

CHICAGO POINT

NUMBER 49

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

AUGUST 1992

1992 monte carlo world championship

POSITIVELY CHARGED ION

Ion Ressu of Switzerland is Backgammon's new World Champ

Monte Carlo is known as one of the classiest cities in the world. Where else is the standard taxi cab a Mercedes Benz with a car phone? It is also one of the most expensive cities in the world. But Monte Carlo possesses a cosmopolitan charm and beauty that makes the ultra-high prices tolerable. Of course if your name happens to be Ion Ressu, there's no need to worry about the ultra-high prices.

Ressu, a 41-year-old artist from Lausanne, Switzerland is the 1992 World Backgammon Champion. In his fifth attempt to win the World title, the native-born Rumanian cashed for over 379,000 ff (approximately \$76,000). Loews Monte Carlo played host to the more than 400 backgammoners representing over 30 countries. André Rolfo-Fontana chaired the event. James Ballié directed with much assistance from Elizabeth Beatty (UK) and Les & Sue Boyd (Florida, USA).

The 234 Championship entrants were pored to 64 on Tuesday. Americans still in contention were Joe Russell, Jason Lester, Alan Steffen, Antoinette-Marie Williams, Ed O'Laughlin, Howard Markowitz, Joel Silverman, Ron Rubin, John Koonman and the player many considered to be the tourney favorite: Wilcox Snellings.

Wednesday was an off-day inviting participation in the golf or tennis tourney, or exploration of the beautiful French Riviera. That evening, there was an outstanding dinner and show at the Sporting Club. Les and Sue Boyd were wonderful on the dance floor, partnering with dozens of players.

Getting Down To Business

Two rounds were scheduled for Thursday and when the dinner hour eventually rolled around (which was usually sometime after 11:00 p.m.—they eat late in this city!), only 16 players remained including last year's champion Michael Meyburg and

[Continued on page 6]

1992 michigan summer championships

STU CAN DO

Tennenbaum Wins Another Jackpot

Texas expert Stuart Hosen "went through Illinois" en route to winning the Michigan Summer Championships. Carol Joy Cole's 13th annual (24-26 July) proved to be lucky for the 180+ players in attendance, all of whom enjoyed the new Holiday Inn venue.

With four wins under his belt, Hosen faced this reporter in the semifinals, winning 11-5 and sending me into the double elimination loser's bracket. Gary Kay became Hosen's next Illinois victim. Now Hosen had to wait to see who his last opponent would be among those with one loss.

In the "losers" finals, I edged Gary Kay in a close 9-7 battle to earn one more try at the Kid from Texas. After taking a 7-4 lead in the 11-point final, Stu extinguished my hopes by running off seven straight points. The win netted Hosen \$5,000 and a beautiful engraved onyx trophy.

It was Judy Field (MI) over Chicago's Alice Kay among the Intermediates. And Ami Tennenbaum (NY) stayed hot winning the World Cup Qualifier. Results at right: Δ

1992 MICHIGAN SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIPS

OPEN (64): 1-Stu Hosen (TX), 2-Bill Davis (IL), 3-Gary Kay (IL); 1C-Eddie Pavilonis (NY), 2C-Fred Kalantari (MN), 3C/4C-Dann DeRoche (TX) / Gary Margosian (MI)

INTERMEDIATE (64): 1-Judy Field (MI), 2-Alice Kay (IL), 3-Oscar Schon (CAN); 1C-Ed Simms (CAN), 2C-Fred Ishac (MI), 3C/4C-Richard Armbruster (CA) / Dan Neilson (MI)

NOVICE (20): 1-Circe Neilson (MI), 2-Nayan Shah (PA); 1C-Jerry Wlosinski (MI), 2C-Donna Fisher (OH)

WORLD CUP QUALIFIER (16): 1-Ami Tennenbaum (NJ), 2-Jeff Acierno (NY)

\$500 OASIS JACKPOT (8): 1-Frank Talbot (MI), 2-Abbas Zaltash (PA)

SUMMER FREEZE-OUT (32): 1-Howard Levine (MI), 2-Mike Rezai (OH), 3/4-Ira Hoffberg (IL) / Bob Zavoral (IL)

MICHIGAN BLITZ (128): 1-Carl Severino (IL), 2-Sandy Kaplan (MI)

THURS. SPECIALS: \$50-Joe Sylvester (MI), \$30-Mike Darooge (MI), \$20-Woody Woodworth (IN)

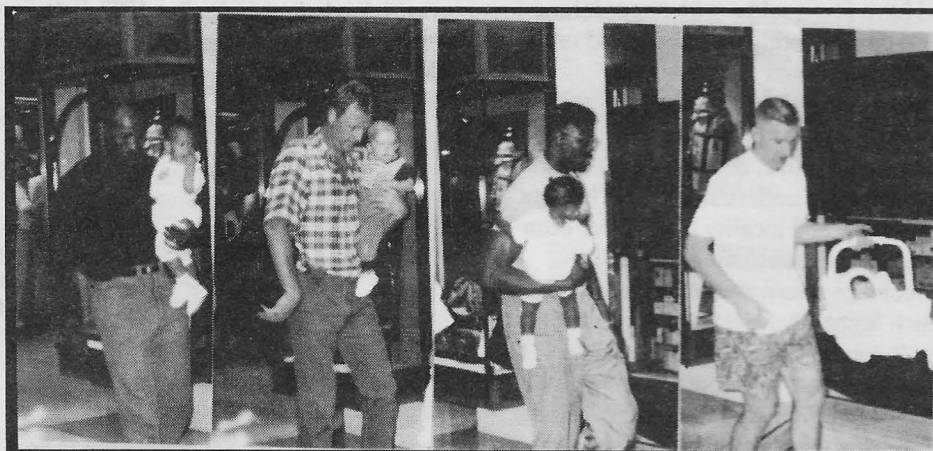
EARLYBIRD JACKPOTS: \$50 Winner-Eddie Pavilonis (NY), \$25 Winner-George Farah (MI)

SUNDAY JACKPOTS: \$50 Winner-John O'Hagan (IN), \$25 Winner-Ben Elliott (NC)

OPEN DOUBLES (32): 1-Basil Farah (CAN) & Geroge Farah (MI), 2-Howard Markowitz & Marcy Sloan (IL), 3/4-Bill Davis (IL) & Mario Madrigal (CO RICA) / Sandy Kaplan (MI) & Carol Starr (NV)

LIMITED DOUBLES (16): 1-Jim Bowman & Alice Gerard (FL), 2-Alina Carr (MI) & Valerie Wong (HI)

CAN YOU SPOT THE DRIBBLERS?



Loews Monte Carlo, site of the July World Backgammon Championship simultaneously played host to the USA Olympic Basketball "Dream Team." Pictured from left with baby in hand: Clyde Drexler, Larry Bird and Patrick Ewing. That's Chris Mullin on the right, going for the basket.

CHICAGO POINT

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LETTERS

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

BACKGAMMON IS BETTER THAN EVER

Most disappointing that Kathy Posner singled out backgammon in her life to use as a scapegoat for life's imperfections ["Letters," June 1992 POINT]. And frankly, I'd have few qualms with her opinions regarding cheating if it were 1985 or prior. But it's not.

I thank God that we have diligent leaders in our backgammon community today to organize, develop new players, and weed out undesirables. Tournament conditions and locality have never been better, publications are at their finest, percentage return and added money are much higher than 10 years ago, and I just don't see the Horowitzes, Chronisters, etc. at tournaments anymore. "... very little integrity left in backgammon..." Kathy says. I say it has never been higher!

No one can "rob" you of something in your life unless you let them. When you see a "wrong" you should fight to "right" it. Imperfections and cheating exist *everywhere* in some degree, whether it be poli-

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

coming attractions



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

Aug 3-9	World Cup III & U.S. Open, Harvey's Bristol Suites Hotel, Dallas, TX	301/299-8264
Aug 9	Monthly 16 Tournament, Greeley's Restaurant, San Francisco, CA	415/387-0429
Aug 10-16	Green Mountain Festival of Backgammon, Stratton Mountain Inn, VT	305/527-4033
Aug 15-16	Riverboat Gambling and CIBC Summer Sizzler, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon IL	309/692-6909
Aug 20	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Aug 23	Summer Cool Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Aug 23	Cavendish Club of Boston Tournament, Brookline, MA	617/734-2230
Sep 4-7	National Labor Day Tournament, Radisson Hotel, Indianapolis, IN	317/845-8435
Sep 13	Monthly 16 Tournament, Greeley's Restaurant, San Francisco, CA	415/387-0429
Sep 17	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Sep 18-20*	28th Gammom Associates Invitational, Cavendish West Hollywood, CA	818/901-0464
Sep 30-Oct 4	2nd Illinois State Championships and America Cup, Hyatt, Deerfield, IL	708/945-7801
Oct 2-4*	Towpath Inn Tournament, Turin, New York	716/442-8221
Oct 11*	Austin BG Association Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/280-5945
Oct 15	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Oct 17-18	College Park Fall Open & Jackpot Tourney, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Oct 21	Rscards Fall Computer Modern Tournament, GENIE	800/638-9636
Oct 30-Nov 1*	Granite State Open/Halloween Costume Contest, Sheraton, Bedford, NH	603/863-4711
Oct 31-Nov 7	Backgammon In Paradise, Kea Lani Hotel, Wailea, Maui, Hawaii	702/852-1221
Nov 10	BPC 10th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Pat's Pub, Norridge, IL	312/338-6380
Nov 22*	14th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Dec 19*	College Park Winter Open Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604

OUTSIDE USA

Aug 8-9	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Aug 8-9*	Sjælland Open 1992, Valhall, Vænget, Frederikssund, Denmark	45 39 40 06 07
Aug 10-14*	XI South American Tourney, Punta Carrasco, Buenos Aires, Argentina	54-1-7942527
Aug 13-16	Palace Summer Championships, Badrutt's Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/331 5816
Aug 15-16	Sjaelland Open, Frederikssund, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Aug 24-30*	2nd Mitteleuropa BG/Blackjack Tourney, Casino Nova Gorica, Slovenia	392/48019343
Sep 7	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Sep 7	Victoria Monthly Tournament, Botanical Hotel, South Yarra, Australia	03/822-3730
Sep 12*	Kater Cup 1992 No. 5, Café chantant De Kater, Enschede, Netherlands	3153/353115
Sep 12-13	BIBA Trophy Tournament No. 3, George Hotel, Solihull, England	0522/721630
Sep 26	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Oct 1-4	11th International Austrian Open, Pörschach/Wörthersee, Austria	08341/12825
Oct 2-4	Victorian Open Championship, Botanical Hotel, South Yarra, Australia	03/822-3730
Oct 5*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Oct 10-11*	2nd Annual Wansbeck Club Tournament, England	0522/53 68 36
Oct 17-18	1st British Isles Open Trophy, Forte Crest Hotel, Eastgate, Lincoln, UK	0522/53 68 36
Oct 22-25*	1992 Rio De Janeiro Open, Le Méridien Copacabana Hotel, Brazil	55 21 267-6033
Oct 24*	Kater Cup 1992 No. 6, Café chantant De Kater, Enschede, Netherlands	3153/353115
Oct 29-Nov 1*	Swedish Open Championships, O'Henrys Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	46 8 652 4099
Oct 31-Nov 1	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Nov 2*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Nov 2*	Victoria Monthly Tournament, Botanical Hotel, South Yarra, Australia	03/822-3730
Nov 5-8*	Austrian State Championships, Vienna, Austria	08341/12825
Nov 13-15*	NordRhein-Westfalen Championships 1992, Düsseldorf-Nord, Germany	02151/503591
Nov 21-22	BIBA Trophy Tournament No. 4, George Hotel, Solihull, England	0522/721630
Nov 23-Dec 1*	Viva Vila Backgammon Cruise, P&O Fairstar, Sydney-to-Vila, Australia	03/726-0222
Nov 28	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124
Dec 7*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846-1923
Dec 7*	Victoria Monthly Tournament, Botanical Hotel, South Yarra, Australia	03/822-3730
Dec 13*	Christmas Open, New South Wales	02/369-3620
Dec 19*	Kater Cup 1992 No. 7, Café chantant De Kater, Enschede, Netherlands	3153/353115
Dec 19-20*	Weisbaden Cup 1992, Hotel Fürstenhof-Esplanade, Wiesbaden, Germany	06122/16124

tics, the workplace, marriage, etc.

Kathy stated, "Once integrity is lost, it is gone forever." What kind of B.S. is this? Is all integrity lost in baseball because of the "Black Sox" scandal of 1919? Is democracy dead because of Watergate? Hell no! Backgammon fought to improve and

improve it has.

Lastly, I consider it irresponsible journalism to just print anyone's letter to the editor. I understand the "open forum" concept but can't condone publishing the unsubstantiated opinions of a woman who

[Continues]

has been out of the game for seven years. Too many of the POINT's readers are new and impressionable and might believe such rantings. The POINT does a great job of promoting our game. Please don't demean it. —Joe Sylvester, Warren, MI

Kathy Posner is not just "anyone." She was a world-class player in the late 70s/early 80s. Kent Goulding devoted one of his Backgammon With The Champions volumes to her match play.

It is not the intention of the POINT to demean backgammon by printing Kathy's letter. We were confident that someone would come to backgammon's defense and thank you for your letter.—Ed.

IN NEED OF A COMPUTER PARTNER

Because it is difficult to find backgammon players where I live, I'm considering purchasing the Fidelity "Gammon Pal Challenger." Could any of your readers

advise me if this is the best one to purchase? —Henry Schwartz, Pompano Beach, FL

Bill Robertie's 1991-1992 Gammon Press Catalog ranks backgammon computer games and the "Gammon Pal Challenger" placed near the bottom. To obtain the catalog, write: The Gammon Press; P.O. Box 294; Arlington, MA 02174.—Ed.

BACKGAMMON ON THE IVORY COAST

I would appreciate your providing me with the necessary information about a future training course in the management of a backgammon club. Indeed, I am planning to open a clubroom in Abidjan, the capital city of my country. As entertainment opportunities for young people are rare in the Ivory Coast, I believe backgammon represents a potentially important market in this field.

I would like to set up my own business.

Could we possibly deal on the basis of a branch of your organization in exchange for training?

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.—Kaffet Yves, Abidjan, Ivory Coast

The preceding letter was forwarded to us by past American Association of Backgammon Club president Michael Maxakuli. We have sent Mr. Yves a copy of "Tips on Forming and Operating a Local Backgammon Club," the seminar we gave at the 1990 Nevada State Championships. For a free copy, send your name and address to CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039.—Ed. Δ

SAN REMO CANCELLED

The 7th Federal International Tournament in San Remo, Italy (9–12 July) was cancelled on the first day of play. In May, tourney organizer Luigi Villa was informed that this year, the San Remo Casino would not pay the 50% prize money tax required by the government to run a competition in Italy. Villa cancelled the tournament and notified the Worldwide Backgammon Fed.

In late May, Marco Fornasir, a WBF-sanctioned director decided to make an attempt to save the event by switching venues to the Hotel Royal. The government found out about the switch 9 July and Fornasir was then forced to cancel.

Fornasir organized 100% return mini-jackpots for the disappointed players in attendance. He regrets the inconvenience caused by the cancellation.

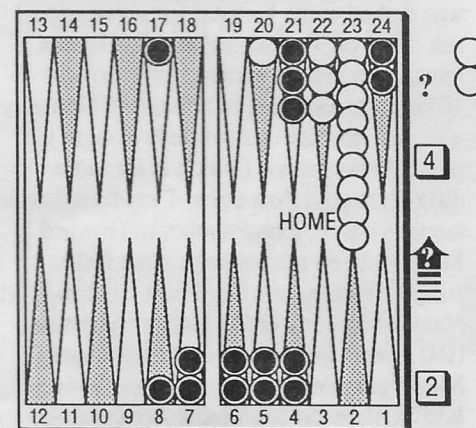
CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1992 BPC PLAYER OF THE YEAR COMPILED THRU 31 JULY

GARY KAY	13.28	Judy Brown	3.44	Scott Goode	1.28
STU KATZ	13.04	George Barr	3.20	Steve Sacher	1.28
MARY FRANKS	12.88	Herb Roman	3.20	Marty Tatosian	1.28
DAVE CRAMER	12.48	Peter Berkman	3.20	Marcy Sloan	1.28
DEEB SHALATI	12.04	Alice Kay	3.20	Jerry Brooks	1.20
DAVID RUBIN	10.24	René Wojtysiak	3.12	Jeff Gottesman	0.88
DAVID ROCKWELL	9.76	Norma Shyer	3.04	Kathy Rudnick	0.88
YAMIN YAMIN	8.56	John Stryker	2.92	Ron Stur	0.88
PAUL FRANKS	8.32	Ralph Levy	2.80	Ken Bond	0.88
SARG SERGES	7.52	Bobbie Shifrin	2.64	Amy Trudeau	0.88
LENNY LODER	7.20	Barry Miller	2.56	Gary Hines	0.80
DON JAYHAN	7.04	Devin Dallaire	2.56	Dan Judd	0.76
LUCKY NELSON	6.96	V.W. Zimnicki	2.56	Patrick Desmond	0.76
JOHN BRUSSEL	6.88	Jim Gibbs	2.56	Kurt Warning	0.64
PHYLLIS SMOLINSKI	6.24	Jake Jacobs	2.40	Tak Morioka	0.64
BILL COX	6.24	Roland Dieter	2.32	Don Desmond	0.56
BOB ZAVORAL	6.20	Frankie Farjood	2.16	Jeff Kane	0.56
HOWARD MARKOWITZ	6.16	Femi Owiku	2.08	Larry Lau	0.56
HOWARD RING	6.00	James Colen	1.92	Marv Arnol	0.52
DEAN MUENCH	5.68	Bill Davis	1.92	Harold Grote	0.48
John Demian	5.60	Tim Serges	1.88	Larry Yakowenko	0.40
Alex Itkin	5.52	Stan Kucharz	1.84	Elaine Kehm	0.40
Chris Stanford	5.28	Joe Koucharian	1.80	Karen Kertz	0.40
Arline Levy	5.12	Paul Klein	1.76	John Macaluso	0.32
Reggie Porter	4.80	Harold Seif	1.68	Phil Simborg	0.32
Peter Kalba	4.72	Leslie Lockett	1.60	Joan Hegg	0.28
Bob Ebbeler	4.72	Steve Katz	1.60	Betsy Miller	0.24
Chris Kenik	4.32	Les Moshinsky	1.56	Fred Gehlhoff	0.24
Joann Feinstein	3.96	Georgina Flanagan	1.44	Jill Ferdinand-Brus	0.24
Jolie Lewis	3.72	Ray Baker	1.28	Bruce Russell	0.20
Ed Buerger	3.68	Rich Galeba	1.28	Jeff Peck	0.20
Tim Mabee	3.56	Richard Stawowy	1.28	J.A. Miller	0.20
Paul Friedman	3.52				

BILL COX, the Limited winner at this year's Midwest Championships is July's Player of the Month. Bill's 3.52 points placed him ahead of two Chicago backgammon names from the mid-70s: Dave Cramer (2.56) and Jim Gibbs (2.56), now residing near San Francisco.

your move PROBLEM #184

1992 World Championship round-of-32. 19-point match. Joe Russell (White) leads Ion Ressu (Black), 14–8. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



ASK DANNY



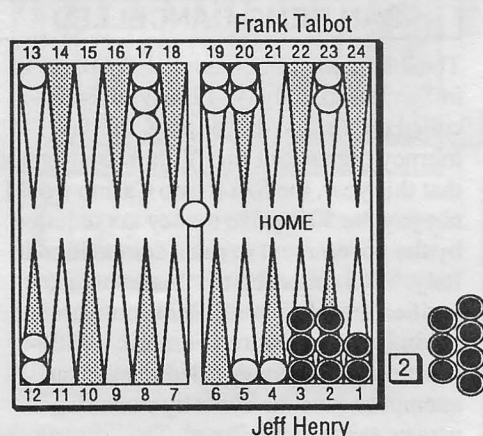
by Danny Kleinman

GO THE WHOLE HOG

Dear Danny: In the opening round of the 1992 Midwest Championships, I drew the defending champion Frank Talbot. Leading 4 to 1 in our 11-point match, I had a choice to make:

11-point match. Jeff Henry (Black) leads Frank Talbot (White) 4 to 1.

BLACK TO PLAY 2-2.



Given Frank's superior skill, did I do right to go for the backgammon by playing 2/off, 2/off, 2/off, 3/1?—Jeff Henry, St. Charles IL

DEAR JEFF: If you count 2-roll parlays, you'll see that your play gets you off in two 345 times in 1296, against only 35 times for the safe 3/1, 3/1, 3/1, 2/off. Because Frank is a slight favorite to escape the backgammon in two rolls, however, these 310 extra successes translate to only about 136 extra backgammons.

How many times will you get hit? For that to happen, Frank must dance or roll a 2 (15 numbers), you must roll a single ace (10 numbers) and then Frank must hit (11 numbers): nearly three times the cost in hits.

How much do backgammons help you at this match score? By playing safe, you accept a gammon and an 8-1 lead. A backgammon gives you a 10-1 lead, while winning only a plain game gives you a 6-1 lead. In general, "diminishing returns" set in with each additional point (except the match-winning point) that you add to a lead, so relinquishing the gammon costs you somewhat more than adding the backgammon gains. Somewhat more, but not three times as much.

What happens, however, when you get

hit? You can lock up the win by redoubling any time after you've been hit, for by then you'll have 11 or 12 men off, and Frank can't afford to take and redouble to 8 even trailing 1-4 (7 of the 8 points work for you). But you can do better still by playing on for a gammon. Frank's three-point board is hardly threatening, and you can have a good chance of getting in, out, around and off before he can save the gammon.

No matter what your opponent's skill, therefore, you do well to go for the backgammon. To illustrate the advantage of your backgammon-hungry play, just ask yourself how Frank should play 6-2. Answer, bar/19, 20/18. For by hanging back on your 2-point, he still relies on a parlay—your single ace and his ace in return—which is barely more likely than the parlay of your rolling a doublet in your last two shakes combined with his rolling any of the 15 extra small rolls which will get him backgammoned. And hitting his shot won't even always save the gammon. *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.

AMALGAMATION

Monte-Carlo morsels: The "Dr. John" that **Jake Jacobs** wrote about in his "Hong Kong" article [June 1992 POINT] is actually this year's Monte Carlo runner-up **John Simon**... **Michael Jordan**, staying at the hotel for a pre-Olympic exhibition, is not a good craps shooter. He only plays hard ways and field—two of the worst bets on the table... Two players were hospitalized during the week. Nevada Backgammon Association director **Howard Markowitz** was rushed to the hospital for severe stomach pains on Thursday evening. He was released in time to compete in the round-of-16 but lost. And **Jürgen Scharlt** of Germany was also hospitalized while he fought to pass a kidney stone (which is far more difficult to pass than a post-Crawford double leading 8-6)... Condolences to Howard Markowitz on the passing of his father 1 Aug.... Visiting the Bar Point Club in July: **Nasser Nikpour** (AZ), **Larry Strommen** (IN), **Todd Zeigler** (Peoria, IL), **Mario Madrigal** (Costa Rica) and **Jim "Frisco Kid" Gibbs** (SF)... Thanks to *das Back-*

gammon Magazin editor **Harald Johanni** for including a beautiful 22 page article about the 1992 Backgammon Tournament of the Americas (including 17 photographs) in his July 1992 issue. Although the text is written in German, 1/3 of the 90 page issue is devoted to recorded matches including those between **Hugh Sconyers/Rick Barabino**, **Bob Wachtel/Paul Magriel**, **Joe Sylvester/Mike Svobodny** and **Talmadge Tinsley/Neil Kazaross**. For a copy send \$13 in U.S. funds to CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039... Chicago BG player **Betsy Miller** is a GG—a great grandmother, that is. His name is **Noah** and he was born in Hawaii last month. Congrats!... A new charitable organization, "Brain Games, Inc.," has been formed to promote intellectual games including backgammon. The Texas corporation, chartered in 1991, has **Malcolm Davis**, **Bill Barron** and **Norma Johnston** as initial directors. Former *Double* newsletter editor Barron edits the organization's bimonthly *Brainstorms*. About 80% of the 10-page newsletter was devoted to backgammon... BPC player **Ed Buerger**'s picture is on this month's July-

August Illinois Chess Bulletin. Ed helped his UOP team win the Chicago Industrial League chess championship for 1992... Good luck to **Marv Arnol** who succeeds **Merrill Schrager** as director of the Milwaukee Backgammon Club... **Arnold Zousmer** reports that the San Diego Backgammon Club now meets Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. at Barnacle Bill's. For more info, call **Mike Fujita** at 619/294-2007... According to new club president **Rick Barabino**, there are a lot of positive changes in store for the New England Backgammon Club. **Evan Diamond** and **Walter Trice** will revitalize the club's *Anchors* newsletter. And look for a big tourney in the spring next year with reduced room rates and added money... There's a good chance that the 10th Nevada State Championships will be held this January in Las Vegas. Reno has been the tournament's home for the previous nine years... We have received many questions about the June *Sports Illustrated* article "Big Backgammon Binge" (about last year's Monte Carlo World Championship) by **Dan Cox**. We'll mail you a copy if you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope to CHICAGO POINT. (Overseas subscribers may send \$1 instead.) Δ

Dancing With

The Lady

by Jim "Frisco Kid" Gibbs



*I*t was a glorious summer Sunday. Once again, I found myself at Greeley's Bar and Grill. It was time to play in the monthly round of sixteen tournament.

Ah, San Francisco. As I sat sipping a cup of strong black coffee, I thought of Mark Twain and his famous quote (which, by the way, he probably never said), "The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco." Not today, though. It's tough living in northern California, but somebody has to do it.

As I glanced across the room, my eyes chanced to meet those of a familiar lady. It was Lady Luck. I expected her to look away as she so often does, but today she smiled and winked. I winked back. The next thing I knew, she glided across the room, took me by the hand, and began dancing with me.

We twirled and spun, and soon we had waltzed our way into the back room. There sat my good friend Neil Kazaross, playing in a three-handed chouette. He was in the box.

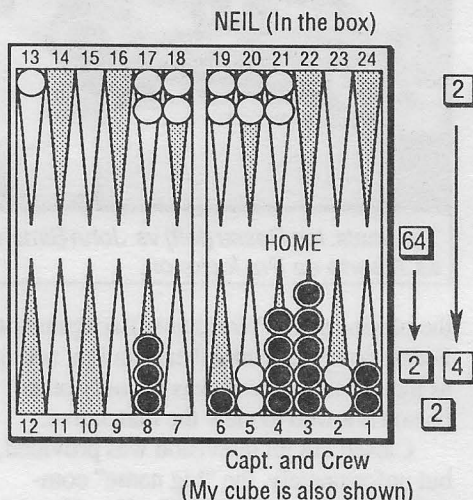
He didn't look too happy and then I saw why. He had a five-two backgame. One cube was on Neil's side at two. The other hadn't been turned.

The captain rolled, and there it was. He had to leave a blot, a double shot!

Neil took a look, and turned the cubes, one at two, the other four. His opponents pondered, then reluctantly took.

I said (in jest), "Hmmm. Maybe it's time for a furry little animal." Neil (being Neil) quickly picked up a spare cube and put it in front of me at two. "Go ahead, jump right in."

Money game with individual cubes. Neil Kazaross (White) doubles and redoubles. Both players take. I enter the game by taking a 2-cube.



I smiled sheepishly as I took the 2-cube (no beaver . . . surprise, surprise). Neil had mucho shots, and a killer rolling prime. How do I get myself into these things, I wondered. "Sure, easy stuff."

The Lady looked at me and smiled and Neil rolled and missed (as you knew he would). I picked up my cube and tossed it in Neil's general direction. "Four." The other two players thought briefly, then followed suit. Neil cogitated, then scooped them up.

Naturally, the captain rolled a perfect set of double twos, and then bore off clean as a whistle. Boom—gammon—eight points in the bank for the kid. Poor, poor Neil.

The next game started, and I was called away. I told the captain to act for me. When I got back, I found out there had been another redoubled gammon, and—boom—another eight points chalked up under my name.

As the next game started, the first round pairings were announced, and I left again. I quickly won my match 9-2. With the Lady by my side, I couldn't lose.

While waiting for the next round, I saw one of my chouette partners and asked him about that last game. I wasn't a bit surprised to hear that there had been still another redoubled gammon for my side! 24 points without lifting a finger. I squeezed the Lady's hand.

My next match started, and the Lady went to the powder room. She got back at double match-point. One little smile from her, and the match was mine.

When I got ahead in round three at 8-4 Crawford, I began thinking. "Perhaps I'm the best player in the world. I'd better make

plans to play in the next world championship tour."

Too late. I came to my senses. "I blew it," I thought. "The Lady could read my thoughts."

She immediately stopped dancing with me. She gave me a sad, sad look with those icy-blue eyes, touched my cheek gently, then turned and danced away, looking for a more appreciative companion.

YOU CAN FIGURE OUT THE REST. My opponent came back from the grave and won 9-8 to reach the finals. His opponent?—Neil Kazaross. Poor, poor Neil?

And when the match started, sitting in Neil's lap was the Lady. She gave me a knowing smile, then put her arm around Neil's shoulder and together, they danced to victory. The Lady had found a new partner. Δ

Catch up on your back(gammon) reading.

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MONTE CARLO...

[Continued from page 1]

Americans Howard Markowitz, Joel Silverman, John Koonman Alan Steffen, and Wilcox Snellings.

Friday was a grueling day of play involving two 21-point matches. Markowitz, Koonman, Steffen and Meyburg all fell in the round-of-16. But Snellings advanced over Juan-Carlos Bizzarro (Argentina) with a thrilling come-from-behind 21-19 win. Silverman also made it through.

The party was over for Snellings in the quarterfinals. Brazilian Backgammon Federation president Alvaro Savio eliminated him 21-18. However New York City's Joel Silverman, winner of this year's Bahamas Pro-Am Invitational Doubles tournament did reach the final four along with Savio, Ressu and John Simon of Hong Kong.

With no "superstar" names in the semifinals, viewership of the last two matches was down. Most players chose to view the Ressu-Savio match. In fact, at one point, *nobody* was watching the Silverman-Simon battle. In the end, Ressu edged out Savio, and Simon was victorious over Silverman 23-15.

THE FINALS

The 25-point championship match began between Ion Ressu and Dr. John Simon at about 3:30 p.m. André Rolfo-Fontana was very strict about permitting no spectators in

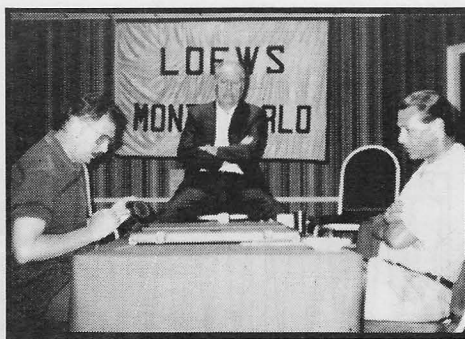
NOBODY TOLD US TO PACK A CANTEEN

Loews Monte Carlo is considered to be a very classy hotel. Overall, it is an outstanding venue (albeit expensive) for the World Backgammon Championship. Overlooking the Mediterranean Sea and only a few blocks walk to fine restaurants, the Grand Casino and some eye-popping beaches, Loews is in the middle of everything. Yet there was a serious complaint in the playing room: no water.

If you get thirsty for a glass of water during a grueling 21-point match, it will cost you \$4. That's not class, that's crass.

At all three major Chicagoland events (Midwest Championships, Chicago Open and Illinois State Championships), the promoters offer complimentary coffee to the players and the hotels provides ice water.

Hopefully next year, the "classy" Loews Monte Carlo Hotel will consider the health and well-being of backgammon players by providing complimentary ice water in the playing rooms. Δ



The finals: Ion Ressu (left) vs. John Simon as Alberto da Pra looks on.

the playing salon. Worldwide Backgammon Federation president Alberto da Pra, acting as the official referee, was the only other person allowed to view the match live.

Closed circuit television was provided, but unfortunately, the "big name" commentators rejected the \$350 offered by the tournament to call the match as insufficient. Alan Steffen came to the rescue of the players but unfortunately (and fortunately for Alan) he was away for most of the match busily winning the World Team Championship.

Ressu began the most important match of his life by removing his wristwatch and laying it upside down at his side. That should have been a tip-off that it would be a long match—and it was.

Trailing 6-2, Simon took the first break. "I reckon he's been unbelievably lucky so far," said John, a 43-year-old British gastroenterologist, living in Hong Kong for the past 12 years.

Trailing 11-4, Simon turned a double around and recubed to win four points. It was the only double/redouble sequence in the entire match. "If these players don't utilize the doubling cube, the match could go on until 9:00 tonight," commented Steffen. Little did he know...

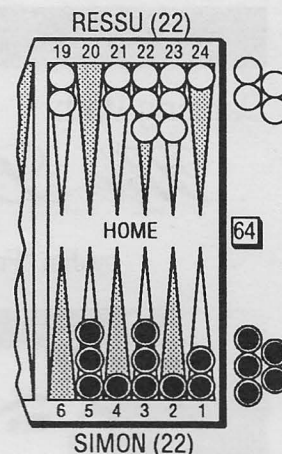
Ion went from a lead of 13-8 to 22-16 in about three hours time. Incredibly in that stretch, no game was won for more than one point. "The pressure is affecting both players," said Steffen. "They're way too timid with the doubling cube."

With the match into it's sixth hour and the Awards Ceremony cocktail party in full swing, Simon rallied to knot the score at 22-all, but then his wheels came off. In the following position, John was in an excellent position to take the lead. [See Position A above.]

Nearly 300 spectators, waiting for a winner to be determined, chanted in unison for John to double. Unfortunately for John, he couldn't hear them. Certainly 60% of the beginners would know that this position is a double/drop. (In fact, after the match,

Position A

25-point finals.
John Simon
(Black) and Ion
Ressu (White)
are tied at 22-all.
Black to roll.
CUBE ACTION?



Ressu couldn't believe that he hadn't been cubed.) Obviously the pressure was effecting Simon. And it would get worse.

Now the dice gods got into the act. They gave John five consecutive 2-1s yielding Position B [shown on page 9].

In order to take a cube at this score, one needs about 32.14% game-winning chances. According to Dean Muench's "Bearoff 1"

[Continued on page 8]

1992 MONTE CARLO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

CHAMPIONSHIP (234): 1-Ion Ressu (SWIS), 2-John Simon (Hong Kong), 3/4-Alvaro Savio (BRAZ) / Joel Silverman (US); 1Cons.1-Oscar Naghizadeh (SWIS), 1Cons.2-Greg Shore (So. Africa), 1Cons.3/4-Laitadze (Geo, USSR) / Hal Heinrich (CAN); 2Cons.1-Paul Magriel (US), 2Cons.2-Yannis Tomazos (GRE), 2Cons.3/4-Herb Gurland (US) / Sebastian Taylor; LC1-Rolf Schreuder, LC2-Howard Ring (US)

INTERMEDIATE (90): 1-Terence Robinson (CAN), 2-Alain LeFellie, 3/4-Marc Bodin / Itzak Omrad; 1Cons.1-Brian Lever (ENG), 1Cons.2-Mehrzad Jarrak-Layegh (GER), 1Cons.3/4-Luisa Sequiera (PORT) / Gregg Shawzin; 2Cons.1-Bobbie Shifrin (US), 2Cons.2-Burno LeMilinaire (FRA), 2Cons.3/4-Carlo Fachetti / Gerard Galuppo (FRA); LC1-Christian Fix (GER), LC2-Flemming Jennsen

BEGINNER (81): 1-Nikolaos Hatzakis (GRE), 2-Teun Ruardy (HOL), 3/4-John Romanicz / Dettlef Stolz (GER); 1Cons.1-Misja Alma (HOL), 1Cons.2-Claudir Chaves, 1Cons.3/4-Kein Bang Henriksen / Thomas Schwanbeck; 2Cons.1-H. Niels, 2Cons.2-Melanie Brown (ENG), 2Cons.3/4-Jorge Arque / Claus Von Brockenburg; LC1-Akaki Kikaleichvili (Geo, USSR) / LC2-Gitte Dalgaard (DEN)

\$1000 SUPER JACKPOT (64): 1/2-Jason Lester (USA) / Paul Magriel (USA), 3/4-Matthias Pauen (GER) / Ami Tennenbaum (USA)

FRED WORLD TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP (96): 1-"USA Dream Team" (Howard Markowitz, Alan Steffen, Antoinette Williams), 2-"Royale Chimes"-UK (Rudy Huber, Allan MacLean, Richard Whitehouse)

TENNIS DOUBLES: 1-Charles Dime & Terence Robinson (CAN), 2-Jaakko Salava (FIN) & Fred Narboni (SWIS). MIXED DOUBLES: 1-Brita Reinhardt & Fred Narboni (SWIS), 2-Kristina Bajic (SWIS) & Ricardo Spinola (BRAZ)

GOLF: 1-Patrick Thelin, 2-Peter Ruppel

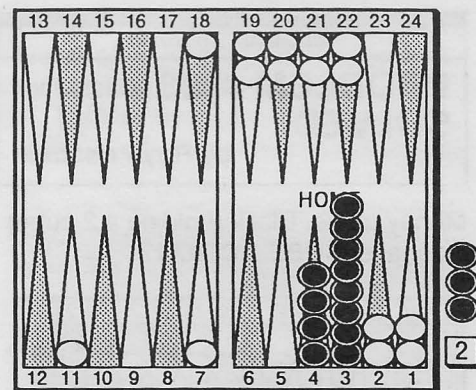
Point Quiz—Win \$50.00

After reading the recent comments by the editors of *Inside Backgammon* about “Backgammon Exam III” (“fiasco”—“...old *Chicago Point* columns... never properly analyzed in the first place”), I felt sorry for you poor folks who live out there on the wrong side of the Berkshires where proper analysis is so scarce. Herewith, in a modest attempt to ameliorate your analytical deficit, I present:

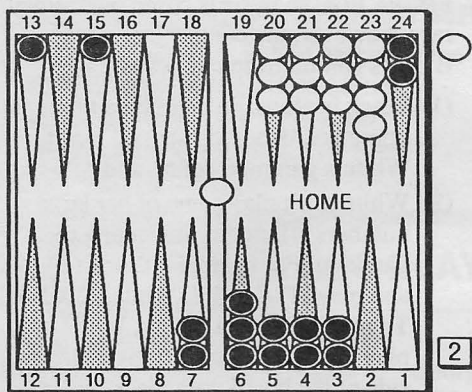
The Advanced Backgammon Exam

by Walter Trice

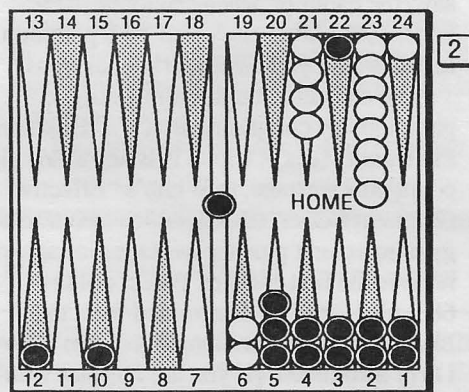
Instructions: Submit your best answers to the following 10 problems by **28 August 1992** (deadline). Mail to: *Advanced Backgammon Exam*; c/o CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645. Or fax us your answers: 312/338-6384. Ties will be broken by random draw. Decisions of Walter Trice and CHICAGO POINT will be final.



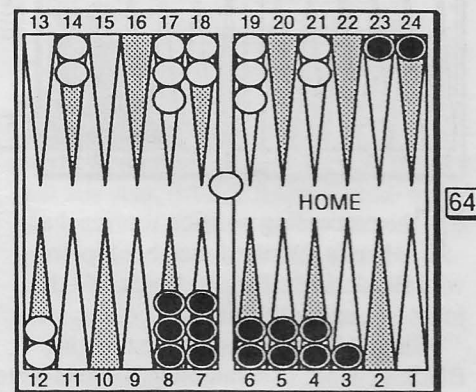
1. Black on roll. What sequences (if any) permit White to take a redouble next turn?



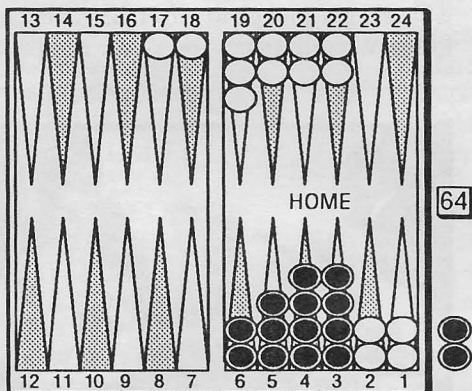
2. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



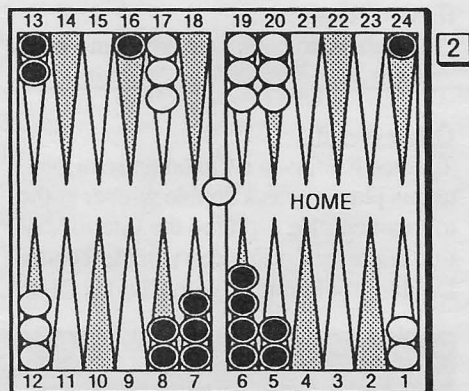
3. Black to play 5-1.



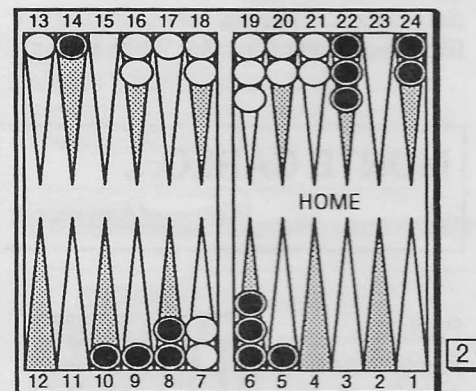
4. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



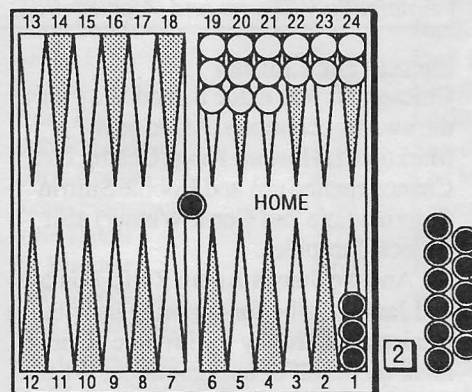
5. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



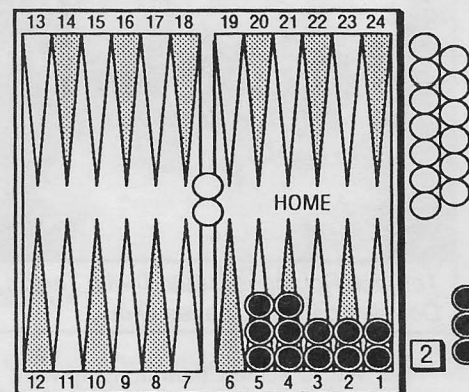
6. Black to play 6-2.



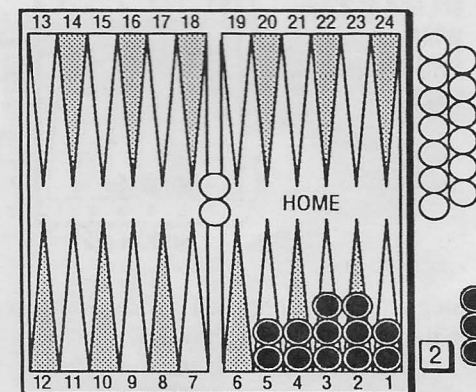
7. Black to play 2-1.



8. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?



9. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?

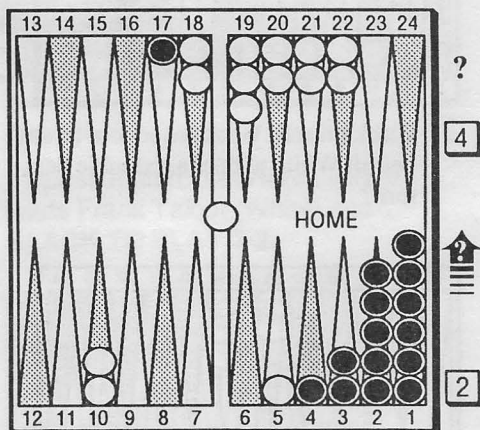


10. Black on roll. Cube action(s)?

PROBLEM #183 SOLVED

by Roy Friedman

Money game. Black (holding a 2-cube) on shake. **CUBE ACTION?**



The preceding position was reached when (a) White slotted her 8-point with Black on the bar, (b) Black rolled a joker 6-2, and (c) White danced.

Should Black redouble? Estimating Black's chance of scrambling home is quite difficult, but fortunately, *Black* need not bother. "Woolsey's Rule" mandates that Black redouble because it is not immediately clear if White has a take. Even if Black were convinced that White had an

easy take, Black should redouble because the volatility is enormous. If Black is not hit this turn, he usually loses his market by a wide margin and often becomes too good to redouble next turn.

Should White take? Black has two jokers (6-6, 5-5) and seven numbers which leave an immediate direct shot. (6-5 leaves a double shot.) 27 numbers leave indirect shots this turn and a single or double shot later if Black rolls small. White's cumulative probability of hitting is more than 40%. White wins about 40% of the games because cube access makes her a big favorite after hitting.

White's 40% chance to win implies that White could take if she were a favorite to save the gammon when she loses. 40% wins, 30% plain losses, and 30% gammon losses would yield a borderline take/pass.

We can get a rough estimate of the gammons by comparing Black's "Effective Pip Count" (EPC), which is Black's raw pip count plus wastage, to White's "Effective Gammon Count" (EGC), which is White's gammon count plus the average wastage to remove the first checker. Black's EPC—68.3 pips—can be determined from the BPA version 4.01 computer program by Larry Strommen. [If you are familiar with Walter Trice's $7N + 1$ formula for EPC in an "N-roll" position, you can see that Black is between a 9-roll (EPC = 64) and a 10-roll (EPC = 71) position.]

There is no computer program I know

of that gives EGCs, but we can estimate White's EGC within a pip or two. White's raw gammon count is 56 pips—53 pips to move all outside men to the 6-point and three pips to bear off a checker. The average wastage for White to bear off a checker is about seven pips. To this, we must add about one pip to account for White's dancing. Thus, White's estimated EGC is $56 + 7 + 1 = 64$ pips. Comparing Black's EPC of 68 to White's EGC of 64 suggests that Black is about even money to win a gammon in a straight race because being on roll is worth about four pips.

Are you convinced? I hope not. A rollout showed that Black is a solid favorite to win a gammon when he is not hit! The EPC vs. EGC analysis is based on a straight race; however, the contact increases Black's gammons in two ways:

- (1) Black is often forced to hit a blot in his home board, adding several pips to White's gammon count, and
- (2) White can't play some of her large numbers efficiently for saving the gammon. For example, Black rolls 4-2 and plays 17/13, 4/2. White rolls 5-4. To maximize shot equity, White must play Bar/21 and waste pips on her own side of the board with the 5.

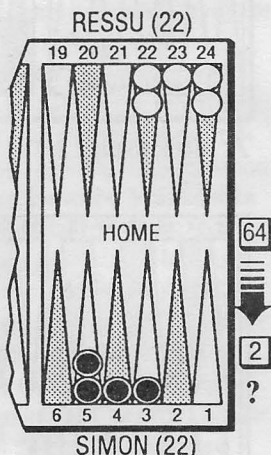
BECAUSE BLACK WINS significantly more gammons than plain games, White's 40% wins are not enough to offset the gammon losses. White has a pass by a close margin. Δ

MONTE CARLO...

[Continued from page 6]

Position B

25-point finals. John Simon (Black) and Ion Ressu (White) are tied at 22-all. White doubles. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**

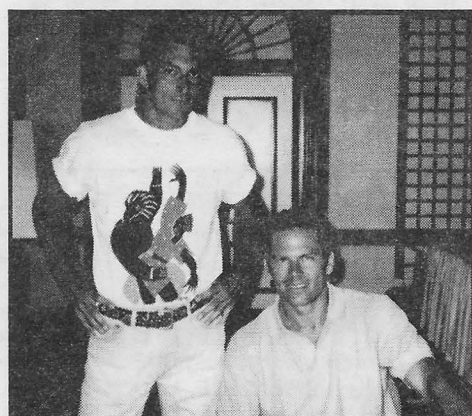


program, Simon only had a 20.20% chance in this setup. He took anyway!

After seven hours, it was over. Ressu won the next game to claim a unique trophy and a suitcase full of French francs.

Other Results

Terence Robinson a Canadian semi-pro tennis player, was a double winner at the tournament. He captured the Intermediate title and breezed to victory in the Tennis Doubles tournament (with Charles Dime).



Terence Robinson (seated) with Tennis Doubles partner Charles Dime.

The World Team Championship went to the "USA Dream Team" of Alan Steffen, Howard Markowitz and Antoinette Williams.



World Team Champs Howard Markowitz, Antoinette Williams and Alan Steffen.

Success For Chicago

Chicago players made a good showing at the awards ceremony. Aside from Markowitz, Howard Ring (Champ Last Chance runner-up) and Bobbie Shifrin (Intermediate 2nd Cons. Winner) also collected trophies.

And we thanks André Rolfo-Fontana and James Ballié for honoring us with the Chairman's Trophy for lifetime achievement on behalf of backgammon. What a great honor. Hopefully in another 20 years, we'll be truly worthy of it! Δ

WINNER'S CORNER



May-July 1992

Vanuatu Tournament (Port Vila, Australia; 17-21 May)... Open: 1-Michael Sampieri, 2-Colin Tyte, 3/4-Clive Sellen / Robbie Solomon.

Argentina Assoc. of Backgammon Weeklys (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in June)... Champ Winners: Eduardo Vaneskeheian, Leonardo Cappella (2), Jorge Cavalieri, Marcelo Daich. Junior Winners: Jimena Rodrigo, Fernando Neumark, Alberto Daich, Elena Dorin, Walter Katz. Novice Winners: Maria Suarez, José Rodriguez, Eduardo Viana.

Mats Jonasson Australian Nat'l Championship (Melbourne, Australia; 5-8 June)... Championship: 1-Gerry Fitt, 2-Kevin Mansfield, 3/4-Michael Sampieri / Simon Friend. Open: 1-Con Lefas, 2-William Van Praagh. Regent Golden Handshake: 1-Artemis Sideridis, 2-Mike Watkins.

NY/NJ Co-op Regional (Hackensack, NJ; 28 June)... Championship (17): 1-Ami Tennenbaum, 2-Al Tesoro; 1C-Jeff Acierno, 2C-Jack Kissane. Limited (16): 1-Al Bader, 2-Phil Franklin; 1C-Otto Reissman, 2C-Zita Samuels.

HBC One-Day (Indianapolis, IN; 28 June)... Open: 1-Jim Curtis, 2-Jeff Baker. Intermediate: 1-Mary Ann Meese, 2-Holly Stowe.

1st Backgammon Olympiad (Venice, Italy; 30 June-5 July)... Olympic Individual Tournament—Championship: 1-Robert Wachtel (USA), 2-Kazuhiro Shino (JPN), 3/4-Michel Cordier (BEL) / Heinz Gottal (GER). Intermediate: 1-John Sjolin (DEN), 2-Siegfried Tonzer (GER). Beginner: 1-Nougzar Melikidze (EUN). 4th City of Venice—Championship: 1-André Hoffmann (HK), 2-Jürgen Scharff (GER), 3/4-Hans Willem Capel (HOL) / Heiner Haussleiter (GER); 1C-Dag Ekmark (SWE), 2C-Bill Robertie (USA); 1LC-Alvaró Savio (BRA); Ladies Prize-Antoinette Williams (USA). Intermediate: 1-Guido Bonavita (ITA), 2-Goran Karlsson (SWE); 1C-Thomas Gettwart (GER); 1LC-Guido Flamigni (ITA); La-

dies Prize-Cathrine Bladh (SWE).

Kater Cup 1992 No. 4 (Enschede, Netherlands; 4 July)... Championship (24): 1-Lie Man (NL), 2-Alexius Giesing (GER), 3/4-Sjors Rolf (NL) / Ernie Aerts (BEL); 1C-Gerd Liedtke (GER), 2C-Volker Wenzlaff (GER). Beginner (14): 1-Margit Hagen (GER), 2-Alex Slegt (NL); 1C-Karie Bos (NL). "Grote Kater" Shootout (38): 1-Michael Vogt (GER).

Milwaukee Sunday Bimonthly (Milwaukee, WI; 5 July)... Open (12): 1-Jeff Kane, 2-Leslie Lockett; 1C/2C-Stu Katz / Bob Holyon... New club director Marv Arnol is temporarily suspending the Sunday events. The Milwaukee Club still meets each week at Gaslight North at 7:00 p.m. Call 414/355-8805 for info.

College Park Summer Championships (Bethesda, MD; 10-12 July)... Summer Championships (25): 1-Karen Davis, 2-Ed Maslansky; 1C-Harry Zilli. Summer Open (32): 1-Mel Leifer, 2-Larry Keating; 1C-Karen Davis. Doubles (16): 1-Bob Eberlein, 2-Greg Lilley & Daniel Riedel. Knockout (16): 1/2-Al Teroso / James Rostom. Δ

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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If your name's not on this list, reaching the America Cup finals could win you an extra \$1000.

Who will win the prestigious America Cup Backgammon Challenge? I say it will be one of the names listed in the combined two page ad appearing here and in the July *Flint Area BackgammonNews*. If your name isn't on the list and you end up reaching the finals, I'll pay you an additional \$1000.

There will be dozens of other events including the Illinois State Championship, Masters, Battle of the States and Parlay from Hell. This fall, you'll find the action in Illinois.

U. U.

The bottom half of this ad appears on the back page of the July 1992 Flint Area BackgammonNews. To receive a free copy, send your name and address to: Carol Joy Cole; 3003 Ridgecliffe Drive; Flint, MI 48532.

2nd illinois state backgammon championships and america cup

Sept. 30-Oct. 4, 1992

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