

CHICAGO POINT

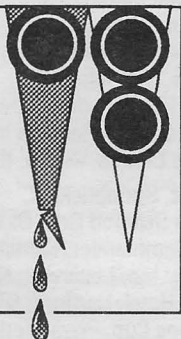
NUMBER 44

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

JAN/FEB 1992

The Leaky Reservoir

by Danny Kleinman

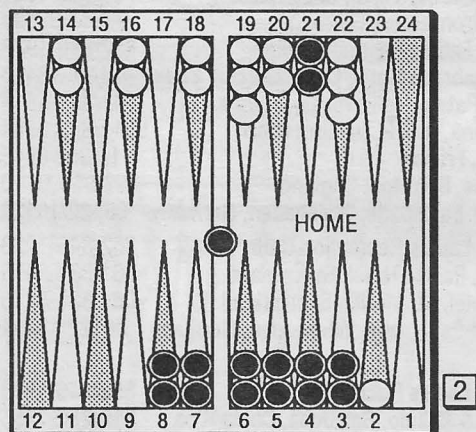


We tend to think of extra men back as "reservoirs of timing." I believe this to be an oversimplification. Extra men back conserve timing only under two circumstances:

- 1) The back men can be sprung easily without breaking a useful anchor.
- 2) The back men can be sprung with difficulty, but there are many pips which can be played non-destructively in the outfield while you are waiting for the escape numbers.

Wilcox Snellings drew my attention to two positions illustrating what I now call the *Leaky Reservoir*. He had done rollouts yielding sharp differences between plays.

Position 1. Money game. BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.



Bar/23, 8/7 gave Black much greater equity than Bar/23, 3/2*. But in my answer to "Torn Between Two Experts" (CHICAGO POINT, January 1991), I sided with Barry Bigplay in favoring Bar/23, 3/2*, saying

that if White hits one of Black's inside blots, the extra man back will help Black's timing and reduce Black's risk of crashing.

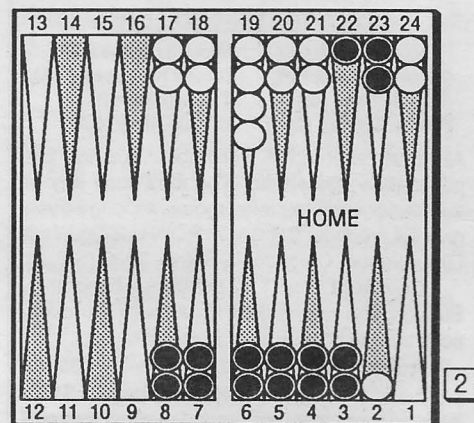
A second look shows that extra man back to be a Leaky Reservoir. It provides timing only upon reentry as a spare to reinforce the 4-anchor, from which escape is possible only on 6s and 4s, and 6s already work for escape from White's 2-point. Meanwhile, if Black rolls badly, he will be moving forward, destructively, on his own side of the board.

I pointed out to Wilcox that 7/6 offered one more active builder than 8/7 while duplicating the 5s that White might otherwise use to attack on her 2-point. Wilcox immediately agreed, without rollouts, that Bar/23, 7/6 was better than Bar/23, 8/7. Careful Kalman was right.

[See Position 2 at right]

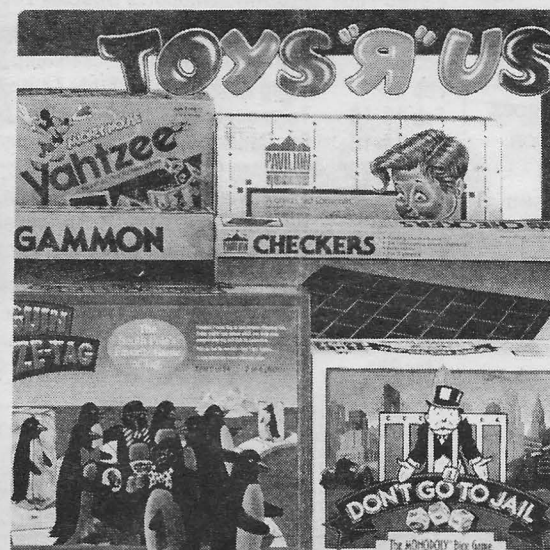
Black, an expert I'll call only "Rhoda Rote" (to protect the guilty), moved 23/22 (coming to the edge of White's prime), 8/6 (breaking from the rear and activating a builder). Another expert (whom I'll call

Position 2. Money game. BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.



only "William Worldbeater"), found a much better play: 23/22, 3/1, after which White's hits, though harmful to Black, do not also spring White's back man. But Wilcox's rollouts yielded a higher equity still for the blotless 7/5, 7/6. As in Position 1, the "reservoir of timing" Black obtains by getting another man sent back is a Leaky Reservoir indeed. Δ

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES



Milton Bradley
MICKEY MOUSE
YAHTZEE
Ages 2-4.

5⁹⁹

Pavilion
BACKGAMMON
Ages 4-up.

12⁹⁹

University Games
PENGUIN
FREEZE TAG
Ages 4-up.

14⁹⁹

Pavilion
JUNIOR LABYRINTH
Ages 4-up.

8⁹⁹

Pavilion
CHECKERS
Ages 5-up.

2⁹⁹

Parker Brothers
DON'T GO TO JAIL
Ages 8-up.

7⁹⁹

Duane Jensen (MN) analyzes the recent Toys 'R' Us Ad thusly: "After one year of maturation, a child can advance from Backgammon to Checkers."

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

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

NO BACKGAMMON AT WEST POINT

I wanted to answer Marc Gray's letter mentioning a rumor that backgammon is practically a "required course" at West Point. During the years I attended the West Point Military Academy (I was in the Class of 1941), I never saw or even heard of anyone playing backgammon. An that goes for the graduates I have known since then.

West Point was founded in 1802 by Sylvanus Thayer. 59 years later, Jefferson Davis, a military man, became president of the South. Davis was an avid backgammon player so it's possible that BG could have been very popular with servicemen in the mid-1800s.

If Marc Gray would like more information on this subject, he should write the U.S. Military Academy Library, West Point, NY 10996.

If not at West Point, where did I learn to play backgammon? I contracted tuberculosis in my senior year of 1941 so I never graduated. The Academy sent me to Fittsimmons Medical Center in Colorado (I

[Continued on page 4]

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

Jan 7	Chicago Bar Point Club Awards Night, Pat's Pub, Norridge, IL	312/338-6380
Jan 8	Winnetka BG Club Awards Night, Community House, Winnetka, IL	708/446-0537
Jan 12	Milwaukee Club Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, John Hawks Pub, WI	414/463-2498
Jan 12	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Jan 15	Rscards Winter Computer Modern Tournament, GENie	313/348-0580
Jan 15-19	9th Nevada State Championship, Peppermill Hotel/Casino, Reno, NV	708/470-9491
Jan 18	Springfield Series Monthly, Davy Byrnes, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Jan 18	College Park Winter Open Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jan 23	Flint Area Club Awards Night & Bonus Tourney, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Jan 25	4th Hawthorne Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	312/338-6380
Feb 1	Springfield Series Monthly, Davy Byrnes, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Feb 9	Bar Point Doubles Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Feb 9	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Feb 15	D.I. Long Memorial Tournament, Holiday Inn, Louisville, KY	502/458-7468
Feb 15-16*	A Black & White Tournament, Sheraton Hotel, Hartford, CT	800/872-2087
Feb 15-16	Riverboat Gambling and Illinois Challenge Cup, Pizza Works, Peoria, IL	309/692-6909
Feb 16	Fleet Underwood Memorial Tournament & Benefit, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Feb 20*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Feb 28-Mar 1	14th Annual Charity Tournament, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA	412/371-5844
Mar 7	Springfield Series Monthly, Davy Byrnes, Springfield, IL	217/789-6275
Mar 15*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Mar 19*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Mar 20-22	1992 Midwest Championships, Marriott Hotel, Oakbrook, IL	312/338-6380
Apr 12*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
Apr 15	Rscards Spring Computer Modern Tournament, GENie	313/348-0580
Apr 18	College Park Spring Open Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Apr 24-26	40th Indiana Open, Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
May 1-3*	13th Annual Granite State Open, Woodbound Inn, Jaffrey, NH	603/863-4711
May 15-17*	Boston Symphony Orch. Benefit, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/641-2091
May 22-25*	13th Chicago Open, Westin O'Hare Hotel, Rosemont, IL	708/674-0120

OUTSIDE USA

Jan 9-12	1st Marriott Open Dutch Championships, Amsterdam Marriott, Holland	31/3240-14734
Jan 9-12	6th International Tournament, Hotel Klosterbräu, Seefeld/Tirol, Austria	08341/12825
Jan 16-19	International Tournament, Hotel Zürich La Résidence, Switzerland	065/22 24 01
Jan 22-26*	1st Austrian Int'l Championships, Sporthotel, Kühtai/Tirol, Austria	052/39-222
Jan 25*	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Jan 25-26	BIBA Trophy Tournament No. 1, George Hotel, Solihull, England	021/711 2121
Jan 30-Feb 2	Pro-Am Invitational Doubles Tournament, Paradise Island, Bahamas	301/299-8265
Feb 7-9	3rd Holland Open Championships, Motel Gilze-Rijen, Gilze, Holland	01/615-4951
Feb 8*	1st Tournament at Hockenheim, Motodrom Hotel, Germany	0621/698539
Feb 10*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Feb 10-16	Torrequebrada Championship, Torrequebrada Hotel, Costa Del Sol, Spain	021/440 3428
Feb 14-16	6th Cannes International Tournament, Palais des Festivals, France	061/331-5816
Feb 20-23*	Brazilian Circuit, Le Méridien Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5511/843-8664
Feb 20-23*	Third French Open, Hotel Lutetia, Paris, France	1/4288 6645
Feb 29-Mar 1*	Weekend Tournament, Springfield Arms, Brighton, England	0273/55 18 10
Feb 29-Mar 1*	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Mar 2*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Mar 12-15	28th Ted Bassett & Gstaad Palace-Cup, Palace Hotel, Switzerland	061/331-5816
Mar 17-22	18th Winter Championships, Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/331-5816
Mar 28*	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Apr 3-5*	1992 Düsseldorf Open	
Apr 6*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Apr 8-12	Tournament of Américas, Cariari Hotel & Casino, San José, Costa Rica	312/252-7755
Apr 16-20*	Nordic Open, Hotel Marina, Vedbæk, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Apr 23-26*	Brazilian Circuit, Le Méridien Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5511/843-8664
Apr 23-26	19th Byblos European Championship, St. Tropez, France	33/9497-0004
May 12-17*	4th Championship of Great Britain, Palace Hotel & Casino, Isle of Man	0624/626148
May 23-24*	BIBA Trophy Tournament No. 2, George Hotel, Solihull, England	021/711 2121
Jun 25-28*	Brazilian Circuit, Le Méridien Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5511/843-8664
Jun 30-Jul 5*	First Olympiad of Backgammon & 4th City of Venice Tournament, Italy	041/521-1029

CRAMER FALLS SHORT TAK WINS AGAIN

Dave Cramer needed to win on 26 Dec. to be 1991 Chicago Bar Point Club Player of the Year. He did win, defeating Wilcox Snellings in the finals; however with only 23 in attendance, Dave fell six players short of overtaking Tak Morioka. The Tak-Monster held on to earn his fifth BPC title in six years: amazing achievement.

Tak's big 9.76 point January jumpstart effectively won the entire year for him (see totals below). He didn't play the last three

months of the year, directing full energy into his paintings. He has also suspended his "Takgammon" column choosing not to comment on the game as an "outsider."

[More on Tak in the next POINT.—Ed.]

Rounding out the BPC top 6 for 1991 were Stu Katz, Gary Kay, Yamin Yamin and Jake Jacobs. They will all be invited to participate on the BPC team at the Illinois State Challenge Cup 16 Feb. in Peoria.

THE AWARDS NIGHT CELEBRATION (7 Jan. at Pat's Pub) will give away nearly \$1,000 in cash and prizes to our 1991 Top 20.

Attention Chicagoland players: Dedicate yourself to a year of BPC backgammon and join us in the 1992 winner's circle. Δ

OTHER 1991 CLUB CHAMPIONS

Hoosier Backgammon Club (IN): Butch Meese
Bloomington-Normal BG Club (IL): Gary Daniels
Central Illinois BG Club (IL): John McCabe
Pub Club (IL): Steve Tennant
Sangamon Valley BG Assn. (IL): Gary Schecter
Winnetka Backgammon Club (IL): Trudie Stern
New England Backgammon Club (MA): Walter Trice
Flint Area Backgammon Club (MI): Carol Joy Cole
Greater New York BG Club (NY): Jeff Acierno
Backgammon Assoc. of South Australia: Terry Efthimiou or Nick Begakis
British Isles Backgammon Assn.: Tom Connor
Costa Rican Backgammon Assn.: Antonio Ortega
Danish Backgammon Federation: Erik Gravgaard
Hong Kong Backgammon Club: Steve Nelson



1991 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR Final Standings

COMPILED
THRU 31 DEC.

TAK MORIOKA	24.40	Alice Kay	5.76	Dan Judd	1.28
DAVE CRAMER	23.92	Mark King	5.76	Jerry Brooks	1.24
STU KATZ	22.16	Harold Seif	5.60	Barbara Levinson	1.24
GARY KAY	20.00	Arline Levy	5.52	Steve Katz	1.12
YAMIN YAMIN	19.76	Ed Buerger	5.28	Judy Brown	1.04
JAKE JACOBS	19.44	Bill Davis	5.16	Roland Dieter	0.96
DON DESMOND	16.00	Marcy Sloan	5.16	Wilcox Snellings	0.96
ALEX ITKIN	14.40	Beverly Klene	3.76	Dean Muench	0.96
JOANN FEINSTEIN	13.92	Jeff Kane	3.64	Greg Try	0.92
DEEB SHALATI	13.28	Alex Caraplis	3.60	Earl Risch	0.88
JOHN DEMIAN	13.24	Stan Kucharz	3.56	Peter Naguib	0.88
MARY FRANKS	12.24	Chris Stanford	3.36	Mike Landau	0.88
JOE KOUCHEARIAN	11.88	David Curd	3.16	Craig Chellstorp	0.88
HOWARD MARKOWITZ	10.48	Barry Miller	2.72	Mickey Kaplan	0.80
JOLIE LEWIS	10.40	Peter Kalba	2.72	Ron Stur	0.80
PAUL FRANKS	10.24	Betsy Miller	2.64	Rich Galeba	0.80
LENNY LODER	10.08	Matthais Pauen	2.56	Kathy Rudnick	0.80
PETER BERKMAN	9.92	V.W. Zimnicki	2.56	Sheila Arnold	0.72
HOWARD RING	9.52	Adam Kay	2.40	David Rockwell	0.72
BOBBIE SHIFRIN	9.48	Paul Friedman	2.16	Larry Strommen	0.56
Phyllis Smolinski	9.20	Reggie Porter	1.92	Ken Torrens	0.48
Lucky Nelson	9.12	Walter Schafer	1.92	Elaine Kehm	0.48
Steve Potashnick	8.96	Ed Bauder	1.92	George Kirkby	0.44
Norma Shyer	8.96	Kurt Warning	1.88	Fred Gehlhoff	0.44
Sarg Serges	8.16	Larry Lau	1.84	Bart Levin	0.40
Ralph Levy	8.16	Kurt Schurecht	1.84	Mike Cohen	0.40
George Barr	8.08	Tim Mabec	1.84	Jill Ferdinand	0.36
Ken Bond	8.08	John O'Hagan	1.80	Jeff Vaughn	0.32
Herb Roman	8.00	Harold Grote	1.68	Mike Curcio	0.32
Don Jayhan	7.96	Richard Stawowy	1.64	Kim McCollom	0.28
David Rubin	7.80	David Orman	1.64	John Stryker	0.28
Bruce Wittert	7.76	Scottie Mitchell	1.52	Mike Spiropoulos	0.24
Frank Callea	7.76	Bob Zavoral	1.52	Larry Knoll	0.24
Leslie Lockett	7.12	Bob Holyon	1.36	Bob Vining	0.24
Tim Serges	6.84	Don Marek	1.36	Glenn Swanson	0.24
René Wojtysiak	6.52	Mark Anshus	1.28	John Meyers	0.20
Femi Owiku	6.24	David Lynn	1.28	Scott Richardson	0.20
Bob Ebbeler	6.08	John Brussel	1.28	Marv Arnol	0.20

STU KATZ made a "run for the money" but fell one win short of Player of the Year. Still, two December victories gave him top honors for the month.

Alex Itkin (completing his first BPC year of play) and Gary Kay were December runners-up with totals of 3.20 and 2.80 respectively.

PAIR O' DICE BACKGAMMON CLUB REOPENS IN CHICAGOLAND

Gary Kay has announced the reopening of the Pair O' Dice Backgammon Club. The premiere tournament is set for 24 January (7:00 p.m.) at Flat Tops Sports Bar, 7320 W. Irving Park Road in Norridge, IL.

Pair O' Dice becomes the second Friday night club in the Chicagoland area. The Prime Backgammon Club (Joann Feinstein and Howard Markowitz, directors) currently plays every Friday at T.J.'s Lounge (Hyatt Hotel) in Lincolnwood, IL.

Kay decided to open his club "...to accommodate the many area players requesting a Friday night club with roomy and comfortable accommodations in an easily accessible location."

"We intend to offer the player many options including league play, special larger entry tournaments and occasional Sunday events," Kay said.

For more info, call 312/819-1122.

CHICAGO POINT GOES BIMONTHLY

Effective with this issue, the CHICAGO POINT will become a bimonthly publication (6 issues per year). The reduction in issues is due to a job reassignment in my professional life that is more taxing and entails longer hours. Hopefully, one day I will be able to resume publication on a monthly basis.

Subscribers will receive all issues for which they have paid. To determine how many issues you have coming, take the exp. date appearing on your envelope and subtract 92.01 from it. Example: 93.03 - 92.01 = 1 year + 2 issues = 14 issues.

Mar./April POINT mailing labels will reflect your correct issue count.—Ed.

ASK DANNY

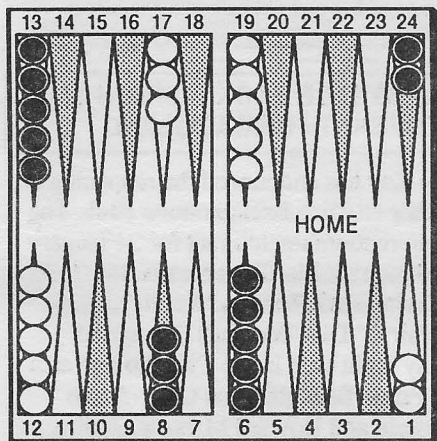


by Danny Kleinman

HEADLINE HERE

Dear Danny: Modern experts fall into two schools for playing opening rolls of 5-4 and 4-3.

Opening roll. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.**
BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.



The "Builders" move 13/8, 13/9 and 13/9, 13/10 respectively. The "Splitters" move 13/8, 24/20 and 13/10, 24/20 respectively.

Which school is right? I've heard claims that one kind of opening play is more likely to produce gammons than the other, but this does not fit with the records I've compiled from my own experience.—
George H. J. Black, Estoril, Portugal

DEAR GEORGE: I'm afraid this must remain a matter of opinion, at least for a while. Hal

Heinrich has compiled more extensive records than anyone, but his data are inconclusive and seemingly inconsistent. For example, Hal shows the split on an opening 5-4 as improving your opponent's gammon chances substantially while not affecting your own, yet gives a slight edge (+0.063 versus +0.050) in equity to the split. On a 4-3, Hal shows the split as increasing gammon chances greatly for both sides (your side substantially more than your opponent's), yet rates the building play as producing far more equity (+0.027 versus -0.029) than the split.

We may explain these seeming inconsistencies not only by the inadequacy of Hal's sample size, but also by the fact that his records include a mixture of games played to the end and terminated by passing a cube, and of different cube sizes.

To investigate further, I ran trials using the rollout feature of Tom Johnson's "Expert Backgammon" computer program (which is cubeless) collecting far larger samples: at least 2592 for each position. Though the program's play is far below expert levels, even in such simple techniques as gammon-saving, I found a clear pattern: building produces more gammons than splitting, for both sides. Building increases your gammon threat by less than splitting reduces your opponent's; however, and thus as you might expect, this experiment shows clearly higher equities for splitting.

Building increases your gammons by producing better boards and primes, while splitting reduces your opponent's gammons by keeping you from getting trapped in an ace-point game, threatening to make an advanced anchor, and inhibiting your opponent's flow of builders to make a good board or prime of his own. I do not know

how to weigh one against the other by any convincing line of reasoning.

The building and splitting plays for these two opening rolls seem so close that I would suggest letting the match score influence you. A player who is far behind should build; a player protecting a lead should split, especially after the Crawford game.

What should you do in a roughly even match or in money play? Cater to your own style if you have one. If you're more comfortable playing prime-vs.-prime, by all means build. If you're happier in blot-hitting contests, split. Personally, I favor splitting 24/20, 13/10 with a 4-3, but building 13/8, 13/9 with a 5-4.

This is contrary to the opinion of my friend Wilcox Snellings, whose judgment I respect greatly. Wilcox splits with a 5-4 but builds with a 4-3, noting that four builders let every number make a useful point next turn. I think a third builder vital: it inhibits an opponent from "coming under the gun" (to use Paul Magriel's phrase). But a fourth builder is partly redundant. Note the self-duplication produced by 13/9, 13/10: 5-4 makes both 5- and 4-points, 6-2 makes both bar- and 4-points, 6-3 makes both bar- and 3-points next.

I emphasize that these are just my personal opinions. Undoubtedly, there is an objective truth to be discovered, but I don't expect it to be discovered for a long time to come. Not even with better computer programs than Tom's, or more extensive records than yours and Hal's.—*Yours, Danny. Δ*

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

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

was there when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor). While recovering there, I used to watch all the navy guys play Acey-Deucy.

I shared a room with a retired admiral by the name of Blakely. He seemed to be the only man on the floor who played regular backgammon. He would play the game alone for hours on end. One day I asked him to teach me the game. Fifty years later, I still play.

I hope to make your Midwest Championships in March, but in any event, have a Happy New Year.—*Robert Cooper, Fort Morgan, Colorado*

BACKGAMMON IN BALTIMORE

Re: Backgammon Clubs In North America. Every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., we chouette at Carl Miller's home in Baltimore, MD. Our group has been meeting for ten years. Visitors to Baltimore are welcome to join us and should call Carl at 410/992-9309.—
Paul Weaver, Westminster, MD

Sorry, Paul. We don't include private residence listings in "Backgammon Clubs In North America."—Ed.

DOUBLING AT CRAWFORD: HOW DO YOU RULE?

In a 7-point match with Black leading White 6 to 3 (Crawford game), Black

mistakenly doubled. Of course White took the cube and immediately redoubled to 4 on his next turn. At this point, Black realized his error and called a director. The director ruled that even though the doubling cube is out of play for the Crawford game, Black's play was an error that White condoned and therefore, the "illegal" cube must stand.

What do the "U.S. Tournament Rules & Procedures" say about this.—*Georges Khouri, São Paulo, Brazil*

"Shades of Gray" Ruling columnist Danny Kleinman responds:

The U.S. Backgammon Tournament Rules

[Continued on page 7]

CHICAGO POINT's 1992 Listing of...

Backgammon Clubs In North America

Information for this listing has been obtained directly from the featured backgammon clubs. Changes are inevitable and we suggest that you always call before attending. As a service to our readers, CHICAGO POINT would like to maintain an accurate listing of Backgammon Clubs in North America. Please send information including updates, club closings and new clubs to: **CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039. Or FAX: 312/338-6384.**

WEST

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING ON	TIME	CONTACT	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO:
Gammon Associates	Bombay Bicycle Club	Burbank, CA	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Patrick Gibson	818/901-0464	7641 Orion Avenue; Van Nuys, CA 91406
Gammon Associates	Cavendish West Clubroom	W. Hollywood, CA	Sunday	2:00 PM	"	"	"
Campbell Bridge & BG Club	Clubroom	Campbell, CA	Friday monthly	7:30 PM	Jeffrey Hu	408/378-3711	175 E. Campbell Avenue; Campbell, CA 95008
Backgammon Club of San Diego	Shelby's Restaurant	La Jolla, CA	Tuesday	6:30 PM	Mike Fujita	619/294-2007	P.O. Box 178119; San Diego, CA 92117
Backgammon Club of San Diego	Hindquarter Restaurant	San Diego, CA	Sunday	4:00 PM	"	"	"
Chess Palace Backgammon	Chess Palace	Long Beach, CA	Saturday	2:00 PM	Charles Rostedt	310/634-8477	3255 E. South Street (205); Long Beach, CA 90805
Antelope Valley Backgammon	Carrow's Restaurant	Palmdale, CA	Wednesday	6:00 PM	Norm Wiggins	805/943-5371	5125 W. Avenue (M-8); Quartz Hill, CA 93536
San Francisco Backgammon	Golden Gate Bar & Grill	San Francisco, CA	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Cheryl Silvers	415/552-6592	5 Divisadero Street; San Francisco, CA 94117
San Francisco Bridge & BG Club	Clubroom	San Francisco, CA	Mon., Wed., Fri.	9:00 PM	Augie Hunt	415/776-6949	777 Jones Street; San Francisco, CA 94109
Colorado Backgammon Assn.	J.L.'s Cheers	Denver, CO	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Earl Earp	303/778-1105	102 W. 4th Avenue; Denver, CO 80223
No. Nevada Backgammon Assn.	Rapscallion Seafood House	Reno, NV	Thursday	7:30 PM	Mark Richardson	702/826-1984	826 Blue Falls Place; Reno, NV 89511
Pacific NW Backgammon Assn.	Shakey's Pizza	Bellevue, WA	Monday	7:00 PM	Chuck Breckenridge	206/778-8181	18204 Olympic View Drive; Edmonds, WA 98020
Puget Sound Backgammon Assn.	Shakey's Pizza	Seattle, WA	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Guy Thurber	206/244-6737	428 SW 127th Street; Seattle, WA 98146

CENTRAL

Bloomington-Normal BG Club	Ride The Nine	Bloomington, IL	1st/3rd/5th Tues.	6:15 PM	Lane O'Connor	309/454-1947	108 Riss Drive; Normal, IL 61761
North Club	Office Building	Chicago, IL	Daily except Sun.	12:30 PM	Howard Markowitz	312/286-8417	4747 W. Peterson Avenue (402); Chicago, IL 60646
Prime BG Club of Chicago	TJ's Lounge/Hyatt Hotel	Lincolnwood, IL	Friday	7:00 PM	Joann Feinstein	708/674-0120	8149 Kenton; Skokie, IL 60076
Chicago Bar Point Club	Pat's Pub	Norridge, IL	Tuesday	6:45 PM	Bill Davis	312/338-6380	2726 W. Lunt Avenue; Chicago, IL 60645
Chicago Bar Point Club	Braxton Seafood Grill	Oak Brook, IL	Sunday bimonthly	12:30 PM	Peter Kalba	312/252-7755	2510 W. Iowa Street; Chicago, IL 60622
Pair O' Dice Backgammon Club	Flat Tops Sports Bar	Norridge, IL	Friday	7:00 PM	Gary Kay	312/819-1122	175 N. Harbor Drive (3204); Chicago, IL 60601
Central Illinois Backgammon Club	Peoria Pizza Works	Peoria, IL	Thursday	6:30 PM	Sue Will	309/692-6909	6129 Jayar Drive; Peoria, IL 61614
Sangamon Valley BG Assn.	On Broadway	Springfield, IL	Tuesday	6:30 PM	Mark Kaye	217/789-6275	2602 Peoria Road (A); Springfield, IL 62702
Sangamon Valley BG Assn.	Davy Byrnes	Springfield, IL	1st Sat./Oct.-Apr.	11:30 AM	"	"	"
Pub Club	Fiddler's Restaurant	Villa Park, IL	Monday	7:30 PM	V.W. Zimnicki	708/378-5205	546 Princeton; Bollingbrook, IL 60440
Winnetka Backgammon Club	Winnetka Community House	Winnetka, IL	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Trudie Stern	708/446-0537	4200 W. Lake (302C); Glenview, IL 60025
Hoosier Backgammon Club	Spats	Indianapolis, IN	Thursday	7:00 PM	Butch Meese	317/845-8435	7620 Kilmer Lane; Indianapolis, IN 46256
Flint Area Backgammon Club	Ramada Inn	Flint, MI	Thursday	7:00 PM	Carol Joy Cole	313/232-9731	3003 Ridgedcliffe Drive; Flint, MI 48532
Plymouth Backgammon Club	Box Bar & Grill	Plymouth, MI	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Dean Adamian	313/981-5706	42954 Barchester; Canton, MI 48187
Cavendish North BG Club	Clubhouse	Southfield, MI	Daily, Tour. Monthly	12:00 N	Joe Sylvester	313/642-9616	30065 Greenfield Road; Southfield, MI 48076
Twin Cities Backgammon Club	Crown Sterling Suites	Minneapolis, MN	Thursday	7:00 PM	Riley Harrison	612/786-8988	50 94th Circle NW (201); Coon Rapids, MN 55448
Grand Forks Backgammon	BoBino's Deli	Grand Forks, ND	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Jim Schothorst	701/772-4721	P.O. Box 393; Grand Forks, ND 58206
Austin Backgammon Club	Bombay Bicycle Club	Austin, TX	Monday	8:00 PM	Randy Prater	512/344-6820	322 Summertime; San Antonio, TX 78216
Backgammon at Mimi's	Mimi's Pub	Dallas, TX	Monday	8:00 PM	Nancy Williams	214/960-1118	109 Spanish Village; Box 574; Dallas, TX 75248
Dallas Backgammon League	Don Carter Bowling Lanes	Dallas, TX	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Bill Barron	214/826-9363	P.O. Box 740306; Dallas, TX 75374
Bayou Backgammon Club	Houstonian	Houston, TX	Sat. bimonthly	7:00 PM	George Morse	713/498-4141	11534 Bellaire Blvd.; Houston, TX 77072
Celebrities Backgammon	Bombay Bicycle Club	Houston, TX	Sunday quarterly	12:30 PM	"	713/879-0370	"

(Continued on opposite side)

CENTRAL (continued)

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING ON	TIME	CONTACT	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO:
Houston Backgammon Club	Bombay Bicycle Club	Houston, TX	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Jack Butler	713/774-9439	5931 Reamer Street; Houston, TX 77074
San Antonio Backgammon	Dad's	San Antonio, TX	Mon., Wed., Fri.	8:00 PM	Marcel Mommers	512/620-5210	3812 Greenridge Drive; Cibolo, TX 78108
Fond du Lac Backgammon	Holiday Inn	Fond du Lac, WI	Thurs. Semi-monthly	8:00 PM	Mark Hicks	414/922-8235	366 East 10th Street; Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Milwaukee Backgammon Club	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Merrill Schrager	414/463-2498	9043 W. Grantosa Drive; Milwaukee, WI 53225
Milwaukee Backgammon Club	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	Sunday bimonthly	12:00 N	"	"	"
Milwaukee Backgammon	Univ. of Wis.-Milwaukee	Milwaukee, WI	Friday	7:00 PM	Bob Holyon	414/672-8359	911 South 11th Street; Milwaukee, WI 53204

NORTHEAST

College Park Backgammon Club	Promenade Cardroom	Bethesda, MD	2nd & 4th Sunday	12:30 PM	Barry Steinberg	301/530-0603	6100 Westchester Pk. Dr. (T2); College Park, MD 20740
Cavendish Club of Boston	Clubroom	Brookline, MA	Daily	12:00 N	Carl Saldinger	617/734-2230	111 Cypress Street; Brookline, MA 02146
New England Backgammon Club	Sheraton Commander Hotel	Cambridge, MA	Sunday monthly	12:30 PM	Bill Robertie	617/641-2091	P.O. Box 294, Arlington, MA 02174
New England Backgammon Club	Sheraton Commander Hotel	Cambridge, MA	Monday	7:00 PM	"	"	"
Granite State Backgammon Club	Folkway Restaurant	Peterborough, NH	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Lincoln Bedell	603/863-4711	South Road; East Lempster, NH 03605
New Jersey Backgammon Assn.	Best Western Oritani Hotel	Hackensack, NJ	Tues. & Fri.	7:45 PM	Ron Whitney	201/833-2915	279 Glen Court; Teaneck, NJ 07666
Bridge Deck Backgammon	Bridge Deck	Hartsdale, NY	Tuesday	6:00 PM	Alan Boutchman	914/949-5853	333 N. Central Avenue; Hartsdale, NY 10530
Bridge Deck Backgammon	Bridge Deck	Hartsdale, NY	Fri. & Sat.	12:30 PM	"	"	"
Greater New York BG Club	Woodbury Ramada Inn	Woodbury, NY	Friday	8:00 PM	Dr. Bob Hill	516/334-4833	P.O. Box 410; Commack, NY 11725
Ace Point Backgammon Club	Clubroom	New York, NY	Daily	3:00 PM	Michael Valentine	212/753-0842	41 E. 60th Street; New York, NY 10022
Coterie	Clubroom	New York, NY	Daily	1:00 PM	Louise Goldsmith	212/371-5151	Private club. Telephone for information.
Saratoga Backgammon Club	Adirondack Trust Branch	Saratoga Springs, NY	Friday	7:00 PM	Lee Hoge	518/584-1714	P.O. Box 563; Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Cavendish Club of Philadelphia	Clubroom	Philadelphia, PA	Daily	1:00 PM	Norm Rosen	215/878-5777	3801 Conshohocken Avenue; Philadelphia, PA 19131
Pittsburgh Backgammon Assn.	Greentree Marriott Hotel	Pittsburgh, PA	Sunday quarterly	1:00 PM	Steve Hast	412/823-7500	3560 Ridgewood Rd; Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Pittsburgh Backgammon Assn.	Murphy's Tap Room	Pittsburgh, PA	Tuesday	8:00 PM	"	"	"

SOUTH

Suncoast Backgammon Assn.	Bombay Bicycle Club	Clearwater, FL	Mon. & Wed.	7:00 PM	Drew Giovanis	813/726-1398	25350 U.S. Highway 19 N. (67); Clearwater, FL 34623
Cavendish Backgammon	Cavendish Bridge Club South	Hallandale, FL	Daily	12:00 N	Lois Rose	305/454-8000	1250 E. Hallandale Blvd.; Hallandale, FL 33008
Backgammon Club of N.W. Florida	B.J. Bailey's Colony of Artists	Panama City Beach, FL	Thursday	7:30 PM	Rick Bieniak	904/763-8826	444 S. Palo Alto; Panama City, FL 32401
Backgammon Society of Sarasota	Livingston's	Sarasota, FL	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Cal Kendall	813/966-5357	2260 Lakewood Lane; Nokomis, FL 34275
Atlanta Backgammon Association	Taco-Mac	Atlanta, GA	Monday	7:00 PM	Randy Cooper	404/921-0672	1413 Country Downs Drive; Norcross, GA 30093
Backgammon In Louisville	Delta Restaurant	Louisville, KY	2nd & 4th Tues.	6:30 PM	Quint McTyeire	502/426-0933	3065 Ledge Brook Court; Louisville, KY 40241
Louisville Backgammon Club	Wilson Inn	Louisville, KY	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Harold Branch	502/458-7468	2631 Gardiner Lane; Louisville, KY 40205

CANADA

Calgary Backgammon	Bottlescrew Bill's	Calgary, AB	Occ. Mondays	6:00 PM	Hal Heinrich	403/229-2024	402-1122 15th Ave. SW; Calgary, AB T2R 1K5; CANADA
Toronto Backgammon	Le Spot	Scarborough, ON	Thursday	8:00 PM	Charles Morrison	416/841-3523	135 Timpson Drive; Aurora, ON L4G 5N2; CANADA
Nat'l Capital Backgammon Club	Lunergan's Pub	Vanier, ON	1st Sun./Sep.-Jun.	12:00 N	Eden Windish	613/741-2530	396 Talbot Street; Ottawa, ON K1K 2N6; CANADA
Le Gammon	Clubroom	Montreal, QB	Daily, Tour. Thur.	4:00 PM	Michel Merlitti	514/845-8370	552 St. Catherine East; Montreal, QB H2L 2E1; CANADA
Pips Backgammon Club	Clubroom	Montreal, QB	Daily	4:00 PM	Michel Gagnon	514/284-0613	3774 St. Denis (200); Montreal, QB H2W 2M1; CANADA

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 4]

state that when a player reaches match point, "...the doubling cube will be out of play for one game." Yet many directors argue over how to rule if the cube is turned anyway. Some believe that if an illegal double is offered and accepted, the cube must stand once acted upon. Other directors rule that because the cube is out of play, the game is played at the one-level regardless of its position at the end of the game.

I believe that this gives the trailer a "free shot" at offering a double at Crawford and have suggested a different rule in my "Madison Club Rules" appearing in ...Only The Hogs Win Backgammons (pp. 237-239). Rule 26 states:

CRAWFORD: The trailer may not double or redouble the game after the leader reaches match-point. The leader, upon detecting a Crawford Rule violation, may cancel either the game or the trailer's cube-turn forthwith.—D.K.

Danny explains the reasoning for this rule on page 240 of Hogs. Players wishing a copy of the explanation may send a stamped, self-addressed envelope (\$1.00 overseas) to: CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039.—Ed.

ONE VIEW OF DICE CHEATS

I have to tell you that the ongoing controversy over dice mechanics is one of the

most amusing and yet disturbing debates I've seen in quite some time. I mean, here we are, devotees of a very enjoyable game whose purpose is amusement and escape and a relaxing form of mental stimulation. In other words, *fun*. But in every world, it seems whether the realm of backgammon or backpacking, there are those people who just don't seem to get it.

The idea of an adult cheating at a simple game is almost ludicrous. After all, it's just a game. Yet some of us apparently have invested so much of our identities in this sublime pastime that we cannot bear to suffer the vagaries of random chance. We must be in control at all times.

To me, backgammon is all about luck and what you are able to do with it. If the rolls are bad, you do your best to compensate, and when you do compensate, the victory is quite sweet. If the rolls are good, well, you'd better make the most of them. Often, losing is what strengthens your game. Isn't that what life is all about?

The thought that some players, even subconsciously, are maneuvering those venerable cubes to their advantage is much more sad than it is annoying. As a journalist, I see it every day in real life—the control freaks desperately maneuvering for better advantage and often crossing over that ethical borderline. These are the dice mechanics of life, people with such a diminished sense of pride and self that they cannot bear to lose at anything, whether it be office politics or a presidential campaign.

You wonder sometimes why such people choose to immerse themselves in a game where luck and losing play such important roles. If life is not about loss as much as it is about gain, then I think I've been deluding myself and should find another pastime—maybe solitaire. But I suspect you'll find there an even more self-delusional strain of card mechanics.—Pat McGuire, Ellicott City, MD

INTERNATIONAL MAILING LIST REGISTER PROPOSED

Since 1988, I have helped Hercules (Baron of Culcreuch) with the administration of the Manx Backgammon Championships. My particular responsibility has been to maintain an accurate International mailing list on my computer. To do this, I have mainly relied on the lists provided by other organizers and/or collected at overseas tournaments which I have attended.

I'm sure all directors realize that each of our major lists contain names and addresses of players who are no longer active in backgammon. This results in a great deal of wasted time and postage costs. Indirectly, the players must pay for this in the form of higher registration fees.

To avoid this, I would like to propose the keeping of a central register of active players who currently travel to backgammon tournaments. This would require the assistance of organizers who would supply their lists to genuine International Backgammon

[Continued on page 11]

Ace Point Backgammon Club

Michael Valentine, Director

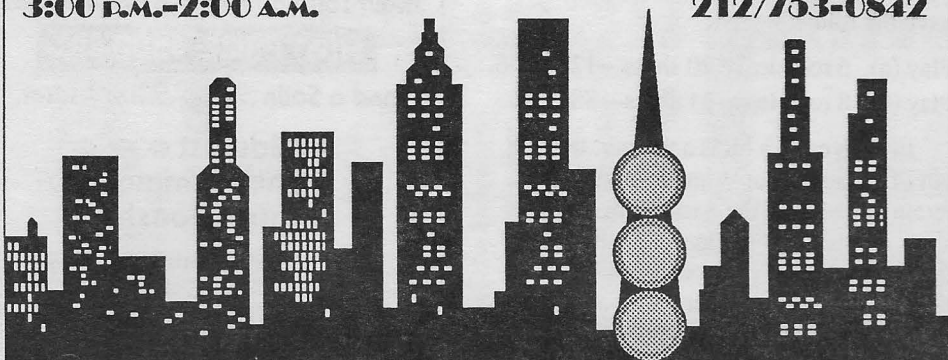
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Sunday Bimonthly, 12:30 P.M. at Braxton Seafood Grill, 3 Oakbrook Center Mall, Oak Brook 708/574-2155.

PUB CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 7:30 P.M. at Fiddler's, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. V.W. Zimmicki (708/378-5205.)

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

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB: Tourn. 1st/3rd/5th Tuesday, 6:15 P.M. at Ride The Nine, 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Lane O'Connor (309/454-1947).

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

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

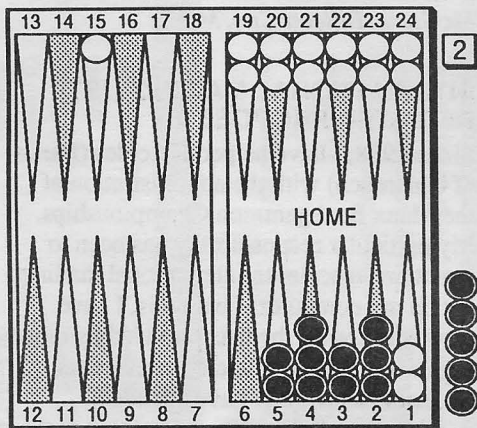
PAIR O' DICE BG CLUB: Tourn. Friday, 7:30 P.M. at Flat Tops Sports Bar, 7320 W. Irving, Norridge. Gary Kay (312/819-1122).

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

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

PROBLEM #178 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-1.**

When Bill Davis sent me this position, he described it as "...a change-of-pace problem for intermediate players," so I relaxed. Upon closer inspection, I realized that this was indeed a very difficult problem. I had no gut instinct about the answer, and even after some analysis, I am far from sure that my solution is absolutely correct.

Normally when bearing off against an ace-point game, safety is the number one consideration. In this position, we have other things to look at which may or may not be important. They are:

- 1) *The gammon.* Clearly the gammon could be pretty close here. If one play is better for the gammon, that is an argument for that play.
- 2) *The race (if Black gets hit).* Black already has five men off, and will have some more off if and when he gets hit. This will make the race fairly close. All other things being equal, an extra man off could make a difference for Black.
- 3) *The cube.* White has access to the cube. If a hit may produce a strong double with one play but not another, this may make a difference.

Now, let's examine the three possible plays. Since the big consideration is safety, we will see how many rolls leave shots on the next roll.

- a) *4/Off.* The only shot numbers are 6-4, 5-4, and 4-3. However, if White retains the anchor, these all leave double shots.
- b) *5/4, 5/2.* The shot numbers are 6-3, 5-3, 4-3, and 3-2. These all leave single shots.
- c) *3/Off, 3/2.* The shot numbers are 6-6,

5-5, 6-4, 6-2, 5-4, 5-2, 4-3, 4-1, 3-2, and 2-1. Because there are so many more shot numbers with this play than with the others, we can eliminate it from consideration and concentrate on (a) and (b).

For play (a), the double shots are very serious. If White hits one, she will still be aiming at a second blot, and will have several rolls to hit it. Since Black will have at most eight men off, White will have a game-winning double in my opinion: she won't have to hit the second blot; the threat of the hit is enough for a cash. However, if White cannot retain her anchor, or is forced to break her board to do so, it is another story. Now Black will have seven men off when hit (e.g., White rolls 6-5 and runs, Black rolls 5-4 and plays 5/Off, 5/4*, and White hits) and Black will not have any gaps in his board other than the ace-point. Hence White will not quite have a double. (But if Black failed on his first attempt to enter when White cleared a point, then White would probably have a strong double.)

Note that on 8 out of 36 rolls (6-6, 5-5, 4-4, 3-3, 6-5, 6-4), White will not be able to retain both the anchor and her closed board. If Black survives the next roll, his position will probably be decent and the extra man he takes off will give him better gammon chances than if he makes the alternative play.

For play (b), if Black leaves a shot and is hit (e.g. White rolls small and moves from the 10-point, Black rolls 6-3, and White hits), then Black will have only six men off. This will give White a game-winning double since Black has a gap on the ace point—this would be true whether or not White had retained the anchor.

If Black survives the next roll his position will probably be all right, although likely not quite as smooth as if he had chosen play (a). Also, it is clear that his gammon chances will be slightly smaller, since he is not taking men off as fast.

So, WHICH PLAY IS BETTER? Assuming White can retain the anchor and her board (which she does 28 out of 36 times), we have the following:

Play (a). 6 rolls leave 20 shots—120/1296.
Play (b). 8 rolls leave 11 shots—88/1296.

In each case, a hit is a winner. In the 8 out of 36 times that White is unable to retain her anchor, the 6 rolls that leave shots on play (a) only leave 11 shots, and they are not quite game winners. In addition, play (a) gives better gammon chances, but not by all that much. My guess is that the two players are extremely close, but I

think I would go with the fewer shots and vote for play (b). When a hit is a game winner, it is never a bad policy to simply make the play that is least likely to be hit next roll.

It must be noted that the placement of the spare White checker is crucial for determining the best play here. If the checker were in White's home board, there would be no question that play (a) is better—White would not be able to hold both her board and the anchor, and taking the man off and blocking 4s in the bargain would offer superior gammon potential.

If the spare checker were back in Black's outer board, there would be no question that play (b) is better. Now White would almost certainly retain her closed board and anchor, so safety would be of the utmost importance. In addition the gammon would be much more likely, so taking the extra man off would not be as important.

In the actual problem, the spare man is placed just where the decision is very close—if it were on the 16-point, I would swing my vote to play (a); if it were on the 14-point, I would be more confident of my choice of play (b). Δ



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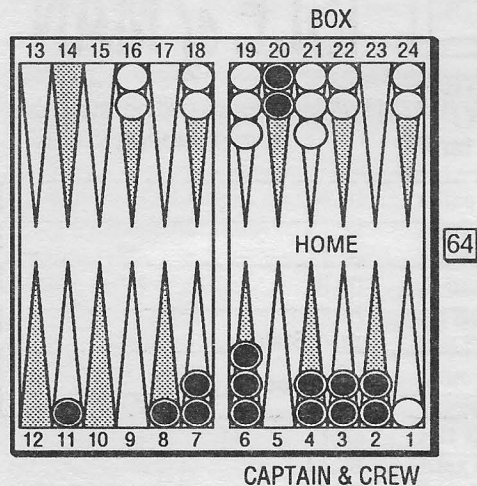
CHOUETTE CONFUSION

by Marc Gray

You're the BOX (+40), playing the White pieces in a full consultation chouette. It's 2:00 A.M. The CAPTAIN and a stalwart crew of three remain.

This is the position with the CAPTAIN (Black) on shake:

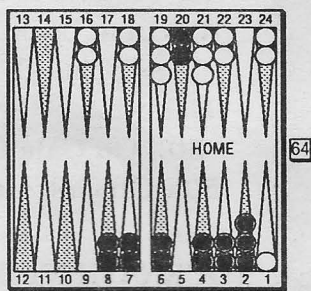
Money game. **BLACK ON ROLL.**



Black rolls a 4-3. Not his best. Silently amused, you listen to them babble as you wonder how many of them will argue in favor of a play based as much on the score sheet as on the position.

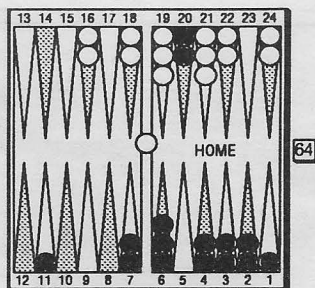
The CAPTAIN (+22) announces that "best is playing safe" moving 11/8, 6/2. "Black's dead meat. There are only five escape numbers (4-4, 4-5, 4-6) and all of them leave us a fly shot return. None of the remaining 31 shakes presents a threat, and all other 5s and 6s are poor. After my play, we're only down a roll. If he doesn't escape right now, we can cash this."

Choice 1.
The position following the CAPTAIN's 4-3 play: 11/8, 6/2.



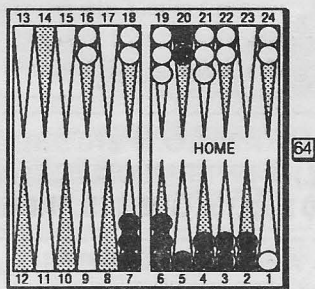
"Wimp," cries out STUCK N' STEAMING (-68). "Hit. Play for the closeout (8/4/1*). We're anchored. We have nothing to fear. Gammon the wretch!"

Choice 2.
The position following STUCK N' STEAMING's 4-3 play: 8/4/1*.



DEAD EVEN (+0), quietly says, "The play is clear. Slot. Play for purity: 11/7, 8/5."

Choice 3.
The position following DEAD EVEN's 4-3 play: 11/7, 8/5.



"Damn these full consultation chouettes," you're thinking as you listen to yourself say: "I'll offer a wash to anybody who wants out."

"Whoa!" shouts HIGH ROLLER (-6). "I'll give a half-point to anyone who wants to sell me their game." Silence ensues.

What's going on here? Before you peek at the solution, assess the position. What was this position worth to Black before the 4-3 shake? Was your offer of a "wash" sound? What is Black's positional equity following each of the three plays?

EACH OF THE THREE rational plays were computer simulated by *Expert Backgammon™* (V2.09) with 324 runs each, rotating nine times through White's 36 immediate responses. This is a very commonplace position. As such, it serves as a good reference position. Here are the results:

Original position. Black on roll. 324 roll outs.

White won:	Black won:
109 plain games.	179 plain games.
14 gammons.	21 gammons.
1 backgammon.	0 backgammons.
38.27% of the games.	61.73% of the games.
-0.250 pts. avg/game.	+0.250 pts. avg/game.

Choice 1. Black plays 4-3: 11/8, 6/2. 324 roll outs.

White won:	Black won:
139 plain games.	161 plain games.
13 gammons.	11 gammons.
0 backgammons.	0 backgammons.
46.91% of the games.	53.09% of the games.
-0.056 pts. avg/game.	+0.056 pts. avg/game.

Choice 2. Black plays 4-3: 8/4/1*. 324 roll outs.

White won:	Black won:
126 plain games.	137 plain games.
39 gammons.	22 gammons.
0 backgammons.	0 backgammons.
50.93% of the games.	49.07% of the games.
+0.071 pts. avg/game.	-0.071 pts. avg/game.

Choice 3. Black plays 4-3: 11/7, 8/5. 324 roll outs.

White won:	Black won:
115 plain games.	164 plain games.
22 gammons.	23 gammons.
0 backgammons.	0 backgammons.
42.28% of the games.	57.72% of the games.
-0.157 pts. avg/game.	+0.157 pts. avg/game.

LET'S ANALYZE THIS POSITION. Before CAPTAIN's (Black's) toss of 4-3, the group had a slight advantage (1/4 of a point). This is barely advantageous, if at all, in a cubeless simulation for a mid-game position. Cube ownership at this point in a game is worth a great deal—perhaps 2% or more.

BOX (You as White) should *not* offer a wash before a choice is decided upon. The position is nearly a toss-up unless CAPTAIN succumbs to STUCK N' STEAMING's strident urging to hit (8/4/1*). In that case, BOX's equity will be clearly positive.

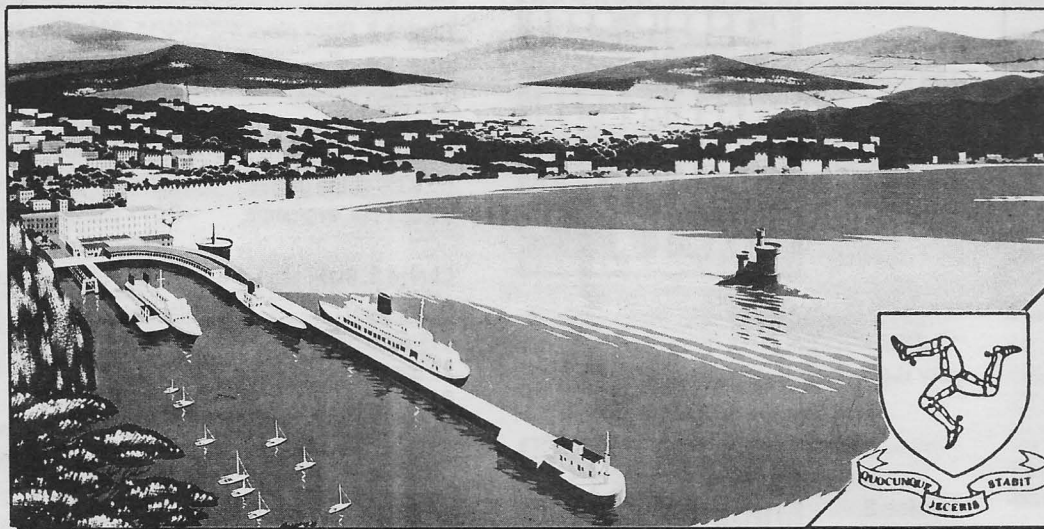
That leaves HIGH ROLLER's offer to buy out his fellow crew members for 1/2 point each: a clear blunder. The position is worth virtually nothing. BOX naturally will remain silent as this offer illustrates that HIGH ROLLER is not accurately assessing the position and may very well play aggressively—hitting (the weakest play) à la STUCK N' STEAMING's desperate advice.

Considerable benefit accrues to BOX if he can reduce his adversaries to one player (sans consultation) who appears likely to mangle the position. Should no one accept his generous (read "foolish") offer, BOX can be reassured that none of his opponents understand the position.

In summary, *Expert Backgammon's™* (cubeless) simulations strongly suggest that this game was essentially an even (center-cube) proposition prior to CAPTAIN's mediocre shake and would remain so unless CAPTAIN incorrectly decides to hit on the ace-point.

Cube ownership is very significant here. A player who profoundly misconstrues the position is likely to crank the cube prematurely. Doing so would, in most cases, place BOX in a very profitable position.

A generation ago, Paul Magriel stated that cube ownership at the start of a game makes you about a 2-to-1 favorite. Think about that the next time you're steamed and about to "spin over an early one." Δ



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Torrequebrada International Backgammon Championship

Costa del Sol, Spain † 10th-16th February 1992

£5,000 ADDED!

ENTRANCE FEE:

Championship £300 (Ptas 54,000)
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Exchange Rate (variable) £1 = Ptas 180

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[Continued from page 3]

For my part, I would supply to all organizers *before their mail-outs*, these international lists. Of course there would have to be a charge, both initial and on the supply of lists or mailing labels as there are obvious expenses involved. In the long run, however, money would be saved by every organizer who joined this scheme.

The few promoters who refuse to share their lists might change their minds if some organization—perhaps the WBF—acted as a clearing house for tournament dates. In looking at “Mark Your Calendar” in the CHICAGO POINT, it is unforgivable that Holland and Austria are holding International events 9–12 Jan. and that Torrequebrada and Cannes overlap in Feb. This is not in the best interest of backgammon. Perhaps it might be possible to add this to the function of an International Register.

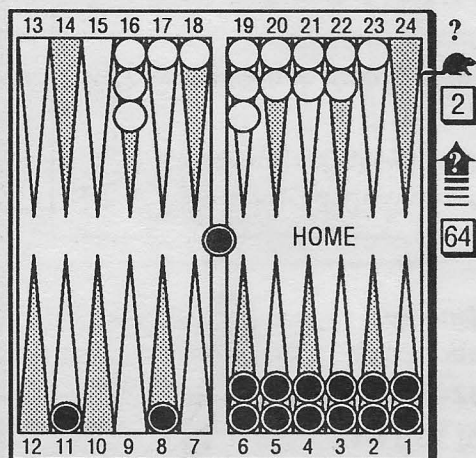
Interested directed and/or promoters should write me at: 11 Farmhill Land; Braddan, Isle of Man. My telephone number is 44/(0)624 626148.—*Donald Hatt, Braddan, Isle of Man* Δ

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your move

PROBLEM #179

Money game (with Jacoby). SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE. SHOULD WHITE TAKE? SHOULD WHITE BEAVER?
[Position submitted by Rick Janowski.]



National Labor Day tourney winner **John Viotor** (CA) has excellent BG "roots." His dad, **Jack Viotor** (a Yale graduate) was a very fine backgammon player/promoter whose backgammon claim to fame was hosting the prestigious Viotor Cup during the 60s and 70s. The round-robin invitational tournament boasts **Barclay Cooke** as a four-time champ... Chicago engagements: Nevada Backgammon Association director **Howard Markowitz** and **Leslie Lockett**. Also **Howard Ring** and **Linda Bergman**, who plan a 6 Sept. wedding... What's the perfect name for a tournament co-directed by **Dr. Bob Hill** and **Lincoln Bedell**? A "Black & White" Tournament, of course! For information on this 15-16 Feb event in Hartford, CT, call Dr. Bob at 800/872-2087 ... Speaking of Linc, it turns out that he and this reporter are related. We are both distant cousins of **Abraham Lincoln** and have a traceable common ancestor from the 1600s: **Thomas & Mary Lincoln**... Get well wishes go out to **Georgina Burrows**, a first-year student at Davidson University, who suffered serious internal injuries in an auto accident 11 December. Immediately upon being informed, step-dad **Brendan McInerney** and his wife flew from England to Charlotte, NC to be with their daughter ... **Tom Johnson** expects to demonstrate an early version of his *Expert Backgammon* for the PC at the Nevada State Champion-

ships 15-19 Jan. in Reno... Miracles department: Apparently, New York's most intense smoker, **Doug Roberts** has not had a cigarette since Pearl Harbor Day, 7 Dec. 1991... While spending 1 1/2 hours in a weather-forced holding pattern over Indianapolis, **Frank Callea's** D.C. to Chicago plane was hit by lightening. Frank's comments: "After the crashing noise, I began praying. I never want to fly again!"... **Yamin Yamin** is moving his annual Illinois State Championships from August to the first week in October (1-4 Oct. 1992). And the **Baron & Baroness of Culcreuch** are moving their Championship of Great Britain from Spain back to the Isle of Man 12-17 May 1992. The event will have £10,000 added... Visiting the Bar Point Club last month: **Wilcox and Randi Snellings** (CA) and **Richard DelFuria** (ND)... HBC director **Butch Meese** will experiment with four divisions of play at his 40th Indiana Open 24-26 April in Indianapolis. Call 317/845-8435 for an invitation... Mega-Chess is already on the market (with a **Walter Browne** endorsement) and now **John Williamson** is announcing his new game Mega-Gammon. It's played by three people on an individual basis. For more information, write John at 4962 Milwee St.; Houston, TX 77092... After three monthly columns, **Danny Kleinman** has terminated his relationship with *Win* magazine because of their slow-pay policies... **Roy Friedman** has suspended publication of *LeadingEdge Backgammon* to "devote time to personal matters." Δ



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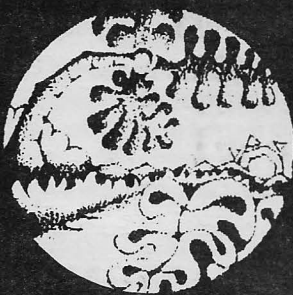
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