

*pittsburgh charity tournament*

## ZALTASH BROTHERS DOMINATE IN PITTSBURGH

We know Ali Zaltash can play. Numerous wins in Chicago, Indiana, Michigan and Reno have proved that. But Ali *only* managed a \$500 Jackpot victory at the Charity Backgammon Tournament in Pittsburgh, PA. His brother Abbas won the Championship title. The Pittsburgh Backgammon Assn's 13th annual affair was held 22-24 Feb. at the Greentree Marriott Hotel. Attendance ran 80% ahead of 1990.

Abbas, beaten once in the double elimination format, faced an undefeated Yamin Yamin (Chicago) in the finals and managed two wins in a row to grab the glory. The same scenario occurred in both the Intermediate and Novice finals.

And let's not forget another Zaltash brother: Abdi Zaltash paired with Lou Steiner to place second in the Open Doubles. Talk about "All In The Family." Complete results: Δ

### 13TH PITTSBURGH CHARITY TOURNAMENT

OPEN (29): 1-Abbas Zaltash (PA), 2-Yamin Yamin (IL), 1C-Jeff Acierno (NY), 2C-John Carrico (MI).

INTERMEDIATE (25): 1-Howard Shirey (PA), 2-Wally Wolf (MI), 1C-Steve Hast (PA), 2C-Marc Gray (NY).

NOVICE (13): 1-Nayan Shah (PA), 2-Marilyn Kubiak (PA)

\$500 JACKPOT 1 (8): Neil Kazaross (CA).

\$500 JACKPOT 2 (8): Ali Zaltash (PA).

MICROBLITZ (64): 1-Howard Robinson (FL).

DOUBLES (16): 1-Jan Carlstrom & Bob Lazear (PA), 2-Lou Steiner (PA) & Abdi Zaltash (TN).

*illinois state challenge cup invitational*

## CUP GOES SOUTH Peoria's CIBC Upset Winners

Four wins by Doc Rushford and Dick Nelson paced the Central Illinois Backgammon Club to a stunning upset over the Chicago Bar Point Club and three other teams in the 1991 Illinois State Challenge Cup Invitational. The event was held 10 Feb. at Fields in Chicago with the 1990 top six master point winners from each of five Illinois clubs invited to participate.

Peoria's six-player squad, all Intermediate level players in regional events, shocked the four-time defending champ CBPC whose team was comprised of six Open level players. It was the Central Illinois Club's second victory in the 11 year history of the statewide competition. They also won in 1986. Team results: Δ

### CENTRAL ILLINOIS BG CLUB (15-9)

Doc Rushford .....	4-0
Cinda King .....	2-2
Sue Will .....	3-1
John Rowley .....	1-3
Linda Woods .....	1-3
Dick Nelson .....	4-0

### PUB CLUB (14-10)

Ed Bauder .....	3-1
V.W. Zimnicki .....	2-2
Sarg Serges .....	1-3
Steve Tennant .....	3-1
John Spatafora .....	3-1
Bob Zavoral .....	2-2

### CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB (12-12)

Tak Morioka .....	1-3
Gary Kay .....	2-2
Mark King .....	3-1
Bruce Wittert .....	2-2
Dave Cramer .....	1-3
Stu Katz .....	3-1

### WINNETKA BACKGAMMON CLUB (12-12)

Marty Tatosian .....	2-2
Trudie Stern .....	2-2
Jay Ward .....	0-4
Ed Buerger .....	3-1
Ralph Levy .....	3-1
Jolie Lewis .....	2-2

### SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASSN. (7-17)

Gary Schecter .....	1-3
Ben Zemaitis .....	1-3
Mark Kaye .....	2-2
Greg Tomlin .....	2-2
Jeff Anderson .....	1-3
Tom Teague .....	0-4

## TOPS IN ILLINOIS



A jubilant Central Illinois Backgammon Club (Peoria) is pictured after winning the 11th Annual Illinois State Challenge Cup. From left: Cinda King, Sue Will, Dick Nelson, Doc Rushford (with the cash), Linda Woods and John Rowley.

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# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT  
2726 W. Lunt Avenue  
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### DANNY UNDER ATTACK

I want to respond to Danny Kleinman's "Ask Danny" column last month where he recommended that the U.S. employ nuclear weapons against the forces of Iraq. While I'm certain that my esteemed classmate (Oberlin College, class of '57) sincerely believes that this would hasten the end of the war and save American lives, I feel he is tragically misguided.

Before assuming that these weapons will even be effective, we should realize that, in an age of "smart" weaponry targeted against structures and armor, the nuclear bomb is a very "dumb" approach that is designed to kill people. We are told daily that it is necessary *not* to destroy the Iraqi army itself, but only its ability to wage war. Battlefield nuclear weapons also pose a real threat of radiation exposure to our own troops and to the populations in the region, including Israel and many nations that have joined us in fighting Iraq.

The legitimacy of our presence in the Middle East rests on our status as part of a

coming attractions

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

by Carol Joy Cole  
313/232-9731

\* Denotes new or revised listing

### NATIONAL

Mar 2	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Mar 3	Cavendish North Monthly Tournament, Southfield, MI	313/642-9616
Mar 3	IBA Monthly Tournament, Pierce Street Annex, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	305/527-4033
Mar 8-10	G/A 24th Invitational Tournament, Cavendish West Hollywood, CA	818/901-0464
Mar 10	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Mar 10	IBA Monthly Tournament, Ramada Resort, West Palm Beach, FL	305/527-4033
Mar 10	Hoosier One-Day Doubles Tournament, Grisanti's, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
Mar 10*	Milwaukee Sunday Bimonthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, WI	414/463-2498
Mar 16	Atlanta Backgammon Association Monthly, Taco-Mac, Atlanta, GA	404/921-0672
Mar 21	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Mar 22-24	1991 Midwest Championships, Marriott Hotel, Oak Brook, IL	312/338-6380
Apr 5-7*	12th Annual Granite State Open, Woodbound Inn, Jaffrey, NH	603/863-4711
Apr 6*	Springfield Spring Open Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Apr 7	Cavendish North Monthly Tournament, Southfield, MI	313/642-9616
Apr 13	Spring Connecticut Open, Hall of Fame, Southington, CT	203/755-9749
Apr 14	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Fields, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
Apr 18	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Apr 19*	1991 Greater New York Club Championship, Long Island, NY	516/334-4833
Apr 20	College Park Spring Open, Promenade Party Room, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Apr 20	Atlanta Backgammon Association Monthly, Taco-Mac, Atlanta, GA	404/921-0672
Apr 21*	Central Illinois BG Club Spring Annual, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon, IL	309/692-6909
Apr 21	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Apr 27*	Garage Door Tournament, Rochester, NY	716/442-8221
May 3-5	39th Indiana Open, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
May 24-27	12th Chicago Open, Westin O'Hare Hotel, Rosemont, IL	708/674-0120
May 24-27	Boston Symphony Orch. Benefit, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
May 30-Jun 2	Sertoma Spring Invitational Tournament, Winn Ranch, Leander, TX	512/267-3968
July 5-7	Michigan Summer Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
July 13-14*	College Park Summer Championship, The Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Aug 2-4*	Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, NY	716/442-8221
Aug 12-18*	Vermont Festival, Stratton Mountain Inn, Stratton Mountain, VT	305/527-4033
Aug 30-Sep 2*	National Labor Day Tournament, Raddison Hotel, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435

### OUTSIDE USA

Mar 4	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/3 689918
Mar 7-10	27th Ted Bassett & Gstaad Palace-Cup, Palace Hotel, Switzerland	061/331 5816
Mar 14-17	17th Int'l Winter Championships, Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/331 5816
Mar 29-Apr 1	Nordic Open, Copenhagen-Vedbæk, Denmark	45/31 22 46 00
Apr 1	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/3 689918
Apr 18-21	18th Byblos European Championship, St. Tropez, France	33/9497 0004
Apr 24-28	Australian Open Championship, Hyatt Kingsgate, Sydney, Australia	02/955 7726
May 6*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/3 689918
May 6-12	Championship of Great Britain, Torrequebrada, Costa del Sol, Spain	44624/851045
May 25-26	BIBA Trophy Tournament, Post House Hotel, Crick near Rugby, England	0522/721630
Jun 3*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/3 689918
Jun 14-16	3rd International Tournament, Casinò Municipale di Veniza, Italy	041/521 1029
Jul 1*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/3 689918
Jul 11-14	San Remo International Tournament, San Remo, Italy	39/2 76003705
Jul 15-21	1991 World Championship, Hôtel Loews, Monte-Carlo, Monaco	305/527-4033

U.N. force. The first effect of using nuclear weapons would be to shatter the Alliance and to make us a pariah in the world. Do we really want to *again* become the only nation ever to use these weapons?

Finally, and most importantly, what Saddam Hussein *wants* is to become the leader of a militant pan-Arab nation unified in its implacable hatred of the U.S. and Israel. The only conceivable way for him to

achieve this end is by our taking the action Danny suggests. He would have lost the military battle (which he will, in any case), but won the geopolitical war.

I do thank Danny, however, for in using backgammon metaphor to make his point, he has answered the age-old question: "What comes after a *raccoon*?"—Dr. David Cramer, Chicago, IL

[Continues]



## POSTAGE DUE

Your February issue was the second one in recent months to arrive "postage due." Please correct this.—*Michael Keller, Editor, World Game Review, Ellicott City, MD*

Many kudos to your newsletter. I only wish it came out daily and that I lived in Chicago. As a journalist, I am particularly impressed with the tight, professional writing.

The February CHICAGO POINT arrived with 23¢ postage due. The small change doesn't bother me; I just thought you should know. In fact, with rising postage rates, I'm certainly willing to up my subscription fee just to ensure that the issues keep coming.—*Patrick McGuire, The Baltimore Sun, Baltimore, MD*

First off, thank you from an individual who never earned a better grade than "C" in English. And of course, without the fine submissions from our contributors, there would be nothing to edit.

On your second point, we have no intention of raising the subscription rate of the POINT. The postage problem results because our "eight page monthly" often takes two additional pages to complete and

10 pages weighs about one-tenth of an ounce over allowable to transport a letter with one stamp. Most post offices overlook this, but a few (apparently those in Maryland) are sticklers.

If too many POINTs return "postage due," then we will either entirely discontinue 10 page issues, or raise the subscription rate. The other option is for our readers to occasionally pay the extra "postage due." Write us with your feelings.—*Ed.*

## WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BACKGAMMON?

Even though I have been out of the "Backgammon Scene" for a number of years, I still enjoy reading your newsletter and keeping up on all the latest BG information. I feel though, that I must take exception with Tak Morioka's "Fortune Cookie" quote last month where he said "The most effective players are rarely involved in flamboyant plays."

Creativity and flamboyance were trademarks of my playing style—and they were successful trademarks. Conversely, today's game has turned into an exercise of computerized, programmed automatons. Personality has been banished from the

playing fields.

Tak's statement reinforces my perception that the new breed of backgammon player looks at the game from behind a computer, pushing keys on a keyboard. Backgammon is no longer a Game with a capital "G"; rather just a memory test of who can best recall the output from one million computer trials of a particular position.

Humanity has left backgammon. The players aren't "people" any longer—they're robots. I think that is sad.—*Kathy Posner, Communications 2000, Chicago, IL*

## UPDATE FROM THE BARON

As of 28 Feb., 57 entrants have signed for our Championship of Great Britain to be held in Málaga, Spain 6-12 May. This is 20% ahead of our forecast and 250-300 players seem probable.

The £2,500 King Pot already has three confirmed entrants out of 16 available slots, so hurry. There is a new special event: The Queen Pot. Only ladies are eligible. Entrance fee is £100. 13-point matches with 70% to the winner and 30% to the runner-up. Register upon arrival. While the Queen Pot is reserved for the ladies, they (bless them) can also enter the King Pot. Who thinks now that I am a male chauvinist pig?

Tournament entrance fees will be collected in the currency you bring. As far as is possible, winners will be paid out in their own currency.

Bridget and I are just back from South Africa. All best wishes. See you in May.—*Hercules, Baron of Culcreuch*

[Continued on page 4]

## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1991 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR COMPILED THRU FEB. 28

TAK MORIOKA	12.88	ED BAUDER	1.92	Mark King	0.80
RALPH LEVY	5.08	Sarg Serges	1.84	Ed Buerger	0.80
DAVE CRAMER	5.04	Howard Markowitz	1.76	David Rockwell	0.72
GARY KAY	4.40	Don Desmond	1.68	Bobbie Shifrin	0.68
DON JAYHAN	4.16	Lenny Loder	1.60	Dean Muench	0.56
BRUCE WITTERT	3.84	Betsy Miller	1.52	Barbara Levinson	0.56
GEORGE BARR	3.68	Marcy Sloan	1.52	Howard Ring	0.56
STEVE POTASHNICK	3.36	René Wojtysiak	1.52	Dan Judd	0.56
MARY FRANKS	3.28	David Lynn	1.28	Jolie Lewis	0.52
JAKE JACOBS	3.20	Joann Feinstein	1.28	Bill Davis	0.48
ALICE KAY	2.88	Frank Callea	1.12	Ken Bond	0.48
YAMIN YAMIN	2.80	Peter Berkman	1.12	Mike Cohen	0.40
DEEB SHALATI	2.68	Paul Franks	1.04	Jeff Vaughn	0.32
JOE KOUCHEARIAN	2.68	Phyllis Smolinski	0.96	Norma Shyer	0.24
STU KATZ	2.48	Herb Roman	0.96	Larry Knoll	0.24
BEVERLY KLENE	2.48	Greg Try	0.92	Richard Stawowy	0.20
DAVID RUBIN	2.40	Tim Serges	0.88	Don Marek	0.20
ALEX ITKIN	2.24	Harold Grote	0.88	Mickey Kaplan	0.16
LUCKY NELSON	2.00	Alex Caraplis	0.88	V.W. Zimnicki	0.16

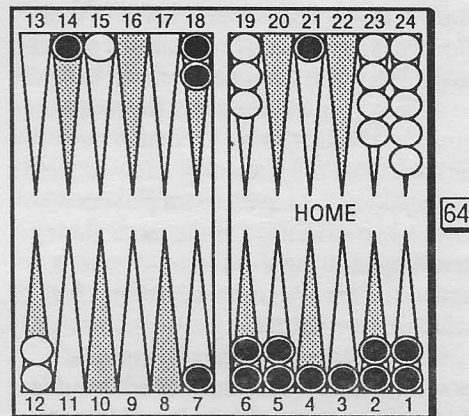
DON JAYHAN entered three tournaments in February and won or split all of them to earn 3.92 points and become Player of the Month. Don's current match-winning streak stands at 11 in a row.

Gary Kay (3.76) finished second and Tak Morioka (3.12) was third.

If you finish in the Top 20 for 1990 (capitalized names on list), you'll be entered in a drawing for over \$300 worth of valuable electronic merchandise. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st—Engraved trophy + \$200, 2nd—\$125, 3rd—\$75. 1st through 20th—to be determined. 1st through 6th—Invitation to participate on the Chicago Bar Point Club team in the 1992 Illinois State Challenge Cup.

## your move PROBLEM #169

Match to 9 points tied at 5-all. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-2.**



# SHADES OF GRAY

## A RULES AND RULINGS COLUMN

by Danny Kleinman

The following situation occurred at last year's Isle of Man tournament, Black had two men on the bar. White had made her 5-point but her 2-point was still open when Black rolled a 5-2. He brought one man from the bar to White's 2-point, arched a hand over his dice, and continued to gaze at the position. Obviously he could have no problem, since he'd already played his forced move.

Meanwhile, White rolled her dice: double-5s, very favorable for her. Black objected—his dice were still down. I was called, and ruled in accordance with USTR 4.6: White must reroll her premature double-5's. A kibitzer whispered to me that

USTR: "4.6 PREMATURE ACTIONS. No player may roll or turn the cube until the opponent has picked up his dice. A premature roll must be rerolled. A premature double shall stand if otherwise valid. An opponent who has yet to complete his turn may then do so with foreknowledge of the premature double."

Black's delay in lifting his dice was a form of cheating. If White had rolled a poor number instead of those good double-5's, Black would have said nothing—in effect condoning White's premature roll. Please

comment on this ruling.—Hercules, Baron of Culcreuch, CGBBA Director, Isle of Man

DEAR BARON: I don't know whether Black was "taking a shot" or whether he was a terribly unethical player, but he certainly wasn't cheating. He broke no rule in pausing before lifting his dice. Nobody but Black knows why he paused. Perhaps he didn't realize he had a second man on the bar, and was trying to find the best 5 to play. He broke no rule in arching his hand over his dice. (Perhaps there *should be* a rule against this, but there isn't.) He broke no rule in calling a director and stating his case—that's exactly what a player is supposed to in the event of a dispute.

You did rule correctly because the tournament was being run under USTR or a similar set of rules.

Isn't it a terrible injustice that Black should have succeeded in canceling White's good roll if that was his intention? Isn't it a terrible injustice that Black should be accused of cheating—or even "taking a shot" if it wasn't his intention?

The fault, dear readers, lies not in ourselves but in the stars. I've already suggested a rule against feigning the lifting of one's dice. Even without such a rule, poor White would not have succumbed if she hadn't seen that Black had no option but to lift his dice, a forced move already having been completed. The rule against premature rolls wasn't intended to prevent harmless premature rolls like White's here.

We could revise the rules to carve out exceptions, e.g. letting premature rolls stand after forced plays or in non-contact

positions. But that would overcomplicate the rules while failing to remedy a defect in USTR 4.6 as it now reads. For that rule encourages "fast-rolling." The fast-roller, who rolls before her opponent lifts his dice, may escape detection. Perhaps her opponent may be shy about protesting, and may allow her favorable rolls to stand. When her premature roll is unfavorable, however, she may laugh, say, "Just practicing!" and roll again—all in accordance with the rules.

The remedy? A *simplification* of the rules. I've written sets of rules more than once. From a recent set, "Madison Backgammon Club Tournament Rules and Procedures":

"18. PREMATURE ACTIONS. All premature actions, including premature rolls, shall stand if otherwise valid. An opponent who has yet to complete his turn or act upon the cube may then do so with foreknowledge of the premature roller's numbers."

This rule, which antedates USTR, is simpler to apply as well as state. If all premature rolls stand, there is no need for a ruling when White starts to roll as Black reaches towards his dice but her dice land after Black has lifted his. Harmless premature rolls are not penalized, while fast-rolling may be punished severely. Δ

Have you ever been involved in a questionable ruling? Get Danny Kleinman's opinion. Write to: Shades of Gray; c/o CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Avenue; Chicago, IL 60645-3039.

## LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

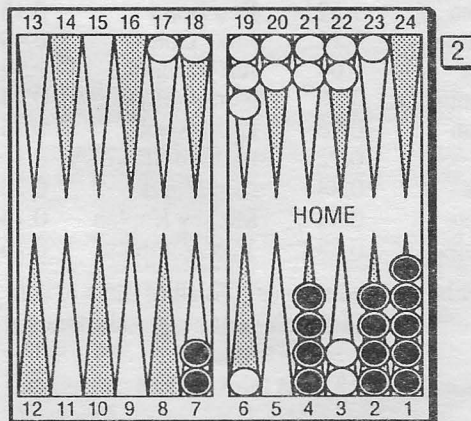
### BULLSEYE FOR ANTONIO

I enjoyed Antonio Ortega's February letter re: Problem #192 from Bill Robertie's *Advanced Backgammon*. The *Flint Area Backgammon News* reports that Bill expects to publish a \$60 2-volume revision in April.

There is no question that the first effort contains errors (Danny Kleinman has written about this), and that a few of them are significant. I have known players who have taken advantage of the more glaring errors by utilizing them as propositions against others who have unyielding faith in what Bill has written.

It struck me that I may be guilty of uncritical blind acceptance as well. Bill's (strongly) recommended play of 4/1 was

Problem #192 from *Advanced Backgammon* by Bill Robertie. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



the play that I definitely would have made over the board. Clearly two-time world champion Bill Robertie is an immortal

player. Who am I to question such an authoritative voice? But what was it that my kindergarten teacher was fond of saying? Oh, yes. "Nobody's perfect."

Still following the motto that I picked up in college—"Question authority"—I spent the better part of two days rolling it out, 108 times each way. Black's equity (with White clutching a 2-cube) was as follows:

- (a)  $4/1 = +0.52$
- (b)  $7/6^*/4 = +1.70$

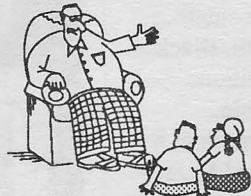
Can "safe play" (a) be so fraught with repeating shot jeopardy that it's worth but one-half point? That sounds O.K. to me. But can (b), the "pick-and-pass" play be thrice as powerful?

I played with deliberate care. There was only one recube that was a take and there was only one BG. When dissected into six

[Continued on page 8]



# EXPERIMENT IN TERROR



by Jake Jacobs

“Uncle Jake, could you tell us another story?”

“What kind of story, Michael?”

“A scary story, with Jason or Freddie or Leatherface!”

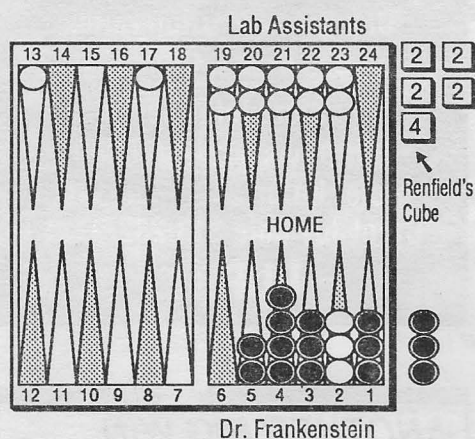
“Yeah, a story without any words like ‘concupiscence.’”

“I’ll try, Christina, but you’re severely limiting my repertoire.” . . .

ONE DARK NIGHT a conclave of sinister looking gentlemen huddled close around the operating table as they conducted their grim business.

“I double everyone,” said Dr. Frankenstein. “Renfield, your’s is a redouble.”

Renfield, Igor and three lab assistants took, and the doctor proceeded to sew the game up like a good-looking corpse. This innocent position was reached, when suddenly, fate extended one taloned hand and DR. FRANKENSTEIN ROLLED 5-3:



“Oh, ho!” he laughed perversely and moved 5/Off, 4/1. “You see, it is within my power to give new life to the rotting dead.”

“No, no, Doc!” cried the lab assistants. “Call off this experiment. We’ll each pay 1.”

But the doctor shook his head and commanded, “Proceed!”

The chief lab assistant rolled a 3-6 and played 2/5\*/11. Unshaken, the doctor responded 1-3 and played Bar/24, 4/1.

“Wait, I redouble,” screamed Igor.

“Me too.” Renfield’s cube came over at the 8-level.

“Any others?” the doctor asked with forced calm. The lab assistants shook their heads.

Muttering something about the stench of decaying body parts, Dr. Frankenstein

took the two redoubles.

After a 5-2 played 17/24\*, and a dance, the lab assistants all redoubled.

“We end it now.”

“Yes, this time you’ve escaped,” said the doctor. Then pointing at Igor and Renfield, “But for these others, the terror continues.”

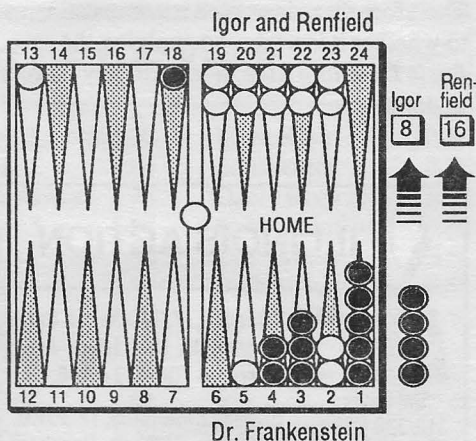
Igor sat down and rolled a 4-3. “I’m playing it this way,” said Igor as he moved his man from the 11-point to his bar.

“Don’t!” shrieked Renfield. “He might roll a . . . 1-6!!”

A flash of lightning lit the table as the doctor did just that. Gurgling like drowning man, Igor weakly responded 5-3.

The doctor examined the board. “Perhaps some things are not meant to be. Maybe this experiment ends now, but the only way to truly bring to life a monster is to turn on the electricity.” HE REDOUBLED:

*The doctor turns on the electricity . . .*



Perhaps he really meant it to end there; but unbeknownst to him, Igor’s and Renfield’s brains had been replaced with the brains of homicidal maniacs. Growling now, they snatched the cubes like wolves tearing flesh from a carcass. Tapping into the mysterious force that hides in the darker corners of the universe and shreds stable matter into chaotic energy, the doctor hurled forth 4-4.

In one sudden, epiphanous moment, he could see the future clear. Strapped to two premature but enormous doubling cubes, carrion birds would come and pick his liver. There was no escape. Dr. Frankenstein realized the fate of those who tamper with the forces of nature: The first person the monster turns on is its own creator. ☞

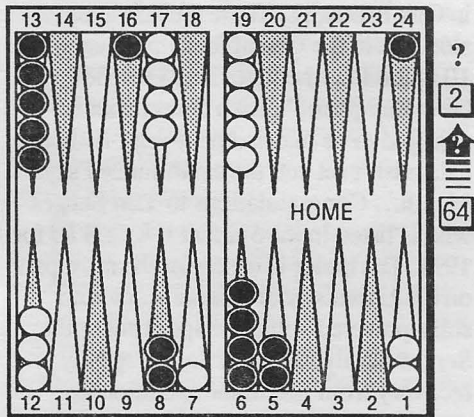
## AMALGAMATION

The reigning World Backgammon Champion **Hal Heinrich** (Calgary) along with ’89 World Champ **Joe Russell** (L.A.) are both registered to play in the Chicago Bar Point Club’s upcoming Midwest Championships 22-24 March at the Marriott Hotel in Oak Brook, IL. There are still about 25 slots left in the Championship division and 10 in the Intermediate: 312/338-6380... New Hampshire’s **Rich Sweetman** is engaged to be married next year. Although a date isn’t set yet, the smart money says March... Congratulations to **Tim Serges** who is listed in the *Student Who’s Who* for 1991. The honor is based for the most part on his University of Illinois work with solar-powered vehicles. Speaking of the Serges family, we wish **Sarg** a speedy recovery from his minor operation last month... Our deepest condolences to **Don Jayhan** and family on the passing of his wife **Mickey Jayhan** 18 February. In lieu of flowers, Don has requested that donations be made to the American Cancer Society in Mickey’s name... To our knowledge, **Trudie Stern**’s Winnetka Backgammon Club (7:00 P.M. Wednesday nights at the Winnetka Community House, 620 Lincoln Ave.) has recently become the first totally NO SMOKING backgammon club in the world. Call 708/446-6909 for the “fresh” directions... In the past, **Mark Harlan** (CA) who works for Apple Computer has had some unusual job titles on his company business cards. First he was Apple’s “Question Authority,” then the “Minister of Propaganda.” Now Mark has been transferred to Apple-U.K. in London and his new title is “Werewolf.”... Last year, CHICAGO POINT columnist **Jake Jacobs** and his brother **Munchkin** (CA) wrote the screenplay for a potential martial arts movie. On 8 March, their story, “Ring of Fire” begins filming in the Los Angeles area. Munchkin will direct and Jake will serve as technical advisor. **Don “The Dragon” Wilson**, the top-rated kickboxer in the world is signed to star... **Les Bale** informs us that Lincolnwood Chess & Games has moved to 3047 N. Lincoln Avenue in Chicago. Play at Chicagoland Chess & Games is from 6:00 P.M. to midnight daily except Sunday. The daily fee is \$3 and backgammon players are welcome. For more information, contact Les at 312/47-CHESS... Congratulations to the allied forces on their “blitz-prime-closeout” victory in the Persian Gulf. Hurry home. Δ

# PROBLEM #168 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

Money game. **SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE? IF BLACK DOUBLES, SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



This problem is a typical early game cube decision. As always, the first question to ask when analyzing the problem is not whether it is a double, but whether it is a take. The analysis of the take question will often solve the problem about whether or not it is correct to double.

In this position, Black has a significant advantage in both the race and development. On the other hand, White is not in immediate danger of being primed, blitzed, crunched, or outraced. If White wins the fight for the enemy bar-point, she will have nearly an even game, while if Black wins the point, White will still have plenty of play. She has an anchor, none of her men are out of play, and Black still has one additional back man to escape. White can win by making an advanced anchor and successfully priming the remaining Black checker, and if things go badly, she will have at worst, an ace-point game to fall back on. With all these possibilities, it appears to me that White has enough play in the game to justify a take.

The question of whether or not Black should double is another matter entirely. Many players will go through the above analysis, decide that it is pretty clear for White to take, and talk themselves out of doubling thinking that they need more improvement. This is very wrong. Just because White has a fairly clear take in no way means that it is incorrect to double. If Black hits the blot on the bar-point and White fails to hit back or immediately establish an advanced anchor, White will have a clear pass of a double. Since this is

not a particularly unlikely scenario, it is essential that Black double now. If things go badly, Black will still retain a small advantage, while if things go well, Black will lose his market. These conditions make this position a classic double.

Another way to look at the problem is to apply the *Basic Doubling Rule* I have developed which is as follows:

**If there is any question at all as to whether a position is a take, then it is always correct to double.**

As an example, suppose Joe Sylvester or Paul Magriel came to you with this position claiming it was a pass, and offering to play it as a proposition for \$100 per point (or whatever would be very high stakes to you). If you would not be willing to instantly say "sit down," then there must be some doubt in your mind as to whether it was a take, which means it must be correct to double. This problem falls into that category.

I am quite convinced that Black's double here is a take for White, and would probably be willing to play it as a proposition until proven wrong. However, if an expert player offered to play the "pass" side of the proposition I would certainly have to give the position a second look. Therefore there is at least some question as to whether it is a take, so applying the *Basic Doubling Rule*, it is definitely correct to double. Δ



## ILLINOIS ACTION



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

Tuesday, 7:00 P.M. at Pat's Pub, 4343 N. Harlem Ave., Norridge 708/457-1166.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:30 P.M. at Fields, 4636 N. Cumberland, Chicago 312/625-1717.

**PUB CLUB:** Tournaments Monday, 7:30 P.M. at Fiddler's, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Ed Bauder (708/985-1568).

**SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASSN:** Tournaments Tuesday, 6:15 P.M. at On Broadway, 210 S. Broadway, Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

**BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB:** Tourn. 1st/3rd/5th Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at Bennigan's, 115 Veteran's Parkway, Normal. Lane O'Connor (309/454-1947).

**WINNETKA BG CLUB:** Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Stern (708/446-0537).

**CENTRAL ILL. BG CLUB:** Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Sue Will (309/692-6909).

**TULEY PARK BG:** Tourn. alt. Sat., 1:00 P.M. at Tuley Park Fieldhouse, 90th & King, Chgo. Reggie Porter (312/471-5066).

**NORTH CLUB:** Daily side play except Sunday at 4747 W. Peterson (402), Chgo. Howard Markowitz (312/286-8417).

# GET FIRED UP.

# FIRE

PUSH IN  
THEN

PULL ▼ DOWN

## 1991 MIDWEST BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS

22-24 March 1991

Oak Brook Marriott Hotel  
Oak Brook, Illinois

For more information:

Bill Davis 312/338-6380

Peter Kalba 312/276-4144

Carol Joy Cole 313/232-9731

## HURRY.

## ANOTHER BIG WIN FOR ROBERTIE



Congratulations to 2-time World Backgammon Champion Bill Robertie and Patrice Pisano who were married 15 February in the Boston area. [Photo from 1990 World Cup auction dinner]



A CHICAGO POINT Contest  
Win **\$50.00** Cash

# WHO KILLED MAGGIE MISPLAY?

by BOB ZAVORAL



**M**y name is Sureluck Holmeboard, a private investigator. Early this morning I received an urgent call from the West Hollywood home of Roberta Richeauladie. I quickly rushed to her palatial estate and the scene of a grisly murder.

A group was awaiting me in the library—the regular Wednesday night \$50 chouette which had been meeting for the past five years at Roberta's mansion. To avoid any publicity, they had all agreed to solicit my services. Since the murderer was clearly one of those present, I was to use my vast array of skills to deduce the culprit and quietly dispatch him or her to the local gendarmes.

Alas, I found myself in a quandary. The murder had taken place during the game and I didn't know how to play backgammon with any kind of proficiency. I worried I might be missing some important clue which a student of the game might more astutely observe.

I am appealing, therefore, to backgammon aficionados to help me solve the crime. Here is a summary of the case assembled from my skillful interrogating:

Viscount Miscount (White) had been playing as "box" against Maggie Misplay (Black), the "captain." The chouette was already an eight hour marathon on a violent and stormy night (in more ways than one). Just as Maggie made her last move and picked up her dice, a bolt of lightning ripped the sky and the lights in the library were mysteriously extinguished. A gammon-curdling scream hacked the pitch black. Then, as if on cue, the lighting returned. Maggie hunkered dead in her chair, a silver pastry knife protruding from her crimson back.

Shown at right is the position on the board after Maggie made the final move of her life:



According to the others, the victim **MAGGIE MISPLAY** was an erratic player prone to moments of craziness: misreading the dice, leaving gratuitous shots, making illegal moves, etc. These annoying lapses were tolerated by the others only because they made her such a joy to play when she was alone in the box.

Big cube games however, were particularly tense for Maggie's crew because

consultation on doubling decisions and moves that Maggie played legally was forbidden. The crew was only permitted to correct her illegally played moves.

Thumbnail sketches of the suspects follow:

**VISCOUNT MISCOUNT** was Maggie's ex-lover. She had left him a week ago and his love pangs were still great. Moreover, when they split, Roberta Richeauladie had overheard him say, "If she leaves me for another man, I'll kill her." A compulsive gambler, Viscount owed Harry Hottemper \$20,000 from past football wagers. He didn't see Maggie's last roll or play, he said, because of a coughing attack. Besides, he was steamed because he had just missed hitting a blot on Maggie's 4-point which would have turned the game around. "Larry Legleplay said I had 11 ways to hit that blot and instead I dance. Oh well. That's backgammon."

**HARRY HOTTEMPER** was Maggie's new boyfriend. Although they had been dating only one week, he had become insanely jealous of her. When he had seen her talking to the Viscount earlier in the evening, it had driven him into a jade rage. "If she goes back to him," he fumed to Roberta, "I'll kill them both." Commenting on Maggie's last roll, he said, "Her pieces were all in for the bear-off. Instead, she played harebrained—completely illegal. I can't remember the exact roll, though. I had wanted to correct her, but she picked up her dice too fast."

**LARRY LEGLEPLAY** was by far the best player of the lot. In other chouettes he routinely played rules permitting consulta-

tion between captain and crew in all instances. But to "fish in this pond," he had to suffer their rules, irksome and expensive though they could be. Reeling from a huge loss at the mercy of Maggie's craziness last week, he had (rhetorically, he said) remarked to the Viscount this fateful evening, "If Maggie makes another illegal move that costs me big money, I'll kill her." About Maggie's last roll, Larry was philosophical. "I can't be upset. Maggie's last play was crazy, but it was legal. According to the rules, there was nothing any of us could do about it."

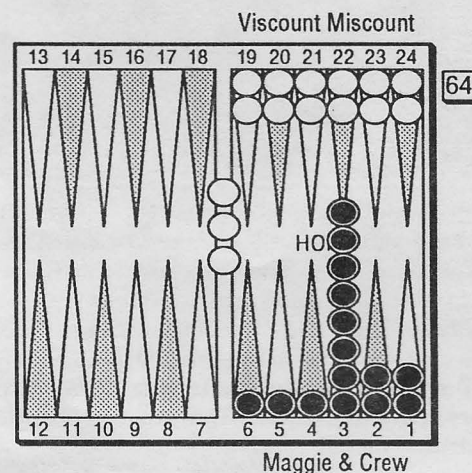
**ROBERTA RICHAULADIE** was the *raison d'être* of the Wednesday chouette. She admitted to being sick and tired of the condescending attitude of the others. After all, she said, the game was only luck, not skill as Maggie kept trying to impress upon her. "To have that scatterbrain tell me anything is an insult," she told Larry. Roberta claimed she had been fixing her tea and never focused on Maggie's exact roll, but was certain "It was larger than a 4."

**DEBBIE DEISMISREEDER** was Maggie's closest friend. She confessed to being secretly in love with Harry and when he had made a move on Maggie, Debbie could barely bring herself to speak to her. Her comment was, "She's so damn beautiful, I could just kill her!" Debbie claims that Roberta is wrong when she says the roll was larger than a 4. "It was 2-2 and I'm positive about it." The other players scoffed at this because Debbie has the annoying habit of always reading the *sides* of the dice.

Finally, there was **PIPPS**, the butler (of course). He hated to see his employer Roberta lose every week, figuring it might eventually cost him his job. Knowing nothing about backgammon, he didn't realize that she was in an enviable position when the lights went out. "I have no sympathy for any of these greedy vermin," he said. "Can you believe it? While Maggie lay slumped in her chair, they were voting to complete the game at a later date!"



**THERE YOU HAVE IT.** Everyone had a motive for murder and each had easy access to the knife on the pastry cart next to the backgammon table. But something is eluding me... perhaps about the play of the game. Can you help? Who killed Maggie Misplay?



**HOW TO ENTER:** Send your best guess on Maggie's killer along with a brief reason for your answer to: CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645. **Entries must be received by 29 March 1991.**

Ties will be broken by random draw.

## LETTERS...

[Continued from page 4]

sets of 36 rollouts, there was internal consistency. With the safe play, Black won nine gammons (25%). With the aggressive play, Black scored 18 gammons (50%) and one BG before losing one gammon. Black won one game after accepting a recube to 4. I conclude that my results are perhaps slightly overstated for the aggressive play, but the results are essentially valid and reliable.

Antonio, I doubt that I'll have the chance to thank you in person, so I'll just say thanks for keeping us on our toes.—  
*Marc Gray, Niskayuna, NY*

### MORE PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

Steve Nelson was our Player of the Year for 1990. For the past three years he has been our most consistent tournament player. Our club continues to do well as we had 112 members last year compared to 82 for 1989 and 57 in 1988.—*Jerry Godsey, President, Hong Kong Backgammon Club*

I'm happy to inform you that Rainer Birkle and I are starting the First Mannheim

Backgammon Club here in Germany. I understand that the Reno seminar handout on how to form a backgammon club has tips on building attendance. Could you send us a copy?

One last note: the winner of the first South-West Germany "End of the Year" tournament was Dieter Siegfried from Kaiserslautern which makes him S-W Germany Player of the Year.—*Klaus Feierstein, First Mannheim Backgammon Club, Germany*

For a copy of "How To Form A Local Backgammon Club," send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: CHICAGO POINT, 2726 W. Lunt Ave., Chicago, IL 60645.—*Ed.*

### YAMINOS?

I saw in the December POINT that Yamin Yamin and Darcey Brady got married. Fantastic! Please give them my very, very best. I hope they have lots of little Yaminos.

I have recently accepted a two-year position as Assistant Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. However I still hope to see you "over the board" in Monte-Carlo: preferably in the finals.—*Greg Shore, Rome, Italy* Δ

## Hitting A Blot At . . .

# INFINITY

by Duane Jensen

What is the probability that a Black checker can hit a stationary White blot resting at infinity?

### SOLUTION

Since the average roll is  $8 \frac{1}{6}$ , the total distance traveled in 36 rolls =  $8 \frac{1}{6} \times 36 = 294$  pips. Black has the potential to land on 14 of the pips. Therefore, Black will hit the blot at infinity  $14/294 = 38.76\%$ . Δ

Doublet  $6 \times 4 = 24$   
Others  $30 \times 3 = 90$   
Total  $= 114$

The total pip count for all 36 dice rolls is 294. Each doublet forces the Black checker to land on four different points. Each of the remaining 30 rolls gives Black the option to touch down on any of three different points. Therefore, the total points that Black can land on is:

# 1991 Championship of Great Britain

## Costa del Sol, Spain † 6th-12th May 1991



### EVENTS

- Championship Div. £350
- Intermediate Div. £120
- Novice Division £60

Tournaments include 1st & 2nd Consolations and a Last Chance (100% to Winners).

### REGISTRATION

Player £60

Guest £50 also...

- £25,000 Manx-Med King Pot (7th-12th May)
- Mini-Jackpots
- Super-Jackpots
- Calcutta Auction
- WBF Golden Circuit event

Registration includes Seminars by Bill Robertie and Joe Sylvester, Welcoming Cocktail Party, Gala International and Spanish Cabaret and Prize-giving Cocktail Party.

### Isle of Man goes Mediterranean



The 1991 Isle of Man Championship of Great Britain will be held on the Mediterranean coast at the new Hotel Torrequebrada. The Torrequebrada has a fine casino, luxury rooms, many restaurants, private beach on the Mediterranean Sea, tennis and a health club.

This new luxury resort on the Costa del Sol is only about 7 miles from Málaga International Airport, with very easy direct access from most major cities or via Madrid. Join us!

*Hercules, Baron of Culereuch*  
DIRECTOR

### TORREQUEBRADA BACKGAMMON PACKAGE RATES

Including breakfast, service fees and all taxes

Twin Room £50 per person/night

Single £85 per night

Suite On Request

### HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Send your reservations to:

Hotel Torrequebrada

Attention: Alexandra

29630 Benalmadena

Costa del Sol, P.O. Box 67

SPAIN

Or: Tel. (952) 44.60.00

Fax (952) 44.57.02

(USA prefix: 011 34)

Telex 77528 KSNO E

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65, Balsall Heath Road

Birmingham B5 7NG

ENGLAND

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Bill Davis (312/338-6380), or  
Carol Joy Cole (313/232-9731).