

1991 monte-carlo world championship

A STAR IS BORN

Germany's Michael Meyburg Is The New World Champion

In his forward to *Beginning Backgammon* (1973), Tim Holland describes the game as being "... quick, calculating, decisive, and yet unpredictable until the very end. As luck will have it (and the luck of the toss is a definite uncontrollable factor), it is also—at times—frustrating and exasperating, exhilarating and rewarding."

For Goulding, Marmorstein, Robertie, Magriel, Horan, and all the other superstars attending the 16th Annual World Backgammon Championship in Monte-Carlo 15–21 July, it was "frustrating and exasperating." But for the internationally unknown Michael Meyburg, a computer salesman from Nürnberg, Germany, it was "exhilarating" and most certainly "rewarding"—to the tune of \$60,000. Meyburg has won the 1991 World Championship of Backgammon at the ripe old age of 27.

A huge crowd of nearly 500 movers and shakers representing 40 nations competed in backgammon's most prestigious event at the Loews Monte-Carlo Hotel. James Ballié and André Rolfo-Fontana were in charge, assisted by IBA (Florida) directors Les & Sue Boyd. Except for complaints about the organizer's decision to cancel this year's Calcutta Auction, the tournament was very well received.

From Intermediate To World Champion In Four Months

Meyburg's rise to the top was explosive. In fact, this was only his third entry at the Championship level. His results over the past year include victories in the Austrian Open–Intermediate (Oct. 1990) and the Nordic Open–Intermediate (March 1991). Meyburg then moved to the Champ division where he recently won the Consolation bracket in Wiesbaden. He has been playing backgammon for 2 1/2 years.

A newlywed of two months with lots of "young married" expenses, Michael seriously considered playing in the Intermedi-

ate division in Monte-Carlo. Instead, he decided to look for backing into the Championship. *Das Backgammon Magazin* editor Harald Johann refused his offer, but a friend from Munich took him up on it. Wise investment.

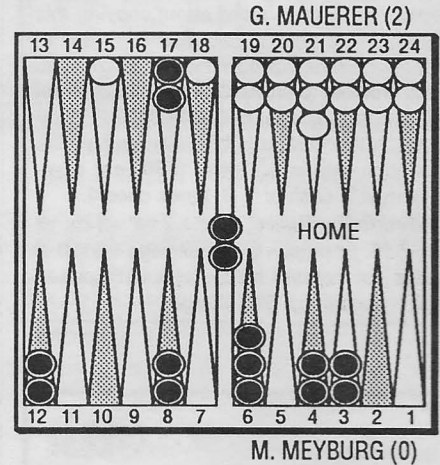
Meyburg bested some tough Americans on his path to the finals including Perry Gartner, Paul Magriel, and Neil Kazaross in the quarterfinals. All three rated Meyburg's game as good. Gartner was so impressed that after his loss, he placed a wager on Meyburg to win the tournament from the round-of-64. Another wise investment.

Meyburg's semifinal match against Georges Vadiakas was a blowout. The other finalist, Gerhard Maurerer of Munich, Germany also had an easy time in the round-of-four. Although oddsmakers made Maurerer the huge underdog, it was his opponent, John Koonmen who did the barking, all the way back home to New York.

The All-German Finals

The Meyburg–Maurerer 25 point finals was decided early on in two "big swing" games:

25 point finals. Maurerer (White) leads Meyburg (Black) 2–0. **WHITE TO PLAY 4-3.**



[Continued on page 6]

TUESDAY AT PAT'S PUB: THE JOINT IS JUMPIN'



Summer attendance for Chicago Bar Point Club Tuesday night BG at Pat's Pub (4343 N. Harlem; Norridge, IL) has never been better: averaging over 50 players per week. What does this have to do with the Cleveland Museum of Art's 23" x 32" oil painting, "Game Of Backgammon" by David Teniers the Younger (Flemish 1610–1690)? Good question. [Submitted by Gardner Soule, Shelburne, VT]

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT
2726 W. Lunt Avenue
Chicago, IL 60645-3039

GETTING THE RATE RIGHT

I understand that there have been queries regarding the room rates charged by the Torrequebrada Hotel in Spain for the May Championship of Great Britain. The rate was negotiated last November with the Management of the Hotel by Mr. Colin Roberts of Gaming Tournament Promotions. Bridget and I were present at these negotiations because it so happened that we were inspecting the hotel for its suitability to accommodate a major international tournament.

The rate agreed upon by the management was exactly as specified in the brochure, namely £50 per night per person, including breakfast, service and all taxes. Included in the brochure was the following: "The above prices are based on the current rates of exchange, so may vary slightly . . ."

When we negotiated the £50 room fee, the currency exchange rate was 180 pesetas to the pound. At the time of the tournament, it was just over 177.5, which makes some slight difference. However, the hotel

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

coming attractions



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

Aug 12-18	Vermont Festival, Stratton Mountain Inn, Stratton Mountain, VT	305/527-4033
Aug 15*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada-Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Aug 18	Summer Cool Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/338-6380
Aug 23-25*	26th Gammon Associates Invitational, Cavendish West Hollywood, CA	818/901-0464
Aug 30-Sep 2	National Labor Day Tournament, Radisson Plaza, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
Sep 14	Connecticut Open, Hall of Fame Lounge, Southington, CT	203/755-9749
Sep 15*	Milwaukee Club Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, John Hawks Pub, WI	414/463-2498
Sep 19*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada-Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Sep 22-26	Las Vegas Open Tournament, Golden Nugget Hotel & Casino, NV	708/470-9491
Oct 3-6	Sertoma Invitational Doubles Tournament, Winn Ranch, Leander, TX	512/267-3968
Oct 4-6	Rochester Club Tournament, Towpath Lodge, Turin, NY	716/442-8221
Oct 6	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Oct 19	College Park Fall Open Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Oct. 25-27	Chicago Fall Classic, Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Rosemont, IL	708/674-0120
Nov 1-3	9th New Hampshire Fall Classic, Sheraton Wayfarer, Manchester, NH	603/863-4711
Nov 5	9th Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Pat's Pub, Norridge, IL	312/338-6380
Nov 16	Connecticut Open, Hall of Fame, Southington, CT	203/755-9749
Nov 24*	13th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Jan 15-19	9th Nevada State Championship, Peppermill Hotel/Casino, Reno, NV	708/470-9491

OUTSIDE USA

Aug 10-11*	Sjælland Open 1991, Hotel Rådhuskroen, Frederikssund, Denmark	45/4231-6611
Aug 15-18	Palace Summer Championships, Badrutt's, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/50 58 16
Aug 23-25*	2nd Torneo Profesional, Costa Atlantica, Pinamar, Argentina	0054/1-7908177
Aug 24	1991 Wiesbaden Cup, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplenade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122-16124
Aug 29-Sep 1	1st Mitteleuropa Tournament, Casino Nova Gorica, Yugoslavia	39/2-48019343
Aug 31-Sep 1	BIBA Trophy Tournament, Post House Hotel, Crick near Rugby, England	0522/721630
Sep 2	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/8-461923
Sep 15-22	Georgia International & World Cup, Colhety Hotel, Kobuleti, Tbilisi	305/937-0659
Sep 28	1991 Wiesbaden Cup, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplenade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122-16124
Sep 28-29	5th British Festival of BG, Morecambe Town Hall, Lancaster, England	061/946 0828
Oct 4-6	Rio de Janeiro Open/91, Le Meridien Copacabana Hotel, Brazil	5521/2676033
Oct 7	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/8-461923
Oct 7-11*	10th Torneo Sudamericano, Punta Carrasco, Buenos Aires, Argentina	0054/1-7908177
Oct 12-13*	Wansbeck Club's 1st Annual Tournament, Buccaneer Inn, Cambios, UK	0522/721630
Oct 26	1991 Wiesbaden Cup, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplenade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122-16124
Nov 1-3*	Swedish Open Championship, Stockholm, Sweden	46/8-524099
Nov 4	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/8-461923
Nov 8-10	1991 NRW-Meisterschaft, Novotel Düsseldorf-Nord, Germany	02151/503591
Nov 14-17	British Open Masters Tournament, Empress Hotel, Douglas, Isle of Man	0624/851045
Nov 24-25	BIBA Trophy Tournament, Post House Hotel, Crick near Rugby, England	0522/721630
Nov 30	1991 Wiesbaden Cup, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplenade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122-16124
Dec 2*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/8-461923
Dec 28*	1991 Wiesbaden Cup, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplenade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122-16124

accepted the £50 rate and was obliged to honor it.

I have been informed that some players were charged a daily fee slightly in excess of £50. If any player feels badly about this, would they please write direct to the hotel (including a copy of their bill) and demand the refund due them.

Obviously, Mr. Roberts is not responsible if a hotel employee incorrectly overcharges a customer, whether it be for the room rate, dinner, or a bottle of wine. All Mr. Roberts could do was to quote the price agreed upon by the hotel, which he

did. After that, players should always check their individual bills for correctness.—

Hercules, Baron of Culcreuch, Isle of Man; Director, Championship of Great Britain

HOW TO ROLL SMALLER NUMBERS

I am completing the machining of new, smaller 1/2" precision backgammon dice. They should be available (in blue, green, red and amber) around 10 August.

Also in the works is a dice tube for generating random numbers. This will be

[Continued on page 4]

ABBAS ZALTASH WINS ILLINOIS

Pittsburgh pizza restaurant owner Abbas Zaltash is starting to enjoy shaking Yamin Yamin's hand. Zaltash topped Yamin in the finals of the February Pittsburgh Charity Tournament for his first victory handshake of 1991. Then at the Award Ceremony of the 1-4 August Illinois State Championships, Abbas collect another victory handshake from Yamin, the *director*.

Participation at the Hyatt Hotel in Deerfield, IL topped one hundred players for Yamin Yamin's debut effort as a tournament director. The event was a rousing success.

In his 15-point final match against Chicago's Don "Mr. Steady" Desmond, Zaltash jumped off to a 13-1 lead. But because Don had come back from two huge deficits to sweep the 1990 Michigan Summer Championships, nobody wrote him off. This time however, Zaltash held on to win 15-8.

Cream rose to the top in the Advanced division with Terry Kuchenbrod (KY) coming from behind to win back-to-back gammons and grab a 13-12 victory over Jeff Kane (WI). Both players have won or reached the finals of numerous Advanced and/or Intermediate events.

Free caps, coffee, punch, sweet rolls, candy, cookies, champagne, etc. Congratulations to Yamin Yamin, Cinda King, Ed Bauder, Darcey Brady et. al. It was great! Δ



Abbas Zaltash and Don Desmond begin the Illinois State Finals as 1991 Michigan Summer Champ Harry Cohn looks on.

1991 ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

CHAMPIONSHIP (40): 1-Abbas Zaltash (PA), 2-Don Desmond (IL), 3/4-George Morse (TX)/John O'Hagan (IN); 1C-Neil Kazaross (CA), 2C-Steve Tennant (IL)
ADVANCED (43): 1-Terry Kuchenbrod (KY), 2-Jeff Kane (WI), 3/4-Arline Levy (IL)/Dennis McKown (IL); 1C-Don Marek (IL), 2C-John Stryker (OH)
LIMITED (12): 1-William Hutcherson (IL), 2-Claudia Brown (TX); 1C-Mike Wesley (MI)
\$500 MASTERS (20): 1-Joe Sylvester (MI), 2-Alan Steffen (WA)

TEAM (14): 1-Carol Joy Cole (MI) & Howard Markowitz (IL) & Marcy Sloan (IL), 2-Yamin Yamin (IL) & Abbas Zaltash (PA) & Sue Will (IL)
PARLAY FROM HELL (16): 1-John Stryker (OH)
KICKOFF (64): 1-Stu Hosen (TX), 2-Gary Daniels (IL), 3/4-Martin Brown (TX) / John Vietor (CA)
MINI-BLITZ (64): 1-Wally Wolf (MI)
MICRO-BLITZ (8): 1-Yamin Yamin (IL)
LAST CHANCE #1 (16): 1-John O'Hagan (IN)
LAST CHANCE #2 (32): 1-Herb Roman (IL)
LADIES PRIZES: Championship-Trish Hegland (CA); Advanced-Arline Levy (IL)
HIGH PERFORMANCE PRIZE: Leslie Witt (CAN)



1991 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU 31 JULY

TAK MORIOKA	18.56	Phyllis Smolinski	4.64	Richard Stawowy	1.00
JAKE JACOBS	14.96	Peter Berkman	4.56	Larry Lau	0.96
DAVE CRAMER	13.36	Herb Roman	4.32	Dean Muench	0.96
YAMIN YAMIN	13.28	Bobbie Shifrin	4.28	Greg Try	0.92
GARY KAY	12.80	Alice Kay	4.24	Craig Chellstorp	0.88
DON DESMOND	11.52	Bill Davis	3.96	Peter Naguib	0.88
STU KATZ	10.56	René Wojtysiak	3.96	Mike Landau	0.88
JOE KOUCHEARIAN	9.84	Harold Seif	3.84	Mickey Kaplan	0.80
JOANN FEINSTEIN	9.44	Marcy Sloan	3.48	Ron Stur	0.80
DEEB SHALATI	9.28	Beverly Klene	3.36	Kathy Rudnick	0.80
MARY FRANKS	8.48	Tim Serges	2.84	Don Marek	0.80
JOHN DEMIAN	8.44	Betsy Miller	2.64	Rich Galeba	0.80
GEORGE BARR	8.08	Ed Buerger	2.64	Kurt Schurecht	0.80
HOWARD MARKOWITZ	8.00	Adam Kay	2.40	Sheila Arnold	0.72
BRUCE WITTERT	7.76	Ken Bond	2.40	David Rockwell	0.72
LUCKY NELSON	7.60	V.W. Zimnicki	2.32	Tim Mabee	0.64
PAUL FRANKS	7.36	Alex Caraplis	2.16	David Curd	0.64
STEVE POTASHNICK	7.04	Stan Kucharz	2.08	Bob Ebbeler	0.56
LENNY LODER	6.48	Ed Bauder	1.92	Steve Katz	0.48
DON JAYHAN	6.44	Arline Levy	1.92	David Orman	0.44
Jolie Lewis	6.32	Walter Schafer	1.68	George Kirkby	0.44
Ralph Levy	5.72	Chris Stanford	1.44	Bob Holyon	0.40
Norma Shyer	5.44	Harold Grote	1.44	Mike Cohen	0.40
Leslie Lockett	5.36	Paul Friedman	1.28	Kurt Warning	0.40
Mark King	5.12	David Lynn	1.28	Mike Curcio	0.32
David Rubin	5.08	Barry Miller	1.28	Peter Kalba	0.32
Frank Callea	5.04	Bob Zavoral	1.28	Jeff Vaughn	0.32
Howard Ring	5.04	Jerry Brooks	1.24	Roland Dieter	0.24
Alex Itkin	4.96	Barbara Levinson	1.24	Mike Spiropoulos	0.24
Sarg Serges	4.80	Dan Judd	1.04	Larry Knoll	0.24
Femi Owiku	4.72				

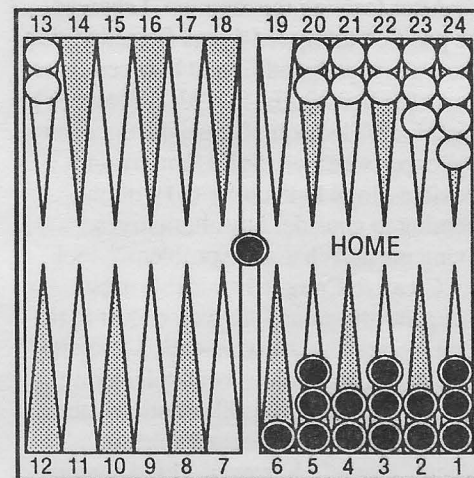
HOWARD MARKOWITZ won on the last Tuesday of the month to earn top honors for July (3.04 points). Howard Ring (2.96) and Yamin Yamin (2.88) were close behind in a month of master point parity (44 players earned points).

If you finish in the Top 20 for 1991 (capitalized names on list), you'll be entered in a drawing for over \$300 worth of valuable merchandise. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st-Trophy + \$200, 2nd-\$125, 3rd-\$75. 1st through 20th-engraved marble paperweight. 1st through 6th-Invitation to participate on the Chicago Bar Point Club team in the 1992 Illinois State Challenge Cup.

your move

PROBLEM #174

Match to 9 points tied at 8-8 (double match-point). **BLACK TO PLAY 6-5.**



ASK DANNY

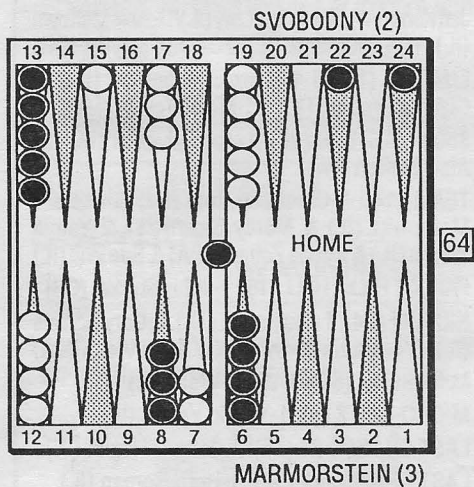


by Danny Kleinman

GAIN FLEXIBILITY EARLY

Dear Danny: I was going over some matches from last year's Monte-Carlo World Championship in an old German language Das Backgammon Magazin and came across the following position:

Match to 17 points. Phillip Marmorstein (Black) leads Mike Svobodny (White) 3 to 2. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



Marmorstein (Black) played Bar/24/22. No doubt that this is a secure move, but what about (Bar/23, 6/5)? Take a little risk now for more flexibility later. Would you agree?—Mark Siebert, Laconia, NH

DEAR MARK: Anchoring on the 3-point is an obvious, solid play which most experts would make automatically and might still make even after reflection. Yet the alternative that you suggest, Bar/23, 6/5, appeals to me more.

After forming this opinion, I showed the position to my old friend Eclectic Edith. She was virtually indifferent between three plays: (S) Bar/22; (F) Bar/23, 6/5; and (C) Bar/24, 13/11. Soon afterwards, three very fine experts arrived. Solid Sammy and Flexible Floyd both chose (S) without seeming to consider any alternatives, giving me a "What's the problem?" look. But Creative Craig believes that most backgammon games are won or lost in the opening, and that most so-called "experts" misplay early positions routinely. Craig sneered at (S) and (F) alike, and insisted that (C) was the only reasonable play. When Craig left, however, Floyd agreed

with your choice and mine, (F).

None of my expert companions, excellent as they are, were highly articulate in giving reasons for their plays they liked. So let me try.

AS I SEE IT, the issue isn't "risk" versus "flexibility," but *what kind of flexibility.*

(S) is flexible in offering three different game plans:

- (1) play a trey-point game, with a lone man on the ace-point to inhibit Black's movement beyond his 3-point;
- (2) convert to a holding game by making an advanced anchor later;
- (3) having anchored safely, forget about safety in the future and engage your opponent in an exchange of hits, gaining a strong positional advantage if successful and reverting to a back game if unsuccessful. (The 3-anchor, though mediocre as your lone anchor, is splendid as part of a pair of anchors.)

(C) is flexible in providing the best distribution of men on the 6-, 8- and 13-points: (4, 3 and 4) instead of (4, 3 and 5) or (3, 3 and 5). Likewise, the builder it brings to the 11-point is flexible because it can be used to make either the 5-point or another outfield point to impede Black's eventual exit from his bar-outpost.

Meanwhile, making the ace-point rather than the trey-point is flexible in letting you switch to a trey-point game as well as making a more advanced anchor. If you do make a more advanced anchor, moreover, you will have a better (because farther back) lone sentry on the ace-point than the trey-point.

(F) is most flexible only on White's side of the board. I like it because I appreciate (as some may not) the power of three blots in an opponent's home court when she has yet to build her key points. I like it because it starts a key inside point immediately, so that it may quickly become dangerous for White to leave blots. Contrary to Creative Craig, the midpoint needn't be unpled quickly: it can be unloaded later. And making a third outfield point to restrain White's bar-outpost isn't much more effective than playing with only the 13- and 8-points when you need to use men from the outfield to build a board (else White can leave a triple shot on your 7-point and dare you to hit it, knowing she can reenter easily).

DESPITE THE DIVERGENCE of strategies behind each play, I see little to choose among them, and I wouldn't be surprised if my order of preference—(F), (S), (C)—

was mistaken. I would like Craig's play better if the cube had already been turned, for with the cube still centered, the ace-point game that may result might not be quite good enough to take White's double.

Don't think I disrespect Creative Craig's ideas, even though I disagree with his move. This problem illustrates how Craig may be right in his central thesis. For the differences among plays here—unlike, say, differences among moves in contact bear-offs—aren't mere small tradeoffs between frequency of getting hit and chances of winning after getting hit or gammon chances if not hit. No, they are deep strategic differences in the kinds of games that may develop.—Yours, Danny Δ

Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: Ask Danny, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 2726 W. Lunt Avenue, Chicago, IL 60645-3039.

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

an improved version of the one that Martin De Bruin sold at the May tournament in Spain. When perfected, I believe that it will eventually replace the baffle box.—Larry Strommen, Indianapolis, IN

Larry Strommen is the largest distributor of 5/8", 9/16" and now 1/2" precision dice in the United States. For more information, contact Larry at 6866 Meadowview Drive; Indianapolis, IN 46226 (Phone: 317/545-0224).—Ed.

RANDOMIZE DICE FACES

I have been reading a lot about the possibility of dice mechanics and cheating in the CHICAGO POINT these past few months and wanted to add my two cents worth.

There is no need for mass hysteria or paranoia among backgammon players. In fact, if everyone would shake their dice well and throw them across the board, the "repeat" controversy wouldn't exist.

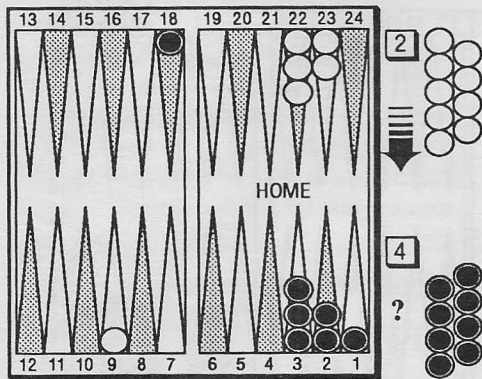
Experts on so-called mini-mechanics contend that when the dice are poorly shaken and dumped, they tend to repeat the number previously rolled, and/or the number on the opposite side of the die. To make the unethical study of dice mechanics more unclear, why not completely randomize the faces of all die? In other words, stop building dice in the traditional manner where opposite sides always add to seven. Just an idea.—Fred Kalantari, Edina, MN Δ

A Perfect Problem For The 'Expert'

by Marc Gray

The following position generated a lot of discussion at the recent Michigan Summer Championships:

Match to 9 points tied at 5-all. White recubles to 4. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**



By using Roy Friedman's match equity chart, we know that if Black passes the recube and falls behind 7-5, his chance of winning the match is 36%. The question is whether or not Black has a 36% chance to win this game. Looks like a job for the "Expert."

Tom Johnson's "Expert Backgammon" Macintosh computer program rollout feature is by no means an "expert" in complex positions. However, with this fairly straightforward setup, EB can be

trusted to yield dependable results.

I had EB play out the position with White's blot on each of the available points from 4 to 17. The original position—with the White straggler on the 9-point—was run 6000 times. With the blot moved one pip in either direction, I generated 4000 trials. I ran 2000 trials for blots located two or three pips from the 9-point. Blots four or more pips from the 9-point received 1000 trials each. The following table shows EB's findings:

Position of White's Trailer	White's Win %
4-point	54.5%
5	56.0
6	59.0
7	64.4
8	68.1
9	69.5
10	73.8
11	78.2
12	82.8
13	87.2
14	92.2
15	91.2
16	94.3
17	94.7

We see that in the given position, Black will win $100\% - 69.5\% = 30.5\%$ by taking the 4-cube. Black does 5.5% better by passing the double and playing from a 7-5 deficit.

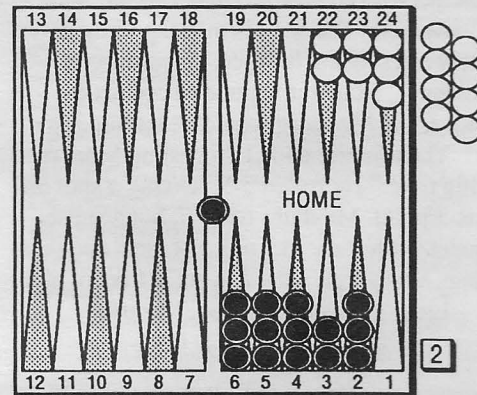
Note that if the White trailer had been on the 7-point, the decision of whether Black should take the recube would have been a virtual toss-up. Δ

prudence

HASTY PLAYS

by Duane Jensen

Match to 9 points. Black leads White 7 to 5. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**



Black must do what he can to escape the gammon which would cost him the match. After entering on the 21-point, Black has the familiar question of "which ace to play?" Should he slot his ace-point or play 21/20, moving closer to home?

Feeling that "it's only an ace and shouldn't make any difference," Black slotted his one-point. In fact, playing 21/20 will save more gammons for Black than the slotting play he chose. Advancing the checker escapes the gammon 68.5% while slotting the ace-point has a success rate of only 67.2%.

Whenever you have a single checker left to bring home and that checker is still in your opponent's home board, *always* move it closer to home with an ace. *Never* slot your one-point in these positions. Δ

NEW WEEKLY CLUB OPENS IN CHICAGO AREA

Joann Feinstein and Howard Markowitz have announced the 23 August grand opening of the Prime Backgammon Club of Chicago. The club will meet Fridays at TJ's Lounge in the Lincolnwood Hyatt Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy Avenue beginning at 6:45 p.m.

The entry fee will be \$15 with an optional \$5 side pool. Master Points will be issued by the club and included in the Chicagoland All-Time Master Point Listings. Due to space considerations, the tournament is limited to 32 players.

For more information, contact Joann at 708/674-0120 or Howard at 708/470-9491.

BG VANITY

Send a photo of you and your vanity backgammon license plate to BG Vanity; CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039.



Leslie Lockett; Kenilworth, Illinois

ILLINOIS ACTION

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB
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 Braxton Seafood Grill, 3 Oakbrook Center Mall, Oak Brook 708/574-2155.

PUB CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 7:30 p.m. at Fiddler's, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. V.W. Zimnicki (708/759-7105.)

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 Godfather's, 1546 E. College Ave., 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).

PRIME BG CLUB OF CHICAGO: Tourn. Friday, 6:45 p.m. at TJ's Lounge, Hyatt Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy, Lincolnwood. Joann Feinstein (708/674-0120). OPENS 23 AUGUST.

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

A STAR...

[Continued from page 1]

Gerhard played illegally: 7/4, 10/5. Match commentator Neil Kazaross later admitted, "Mauerer played the move so fast, I didn't even realize that his play was illegal. Of course 10/6, 4/1 is correct here. Mauerer was nervous and choked under the pressure."

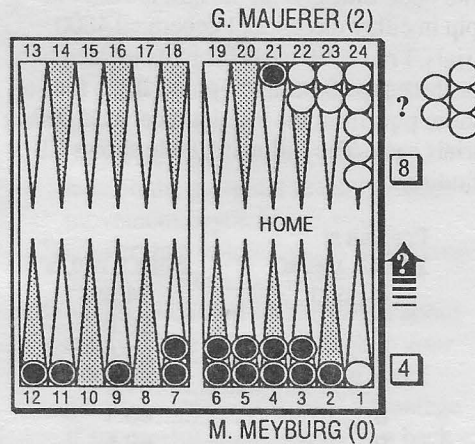
Mauerer noticed his mistake immediately after lifting his dice. According to Johanni, "Mauerer wanted to correct the move, but Meyburg wouldn't let him."

The mistake ended up costing Mauerer "big time." He rolled 5-5, leaving a shot on his 5-point. Meyburg missed, but a subsequent 4-4 left another piece of meat and this time, Michael ate what was put in front of him.

Later in the same game, Kazaross

credited Meyburg on showing "...world-class table presence by redoubling" here:

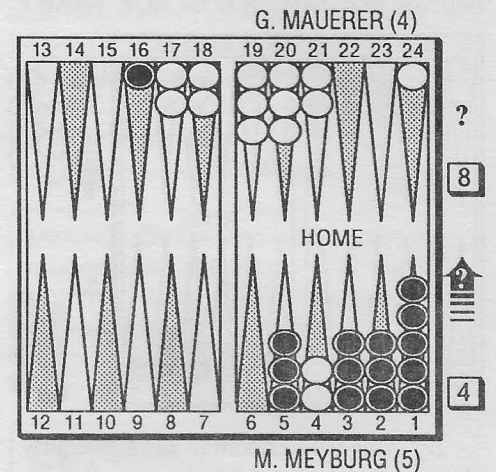
25 point finals. Mauerer (White) leads Meyburg (Black) 2-0. **BLACK RE-DOUBLES AND WHITE DROPS.**



"After the match, Meyburg told me he thought Gerhard, flustered after misplaying, would probably drop the position even though it was a very close match take (and a clear money take)," said Kazaross. "It was a perfectly timed psychological recube."

A few games later, with Meyburg up 5-4, the second key swing position developed:

25 point finals. Meyburg (Black) leads Mauerer (White) 5-4. **CUBE ACTION?**



Kazaross claims White has at least 31% winning chances after accepting the 8-cube. In reality, Mauerer got two shots but missed them both. A 16 point score swing.

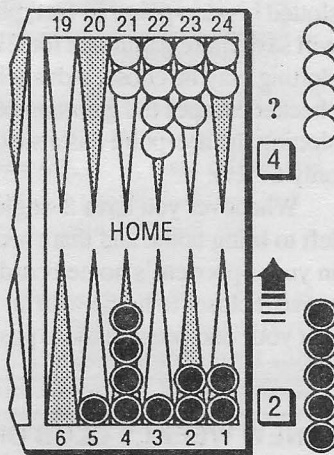
Leading 13-4, Meyburg went on to a 25-8 victory to claim backgammon's most coveted title for 1991. Complete results: Δ

last month's position

PROBLEM #173 SOLVED

by Malcolm Davis

Money game. Black redoubles White to 4. **SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



A PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT

The backgammon position designated as Problem #173 occurred in a Dallas chouette a few weeks ago. Immediately pursuant to the Box's (Black's) pass, the Captain of the team (White) verbally observed that he thought the position was "a take." Considerable controversy ensued, with a friendly bet emanating from the discussion.

Since available computer technology, to the best of my knowledge, has not advanced to the stage where an eleven piece bear-off position of this nature can be

exactly calculated, we must employ a persuasive argument to obtain our solution.

It can be readily determined that the favorite's "no-cube" probability of winning is almost precisely 76.8%. The computer programs of Hal Heinrich, Walter Trice, and Larry Strommen all get close to this number, and a small allowance is made for the slight exaggeration of the favorite's chances inherent in their methodology. The question now becomes whether White's recube value can push his no-cube winning chances of 23.2% into the take zone.

Drawing from the knowledge of some of the most expert cube technicians in backgammon, and combining their opinions with my own extrapolation of cube value from seemingly representative "five-roll" positions, I suggest the increase in the underdog's winning chances through ownership of the cube comes to about 2.7%. Therefore, my best estimate is that incorporating cube-value brings "the take" to about 25.9%.

When polling several "world-class" players, I found that the "takes" were in the minority. As a matter of fact, your CHICAGO POINT editor was one of the three "takes" out of perhaps ten people. [Editor's note: *Psychic guess!*]

We have stretched a bit to claim to know an almost exact answer to a position so currently resistant to specific analysis. Nevertheless, I am sure enough of the findings to offer 9.4 points to anyone who wants to take a 2-cube for ten games, and would be willing to take 9.8 points in ten games as the underdog.

I trust I've made my case in that the foregoing, while admittedly not exact, is somewhat persuasive. Δ

1991 MONTE-CARLO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

CHAMPIONSHIP (234): 1-Michael Meyburg (GER), 2-Gerhard Mauerer (GER), 3/4-John Koonmen (USA)/Georges Vadiakas, 5/8-Roberto Giorgi / Neil Kazaross (USA) / Freddi Narboni (FRA) / Salvador Treves; 1stC1-Christoph Wagener (GER), 1stC2-Rolf Schrueder (NL), 1stC3/4-Uwe Aisch (GER)/Chuck Papazian (USA); 2ndC1-Stefan Keller (SWIT), 2ndC2-Matthias Pauen (GER), 2ndC3/4-Allan Jones (CAN) / Karl Laubmeier (GER); 1LC-Mike Senkiewicz (USA), 2LC-Richard Whitehouse (UK); Ladies Prize-Antoinette Williams (USA)

INTERMEDIATE (110): 1-Beverly Phillips (SP), 2-Martha Ghio (USA), 3/4-Bidziva Kiknadze (URS) / Hermione Somers (UK); 1stC1-Oswald Odermatt, 2ndC2-Alexandre Guillame, 1stC3/4-Raphael Colombo (ITA) / Miklos Nagy; 2ndC1-Brian Lever (UK), 2ndC2-Jens Sjogren (SWE), 2ndC3/4-Parvez Daroudi / Elli Nache (USA); 1LC-Joachim Kieffer (GER), 2LC-Jacob Juhl (DEN)

BEGINNER (96): 1-Kajetan Pfeuffer (GER), 2-David Tsintsadze (URS), 3/4-P. Borglund (SWE) / Alain Lefellic; 1stC1-Jeroen Sikkema (NL), 1stC2-Nana Chaziuri, 1stC3/4-Michel Fornes / Ola Hamring; 2ndC1-Rene Pas, 2ndC2-Misja Alma, 2ndC3/4-Rainer Lietz / Leon Weyl (NL); 1LC-Lorenzo Andriolo, 2LC-Robert Willems (NL)

\$1,000 SUPER JACKPOT (64): 1-Thomas Lumper (GER), 2-Sushil Ong (NL), 3/4-Howard Markowitz (USA) / Mike Svobodny (USA)

TAKGAMMON



by Tak Morioka

WHY ME?

Et tu dice? It's bad enough to face my opponent's good rolls; but to do this to myself—ugh! I've worked so hard to find all of the right plays and now this happens. It's so unfair. Why do I even bother trying?

The law of probability states that a 99% winning position will incur a 1% loss. Suffering that outcome is fairness in the ultimate sense. Our prejudice to compare the highs with the lows is our "fish story." We often will cube at 2-to-1 and that's where the roller coaster ride begins. Wherever the numbers go from there is irrelevant. The final outcome from the point of cubing should be around 2-to-1.

The pain and suffering coming from a loss is due to inconvenience rather than fairness. If there was little chance of winning the match, a 1% reversal would appear almost comical in nature. But put the reversal in a double match-point context and note the emotional upheaval it creates.

Dice rolls can be good or bad, depending on the position. They are relative, not absolute. Giving them personality is our way of trying to relate to an omnipotent force. If dice had ears, they might answer our pleas for mercy. All the problems occur when we start to believe that they *do* have ears. Δ



FORTUNE COOKIE

Why did you lose? . . . Because it was one of the two possible outcomes.

who did what

WINNER'S CORNER



May–July 1991

•**Genie Spring Computer Modem Tourney** (Apr.–May 1991)... Open (26): 1-Ron Lewis, 2-Kurt Schurecht, 3/4-Greg Daniel / S. Price, 5/8-Sheila Arnold / Glenn Daily / L. Kern / D. Shirley... Sheila Arnold reports that Ron Lewis (TX), the top-rated modem player in America, defeated Kurt Schurecht (IL) for the title. The Summer Genie tournament is now under way with 33 entrants. For information on entering a future computer backgammon tourney, call Kurt Schurecht at 708/778-9260.

•**NY/NJ Co-op Regional** (Hackensack, NJ; 19 May)... Championship (20): 1-Perry Gartner, 2-Jack Kissane, 3/4-Eddie Pavilonis / Howard Shapiro; 1C-Jerry Kane, 2C-Dr. Bob Hill. Open (18): 1-Fred Fado, 2-James Mannheimer; 1C-Bob Molitor.

•**Copenhagen Championships** (Denmark; 1–2 June)... Open (37): 1-Michael Herbst, 2-Benny Bøttiger; 1C-John Sjølin, 2C-Thomas Johnsen. Novice (72): 1-Henrik Olesen, 2-Peter Aude; 1C-Lars Knudsen, 2C-Dennis Andersen.

•**Children's Miracle Network Benefit** (Flint, MI; 2 June)... Open (10): 1-Carol Joy Cole, 2-Jim Airgood.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oak Brook, IL; 9 June)...

Open (14): 1-Don Desmond, 2-George Barr, 3/4-Bob Holyon / Jake Jacobs; 1C-Dave Cramer, 2C-Bill Davis. Limited (11): 1-David Orman, 2-Richard Stawowy, 3/4-Bobbie Shifrin / Stan Kucharz; 1C-Kurt Schurecht, 2C-Barbara Levinson... A Bulls championship game cut attendance.

•**Cavendish North Monthly** (Southfield, MI; 9 June)... 1/2-Emil Mortuk / Joe Sylvester.

•**NEBC Club Championship** (Cambridge, MA; 9 June)... 1-Walter Trice, 2-Bill Robertie.

•**Third International "City Of Venice" Tournament** (Italy; 14–16 June)... Open: 1-Robert Hutchinson (GB), 2-Martin Koch (GER), 3/4-Bruno Lavina (ITA) / Michel Sneoual (MNCO); 1C-Thorsten Gunther (GER), 2C-Nino Di Bella (ITA); 1LC-Claud Marbleu (FRA). Beginner: 1-Guido Bonavita (ITA), 2-Dario Baso (ITA); 1C-Markus Lehmann (GER); 1LC-Ingeborg Haussleiter (GER). Super Jackpot: 1-Ralf Jonas (GER), 2-Dario De Toffoli (ITA). Warm Up: 1-Raphael Colombo (ITA), 2-Vittorio Limani (ITA). Ladies Prizes: Open-Martine Oules (FRA), Beginner-Melanie Brown (GB)... Over 150 players were in attendance.

•**25th Gammon Associates Invitational** (Hollywood, CA; 28–30 June)... Open (29): 1-Paul Gedigian, 2-Ray Fogerland, 3/4-Perry Firooz / Jack Turner. Limited (8): 1-Mariann Rosenblatt, 2-Carolyn Zacks. Special 16: 1-Odis Chenault, 2-Bob Glass. Overflow Special 8: 1-Joe Thomas. Doubles (8): 1-David Fletcher & Joe Russell. Doubles (4): 1-Roy Baker & Mike Fujita.

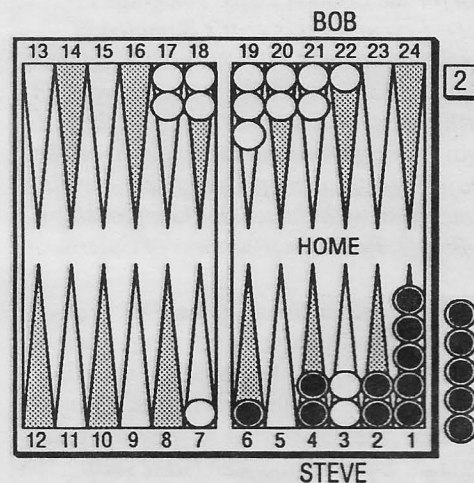
•**Monte-Carlo Cup** (Copenhagen, Denmark; 22–

NO WINNERS! NOW WIN \$35

Bob & Steve

by Duane Jensen

You will recall that Steve has just played 3-3 illegally when Bob said: "You played four 3s all right, but you played illegally. Play the roll legally and I'll consider a redouble since I will then be a favorite to win the game."



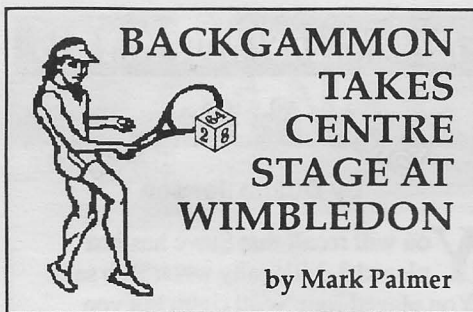
Nobody solved the puzzle so we've increased the prize money by \$10. Send us the setup *after* Steve (Black) has played legally and state whether or not Bob should redouble the new corrected position. Mail by 5 Sept. to: Bob & Steve; c/o CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645. Ties will be broken by random draw. *Editor's hint: This is a Duane Jensen puzzle. The error that Steve made is not totally off-the-wall, but it is off something.* Δ

23 June)... Handicap Tournament (89): 1-Jan Busch Hansen, 2-Henrik Bodholdt; 1C-Leeroy Malachinski, 2C-Lillian Milian... J.B. Hansen's win was worth a trip to this year's World Championship in Monte-Carlo.

•**Milwaukee Bimonthly** (Wisconsin; 7 July)... Open (15): 1-Gary Hines, 2-Peter Kalba; 1C-Marc Ingenoso... Merrill Schragger has set 15 Sept. as the next Milwaukee Sunday tourney.

•**San Remo International Tournament** (Italy; 12–14 July)... Championship (54): 1-Harald Johanni (GER), 2-Luigi Villa (ITA), 3/4-Frank Kirschner (GER) / Jan Carlstrom... Johanni, editor of *das Backgammon Magazin*, defeated tourney co-organizer Villa 21–9.

•**Nation's Capital Summer Champs** (Bethesda, MD; 13–14 July)... Summer Championship (28): 1-Samuel Orandle, 2-Greg Lilley; 1C-Linc Bedell, 2C-Paul Weaver; 1LC-Rami Tal. Summer Open (32): 1-Paul Weaver, 2-Roy Friedman; 1C-Neil Berkman, 2C-Bill Pow. Δ



Backgammon enthusiasts will be interested to read how Mark Palmer, a sports columnist for the London Daily Telegraph reported events at this year's Wimbledon tennis tournament. As you know, England's weather this summer has been the worst in living memory. On the bright side, the heavy rains helped put the spotlight on the players' backgammon tournament, running concurrent with the tennis championships.
—Bridget Robinson, Baroness of Culcreuch.

The weather disrupted the 1991 Wimbledon Championships yesterday when an unexpected outbreak of sunshine postponed the singles final between Jimmy Connors, the flamboyant 38-year-old tennis veteran, and the American No. 2 seed Robert Seguso.

With encouraging signs of rain for much of today, however, hopes are high among

officials in the players' canteen and changing rooms that a prompt start can be made this morning on the game that has most occupied the tennis stars for the past week.

"Jimmy's commitment to backgammon has intensified during the tournament, and he is now playing with a great confidence; he's playing like a man double his age," said Wella Evans, a spokesman for the Association of Tennis Professionals.

"Of all the players, he seems to be the keenest, and is always willing to play whenever there's a downpour."

But Seguso may prove to be a formidable opponent. Despite appalling conditions yesterday, when not a drop of rain was to be seen for the first time since last Monday, the American, who is 10 years Connors' junior, was spotted practising at one of the Formica-top tables in the dining room.

For a while, it looked as though there might not be any play all day yesterday, but when dark clouds started rolling in from the north, backgammon boards began appearing throughout the players' lounge, and almost normal service resumed.

Several of the world's leading backgammon tennis players said that, given the forecast, they were delighted that the All England Club had decided to break with tradition and allow tennis to be played on

Sunday for the first tie since the Championships began in 1877.

The expected showers in the morning, followed by more persistent rain in the afternoon, should ensure that the backlog of matches in the ladies' backgammon singles is cleared up by this evening.

It's been a men's championship of upsets. Peter Sampras, unseeded and virtually unknown on the backgammon circuit, has showed great promise, building on the experience he gained during the Stella Artois tournament earlier this month at Queen's Club when at least two full days' worth of tennis were lost to rain.

Patrick McEnroe, brother of John, has also displayed dogged determination to while away the hours over a backgammon board. He could become a leading player if next summer is anything like as wet as this one.

Oddly, few British professional tennis players have showed much enthusiasm for the game, which is surprising, as they are more used to the conditions than many of their colleagues. Details of today's play have not been finalised, but it is hoped that Connors and Seguso will be persuaded to abandon the locker room in favour of the press bar, which is enjoying one of its best-ever Wimbledon because there has been so little tennis for journalists to write about but so many pages to fill. Δ

AMALGAMATION

Directors at this year's Monte-Carlo World Championship didn't feel like paying anything in exchange for the final match commentary, so **Bill Robertie** and **Kent Goulding** refused to donate their services. Stepping in to save the day for the spectators was **Neil Kazaross** who did an excellent job. Let's hope that the Monte-Carlo people will get their act together next year and offer the commentators some sort of perk for their efforts... Congratulations to **Jeff & Renée Kane** of Kenosha, WI on the birth of their fifth (and final?) child. **Jasper Jacob Kane** checked in 4 June at 8 lbs.-4 oz.... The Bar Point Club welcomes back "99%" of **David Curd**. In Dec. 1985, Dave was the passenger in a car that flipped over on a snowy road near Rockford, IL. Because of the severity of Dave's neck injuries, a helicopter was called to fly him to a top hospital in Chicago. The prognosis was that he would be a quadriplegic the rest of his life. But a miracle of sorts occurred and Dave began to regain the use of his limbs. In fact, when he played in his first post-

accident tournament—the April 1986 Midwest Championships—Dave was 60% recovered. Now that he's 99% better, Dave lets his feelings be known: "My miracle recovery was not a religious experience; it was just a case of incredible blind luck—similar to my backgammon game! I can only hope I haven't used up all my luck, especially in close bearoffs."... The 20 July issue of *Science News* had a cover story on programmer **Jonathan Schaeffer's** checker-playing computer program "Chinook" that currently ranks among the top ten players in the world. Schaeffer's goal is to solve the game of checkers which has 10²⁰ possible positions. But Schaeffer admits that a solution of chess can not be contemplated at this time. It has 10⁴⁴ possible positions. We wonder how many positions backgammon has?... For last minute info on the National Labor Day Tournament in Indianapolis 30 Aug.-2 Sept., phone **Butch & Mary Ann Meese** at 317/845-8435... Congrats to Pub Club hostess **Rose Gecht** who recently hit 5 out of 6 numbers for \$2200 in the Illinois State Lottery. And **Howard Perlman** of Southfield, MI had *kind of* a lucky day at the races 27 July. He hit the SuperTrifecta at the Detroit Race

Course for a cool \$800,000... Visiting the BPC and the Pub Club in July: **Ed Bennett**, in town on banking business from New Mexico... Talk about dedication! On 15 July, **V.W. Zimnicki** received a phone call at the Pub Club (Fiddler's in Villa Park) from **Tim Mabee's** wife. She told V.W. to "Save a spot for Tim. He broke his collarbone this afternoon and won't be getting out of the emergency ward for another half hour."... Thanks to **Kathy Posner**, Senior V.P. of Communications 2000 who supplied BPC players with complimentary Odyssey Moonlight Cruise passes for a beautiful view of the Chicago skyline on 26 July... The Greater New York Backgammon Newsletter reports that **Michel Merlitti** has announced the opening of a new Canadian club. The Gammon (552 St. Catherine East) opened 5 July in Montreal. For more information, call 514/845-8370 ... Saitek has unveiled a new 8 1/4" x 3 1/2" hand-held computer backgammon game. The 16K memory computer plays Backgammon, Jacquet, Tricrac and Moultezim. We can't comment on the ad claim that it's "the most intelligent backgammon game ever invented." \$129.95 from *Sharper Image* (800/344-4444). Δ