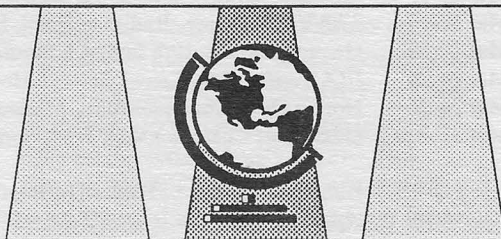


BACKGAMMON IN THE *Real World*

by Danny Kleinman



Ray Kershaw and I disagree. In the January 1989 *Chicago POINT* ("Ask Danny") I suggest that you should be prepared, financially and emotionally, to accept a 200 point loss before entering a chouette. In a letter to the *POINT* printed last month, Ray thinks capital sufficient to absorb a 50 point loss is adequate.

Two days after reading Ray's letter, I learn of this ending. I shall disguise the identities of the players involved, but not their essential characteristics.

White is our old friend Diana Diala-cube. Years of experience in tough competition have strengthened her checker play substantially, but her cube actions are as bad as ever. This is partly because she sees all positions through rose-colored glasses; but it's also for several other reasons. She thinks of backgammon as an enjoyable form of gambling, can more than afford 200+ point losses (of which she's had quite a few), and paradoxically, wants very much to finish each session "plus." Any time she's as bad as -5 on the score sheet, she's already steaming.

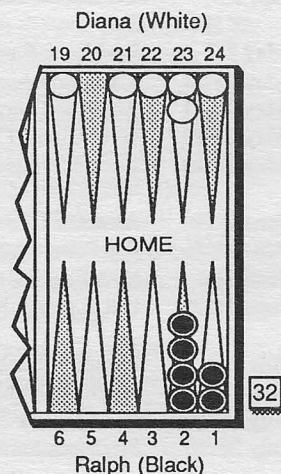
Black is Rational Ralph, a high school math teacher who is supplementing his income by playing backgammon. His checker play is actually little better than Diana's, but he sees the board objectively, and his cube actions are sane. He handles the cube with neither Diana's abandon nor the timidity of Colonel Whiteflag.

A key double-4's early in the game gave Black such a strong advantage that Diana passed the cubes of all the outside Crew members. But she took Ralph's, of course, to keep the Box, and three turns later, redoubled to 4. Ralph undoubtedly knew enough to appraise it as a beaver, but his desire for "cube control" induced him merely to take. Ralph eventually converted to a winning race, and confident that even Diana would pass, he returned the cube to her at 8. To his horror, she beavered.

Eventually, she became a genuine (though not a doubling) favorite, and sent it back to Ralph at 32. By the time Diana prepared to roll in this position, Ralph was again the favorite:

POSITION 1

White is on shake.
Estimate the proper settlement.



"Let's settle," urged Ralph.

"Settle?" asked Diana. "Why should I settle when I'm about to beat you for 32 points and go plus for the first time this evening?"

"I'll give you 5 points," offered Ralph.

"Do you think I was born yesterday?" answered Diana. "I'm not the mathematician, you are. It would be foolish for me to accept when you know the probabilities and I don't. I'll bet this position is worth twice what you're offering!"

For once, Diana's estimate came very close to the truth. I rate Black a 55-45 favorite when the game is rolled to completion. Owing the cube makes Black about a 65-35 favorite. On all White's 5's except 6-5 and 5-5 (8 rolls), Black has a redouble-out immediately. On 9 other rolls (3-2, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1 and 1-1), Black has a strong redouble-in. On 4 more rolls (4-3 and 4-2), Black becomes a strong favorite but the redouble (if sound) isn't obvious.

By my rough estimate, therefore, the game is worth about 9.6 points to Black. When White is Diana, it's worth somewhat more, since her bad takes add to Black's equity. Yes, I'd estimate Black's equity against Diana at about 10 points.

Diana rolled 5-3 and moved 6/1, 3/off.

(See "Real World..." page 3)

RENO RENDEZVOUS

Representatives of nine backgammon clubs met at the NNBA's January Reno tournament to discuss unified rules and the possibility of a national backgammon network. Present were:

First Row: Bill Davis (IL), Mary Ann Meese (IN), Steve Brown (MN), Butch Meese (IN). **Second Row:** Howard Markowitz (IL), Carol Joy Cole (MI), Rick Barabino (MA), Carla and Pat Gibson (CA). **Back Row:** Peter Kalba (IL), Jim Roderick (NV), Mark Richardson (NV), Walter Trice (MA), Lincoln Bedell (NH).



CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

EDITOR

Bill Davis

2726 West Lunt Avenue
Chicago, IL 60645
Telephone: (312) 338-6380

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Carol Joy Cole (MI)	Larry Strommen (IN)
Duane Jensen (MN)	Neil Kazaross (CA)
Danny Kleinman (CA)	Kit Woolsey (CA)
Tak Morioka (IL)	Dean Muench (IL)

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LETTERS

c/o Chicago POINT
2726 W. Lunt Avenue
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EVERYONE IN THE POOL?

The editorial in last month's POINT talked about scheduling conflicts that can arise when weekend tournaments run \$500 knockouts in addition to the regular competition. Here's a suggestion that keeps the spotlight on the main event and still gives the "high rollers" plenty of extra action. I call it the **Optional Multileveled Side Pool**. Here's how it works:

Let's say the Open entry fee is \$200. In addition to that, each entrant could pay an additional fee that would be placed in a side pool. There could be four different pools—for example: \$50, \$100, \$200 and \$500. A player could enter all of the pools (for a total of \$850), or enter none. The player advancing furthest among the active participants in each pool would win all the collected money in that group (less a fair tournament rake). With this system, all players compete in the same event and choose the level of "action" they desire to make the game interesting.—*Joe Monro, Birmingham, MI*

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

Mar 4	Sangamon Valley Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Mar 12	NEBC Monthly, Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Mar 12-15	Ted Bassett & Gstaad Palace-Cup, Palace Hotel Gstaad, Switzerland	061 50 58 16
Mar 16	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Mar 16-19	International Championships, Badrutt's Palace Hotel, St. Moritz	061 50 58 16
Mar 17-19	37th Indiana Open, Radisson Hotel, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
Mar 17-19	Gammon Assoc. 19th Invitat'l, Stouffer Concourse, Los Angeles, CA	818/901-0464
Mar 24-26	IBA Tournament, Loews Summit Hotel, New York, NY	305/527-4033
Mar 24-26	Nordic Open Championships, Marienlyst Casino, Elsinore, Denmark	45 1 22 46 00
Mar 31-Apr 2	Dusseldorf Championship, West Germany	02151-5035
Apr 1-2	BIGI Tournament of Fools, The Beef Cellar, Atlanta, GA	404/257-0567
Apr 12-16	April in Tahoe, Hyatt Lake Tahoe, NV	800/327-3910
Apr 14-16	1989 Midwest Championships, Holiday Inn, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	312/338-6380
Apr 15	College Park Spring Open, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	703/620-3239
Apr 16	NEBC Monthly, Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
Apr 20	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Apr 20-23	Byblos European Championship, Hotel Byblos, Saint-Tropez, France	061 50 58 16
Apr 21-25	Australian Open Championship, Hyatt, Sydney, New South Wales	02/929-0273
Apr 28-May 1	North German Championship, Hamburg, W. Germany	040/270-1166
Apr 30	Celebrities Tournament, Celebrities Lounge, Houston, TX	713/495-2240
May 5-7	Rochester Backgammon Ass'n Tournament, Rochester, NY	716/442-8221
May 18-21	Championship of Great Britain, Palace Hotel, Douglas, Isle of Man	0624/851-045
May 19-21	Austrian Tournament, Casino Bregenz, Austria	08341-12 825
May 26-29	10th Annual Chicago Open, Westin Hotel O'Hare, Rosemont, IL	312/674-0120
May 26-29	Boston Symph. Orch. Benefit, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
June 9-11	Austrian Tournament, Casino Velden, Austria	08341-12-825
June 11	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Bagwells, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
June 11	New England Club Finals & Year-end Tournament, Cambridge, MA	617/547-4800
June 21-25	U.S. Open & Master's Invitational, Nugget Hotel/Casino, Reno, NV	702/826-1984
July 7-9	Internat'l Backgammon Tournament, Hotel Royal, San Remo, Italy	0184/7-99-91
July 10-16	World Championship of Backgammon, Monte-Carlo, Monaco	301/299-8264
July 15-16	College Park Summer Championship, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0603
July 28-30	Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Aug 7-13	Green Mountain Festival, Ascutney Mtn. Resort, Brownsville, VT	305/527-4033

An interesting idea, but how would you stop collusion? For example, a player in the quarterfinals needs one more win to lock up \$6,000 in the \$500 pool. Imagine the deal he could offer his opponent to throw the match.—Ed.

BASE ALL RULINGS ON BEST EVIDENCE

An incident occurred at the recent Reno tournament which may be of interest to those formulating the "U.S. Backgammon Tournament Rules & Procedures."

Black led White 9 to 6 in an 11 point match when White picked up the doubling cube (at the 2-level on his side of the board at the time) and professed to be redoubling.

Black was positive that the cube had not been previously turned that game,

asserting that he had been playing for a gammon. The score sheet supported Black's contention that the cube had not been returned to the middle, as Black had doubled White and won a backgammon the previous game.

White would not unabashedly state that he knew the cube had been turned, claiming confusion. White's stance was further weakened because the correct strategy after taking a 2-cube at the given match score is to immediately redouble.

Yet the committee's final decision was that the cube position would stand and that White would be allowed to redouble to 4. Black was forced to pass the 4-cube, whereas he had a trivial take at 2 for the match.

(See "Letters..." page 6)

PETRILLO TOPS SMALL FIELD IN LOUISVILLE

Ed Petrillo of Tierra Verde, Florida controlled Chicago's Yamin Yamin twice in the double elimination finals to win the 13th annual Bluegrass Regional held this year in Clarksville, Indiana February 24-26. Unfortunately, Petrillo topped a field of only 16 players.

The first directing effort for new Louisville Backgammon Club leaders Scott Arche and Larry Deckel got good reviews, but proved disappointing from a numbers standpoint. Two major mistakes undoubtedly played a factor. There were no flyers distributed at the big Reno tournament in January. And the two biggest backgammon clubs in the Midwest, Chicago Bar Point Club and Flint (MI) Area Club, were not sent invitations for local circulation.

The LBC's next event is set for Labor Day weekend. The directors have promised to work doubly hard to get the word (and this time, the flyers) out. Δ

13TH BLUEGRASS REGIONAL

OPEN (16): 1st Ed Petrillo (FL); 2nd Yamin Yamin (IL); 1st Cons. Mike Nelson (MA); 2nd Quint McTyeire (KY).

INTERMEDIATE (24): 1st Harold Branch (KY); 2nd Donald Guss (KY); 1st Cons. Mark King (WI); 2nd Cons. Stu Katz (IL).

DOUBLES (16): 1st Johnny Cox (KY) & Tom Walthes (IL).

OPEN MICROBLITZ (8): 1st Yamin Yamin

LTD MICROBLITZ (16): 1st Sharon Lennon

Real World...

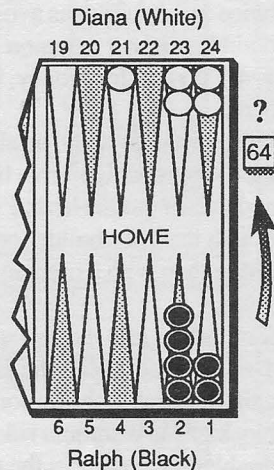
(continued from page 1)

Correct, but not automatic for a player of her caliber. There was some chance she might have played the inferior 6/3, 4/off. Don't all the textbooks advise against leaving gaps?

Ralph redoubled:

POSITION 2

Black redoubles. Should White take?



This position isn't too hard to calculate. It's a pass for White, though by less than 2%.

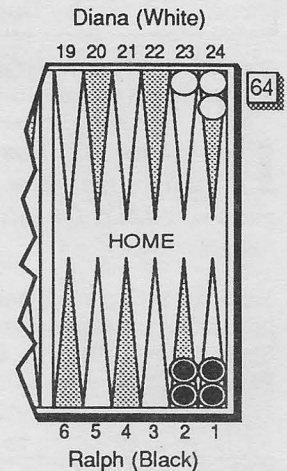
Will it surprise you that for once in her life, Diana Dialacube reacted correctly to a cube? She took. True, White should pass when **Black** redoubles, but not when **Ralph** redoubles to 64. For if unless he rolls double-2's or better, he will offer a generous settlement next turn, more than

compensating for the 2% shy of a take that White's position falls from a purely technical standpoint.

Two uneventful rolls then produced:

POSITION 3

Black is on shake. Estimate the proper settlement.



"Let's settle!" urged Ralph again.

"When I'm about to roll a double and beat you for 64 points?" answered Diana. "You must be kidding. If I didn't want to gamble, I'd have stayed home."

This position is very simple indeed to calculate. For White to win, Black must fail to roll double-2's or better (a 5-in-36 chance) and White must roll any doublet (a 1-in-6 chance), a 31-in-216 parlay. Hence Black is worth $64(185-31)/216 = 9856/216$, or about 45.6 points. After some negotiation, he **sold** his game to a consortium of well-capitalized kibitzers for only 36 points.

I won't tell you the outcome of the game. It suffices to say that Rational Ralph didn't lose 200 points that evening, didn't suffer the 3-digit loss he fears, didn't lose Ray Kershaw's supposedly realistic 50 point limit, didn't lose at all. His risk was assumed by the kibitzers.

Nonetheless, he paid a price for his unwillingness to lose in triple figures: 9.6 points. At \$10 a point, that's \$96. All you supposedly practical players will say that he really paid 28 points (\$280), since some blabbermouth has probably told you that yes, the consortium of kibitzers did win this game, but I don't count that way. At any rate, Ralph might have paid a stiffer price had the kibitzers been enterprising enough to have taken over Ralph's game in Position 1 for the 5 points he offered to pay Diana. Then he'd have paid 15 points (\$150) for his under-capitalization.

No, you don't need ample capital to avoid paying out 200 points very often. But you do need it to be able to cash in on the equity which good luck and skill often deal you. Δ



1989 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU FEB. 28

TAK MORIOKA	5.76	ARNOLD ZOUSMER	1.68	Dave Rockwell	0.72
CHRIS KENIK	5.32	DON JAYHAN	1.64	René Wojtysiak	0.64
DAVID LIBCHABER	4.28	KATHY BAUDER	1.64	Bob Holyon	0.64
SARG SERGES	4.16	ARLENE LEVY	1.56	Mark King	0.64
ALAN STEFFEN	3.36	Mark Anshus	1.52	Yamin Yamin	0.60
NORMA SHYER	3.12	Dean Muench	1.52	Harry Hayward	0.56
GARY KAY	2.88	Bill Keefe	1.04	Rich Siebold	0.56
BILL DAVIS	2.76	Dan Judd	0.96	Ed Buerger	0.48
JOHN DEMIAN	2.72	Stu Katz	0.96	John Spatafora	0.30
ALICE KAY	2.68	Jim Pappas	0.80	Craig McCullough	0.30
DEEB SHALATI	2.64	Ken Bond	0.80	Mark Hicks	0.28
RALPH LEVY	2.52	Ron Stur	0.80	Richard Stawowy	0.28
BOB ZAVORAL	2.08	Jill Ferdinand	0.80	Joan Hegg	0.24
JEFF KANE	1.92	Gary Keyes	0.72	Trudie Stern	0.16
JOANN FEINSTEIN	1.72	Mike Cyrkiel	0.72	Leslie Lockett	0.16
PHYLLIS SMOLINSKI	1.68	Dave Cramer	0.72	Dianne Cyrkiel	0.12

Chris Kenik parlayed wins on the 7th and 14th to become February's Player of the Month with 3.48 points. Runner-ups with one win and two semifinal finishes each were David Libchaber (3.44) and Norma Shyer (3.12).

ASK DANNY

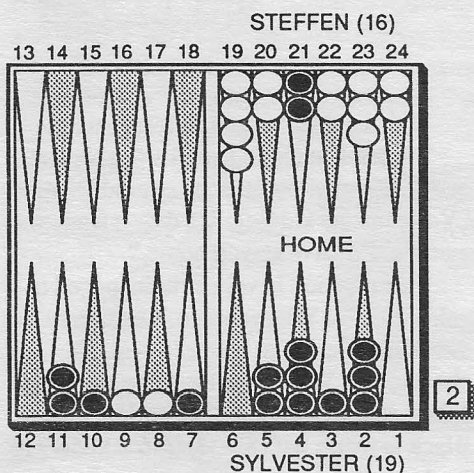


by Danny Kleinman

SYLVESTER'S TOUGH PLAY—
ANOTHER VIEW

Dear Danny: *The September POINT* had a contest where we were asked to guess which play Joe Sylvester made in the following situation:

1988 World Cup semifinal match to 37 points. Joe Sylvester (Black) leads Alan Steffen (White) 19 to 16. **SYLVESTER TO PLAY 3-3.**



Joe called this setup the toughest backgammon position of his life. He spent a half hour on calculations over the board before making his play. Unfortunately, in the October POINT, Joe gave us only two short paragraphs as to why he moved 10/1, 4/1. What's your analysis?—Rich Siebold, Milwaukee, WI

Dear Rich: Despite my great respect for Joe's backgammon talent and fondness for Joe himself, I disagree with his thinking. Obviously, too, his half hour of study produced far more than the brief appraisal quoted.

I don't think "retaining the lead" should be paramount at all. If a 19-16 lead with a 2-cube in a 37 point match calls for "the best anti-gammon play," then so does a 19-18 lead. Joe's argument implies that a 19-18 lead would demand taking extra gammon risks in order to win the game (the only way to keep the lead).

But I don't think it's right to make the best anti-gammon play when—at this score—converting a loss into a win is still about twice as important as avoiding turning a plain loss into a gammon loss. If 11/8*, 7/1, 4/1 is right for money, it's still right here.

I also disagree with Joe about the value of the 1-point, which I rate below the 3-, 6- and even 7-points here; I'd prefer to make it with the dilly-builder on the 2-point rather than with a precious cover for the 3-point.

Similarly, I rate the bar-anchor ahead of the 4-anchor here. With the bar-anchor, Joe gains control of three more outfield points, blocks Alan's smooth ride home on double-5's, and turns the midpoint Alan can remake with 5-4 or 4-3 from an asset into a liability.

But as far as I'm concerned, weighing 4-anchor versus bar-anchor is purely academic. I'd play to win, not to avoid a gammon, by moving 11/8*, 10/7, 11/5, preferring the bar-point to the 1-point, and maximizing direct covers for the 3-point. The October POINT mentions nine different readers' guesses as to Joe's play. I'd be interested to hear the arguments in support of the other seven. Maybe some astute readers see something that Joe and I both missed.—Yours, Danny Δ

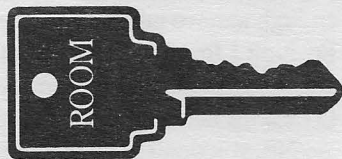
Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: Ask Danny, c/o Chicago POINT, 2726 W. Lunt Avenue, Chicago, IL 60645. Danny will answer the most interesting questions bimonthly.

AMALGAMATION

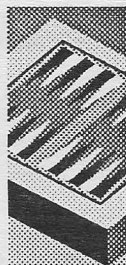
Bar Point Club player **Kurt Warning's** wife **Vicki Brooks Warning** and **Bill Robertie** have something in common: both of their fathers were U.S. Second Air Division B-24 bomber pilots over Europe during World War II... Speaking of Bill, he's running a big ad on page 57 in the March *Chess Life* in an effort to expose chess players to the wonderful world of backgammon... Thanks to *Chicago Tribune* writer **Tricia Drevets** for including the Chicago Bar Point Club in her February 10 *Go Guide* article, "Lively Games Take Gray Out Of Winter"...

Attention computer game programmers: The 1st Computer Olympiad will be held in London, England, August 9-15. Computers will compete in a variety of games including backgammon with medal awards to the top finishers. Contact **David Levy**, Computer Olympiad, 11 Loudon Road, London NW8 OLP, England, or call (01) 624-5551... You won't see **Dan Judd** at any Bar Point Club tournaments until after Easter. He's given up backgammon for Lent!... Chicago area players **Randy Cone**, **Bill Davis**, **Joann Feinstein**, **Jeff Henry** and **Betsy Miller** crossed vacation paths during a February 17 backgammon tourney at Kycho's Cantina in Acapulco, Mexico (Joann prevailed). Kycho's (Horacio Nelson at Costa Azul) holds Open tournaments every Wednesday and Friday at 9:00 PM... Thanks to Winnetka Backgammon Club's **Trudie Stern** for filling in as Bar Point Club director on February 21. A female in command undoubtedly inspired the other ladies in attendance who swept the tournament: **Norma Shyer** and **Phyllis Smolinski** (1st/2nd split) and **Alice Kay** (1st Cons)... An expected £40,000 prize pool (including £10,000 added) is luring hundreds of players from across the globe to the Isle of Man for the Championship of Great Britain May 18-21. Additional events include the Inter-Nation Team Cup and a Blackjack tournament with £2000 added... Chicago welcomes former Milwaukee player **Mark King** who recently secured a position at the Chicago Options Exchange... Can you lie your way past **Peter Kalba**? That's what it'll take to qualify for "Liar's Dice," a fun side event at the Midwest Backgammon Championships (April 14-16, Holiday Inn, Oakbrook Terrace, IL). Call 312/338-6380 for the details. Δ

KEY REDUCTION TO \$35.



Midwest Backgammon Championship room rates at the Holiday Inn have been reduced to \$35 per night (Single or Double) for everyone.



1989
MIDWEST
BACKGAMMON
CHAMPIONSHIPS
APRIL 14-16, 1989
HOLIDAY INN
OAKBROOK TERRACE, IL
INFO: 312/338-6380



Dean Muench's

"GRIZZLY" BEAR-OFF CONTEST

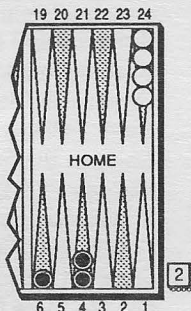
WIN **\$100** CASH
-and-
The MUEENCH BEAR-OFF PROGRAM (IBM Compatible)

INSTRUCTIONS

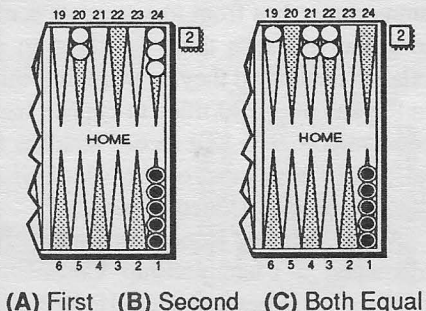
- Black is always on roll in a money game except as noted.
- Computer finds 2 plays equal if they yield the same expectancy.

1 What is the expectancy (in points) for Black?

- (A) -0.0987654321 x 2
(B) 0
(C) +0.0987654321 x 2
(D) None Of The Above



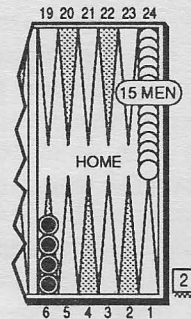
2 Which position is better (expectancywise) for White?



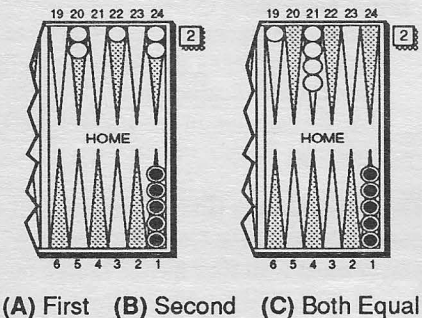
- (A) First (B) Second (C) Both Equal

3 What is the correct cube action for both Black and White?

- (A) No Redouble
(B) Redouble/Take
(C) Redouble/Drop
(D) Redouble/Either Take or Drop



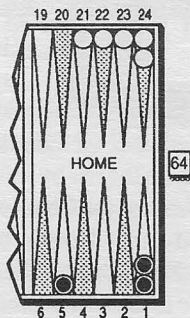
4 Which position is better (expectancywise) for White?



- (A) First (B) Second (C) Both Equal

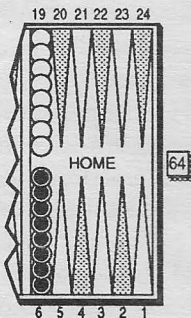
5 What is the correct doubling decision for Black?

- (A) Double
(B) No Double
(C) Either Of The Above

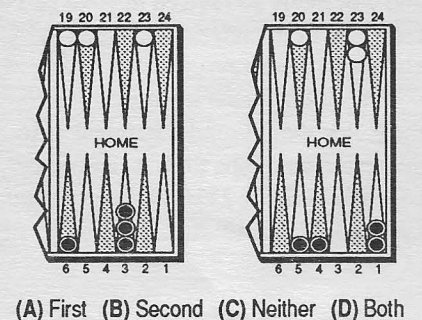


6 What is the correct doubling decision for Black?

- (A) Double
(B) No Double
(C) Either Of The Above



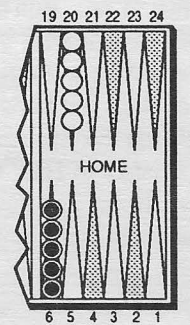
7 Tournament double match pt. Which position(s) favors Black?



- (A) First (B) Second (C) Neither (D) Both

8 Tournament double match point. Who is favored?

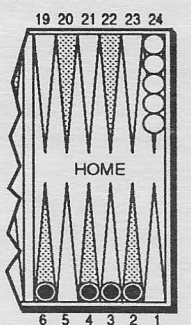
- (A) Black
(B) White
(C) Both Equal



9 Tournament double match point. Black to play an ace.

- (A) 6/5
(B) 4/3
(C) 3/2
(D) 2/1

Order Black's four possible plays from best to worst. (Example: DCBA)



Entry must be received by **APRIL 1, 1989**. One entry per person. Ties will be broken by random draw. Mail entry or facsimile to:

"GRIZZLY" BEAR-OFF
c/o Chicago POINT
2726 W. Lunt Avenue
Chicago, IL 60645

"GRIZZLY" BEAR-OFF ENTRY FORM

Name _____
Address _____
City/St/Zip _____

1 A B C D 6 A B C
2 A B C 7 A B C D
3 A B C D 8 A B C
4 A B C 9
5 A B C (Question 9 is not multiple choice.)

THE CANADIAN DIALECT or WHY HAL HEINRICH'S MIDDLE NAME IS "CAM-CORDER"

by Duane Jensen

I live in St. Paul, Minnesota where everyone speaks the American language perfectly and without a trace of an accent. Actually, most persons raised within a 100 mile radius of my home speak with no accent. However when we venture beyond the 100 mile limit, we're exposed to accents and dialects that range from quaint to unintelligible. In northern Minnesota, "three" becomes "tree," "couldn't" becomes "coon't," and animal sounds are added to the vocabulary. If we head south to Iowa, the name "Washington" becomes "Warshington." A Twin Cities' newscaster, raised in Missouri, speaks of "min and wemin" and mentions "farty-far degree temperatures" while doing the weather.

I was surprised to meet a Canadian in Reno who speaks better "American" than most native born Americans. While talking with Hal Heinrich of Calgary, I realized that he could almost pass for a Minnesotan. Only once did I catch him say "oot" instead of "out." And Hal never once punctuated a sentence with "eh?", the Canadian National Sound.

I'm convinced that amongst themselves, Canadians speak exactly as I speak. But when an American approaches, they sprinkle Canadianisms into their conversations. The Canadian accent has intrigued great thinkers for centuries. Ponder for a moment that ageless philosophical question:

"If a Canadian falls in the woods but no one is there to hear him, does he say OUCH or OOCH?"

Hal Heinrich has distinguished himself by compiling a monster collection of backgammon matches from tournaments across the globe. He sells them for three to six dollars a match and they're worth it. I think his list has over 700 titles to choose from. Sometimes friends will record matches for Hal, but he gets most of them himself by notebook or with a video camera.

At the January Reno tournament, Hal videotaped a Championship Consolation semifinal match between Dave Holm of Minneapolis and a Calcutta auctioneer named Goulding (who also plays backgammon). Holm led Goulding 11-3, but Goulding quickly closed the gap. One game took an unusual twist when Holm hit Goulding's blot and put his *own* man on the bar by mistake. Misplays like this are rare at the Championship level, but eventually, they happen to all of us.

Hal Heinrich has agreed to mail the video tape to Dave in Minneapolis. We're going to have a party at which time we'll run the incriminating tape, studying it closely as if we were the Warren Commission reviewing the Zapruder film. I can imagine the comments: "Yes... Run it in slow motion... I see him... It's a hit! He's hit the checker!... Now he's putting it on the bar... Oh, no!... My God—he's put his *own* man on the bar!... Let's run the tape again, **frame by frame.**"

Thanks to Hal "Cam-corder" Heinrich, Dave Holm can save forever, his special moment in backgammon history. Δ



I would suggest adding a paragraph to the written rules to the effect that an important, if not overriding consideration in rulings should be a "best efforts" determination of what actually occurred. It's a "cop-out" to say "We can't be sure what happened," as that line of reasoning can almost always be adopted. No set of rules should excuse a committee from its responsibility to enforce a fair and honest decision (not that the committee was dishonest, but that its decision-making process was perhaps flawed).

u.s. rules update

20 CLUBS AGREE TO USE NEW RULES

A total of 20 backgammon clubs in the United States have agreed to use the "U.S. Tournament Rules & Procedures, January 1989" for the current year. Those clubs responding include:

American BG Club of Plymouth (MI)
Backgammon In Georgia, Inc. (GA)
Cavendish Club of Chicago (IL)
Central Illinois Backgammon Club (IL)
Chicago Bar Point Club (IL)
College Park Backgammon Club (MD)
Dallas Backgammon League (TX)
Flint Area Backgammon Club (MI)
Gammon Associates (CA)
Granite State Backgammon Club (NH)
Hoosier Backgammon Club (IN)
Louisville Backgammon Club (KY)
Milwaukee Backgammon Club (WI)
New England Backgammon Club (MA)
Pub Club (IL)
San Diego Backgammon Club (CA)
Sangamon Valley BG Association (IL)
Twin Cities Backgammon Club (MN)
U.S. Backgammon Enterprises (MD)
Winnetka Backgammon Club (IL)

The Holland Rule (In each subsequent game following the Crawford game, a player must wait four moves before turning the cube) has a solid 20% following among the responding clubs. Those clubs will add the Holland Rule as an addendum to the "U.S. Rules."

The Rules are undergoing a trial year and will likely be revised in 1990 based on feedback from club directors and individuals across the country.

Those interested in obtaining a copy of the Rules should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: U.S. Rules; c/o Chicago POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Avenue; Chicago, IL 60645. Δ

LETTERS...

(continued from page 2)

The committee seemed to be using the rules as a crutch to avoid making a tough ruling, as nobody on the committee could *really* have thought that the cube had been initially turned. White, admittedly an inexperienced player, at best was trying to (and did) take advantage of the rules. At worst, he was downright dishonest.

To reiterate: The cube's on 2 on White's side of the board—we don't know what happened—White must have the cube on 2. Easy ruling. Next case. Yet if a video camera had recorded the entire game, it's unlikely that a single member of the ruling committee would have taken 10-1 odds that the cube had ever been turned!

I think any ruling should be particularly sensitive to "shot-taking" in any form or degree. Such action should be unequivocally discouraged, and certainly not encouraged.—Malcolm Davis, Dallas, TX Δ

last month's position

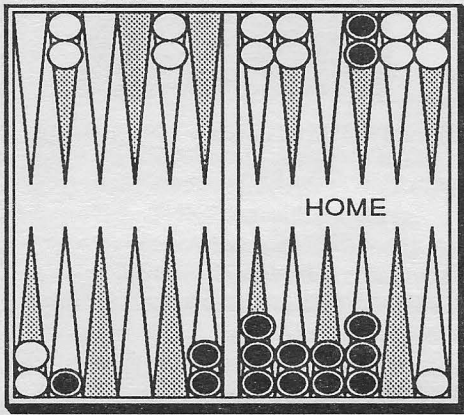
PROBLEM #144 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

We welcome Kit Woolsey of Kensington, California as Chicago POINT's bimonthly problem analyst. Kit will solve the even-numbered problems.

Tournament double match point.
BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24



12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

While Black certainly has the upper hand, his position is not as overwhelming as might appear. There are several reasons for this:

- White is actually a bit ahead in the race meaning that Black must concentrate on containing White's last man;
- White has a four point board which can

- be very menacing if Black is hit;
- Black has just rolled a poor number and must leave a shot.

The four plays that merit consideration are:

- (A) 7/2, 6/2
- (B) 11/7, 6/1*
- (C) 11/2
- (D) 22/13

Making the 2-point (A) doesn't seem right at first glance, but it may prove better than it looks. If White rolls a 6, Black will be reduced to a 3-anchor game (unless he rolls an immediate lucky return). But evaluate Black's ready-made board with regard to White's long outfield trek leading to a gaping hole on her 4-point and it's evident that Black will win a fair share of these games. And when White fails to roll the 6, Black has a reasonable chance to complete the prime or attack the remaining back man, with the 3-anchor game in reserve if the strike is unsuccessful.

Hitting loose on the ace-point (B) is an interesting compromise. If White hits back, Black's 3-anchor will make it difficult for White to safely bear in her outfield men if she can't immediately escape Black's 5-prime. If White fans, Black will try to scramble home while White is still on the bar. However if White rolls a 2, Black, with a wasted ace-blot and no attack formation, is in pretty bad shape.

Slotting the 2-point (C) was my intuitive choice. It seems to solve the positional themes of the setup. If White

rolls an ace, her back man is still 5-primed, and even if she gets away, Black will still have a strong 3-anchor game. If White doesn't roll an ace, Black has a chance to complete the prime which will likely ensure the win if he can also run a back man on the next roll.

After fooling around with this play for a bit, I found it rather unsuccessful. The main problem, of course, is that Black's 4's and 1's are of good use on both sides of the board, leaving surprisingly few rolls to complete the prime. If Black fails to roll on of these perfect numbers, his next move will be very uncomfortable—either breaking the bar-point or running with a back man while the 2-point is slotted—both of which decrease his winning chances.

The seemingly anti-thematic running play (D) now appears to me to be the best. White's ace duplication is very significant. Note that this duplication occurs on future rolls as well when White slashes on the 3-point and Black fans. True, White hits something with most of her rolls, but she has few knockout punches. And if Black ever hits back, he becomes a huge favorite. White will then be forced to attack and escape her back man at the same time—not an easy task.

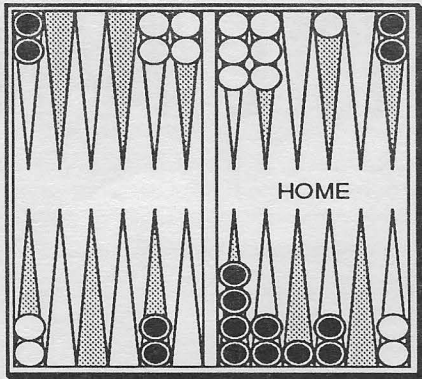
This is a surprising position because it is usually wrong to allow an opponent who has already made deep inside points a chance to blitz. However, the resulting duplications from the slotting and running plays are so significant that *tactical* appear to outweigh the *positional* considerations. Δ

your move

PROBLEM #145

1989 Nevada State Championships (Reno, NV). Match to 5 points. M. Shahidi (White) leads Joe Sylvester (Black) 2 to 1. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24



12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

64



ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis
312/338-6380
Peter Kalba
312/276-4144

Tuesday, 7:15 PM at Pat's Pub, 4343 N. Harlem Ave., Norridge (457-1166).

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:30 at Bagwells, 4636 N. Cumberland, Chgo (625-1717).

PUB CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 7:30 PM at Fiddler's, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Ed Bauder (312/985-1568).

SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASS'N: Tournaments Tuesday, 6:15 PM at On Broadway, 210 S. Broadway, Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

WINNETKA BG CLUB: Tournaments Weds., 7:00 PM at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Stern (312/446-0537).

CENT. ILL. BG CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 PM at Peoria Pizza Wks, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Sue Will (309/692-6909).

NORTH CLUB: Daily side play at 4747 N. Peterson (Room 402), Chicago. Howard Markowitz (312/286-8417).



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illinois state challenge cup

BAR POINT CLUB OUTLASTS WINNETKA IN OVERTIME

The Chicago Bar Point Club was supposed to waltz away with the 1989 Illinois State Challenge Cup. After tangling with the Winnetka Backgammon Club, "limp away" would be a better verb. Five Illinois backgammon clubs sent their six top 1988 master point achievers to do battle in the 9th annual struggle for state bragging rights and one year possession of the massive Challenge Cup trophy.

Winnetka came out blazing in round 1, winning all six matches. Sangamon Valley (Springfield) managed three wins and the other clubs (BPC, Pub Club (Villa Park) and CIBC of Peoria) settled for two wins each. But in rounds 2 and 3, while the other clubs faltered, the Bar Point Club began grinding out victories. With five wins in

rounds 2 and 3, they managed to take a 12-11 lead over Winnetka into the final round.

With five of the six matches decided, the clubs were again tied at 15-all. The Challenge Cup hinged on 2 final struggles: Tak Morioka (BPC)/John McCabe (CIBC) and Dave Rockwell (Wtka)/John Spatafora (Pub). But Morioka and Rockwell both lost forcing a tie breaker round.

The Bar Pointers and Winnetka paired up into three doubles teams for head-to-head competition. When the Bar Point Club won two of the three matches, the cup was theirs for a third year in a row. Special praise to Kathy Bauder with a 4-0 record. Δ

1989 ILLINOIS STATE CHALLENGE CUP

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB (15-9)

Tak Morioka	2-2	David Libchaber	3-1
Yamin Yamin	2-2	Stu Katz	1-3
Kathy Bauder	4-0	Deeb Shalati	3-1

WINNETKA BACKGAMMON CLUB (15-9)

Marty Tatosian	2-2	Ed Buerger	3-1
Trudie Stern	3-1	George Barr	3-1
Dave Rockwell	2-2	Marcy Sloan	2-2

PUB CLUB (11-13)

Ed Bauder	3-1	Jay Bauder	1-3
Bob Zavoral	2-2	Peter Kalba	2-2
John Spatafora	2-2	Mike Hewson	1-3

SANGAMON VALLEY BG CLUB (10-14)

Greg Tomlin	1-3	Mark Kaye	3-1
Gary Schechter	2-2	Dan Eatherington	1-3
Ben Zemaitis	1-3	Tom Teague	2-2

CENTRAL ILLINOIS BG CLUB (9-15)

Milad Doueihy	1-3	Dick Nelson	1-3
John McCabe	2-2	Cinda King	3-1
Sue Will	0-4	Doc Rushford	2-2

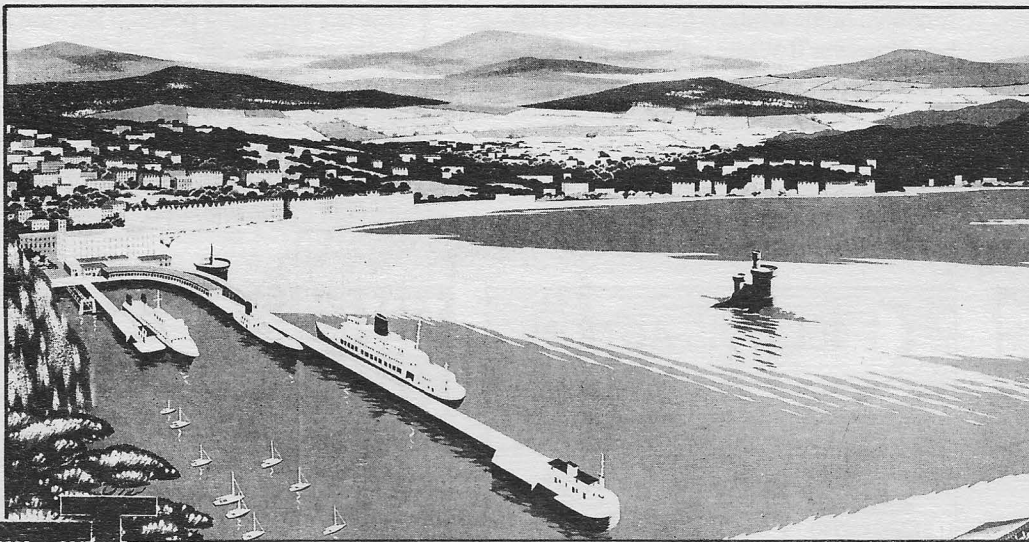
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