Illinois State Challenge Cup defeating five other state clubs. The winning team (pictured at right) compiled an 18-12 record en route to their first Cup victory in the 29 year history of the event.

Going into the final round of play, three teams, Springfield, Chicago Bar Point Club, and Bloomington were all tied with 14 wins. The Springfield team stepped up winning four of their six matches including Randy Armstrong's decisive victory over Winnetka's June Steinberg to claim the

massive three foot trophy. Complete results:

1-SPRINGFIELD 18-12 (Jena Jennings, Randy Armstrong, Greg Tomlin, Steve McGuire, Michael Plog, John Jennings)

2-BLOOMINGTON 17-13 (Scott Rudebeck, Michael Flohr, Jim Zimmerman, Jim Dammeyer, Ed Bauder, Greg Michaels)

3-CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 16-14 (Rory Pascar, David Rockwell, Phil Simborg, Carter Mattig, Bill Davis, Nora Luna Righter)

4-PUB CLUB 14-16 (Tim Mabee, Don Marek, Joe Szvedo, Oleg Raygorodsky, Bill Gradl, Dick Nelson)

5-PEORIA 13-17 (Faddoul Khoury, Milad Doueih, Fouad Malouf, Ed Zell, Gary Bessler, Ramez Abi-Akar)

6-WINNETKA 12-18 (Neil Banoff, June Steinberg, Jolie Rubin, Jay Robinson, Ben Schneider, David Rubin)



Winning Springfield team. Front: Greg Tomlin. Back (L to R): John Jennings, Randy Armstrong, Steve McGuire, Michael Plog, Jena Jennings.

WINNER'S CIRCLE



JAN.—MAR. 2009

•**13th Thai Open** (Dongtan Beach, Thailand; 2-4 Jan.)... Open (23+4 rebuys): 1-Bruno Orsuni (THA), 2-Nicholas Check (UK); 1C-Jerzy Behnke (GER), 2C-Martin Nadoll (GER); 1LC-Glenn Gill (THA).

•**ABT—New York Met Open** (New York, NY; 8-11 Jan.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (51+15 rebuys): 1-Victor Ashkenazi (NY), 2-Rick Barabino (NY), 3/4-Richard Munitz (NY) / Steve Sax (CA); 1C-Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (ISR), 2C-Pernille Rosendal (DEN); 1LC-Boris Dekhtyar (NY). INTERMEDIATE (36+12 rebuys): 1-Majid Jahanbani (VA), 2-Robert Regan (NY); 1C-Charlie Silverman (NJ), 2C-Beverly Flowers (NJ); 1LC-Robert Sisselman (NJ). BEGINNER (10): 1-Luciana Abes (BRZ), 2-Jeff Moretti (NY). LIBERTY CUP MASTERS (32): 1-Chris Trencher (NY), 2-Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (ISR), 3/4-Matt Cohn-Geier (CA) / Ed O'Laughlin (VA). LIMITED JACKPOT (16): 1-Larry Taylor (GA), 2-Stuart Katz (NY). NEW YORK DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Matt Cohn-Geier (CA) & Carol Joy Cole (MI), 2-Ray Fogerlund (CA) & Petko Kostadinov (SC), 3/4-Jeff Acierno (NY) & Steven Keats (NY) / Rod Covlin (NY) & Richard Munitz (NY). SENIORS (64): 1-AI Hodis (NY), 2-Kevin Walsh (NJ). JACKPOTS \$50 (32): 1-Rod Covlin (NY), 2-Boris Dekhtyar (NY). \$20 (64): 1-AI Hodis (NY), 2-Antoinette-Marie Williams (NY). \$10 NY WARM-UP (32): 1-Julian Schulman (NY), 2-Antoinette-Marie Williams (NY).

•**CasinoRip.com BIBA Bright 'N' Breezy** (Brighton, England, NY; 9-11 Jan.)... OPEN (82): 1-John Hurst, 2-Gerry Enslin, 3/4-Martin Barkwill / Simon Heath; 1C-Sean Williams, 2C-Paul Barwick, 3C/4C-Kevin Dale / Chris Ternel; 1LC-Peter Chan, 2LC-Marcus Wrinch. TIDAL WAVE (32): 1-Andy Darby, 2-Ed Turner. FRIDAY 500 (44): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-Marcus Wrinch. TEAM (12): 1-Peter Christmas & Elena Magana. POKER FREEZE-OUT (24): 1-Tony Lee, 2-John Hedge, 3-Martin Barkwill, 4-Neil Young, 5-Myke Wignall.

•**BG & Poker On Board IX** (Caribbean Cruise; 18-25 Jan.)... OPEN (24+48 rebuys): 1-Pia Jeppesen (DEN), 2-Russell Burke (CT). CARIBBEAN JACKPOT (8): 1-George Morse (TX), 2-Pia Jeppesen (DEN). CAPTAIN'S TOURNEY (24): 1-Doug Roberts (MA), 2-Pia Jeppesen (DEN). POKER (22): 1-Joe Miller (OH), 2-Wally Wolf (MI), 3-Steve Hast (PA). HONORARY TROPHY: Sally Woolsey (CA).

•**New England Club Monthly** (Malden, MA; 24 Jan.)... OPEN: 1-Greg Jukins, 2-Herb Gurland, 3/4-Walter Trice / Eric Wicklund; 1C-Alex Zamanian, 2C-Tom O'Riordan.

•**Pair-O-Dice Monthly** (New York, NY; 25 Jan.)... OPEN (12): 1-Steve Grill, 2-Julius High; 1C-Victor Ashkenazi. LIMITED (2): 1-David Shafer.

•**WBF—Türkiye 5th Ankara** (Anakara, Turkey; 31 Jan.-1 Feb.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (94): 1-Gültekin Uygur, 2-Onur Vurur, 3-Irfan Mizrakçi, 4-Çağlar Erdogan. DOUBLES (23 teams): 1-Çağlar Erdogan & Hisar Uyar, 2-Hilmi Göçhan & Erdem Hüniü. ARENA (243): 1-Gültekin Uygur, 2-Sabri Evrim Ünel, 3/4-Levent Erim / Ali Riza Kabalak. SWING (14): 1-Kemal Aksu, 2-Okan Gülec. LADIES PRIZE (11): 1-Ayperi Samantir, 2-Sezen Akbas.

•**BPC Doubles Championship**: Open (19 teams): 1-Linda & David Rockwell, 2-Howard Markowitz & Roz Ferris, 3/4-Albert Yakobashvili & Christopher Shanava / Carter Mattig & Lindsay Mattig; 1C-Rory Pascas & Dustin Lindgren, 2C-Bill Davis & Nora Luna Righter.

•**BIBA Jarvis Trophy** (Daventry, England; 6-8 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Michael Bennett, 2-Peter Bennet. 1C-Lee Wood. FRIDAY 500 (14): 1-Andy Darby. POKER (11): 1-Andy Darby. TEAM (6): 1-Gerry Enslin & Brian Metcalf.

•**Springfield Series #4** (Peoria, IL; 7 Feb.)... OPEN (34): 1-John Jennings, 2-Terry Leahy; 1C-Sean Garber (IN), 2C-Chris Scott; 1LC-Ramez Abi-Akar.

•**PGT—Partouche Gammon Grand Finale** (Cannes, France; 10-15 Feb.)... PGT GRAND FINALE (42): 1-Olivier Décultot (FRA), 2-François Tardieu (FRA), 3/4-Jan Jacobowitz (GER) / Najib Salamzy (AFG/GER). OPEN (48): 1-Bartolomeo Migliore (ITA), 2-Serge Dahan (FRA), 3/4-Olivier Croiselle (FRA) / Scarlett Serrero (FRA); 1C-Raj Jansari (ENG), 2C-Masayuki Mochizuki (JPN), 3C/4C-Fernando Braconi (ITA) / Roland Ekström (SWZ). BLITZ: Winners Patrick Gaillard (FRA) / Alexis Vincent (FRA). BEGINNERS (14): 1-Stéphane Tcherchian (FRA). WARM-UP (41): 1-Alexandre ben Lassin (SWZ).

•**15th South Australia Open** (Adelaide, So. Australia; 15 Feb.)... Open (20): 1-Chris Benham, 2-Peter Geelen; 1C-Tony Walker.

•**2nd Pub Club Trophy Tourney** (Carol Stream, IL; 1 Mar.)... Open (32): 1-Rory Pascas, 2-Phil Simborg, 3/4-Dave Rockwell / Dave Settles; 1C-Tim Mabee, 2-Larry Goldstein. Δ



Linda & David Rockwell



Pub Club champ Rory Pascas his trophy in one hand and his real treasure (daughter Amelia) in the other. [Photo: Tim Mabee]

AMALGAMATION

Great news! The Wyndam Lisle has reduced hotel rates at the Midwest Championships (March 20-22) from \$95 to \$79/night. Book your reservation today! For more info, visit chicagopoint.com/mbc09.html... Backgammon's interplay of position and probability keep me in the moment, and that's a very good thing."... **Carter Mattig** (312/493-2911) and **Phil Simborg** (312/543-0522) announce the opening of the Chicago Backgammon Association. The first meeting is Monday, 2 March at the Parthenon Restaurant in Greektown, Chicago... Add the Minnesota Open to this year's ABT. Director **Dave Minikus** supplies the dates: July 24-26 in Bloomington, MN)... Oops! In listing last year's Players of the Year, we accidentally listed **John** instead of **Jena Jennings** as the Springfield top pointer. Also, the Nashville Top Player was **Bob Weigel**, and **Marco Fornasir** (Italy) informs us that

the WBF Golden Circuit 2008 Master's Champ is **Tassilo Rzymann** (Austria)... Congrats to **Howard Markowitz** (IL) who has 10 BPC wins in a row—and counting!... Howard will team with **Rory Pascas** (IL) to put on this year's Chicago Open.



Springfield's Player of the Year Jena Jennings

It will be held at the Holiday Inn Select in Rosemont, Illinois over the Memorial Day weekend... Congrats to **Rory and Dawn Pascas** on the 14 January birth of their daughter **Amelia**. To celebrate, he bought drinks at the BPC Award's night... MBC "Pig Mistress" **Dru Heggen** (IL) is beaming that her son **Mark** has been promoted to Sergeant in the Marines Special Ops unit... As chess clocks begin to gain a foothold in our game, out comes a portable clock: DGT 960. Although it doesn't play quite as well as the Game Time II, it fits in any BG board, can be set in seconds, and is only \$40... Dallas director **Tom Wheeler** informs us of **Bill Barron's** passing 7 February... The iPhone now offers two valuable "apps" relating to backgammon. Two chess clocks and a backgammon scoreboard are available for only a few dollars each... **Paul Berg** (MI) reports that the Metro North Club in Michigan has moved its Monday night location to Finny McCool's Sports Pub in Madison Heights, Michigan. For details, call Paul at 313/330-7803... A new BG forum has opened moderated by **Bill Robertie** (MA). Visit: forumserver.twoplustwo.com/138/backgammon... Get well wishes go out to **Gary Kay** (IL) and **Greg Merriman** (MI), both recovering from hospital visits... In his article appearing at newsreview.com, **Anthony Peyton Porter** states, "Backgammon is like life—anything can happen at any time. Δ



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Backgammon Championship
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New

Backgammon Spring Challenge
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