

nevada state tournament

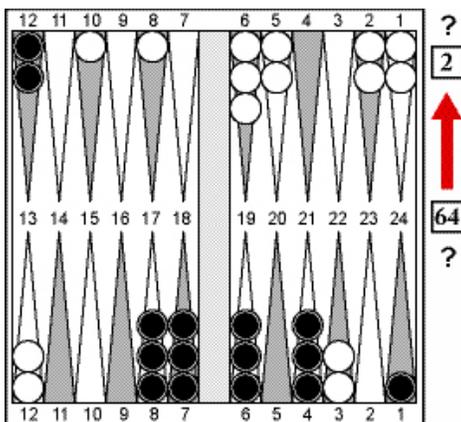
## GIBSON IN CHARGE IN NEVADA

Patrick Gibson (CA), is for real. The Gammon Associates "MFIC" director defeated backgammon giants Joe Russell (CA) in the semifinals and Stick Rice (OH) in the finals to capture the 26th Nevada State Tournament. Howard Markowitz of the Nevada Backgammon Association directed the event that drew 119 players to the Las Vegas Riviera Hotel 14–18 April.

Although he currently ranks as the #7 Giant of Backgammon, Stick Rice has been unable to win an ABT event over the past four years. And Patrick was determined to keep that losing streak alive. The MFIC leaped out to an 8–0 lead in the 15 point finals to which David Rubin jokingly posted at [bgonline.org](http://bgonline.org): "So now it's even money?!"

In fact, David's words seemed to ring true. With Stick leading MFIC 13–11. Gibson doubled here:

Nevada State 15 point finals. Stick Rice (White) leads Patrick Gibson (Black) 13 to 11. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



This is a great double by Patrick, and according to the rollouts, a razor-thin take for Stick. In fact Stick did take the double but here is where he should have played his opponent and dropped. When Stick, the superior player, takes this double, there are no more cube decisions. Additionally, it's a straight-forward game for Patrick to bring

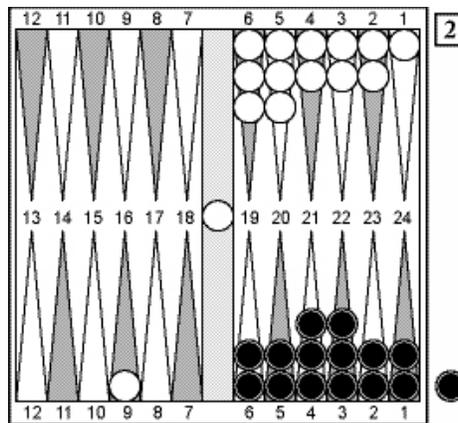


Patrick Gibson (L) shares a lighter moment with Stick Rice in the Nevada State Championship finals. [Photo: Carol Joy Cole]

home. Dropping this optional cube, and playing from the more complicated score of 13–12 seems like the best approach.

Fast forward in the same game to this position:

Nevada State 15 point finals. Stick Rice (White) leads Patrick Gibson (Black) 13 to 11. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-2.**



MFIC judged gammons to be few and far between and played the super-safe 6/4, 6/3. This is a clear error. Patrick can win nearly 7% more gammons (16% vs. 9%) by playing 4/2, 3/off. But Stick entered immediately so it looked like the match would even out at 13-all. As the dice gods would have it, Patrick managed a salty gammon to capture the Nevada State title 15–13. Once again for Stick Rice, it was close, but no cigar.

Playing alone, Stick did manage to win the Doubles competition so he still had a terrific tournament. Props go to Intermediate winner Scott Cole (NV), Beginner

champ Johnny Jigamian. In the Jackpots, Petko Kostadinov (SC) defeated Joe Russell in the \$2000 Super Jackpot finals. And Gil Evans topped Sam Ahmed in the \$1000 Limited Jackpot.

In a sign of the times, the largest tournament of the weekend was the Senior's Event. It generated 128 entries and was won by Jona Alexander.

Although attendance at this tournament was at a record low, look for a huge increase in the Fall when Bally's Hotel plays host to the Las Vegas Open. *Complete results:* Δ

### 26TH NEVADA STATE TOURNAMENT

CHAMPIONSHIP (54+24 rebuys): 1-Patrick Gibson (CA), 2-Stick Rice (OH), 3/4-Joe Russell (CA) / Gary Schachtschneider (NV); 1C-Ary Nogueira (Brazil), 2C-Tom Wheeler (TX), 3C/4C-Greg Cottle (NV) / Paul Weaver (AL); 1LC-Ken Bame (CA), 2LC-Larry Taylor (GA). INTERMEDIATE (60+18 rebuys): 1-Scott Cole (NV), 2-Lynn Ehrlich (NY), 3/4-Jesse Eaton (MN) / Elli Nache (CA); 1C-Damon Singer (NV), 2C-Lynda Clay (CO), 3C/4C-Sergiy Rybiy (NY) / David Taniguchi (CA); 1LC-Aaron Foust (NV), 2LC-Daniel Stroberger (WA). BEGINNER (5): 1-Johnny Jigamian (NV). SUPER JACKPOT (14 @ \$2,000): 1-Petko Kostadinov (SC), 2-Joe Russell (CA). LTD. JACKPOT (16 @ \$1,000): 1-Gil Evans (NH), 2-Sam Ahmed (CA/Egypt). SENIORS TOURNAMENT (128): 1-Jona Alexander (CA), 2-Randi Sachar (NY), 3/4-Ray Foglerund (CA) / Bob Schumacher (MN). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Stick Rice (OH), 2-Ary Nogueira (Brazil) & Andrea Quadros (Brazil). BLITZ (128): 1-Jason Lee (NV), 2-Tom Horton (CA). \$400 OPEN JP (7): 1-Drew Giovanis (NV), 2-Ted Chee (CA). \$300 SATURDAY JP (8): 1-Ai Hodis (NY), 2-Ray Foglerund (CA). \$150 SATURDAY JP (20): 1-Larry Arnold (MN), 2-Ted Chee (CA). \$50 BEGINNER JP (7): 1-George Photias (NV), 2-Julian Stelica (NY). 2-PT. MINI-MATCH (64): 1-Ted Chee (CA), 2-Ray Foglerund (CA). \$100 SUNDAY JP #1 (8): 1-Nicky Niknam (CA). #2 (8): 1-Tom Zarrinam (CA). #3 (8): 1-Stepan Nuniyants (WA). AFTER TOURNAMENT TOURNAMENT \$50 (24): 1-Tom Wheeler (TX), 2-Ray Foglerund (CA). \$20 (8): 1-Tom Horton (CA), 2-Susan Randall (FL).

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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### "NORIC" OPEN?

Good issue as usual but plagued with a small amount of errors. On the front page, you said Crystal Beaver winner Malcolm Davis was on the right, but actually he was on the left. And what is the "Noric" Open that you describe in Amalgamation? It's the "Nordic" Open.—*Lucky Nelson, Arlington Heights, Illinois*

*Yes Lucky, we did refer to it as the "Noric" Open. But correct us if we're wrong: the Scandinavian country up there is called called "Norway," not "Nordway." So there.—Ed. :-)*

### UNUSUAL POSITION ERRORS

Phil Simborg's "Unusual Position Quiz" certainly has some interesting positions! However numbers eight and nine have errors. The solutions offered for eight don't match the question. And the answer to

[Continued on page 3]

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



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

\*Denotes new or revised listing

### NATIONAL

*American Backgammon Tour events underlined.*

May 7*	Portland Club Monthly, Spring Creek Coffee House, Milwaukie, Oregon	503/515-5682
May 8	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Peking Express, Berkeley, California	831/261-4583
May 8	New England Bonus, Dockside Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
May 8	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
May 9	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
May 11*	Teakwoods Club Monthly, Teakwoods Tavern, Phoenix, Arizona	480/286-8239
May 13-16	<u>WBGT: 2nd US Open, Embassy Suites Airport, So. San Francisco, California</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
May 15*	2nd Annual Whatcom Benefit, Boundary Bay Brewery, Bellingham, Washington	360/676-0122
May 16*	Bellingham Monthly, Pacific Martial Arts, Bellingham, Washington	360/733-6173
May 16*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Panera Bread, Dayton, Ohio	937/864-1748
May 20*	Third Thursday Bonus (Chicago Open), Liquid Sports Bar, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
May 22*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/261-4583
May 23*	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Lincoln Center Atrium, New York, New York	212/222-7177
May 28-31	<u>Chicago Open, Holiday Inn &amp; Suites-O'Hare, Rosemont, Illinois</u>	<u>617/699-9100</u>
Jun 4*	Portland Club Monthly, Spring Creek Coffee House, Milwaukie, Oregon	503/515-5682
Jun 5*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Peking Express, Berkeley, California	831/261-4583
Jun 6*	Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Holiday Inn-O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Jun 6*	Cincinnati Club Monthly Tournament, Max & Erma's, Sharonville, Ohio	513/807-6926
Jun 6*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Spaghetti Warehouse, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Jun 8*	Teakwoods Club Monthly, Teakwoods Tavern, Phoenix, Arizona	480/286-8239
Jun 11-13	<u>Los Angeles Open, Airtel Hotel, Van Nuys, California</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Jun 12*	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Jun 12*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Panera Bread, Dayton, Ohio	937/864-1748
Jun 12*	New England Monthly & Playoffs, Dockside Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	781/324-0892
Jun 12*	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Jun 12*	Tampa Bay Club Monthly, Hampton Inn, Tarpon Springs, Florida	727/786-9133
Jun 13*	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Lincoln Center Atrium, New York, New York	212/222-7177
Jun 30*	Michigan Summer Warm-up, Sheraton Hotel, Novi, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 1-4	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton Novi, Novi, Michigan</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Jul 23-25	<u>15th Minnesota Open, Courtyard by Marriott, Bloomington, Minnesota</u>	<u>612/718-2613</u>
Jul 30-Aug 1	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	<u>585/396-0969</u>
Aug 19-22*	<u>Florida State Championships, Marriott Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida</u>	<u>954/249-1416</u>
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

May 6-9	EBGT: 2nd Cyprus Open, Hotel-Casino Golden Tulip, Nicosia, Cyprus	491715-422222
May 7-9	County Cups Trophy, Barceló Hotel, Hinckley Island, England	441522-888676
May 14-16	15th Oslo Open, Bridgesenter Vest, Oslo, Norway	4797-513941
May 15-16	CBT: 1st Dubrovnik Backgammon Open, Hotel Adriatic, Dubrovnik, Croatia	38598-345135
May 15-16	TBT: 4th Izmir Open/WBF-TR, Izmir, Turkey	905332-352555
May 21-24	15th Kaiserbrunnen-Cup, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
May 28-30*	TBT: Mediterranean Open/WBF-TR, Sealife Resort, Antalya, Turkey	905332-352555
May 28-31*	POSTPONED: WBGT/ESOB: 2nd London Open, London, England	442077-001798
May 29-30	SBTT: 1st Flumserberg Open, Hotel Siesta, Flumserberg, Switzerland	4179-3584825
May 29-30	14th Rotterdam Open, Café oKay, Rotterdam, The Netherlands	31653-579164
Jun 4-6	English Open, Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Jun 5-6	Istavder Istanbul Championship #13, Green Park Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey	905324-279454
Jun 11-13	Austrian Masters Grand Finale, Montesino, Vienna, Austria	436642-127412
Jun 12-13	TBT: 16th Istanbul Championship/WBF-TR, Merter Gunes Hotel, Turkey	905322-329228
Jun 17-24	ESOB: Zakynthos Festival/BG & Poker, Peligoni Club, Zakynthos, Greece	447946-801801
Jun 18-20*	2nd Torneo del Mediterraneo, Hotel Fontane Bianche, Siracusa, Italy	393388-022946
Jun 19-20	SBTT: Swiss Club Championships/Montreux Open, Switzerland	4179-3584825
Jun 23-27	EBGT: 5th Portuguese Open & Doubles, SANA Hotel, Estoril, Portugal	491715-422222
Jun 26-27	CBT: Bol Backgammon Open 2010, Bol na Bracu, Croatia	38598-456788
Jul 2-4	ESOB: BIBA World Championship, Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel, UK	441522-888676
Jul 11-18	35th World Championship, Fairmont Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 212/222-7177
Jul 16-18*	Festival of Games 7th Czech Open, CEZ Arena, Pardubice, Czech Republic	420602-222282
Jul 20-25*	ESOB: 7th Riviera & Nations Cup, Pullman Mandelieu, Cannes, France	336-75841247
Aug 6-8*	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Barceló Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Aug 7-8*	TBT: 5th Karadeniz Championship/WBF-TR, Kordon Café, Eregli, Turkey	905332-352555

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

number nine is clearly incorrect; it ought to be no redouble/beaver, but the answer given is redouble/drop.

Perhaps the editor had his eyes on the picture of the flexible female when he was transcribing the quiz?—*Jake Jacobs, Thailand*

*We'd argue if we could, Jake. Chris Bray wrote us that the answer to Question 2*

*should be C and both 9 and 10 are "No Redouble/Beaver."—Ed.*

## PRAISE FROM GREECE

I just received CHICAGO POINT issue 218. Very interesting! Keep up the good work.—*Jim Caray; Athens, Greece*

## HEIL BACKGAMMON

Attached are pics of an early 1930s backgammon board I'm interested in selling. If nobody in the BG community is interested,

I will be offering it on eBay. The board measures 15.5" x 8" x 2.25". The checkers are made of some kind of plastic (probably not bakelite) and measure 1" x 0.25". The checkers are impressed with a swastika design on one side, and a rosette pattern on the other. My research on this item indicates it is probably NOT Nazi-related, but rather refers to an ancient meaning of the swastika as a symbol of good fortune.

If anyone is interested, they can email me at the following address. I'd like to get at least \$50.—*Robert Stone, rq6146@gmail.com*



## AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2010

Compiled through 2 May 2010 after 7 tournaments

(Upcoming events: US Open, Chicago Open, LA Open)



John O'Hagan	26.67	Ray Foglerlund	6.22	Bob Hickey	3.60	Randi Sachar	1.52
Gary Fries	25.20	Paul Polatov	6.07	Steve Nelson	3.20	Lyle Rubin	1.50
Ed O'Laughlin	18.31	Bob Weigel	5.40	Barry Silliman	3.15	Tom Duggan	1.35
Bob Steen	17.33	Donny Lomuto	5.17	Al Faller	3.15	Kate Elmore	1.35
Gary Bauer	16.78	Glenn Ramsey	5.17	David Rockwell	3.11	Lynn Lusk	1.33
David Rubin	16.77	Carter Mattig	5.04	Garry Kallos	3.04	Johnny Jigamian	1.25
Patrick Gibson	16.00	Lynda Clay	4.89	Damian Plesec	3.04	Julie Schifferle	1.22
Jesse Eaton	13.29	Jeremy Bagai	4.50	Rob Reynolds	2.70	Wendy Russell	1.22
Mike Senkiewicz	12.80	Mark Andrus	4.50	Terry Seymour	2.70	Molly Bennett	1.14
Sean Garber	12.60	Sergiy Rybiy	4.45	Ed Johnson	2.58	David Tanaguchi	1.11
Paul Weaver	11.00	Lynn Ehrlich	4.44	Ryan Hast	2.58	Daniel Stroberger	1.11
Patty Geoffroy	10.33	Damon Singer	4.44	Sheri Peters	2.44	Alicia Araya	1.00
Mel Rappaport	10.08	Sal Chehayeb	4.38	Ben McCracken	2.29	Mihai Pop	1.00
Dorn Bishop	9.00	Faddoul Khoury	4.33	Aaron Foust	2.22	Randy Pals	1.00
Scott Cole	8.89	Lucky Nelson	4.33	Elli Nache	2.22	Jenna Longman	0.83
Stick Rice	8.00	Mark Antranikian	4.33	Adrian Rios	2.10	Pete Anderson	0.76
Ary Nogueira	8.00	Dujuan Meekins	4.20	Richard Stawowy	2.10	Martha Ghio	0.76
Al Hodis	7.56	Ken Tyszko	4.20	Larry Taylor	2.00	Fran Miller	0.61
Richard Munitz	7.56	Joe Russell	4.00	Terry Weiss	2.00	Sara Piazza	0.57
Greg Cottle	7.33	Gary Schachtschneider	4.00	Steve Mellen	1.89	Stephen Brady	0.50
Prince Barlow	7.20	Tom Wheeler	4.00	Dave Kiurski	1.80	Holly Brososky	0.50
Rory Pascar	6.93	Ken Bame	4.00	David Shaerf	1.67	Tim Turner	0.50
Jerry Godsey	6.40	Rick Barabino	3.78	Fred Fado	1.52	D. Sculley	0.50
Mike Corbett	6.40	Michelin Chabot	3.78	Jason Pack	1.52	Donna Davenport	0.50
Gregg Cattanach	6.30	John Baron	3.60	Marcy Kossar	1.52		



1930s set with swastika checkers. Almost certainly not Nazi related.

## TAKI'S PADDED SURFACE

I've been looking to refurbish an old board and would like very much to do it in like kind material as used in the Taki-board. Can you get me some advice as to what kind of rubber underliner is used beneath the material for better action dice rolls? Also, what adhesive was used to apply the material to the rubber underliner?—*Casey Cullers, via email*

*Tak Morioka answers: You can get the foam padding that about 1/8" in thickness and*

[Continued on page 4]



## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2010 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED  
THRU 30 APR.

Bill Bartholomay	10.56	Eric Johnson	4.88	Steve Klesker	2.48	Mark Murray	1.28
Phil Simborg	10.40	Bob Steen	4.72	Ken Tibbs	2.32	Shaw Dogan	1.28
Rory Pascar	9.60	Herb Roman	4.64	Amy Trudeau	2.24	Wendy Kaplan	1.28
Tim Mabee	9.28	Reginald Porter	4.36	J. A. Miller	2.20	Lucky Nelson	1.28
Michael Ginat	8.04	Christopher Shanava	4.16	Peter Kalba	2.04	Alex Aliyev	1.04
Dave Settles	6.96	Tak Morioka	3.60	Mitch Pomper	2.00	John Spatafora	0.96
Julius High	6.80	Georgina Flanagan	3.52	John Gaski	1.92	Paul Baraz	0.88
Nora Luna Righter	6.40	Mike Minkovski	3.36	Gary Kay	1.92	Mihai Pop	0.80
Howard Markowitz	6.16	Mike Peters	3.16	Jerry Brooks	1.84	Stefan Pop	0.72
Bill Keefe	5.64	Carter Mattig	2.88	Royal Robinson	1.68	Richard Pearlman	0.64
Mike Sutton	5.64	Mike Wolock	2.88	Adrian Rios	1.60	Scott Casty	0.48
Bill Davis	5.52	Dujuan Meekins	2.64	Ralf Boettger	1.56	Linda Rockwell	0.48
Wayne Wiest	5.04	Serge Bondar	2.56	Alice Kay	1.48	Beth Whitney	0.48
Larry Goldstein	4.92	David Rockwell	2.56	Dan Weymouth	1.44	Kwong Chan	0.48
						Paul Lombardo	0.48

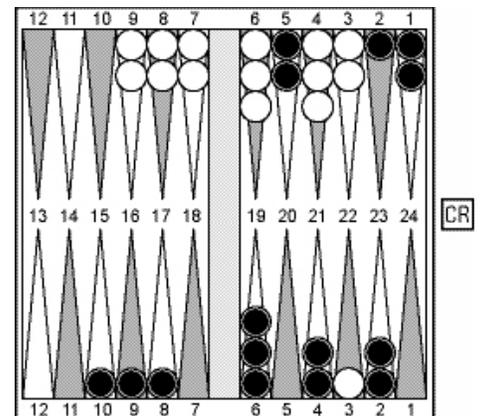
**MICHAEL GINAT** came on strong earning 5.28 points to grab April Player of the Month. Following close behind were club leader Bill Bartholomay (4.24) and Dave Settles (3.36).

your move

## PROBLEM #354

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

11-point match. Black leads White 10 to 8 Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-1.**



## THE UNAIDED EYE

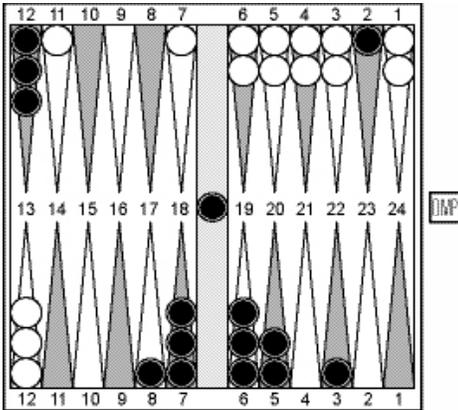


© 2010 by Danny Kleinman

### WHICH 5 AT DMP?

Dear Danny: I faced the following problem at my local club's Sunday monthly event.

Tournament double match point.  
**BLACK TO PLAY 5-2.**



The deuce entered, so the only question was how to play the 5. I checked out each of the five possible plays before making my choice. I'm not going to tell you the move I made, but I can say that it was in the top three and all of the top three are relatively close.

I know what Snowie now says about this play. But that doesn't help me over the board. How would you tackle this problem?—*Hungry to Learn*

**DEAR HUNGRY:** In chouette play or at the start of a match, I wouldn't take more than a few seconds to choose my play. Out-boarded 5-to-2, with a danger of losing a gammon I would reject hitting 23/18\* from fear of the 26 rolls that hit back. I would stay anchored on the deucepoint and prepare for a shot that could turn the game around later, when a stronger board or longer prime would provide a better chance of containing the opposing blot after I hit. So after entering bar/23, I would choose between 8/3, making a third inside point immediately, and 13/8, making a 4-prime and preparing to make my inside points in order, 4-point ahead of 3-point.

Which of those two 5s would I pick? That would depend on how soon I expected to hit a shot. If I were preparing to hit a shot next turn, I would play 8/3, but as I would expect my next shot to come later, I would play 13/8.

At double matchpoint, however, I can disregard gammons. Deeming a deucepoint game most unpromising, I focus on the good luck that may befall me if I hit now, despite my undeveloped board and vulnerability to return hits. 23/18\* gives the opponent four dancing rolls and six other rolls, 1-5, 2-5 and 4-5, that enter without hitting back. After these ten bad rolls for my opponent, I have excellent chances for a continued attack, containing the man sent back, and completing my escape from my opponent's home court. So this bold hit, which runs contrary to habits formed from playing under conditions where gammons can hurt me, is the play I choose here.—*Yours, Danny*

### Snowie Rollout Data

6000 cubeless rollouts were run for each play. Parameters were full, 3-ply, precise.

	BLACK			WHITE		
	BGs	Gammons	Wins	Wins	Gammons	BGs
1. R bar/23 8/3				-0.524		
	0.1%	2.6%	23.8%	76.2%	13.7%	0.3%
2. R bar/23 13/8				-0.535	(-0.011)	
	0.1%	2.3%	23.3%	76.7%	13.3%	0.4%
3. R bar/18*				-0.535	(-0.011)	
	0.2%	4.1%	23.3%	76.7%	55.5%	4.7%
4. R bar/23 7/2				-0.567	(-0.043)	
	0.1%	2.0%	21.7%	78.3%	14.0%	0.4%
5. R bar/23 6/1				-0.619	(-0.095)	
	0.0%	1.6%	19.0%	81.0%	15.1%	0.5%

### Danny Kleinman Responds

The rollout results show 8/3 as having a tiny edge, with 13/8 and 23/18\* in a virtual tie for second. The differences among these three plays are too small for the unaided eye (certainly for mine) to detect, just as the parallax of the stars was too small for the wonderful Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe to detect with the telescopes of his time, leading him to reject the heliocentric Copernican model of the solar system in favor of a more complicated model of his own.

However, the very closeness of the three plays makes this a reference position. It matters little which of the three plays we choose in the position as shown, but any improvement in the board would make the hitting play clearly right, while an even less developed board would make hitting clearly wrong.—*D.K. Δ*

## LETTERS...

*(Continued from page 3)*

comes in sheets at Michael's or another similar craft store. The padding can be glued to a backing surface using the appropriate glue.—*T.M.*

### T-SHIRT SITE

If you're looking to buy a backgammon T-shirt, I can thoroughly recommend this website. Create your own designs and get paid if someone buys it. There's an astonishing range of products of every description. <http://www.zazzle.co.uk/backgammon+tshirts>—*Martin Lee, West Yorkshire, England*

### BAR POINT VISITOR

I dropped in on the Bar Point Club last Tuesday night straight from flights from

California, luggage, husband and all. Thank you for your gracious and warm reception. I hope to see you at the US Open in San Francisco. I will send a check for subscription to your CHICAGO POINT newsletter.

I wish there was play nearer to where I live. As far as I know, the closest group is in Orange County, they meet monthly. That is about an hour+ away for me, but I'll try to go occasionally. If you hear of anything in Palm Springs, Upland, Rancho Cucamonga, Riverside etc please let me know. I live in Redlands, California.

Again, it was a pleasure meeting you and a couple of members of your group. Thanks for the games. By the way, if I am correct, you owe me 50 cents!—*Nancy Bailey, California*

*Yes we do, Nancy. At 25 cents/point, the debt really ads up.—Ed. 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.

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

MIDSTATE BG CLUB: Tourn. Tues. 6:00 P.M. at Ride The Nine; 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Ed Bauder (309/830-1632).

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wednesday, 6:00 P.M. at Capitol Teletrack, 1766 W. Wabash Ave., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

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

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

PEORIA BG CLUB: Tourn. Thursday, 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Sue Will (309/699-6005).



**BG Peeves**

By Larry Liebster



**WAS I CHEATED?**

Paranoia is running rampant in the backgammon community. Every time an opponent throws a sequence of repeating doubles or hits a critical shot to turn a game around, there is born the suspicion that he is cheating. I sometimes get these feelings, just like everyone else.

At a recent tournament, I didn't have any of those thoughts. Long match, DMP, back game, and eight men in my oppo-

nent's home board. He bears two men off and leaves a shot. I hit it. Then begins the arduous task of building my board and bringing my men around. During the ten minutes this takes, we develop an audience and my opponent's checkers end up piled three high on his 1-point. Finally, I close him out and start bearing off. I am now the favorite. The dice are thrown, checkers are quickly removed, and lo and behold, a series of doubles allows him to beat me by one roll. Great game!

Five minutes later one of the spectators comes up to me and says that while my opponent's checkers were piled up on his ace-point, several were swept off the board and didn't have to be borne off. If that's true, I would have been a winner! Did that really happen? Was it intentional?

What should I do? I went through a multitude of emotions and finally decided to confront my opponent. He denied that anything like that happened. "I wish those kibitzers would keep their mouths shut," he said. "They just make trouble."

What I learned: When my opponent is bearing off men ask him to keep the discs away from his home board so that any checker that falls off a stacked 1-point is recognized as not being borne off.

Like I said, paranoia runs rampant; but I can take care of one problem by making sure that the same thing never happens to me again.—Larry Liebster Δ

**WHO IS THIS PERSON?**

As the years go by, it's fun to take a look back. Here is Fran Goldfarb, one of the finest female players of the 1970s with a well known player of today. We're betting that you won't recognize him. Hint: He's won an ABT state title within the last three years and is an all-around nice guy. This picture appeared in the International Backgammon Association magazine in 1978. Can you identify him? Answer next month. Δ



Fran Goldfarb and ???

**23–27 June 2010**



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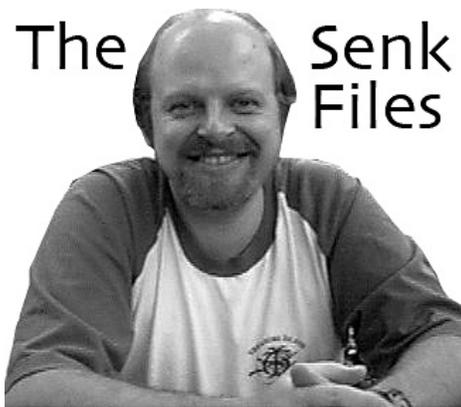


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# The Senk Files

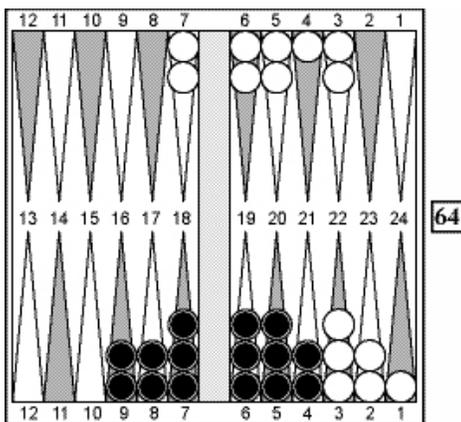


By Duane Jensen

Mike Senkiewicz (SENK) played backgammon online against quality opponents, often in cash games with Mike Svobodny and Matvey “Falafel” Natanzon. Mike would also challenge the backgammon bots called GG raccoon and Tbot.

When I analyzed his matches against the computer robots, I found that Mike’s errors were small and infrequent. Most of his plays flagged as errors seemed correct plays to me, so I was interested in rolling them out.

## 1. Black (SENK) to play 5-5



Mike chose to play 9/4, 6/1\*(3). This play leaves only six indirect shots: 6-6, 6-3, 6-2, and 3-3.

The best play is 9/4(2), 6/1\*(2) leaving a blot on the 6-point. This unexpected choice leaves the blot exposed to 18 shots.

### Black to play 5-5

- Rollout<sup>^</sup> 9/4(2), 6/1\*(2) eq: -0.257  
Black: 44.43% (G:30.60% B:7.06%)  
White: 55.57% (G:11.45% B:0.65%)  
Confidence: ± 0.011 (-0.268 < E < -0.246)
- Rollout<sup>^</sup> 9/4 6/1\*(3) eq: -0.288 (-0.030)  
Black: 43.74% (G:30.49% B:5.90%)  
White: 56.26% (G:11.48% B:0.64%)  
Confidence: ± 0.010 (-0.298 < E < -0.278)

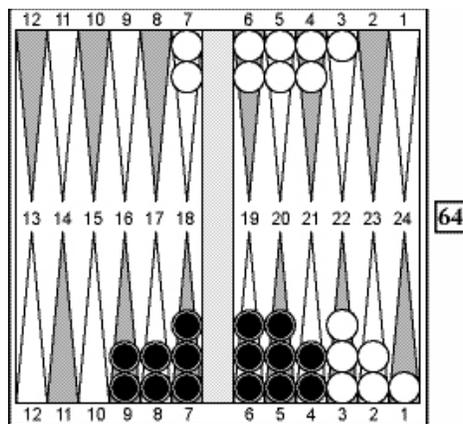
<sup>^</sup> 10,000 games rolled with Variance Reduction. Random seed. 3-ply play and cube decisions.

It is not surprising that Mike preferred leaving six shots instead of 18, but not all 18 opportunities to hit would be used. With a 4-3, GG raccoon would not break the 2-point to hit. A 6-2 is better used by sending a man into the outfield without hitting.

Hitting immediately is not the game-winner you might expect for GG raccoon. After playing 9/4(2), 6/1\*(2), a hit with 6-5 (Bar/19\*, 19/14) wins 58.7% of the games. If you play Bar/19, 19/14, forgetting to hit, GG raccoon still wins 58.4% of the games. GG raccoon will get more opportunities to attack blots later in this game when he has a better board.

If you take the original position and adjust a pip backwards, making the 4-point, the correct play for 5-5 becomes 9/4, 6/1\*(3).

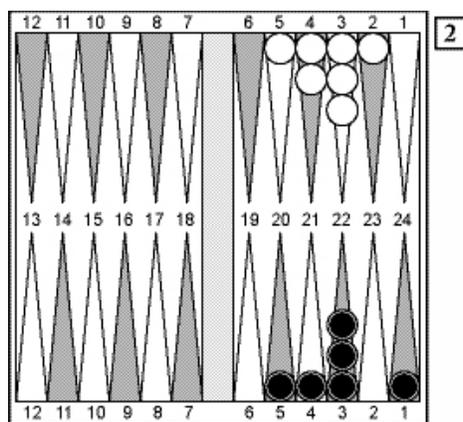
## 1A. Black to play 5-5 with a one pip White checker adjustment.



It is clear that without the 4-point, any hit loses much of its effectiveness.

The upside of leaving the blot on 6-point rather than the 9-point is that when not hit, SENK will win more games and more undoubled gammons to win the match.

## 2. Black (SENK) to play 5-2.



SENK played 5/off, 4/2 which is a small error but a very common mistake. It seems natural and correct to fill in the empty point

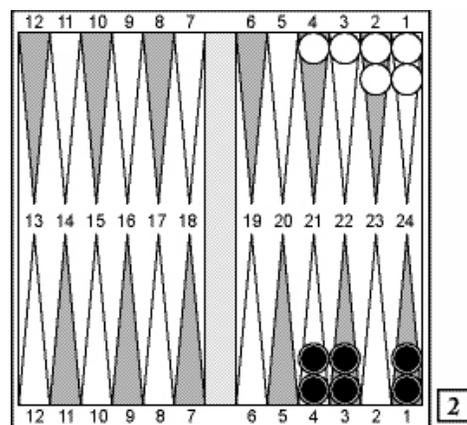
with the deuce, but it is often wrong when an odd number of checkers remains.

A better deuce play is 3/1. This play protects against rolling three aces, one of which is a 2-1.

This position is one from a category of positions in which the deuce slot is a small error. The deuce slot looks so natural that it is rarely recognized or challenged by players or onlookers.

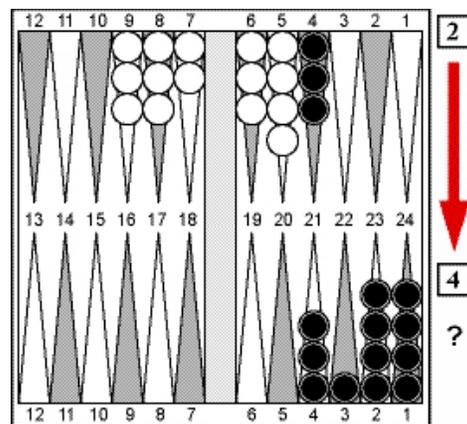
Here’s another position from this category.

## 2A. Black to play 5-2



The best play is 4/off 3/1 making double ones play off better.

## 3. White (Tbot) redoubles SENK.



This take is a small error losing a little over 0.01 in equity.

This position is an error to take against an expert player, but it is a take against an average or inexperienced player.

[Continued on page 8]

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# Wind Assisted

Chris Bray's new book reviewed by David Rubin

Wind Assisted. © 2010 by Chris Bray. Published by [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). \$35 plus postage. Softbound. 217 pages

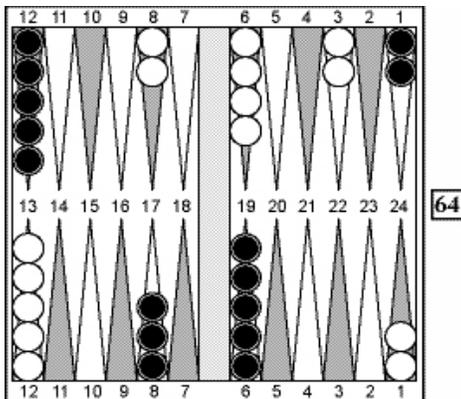
Chris Bray sure is a lucky chap. His side job since 1994 is writing a weekly backgammon column for *The Independent* newspaper in London. I know of no major newspapers on this side of the pond that have such a column. Every few years Chris publishes a collection of his columns. In 2002 it was *What Colour is the wind?*; in 2007 it was *Second Wind*; and this year, Chris's new book is titled *Wind Assisted*.

The book is big (8"×11") and very attractive. A cool looking Dali-like backgammon flag makes for a beautiful cover. The book is available online at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) (and from Carol Joy Cole) for \$35 + \$4 p&h. What's especially interesting is that Chris can (and does) electronically edit the book through Lulu as bots provide new rollout results!

*Wind Assisted* is a whopping collection of 150 articles that Chris wrote from 2007–2009, plus two bonus quizzes. Each article takes up exactly one page which makes for a really fun and easy read. Articles start with a diagram followed by Chris's analysis. Chris relies heavily on the bots, and I get the impression that he rolls out a position first, then tailors his analysis to the rollout data. He uses Snowie 4.7 (and occasionally eXtreme Gammon), listing rollout results in the back of the book.

Chris writes his articles in two completely different and distinctive styles. One style, which happens to suit me, is analytical. For example, his "Back to Basics—The First Response" article paraphrased thusly:

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



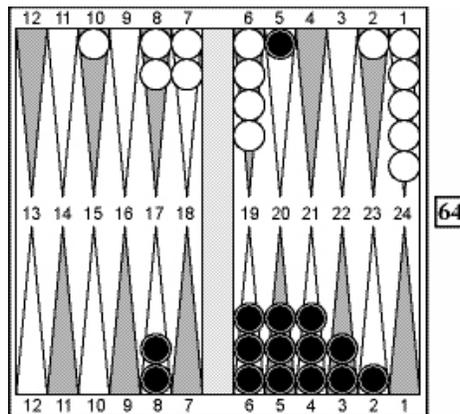
*It is the second move of the game, your opponent had made a new home board point with his first roll, and you now have a roll that gives you the choice of splitting the back checkers or bringing down builders on your side of the board. What do you do?*

*The answer is that it depends upon which point your opponent has made. If your opponent has managed to make his 5-pt or 4-pt, then it is more important to split your back checkers than to bring down new builders. The reason for this is that your opponent is threatening to build a prime and the sooner you challenge that prime the better. With the 3-pt made (see diagram) the two different approaches are a dead heat. If your opponent has made his 2-pt then two builders down is the mandatory play. This change of tactic is dictated by the fact that when your opponent makes the lower points in the opening, his game plan is more likely to be based upon a blitzing attack.*

Chris's clear and succinct explanation of this opening nuance is outstanding. Learning this first move response strategy is extremely important because, as Chris points out, it often dictates your plan for the rest of the game.

The majority of the articles, however, are written in a completely different style. Chris makes every attempt to add color, humor, and personality to his articles—an ideal style for weekly newspaper columns. He discusses recent tournaments, he talks about backgammon celebrities, and he has developed many chouette-playing alter-egos who discuss certain plays, based on their personality. A typical "character" article is called "Wastage," paraphrased as follows:

Money game. White on roll. **CUBE ACTION?**



*London was basking in a late summer heat wave. Holmes had bemoaned the*

*fact that most of the criminals seemed to have gone on holiday. "Whilst business is so slow, Watson, have a look at this position. Lestrade, who was white, doubled me. Do you think I should have taken or passed?"*

*"On the face of it, Holmes, it looks a simple pass. Eighteen pips is a big deficit to make up in such a short race. I would certainly have passed."*

*"Then you would have made a big error, my dear doctor. I suspect that in years to come better players than you or I will work out the formulae for this type of position but all my instincts tell me this is a take. Look at those white checkers piled up on the one-point. Even when he has got all his checkers home he is likely to have lots of gaps in his board. Wastage is very poorly understood but this is a classic example. This is an easy take."*

It sure is fun to think of Holmes and Watson playing our wonderful game. However, it leaves the reader wondering how the heck one adjusts for gaps & wastage! It would have been nice if Chris explained how to incorporate these two features into doubling decisions. I know other writers (e.g. Walter Trice) have analyzed how to measure wastage and gaps. Perhaps Chris figures that if he points out these concepts the reader is free to research them on his own. These articles are, after all, only one page long.

**PLAYERS WHO ENJOY** fun and whimsical backgammon reading without heavy analysis will find this book to be a treasure. Beginners and Intermediates should find the 150 positions and two quizzes educational, and worthy of additional study.—David Rubin Δ

## BODY-GAMMON

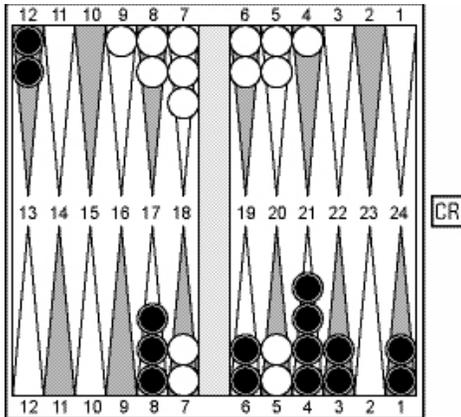
"A night of too many beers and the gaming spirit, sans a board, led to this lovely little morsel of ingenuity! I know we all love this game, but for God's sake, **KEEP YOUR PANTS ON PEOPLE!**"—Becca Thompson Δ



# PROBLEM #353 ANALYZED

by John O'Hagan

7-point match. Black leads White 6 to 5 Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-3.**



Leading 6-5 Crawford, Black is at gammon save and has done well to get to a position where a gammon loss is pretty unlikely. Black is way up in the race, but getting home safely figures to be a big problem against White's strong 18- and 20-point holding game. This 5-3 leaves Black with a classic "pay now or pay later" decision. He can pay now by breaking off the midpoint with either 13/8, 13/10 or 13/8, 4/1; or pay later with 8/3, 4/1. Which of these plays maximize Black's match-winning chances?

Let's first compare the two "pay now" plays. Although 13/8, 13/10 duplicates 3s and 5s, it still leaves 24 hitting numbers. Four of these are real strong hit-and-cover numbers: 3-3 hits and covers both the 9- and 4-points giving White a full 6-prime, while 5-5 and 5-3 hit the blot and cover the 4-point making a strong 5-prime. 5-4 and 4-3 also hit and cover the 4-point but aren't as strong since Black will have several ways to enter and hit back.

6-5 and 6-3 allow White to hit and cover her 9-point but leave Black a direct shot on White's 4-point plus a 1 or 3 to hit back on Black's 5- or 7-point. The other 12 hitters don't cover giving Black the direct 4-shot plus maybe an ace or 3 to hit back on his 5- or 7-point. *Bottom line:* if Black makes this play and is hit, he'll still have decent winning chances unless White rolls one of her four numbers that hit and cover cleanly.

What if White rolls a non-hitter? It shouldn't be too difficult for Black to safety his blot since only five numbers

fail to do so: 6-6, 5-5, 5-3, and 3-3. These all leave a double shot so altogether this double jeopardy adds about one additional hit (arrived at thusly:  $12/36 \times 5/36 \times$  being hit) meaning Black's chance of being hit within the next two rolls after playing 13/8, 13/10 is around 25/36.

13/8, 4/1 is the other "pay now" play. Could it be better? This play does get hit less often (20 vs. 24 shots) and that is frequently the deciding factor in this kind of position. But six of the 20 cover the 4-point cleanly (vs. five the other way) and double jeopardy is a bigger problem for Black here since 13 numbers fail to bring his midpoint blot to safety if the initial shot is missed. These extra future shots add about three more hits which raise the total to 23 hits in 36 games. Another problem with this play is that it buries a third checker on the ace point which is never a good thing.

So which of these "pay now" plays is better? I think it's close but give the edge to two checkers off the midpoint. It gets hit 25 times in 36 games, but only about six of those will be when White's board is super strong. (The five clean hit-and-covers plus the one hit next time.) On the other hand, 13/8, 4/1 gets hit 23 times in 36 games, but nine of those will be when White has a real strong board. (The six clean hit-and-covers plus the three hits next time.) 6/25 vs. 9/23 is a pretty big difference and I think that's enough to make leaving the extra shots correct.

Then there's the "pay later" play: 8/3, 4/1. It's safe for now and a great roll like 5-5 or 2-2 will probably be a game winner. How about the other doubles? 6-6 leaves Black's checkers on the midpoint really isolated with a future shot very likely. 4-4, 3-3, and 1-1 help a bit but he will still have significant chances of leaving a shot while trying to clear his outfield points. Notice that eight numbers force Black to leave a direct shot next time: 6-3, 6-1, 5-1, and 4-1, while 5-3 and 4-3 force him to either leave a direct or break his 6-point. Additionally, 3-2 makes Black choose between a direct shot, breaking his 6-point, or hacking up his board. So Black is very likely to eventually leave a shot and the longer he waits, the more likely that White's board will be a winner.

So which is better: paying now or paying later? I vote for now. The chance of Black clearing his midpoint safely is a little too remote and being hit later is a lot worse than being hit now since White's board is only going to improve. Additionally, when Black does get hit later, White might be

able to shake a second checker loose and win a match-ending gammon. Of course, this could happen with an immediate hit as well, but it's less likely since White will need to first concentrate on nailing down the win.

I had GNU and eXtreme Gammon each roll this position out and both rollouts showed 13/8, 13/10 to be the best:

### GNU

Play	Wins	G losses	MWC
13/8, 13/10	53.06%	6.25%	73.505%
13/8, 4/1	53.14%	6.96%	73.092%
8/3, 4/1	53.99%	7.96%	73.017%

### eXtreme Gammon

Play	Wins	G losses	MWC
13/8, 13/10	52.73%	6.37%	73.18%
13/8, 4/1	52.44%	7.04%	72.70%
8/3, 4/1	53.10%	7.88%	72.61%

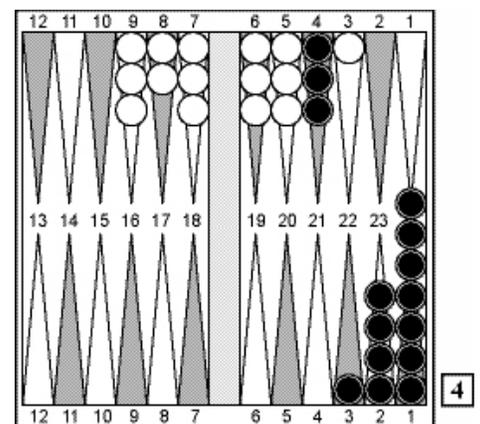
It's interesting that the "pay later" play wins more often than either of the "pay now" plays but is still the worst play at this gammon save score because the extra gammon losses outnumber the extra wins.—John O'Hagan Δ

## SENK FILES...

[Continued from page 6]

An average player does not know how to play Tbot's side. Imagine that Tbot rolls 2-1, followed with a 3-3 by SENK.

### 3. White (Tbot) to play 6-1.



An average player would play something like 9/3, 7/6, keeping the 5-point prime intact. An expert player would try to squeeze as much as possible from this position. He would play 7/6, 7/1 forcing a hit with a 3 trying to pick up the extra checker. The weaker plays made by an average player would allow this cube to be a take.—Duane Jensen Δ

**WINNER'S  
CIRCLE**



MAR.-MAY 2010

•**New England Club Monthly** (Malden, MA; 13 Mar.)... OPEN (22): 1-Anne Bidner, 2-Doug Roberts, 3/4-Yan Friedman / Alex Zamanian; 1C-Greg Jukins, 2C-Dave Metz.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 4 Apr.)... OPEN (8): 1/2-Mike Corbett / Elayne Feinstein.

•**WBG:22nd NORDIC OPEN 2010** (Copenhagen, Denmark; 1-5 Apr.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (131): 1-Søren T. Larsen (Denmark), 2-Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (Israel), 3/4-Pawel Bielewicz (Sweden) / Michihito "Michy" Kageyama (Japan), 5/8-Tore Fredriksen (Norway) / Henrik Løber (Denmark) / Carlo Melzi (Italy) / Frank Simon (Germany); 1LC-Manos Mastorakis (Greece), 2LC-Andreas Becher (Denmark), 3LC/4LC-Janne Bergstrøm (Sweden) / Inge Christoffersen (Denmark). ADVANCED (98): 1-Peter Holm Stampe (Denmark), 2-Jerker Sandberg (Sweden), 3/4-Johan Bynell (Sweden) / Kenneth Friis (Denmark), 5/8-Rasmus G. Hansen (Denmark) / Tommy Kean (Denmark) / Lennart Kurland (Denmark) / Paulus Van Rooijen (Netherlands); 1LC-Erik Hansen (Denmark), 2LC-Ole Jensen (Denmark), 3LC/4LC-Rikke Kragh (Denmark) / Kazuko Numazawa (Japan). INTERMEDIATE (93): 1-Sten Lorentzen (Denmark), 2-Kathrine Langjord (Norway), 3/4-Catalin Bucur (Romania) / Kristian Ernst (Denmark), 5/8-Roberth Jonnarth (Sweden) / Ditte Martinsen (Denmark) / Anna Mielech (Poland) / Niklas Nyman Holdgaard (Denmark); 1LC-Peter Bjørn Larsen (Denmark), 2LC-Maj Falsig (Denmark), 3LC/4LC-Ulla Hansen (Denmark) / Birgit Jørgensen (Denmark). SUPERJACKPOT #1 (8): 1-AI Hodis (USA). #2 (16): 1-Masayuki "Mochy" Mochizuki (Japan). #3 (16): 1-Henrik Løber (Denmark). FRENCH OPEN QUALIFIER (32): 1-Peter Bosse (Denmark). US OPEN QUALIFIER (16): 1-Michael Schweitzer (Germany). SWEDISH OPEN QUALIFIER (32): 1-Allan Christensen (Denmark). PORTUGUESE OPEN RAFFLE: 1-Bob Wachtel (USA). SPEEDGAMMON (32): 1-Chiva Tafazzoli (Iran/Germany). LADIES TOURNAMENT (61): 1-Sabrina Milling Petersen (Denmark). WARM-UP (32): 1-Michael Schou (Denmark), 2-Christian Sørensen (Denmark); 1C/2C-Karsten Bredahl (Denmark) / Jonas Moehrdel (Denmark). DENMARK VS. THE WORLD: 1-Team Denmark (43): Mads Andersen, Gus Hansen, Captain Morten Holm, Thomas Kristensen, Pia Jeppesen, Sander Lylloff, Marc Olsen, Lars Trabolt, 2-The World Team (33): Fernando Braconi (Italy), Matt Cohn-Geier (USA), Peter Heitmüller (Germany), Michihito "Michy" Kageyama (Japan), Masayuki "Mochy" Mochizuki (Japan), Matvey "Falafel"

Natanzon (Israel), Captain Stick Rice (USA), Katja Spillum (Norway).

•**British Open** (Hinckley, England; 9-11 Apr.)... OPEN (57): 1-Sean Casey, 2-Paul Gilbertson, 3/4-Julian Minwalla / Paul Barwick; 1C-Adrian Jones, 2C-Peter Bennet; 1LC-Irving Czechowicz, 2LC-Stuart Mann. THE RIP (32): 1-Mardi Ohannessian, 2-Liz Perry. FRIDAY 500 (31): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-Andreas Sophocleous. POKER (23): 1-Andy Darby, 2-Rosey Bensley. TEAM (13): 1-George Miltiadou, 2-Michael Crane. CRACKSHOT (57): 1-Cecilia Sparke, 2-Vaidas Novicenko.

•**Northwest Indiana Club Monthly** (Porter, IN; 10 Apr.)... OPEN: 1-John O'Hagan, 2-Dave Settles; 1C-Charlie Halberstadt.

•**Springfield Series Grand Finale** (Lincoln, IL; 10 Apr.)... OPEN (17): 1-Gerry Tansey (MO), 2-Rob Farmer; 1C/2C-John Jennings / Randy Armstrong. 1LC/2LC- Jena Jennings / Jim Zimmerman . . . *Dan Eatherington won the Vinton Knarr crafted Backgammon Board in the Hold'em game.*

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Akron, OH; 11 Apr.)... OPEN (10): 1-Farhad Forudi, 2-Mark Murray.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Chicago, IL; 11 Apr.)... Open (23): 1/2-Bill Bartholomay / Dave Settles, 3/4-Lucky Nelson / Phil Simborg; 1C/2C-Bill Davis / Michael Ginat.

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Akron, OH; 11 Apr.)... OPEN (10): 1-Farhad Forudi, 2-Mark Murray.

•**Atlanta Spring Classic—ABT** (Atlanta, GA; 30 Apr.-2 May)... OPEN (32): 1-Mike Senkiewicz, 2-Jerry Godsey; 1C-Mike Corbett, 2C-Ed O'Laughlin; 1LC-Steve Nelson. ADVANCED (27): 1-Bob Weigel, 2-Rob Reynolds; 1C-Terry Seymour, 2C-Tom Duggan; 1LC-Kate Elmore. NOVICE (8): 1-Alicia Araya, 2-Stephen Brady; 1LC-Holly Brososky. MASTERS (14 + 2): 1-Ray Fogelund, 2-Stacy Turner. ATLANTACUP JACKPOT (25): 1-George Morse, 2-Danielle Bastarache. DOUBLES (19 Teams): 1-Jerry Godsey & Steve Nelson, 2-Alicia Araya & Jim Hickey. QUICKIES (64): Ray Fogelund vs. ?. WARM-UP (32): 1-Julius High (GA), 2-Ken Larsen; 1C-Steve Nelson (Hong Kong), 2C-Jerry Godsey. Δ



Atlanta Main winner Mike Senkiewicz (R) and Consolation victor Mike Corbett seen here at the PartyGammon Million in 2007. [Photo by Michael Strato]

**AMALGAMATION**

**Mike Peters** (IL) has developed a website for quickly searching backgammon items on eBay. Visit: [tinyurl.com/284ufv6](http://tinyurl.com/284ufv6) and you'll find a pop-up menu at the bottom of the page with categories predefined such as: boards, cubes, bakelite, vintage... In the April Las Vegas Sun, **Reba McEntire** admitted she plays backgammon: "I've been competing since I was a kid . . . I'm not in it just to compete. I'm in it to win it. My positive attitude says I don't lose because I've got to compete. Doesn't matter if it's backgammon, cards, or dominos . . . I love to play and win."... It's interesting to note that 13 of the new Giants of Backgammon Top 32 are also in the all-time ABT Top 32... **Ed Rosenblum** (NM) wrote a great backgammon article for The Sundancer titled "Mind Game." To read it, Google: "Mind Game Ed Rosenblum."... In the recent movie "Valentine's Day," Director **Garry Marshall** encouraged the actors to bring something of themselves to their character. **Julia Roberts** brought her "propensity for backgammon."... **Brett Meyer** (SC) has developed unquestionably the finest dice tube ever made. They are available sealed with **Carol Joy Cole** (MI) precision dice, or you can get ones that open. For more info, check out the back page ad... **Mary Hickey** (OH) had compiled her works from Gammon Village postings into a "Book on CD" titled *Chouette and More: The World's First and Only Backgammon Sci-fi Soap Opera*. Cost is \$30 + \$5 s&h (US/Canada/Mexico). To order, mail \$35 to: Mary Hickey; P. O. Box 27; Kirkersville OH 43033... Have you checked out the new ABT Records page? Lots of interesting stats are posted. Go to [chicagopoint.com/abt.html](http://chicagopoint.com/abt.html), then click on the "Records" link... The Flint Area BG Club has moved again, this time to Liquid Sports Bar & Grill. For more info, go to [www.flintbg.com](http://www.flintbg.com)... **J.A. Miller** reports that on April 7, while attending the Cleveland Indians/White Sox game, **Dave Settles** (IL) caught a foul ball (the fourth of his "amazing career"). In a very classy move, he promptly gave the ball to a preteen girl who was celebrating her birthday!... **Phil Simborg** (IL) has resigned his position as Chairman of the Rules and Ethics Committee of the USBGF. He's still very active in backgammon, though. For example, Phil's staging a youth tournament on Monday, May 10 (6-7:00 P.M.) at the Parthenon Restaurant in Greek Town. Ten to twenty 1st-4th grade children from the Lincoln elementary school (River Forest, IL) are expected... The Winnetka Backgammon Club will NOT meet on Wednesday May 12... Finally, from **Bette Davis**: "I've been lucky. I'll be lucky again." Δ



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