

california state championship

RUSSELL CLAIMS CALIFORNIA Matt Cohn-Geier wins Masters By Paul Weaver

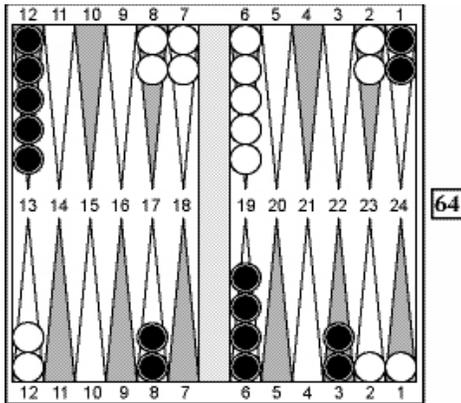
Joe Russell of Los Angeles defeated David Rubin (IL) 11–6 in the finals of the California State Backgammon Championship. Patrick Gibson’s 4–6 December event drew 87 main event players to the Airtel Hotel in Van Nuys, California. The final American Backgammon Tour event of the year, this tournament often determines the ABT Player of the Year.

Joe Russell has been a world-class player for at least three decades. He was the Monte Carlo World Champion in 1989, he won the ABT title in 1995, and earlier in 2009, he was a US Open finalist.

Joe’s opponent David Rubin, a fine player in his own right, won the Illinois State Championship in October. Although he enters only a handful of events each year, David ranks 17th on the ABT all-time list.

Let’s look at two positions from their final match (recorded by Justin Nuñez).

Pos. 1. 11-point Open finals tied 0–0. Joe Russell (Black) vs. David Rubin (White). **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**

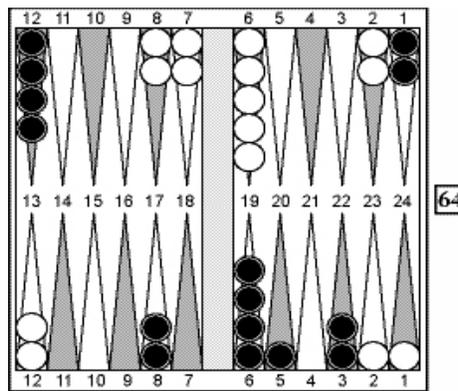


Running (24/16, Joe’s choice) may appear to be the safest play. When Black trails in the race and White has an ugly, awkward, gapped, stacked, and stripped position, Black should often sit on his anchor, even if it means leaving a double shot on his own side of the board.



2009 California State Champ Joe Russell.

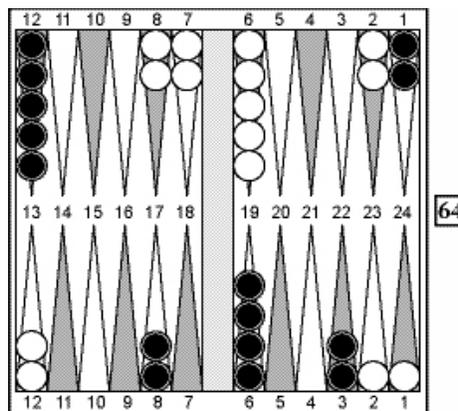
Pos. 1A. After Black plays 13/5.



The best play is 13/5. Although it leaves a double shot, the risk is minimal because White’s board is not threatening. Also, slotting (13/5) duplicates many of White’s point-making rolls (3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, and 5-3). The correct play forces White to break his 8-point with 4-1 and 6-6.

Running (24/16) invites White to attack with direct 4s plus 1-1, 2-2, 5-5, and 6-6.

Pos. 2. Russell (Black) leads Rubin (White) 6–2 to 11. **WHITE TO PLAY 6-3.**



[Continued on page 8]

2009 ABT PLAYER OF THE YEAR: RAY FOGERLUND

Ray Fogerlund, a newly-retired fireman from Bakersfield, California cashed in a record seven American Backgammon Tour events en route to becoming the 2009 Player of the Year. It was his second title over the past three years.



Ray Fogerlund

Ray began the year reaching the Consolation finals in Pittsburgh and Nevada, followed by the Main Flight finals at the Chicago Open. Then it was on to his home state for the LA Open where he won. He added Last

Chance victories in Minnesota and Florida. But all of these wins would not be enough for the title; not with Stick Rice in pursuit. In December at the California Open, two players had excellent chances to wrest the ABT lead from Fogerlund: Stick Rice and David Rubin. If Ray fails to cash, David can win it all by defeating Joe Russell in the finals; or Stick Rice would take the title by defeating Matt Cohn-Geier in the Consolation finals.

Ray put a stop to the “ifs” by capturing third place and locking up the title on his own. An outstanding year for the number two ranked player on the ABT all time listings.

Congratulations go out to the second and third place finishers: Stick Rice (OH) and Ed Bennett (NM). Stick cashed an impressive six times across the US and Ed had three placing finishes including a victory in the 95-player Michigan Summer Championships. The three top finishers received trophies and the top 20 earn solid silver eagle coins, ten of which were kindly donated by Mid Jersey Club director Alan Grunwald. Presentations will be made at the Pittsburgh Championships 19–21 February.

The ABT top 100 for 2009 are printed on page 3. Δ

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Bill Davis

3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue #504
Chicago, IL 60659-3155
Tel: 773/583-6464 ♦ Fax: (E-mail PDF file)
E-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com
www.chicagopoint.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Carol Joy Cole (MI)	Danny Kleinman (CA)
Mary Hickey (OH)	John O'Hagan (IN)
Jake Jacobs (IL)	Steve Sax (CA)
Duane Jensen (MN)	Phil Simborg (IL)
Neil Kazaross (IL)	Kit Woolsey (CA)

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504
Chicago, IL 60659-3155

E-mail: letters@chicagopoint.com

HAPPY CHICAGOLAND MARCH BG WILL CONTINUE

I just wanted to send you a short note to say "thanks" for continuing to run a March Chicagoland tournament. I always enjoyed your Midwest Championships and look forward to the new CSI event with codirector Amy Trudeau. My deposit is in the mail.—*Stacy Turner, Tampa, Florida*

NEW SUBSCRIBER

Enclosed is my one year subscription fee. I've been playing backgammon for just over seven years and have enjoyed visiting your website. Now I'd like to step to the next level by reading the POINT.—*Darren Musial, Oak Park, Illinois*

BUYING A BACKGAMMON SET

Can you recommend a store in the Chicago area where I could buy a backgammon set?

[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.

Jan 16	New England Monthly, Docksider Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Jan 16-17	2010 Sunshine State Regional, Hampton Inn, Tarpon Springs, Florida	727/786-9133
Jan 21	Third Thursday Bonus (Pittsburgh) & Awards, Maxie's, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jan 24	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Cusi, New York, New York	212/222-7177
Jan 29-31	<u>New Mexico State Championship, La Posada Resort, Santa Fe, New Mexico</u>	505/982-2729
Jan 30	3rd Annual Pub Club Trophy Tourney, Playoffs Sports Bar, Carol Stream, IL	630/606-2388
Jan 31	Illinois State Challenge Cup, Playoffs Sports Bar, Carol Stream, Illinois	630/606-2388
Jan 31*	Cincinnati Club Monthly, Metropole Coffee Company, Sharonville, Ohio	513/807-6926
Jan 31*	Northside Club Monthly, Loop Pizza Grill, Atlanta, Georgia	770/612-0818
Feb 6	Bar Point Doubles Club Championship, Holiday Inn O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Feb 7*	Cincinnati Club Monthly, Metropole Coffee Company, Sharonville, Ohio	513/807-6926
Feb 7*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Feb 9*	Teakwoods Club Monthly, Teakwoods Tavern, Phoenix, Arizona	602/762-2288
Feb 13*	New England Monthly, Docksider Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Feb 13*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Feb 13*	Springfield Series #5, Ride the Nine, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Feb 19-21	<u>Pittsburgh Championships, Holiday Inn Airport, Moon Twp., Pennsylvania</u>	304/685-3214
Feb 28*	Cincinnati Club Monthly, Metropole Coffee Company, Sharonville, Ohio	513/807-6926
Feb 28*	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Cusi, New York, New York	212/222-7177
Mar 5-7	CSI-Central States Invitational, Wyndham Lisle, Lisle, Illinois	773/583-6464
Mar 7*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Mar 9*	Teakwoods Club Monthly, Teakwoods Tavern, Phoenix, Arizona	602/762-2288
Mar 13*	Springfield Series #6, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/622-9447
Mar 13*	New England Monthly, Docksider Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Mar 13*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Mar 21*	27th Fleet Underwood Memorial, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Mar 26-28	Ohio State Championships, Sheraton Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio	330/268-4610
Apr 14-18	<u>26th Nevada State Tournament, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada</u>	702/218-8238
Apr 30-May 2	Atlanta Spring Classic, Crown Plaza Ravinia, Atlanta, Georgia	770/633-0001
May 13-16*	WBGT: 2nd US Open, Embassy Suites Airport, So. San Francisco, California	773/583-6464
May 28-31	<u>Chicago Open, Holiday Inn & Suites-O'Hare, Rosemont, Illinois</u>	617/699-9100
Jun 11-13	<u>Los Angeles Open, Airtel Hotel, Van Nuys, California</u>	818/901-0464
Jul 1-4	Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton Novi, Novi, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 30-Aug 1	Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York	585/396-0969
Aug 20-22	Florida State Championships, Marriott Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/249-1416
Sep 3-6	Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin	608/516-9109
Sep 24-26	Colorado State Championships, Hilton Hotel, Aurora, Colorado	303/791-0271
Oct 8-10	Illinois State Championships, Grand Hotel, Peoria, Illinois	847/677-6852
Oct 14-17	Mid-Atlantic Championships, Marriott Hotel, Towson, Maryland	954/249-1416
Nov 10-14	Las Vegas Open, Bally's Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/218-8238
Dec 3-5*	California State Championship, Airtel Hotel, Van Nuys, California	818/901-0464
Jan 22-29	2011 Backgammon & Poker On Board, Western Caribbean Princess Cruise	773/583-6464

OUTSIDE USA

Jan 16-17*	Greek Monthly Tournament, Piraeus Bridge Club, Athens, Greece	306945-298985
Jan 22-24*	TBT: Istanbul Open/WBF-TR, Merter Gunes Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey	905322-329228
Jan 23-24	SBT: 1st Bülicher Festival/Zürich-Open, Rössli, Bülicher, Switzerland	41786-329228
Jan 30-31*	Munich Club Tournament of Champions, KARO-Burg, Munich, Germany	491715-422222
Feb 5-7	Jarvis Trophy, Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Feb 6-7	WSOB: Championship Shootout, Adam Street Club, London, England	447980-122344
Feb 7	32nd Australian Open, Hilton Hotel, Adelaide, South Australia	618412-836266
Feb 13-14*	TBT: 6th Ankara Championship/WBG-TR, Enerji Hotel, Ankara, Turkey	905332-352555
Feb 19-21	1st Frühlings-Meeting, Hotel am Rosenberg, Hofheim, Germany	497111-486190
Feb 26-28	Istavder 2nd Anniversary Tournament, Green Park Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey	905324-279454
Mar 5-7	BIBA International Championships, Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, UK	441522-888676
Mar 6-7*	BBT: Mokum Open, Café Twee Klaveren, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	31611-106930
Mar 13-14*	SBT: Genève Swiss Tourney Tour, L'Apéritivo, Geneva, Switzerland	4178-7685569
Mar 13-14*	TBT: 2nd Bursa Championship/WBF-TR, Efehan Hotel, Bursa, Turkey	905332-352555
Mar 19-21	XI Scottish Open, Barceló Carlton Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland	441522-888676
Apr 1-5	WBGT: 22nd Nordic Open, Scandic Hotel, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601
Apr 7-11*	22nd WBF-European Championships & 9th Velden Open, Velden, Austria	390331-923537
Apr 9-11*	British Open, Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Apr 16-18*	5th Strawberry Hill High Stakes Tournament, Irish Town, Jamaica	876/999-0471
Apr 16-18*	TBT: 2nd Antalya Open/WBF-TR, Diva Café Bistro, Antalya, Turkey	905332-352555
Apr 17-18*	DATE CHANGE: Rhein-Neckar-Cup 2009 Year-End, Mannheim, Germany	496204-620396
Apr 24-25*	Istavder 1st Izmir Championship, Green Park Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey	905324-279454

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

I'll be visiting for a few days next week. Thanks.—Ron Conheim, via e-mail

We can't think of a store that sells a fair-priced board. Here are two good alternatives. (1) Call Tak Morioka (773/465-0675)

and invest in a high quality "Taki-Board." With shipping, it's around \$1,000, or (2) try "Backgammon à la Carte." Carol Joy Cole as details of her store (open noon to midnight EST) at 810/232-9731. Boards range from \$100 up to \$1,000.—Ed.

THANKS FOR DIRECTIONS

I just noticed that the ABT tab on your

POINT website has a "Map Locations" with a driving directions option. Dale Kerr obviously put some meticulous work into the "drop downs" listing each ABT event and the event's demographics. Very nice work!—Patrick Gibson, Gammon Associates, Van Nuys, California

That was a great feature. Perhaps Dale will include the feature again for the ABT 2010 season.—Ed.

	AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2009	
Final standings after 20 tournaments		
Top 100 • 219 players earned points		

Ray Fogerlund	48.28	Murray Bryntesen	13.00	Joe Freedman	8.14	Rory Pascar	5.19
Stick Rice	46.16	David Todd	12.80	Mike Senkiewicz	7.92	Ramon Eleazar	5.19
Ed Bennett	40.77	Lucky Nelson	12.73	Majid Jahanbani	7.20	Jenann Nakamura	5.18
John O'Hagan	39.29	Richard Munitz	12.23	Karen Davis	7.00	Rose Sheedy	5.11
David Rubin	36.23	Trisha Hegland	12.05	Neil Garvie	6.67	Jona Alexander	5.09
Neil Kazaross	32.68	Peter Zacks	11.70	Stacy Turner	6.50	Sal Chehayeb	5.08
Adam Bennett	26.50	Rob Maier	11.54	Michael Flohr	6.40	Ramez Abi-Akar	5.08
Joe Russell	25.73	Scotty Kelland	10.96	Ed King	6.22	Brian Barber	5.00
Mary Hickey	25.19	Fred Kalantari	10.96	Jesse Eaton	6.10	Charles Toots	4.67
Larry Taylor	24.00	Harold Rex	10.55	Patty Geoffroy	6.04	Bill Devine	4.67
Mike Corbett	21.93	Shinichiro Kaneko	10.37	Tom Hodous	6.00	Pernille Rosendal	4.25
Julius High	21.33	Dorn Bishop	10.18	Lynn Lusk	6.00	Boris Dekhtyar	4.25
Bob Glass	21.00	Brandon Macklin	10.17	Tom Magne	5.85	Harvey Gillis	4.20
Rod Covlin	20.73	Ed Johnson	10.00	Robert Regan	5.60	Jerry Kressin	4.20
Scott Casty	17.37	Carol Joy Cole	10.00	Todd Crosner	5.52	Arthur Sutton	4.00
Victor Ashkenazi	17.00	Jon Viator	9.98	Ed Rosenblum	5.50	Paul Strasberg	4.00
Tak Morioka	16.73	Steve Sax	9.58	Alfred Mamlet	5.50	Bruce Whitaker	4.00
Malcolm Davis	16.05	Bob Schumacher	9.33	Tom Wheeler	5.48	Eric Johnson	4.00
Dean Adamian	15.83	Frank Raposa	9.00	Ian Macfarlane	5.48	Bob Howayeck	4.00
Bill Riles	15.52	Philip Smith	9.00	Jena Jennings	5.40	Neal Rosensweig	4.00
Alan Grunwald	15.43	Charlie Silverman	8.60	Gary Fishman	5.27	Ray Glaeser	3.96
Petko Kostadinov	15.00	Rick Barabino	8.50	Matt Reklaitis	5.25	Wendy Kaplan	3.96
Philippe Salnave	14.80	Falafel Natanzon	8.50	Herb Roman	5.25	Charles Morrison	3.86
Matt Cohn-Geier	14.33	David Rockwell	8.40	Al Faller	5.25	Gerry Tansey	3.80
Brent Cohen	14.00	John McDonald	8.38	Bill Calton	5.20	Dennis Culpepper	3.70

COLLEGE BACKGAMMON COURSE

Last week I received approval for a new course, "Strategy and Backgammon." This is a university orientation theme-based course for incoming freshman.

My midterm and final exams will be community wide tournaments. I expect to develop a student club as well.

The University accepted my proposal based on my fifty word description that you can read at: tinyurl.com/ydehljh. Now I have to affirm the course as a permanent offering.

This two semester-hour course is justified based on the business/management strategies

that are learned from playing backgammon. Next semester I'll send you my completed package.—Don Berez, School of Accountancy, Georgia Southern University

THANKS TO RICHARD

I had been looking for a good backgammon program for my iPod Touch and sent you a letter. One day after I mailed it, the Oct./Nov. CHICAGO POINT arrived with Richard Munitz's letter praising "Backgammon NJ"

[Continued on page 11]

	CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB	FINAL STANDINGS
2010 PLAYER OF THE YEAR		75 players earned points

Rory Pascar	37.42	Mike Sutton	10.88	David Rubin	4.08	Jeff Fischer	1.64
David Rockwell	33.80	Ken Bond	9.84	Richard Stawowy	3.64	Paul Baraz	1.56
Herb Roman	29.68	Mike Minkovski	9.08	Dan Cox	3.36	Alex Aleyev	1.52
Howard Markowitz	27.20	Gary Kay	8.60	Alexander Medvedev	3.20	Neil Kazaross	1.44
Lucky Nelson	25.64	Oleg Raygorodsky	8.56	Jacob Moreno	3.12	Joe Rafson	1.36
Tak Morioka	18.16	Scott Casty	7.68	Linda Rockwell	2.80	Roy Cohen	1.32
Bill Davis	17.92	Christopher Shanava	7.52	Dujuan Meekins	2.72	Sonja Peacock	0.88
Bob Steen	17.80	Albert Yakobashvili	7.36	Richard Pearlman	2.68	Henry Gray	0.88
Carter Mattig	15.82	Tim Mabee	6.96	Royal Robinson	2.64	Roz Ferris	0.80
Matt Cohn-Geier	14.84	Peter Kalba	6.96	Steve Hines	2.48	Dustin Lindgren	0.80
Nora Luna Righter	14.24	Jerry Brooks	6.72	Georgina Flanagan	2.40	Ed Fried	0.72
Larry Goldstein	14.04	Adrian Rios	6.56	Mark Ostrovsky	2.36	Mark Murray	0.64
Mike Wolock	13.48	Roger Hickman	6.52	Reginald Porter	2.32	Leslie Lockett	0.64
Wayne Wiest	13.36	Michael Ginat	5.52	Sam Yoyen	2.32	Elaine Kehm	0.64
Bill Bartholomay	13.12	Eric Johnson	5.40	John Jennings	2.24	Bob Pondelicek	0.60
Steve Klesker	12.68	Alex Owen	5.00	Michael Peters	1.96	Lindsay Mattig	0.56
Phil Simborg	12.48	Dan Weymouth	4.64	Jolie Rubin	1.88	Barry Miller	0.56
Alice Kay	12.20	Mike Pufpaf	4.48	Rob Maier	1.68	Rodney Gonzalez	0.48
Dave Settles	12.16	Bill Keefe	4.44	Wendy Kaplan	1.68		

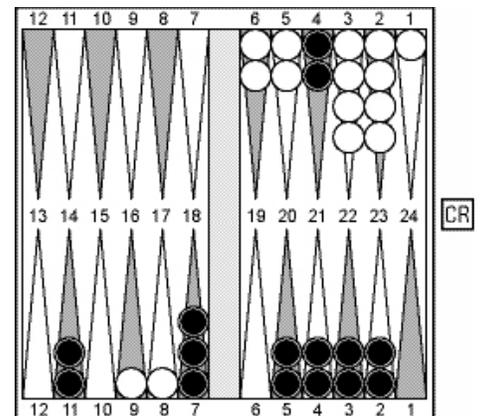
HOWARD MARKOWITZ had an impressive 7.72 December points to finish the year in fourth place. Runner's-up were Nora Luna Righter (4.24) and Tak Morioka (4.08).

your move

PROBLEM #351

to be analyzed by Mary Hickey

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



THE UNAIDED EYE



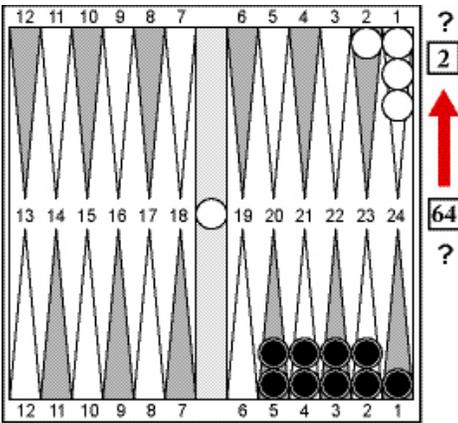
© 2010 by Danny Kleinman

This month, we begin a new column with Danny. He'll explore the problems from an "over the board" point of view. Following his analysis, we'll print out extensive computer rollout results. Danny will then get the chance to comment on how well his analysis has measured up with the computer's output.—Ed.

A TRICKY ENDGAME

Dear Danny: The following problem occurred in the Open Consolation of a major event. I was Black tied at 6–6 to 9 points. What should I be thinking about in determining whether or not to turn the cube?—End Game Ed

9 point match. Black and White tied at 6 to 6. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



DEAR ED: When wondering whether to turn the cube, I usually ask myself three questions:

1. Am I a substantial favorite?
2. Might my opponent pass?
3. If not, have I a substantial chance of losing my market after an exchange of rolls?

1. First I'd be looking at the race and seeing myself as the favorite, needing five rolls to bear off while my opponent figures to need six rolls (three to bring his man in from the bar and come home, then three to bear off).

Against that, I have shot jeopardy. All 6s and 5s but 6-4 and 5-4 (that's 16 rolls in 36) leave a blot, and White will hit with 11 of his 36 rolls). So $(16 \times 11 =) 176$ times in 1296 I'll be on the bar with 7 or 8 men left against 5 men left for my opponent.

Furthermore, to avoid leaving shots, I may have to play safely, covering my blot, smoothing my position and losing time (perhaps a full roll) in the race.

I conclude that I'm a substantial favorite, which means that a "yes" answer to either of the next two questions will induce me to double.

2. The combination of racing chances and hitting chances (two not extremely unlikely ways to win) will allow my opponent to take, but now I must consider too other things.

First, the score. This score calls for tight takes, as a 6-7 deficit retains nearly 40% match chances but a 6-8 deficit at "Crawford-even" reduces match-winning chances to about 25%.

Second, my opponent. If my opponent is very conservative when doubled, he might let the score influence him to pass. So I would double Colonel Whiteflag, but I would not double Diana Dialacube. Also, if my opponent thinks he is much the better player, he might also let the score influence him to pass. So I would double William Worldbeater, but I would not double Nina Neophyte. If these considerations are indecisive, I move on to the next question.

3. To judge the chances of market loss, I must count the number of sequences in 1296 that will improve my position enough for me to cash. This is difficult, as there are many classes of sequences to evaluate.

a) I roll 6-6 or 5-5 (2 rolls), leaving a shot but bearing off four men, then White misses the shot (25 rolls). That's 50 sequences.

b) I roll 6-4 or 5-4 (4 rolls), covering my blot while bearing a man off, leaving a four point board and a smooth position, then White dances (16 rolls). That's 64 sequences.

c) I roll 2-2, 4-3 or 4-2 (5 rolls), covering my blot without bearing a man off, leaving a four point board and a smooth position, then White dances (16 rolls). That's 80 sequences.

d) I roll 4-4 (1 roll), covering my blot while bearing two men off, leaving a three point board and a smooth position, then White fails to counter with 6-6 or 5-5 (34 rolls). That's 34 sequences.

e) I roll 3-3 (1 roll), covering my blot without bearing a man off, leaving a three point board and a smooth position, then White dances (9 rolls). That's 237 sequences.

This comes to 237 market-losing sequences, about an 18% chance of losing my market. That's enough for me, so I double. Note, however, the many possibilities for error in my procedure. I might misjudge the position (in this case, perhaps, not noticing that I will lose time in the race by playing rolls safely instead of bearing men off). I might misjudge my opponent (e.g. she's Diana Dialacube in a chouette, but Cautious Cora in a match). I might overlook some market-losing sequences. I might miscalculate some sequences, thinking that they will lose my market when they really won't. I might even make some mistakes in arithmetic that I wouldn't have made 25 years ago when I was younger and sharper.—Yours, Danny

COMPUTER ROLLOUT DATA

6000 Snowie 3-ply, precise, full rollouts yielded the following results (note that the rollout reversed the answer from "Double" by 0.044 to "No double" by 0.034):

Cubeless evaluation					
Rollout	Money equity		0.341		
0.0%	0.0%	67.1%	32.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Evaluations					
Actions					
1.	No double	0.564			
2.	Double, take	0.530	(-0.034)		
3.	Double, pass	1.000	(+0.436)		
All numbers in normalized emg					7%
Proper cube action					
No double, take					

DANNY'S COMMENTS ON THE ROLLOUT DATA

ASTOUNDING! You win two-thirds of the games, gammons aren't involved, the score calls for cautious takes, you have a substantial chance of losing your market, and it's not even an initial double? If that's true, then much of what I thought I knew about the cube in backgammon is false. The game is just too complicated. I guess John Henry can't beat the Steam Drill any more.—DK Δ

Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: *The Unaided Eye*, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue #504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155 or send e-mail to: bg@chicagopoint.com

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/usacclubs.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. E-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com**

WEST

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT (E-MAIL)	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Teakwoods Backgammon Club	Teakwoods Tavern & Grill	Phoenix, AZ	2nd Tues. monthly-7:00 PM	Doug Amenda (doug@amendainsurance.com)	602/762-2288	15230 N. 75th St. 2031; Scottsdale, AZ 85260
Phoenix Backgammon Club-USBL	Baseline Sports Bar	Tempe, AZ	3rd Thur. monthly-7:00 PM	Joni Brummer (jonibrummer@hotmail.com)	623/206-1450	8613 N. 50th Lane; Glendale, AZ 85302
Gammon Associates	El Torito	Burbank, CA	Wednesday-5:30 PM	Patrick Gibson (pgibsonmfc@roadrunner.com)	818/901-0464	7641 Orion Avenue; Van Nuys, CA 91406
"	A.R. Private Club	Los Angeles, CA	Sunday-2:00 PM	"	"	"
"	Airtel Plaza Hotel	Van Nuys, CA	3rd Thurs. monthly-6:00 PM	"	"	"
Backgammon By The Bay	Peking Express Restaurant	Berkeley, CA	2nd Sat. 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	"	"	"
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	10153 Camino Ruis #18; San Diego, CA 92126
Orange County Backgammon Assoc.	Kéan Coffee	Newport Beach, CA	3rd Thursday monthly-7:00 PM	Paul Barth (barthp1@ca.rr.com)	714/928-0052	15610 Tustin Village Way #45; Tustin, CA 92780
Boulder Backgammon Club	Rodeway Inn & Suites	Boulder, CO	1st, 3rd, 5th Thurs.-7:00 PM	Lynda Clay (info@coloradobackgammon.com)	303/791-0271	5516 Samuel Peak; Highlands Ranch, CO 80130
Colorado Backgammon Association	Old Chicago	Denver, CO	Last Sat. or Sun. monthly-1 PM	"	"	"
Backgammon Club of Las Vegas	Jackson's Bar & Grill	Las Vegas, NV	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Jason Lee (jlee@vegasbg.net)	702/301-4987	1154 Heavenly Harvest #1; Henderson, NV 89002
Nevada Backgammon Association	Las Vegas Hotels	Las Vegas, NV	Event dates: www.nvbg.com	Howard Markowitz (howard.114@live.com)	702/218-8238	1201 N. Mitchell; Arlington Hts., IL 60004
Backgammon Club of Santa Fe	La Posada Hotel	Santa Fe, NM	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Barbara McIntyre (b@barbaramac.com)	505/820-1815	3101 Old Pecos Trail #707; Santa Fe, NM 87505
Puget Sound Backgammon Club	PJ Pockets Casino	Federal Way, WA	Tuesday-7:30 PM	Kristina Vig (kristinavig@yahoo.com)	253-230-6561	1415 S. 17th Street; Tacoma, WA 98405

CENTRAL

Pub Club	Playoffs Sports Bar & Grill	Carol Stream, IL	Thursday-6:45 PM	Tim Mabee (Timmabee1@gmail.com)	630/606-2388	224 Split Oak Road; Naperville, IL 60565
Chicago Bar Point Club	Holiday Inn-O'Hare Hotel	Chicago, IL	Tue.-6:30 PM, Sun. bimonthly-12 PM	Bill Davis (bg@chicagopoint.com)	773/583-6464	3940 W. Bryn Mawr #504; Chicago, IL 60659
Chicago Backgammon Association	The Parthenon	Chicago, IL	Thursday-6:15 PM	Carter Matting (bamfkato@hotmail.com)	312/493-2911	953 W. Fulton Market; Chicago, IL 60607
Bloomington-Normal BG Club	Ride The Nine	Bloomington, IL	Monday-6:00 PM	Michael Flohr (mflohr0925@verizon.net)	309/662-7967	707 Broadmoor Drive; Bloomington, IL 61704
Midstate Backgammon Club	Ride The Nine	Bloomington, IL	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Ed Bauder (edbauder@yahoo.com)	309/830-1632	24949 E. 1900 North Rd.; Towanda, IL 61776
Peoria Backgammon Club	Peoria Pizza Works	Peoria, IL	Thursday-6:30 PM	Sue Will (wg2008@thezells.com)	309/699-6005	147 Field Grove Court; East Peoria, IL 61611
Sangamon Valley BG Association	Capitol Teletrack	Springfield, IL	Wednesday-6:00 PM	Randy Armstrong (randya1@comcast.net)	217/622-9447	2012 N. 20th Street; Springfield, IL 62702
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 (hooisierbackgammon@yahoo.com)	317/241-0605	1824 N. Auburn Street; Speedway, IN 46224
Northwest Indiana BG Association	VFW Hall	Porter, IN	2nd Sat. monthly-12:30 PM	Charlie Halberstadt (chbug@yahoo.com)	219/617-5566	P.O. Box 84; Westville, IN 46391
Flint Area Backgammon Club	Maxie's Food & Spirits	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	Victory Club	Ada, MI	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Bob Kamp (4thekamps@comcast.net)	616/956-1910	322 Clements Mill Court; Ada, MI 49301
Plymouth Backgammon Club	TC Gator's	Canton, MI	Wednesday-7:30 PM	Dean Adamian (deanadamian@gmail.com)	734/981-5706	42954 Barchester; Canton, MI 48187
Metro North Backgammon Club	Crash Landing	Warren, MI	Monday-6:30 PM	Paul Berg (p.berg@att.net)	313/330-7803	921 Winchester; Lincoln Park, MI 48146
Twin Cities Backgammon Club	Majors Sports Cafe	Golden Valley, MN	Thursday-7:00 PM	David Minikus (dminikus@comcast.net)	612/718-2613	6300 Phoenix St.; Golden Valley, MN 55427
Rochester Minnesota BG Club	Mickey's Irish Saloon	Rochester, MN	Wednesday-5:30 PM	Ray Bills (RayBills@ItsAboutTimeTheater.org)	507/280-8956	618 23rd Street NE; Rochester, MN 55906

(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
Kansas City BG Club-USBL	Lew's Grill & Bar	Kansas City, MO	1st & 3rd Tuesday-6:30 PM	Eric Barr (mister_eb@gmail.com)	816/237-8089	421 E. 65th Street; Kansas City, MO 64131
Ohio State Backgammon Club	Spaghetti Warehouse	Akron, OH	1st or 2nd Sun. monthly-2:00 PM	Joe Miller (osbc@neo.rr.com)	330/268-4610	1066 Winston Street; Akron, OH 44314
Dayton Backgammon Club-USBL	Barnes & Noble	Beavercreek, OH	Last Sun. monthly-12:45 PM	Teresa Wondery (MBackgammon@aol.com)	937/233-5786	5400 Pitaclair Rd.; Huber Heights, OH 45424
Miami Valley Backgammon Club	Parera Bread	Dayton, OH	2nd Sun. monthly-12:45 PM	Roger Foster (MVBBackgammon@woh.rr.com)	937/864-1748	4151 W. Enon Drive; Enon, OH 45323
Cincinnati BG Players Club	Metrople Coffee Company	Sharonville, OH	1st Sun. monthly-12:00 PM	Peter Carceri (pac417@cincybg.com)	401/286-7336	6926 Jerry Drive; West Chester, OH 45069
Dallas Backgammon League	IHOP	Addison, TX	Wednesday-8:00 PM	Tom Wheeler (zwheel@sbglobal.net)	972/484-3038	3705 Pageant Place; Dallas, TX 75244
Austin Backgammon Club	Doubletree Hotel	Austin, TX	Mon.-7:00 PM	Leslye Joy DeMoss (leslye@sp.com)	512/251-3719	5107 Gregg Lane; Manor, TX 78653
Madison Backgammon Club	Basie's - Radisson Hotel	Madison, WI	Tuesday-6:30 PM	Tom Machaj (tom.machaj@madisonbg.com)	608/516-9109	5313 Tolman Terrace; Madison, WI 53711
Milwaukee Backgammon Club	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	2nd Wednesday-7:00 PM	Bob Holyon (bhole64@yahoo.com)	414/530-9283	911 S. 11th Street; Milwaukee, WI 53204
Becket's Backgammon Club	Becket's Restaurant	Oshkosh, WI	Monday-7:00 PM	Kris Larson (weldon@becketrestaurant.com)	920/230-3333	1 City Center; Oshkosh, WI 54901

NORTHEAST

Baltimore Backgammon Club	Silver Spring Mining Restaurant	Perry Hall, MD	1st & 3rd Tuesday-7:00 PM	Vic Morawski (vmorawski@juno.com)	443/570-0400	3358 Hickory Ave.; Baltimore, MD 21211
New England Backgammon Club	Dockside Restaurant	Malden, MA	Sat. or Sun. monthly-12 PM	Herb Gurland (herb.gurland@gmail.com)	781/324-0892	62 Newman Road; Malden, MA 02148
Mid Jersey Backgammon Club	Town & Country Inn	Keypoint, NJ	Thursday-7:30 PM	Alan Grunwald (agwald@gmail.com)	732/598-2988	205 Doe Trail; Morganville, NJ 07751
Midtown Backgammon & Chess Club	Club Room	New York, NY	Daily-12 PM. Side play only.	Ben Flowers (flowers_ben@icloud.com)	212/575-2003	265 W. 37th Street 303; New York, NY 10018
Pair-O-Dice Backgammon	Così Restaurant	New York, NY	Sunday monthly-12:30 PM	Antoinette Williams (montecarloam@gmail.com)	917/538-7039	135 W. 106th Street #C; New York, NY 10025
NYC Backgammon	Visit nycdbg.com for location	Greater NYC area	Visit nycdbg.com for day & time	Rod Covlin (rod@nycdbg.com)	646/607-5802	PO Box 4668 #20370; New York, NY 10163

SOUTH

NW Alabama Backgammon Club	Demos Restaurant	Florence, AL	Monday-6:00 PM	John Ramm (johnrammiii@gmail.com)	615/427-9244	1507 Shadywood Ln.; Murfreesboro, TN 37130
Suncoast Backgammon Association	New York, New York Lounge	Clearwater, FL	Monday & Friday-6:30 PM	Bob Carpenter (gammont167@yahoo.com)	727/771-6544	1801 Eastlake Rd. 12E; Palm Harbor, FL 34685
South Florida Backgammon Club	NorthRidge Raw Bar	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Sat.-1 PM; Sun. mthly-1 PM	Elyne Feinstein (BGFfla210@bellsouth.net)	954/249-1416	649 W. Oakland Pk. #108A; Oakland Park, FL 33311
Tampa Bay Backgammon Club	Hampton Inn & Suites	Tarpon Springs, FL	Thursday-7:00 PM	Dimitur Alipiev (bgchump@yahoo.com)	727/786-9133	450 Hadley Drive; Palm Harbor, FL 34683
The Villages Backgammon Club	Chula Vista Rec. Center	The Villages, FL	Friday-12:00 PM	Michael Shedroff (feiffic2001@juno.com)	352/750-4914	1851 E. Schwartz Bl.; The Villages, FL 32159
Northside Backgammon Club	Tony's American Grille	Roswell, GA	Wednesday-7:00 pm	Jerry Godsey (jerrygod2000@hotmail.com)	770/612-0818	1795 High Trail; Atlanta, GA 30339
"	Varies; Contact director	Greater Atlanta area	Last Sunday monthly-2:00 PM	"	"	"
Louisville Backgammon Club	Fox and Hound Pub	Louisville, KY	1st & 3rd Tuesday-6:30 PM	Quint McTyeire (hnm@gdm.com)	502/587-3672	4906 Crofton Road; Louisville, KY 40207
New Orleans Backgammon Club	Flora's Cafe	New Orleans, LA	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Will Hurn (willhurn@cox.net)	504/366-7498	180 Willow Drive; Gretna, LA 70053
Charlotte Backgammon Club	Dilworth Neighborhood Grille	Charlotte, NC	Monday-7:00 PM	David Rogers (dasrtr@bellsouth.net)	704/965-3573	1701 Bonnie Lane; Charlotte, NC 28213
Durham/Chapel Hill BG Club	Jason's Deli	Durham, NC	Monday-6:00 PM	Ken Larsen (klarsen1@nc.rr.com)	919/942-8635	807 Emory Drive; Chapel Hill, NC 27517
Charleston Backgammon Society	Smokley Bones Bar & Fire Grill	N. Charleston, SC	Sunday-5:00 PM	Brett Meyer (mrhneyer@comcast.net)	843/532-5426	8058 Long Shadow Ln.; N. Charleston, SC 29406
Nashville Backgammon Association	Anatolia Turkish Restaurant	Nashville, TN	Monday-6:30 PM	Rollow Mickle (rollmick@comcast.net)	615/942-9979	1518 Compton Ave. #C; Nashville, TN 37212
No. Virginia Backgammon Club	Bailey's Pub & Grille	Arlington, VA	Monday-6:45 PM	Bill Pow (bill_22003@hotmail.com)	703/577-1927	9310 Hedgford St.; Manassas Park, VA 20111
Beltway Backgammon Club	O'Malley's Pub/Crowne Plaza	McLean, VA	18± Sundays/year -12:15 PM	Barry Silliman (sillybaz@beltwaybg.org)	240/674-7222	P.O. Box 612; Walkersville, MD 21793

CANADA

Natl'l Capital Backgammon Club	Puzzles Sports Bar	Ottawa, ON	1st Sun. mthly except Jul. & Aug. -10 AM	Eden Windish (Eden.Windish@hc-sc.gc.ca)	613/741-2530	396 Bangs St.; Ottawa ON, K1K 2N6; Canada
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**LESLIE STONE COREN
1958–2009**



Leslie Stone Coren playing in the 2000 Florida State Championship. [Photo by Diane Varner.]

Leslie A. Coren (Stone) passed away on 21 November 2009. She was a fine player and one of backgammon's galmour girls during the game's salad days (1977–1981).

Leslie's father, Tobias Stone, was instrumental in her interest in games including bridge, backgammon, and poker. Her greatest tournament success was winning

the Black & White Tournament in Boston in 1980.

Leslie was laid to rest at the Star of David Cemetery in North Lauderdale, Florida. She is survived by her daughter Alex.

LEE GENUD REMEMBERS LESLIE

Arriving at my first big backgammon tournament in 1972 in St. Maarten, I was surprised to observe a skinny 13-year-old girl beating famed player Al Tesoro for a lot of points with great talent and confidence. I later learned that she was the daughter of Bridge Champion, Tobias Stone, a long-time friend from my bride days.

Leslie and I grew to be close friends and traveled the world together attending major events. Leslie was also a great poker player well known for her stylish beauty and quick mind.

After I moved to Florida in 1986, our friendship renewed and I introduced her to her former husband, Richard Coren. She will be deeply missed by her many friends, of which I AM ONE.—*Lee Genud, Fort Lauderdale, Florida* [Lee was the world backgammon champion in 1981—Ed.]

Leslie Stone

"Who do you like better, my daughter or me?" That's Tobias Stone's best line when he catches someone staring open-mouthed at his daughter, Leslie — and who wouldn't look? She is undoubtedly the most stunning and chic woman on the backgammon circuit.

The Black & White Scotch people were elated when the photogenic Ms. Stone won the 1980 Boston Tournament (yes, of course, she can play). She learned by kibitzing many a bleary-eyed session at her father's home. In the intensity of the game, the players would forget about the time and Leslie, until the dawn would surprise everyone and she would be led off to bed. Today no one has to hold Ms. Stone's hand. She knows her game and plays to win.

"I love backgammon and I love music," she says. Her boyfriend is a well-known musician. "I have a lot of interests, such as tennis and rollerskating; but backgammon is my first love. I can beat the best because I learned from the best. I don't just play — I win." **



Leslie Stone enjoyed her status as backgammon's "it" girl, fueled by this photograph and article appearing in the Dec. 1980 Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine. Δ

2009 WORLDWIDE PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

NATIONAL (Alphabetized by State)

American BG Tour: Ray Foglerund (CA)
 NW Alabama BG Club (AL): John Ramm
 Arizona Backgammon Club (AZ): David Cohen
 Phoenix BG Club—USBL (AZ): Cherie Owens
 Gammon Associates (CA): Steve Sax
 BG By The Bay (CA): Mark Antranikian
 Boulder Backgammon Club (CO): Rich Siebold
 Colorado Backgammon Assoc.: Neville Kerr
 South Florida BG Club (FL): Neal Rosensweig
 Tampa Bay BG Club (FL): Jim Pascoe
 Northside BG Club (GA): Stuart Thomson
 Bloomington-Normal BG Club (IL): Scott Rudebeck
 Chicago Bar Point Club (IL): Rory Pascar
 Pub Club (IL): Don Marek
 Peoria Backgammon Club (IL): Nick Fady
 Sangamon Valley BG Assn. (IL): Jena Jennings
 Winnetka Backgammon Club (IL): Neil Banoff
 Hoosier Backgammon Club (IN): Jim Curtis
 Hoosier BG Club—USBL (IN): Jim Curtis
 NW Indiana Backgammon Assoc.: Dave Settles
 Louisville BG Club (KY): Jim Hatcher
 New Orleans BG Club (LA): Mike Weinberger
 Baltimore Backgammon Club (MD): Bill Counts
 Beltway BG Club (MD): Joe Freedman
 New England BG Club (MA): Alex Zamanian
 Flint Area BG Club (MI): Carol Joy Cole
 Grand Rapids BG Club (MI): Bob Kamp
 Plymouth Backgammon Club (MI): Gary Fritzsche
 Metro North BG Club (MI): Emil Mortuk
 Twin Cities BG Club (MN): Steve Brown
 Rochester Minn. BG Club (MN): Kieth Hvamstad
 Kansas City BG—USBL (MO): Kathleen Davis
 Sante Fe Backgammon Club (NM): Ed Bennett
 Charlotte BG Club (NC): Vadim Musaelyan
 Durham/Chapel Hill BG Club (NC): Ken Larsen
 Las Vegas Backgammon Club (NV): Cy Yehros
 Ohio State BG Club: Mike Hendrickson
 Miami Valley BG Club (OH): Roger Foster
 Cincinnati Player's Club (OH): Daniel Pehoushek
 Charleston BG Society (SC): Brett Meyer
 Nashville BG Assoc. (TN): Bob Weigal
 Dallas BG League (TX): Tom Wheeler
 No. Virginia BG Club (VA): Frank Raposa
 Puget Sound BG Club (WA): Karl Pearson
 Madison Backgammon Club (WI): Keene Marin

INTERNATIONAL

World Champion: Masayuki Mochizuki (JPN)
 WBF Golden Circuit: TBD
 EBGT European Champ: Frans Bergi (AUS)
 European Champion: Christos Groustos (GRE)
 Mitteleuropa Champ: Michele Muratori (ITA)
 BG Assoc. of So. Australia: Siegfried Pohlentz
 Danish Champion: Brian Pedersen
 Italian Champion: Fabio Gullotta
 French Champion: Olivier Lafon
 BIBA Grand Prix Champ (UK): Rachel Rhodes
 BIBA Ranking Champ (UK): Paul Gilbertson
 Nat'l Capital BG Club (Canada): Robert Lessard

CSI:
LISLE ★ MAR. 5–7, 2010

Wyndham Lisle room rates:
 \$85/night. Reserve by
 Feb. 19. 800-WYNDHAM

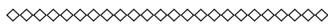
Info: 773/583-6464 or
 download an invitation at
chicagopoint.com/csi2010.html





BG Peeves

By Larry Liebster



SETTLEMENTS

In backgammon chouette play, a settlement is an action trying to resolve the game for one player before the end. I don't like settlements in chouette play.

You have all heard it: "I'll take two points," or "I'll give you three points."

I don't like this because:

1. It takes up the time of everyone in the chouette, not just the two players involved.
2. Over the table, there are only a few individuals who can accurately calculate the fair settlement.
3. The correct figure is usually a complicated fraction, making it difficult to score.

And if that figure must be rounded up or down, it means an unfair settlement has been reached.

4. The discussion of settlements can be used as a ploy to get a player to reveal his evaluation of the position. Example: I was in a four-man chouette. Two players had 8-cubes in a bear-off when each side had two or three men left. While both considered giving it back to me at 16, one of the players said, "I'll take four points."

This was a gross miscalculation of the position. My response was, "I will wait to answer until the other player declares his intention." Good poker player that I am, I was reluctant to reveal anything. When hearing this, the original player responded by withdrawing his inflated offer.

I believe that this kind of action borders on the illegal. If I capriciously handle the cube, it is considered turned. It should be the same with settlements. A settlement offer should remain in effect until either accepted or rejected.

To reach the proper settlement in any position, determine how many of the 36 dice rolls win, lose get gammoned, etc. Subtract the losses from the wins, multiply by the cube value, multiply by the stake, and divide by 36 (the number of dice rolls). This is your settlement figure. It's not rocket science, but it's not easy to calculate without paper and pencil, either.

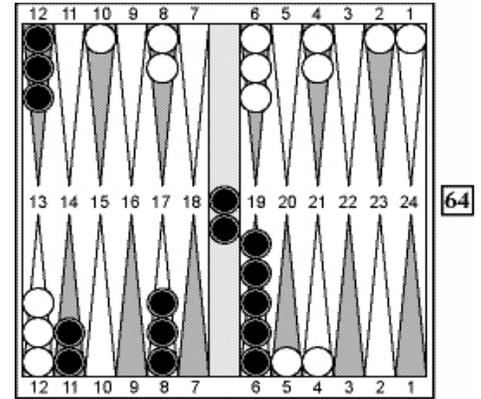
In my future chouettes, I will always ask the participants to agree to "no settlements." A chouette without them saves time, scorekeeping problems, and aggravation.—Larry Liebster Δ

CALIFORNIA...

[Continued from page 1]

With the 3, White will definitely hit 24/21*. With the 6, 21/15 is just about as good as 10/4. David is to be credited with finding an even better 6: hitting 8/2*.

POS. 2A. After White has played 24/21*, 8/2*.



It is frequently correct to hit loose while leaving two blots on high inner board points, but less often correct to leave two blots on low points.

If Black hits with an ace or deuce, White will be a favorite to make an advanced anchor. If Black rolls 1-1 or 2-2 (these are jokers for Black regardless of White's play), White has at least eleven numbers that make an advanced anchor, while Black has two checkers back on a deep anchor.

If Black rolls one of his twelve worst numbers (4-3, 4-4, 5-4, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, and 6-6), White will have a chance to blitz.

PASCAR IS BPC'S BEST FOR 2ND STRAIGHT YEAR

Rory Pascas is the Chicago Bar Point Club 2009 Player of the Year. It was his second title in as many years.



Rory Pascas: Chicago Bar Point Club's best in 2008 and 2009.

Although he won only one Player of the Month award (in March), Pascas avoided cold spells earning points at least twice in every month—a feat he has accomplished

for a record 24 straight months. He ended the year with 37.42 points.

As with last year, Pascas's greatest challenge came from 2007 POY David Rockwell. After ten months, Rockwell lead the 2009 race. But two big Consolation victories by Pascas in the Fall Trophy Tourney and the December Sunday bimonthly locked up the title. In finishing second, Rockwell still earned an impressive 33.80 points and has now finished third or higher at the Bar Point Club since 2004.

In third place with 29.68 points is our Player of the Decade Herb Roman. Between 2000 and 2009 Herb earned over 233 points and one Player of the Year title.

Rounding out the top six (who all qualify to play for the BPC at the Illinois State Challenge Cup 31 Jan. at Playoff's Bar in Carol Stream) are Lucky Nelson, Howard Markowitz, and Tak Morioka. But Herb Roman is unavailable, so seventh place finisher Bill Davis will fill in. Δ

OPEN CONSOLATION FINALS

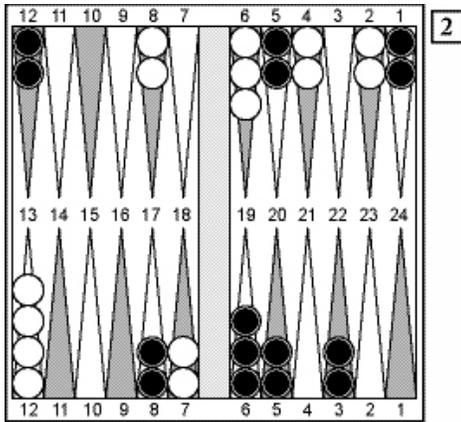
Stick Rice defeated Matt Cohn-Geier in the well-played Open Consolation finals. Computer ratings showed that Stick played 2.4 and Matt played 2.0—both incredible error rates. Matt also won the SuperJackpot.



Left: Super-32 Champ Matt Cohn Geier. Right: Open Consolation victor Stick Rice.

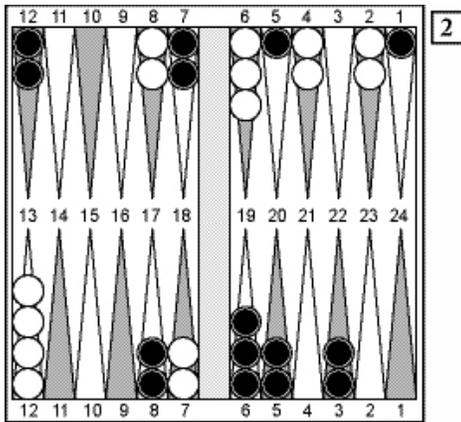
On the next page are three positions from their Consolation finals:

Pos. 3. 9-point Open Cons. finals. Stick Rice (Black) trails Matt Cohn-Geier (White) 0-4. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



The best play is shown in Position 3A.

POS. 3A. After Black has played 24/18, 20/18.

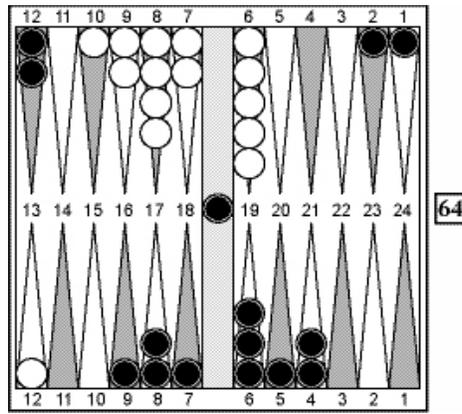


There is a tradeoff in swapping the 20-point for the 18-point. Black hits more shots from the 18-point, but he gives up the security of having an inside anchor and loses more gammons. Advancing to the 18-point is worth this risk.

Running to the 16-point (Stick's choice) also has its risks. White can hit not only with 4s, but also with 6-3.

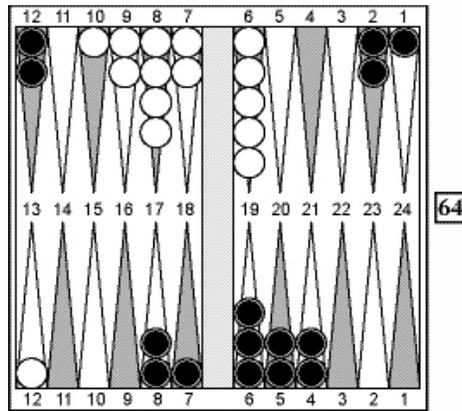
Although making the 18-point gives White four jokers (4-4, 3-3 and 3-1), White's 4-4 and 3-3 play very well regardless of Black's play. Making the 18-point has the advantage of giving White a bad 6-6, not only on White's next roll, but also for several rolls to come.

Pos. 4. Rice (Black) trails Cohn-Geier (White) 2-6 to 9. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-3.**



In most early game positions, Black should grab the highest anchor possible to diminish the chance of getting primed. However in Position 4, anchoring on the 23-point is better than Stick's play of making the 21-point:

POS. 4A. Bar/23, 9/5 (shown below) is better than making the 4-anchor.

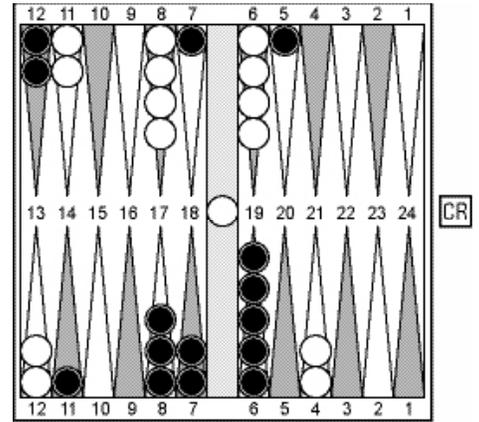


In Position 4, Black trails by 38 pips after the play while White has escaped his back checkers. Black must rely on hitting a shot to win the game, and owning the 23-point gives him a better chance of accomplishing this than owning the 21-point.

If White makes an inner board point with 1-1, 3-1, 5-1, 5-3, 4-2, 6-2, or 6-4 and gets hit with the ace, Black will have an excellent chance of priming White's checker.

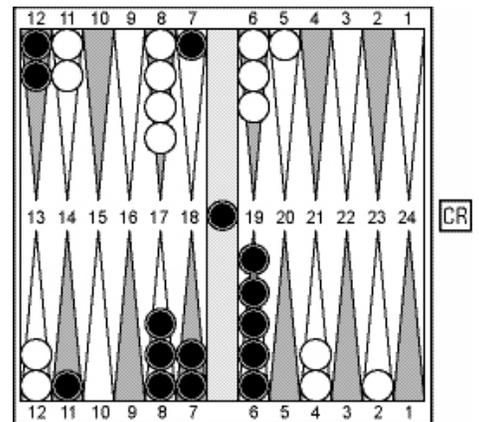
Surprisingly, Black increases his gammon-losing chances very little by anchoring on the 23-point instead of on the 21-point.

Pos. 5. Rice (Black) leads Cohn-Geier (White) 8-7 CR to 9. **WHITE TO PLAY 2-1.**



White will enter on the 23-point and then hit either on the 7- or 5-point. Matt hit on the 7-point. Position 5A shows the best play:

POS. 5A. Bar/23, 6/5* (shown below) is better than hitting on the bar point.



Hitting on the 5-point leaves fifteen shots and gives Black four additional numbers (6-1, 4-3) that anchor on the 18-point. This play gives Black a total of nineteen numbers that either hit or anchor.

Hitting on the 7-point leaves Black only thirteen return shots, which is two fewer shots than Black gets after White hits on the 5-point. However, hitting on the 7-point also gives Black eleven additional numbers that anchor.

Bar/23 8/7* gives Black a total of twenty-four numbers that either hit or anchor compared to only nineteen such numbers after B/23 6/5*. — Paul Weaver Δ

2009 CALIFORNIA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP—ABT

OPEN (57): 1-Joe Russell (CA), 2-David Rubin (IL), 3-Ray Fogelund (CA); 1C-Stick Rice (OH), 2C-Matt Cohn-Geier (CA), 3C/4C-Todd Crosner (AZ) / John O'Hagan (IN). ADVANCED (22): 1-Jennann Nakamura (CA), 2-Claudia Imatt

(CA); 1C-Peter Wisniewski (CA), 2C-Josh Racko (CA), 3C/4C-Fred Kamgar (CA) / Joe Nolan (NV). LIMITED (8): 1-Andy Platt (CA), 2-Susan Lee (AZ); 1C-Jacki Singleton (WI). SUPER 32 (32): 1-Neil Kazaross (IL), 2-Dorn Bishop (CA), 3/4-Bob Glass (CA) / Justin Nunez (CA). PAUL DINGWELL AMATEUR JACKPOT (16): 1-Peter Zacks

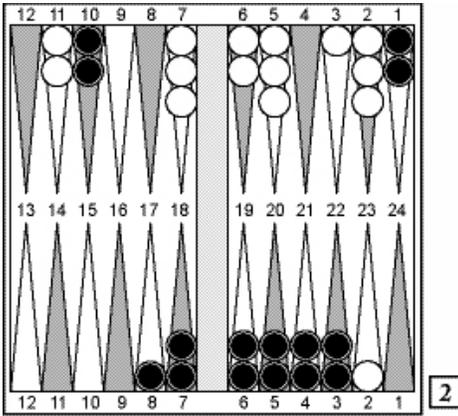
(CA), 2-Ed Rosenblum (NM). PAUL DINGWELL AMATEUR OVERFLOW (4): 1-George Haskour (CA). 2-POINT QUICKIES (32): 1-Ted Chee (CA). BLITZ (88): 1-Todd Crosner (AZ). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Harvey Gillis (WA) & Azzam Masarani (CA), 2-Jona Alexander (CA) & Nick Maffeo (CA).

last month's position

PROBLEM #350 ANALYZED

by Kit Woolsey

11-point match. Black leads White 9 to 6. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-3.**



If it weren't for the match score, the question wouldn't be whether or not to hit; the question would be which 3 to play after hitting loose with the 5. Every factor argues for hitting. You have the stronger inner board. You have more men back. You are behind in the race. Your opponent is threatening to escape his last back checker. Your opponent has a critical point slotted. Every factor except the score, that is. This is gammon save. Your opponent can use a gammon, while you cannot. Any hitting play is far more gammonish for both sides than a non-hitting play.

If you don't hit, there is only one

sensible play: 15/12, 15/10. The plan is very simple. White doesn't roll a 6, you complete the prime (or hit White's blot on the 3-point if you are lucky), and then you win the priming battle. Any play which involves lifting the blot on the 8-point without hitting is counter-productive. You want to make the prime if you aren't blitzing. Also, any play which lifts the blot involves breaking one of your other points.

Now, let's look at the hitting plays. 8/5, 7/2* has to be better than 7/4, 7/2*. The latter play duplicates your 2s when White misses. The checker on the bar point is a builder to attack on the ace point should White enter there. Also, by keeping the bar point slotted, Black retains the chance of making it. It is true that this play comes out considerably worse if White rolls specifically 1-6, but that is just one specific roll. On balance it has to be better.

Both 24/21 and 15/12 are better 3's if White flunks. 24/21 starts to extricate the back checkers, important since White does have his bar point. 15/12 gives Black a builder to make the bar or 8-point. The problem with both of these plays is simply that they leave too many blots. If White does enter with a hit, having those blots could be very ugly. It is better to hold onto the points Black has when he hits loose. So, 8/5 is the right 3 if Black is hitting loose.

Now to compare the two real candidates. 15/12, 15/10 is going to be bad if White does roll that 6. If White doesn't roll the 6, she will cover the blot on her 3-point most of the time. Black will have 2s and 4s to complete the prime, but he hasn't made it yet. Even

if Black does complete the prime, he still has work to do. White has two checkers on the 11-point and one spare on the bar point to play with; and once the checkers on the 11-point are brought home, White will be frozen on 6s. Thus, White has the better timing in the priming battle. Of course if Black completes the prime and then rolls a 3, he will be in very good shape. But if Black can't roll a 3 in a couple of rolls, he will be forced to break his prime to attack White's blot. In that case, it is anyone's game.

What happens after the loose hit? If White flunks, that is great. Black has 3s and 5s to cover, and 2s to hit White's other blot. Black will be a big favorite. If White does enter with a hit, Black still has a shot at the blot on White's 3-point from the bar unless White rolls a miracle hit-and-cover number. Black will still have his four-prime which White will have to escape over. Even when everything goes wrong, Black will have his strong board, his anchor, his point in the outfield, and White's open 4-point. These will give Black a playable game.

It looks to me as though the loose hit is going win more often. It will probably get gammoned more often also, but the other play isn't exactly gammon-free. I think the extra wins outweigh the extra gammons, so I would go with 8/5, 7/2*.

There are many positions where your play is altered by the match score, particularly if one side can use a gammon while the other can't. However, you still have to play backgammon. The play which wins more gammons may also be the play which wins more games.—Kit Woolsey Δ

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WINNER'S CIRCLE



NOV.–JAN. 2010

•**New England Club Bonus** (Malden, MA; 14 Nov.)...OPEN: 1-Matt Reklaitis, 2-Ann Bidner; 1C-Alex Zamanian, 2C-Herb Gurland.

•**Gilbertson UK Finals** (Oxford, England; 4-6 Dec.)...OPEN (49): 1-Jon Barnes, 2-Marcus Wrinch, 3/4-Tony Fawcett / David Startin; 1C-Paul Christmas, 2C-Lawrence Powell; 1LC-David Startin, 2LC-Peter Christmas. SNOWBALL (10): 1-Brian Metcalf, 2-David Motley. CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS: Jon Barnes. FRIDAY 500 (16): 1-David Nathan, 2-Tom Duggan, 3/4-Jeff Barber / Gerry Enslin. FRIDAY 500 GRAND FINALE: 1-Tom Duggan, 2-Paul Gilbertson. TEAMS (9): 1-Simon Morecroft, 2-Martin Blindell. POKER (19): 1/2/3-Raj Jansari / Edie Barker / Lawrence Powell. UK BLITZ (32): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-Jon Barnes. JACKPOT #1 (8): 10-Rachel Rhodes. JACKPOT #2 (8): 1-Richard Biddle. ROSEY'S ROLLOUT: Steve Wiltsher.

•**Springfield Series #3** (Peoria, IL; 5 Dec.)... OPEN (19): 1-Vinton Knarr, 2-Michael Flohr; 1C-Ramez Abi-Akar, 2C-Faddoul Khouri; 1LC-Sean Garber (IN). KNARLY BOARD QUALIFIER: Cliff Mayoh.

•**New England Club Monthly** (Malden, MA; 5 Dec.)...OPEN (16): 1-Greg Jukins, 2-Herb Gurland; 1C-Eric Wicklund, 2C-Patty Geoffroy.

•**Pair-O-Dice Monthly** (New York, NY; 13 Dec.)... OPEN (17): 1-Victor Ashkenazi NJ, 2-AI Hodis; 1C/2C-Boris Golubov / Nasser Sedaghatpour. INTERMEDIATE (2): 1-Vincent Reece.

•**Christmas Open** (Pattaya, Thailand; 26-29 Dec.)... OPEN (23): 1-Joe Somjai (THI), 2-Lars Hammargren (SWE).

•**Thailand Open** (Pattaya, Thailand; 2-3 Jan.)... OPEN (21): 1-Jerzy Behnke (GER), 2-Mika Laukanen (FIN); 1C-Werner Schmuck (GER).

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Akron, OH; 3 Jan.)... OPEN (6): 1-Michael Brown, 2-Mark Hendrickson.

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

for the iPhone and iPod Touch.

Bingo. I got it!! It is great to play on the train ride home every night. Thanks to Richard for mentioning it. Backgammon NJ is an excellent practice game.— *Andrew Liebenthal, Monroe Township, New Jersey*

VANITY REQUEST

As a matter of personal vanity, could you either confirm or correct my impressions on two points: First, I believe I am the only Alaskan to have won even a fraction of a point at an American Backgammon Tour event in 2009. Second, I believe I may be the only Alaskan ever to have cashed in an ABT tournament.

Assuming that my professional responsibilities with the State of Alaska Department of Law do not preempt me at the last moment, I am planning to be in Santa Fe at the end of January. Perhaps I will see you there.— *Robert Stoller, Anchorage, Alaska*

You are correct on both points, Robert. It's quite a trip from Alaska to the lower 48. Hope you can attend a few more ABT tournaments in 2009. What about The Central States Invitational (CSI) 5-7 March in the Chicagoland area? — Ed.

WE KNOW OF ONE

Do you happen to know of any backgammon cruises coming up in the near future? — *David Friedman, via e-mail*

We just happen to know of one, David: Backgammon & Poker On Board X. It will be held Jan. 22-29, 2011, so you'll have to fight the ice and snow this year. Reserve now and you'll have something warm to look forward to throughout 2010! Your deposit is refundable. Call Sue Will for details: 309/699-6005 or cruiserbag@comcast.net.— Ed. Δ

AMALGAMATION

Bravo! Director **Chiva Taffazzoli** has moved the May 13-16 US Open from dingy Fresno, CA to the Embassy Suites in San Francisco. Room rates will be under \$100/night. When the US Open permanently moves to **Martin Luther King** Birthday weekend in Fort Lauderdale in 2011, look for an annual event in San Fran to remain on the ABT circuit... **Phil Simborg** and **Carter Mattig** inform us that the Chicago Backgammon Association is changing nights. Effective in February, the club will meet at the Parthenon on Thursdays at 6:15. All the US and Canadian clubs are updated in this issue... Super Bowl Saturday is a great day for a backgammon tournament. If you're in Chicago, make sure you attend



Brent Cohen

the BPC Doubles Club Championship at the Holiday Inn O'Hare. 12 noon start... Pictured at left: Mid-Atlantic champ Brent Cohen. We left out his pic last month... Chicago's famed Pump Room opened in 1938. Now word comes that the Ambassador East Hotel is closing their restaurant the end of January. Because it was the home of the Anti-Cruelty (jacket & tie) Backgammon Invitational, the event's

status is uncertain... Thats to docs.google.com, the entire all-time ABT spreadsheet (1993-2009) is online. Find the link at www.chicagopoint.com/abtalltime.html... And although the all-time Chicagoland master point spreadsheet (1975-2009) is too large to upload online, we can send it to you in Excel. Simply email us with your request (bg@chicagopoint.com)... Actress **April Scott** has appeared



April Scott

on the *Shield*, *CSI: Miami*, and *Entourage*. She was also a *Deal Or No Deal* model during the premiere season. April has been ranked by both *Maxim* and *FHM* magazines as one of the 100 hottest women in the world. And in addition, she enjoys backgammon!... Just before the holidays, 2008 US Open tennis finalist **Andy Murray** split with his girlfriend of four years **Kim Sears**. The UK's *Daily Record* reports that the British couple "...did not live a champagne lifestyle, preferring to play Scrabble and backgammon." Δ

New Year's Resolution: Cruise in 2011

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How to prepare for Clocked Backgammon Matches



By Phil Simborg

Tournament backgammon around the world is about to change in one major way: clocks. Clocks are going to be used extensively, and eventually, they will probably be required use at all tournaments and at all levels of play (except possibly novice).

Personally, I find this an excellent development; not just to help ensure that the tournament runs on time and people won't have to sit around until 2:00 A.M. waiting for their next match, but because I believe it improves the game itself. I can't think of anything more boring for players and spectators than watching someone take forever to make a play. I also believe that anyone who takes a longer time to make a move is more likely to make a better play, so it's simply not fair if someone isn't penalized for taking too long. Can you imagine how boring a football game would be if the coaches had unlimited time between plays to decide what they should do?

So like it or not, accept the fact that we will be playing with clocks, get used to it, learn the rules applicable, get yourself a good clock you are comfortable using and bring it with you.

In a typical match, you are given two minutes for each point of the match, so if you have a seven point match, you have 14 minutes to play. You also have 12 seconds of free time at the beginning of each turn before the clock starts running, so it is possible to play an entire match using up no time at all.

I have seen people do this . . . play an entire match and hardly use up any of their time on the clock. Usually, they are proud of their accomplishment. They shouldn't be. It is foolish not to use *most* of your time up in a match. Again, the more time you use to consider your options, the more likely you are to come up with the best play or decision.

The problem is obvious: if you take too much time at the beginning of the match, you might not have enough left at the end to fully consider important decisions. So it is clear that while we need to use our time when we need it, we also have to be careful to save enough in case we need it later. And of course, if we use up all our time and the clock expires, no matter what the score, we lose the match!

So here are my suggestions that might help you use your time more efficiently:

1. First, as stated above, make sure you know the clock rules and are familiar with

the clock you are using.

2. Make sure the clock is placed where you can comfortably use it. Some people are left handed and simply much more comfortable if the clock is on one side of the board or the other.

3. While decisions at the beginning of the match could be very important, always keep in mind that the ones at the end of the match are often more important, so as a general rule, take less time on tough plays in the early games so that you will reserve more time for the later games.

4. Prepare yourself mentally as much as possible before the match starts. Of course, this is critical whether you use a clock or not, but the more you know the take points and price of gammons and match equities before you sit down, the less time you will have to take over the board to calculate these numbers.



"I can't think of anything more boring for players and spectators than watching someone take forever to make a play."

5. Use the time between games well. The clock doesn't run between games, and you should use that time to think about the score, your strategy at that score, what your likely cube action should be, your take points and your opponent's take points, value of gammons. *All of these factors* can affect even your opening move, so clock or not, these factors should be clear in your mind before you roll the opening die. If you don't work these things out when the clock is not running, you will waste valuable time doing it when the clock is running.

6. Make good use of the time when your opponent is on the clock. When he's playing, that is not a time to be sleeping. Think about your cube action if he leaves you a shot; think about what numbers you need to hit him; think about your overall goals and strategy. You can also use that time to count pips . . . at the very least, count your own side of the race and then, after he moves, you only have to count his side.

7. If you haven't already, take time to learn

the shortcuts to pip counting. There are people like Karen Davis, Jack Kissane, and Bob Zavoral who can count any position in a matter of a few seconds. You don't have to be that good, but they prove that with effective pip counting strategies and practice, you can certainly do this very quickly. If you take a long time to count the race you will either use up valuable time doing it, or like most, you just won't do it at all at times when you should know the count.

8. Learn other shortcuts and time savers. Do you know that if your opponent has a blot 6-away that's 17 shots? If you can hit with a 6 or 1, that's 24 shots. If there are three open points in your board, his checker on the bar enters with 27 rolls. There are six ways to roll a 7 or 8. If you have to stop and count shots and count odds every time, again, you will be using up valuable time. The more short cuts you have the more time you will have to work consider important checker and cube decisions.

9. Practice your math skills. People who are afraid of math simply don't do it. But when you are playing over the board you often have to estimate odds, the race, take points, gammons times gammon price, and many other calculations. Jake Jacobs can multiply two 6-digit numbers together in his head. You don't have to be like Jake to estimate that if you get gammoned 30% of the time and if the price of gammons is .5 that your gammon price is 15, and that you should subtract that from the 35% wins you have estimated, and that equals 20. If your take point is lower than 20 at this score, you take, otherwise, drop. How long it takes you to do these estimates and calculations in your head is more a matter of practice than it is of skill. So practice! The more you do it the faster and easier it will be.

10. Apply MCV (Most Common Variation) to your reasoning over the board. Don't waste a lot of time counting pips if the race is not a critical factor in your checker or cube decision. Spend your time thinking about what is most likely to happen and don't spend too much time figuring out what you would do if he rolls the 1 out of 36 joker. If you have two plays and you are pretty sure the plays are close, take your best shot . . . why spent a lot of your valuable time if the difference between the plays is very close?

11. Lastly, relax. Two minutes per point with the delay is really a lot of time. You don't have to hurry. Keep your eye on the clock and be aware of the time, but unless you take an excessive amount of time on a few moves, you should never have a problem.—Phil Simborg Δ