

*world cup II and eastern open*

## HORAN 'BUYS THE BEERS' IN QUEST FOR WORLD CUP

Talbot Over Snellings in Eastern Open

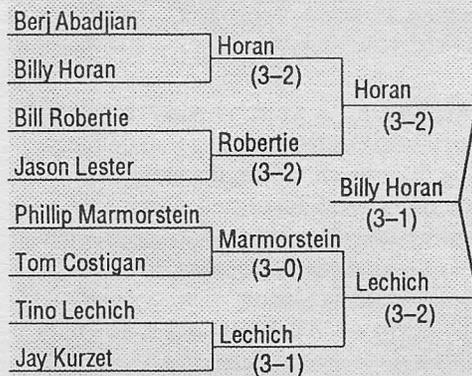
**B**illy Horan, a 40-year-old professional poker and backgammon player from New York City has won World Cup II and \$43,000. Horan, top seed at this year's Monte-Carlo World Championship, defeated 30-year-old Australian expert, Tino Lechich at the U.S. Backgammon Enterprises' biennial biggie 7-12 August in Cambridge, Mass. The tourney was run in conjunction with the Eastern Open at the Sheraton Commander Hotel. Kent Goulding and Bill Robertie chaired the event, directed by an all-star staff including Carol Joy Cole, Joanne Goulding, Butch & Mary Ann Meese and Linc Bedell.

The 39 player international field (including five former world champions) who anted up the \$3500 entry fee found this to be a premier test of backgammon skill and in some cases, endurance. Opening rounds played a best 3-out-of-5 set format to 11 points, increasing to 13 points for the semifinals and finals. 10 hour tussles were not uncommon, even with chess clocks in action to monitor slow play.

### The Auction and Round-Of-8

The final eight competitors were auctioned off at the "Black Tie" dinner Thursday evening. Actually only the chairmen,

### WORLD CUP II—FINAL 8



Robertie and Goulding dressed accordingly (and Goulding's bow tie was red, yellow and blue). But the invitation request got most of the male players to at least don a sport coat. Germany's Phillip Marmorstein was the top bid at \$2200.

Friday quarterfinal losses of Costigan, Kurzet, Lester and Abadjian set up the semifinals. Horan had the longest match against Berj Abadjian. Trailing 2-0 in sets, Billy rallied to tie the battle at 2-2. At 12:20 A.M., more than 12 hours into the match and down 8-4, Horan moaned, "I'll pay \$1000 cash to trade this for root canal."

Berj showed effects of the struggle as well. In the final set, he was actually eating Marlboro cigarettes down to the filter! And losing 10-9 Crawford, Berj was said to roll the number needed to hit Billy in a back-game only to overlook the play. The marathon ended at 2:00 A.M. with Horan advancing to the final four.

### Another Late Night For Horan

The first semifinal match began Saturday at noon, pitting the best players from Germany (Marmorstein) and Australia (Lechich). Although it went the full 5 sets, the entire match was completed in 6 1/2 hours. Final score in favor of Lechich: 13-1, 9-13, 12-13, 13-5, 13-7.

In the other semifinal, Horan again locked in a long battle, this time with Bill Robertie. In fact, although both semifinals started simultaneously, Marmorstein and Lechich completed three sets before Robertie had edged Horan 13-9 in set #1. At that point chairman Goulding introduced a chess clock into the match that sped things up. When Horan lost set #2 13-8 in relatively quick fashion, he asked to "trash the clock" as long as the pace remained reasonable. Goulding acceded to Horan's request which seemed to turn Billy's luck around. For the third match in a row, he was able to come back from two sets down and win 3-2 in another 2:00 A.M. finish.

### Billy Beer?

The Horan-Lechich finals rolled off at 12:50 P.M. on Sunday in a private room with Joanne Goulding acting as referee/scorekeeper. Kit Woolsey, and chairmen Bill Robertie and Kent Goulding provided

entertaining commentary of the closed circuit telecast.

Tino quickly gained a solid advantage in game one and flipped the cube Billy's way. "Yikes! What is that thing coming at me? It's gigantic!" clowned Billy who quickly passed. Horan continued his chatter with the referee. "How to you feel, Joanne? Tired?" Joanne nodded. "Imagine how I feel," Billy continued. "Look at Tino over there. He hasn't even shaved yet. He's got that *rugged look*."

With Horan leading 5-1, things quieted down as both players settled into the match. Horan won the first set 13-3 in one hour.

In set #2, Lechich doubled five times and Horan was able to turn four of them around. Tied at 8-8, Horan hit a gammon-saving shot in the bearoff and immediately recubed Tino out. Eight moves into the next game, Lechich lamented, "That was my chance, Billy. I wanted that one." Second set to Horan: 13-8.

The third set started with what many would regard as a psychological ploy by



Tournament chairmen Bill Robertie (left) and Kent Goulding (right) present winner Billy Horan (second from right) and runner-up Tino Lechich their World Cup trophies.

Horan, who is considered a master of gambling stratagem. With \$64,000 of prize money at stake, he decided to buy Tino and himself cold Heinekens. Whereas Tino (a Melbourne pub player/beer drinker from way back) quaffed his beer before the opening roll hit the playfield, Billy nursed his bottle for the duration of the match.

Tino won two points in the first game via recube. "Well done," proclaimed Horan.

"Looks like I needed that beer more

[Continued on back page]

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

c/o Chicago POINT  
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## A PAST EDITOR SPEAKS

Thank you for remembering the Las Vegas Backgammon magazine in your July POINT. The magazine lasted as long as it did because of the selfless contribution of time and effort given by so many who loved backgammon (writers, proofreaders, analysts, mail room workers, typists, advertisers, etc.).

Incidentally, you and your staff are doing a wonderful job with the POINT. Keep it up!—*Michael Maxakuli, Las Vegas, NV*

## EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

Marjorie Kirchoff's letter [August 1990] mentioned a situation where on the opening shake, she rolled a 1 and her opponent rolled a 3, first bumping her die and changing it into a 4. I was the director and am aware that players must roll to the board on their right without exception; however in this instance, both players were using a baffle box which remains stationary on one side of the board throughout the match. Our rule is that on the opening roll, the dice

coming attractions

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole  
313/232-9731

Sep 8	Fall 1990 Connecticut Championship, Hall of Fame, Southington, CT	203/755-9749
Sep 9	1990-1991 New England Kickoff Tourney, Sheraton, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Sep 15	2nd Valle De Las Leñas Tournament/Ski Weekend, Mendoza, Argentina	790-8177/4769
Sep 16	Leading Edge BG Club Grand Opening, Sit'n Bull Pub, Maynard, MA	617/863-0012
Sep 20	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Sep 21-23	1st Annual Minnesota Open, Minneapolis Athletic Club, MN	612/521-9532
Sep 28-30	G/A 23rd Invitational Tournament, Cavendish West Hollywood, CA	818/901-0464
Sep 28-30	1st Ramada-Cup, Ramada Hotel, Sindelfingen, Germany	07121/470037
Sep 29-30	IV British Nat'l Championships, Morecambe Bay, Lancaster, England	44 61 946-0828
Oct 1	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	3-689918
Oct 1-16	Mediterranean Open: Poker/Backgammon, Celebrity Hotels Ltd, Cyprus	021-440 3428
Oct 7	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Bagwells, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
Oct 13	Springfield Fall Open, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Oct 14	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Oct 14	Double Door Tournament, Amsterdam, Netherlands	0031 324014734
Oct 18	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Sheraton Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Oct 19-20	De Åbne Jydske Championships, Århus, Denmark	31/22 46 00
Oct 19-21	8th New Hampshire Fall Classic & New England Doubles	603/863-4711
Oct 20	College Park Fall Open, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Oct 24-28	BG & Tennis Casino Cup, Hotel Schloss Seefels, Pörtlach, Austria	0 42 72 23 77
Oct 24-28	Caesars Tahoe Tournament, South Lake Tahoe, NV	702/826-1984
Nov 2-4	NRW German Open, Düsseldorf-Breitscheid, Germany	02151-27775
Nov 2-4	Swedish Open Championship, O'Henry's Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	08-524099
Nov 3	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Nov 5	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	3-689918
Nov 6	8th Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Pat's Pub, Norridge, IL	312/338-6380
Nov 9-11	Children's Hospital Benefit, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Nov 9-11	BG Co-op Fall Championships, Rocking Horse Ranch, Highland, NY	201/833-2915
Nov 9-11	14th Crystal Cup Venezia, Casinò Municipale di Venezia, Italy	76 00 37 05
Nov 17	Winter 1990 Connecticut Championship, Hall of Fame, Southington, CT	203/755-9749
Nov 18	12th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Nov 22-25	Valencia Championship, Casino Monte-Picayo, Valencia, Spain	96 142 12 11
Nov 23-25	Holland Casino Open Tournament, Nijmegen, Netherlands	080/564628
Nov 29-Dec 2	Teacher's European Open Championships, Casino Deauville, France	31 98 66 22
Dec 1	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tournament, On Broadway, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Dec 3	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/3-689918
Dec 9	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Bagwells, Chicago, IL	312/252-7755
Dec 9	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Dec 23	Double Door Tournament, Amsterdam, Netherlands	0031 324014734
Jan 10-13	Seefeld International, Seefeld/Tirol, Austria	08341 12825
Jan 13	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Jan 17-20	2nd French Open, Hotel Lutecia, Paris, France	4772-2810
Jan 19	College Park Winter Open, Promenade Party Room, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jan 26	3rd Hawthorne Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	312/338-6380
Jan 30-Feb 3	8th Nevada State Championship, Nugget Hotel/Casino, Reno, NV	702/826-1984
Feb 9	Spring Connecticut Championship, Hall of Fame, Southington, CT	203/755-9749
Feb 10	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Feb 17	8th Fleet Underwood Memorial Tournament & Benefit, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Mar 14-17	17th Int'l Winter Championships, Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/331 58 16
Mar 22-24	1991 Midwest Championships, Marriott Hotel, Oak Brook, IL	312/338-6380

are valid the way they come to rest, even if one die hits the other.—*Patrick Gibson, Director, Gammon Associates, Van Nuys, CA*

## DEAD LETTER

Although I also agree with the existing wording used to announce the deaths of backgammon players, I find Danny Kleinman's comments regarding the issue to be absurd ["Letters," August 1990].

After all, if the word "passing" is deemed inappropriate for its backgammon meaning, then by all means, the word "die" should be avoided as well. Otherwise readers may become terribly confused with that 6-sided object that they toss onto the board at the beginning of each game.

Come on, Mr. Kleinman. Let's "bury" this issue.—*Frank Frigo, Fullerton, CA*

[Continued on page 3]

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

## WILCOX WHO?

All of the sudden we're hearing a lot about Wilcox Snellings. How about an article on him? He seems to have sprung full blown from out of nowhere.—Ed Maslansky, Silver Spring, MD

This month, Wilcox and Randi Pinckes will be married in Louisiana. We'll see if we can reach him after the honeymoon.—Ed.

## NEW DOUBLING THEORY

To keep in the tradition of backgammon, I think you should randomly either double or halve the POINT subscription rate each

year. To hedge, people could pay a one-time \$125 lifetime fee.—Brad Zarlin, Roslyn, NY

The POINT subscription fee was increased 31 July. Instead of your idea, we'll try to keep the rates in "Crawford Game" mode (no doubling) for a while.—Ed.

## MORE DUANE

How about featuring a bit more of Duane Jensen's material. I really enjoy his sense of humor.—Ray Kershaw, London, England

You're not the only one. Some of Duane's Chicago POINT columns have been re-printed in Australia, Germany, Denmark and Argentina. We'll see what we can do, but it's really up to Mr. J.—Ed.

[Continued on page 4]



# 1990 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU AUG. 31

TAK MORIOKA	18.72	Jay Ward	3.28	Howard Ring	0.88
GARY KAY	16.84	Leslie Lockett	3.28	Randall Witt	0.88
MARK KING	15.28	Ken Bond	3.04	Sharon Lennon	0.88
LUCKY NELSON	14.00	Dean Muench	3.04	Jerry Brooks	0.88
YAMIN YAMIN	12.60	Frank Callea	2.96	Joe Wollick	0.80
BRUCE WITTERT	12.40	Alex Caraplis	2.88	Jeff Kane	0.80
DAVE CRAMER	12.20	Bart Levin	2.80	Barbara Levinson	0.76
JAKE JACOBS	11.00	Bill Hoeflich	2.80	Kurt Warning	0.72
STU KATZ	10.16	Peter Kalba	2.64	Harold Seif	0.72
DEEB SHALATI	9.04	Ron Stur	2.60	Ed Bauder	0.72
PAUL FRANKS	8.56	Kathy Rudnick	2.60	George Kirkby	0.72
MARCY SLOAN	7.76	Mike O'Brien	2.56	Bill Hargrave	0.72
TIM SERGES	7.68	Mike Spiropoulos	2.48	Hal Heinrich	0.64
DON JAYHAN	7.16	Norma Shyer	2.48	Mike Fengya	0.64
ARNOLD ZOUSER	7.04	Harry Cohn	2.48	David Rubin	0.56
BILL DAVIS	6.52	Howard Markowitz	2.24	Mike Siegel	0.56
BOBBIE SHIFRIN	6.20	Greg Shore	2.16	Reggie Porter	0.52
GEORGE BARR	6.16	John Spatafora	2.00	Steve Potashnick	0.48
BOB ZAVORAL	6.16	Jim Gibbs	1.92	Terry Moskowitz	0.48
RICH GALEBA	6.00	Arline Levy	1.80	Alex Itkin	0.48
Andy Argy	5.88	Mary Franks	1.76	Betsy Miller	0.40
Phyllis Smolinski	5.16	V.W. Zimnicki	1.68	Elaine Kehm	0.32
Joe Koucharian	4.96	Jolie Lewis	1.60	Mike Sutton	0.32
John Demian	4.88	Bill Keefe	1.52	Larry Knoll, Jr.	0.28
Alice Kay	4.88	Walt Schafer	1.44	Jamie Dodge	0.24
Don Desmond	4.72	Richard Stawowy	1.36	René Wojtysiak	0.24
Joann Feinstein	4.56	Gabriel Kairouz	1.28	Bernie Smuda	0.24
Judy Brown	4.44	Walter Trice	1.28	Larry Knoll	0.24
Ed Buerger	4.40	Herb Roman	1.12	Jeff Ferguson	0.16
Sarg Serges	4.20	Grant Dace	1.04	Jill Ferdinand	0.16
Ralph Levy	3.84	Bob Holyon	1.04	Marv Arnol	0.12
Rudy Emmelot	3.64	Dave Rockwell	0.96	Ted Mann	0.12
Femi Owiku	3.48	Stan Kucharz	0.96		

MARCY SLOAN waited until the 19th to win her first points in August, but then she "poured it on" placing 2nd at the Summer Cool tourney and winning the August 21 and 28 Tuesday events. Her 4.96 points rank as the third highest monthly total of 1990. Both Don Jayhan (3.96) and Gary Kay (3.84) had fine August totals as well.

Incidentally, Stu Katz stopped Tak Morioka's BPC match-winning streak at a record-breaking 13. Will Marcy Sloan (who now has 8 wins in a row) eclipse that mark in September?

national labor day tournament

# YAMIN'S 2ND VICTORY OF MONTH IS A 'LABOR' OF LOVE

Talk about a great month of backgammon! Our own Yamin Yamin (Deerfield, Ill.) certainly had one. First he takes 1st Consolation at the Boston World Cup. And now he grabs the National Labor Day tourney (Indianapolis, IN; 31 Aug.-3 Sept). 100 players from across the U.S. attended.

Other fine Chicago finishes were turned in by Don Desmond (Open 3rd), Jake Jacobs (Open Cons. 1st) and "doubles guru" Mark King (Doubles 1st & Jackpot 1st). Results:

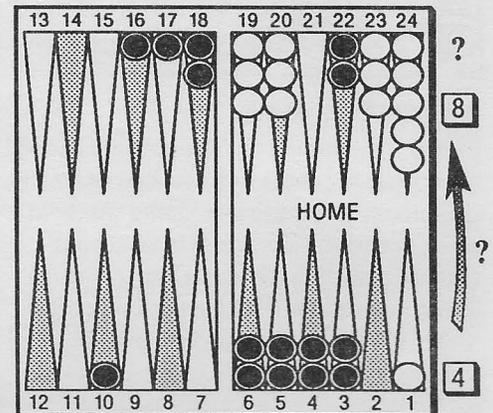
## NATIONAL LABOR DAY TOURNAMENT

OPEN (40): 1st Yamin Yamin (IL); 2nd Quint McTyeire (KY); 3rd Don Desmond (IL); Cons. 1st Jake Jacobs (IL); Cons. 2nd Steve Brown (MN)  
 INTERMEDIATE (48): 1st Mike Rezaei (OH); 2nd Fred King (TX); 3rd Denny Leatherman (PA); Cons. 1st Jim Bowman; Cons. 2nd Fouad Malouf (IL); Cons. 3rd/4th Sharon Lennon (KY), John McCabe (IL)  
 NOVICE (9): 1st Barb Zeman (IL); 2nd B. King (TX)  
 MASTERS JACKPOT (13): 1st Ami Tennenbaum (NJ); 2nd Wendy Kaplan (IN)  
 DOUBLES (32): 1st Mark King (IL) & Drew Giovanis (FL); 2nd Bob Holyon (WA) & Dave Cardwell (GA) & Rich Siebold (WI)  
 LIMITED TEAM (8): 1st John Bashian (OH), David Smith (IN), Don Woods (IN)  
 \$80 OPEN JACKPOT (16): 1st Mark King (IL); 2nd Joanie Ross (MI)  
 OPEN MICRO-BLITZ: 1st Jim Mieske (OH); Overflow 1st Carol Joy Cole (MI)  
 LIMITED MICRO-BLITZ: 1st Sandy Grassel (MI); Overflow 1st Milad Doueihy (IL)

your move

## PROBLEM #163

World Cup II. Best 3-out-of-5 set finals. 13-point sets. Billy Horan (Black) leads Tino Lechich (White) two sets to one. The fourth set is tied 3-3. **SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE? IF BLACK DOUBLES, SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



## ASK DANNY



by Danny Kleinman

## BEWARE THE CHEAT

**D**ear Danny: I recently observed my first organized backgammon tournament and noticed that all players used different color dice (e.g. one black and one white) in their matches. At home, whoever plays the white pieces uses the white dice. When I asked about this, the director told me it "protects against cheating." What did he mean by this? Also, if I am going to enter the world of backgammon, what other forms of potential cheating and/or unethical play should I be aware of?—*Naïve Ned*

Dear Ned: Don't ask me what your director meant when he said that rolling one die of one color and a second die of another color "protects against cheating"—ask him. All the cheaters I know came equipped with magnetized dice of all colors. Steve Goldman, for example, went to some lengths to obtain dice imprinted with the logo of a club in a distant city so that he could have his crooked dicemaker copy them before traveling to that city for a tournament.

There are more ways to cheat at backgammon than I can detect or catalog, though I've described some in several of my books. I have nothing to add here, except to say that cheating is like warfare: the offense can always stay ahead of the defense. This is no accident. Before I can invent a defense to your offensive technology, you must have developed that technology.

Have you ever watched a talented illusionist ("magician" to most laymen)? He

operates by misdirection. Likewise with some backgammon cheaters. Check their dice, and they'll be cheating with their fingers. Watch their fingers, and it will be something in their cups. Verify that they are rolling properly, and you may miss how they manipulate their dice with their hands while the dice are still spinning or have already landed on the playing surface. Take your eye off the board momentarily, and they will move their checkers illegally—or move yours. Glue your eyes to the board, and they will alter the setting of the doubling cube.

I could recommend "eternal vigilance" (the price of liberty) but I won't. Playing first-rate backgammon is hard enough as it is. It's all the harder when you devote your energy to other things. Gaby Horowitz obtained a tremendous advantage whenever he played against an opponent who knew he cheated. That opponent would be watching for a dozen different ways in which Gaby might be cheating—paying attention to 12 things other than playing his own game—while Gaby concentrated only on his own moves and the one cheating technique he may have chosen for the occasion. It wouldn't even surprise me if sometimes Gaby *didn't* cheat: just to be suspected of cheating gave him a big enough illicit advantage.

The only real assurance you can have of a negative—that someone *isn't* cheating—is character. But why should you be required either to watch your opponent carefully or judge his character? That should be the job of those who organize and direct backgammon. If somebody *must* watch an opponent for cheating, let it be a kibitzer, not a player.

I've been involved in creating more than one set of rules for backgammon. For example, many formulations in the "U.S. Rules and Procedures" are mine. Yet I don't want my name attached to these rules because of a fundamental objection I have

to every set of rules ever accepted by the backgammon community I attempt to serve. Almost everyone but I wants to *restore equity* following an infraction by cancelling the illegal action, be it checker play, cube turn, or premature roll. I want to penalize all infractions, deliberate or inadvertent. This is not to "punish" the perpetrators but to *deter* the infractions. You can't stop Gaby and his ilk from taking illegal moves to their own advantage merely by requiring them to replay their moves legally, for sometimes you won't spot them. You must put them at risk. You can't just say, "That roll doesn't count," when you see Alan Martin *place* a die on the table; you must be able to penalize him by turning that die to a number of your own choosing, else he'll profit all the times his hand is quicker than your eye.

Sometimes I watch backgammon players in chouettes with all their petty attempts to gain advantage short of actual cheating, all their griping and feuding, all their annoying habits, and I think, "Children!" But then I get to thinking what real children are like, and I remember the street and sandlot ball games we played as boys, without benefit of umpires. We played as hard as anyone, and we loved to win. We had our quarrels and our scrapes, but we always made up. Perhaps that's because we knew something the "adults" who play backgammon, bridge and other games for money and glory seem to have forgotten. The others in our game may be "opponents" all right, but they're also our *playmates*. We need them for both competition and fun.—*Yours, Danny Δ*

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

## LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

## WATCH OUT, HAIO!

It's true that this year's Monte-Carlo World Championship at the five-star Loews Hotel ran smoothly because everything was held under one roof. However, I have always enjoyed attending the major happenings at different locations (like the cocktail party at the Hermitage Hotel and the award ceremony at the Hotel de Paris). It gets us out to see more of the beautiful city.

By the way, Haio Forler's report on the event was excellent, but I'm afraid he overlooked one very well-known African American woman who reached the final 32. In fact, Lewis Deyong dubbed her the "Zina Garrison of backgammon" at the auction.

I'll forgive you this time Haio baby, but next time, watch out!—*Antoinette-Marie Williams, New York, NY*

## A VOTE FOR EUROPE

This past year, most of my time has been spent in pursuit of a master's degree at

Oakland College (Michigan). That's why I especially enjoyed visiting the Isle of Man, San Remo and Monte-Carlo this summer. Playing in backgammon tournaments and meeting so many nice people from all over the world is truly a rewarding experience. If anyone ever has the chance to travel overseas for a backgammon tournament, *go for it!*

I really enjoyed last month's interview with Phillip Marmorstein. The way it was written made it seem like we were eavesdropping on your conversation.—*Gayle Wolf, Warren, MI Δ*

# What's Happening?

SOLVED

Duane Jensen's "What's Happening?" puzzler proved to be our most popular contest ever. Nearly 100 entries were received, including international submissions from Canada, Costa Rica, England, Germany, Mauritius, and Sweden.

By random draw, the winner of the \$80 Crisloid backgammon set is **HARRY**

**BROWN** of Birmingham, Michigan.

Refer to your August *POINT* for the questions. Here are the answers:

1. The opening roll was 4-2.
2. (e) 4-3 is not a possible first roll for White.
3. (b) 9 point match.
4. (a) Black led White 6-4.
5. (d) Doubles tournament (Two left hands were shown).

Those requesting a written explanation of the solution should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Chicago *POINT*; 2726 W. Lunt Avenue; Chicago, IL 60645.

## BACKGAMMON CLUB OF EUROPE TOP 10

(Compiled through July 1990)

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 1 .... Manto Sequeira (Portugal) .....   | 2142 |
| 2 .... Evert Van Eyck (Netherlands) .... | 1784 |
| 3 .... Fred Hoffmann (Germany) .....     | 1664 |
| 4 .... Karl Laubmeier (Germany) .....    | 1576 |
| 5 .... Harald Johanni (Germany) .....    | 1558 |
| 6 .... Matthias Pauen (Germany) .....    | 1535 |
| 7 .... Manfred Hollederer (Germany) ...  | 1488 |
| 8 .... Gerd Schiesser (Germany) .....    | 1472 |
| Harald Milarch (Germany) .....           | 1472 |
| 10 .. Uli Koch (Germany) .....           | 1424 |
| Peter Van Rooy (Netherlands) ....        | 1424 |

## Final BOARD-ing Call...

### Minnesota Open

Sept. 21-23, 1990

Minneapolis Athletic Club

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NOV. 9-10-11

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This tournament will be professionally directed by the NNBA with seven years experience in running the largest, most exciting, highest equity tournaments in America. It will feature a gala reception, Calcutta Auction, special side events and three divisions with three chances to play within each.

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Please send a brochure on this and your future events to:

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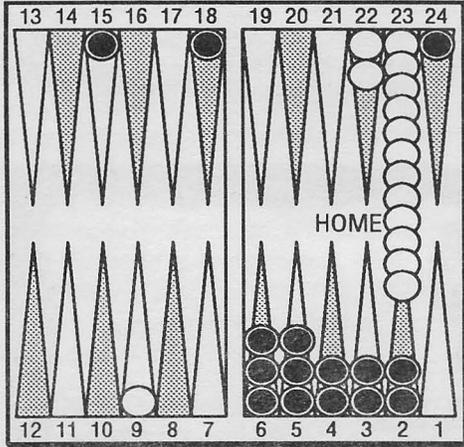
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**PROBLEM #162  
SOLVED**

by Kit Woolsey

13-point tournament match. Black trails White, 12 to 11. Crawford game.  
**BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.**



In this position, Black's goal is quite simple. He must make the best play to hit White's checker on his next roll. Anything else is quite secondary. One obvious possibility is 18/15, 5/4. This blocks some doubles, and turns 5-1 and 4-2 into horror rolls for White. The other choice is to stay back on the 18-point. (Any other play which moves the back checkers forward loses some shot potential.) It is then probably correct to slot the ace-point with 5/1,

but that part of the play is really no big deal.

Many analysts would now examine White's 36 rolls and Black's 36 return rolls for each play. This would yield some number divided by 1296 as the probability of hitting a shot on the next roll (with some slight added vig if a second checker was jarred loose), and unequivocally demonstrate which play was superior.

While this sort of exercise is worth doing for a few positions as a learning experience, only a player with the incredible ability to handle numerous arithmetical computations in his head could do it in a few minutes. Consequently, this sort of analysis, while completely accurate, does not help the average player solve this type of problem at the table. I propose to show how to attack positions like this as one would in an actual game—by making reasonable estimations and coming up with a sensible conclusion.

First consider White's numbers of 5 or less. There are nine of them (1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 2-3, and 1-1). On any of these, staying put is moderately better, since Black will have a double shot rather than a single shot. Also, on non-doubles totalling 7 or 8, Black gains by staying put because he gets a direct shot (or the equivalent if White hits) next turn. There are ten of them (1-6, 2-5, 3-4, 2-6, and 3-5). If White rolls 3-3 or 6-6, Black is obviously better making the point and keeping White blocked, and much better if White rolls 5-1 or 4-2, since these rolls create at least one more blot. Also, 6-3 argues for making the point because the double hit robs Black of a

return shot. On 2-2 or 5-4, there are no great swings, and on higher rolls, it doesn't make any difference.

So let's see what we have. On nineteen rolls, Black is moderately better if he moves nothing. On eight rolls, Black is from moderately to considerably better to have made the point. The rest of the rolls don't matter that much.

Nineteen rolls to eight is a big difference, so it appears that staying back is superior. Does the possible gammon vig from jarring loose a second checker compensate? To get this gammon, first we need White to roll 5-1 or 4-2; then Black must pick up a second blot; then Black must win the fight for the ace-point; finally Black still must win the gammon. This is a long shot parlay to say the least. Since Black could still pick up a second blot later if he manages to hit the one White has now, I don't think the instant gammon threat is that serious a consideration. I'm going with the 5/1 move.

I'm fairly confident of my choice after this analysis, but have no intention spending the necessary 15 to 30 minutes working it out to check the result. If you readers wish to do so, then more power to you. And if I am proved wrong, it won't be the first time. But even if my analysis turns out to be faulty for this example, the methodology is clear, and this type of combination of analysis and estimation can be done over the board by any competent player. If the necessary estimations are reasonably accurate, the right play is quite likely to be found. Δ

**AMALGAMATION**

Joe Sylvester no longer slots the 4-point with the opening 5-2 roll [see March 1990 *POINT*]. To quote Sly, "It seemed like I was getting hit too often!"... Chicago is lucky to gain the backgammon talents of **Howard Ring** who moved here last month to begin trading options... Hoosier director **Butch Meese** proved to his wife **Mary Ann** that he's still full of surprises. Butch organized a surprise birthday party for her at *Acapulco Joe's* in Indy on August 19... Visiting the Bar Point Club in August: **Jamie Dodge** (NJ), **Roger Brown** (FL), **Lance Dieter** (PA) and former Chicagoan **Jim Gibbs** (CA)... We misunderstood German expert **Phillip Marmorstein** in last month's interview, writing that he had a son **Tommy**. In fact, he and his wife **Carmen** have a lovely one-year-old daughter **Tami**... "We're thinking of changing the location for World Cup III in 1992 and Indianapolis is the

leading contender," according to director **Kent Goulding**. Overall attendance at World Cup II & Eastern Open was down 20% from 1988 and the \$120/night Sheraton Commander (Cambridge, Mass.) hotel rate certainly didn't help matters... **Mark Richardson** suggests that if you plan to attend the Caesars Tahoe tourney (Oct. 24-28), register forthwith. The hotel will sell out... Get well wishes go out to **Rudy Emmelot** who is resting at home following 4 1/2 hours of surgery and a one week hospital stay last month. When will Rudy be back to gammon? "As soon as I can talk my way past my wife!"... **Marcy Sloan** showed us an article in the Sept. 1990 *Cosmopolitan* on "Life With the Big-time Gamblers" (pp. 256-259). Backgammoners **Vera Swift**, **Stu Ungar** and **Mike Senkiewicz** are mentioned. Senk has supposedly wagered huge money on his Scrabble skills. And pity his poor opponent. Mike is said to have memorized all 150,000 words in the Funk and Wagnalls dictionary! Δ

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**TULEY PARK BG CLUB:** Tourn. alt. Sat., 12:00 at Tuley Park Fieldhouse, 90th & King, Chgo. J.A. Miller (219/883-6127).

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

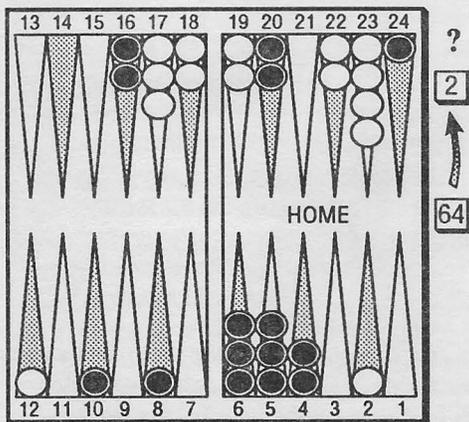
# THE SEVEN YEAR SWITCH



by Harold Branch

I was studying Danny Kleinman's *How Little We Know About Backgammon*, picking up on some of the concepts that are exciting and, to me at least, original. (You might look again at pages 137, 138, and 145-146. Great ideas.) Then my attention was grabbed by one of the diagrams on page 75:

Match to 15 points with the score tied at 11-11. **SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE? IF BLACK DOUBLES, SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



Mike Labins (Black) on roll, doubled. Norm Weinstein (White), who was just forced to break his midpoint on the last roll, dropped.

Danny Kleinman, annotating, said the pass was correct. He noted the White men out of play, pointed out Black's control of the outfield and threats on the infield, and observed that even just making the 8-point would leave White in deep trouble. So Danny viewed it as a "cash." Do you have any questions?

Well, I have a few. I also can see that White has outrun himself, but isn't the pip count 155 to 100 favoring White? Therefore, can't White take a hit, recycle, and still be in the game? OK. I heard you say "wastage." So we'll call it just a 50 pip lead. Still humongous!

What will the position look like if White escapes that front runner? Is anything trapped by a big prime? No. Suppose each side rolls a 6-3. Is there a concentration for a convincing attack? No. The "attack" is disjointed and speculative, hampered to some degree by *Old Lonesome*

back there on 24th Street. It is a holding game with threats. Black has some juicy opportunities, but White's disorganized speed has a distinct equity of its own. I thought it was a take.

Sometimes I become obsessed with a position. Then after a few days, I need to get it right. So I rolled out a random 200. The results gave me second thoughts about some of my plays, priorities, and recube vs. keep-rolling decisions. I decided to do it again. A little more care this time. And if I thought it appropriate, I would do it again—and maybe again.

Reminds me of the joke about a hog farmer. Punch line: "Yes, but what's time to a hog?"

On the second 200, I had Black with a net gain of 46 points after White's take. Only 46 points—nowhere near the 200 points required for White to drop in a money game. Black won 80 plain, 26 gammons, and 2 backgammons. White won 70, 21, and 1.

Are you curious about that first 200, the "practice set"? No? Good. I'll tell you anyway. Black showed a net plus of 54 points. (Black 83, 27, and 1. White 67, 20, and 2.) Surprisingly close to the other result. It could easily be a coincidence, of course. But I am satisfied that this is a take—a triflingly easy take both for money play and at the actual score.

However, let's remember... this match was played around seven years ago. Sup-

pose the identical situation came up today. Let's conjecture. Mike would hesitate before rolling on and conclude, "Not quite yet. It's a little too thin."

Norm would think, "What is he looking at? If he serves it to me now, I'll snatch it right off the silver platter!"

Danny would write: "The advantage has now turned slightly towards Black and he's getting close to a double. But a cube here would be premature. His opponent has too much racing and joker equity. He needs to either get two men behind some loose construction, or one man behind some good construction—say a 5-prime. And let's not forget *Old Lonesome* back their on 24th Street." ...or something like that.

But Mike sure didn't do anything wrong. He offered a light double and wound up benefiting from Norm's pass that seven years hence appears to have been a cube error. Δ

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## HORAN WINS...

*[Continued from page 1]*

than you did, Billy," retorted Lechich. The brew had made him more vocal.

Trailing 3-0, Horan again doubled. At one point, Lechich tossed back-to-back double 5s—two very bad rolls. He whipped his dice cup into the wall so hard that it bounced 40 feet to hit the opposite wall as well. The next turn saw his cup go airborne again, this time grazing the referee. And then Lechich went on to win the game.

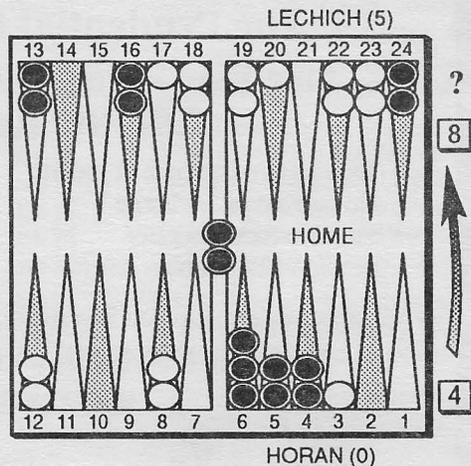
"Aren't you ashamed, Tino?" chided Horan. "You threw your cup twice and still got me for two points."

"I have an excuse now, Billy," explained Lechich. "I've had a beer." Horan took a sip of his Heineken but said nothing.

The next game produced some big swings. The biggest occurred with Horan on roll trailing 5-0 and holding a 4-cube (shown in the next column).

Horan doubled. Tino quickly took and ended up backgammoning Billy to win the third set 13-0. "I want the full score, Billy: 29-0! I'll win on aggregate if nothing else," a happy Tino said as he got up to take a quick break before set #4. "Want another beer, Billy?" Horan passed on Tino's offer.

Horan (Black) trails Lechich (White) 5-0 in set #3. Horan leads 2-0 in sets. **SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE. IF BLACK DOUBLES, SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



As they sat down to begin again, Horan proclaimed, "You used up all your *dingoishness* in one match, Tino: 29 points worth." Lechich didn't speak. He appeared content with his second Heineken and a bag of nacho chips at his side.

Horan "went to the whip" in the final set (winning 13-5) to claim one of the most prestigious titles in the world of backgammon. Problem #163 [page 3] diagrams an interesting position from that set.

As Tino was leaving the room, he looked back and said, "You bazookied me today, Billy. I'll remember that." Billy smiled.

### More Congratulations

Kudos to Michigan's Frank Talbot who outlasted Wilcox Snellings (NY) to win the Eastern Open. It was Eden Windish (CAN) over Bill Barrows (MA) in the Intermediate. Christian Lestrade (MNCO) topped Nackgammon champ Mike Nelson (MA) in the Suicide Squeeze (one point matches). And Chicago can be proud of Yamin Yamin who claimed big bucks for winning the World Cup Consolation. Results:

### WORLD CUP II AND 1990 EASTERN OPEN

WORLD CUP II (39): 1st Billy Horan (NY); 2nd Tino Lechich (AUS); 3rd/4th Phillip Marmorstein (GER), Bill Robertie (MA); Cons.1st Yamin Yamin (IL); Cons.2nd Jay Kurzet (WA)  
EASTERN OPEN (61): 1st Frank Talbot (MI); 2nd Wilcox Snellings (NY); 3rd/4th Dean Muench (IL), Steve Avery (NH); Cons.1st Jack Kissane (NY); Cons.2nd Ali Zaltash (PA)  
INTERMEDIATE (22): 1st Eden Windish (CAN); 2nd Bill Barrows (MA); Cons.1st Belle Pronman (MA); Cons.2nd Mike Rezai (OH)  
SUICIDE SQUEEZE (128): 1st Christian Lestrade (MNCO); 2nd Mike Nelson (MA)  
NACKGAMMON (8): 1st Mike Nelson (MA)  
MICROBLITZ (16): 1st/2nd Larry Strommen (IN), David Thomas (FL)