

*las vegas open (ABT) & world doubles*

## YOUR VEGAS WINNERS: FALAFEL & FOGERLUND

**Sax & Zembic win World Doubles**

**Carter Mattig rants about what  
it feels like to finish second**

For the first nine days of November, backgammon action was intense at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas for the Las Vegas Open and World Doubles tourney. Nevada Backgammon Association owner Howard Markowitz directed the first-time ABT event. Tournament sponsor BackgammonMasters.com added \$25,000 to the player's pool. This coupled with an \$8,000 Calutta Auction giveaway increased attendance to 234—up nine players compared to 2005.

In the Championship event, Chicago's own Carter Mattig, hot off his Last Chance victory in the Paris Masters a week prior, faced Israeli expert "Falafel" Natanzon. Chicago Point is allowing Carter some space to complain about his second place finish . . . or should we say his "finalist" finish:

They stare at me from the trophy shelf—twin towers of defeat. They now have a brother.

The "towers" I speak of were won six years ago at the Desert Inn Worldwide Twin Championships. As a newbie on the national tournament scene, I did what any sandbagger would do . . . I entered the Intermediate in both the Nevada State and International Cup events. I felt entitled. This was my first backgammon tournament in Sin City. So what if I was playing in a \$20 chou with Bar Point Club championship level players—my regular game. (What—play with strangers?) Tournament-wise, I had no significant results.

Ah, it was a magical time. I reached the finals of one event and the consolation finals of the other. Cashing twice meant plenty of ammunition to play with in Vegas. I was on top of the world. The Desert Inn had hot tubs in the rooms, a magnificent pool, 24-hour-a-day action, and all for \$89



Las Vegas Open winner "Falafel" Natanzon (R) shares the spotlight with runner-up Carter Mattig. [Photo by Patrick Gibson]

a night. Magic.

There was a touch of remorse on my part when the late, great John Brussel said to me "Congratulations on your first and LAST time playing in the Intermediate." But, like my conscience, the guilt was brief and fleeting.

Fast forward to the Las Vegas Open at the Riviera Hotel November 1–5, 2006. No longer a newbie (but still a rookie given the playing experience of the other Americans), I now enter the Championship division. I make it to the finals in record time, jumping ahead of the bracket at each turn. (Even after having to buy back!) A week earlier, I had won the Last Chance in the Paris Masters, so I was cockier than Ray Foglerlund in an L.A. chouette.

I defeat Emil Mortuk in the semifinals and wait for my finals opponent—either Steve Sax or "Falafel" Natanzon. I'll kill either of them, no problem.

I draw Falafel in the 17 point finals. It's 9–7 my way and I'm bearing off on my way to gammoning him for the match. He has three checkers on my ace point with a pretty good board. I have four on my deuce and two each on my 3-, 4-, and 5-points with the other five checkers borne off.

Crap. I roll a "Barabino" (5-4) leaving two blots. He hits me and, well you know the rest. Damn. Instead of winning the match, I'm down 9–11.

I fight back to double match-point and reach this position where I'm an 86% favorite:

[Continued on page 7]

## MABEE AND SETTLES TAKE HOME BPC FALL TROPHIES

Pub Club director Tim Mabee and Dave Settles were the big winners at the Chicago Bar Point Club's Fall Trophy Tourney 10 Nov. at the Purple Hotel in Lincolnwood, IL. 43 total players in two divisions braved a driving rainstorm to attend.

The event was sponsored by TrueMoneygames/Snowie which permitted 100% of the entry fees to be returned as prizes. Δ



Pub Club director Tim Mabee hits a winning 2-shot to lock up 1st-Championship in the Fall Trophy Tourney.



Intermediate victor Dave Settles displays his Fall Trophy. Pictured at right is One-Point winner Russ Lyutik.

## 24TH BPC FALL TROPHY TOURNEY

CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Tim Mabee, 2-Efim Liberman, 3/4-Gary Kay / Tak Morioka; 1C/2C-Eric Johnson / Don Marek. INTERMEDIATE (13) 1-Dave Settles, 2-Jolie Rubin, 3/4-Oleg Raygorodsky / Judy Zager; 1C-Wayne Wiest, 2C-Willis Elias. ONE-POINT TOURNEY (32) 1-Russ Lyutik, 2-Steve Klesker.

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS



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## A THANK-YOU FROM PAUL

Thanks to David Rockwell for his kind words about my Wisconsin lecture in the September CHICAGO POINT. It takes a lot of preparation and energy to present a lecture, and it feels good to get some recognition for my efforts.—*Paul Weaver, Birmingham, Alabama*

## REQUEST FOR AN ARTICLE

I think an article on cube and checker strategy when one player is 2-away and the other is 5 or more points behind would make an excellent article. The match equity swings, affects of gammons, etc. are quite complicated, and while I think I understand the strategy fairly well when I'm the one behind, I'm not sure I've got it very well if I'm the one 2-away.

I'm sure you could get someone like O'Hagan, Jake, etc. to write an article on

[Continued on page 3]

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR



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

\*Denotes new or revised listing

## NATIONAL

*American Backgammon Tour events underlined.*

Nov 16	Third Thursday Bonus (California State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Nov 18	Phoenix Free Monthly, Glendale Gaslight Inn, Glendale, Arizona	602/296-4307
Nov 19	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/784-8132
Nov 19	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's Lounge, Cranberry Twp., PA	412/826-1334
Nov 19*	New England Monthly Bonus, Docksides Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	508/756-6434
Dec 1-3	<u>California State Championship, Sheraton Gateway Hotel, Los Angeles, CA</u>	818/901-0464
Dec 2	Springfield Series, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/622-9447
Dec 3	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Purple Hotel, Lincolnwood, Illinois	773/583-6464
Dec 4	Roy's Monthly Tournament, Restaurant Roy, Santa Barbara, California	805/966-5636
Dec 4*	Arizona Club Monthly, Rosie McCaffrey's Irish Pub, Phoenix, Arizona	602/279-0215
Dec 6	Kansas City Club Monthly, Harpo's, Kansas City, Missouri	816/916-6599
Dec 9	Atlanta Holiday Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Dec 9	Northwest Indiana Club Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Dec 9	Tournament of Champions, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Dec 9*	Backgammon By the Bay, Peking Express, Berkeley, California	831/688-9722
Dec 10	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Gambits Bar, Marriott Hotel, Dayton, Ohio	937/890-2536
Dec 10	South Florida Monthly, Northridge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Dec 10	New England Monthly, Docksides Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	508/756-6434
Dec 16	Phoenix Free Monthly, Glendale Gaslight Inn, Glendale, Arizona	602/296-4307
Dec 17	Pittsburgh Monthly Tournament, Hartner's Lounge, Cranberry Twp., PA	412/826-1334
Dec 21*	Third Thursday Bonus (Carolina), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Dec 28*	Flint Club Holiday Party/Tournament, Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jan 6*	Springfield Series, LAPS Sports Bar, Springfield, Illinois	217/622-9447
Jan 12-14	<u>7th Carolina Invitational, Hilton University Place, Charlotte, North Carolina</u>	704/814-0850
Jan 20*	Austin Bimonthly, Doubletree Hotel, Austin, Texas	512/471-7258
Jan 21*	New England Monthly, Docksides Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	508/756-6434
Jan 20-27	Backgammon On Board 8, Princess Cruise, Los Angeles to Mexican Riviera	773/583-6464
Feb 3*	Bar Point Doubles Club Championship, Purple Hotel, Lincolnwood, Illinois	773/583-6464
Feb 10*	Springfield Series, Ned Kelly's Steakhouse, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Feb 11*	Illinois State Challenge Cup, Ned Kelly's Steakhouse, Bloomington, Illinois	217/622-9447
Feb 11*	New England Monthly, Docksides Restaurant, Malden, Massachusetts	508/756-6434
Feb 16-18	<u>29th Pittsburgh Championships, Holiday Inn, Moon Twp., Pennsylvania</u>	412/823-7500
Mar 3*	Springfield Series, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, Illinois	217/622-9447
Mar 23-25	<u>2007 Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Lisle, Illinois</u>	773/583-6464
Apr 8*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Purple Hotel, Lincolnwood, Illinois	773/583-6464
Apr 13-15*	13th Ohio State Championships, Airport Marriott Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio	330/268-4610
May 4-6*	<u>1st Southeast Championships, Holiday Inn Dunwoody, Atlanta, Georgia</u>	678/982-3203
May 25-28*	<u>28th Chicago Open, Oak Brook Hills Resort &amp; Hotel, Oak Brook, Illinois</u>	847/674-0120
Jul 5-8*	<u>32nd Michigan Summer Championships, Sheraton, Novi, Michigan</u>	810/232-9731
Aug 3-5*	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	585/396-0969
Aug 31-Sep 3*	<u>Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin</u>	608/516-9109

## OUTSIDE USA

Nov 17-19*	Bodø Bymesterskap 2006, Kantina, Rønnevikleira, Norway	4799-637475
Nov 18-19	Gammonitis League Tournament, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	441634-840592
Nov 18-19*	Danish Championships, Fungolf, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601
Nov 28-Dec 3	Cancun Invitational Tournament, Ritz-Carlton, Cancun, Mexico	775/829-8403
Nov 30-Dec 3	18th City of Venice Tournament, Venice Casino, Venice, Italy	3941-5211029
Dec 2-3	Gilbertson United Kingdom Finals, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Dec 2-3	5th Thun Tournament & Doubles, Waadtlanderstube, Thun, Switzerland	4179-4811318
Dec 7-10	13th German Open, GlockenSpitze, Altenkirchen, Germany	49521-64314
Dec 9-10	Julian's Christmas Cracker, Eynsham Hall, Oxford, England	441634-840592
Jan 3-7	11th Thailand Open, 19th Hole Superpub, South Pattaya, Thailand	661-0001379
Jan 4-7	Winter-Open/Amateur-Cup Final, Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
Jan 13-14	10th Birthday Bright 'n' Breezy, Holiday Inn Seafrost, Brighton, England	441522-888676
Jan 21-25	PartyGammon.com Million, Atlantis, Paradise Island, Bahamas	<a href="mailto:info@partygammon.com">info@partygammon.com</a>
Jan 26-28	5th Cotswold Fireside Tournament, Bear of Rodborough, Stroud, England	441453-821479
Feb 3-4	Jarvis Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Feb 21-25*	Groupe Partouche Trophy, Palm Beach Casino, Cannes, France	33147-587179
Mar 10-11*	Slattery Scottish Open, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Mar 31-Apr 1*	British Open, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Apr 5-9*	19th TrueMoneygames Nordic Wide Open, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601
May 5-6*	County Cups Trophy, Hilton Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

this if there isn't a good one already. If there is a good one out there, I'd love to find it and read it.—Phil Simborg, Chicago, IL

If an expert submits an article on the subject, we will surely print it.—Ed.

## A NOTE FROM BRUCE ENDZEL

I love CHICAGO POINT even though I haven't played tournaments in quite a while. Maybe I'm just a "backgammon groupie" . . . following the exploits of all the players I've met in the past. I've morphed into a semipro blackjack and poker player and, of course, much of the match involved is similar to BG math.

Hope to see you at some event soon.—Bruce Endzel, Chicago, IL

## WHY USE DICE OF OPPOSITE COLORS?

I have a quick question for you. You know how most backgammon boards come with two pair of two different colored dice? (e.g. one pair of red and one pair of white.) Is that so the opponent with the red checkers can use the red pair of dice and opponent with white can use the white pair of dice? Or must both opponents use one die of each color? Is there an official rule on this?—Josh Frohman, via e-mail

This is a question that all beginners ask. When you attend your first tournament, you'll find nearly everyone using one die of each color. At the start of any game, the dice may be mixed together in one cup and rolled out. The opponent selects a die—then roller—then opponent—with roller taking the last die. Using mixed colored dice is the safest way to protect yourself from the extremely rare possibility that one of the dice colors favors a specific number.

It is important that there are no single color dies in the set of four as this makes it impossible to truly "mix" the dice.—Ed.

## AGE LIMIT?

Is there an age limit at the New England Backgammon Club tournaments at the Dockside Restaurant in Malden, Massachusetts?—Jason Zimbran, via e-mail

Walter Trice answers the question: "Yes, players must be at least 2, but not older than 135."—WT Δ

## AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2006

Top 100 through 5 Nov. 2006 after 16 tournaments  
(Upcoming events: Calif. State, Carolina Invitational–2007)

Richard Munitz	56.15	Steve Sax	11.64	Dennis Culpepper	6.64	Tim Lawless	4.44
Gregg Cattanach	49.62	Malcolm Davis	11.59	Faddoul Khoury	6.48	Beth Raby	4.42
Stepan Nuniyants	36.16	Rose Sheedy	11.54	Emil Mortuk	6.44	Bill Bartholomay	4.32
Falafel Natanzon	35.42	Ray Foglerlund	11.42	Walter Trice	6.44	Peggy Neubig	4.21
Bob Glass	29.06	Sean Garber	11.28	Bruce Russell	6.40	Cole Parker	4.00
Ken Fischer	28.13	John Jennings	10.72	Carlos Azcarate	6.27	Norm Hansen	4.00
Fred Kalantari	27.72	Aram Kouleyan	10.12	Ted Chee	6.00	Bill Minser	3.91
Doug Roberts	26.56	David Todd	10.10	Thomas Meyer	6.00	Jim Pokela	3.91
Richard Lloyd	20.68	Alan Robinson	9.90	Harvey Gillis	6.00	Jolie Rubin	3.83
Petko Kostadinov	20.26	Neil Garvie	9.38	Mario Savan	5.94	Doug Mayfield	3.78
Peter Beling	19.22	Dana Nazarian	9.11	Robert Lessard	5.77	Pete Esposito	3.68
Marv Porten	18.48	Lee Wood	9.05	Michael Edge	5.77	Gary Schachtschneider	3.66
Perry Gartner	17.63	Wayne Wiest	8.86	Mark Rozans	5.65	Michael Flohr	3.56
Art Moore	16.21	Tak Morioka	8.83	Roz Ferris	5.64	Nancy Takala	3.52
Carter Mattig	16.13	Sam Pottle	8.83	Tami Jones	5.59	Butch Meese	3.36
Peter Kalba	14.78	Christopher Yep	8.74	Stuart Katz	5.29	Andy Palumbo	3.36
Jeff Nitschke	14.64	Charles Toots	8.40	J.A. Miller	5.28	Sam Orandle	3.36
Chuck Bower	14.58	Michael Battaglia	8.00	Robert Appell	5.28	Jesse Eaton	3.32
Matthew Miner	13.39	Brent Cohen	7.39	Elayne Feinstein	5.12	Jen Nakamura	3.27
Sal Pittelli	12.56	Joe Freedman	7.39	Mary Hickey	5.06	Eric Barr	3.26
David Rubin	12.38	Steve Brown	7.32	Kathy Sorci	4.89	Patty Geoffroy	3.20
Arlene Austin	12.25	Barry Murphy	7.20	Arkady Tsinis	4.60	Ralph Byrns	3.20
Mark King	12.01	Sal Chehayeb	7.11	Iancho Hristov	4.52	Dan Cramer	3.15
Nick Maffeo	12.00	Tolga Ece	6.80	Joe Miller	4.52	Blaze Braden	3.00
Mark Donaldson	11.68	Raymond Rickard	6.66	Yuri Millman	4.44	Chris Spieldenner	3.00

## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2006 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU 31 OCT.

Tak Morioka	24.70	Mike Wolock	8.00	Christopher Shanova	4.24	Mark Ostrovsky	0.80
Herb Roman	23.80	Larry Goldstein	7.96	Alex Owen	3.88	Tom Harrison	0.76
David Rockwell	22.96	Georgina Flanagan	7.96	Les Moshinsky	3.68	Efrem Coley	0.72
Phil Simborg	21.28	Roger Hickman	7.52	Dave Settles	3.20	Dave Cramer	0.72
Bill Davis	18.52	Bill Keefe	6.94	Amy Trudeau	3.12	Martha Ghio	0.72
Steve Klesker	17.64	Jacob Moreno	6.84	Nora Luna Righter	2.68	Jordan Sanders	0.68
Gary Kay	15.16	Alice Kay	6.36	Richard Stawowy	2.64	Ryan Anderson	0.64
Paul Baraz	13.52	Peter Kalba	6.12	Efim Liberman	2.32	Ron Washington	0.52
Tim Mabee	12.04	Wayne Wiest	5.88	Russ Lyutik	2.16	Mike Pufpaf	0.48
Linda Rockwell	11.68	Carter Mattig	5.72	Vlad Genkin	2.16	Doug Rodgers	0.48
Bob Zavoral	11.60	Sargon Benjamin	5.72	Adrian Rios	2.00	Judy Zager	0.48
Phyllis Smolinski	11.44	Mark Murray	5.60	Vince Bennett	1.92	Tony Santori	0.48
Albert Yakobashvili	11.28	Willis Elias	5.36	Elaine Kehm	1.80	Elaine Andrews	0.48
Bill Bartholomay	11.08	Jerry Brooks	5.24	Kwong Chan	1.52	Tony Garcia	0.48
Eric Johnson	11.00	Michael Ginat	5.20	Steve Mellen	1.44	Wright B. George	0.40
Bob Steen	10.44	Arlene Levy	5.00	Ken Tyszko	1.20	Daniel Lillian	0.32
Oleg Raygorodsky	9.64	Boris Dekhtyar	4.80	Felix Yen	1.20	Kamau Jibri	0.24
Ken Bond	9.40	Glenn Martells	4.36	Ken Tibbs	1.12	Michael Peters	0.16
Rory Pascar	8.56	Mike Sutton	4.28	Marcia Karen	1.08		

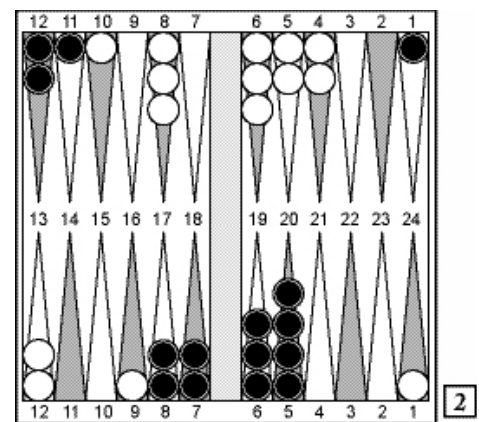
TAK MORIOKA vaulted to the 2006 BPC points race lead by scoring 5.76 points en route to October Player of the Month honors. Albert Yakobashvili (4.92) and Bill Davis (4.76) were runner's-up.

## your move

### PROBLEM #323

to be analyzed by Mary Hickey

5-point match. Black leads White 4 to 2.  
**BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.**



# SHADES OF GRAY

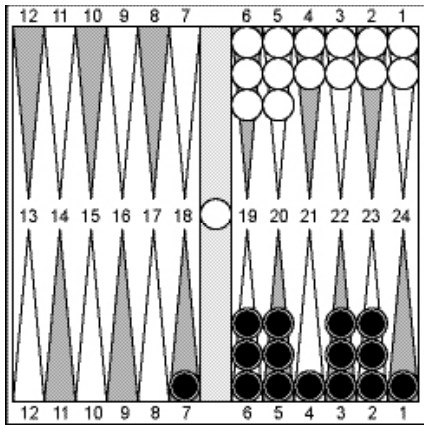
A RULES AND RULINGS COLUMN

© 2006 by Danny Kleinman

## TWO RULINGS TO EXAMINE

At double match point, my opponent (White) was on the bar and threw the dice. One stopped quickly flat on the board, showing a 5. The second started spinning on various checkers for a quite long time. Before it had stopped, my opponent picked up both dice and wanted to throw them again, certain the second die would come to rest on top of a checker (cocked). Following his action, an argument ensued.

Tournament double match-point. White has just picked up a spinning die.



My position was very clear: White picked up the dice. That means his roll is over and so I am entitled to decide if he may reroll: either both dice, a single die or no dice. I would have chosen "no reroll."

What is your opinion and are the official rules meaningful for and/or appropriate to this case?—*Pierre Zakia, Pau, France*

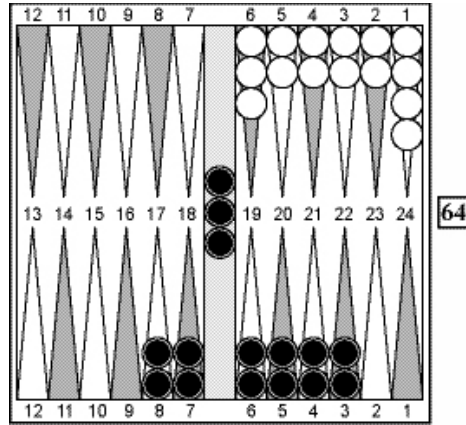
**DEAR PIERRE:** The ruling is a simple one (too simple, perhaps, for "Shades of Gray;" more appropriate for a rulings column called "Black and White"). The player who interfered with one of his own dice while it was still rolling or tumbling committed a serious infraction. The remedy is for the die that had already landed legally to stand, and for the opponent to designate a number of his choosing for the die that was lifted improperly. If that's another 5, tough luck—the player dances.

Why should the opponent be allowed to choose the number for the die that was lifted improperly? Because it *might* have been apparent to the roller on which number the tumbling die was about to land, and to rule otherwise would let the roller

prevent the tumbling die from landing on an unfavorable number.—*Yours, Danny*

I saw an interesting ruling question the other day and wondered how you would rule on it (using the 1990 US Backgammon Rules and Procedures).

Match to 5 points tied at 3 to 3. White is rolling against Black who is closed out.



White had just brought her last checker in with a 6-1 playing 13/6. Black (on the bar against a closed board) obviously can't roll. White paused for only about three seconds prior to rerolling her dice. When the roll came up 6-1 again, Black protested.

"You didn't give me the chance to double. I demand that you reroll."

This is quite a coup. After White cleans up her position with 6-1, she will win around 94% of these games and 87% of the wins will be game-ending gammons. So Black has very little to lose by "canceling" White's roll. And when White is immediately forced to leave a shot, it is clearly correct for Black to cube.

First, what do the rules say about this, Danny; and second, how would you rule?—*Phil Simborg, Chicago, Illinois*

**DEAR PHIL:** The applicable rule is:

**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.

Is White's second 6-1 premature? Here Black, who was closed out, had no dice on the board and thus could not complete his turn (by doubling in the position shown) by lifting them. Nonetheless, Black was entitled to double before White rolled the second 6-1.

You say that White paused about three seconds before rolling. Presumably, White shook her dice properly during this time. While White was shaking her dice, but before she rolled them, Black had an opportunity to say, "Wait! I want to think about doubling."

Having squandered this opportunity, Black should not be allowed to reclaim it. White's roll is not premature; her lucky 6-1 stands, and if Black wants to double while closed out he must speak up between White's rolls.—*Yours, Danny*

*Have you ever been involved in a questionable ruling? Get Danny Kleinman's opinion. Write to: Shades of Gray; c/o CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155 or e-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com.*

## BG DURING WORLD WAR 2



"Miss Patricia Latz in a game of backgammon with Ensign John Ray, U.S. Coast Guard." [1942 photograph]



## ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis  
773/583-6464

Peter Kalba  
312/316-1432

Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at The Purple Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood. 847/677-1234.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at The Purple Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood. 847/677-1234.

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB: Tournaments Tuesday, 6:00 P.M. at Ned Kelly's Steak House, 1603-A Morrissey Drive, Bloomington. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967).

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wednesday, 6:30 P.M. at Capitol Teletrack, 1766 W. Wabash Ave., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

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

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

PEORIA BG CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/689-1964).

# Just Another Unlucky Day

How to tell a hard luck

*Butch and Mary Ann Meese's decision to retire from the Indiana Open backgammon tournament reminded me of this story.—DJ*

A decade ago, Steve Brown and I were flying from Minneapolis to Indianapolis to play in the Labor Day tournament. For months, I had been trying to use my frequent flyer miles with Northwest Airlines to fly to a distant, exotic location; but whenever I tried to book a flight, NWA didn't have any "frequent flyer" seats available. I finally was forced to use the frequent flyer ticket for this flight to Indianapolis.

I'm not characterizing Indianapolis as a last-minute, ugly prom date I had to settle for. I was just annoyed that I couldn't choose my preferred destination. In the past, I'd flown, driven, and taken the train to tournaments in Indianapolis. The Indianapolis tournaments were some of the first to have completely random draws (celebrated players were not seeded) and the payoffs were always very generous. I liked going to Indianapolis to play backgammon; I just wasn't in a happy mood that day and it was about to get worse.

Steve and I got an unlucky "draw" on the plane. We had the aisle seats we wanted in the same row. But unfortunately, the row was in the rear of the plane where the flight attendants repeatedly slammed pantry doors and the passengers were always cued up for the restroom.

A nervous first-time flyer on my right, trapped in the middle seat, started up a conversation with himself. I turned to Steve across the aisle and began my own conversation.



We debated who had been the unluckier player that year, Steve or me. My argument was that I was the unluckier one because I hadn't won a match in the last two tournaments. Steve said that was a skill problem not a luck problem. Steve felt he was unluckier in recent tournaments because he

had won 70% of his matches but kept losing in the round just before the money.

We were next in line for takeoff. I always enjoy the acceleration down the runway and the sensation when the wheels are off the ground and you're airborne. I could feel the acceleration but suddenly I was thrown forward and the seat belt cut into my stomach as the pilot hit the brakes. A warning light had come on and our plane had to return for an instrument check and repair.



An hour later, we were accelerating down the runway again. Just when I was expecting the wheels to lift off, we hit the brakes. This time, the braking caused my head to hit the back of the seat in front of me. Steve and I just looked at each other; this was becoming an unlucky day.

Now the passenger on my right was talking to himself and anyone who'd listen. He was trying to stand up but was still buckled in his seat. "I've got to get off this plane!" he said. "We've had two aborted takeoffs and I'm in the same row with the two unluckiest backgammon players in the world. I don't want to be on this plane with them."

The next voice was that of the pilot who announced that we were not going to attempt a third takeoff. We would have to find a new plane.

The first thing people do when they exit a defective plane is call a loved one. The nervous fellow next to me probably called his psychiatrist. I called my wife. I told her of our unlucky experience with two failed attempts to takeoff, but she wasn't sympathetic. She said, "Two unsuccessful takeoffs don't make an unlucky flight. An unlucky flight is one that begins with a successful takeoff but ends with an unsuccessful landing. You and Steve might miss your Doubles competition but so what! I know Steve, and he's not that good. You guys weren't going to win the Doubles anyway."

It's always been my wife's delight to bring me back down to the real world, to remember what's really important. She still introduces me as her "first" husband.

Steve and I finally got to Indianapolis late that evening after an unscheduled stop in Detroit. As Butch Meese was graciously refunding our Doubles entry fee, I saw a small group of players encircling a backgammon board. One player was reenacting a gut-wrenching story of good vs. evil to

his audience—how bad luck had stolen the match from him.

Do you know how to tell a hard luck story? You can't just blurt it out or people will walk away. If you want them to share your pain, you must present your sob story with stealth and subtlety in this fashion:

**The Search:** It is best to share your hard luck story with a group rather than a single individual. The group presentation allows you to tell your story less often. A single individual may feel pressured by your ardent attempt to tell your tale. He may find some excuse to leave before your full presentation is over. Look for a small gathering of players already involved in conversation preferably near an open backgammon board because you're going to need a visual aid when you relate your hard luck story. You may wish to use a "baited board." Set up your position on a backgammon board and walk away. Wait for players to gather near your open board and then begin . . .

**The Stalk:** Do not move swiftly in a direct line toward your quarry. They will see you coming, recognizing you as an annoying whiner with a boring story to tell. You must "meamble," that is to meander or amble randomly toward the group. Once in their presence, join in their conversation for awhile. *never* bring up your hard luck story as your opening comment. If the group breaks up quickly, do not try to call them back to listen to your story. Let them go. Wait for better prospects. If the group stays together, begin your presentation with . . .

**The Attack:** Say these exact words: "An interesting (position, roll, cube, sequence, etc.) came up in my last match."

The word "interesting" must be used; it's a buzz word that backgammon players respond to. Now you can show the sequence of rolls that took you down. "And then he rolled 6-1 from the bar three times in a row to hit me," or some such statement. You must *never* mention the words "lucky" or "unlucky" during this presentation. When you finish your speech, you wait for . . .

**The Kill:** You can record a kill if anyone in your audience says something like . . . "Wow. That was really unlucky!" Only then can you agree that your luck could have been better. If the word "lucky" is not said, *never* bring it up yourself. An exceptional kill will see members of the group telling other people about your hard luck story. You've made the ultimate kill by recruiting someone to carry the torch for you. You will walk away as a talented yet humble backgammon warrior who just couldn't get his wheels off the ground that day.—Duane Jensen Δ



One of the unintended consequences of the end of the Indiana Open's multi-decade run is the loss of a great source of puns. The title above isn't bad, but just imagine if Carolina director Jeb Horton had won; I would be able to title my report "Horton Hears A Hoosier!"

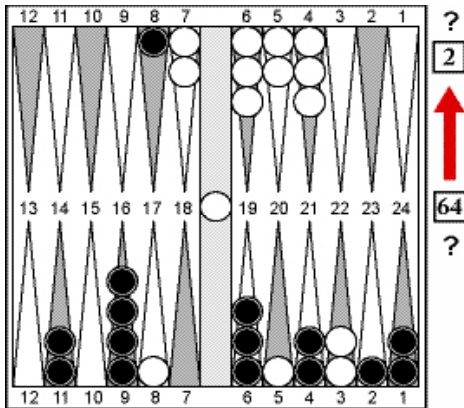
Perhaps you'd rather not imagine that.

At any rate all good things must end.

The Indiana Open was a very good thing; it has ended. Before we close the book on it, here is a quiz from positions that arose over the weekend. The layout is slightly different from other quizzes of mine, as some of the questions per position are multipart.

Answers & my scoring chart on pg. 10.—JJ

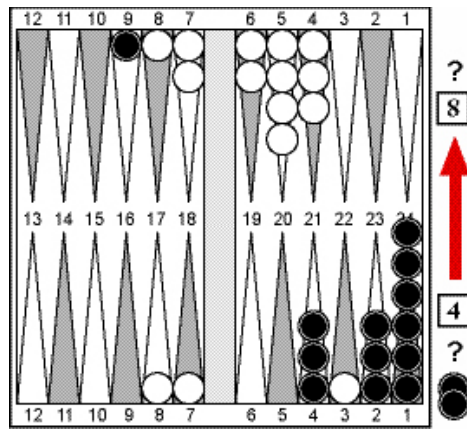
1. 11-point match with Black leading 7–6.  
 (a). Should Black double? Should White take?  
 (b). Same questions, but for money.



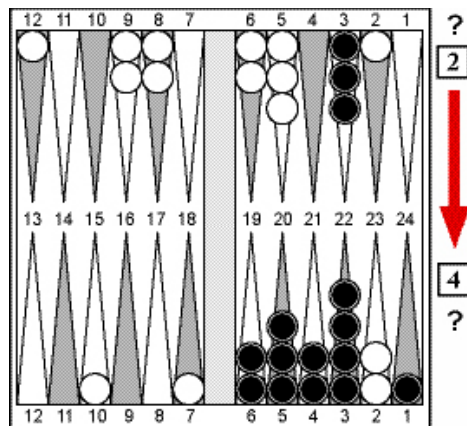
2. Assuming the above diagram is a money game where Black doubled and White took. How should Black play:  
 (a) 6-1? (b) 4-1? (c) 3-2? (d) 5-1?



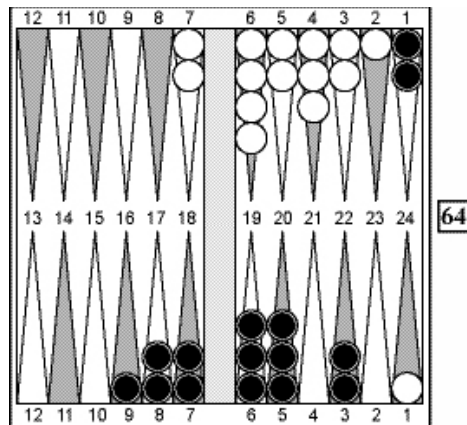
3. Money game. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



4. 11-point match with White (on roll) trailing 1 to 4. Cube action(s)?

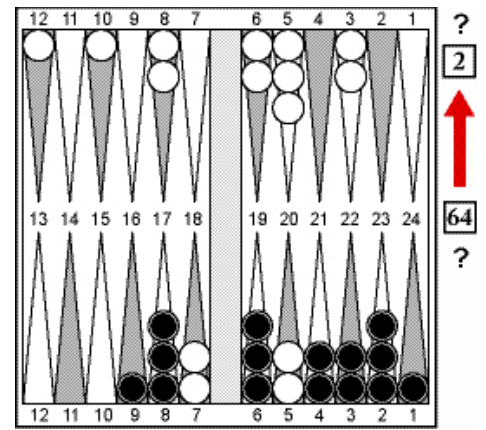


5. 11-point match with Black leading 5 to 3. How should Black play 3-3?

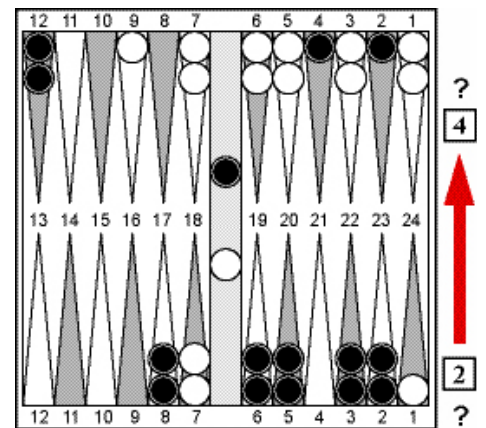


6. Assuming Black makes the best play with 3-3 in the above diagram, with White now on roll, what are the proper cube actions?

7. 11-point match with Black leading 8 to 5. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



8. 9-point match with Black trailing 5 to 6. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



### ARE YOU TIRED OF SLOW BACKGAMMON ACTION? HERE'S AN ALTERNATIVE

I have discovered a cool alternative to backgammon that I wanted to share with you. It's called "Flip a coin." Here's how it works.

You and your opponent find a coin, any coin. Make sure that one side has heads and the other side has tails. Now here's the fun part. You flip the coin in the air and one of you shouts either "heads" or "tails." If it lands on heads, whoever picked heads will win the match. If it lands on tails, then the other player wins the match.

You guys should be thanking me. A game of backgammon can last ten minutes or more. "Flip a coin" is about 1,000 times quicker.

And here's the best part: it has the same amount of skill as a game of backgammon.—Posted by "M" at rec.games.backgammon Δ

# 2006

## CALIFORNIA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

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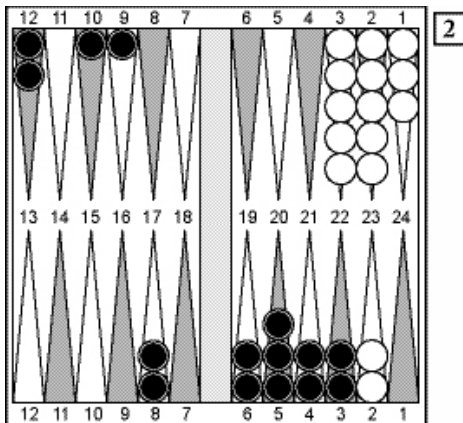
Website: [users.adelphia.net/~pgibsonmfic](http://users.adelphia.net/~pgibsonmfic)



## VEGAS WINNERS...

[Continued from page 1]

17 point Las Vegas Open finals with Falafel (White) and Carter (Black) at double match-point. White on shake...



Damn again. Falafel rolls 5-5, then 6-4 hitting me and safing a checker, then another 5-5 to seal the victory. I'm sick.

The crowd moans, people leave in tears, and a few swear off backgammon for life (or at least until the "After Tournament Tournament"). I shake Falafel's hand, listen to the condolences of my friends, then

start whining. Everyone who has lost in the finals knows the drill.

Is the point of this, my first article, to whine about coming in second? Maybe a little. But nobody really feels sorry for you. After all, you did better than everybody but one. You cashed, you played your heart out (I did, I know I did), and your opponent got lucky. That's right. LUCKY. At DMP, you need the luck factor, and in the end, Falafel had it.

No, the real reason for this article goes back six years. I HATE SECOND PLACE TROPHIES!! I got two at the Desert Inn, and one this past weekend. Can I get an "amen" out there, my brothers and sisters? Ah, the last loser trophy. What does everyone ask? Who beat you!

This is a cry to Howard Markowitz and all those other tournament directors who label the second place trophy with a big "2nd." Can we go to "Finalist"? Please? "Finalist" seems more important to all those non-backgammon players who come over to your home. It almost looks respectable. This game is not the coolest, hippest sport (the 70s have passed—let it go) and all I want is to show off my great finish without that huge number "2." Jeb Horton uses "Finalist" in Carolina (got that trophy prominently displayed!), and Bristol does

it, too (go U.K.!).

Like lucite loser signs, my Desert Inn trophies are in the back of the shelf. Way back. Thankfully, this year's Vegas trophy was a cup. Take a guess which way my cup is turned. Go ahead. Guess.

[Carter Mattig is a protégé of Jake Jacobs and the Chicago Bar Point Club; he is the proud father of Lindsay Mattig, future world backgammon champion who will take his crown sometime after he acquires it next year in Monte Carlo. He also wrote this description of himself.—Carter Mattig]

### SUPER JACKPOT

California expert Ray Fogerlund continued a great year by winning over \$20,000 in the Super Jackpot. Following victories over Paul Magriel and Rick Barabino, Ray faced backgammon giant Ed O'Laughlin.

Although Ray won the match, a Snowie analysis shows that Ed actually outplayed Ray 2.9 to 6.5. However trailing 10–9, Ed made two critical errors that might have cost him the match.

In the position shown on page 8, Ed played his 4-2 by hitting and lifting his home board blot (6/4). Ray danced and Ed made another huge blunder by doubling

[Continued on page 8]



*Marcy's BG*  
**Holiday Gift Ideas**  
by Marcy Sloan

Here's another sackful of backgammon-related goodies from our favorite Santa, Marcy Sloan (Northbrook, IL). Everything here can be purchased at the Internet address shown.—Ed.



Don't you hate getting "beavered"? Express your true feelings with this "Dam It" T-shirt. [www.catalogfavorites.com](http://www.catalogfavorites.com) sells it for \$18.95. (search: V8501)



Create your own drinking game variation with this shot glass BG set. (e.g. If your piece gets sent to the bar, you have to take a drink.) Check it out at [www.yuqing.en.alibaba.com](http://www.yuqing.en.alibaba.com). (search: backgammon)



Back by popular demand, the "Backgammon Watch." Price: \$30 + \$5 postage/handling. To order, go to: [www.chicagopoint.com/watch.html](http://www.chicagopoint.com/watch.html).



Here's a very unusual backgammon purse with a limited number available at [www.studio111.com/shop](http://www.studio111.com/shop). (Then click on "fashion") Price: \$88.00.



Do things get heated in your chouette? Pull out these 3/4" dice and "roll" your opponents the bird. Great conversation piece. \$2.99/pair (comes in a plastic case.) [www.bewild.com/mifidi.html](http://www.bewild.com/mifidi.html).

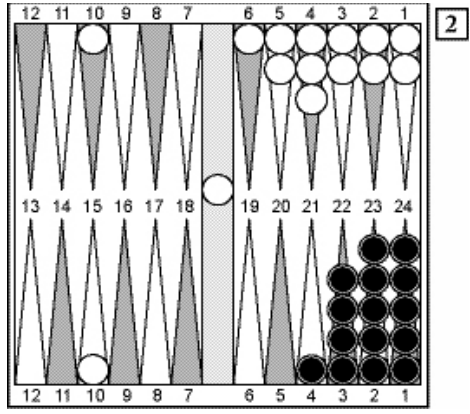
**VEGAS WINNERS...**  
*[Continued from page 7]*

Ray. When Ed correctly leaves his 6-point slotted and Ray dances, the proper cube action is double/drop.

15 point Super Jackpot finals. Ray Fogelund (Black) leads Ed O'Laughlin (White) 10-9. White rolls 4-2 hitting and lifting. Black dances. Should White recube?



Ray Fogelund vs. Ed O'Laughlin in the Super Jackpot finals. [Photo by Maia Khan]



**WORLD DOUBLES**  
Congrats to Steve Sax (CA) and Brian Zembic (NV) on their 23-20 victory over Tim Lawless (MN) and Mike Senkiewicz (NY) in the World Doubles Championship. 14 teams participated.

At the Calcutta Auction (where \$8,000 was given away in cash prizes, director Howard Markowitz announced that neither the Nevada State nor the Las Vegas Open is officially scheduled for 2007. Returning to the Riviera (under new management) is less than 10%, and no other Vegas property has given a firm commitment to host the backgammon tournaments. Hopefully, something positive will develop in the coming months. Complete results: Δ

**LAS VEGAS OPEN & WORLD DOUBLES TOURNAMENT**

CHAMPIONSHIP (92+36 rebuys): 1-Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (Israel), 2-Carter Mattig (IL), 3/4-Emil Mortuk (MI) / Steve Sax (CA); 1C-Aram Kouleyan (CA), 2C-Arkadiy Tsinis (NV), 3C/4C-Bob Glass (CA) / Mike Senkiewicz (NY); 1LC-Walter Trice (MA), 2LC-Kit Woolsey (CA). INTERMEDIATE (108+20 rebuys): 1-Marv Porten (CA), 2-Charles Toots (CA), 3/4-Sam Orandle (NV) / Andy Palumbo (NY); 1C-Robert Appell (CA), 2C-David Taniguchi (CA), 3C/4C-Thomas Loew (Germany) / Jonah Seewald (CO); 1LC-Butch Meese (IN), 2LC-Mark Donaldson (MN). BEGINNERS (34): 1-Jen Nakamura (CA), 2-Yehuda Hodara (NY), 3/4-Virgine Kouleyan (CA) / George Ramia (IL); 1C-Mike Freeman (NC), 2C-Don Thompson Sr. (NV); 1LC-Carol Manzi (NV), 2LC-Sue Martin (IL). SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-Ray Fogelund (CA), 2-Ed O'Laughlin (FL). LIMITED JACKPOT (16): 1-Harry Brown (MI), 2-Richard White (NV). SENIORS TOURNAMENT (128): 1-Walter Trice (MA), 2-Herb Gurland (MA). DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Al Cantito (CT) & Gerhard Roland (CT), 2-Danielle Bastarache (FL) & Mike Corbett (FL). MINI-MATCH (128): 1-Albert Lee (CA), 2-Dave Settles (IL). BLITZ (208): 1-Mary Hickey (OH), 2-Art Grater (CA). SATURDAY JACKPOTS \$300 (19): 1-Ken Fischer (CA). \$100 (44): 1-Ken Bame (CA). \$50 (20): 1-Don Thompson Sr. (NV). AFTER TOURNAMENT \$50 (38): 1-Kit Woolsey (CA), 2-Greg Cottle (NV). \$20 (21): 1-Marianne Gatenby (Canada), 2-Tom Duggan (England).

WORLD DOUBLES (14 teams): 1-Steve Sax (CA) & Brian Zembic (NV), 2-Tim Lawless (MN) & Mike Senkiewicz (NY), 3/4-Morten Holm (Denmark) & Mike Sherman (NV) / Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (Israel) & Arkadiy Tsinis (NV). \$300 JACKPOT WINNERS: Howard Markowitz (NV), Mary Hickey (OH).



# How to Win in

# chouettes



By Phil Simborg

*Phil Simborg is not only a fine tournament player (2005 ABT runner-up), but he probably plays chouette money backgammon as much as anyone in the U.S. We thank him for sharing his insights with our readers here.—Ed.*

**C**houette backgammon, which is three or more players competing for points or money over the same board, is one of the most fun and challenging forms of gambling and competition I have ever experienced. To me, it is far more interesting and fun than any card game or table game you can find anywhere, including Las Vegas!

Over the years I have learned much about increasing my odds in Chouette play from some of the best players in the world, but I have probably learned just as much from the old fashioned school of hard knocks (and I have had my share of knocks!) I GUARANTEE you these strategies will make or save you money if you play in chouettes.

**Be the best.** The number one way to win in chouettes is to be the best player in the game. That is my “trick” to winning any competition. If you are about to sit down at the table, and most of the players there are better than you, DON'T SIT DOWN. If you aren't the best, you still have a reasonable chance if you are better than most in the game. If you do get into a game where there are clearly better players, be sure you are playing for very “social” stakes that you don't mind losing in return for the fun, camaraderie, and lesson you are about to receive.

**Play at comfortable stakes.** If you can't afford to take a 32 or 64 cube when it's a take, you should not be in the game. You can't play good backgammon if you're playing scared. It's tough to take a cube if losing means you don't pay the rent or have to skip meals. Don't get in over your head, no matter how good you think you are.

**Know the rules.** Every chouette has its own rules about rotation, keeping the box, partners, extras, consulting, settlements, etc. In our Chicago chouette, we actually have a written set of rules on the back of the score sheet to help eliminate misunderstandings. Not knowing the rules can cost you money, so find out what they are before you start to play. (You can e-mail me at [psimborg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:psimborg@sbcglobal.net) if you would like a

copy of our Chicago Chouette Rules.)

**Read your opponents.** Almost everyone brings their own “tells” or “patterns” to the table, and reading these will make you money. Some players are extremely cautious with the cube (*double them earlier than others*). Some players love to gamble, and the higher the cube the more likely they are to take it (*double them later on high cubes—they'll take anyway*). Some players will take almost any cube if it is for the box, while others might drop almost any cube if it is not for the box. Some players are reluctant to hit twice and take a chance on leaving a direct shot (*you can be less fearful of leaving more blots against these players*). Some players will take or drop with the crowd (*double these players separately if you can*). Some players let you know, with their comments or body language, when they will drop or take a cube. Some players make very poor settlements (*settle often with these players, particularly the bigger cubes*). Many players will be more or less aggressive depending on whether they are up or down for the day (*watch the score sheet and act accordingly*). Since you can take advantage of a player's tells, it makes sense that they can do the same to you. So think about what you say or do that gives an edge to your opponents, and work on hiding or eliminating tells.

**The Box means NOTHING.** People who take cubes because they want to keep the box are giving money away. I don't care what you think your “edge” is in the game, when you take cubes that mathematically should be dropped, you are giving money away. At the end of the day I know many players who are losers instead of winners simply because they “took for the box.”

**Watch, listen, and learn.** One of the reasons I often play in chouettes with players who are as good or better than I (in addition to the fact that it is fun) is that it's a real learning experience. I get a chance to see what plays these better players prefer, and what cubes they take and drop. You not only learn from the better players, they can help you make money by listening to their plays and following their cube action. (*If I am on the same side as Yamin Yamin, and he's not doubling, I know I probably would be wrong to turn the cube, and if Perry Gartner tells me to run instead of make the 5 point, I run.*)

**Money Management is Important.** In most “sane” games with reasonable stakes, almost all the cubes are at the 2- and 4-levels. The one or two times you see an 8- or 16-cube could mean the success or failure of the entire day. You should be more inclined to make settlements on these cubes, even if you

are giving away a little on the settlement. Of course you are giving away money if you drop a 16-cube that is a take. (I'm not saying you should just drop it, but if it's really close, or there are lots of gammon risks, maybe you should be more inclined to drop it.) The key is to try to avoid getting yourself in the position of having to decide on large cubes. When you give a 4- or 8-cube, you might be a little slower giving that cube so you are more likely to get a drop and less likely to see a recube. Conversely, keep in mind that your opponent has the same concerns that you have, and he might be more likely to drop a 16-cube that he should take. This is where knowing your opponent is key.

**The Score Sheet Doesn't Matter.** While I believe in money management, I don't believe the score sheet should matter at all. If you are plus 8 on the sheet, that is no more a factor to taking or dropping a cube than if you won 8 points yesterday, or last week, or last year. If it's on the sheet, it is “booked” and it is yours, and it should not affect your play in any way. If you let it affect your play, all you do is give your opponents a way to exploit you. (Of course I am referring here to standard money play. If you are playing “table stakes” or in a competition where the winner is the one with the most points, the sheet becomes critical in all decisions.)

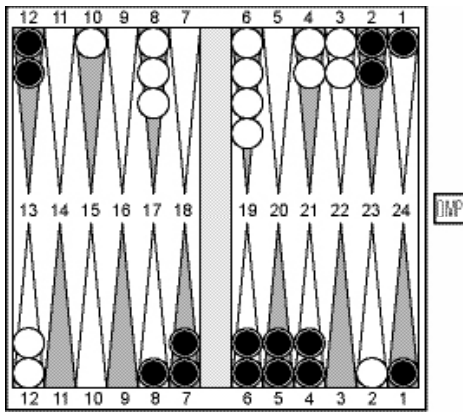
**Watch out for foul play.** Sorry, but any time there is money involved, there is the potential for cheaters. I won't go into all the ways players can cheat, but I can assure you that I have seen virtually all of them over the years, and I even have a list of people I will not play because I believe they are not trustworthy. Even “honest” people can make “mistakes” that can cost you money if you are not alert. People do make mistakes on the score sheet; people do make illegal moves (accidentally or otherwise) that help their position; people do have “friends” that they might not play their best against when their friend (or secret partner) is in the box. Some of the more extreme methods of cheating included loaded dice, magnets, dice manipulation, being slow to pick up dice to force an opponent to roll over if he has a good roll, late doubling after you know how the opponent is going to act, and many others. As my granddaddy once told me, “Trust everyone, but cut the cards.”

And finally, my last sage advice:

**Learn from me.** If you are new to chouette play, and not a very experienced backgammon player, I will be more than happy to play you (for large stakes) over the board and give you the benefit of my many years of (losing) experience. Please be sure to give me a call!—Phil Simborg, 1-800-SUCKER Δ

**PROBLEM #322  
ANALYZED**

by Kit Woolsey

7 point match tied at 6 to 6. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-4.**

Black has several choices. He can make his 9-point, his 3-point, or both. If he makes one of them, he can lift the blot on the 8-point and play 24/20, or he can play 24/16. In addition, there is the possibility of switching with 7/3(2), 6/2(2)\*. That's a lot of different possibilities. How can we sort them all out? We have to start by eliminating the candidates which look weakest compared to the others.

For starters, we can eliminate 13/9(2), 7/3(2). That play isn't consistent. The 9-point and the 3-point are six away, and thus do not part of the same prime make. If Black makes the 9-point, it is with the intent of priming. If Black makes the 3-point, it is with the intent of attacking. Black definitely improves by lifting the blot on the 8-point and/or by moving the back checker.

The next play to be ruled out is the switching play. Yes, it puts White on the bar against a 4-point board when White has the checker on her 10-point which is both a blot and an important builder. The problem with the switching play is that Black simply doesn't have the ammunition for this approach. He doesn't have a builder in direct range of the blot on the ace point, and he doesn't have a direct shot at White's outfield blot. This means that the switching play figures to be effective only if White flunks twice in a row, and with a four point board there is less than a 25% chance that this will happen. In addition, Black loses his 6-point, and that point will be difficult to re-make. When you are short on builders you can't afford to move checkers from more valuable points to less valuable points.

Next question: Should Black be making the 9-point or the 3-point? I think he should be making the 3-point. The broken five prime from 13/9(2) is nice, but how does Black follow it up? All White needs to do is roll a 6 sometime in the future, and the blockade loses its value. Being primed isn't a big danger for White, since she isn't in danger of crunching and she has plenty of good things to do on her side of the board. Other factors which argue for making the 3-point as opposed to the 9-point are:

1. White has a single checker back. It is usually more effective to attack a single checker than to try to prime it.
2. Black has a checker on his ace point. That checker can't help a priming approach. It can be of value with an attacking approach once it is covered.
3. If Black plays 13/9(2), he loses control of the outfield. If White escapes the back checker Black's army will be split in two and White will be free to play where she desires. The midpoint is Black's lifeline, both for his back checkers and to keep pressure on all parts of the board.

It looks like three of our 4s will be 24/20 and 7/3(2). What about the final 4? There are arguments for advancing the back checker to the 16-point. This gets away from White's killer rolls which make her 5-point on Black's head if Black stays there, and gives Black extra outfield coverage. On the other hand, it is safer for White to hit on the 9-point than on the 5-point, and if Black stops on the 5-point and White doesn't hit, Black has an opportunity to make the 5-point.

These arguments look close, perhaps a bit in favor of coming out. However, there is the offensive side of the board to consider. Black wants to cover the blot on the ace point as quickly as possible. By playing 8/4, he gets in direct range to cover. In addition, if Black stays on the 8-point he risks getting hit if White rolls a 6, and it would be very bad for Black if White simultaneously hits and escapes. Therefore the best choice appears to be 24/20, 8/4, 7/3(2).

When you roll doubles in a complex position, there are often a variety of choices available. It can be difficult to sort through them all and come up with an intelligent conclusion. The process of breaking the parts of the play down and comparing one play to another often allows you to eliminate candidate after candidate until you wind up with the winning choice.—Kit Woolsey Δ

**JAKE'S "HOOSIER  
DADDY" QUIZ ANSWERS**

[From the quiz on page 6]

**1(a)** Double/Pass—13 points. This is actually a much bigger pass than for money (because winning 4 points wins the match).

**1(b)** Double/Pass—8 points. Taking is still a blunder.

**2(a)** 9/8\*/2—4 points.

**2(b)** 9/5\*, 6/5—4 points. The difference between the two is can be found if you look at how 3-3 plays for White after each.

**2(c)** 11/8\*, 9/7—4 points.

**2(d)** 9/8\*, 9/4—4 points. If there is a common theme for c) and d) it would seem to be the importance of builders to close the deuce.

**3.** Redouble/Take or Pass—9 points. The take is right on the border. This position arose while Ray Foglerlund and I were playing out 1(b) as a prop.

**4.** Redouble/Take—11 points. I wimped it up, and passed this, but it is a take. Black has a better board and a racing lead. Bad things (like Black's board collapsing) don't *have* to happen.

**5.** 8/2(2)—12 points. I fell into the trap of trying to attack to prevent White from closing his deuce.

**6.** Double/Take—12 points. If Black makes the deuce he has a relatively comfortable take; all other choices lead to a pass.

**7.** No Double/Take—9 points. This is just barely too good, despite the four numbers that fail to safety the blot.

**8.** Redouble/Take—10 points. At the score, Black is eager to redouble. The take is actually fairly tough, but still proper.

**SCORING**

**81-100** You've earned a *Bayh* in the 55th Indiana Open!

**61-80** Your opponents quail at the sight of you!

**41-60** Your opponents *Quayle* at the sight of you!

**21-40** You need an opponent who is a *Quayle*!

**0-20** You need an opponent who is a quail!

**WINNER'S CIRCLE**



OCT.-NOV. 2006

•**12th Japan Open** (Tokyo, Japan; 6-9 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (128): 1-Junko Nakamura, 2-Yukio Nakamura, 3/4 - Masayuki Mochizuki / Tsuyoshi Minakami. INTERMEDIATE (128): 1-Yu-suke Itagaki, 2-Kazuma Ishioka, 3/4-Yu-ki Takahashi / Hiroyuki Mori. BEGINNER (128): 1-Yasushi Itoh, 2-Kumi Naka, 3/4-Morio Takeda / Tsutomu Suzuki. JAPAN OPEN (53): 1-Kazuhide Niki, 2-Susumu Mizutani, 3/4-Masayuki Mochizuki / Yousuke Takahashi; 1C-Hironobu Yazawa, 2C-Kazuhiko Yotsushika; 1LC-Paul Weaver (USA), 2LC-Masahiko Nasu. TEAM MATCH (16 teams): 1-Komagome BG (Akiko Abe & Takumitsu Suzuki & Sinichiroh Kaneko & Hironobu Yazawa), 2-Nerima (Raizoh Ishizuka & Takashi Uno & Ryuzoh Suzuki & Chitose Okamura); 1C-Team Dice (Masakazu Matsu-shima & Teruyuki Suzuki & Takeshi Yorita & Miwa Hashizume). LADIES TOURNAMENT (16) 1-Michiko Matsumiya, 2-Hiromi Funahashi, 3-Aoi Wakayama, 4-Yuriko Kondoh. MIXED DOUBLES (32 pairs): 1-Shinichiroh Kaneko & Hiromi Funahashi, 2-Tomoko Tachikawa & Masahiro Yamaguchi. BLITZ (80): 1-Hironobu Yazawa, 2-Yuji Sumi. ROUND ROBIN (62): 1-Keiichi Sasaki, 2-Tadanori Nakayama, 3-Kanta Terao. 1-POINTMATCH (128): 1-Raizoh Ishizuka, 2-Takashi Uno. MONTE CARLO TOURNEY (32): 1-Jake Jacobs (Planet Earth), 2-Nozomu Kawazoe.

•**Bar Point Sunday Tournament** (Lincolnwood, IL; 15 Oct.)... OPEN (22): 1/2-Tak Morioka / Peter Kalba, 3/4-Jerry Brooks / Paul Baraz; 1C/2C-Ken Bond / Bill Davis.

•**New England Club Monthly** (Malden, MA; 15 Oct.)... OPEN: 1-Herb Gurland, 2-Joe Moore.

•**28th Flint Area Club Championships** (Flint, MI; 15 Oct.)... OPEN (30): 1-Frank Talbot, 2-Dean Adamian, 3-Carol Joy Cole, 4/5/6-Paul Berg / Ralph Dietz / Jim Slomkoski. INTERMEDIATE (21): 1-Stewart Kelman, 2-Dave Pink, 3-Miriam Bureson, 4/5/6-Woody Halbritter / Reggie Harvel / Bruce Weiner. NOVICE (12): 1-Lee White, 2-John Mason, 3-Ron Ma.

•**10th Rotterdam Open BG & Poker** (Rotterdam, The Netherlands; 19-23 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (24): 1-Mike Heard (GB), 2-Hassan (EGY), 3/4-Rogier van Gemert (NED) / Arthur Braacx (NED); 1C-Hans Willem Capel (NED), 2C-Myke Wignall (GB). INTERMEDIATE (4): 1-Susan (NED). SATURDAY POKER: 1-Andy Bell (GB). SUNDAY POKER: 1-Alex (NED)... C.U. Ed Baars reporting.

•**11th Minnesota Open—ABT** (Bloomington, MN; 20-22 Oct.)... OPEN (20): 1-Art Moore (CA), 2-Tim Lawless (MN); 1C-Yury Millman

(MN), 2C-Eric Johnson (IL); 1LC-Fred Kalantari (MN). INTERMEDIATE (13): 1-Sharon Rich (WA), 2-Sonya Sidky (WI); 1C-Jim Pokela (MN); 1LC-Jesse Eaton (MN). MASTERS JACKPOT (8): 1-Tim Lawless (MN), 2-Eric Johnson (IL). DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Mike Rezai (OH) & Sharon Rich (WA), 2-Carol Joy Cole (MI) & Harvey Gillis (WA). MINI-MATCHES (8): 1-Fred Kalantari (MN). BLITZ (32): 1-Ed Bennett (NM), 2-Art Moore (CA).

•**Phoenix Club Free Monthly** (Glendale, AZ; 21 Oct.)... OPEN (7): 1-Dan Pelton, 2-Terry Valentine, 3-Dave Perkins.

•**4th Barriere Open** (d'Enghien-les-Bains, France; 26-29 Oct.): MASTERS: 1-Peter Heitmüller (GER), 2-Patrick Gaillard (FRA), 3/4-Georgy Balkandjiisky (BUL) / Chris Ternel (UK); 1C-Bob Wachtel (USA), 2C-Frank Talbot (USA); 1LC-Carter Mattig. ADVANCED: 1-Emanuel Israel (FRA), 2-Damian Plesec (SLO); 1C-Bert van Kerckhove (BEL), 2C-Bontcho Krastev (BUL); 1LC-Andrey Markov (BUL). INTERMEDIATE: 1-Dieter Klein (GER), 2-Sten Lorentzen (DEN); 1C-Ralph Eskinazi (UK), 2C-Numazawa Kazuko (JPN); 1LC-Marc Steyvers (BEL). AMATEURS: 1-Philippe Arnaud (FRA). SUPER JACKPOTS #1: 1-Sander Lylloff, 2-Najib Sallamzy (AFG). #2: 1-Najib Sallamzy (AFG), 2-Piergiorgio d'Ancona (ITA). #3: 1-Howard Markowitz (USA), 2-Andreas Grösch (GER). PRESIDENT 1-POINT: 1-Katja-Sophie Spillum (NOR), 2-Peter Bennet (UK). LADIES TOURNAMENT: 1-Julie Thabault (FRA), 2-Isabelle Bonvalot (FRA). XCITINGGAMES.COM CHALLENGE: 1-Howard Markowitz, 2-Dahan (FRA). ELEGANCE PRIZE: Numazawa Kazuko (JPN). SPECIAL PLAYER PRIZE: Frank Talbot (USA)... *Director Chiva Tafazzoli (WBA) reporting.*

•**3rd Caribbean Open** (St. Maarten; 30 Oct.-2 Nov.)... MASTERS (25): 1-Jean-Philippe Rohr (FRA), 2-François Tardieu (FRA), 3/4-B. Lund (DEN)/A. Zunde (USA). INTERMEDIATE (18): 1-A. Fateh (IRN), 2-R. Herrera (UK), 3/4-M. Serrano (CR)/A. Bauk (STM). WARM-UP (32): 1-Lars Trabolt (DEN), 2-François Tardieu (FRA). SPERTI TROPHY (38): 1-Rainer Witt (GER), 2-N. Skov (DEN), 3/4-Michael Strato (CAN) / M. Fateh (IRN). LADIES TOURNEY (6): 1-Pia Jepsen (DEN), 2-Simonetta Barone (UK).

•**Kansas City Club Monthly** (Kansas City, MO; 1 Nov.)... OPEN (6): 1-Eric Barr, 2/3-James Worley / Scott S.

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Akron, OH; 5 Nov.)... OPEN: 1-Paul Berg, 2-Mike Vasalitos.

•**Arizona Club Monthly** (Phoenix, AZ; 7 Nov.)... OPEN: 1-Bruce Yee, 2-Pete Campbell, 3-Joni Brummer.

•**Springfield Series #4** (Bloomington, IL; 11 Nov.)... OPEN (25): 1-Mark King, 2-Rob Farmer; 1C-Ed Zell, 2C-Nick Fady; 1LC-Cliff Mayoh. Taki-board Qualifier: Ed Zell. Δ

**AMALGAMATION**

Recent out-of-town BPC visitors: **Michael Battaglia** (NJ), **Efrem Coley** (PA)... Best wishes to **Jon & Deborah Vietor** who were married in La Jolla, CA on 21 October... **Ken Bond** (IL/FL) took the \$1000 first prize at a recent charity poker tourney in Elmhurst, Illinois. In the head-to-head finals, Ken's young opponent queried: "Do you want to split, Grampa?" Ken's response: "What say, sonny? I can't hear you." ... It's disappointing to note that online qualifiers for the PartyGammon Million tournament (21-25 January in the Bahamas) are permitted to transfer or sell their \$12,500 entry packages to experts. We feel that online qualifying slots should be nontransferable so as to discourage below average hustlers (who would have not chance in the "live" Bahamas event) from using Snowie or Gnu to cheat... Speaking of cheating, "Backgammon Blog" has an interesting Internet article (including a movie) outlining exactly how to cheat online with Gnu. Their experiment of using the bot for every move in money and tournament play won 70-80% of the time. Know what you're up against. Visit: [www.backgammon-blog.de](http://www.backgammon-blog.de)... Get well wishes go out to **Randi Simborg** (IL) and **Barbara Levinson** (IL) who recently both fractured their wrists. No, it wasn't from rolling dice!... [XcitingGames.com](http://XcitingGames.com) offers an unusual



*Kerstin really knows how to "bear off" at [www.XcitingGames.com](http://www.XcitingGames.com).*

twist at their backgammon playsite: hostesses who strip for you when you win... A new Michigan club opens 30 November. The Northern Michigan BG Club will play Thursdays at the Horizon Bookstore in Petoskey, MI. For more, contact **Robert Townsend** at 231/622-2040... Want to check a player's tournament record back to 1998? Go to [www.chicagopoint.com](http://www.chicagopoint.com). At the Google link, click "Chicago Point Website." Then Google a name and watch the results pop up... Finally, here's an old Italian proverb that can be applied to backgammon: "An ounce of luck is better than a pound of wisdom." Δ

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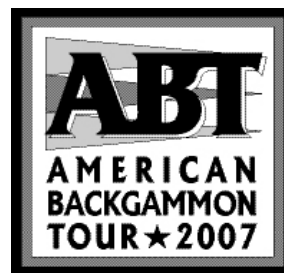
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