

CHICAGO POINT

NUMBER 59

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

JUNE 1993

14th Chicago Open

THE NAME IS BOND, KEN BOND



To qualify for the final-four of the Chicago Open's eight match format, one must achieve a minimum 6-2 win/loss record. After Chicagoan Ken Bond lost his first two matches, first place in the tournament would require winning every remaining match. That's just what the likeable Mr. Bond did to grab top honors at the Memorial Day weekend event.

Joann Feinstein directed the tournament, assisted by Las Vegas Howard Markowitz (the tourney founder) and John Brussel. Attendance at the Sheraton Suites Hotel in Elk Grove Village (new venue) was up 10% from 1992.

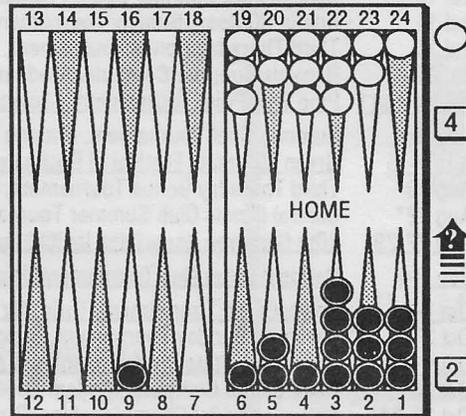
After edging Jan Carlstrom 13-12 in the semifinals, Kenny faced Chicago powerhouse Yamin Yamin.

Leading the 15-point final 12-9, Ken surprisingly redoubled: clearly wrong. [See above position.] Yamin scooped and returned an 8-cube at his first opportunity. In the end, he needed a set of doubles his last roll but failed. After paying his dues to Chicago backgammon for many years, Ken Bond was the champ.

Later asked why he was willing to put the match on the line in a relatively close position, Ken responded, "I felt I had it at that moment. I didn't want it slipping away from me."

Despite negative comments on his

15-point finals. Ken Bond (Black) leads Yamin Yamin (White), 12-9. **SHOULD BLACK REDOUBLE?**



redouble, one fearless cube decision can't diminish Ken's accomplishment of winning nine matches in a row vs. world class competition. He played aggressively and is a worthy champion.

IN OTHER RESULTS, Bill Bartholomay,

Atlanta Braves Chairman of the Board, had a great tournament winning the Special Jackpot, placing second in the Champ Cons. (behind Ami Tennenbaum) and buying Ken Bond in the Calcutta! Congratulations also to Andy Palumbo of New York for his big win in the Intermediate division. Results: Δ

14th CHICAGO OPEN—ABT

CHAMPIONSHIP (42): 1-Ken Bond, 2-Yamin Yamin, 3/4-Jan Carlstrom / Ken Cohen; 1C-Ami Tennenbaum, 2C-Bill Bartholomay.

INTERMEDIATE (47): 1-Andy Palumbo, 2-Fred Gehlhoff, 3/4-David Rubin / Kurt Schurecht; 1C-Norma Shyer, 2C-Ed Buerger.

\$500 SPECIAL EVENT (8): 1-Bill Bartholomay, 2-Ken Cohen.

BLITZ (64): 1-Paul Franks, 2-Andy Krenitz.

DOUBLES (16): 1-Jill Ferdinand & Neil Kazaross, 2-Jeff Acierno & Jim Pascoe.

VEGAS CONNECTION (80): 1-Bill Davis.

SUNDAY JACKPOT (16): 1-Tak Morioka, 2-George Barr.

BIG-TIME BACKGAMMON



Claudio Salamone of the Argentina Backgammon Association sent us the photo of what he believes is "...the largest backgammon set in the world." The Buenos Aires beach board measures 26 ft. x 26 ft. with 14" diameter checkers and 6" square dice.

What do you think? Are the male kibitzers concentrating more on the game or on the bikini-clad participants?

CHICAGO POINT

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT
2726 W. Lunt Avenue
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READING THE LABEL

Hope that you are well and the dice are falling good on your side of the table. Mine are not, but I am putting in a lot of practice on home ground. No international events for me this year.

I have \$35 that I can't spend here, so I've enclosed same for a renewal to CHICAGO POINT. It's not yet due, perhaps, but since I haven't a clue when it expires, better safe than sorry. Sorry to be so stupid. You did tell us once how to work out that date from the number on the envelope. Again, please.—*Don Hatt, Wiltshire, England*

It's really very simple, Don. On your mailing label, just opposite your name, it reads "exp. 74." This means that your subscription expires with the mailing of issue number 74. Of course we'll include renewal notices with issue 73 and 74 as a reminder.—Ed.

DANNY FINDS A BETTER IDEA

If Kit Woolsey doesn't reply to the Jim Gibbs letter, I'd like to. I agree with Jim

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing

1993 American BG Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

Jun 13	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Jun 13	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/262-0173
Jun 16-20	1993 Las Vegas Open Tournament, Maxim Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	708/470-9491
Jun 27*	Knock Yourself Out Sunday, Cavendish North Club, Southfield, MI	313/642-9616
Jul 1	Flint Club's Special Thursday Tournament, Novi Hilton, Novi MI	313/232-9731
<u>Jul 2-4</u>	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI</u>	<u>313/232-9731</u>
Jul 10-11*	College Park Summer Open, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0603
Jul 11	Austin BG Assn. Sunday Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/280-5945
Jul 15	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Jul 21	Rscards Summer Computer Modem Tournament, GENie	800/638-9636
<u>Jul 30-Aug 1</u>	<u>Pine Tree Point Tournament, Alexandria Bay, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Aug 8	Summer Cool Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/338-6380
<u>Aug 9-15</u>	<u>Green Mountain Festival of Backgammon, Stratton Mountain Inn, VT</u>	<u>305/527-4033</u>
Aug 19*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Aug 22*	Central Illinois Club Summer Tournament, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon, IL	309/673-7622
<u>Aug 27-29</u>	<u>30th Gammon Associates Invitational, Cavendish West Hollywood, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
<u>Sep 3-6</u>	<u>National Labor Day Tournament, Radisson Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/845-8435</u>
<u>Oct 1-3</u>	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Turin, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Oct 3*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
<u>Oct 6-10</u>	<u>3rd Illinois State Championships & America Cup, Woodfield Hilton, IL</u>	<u>708/945-7801</u>
Oct 20	Rscards Fall Computer Modem Tournament, GENie	800/638-9636
<u>Oct 22-24*</u>	<u>Nation's Capital Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD</u>	<u>301/530-0603</u>
<u>Oct 29-31</u>	<u>New Hampshire Fall Classic, Sheraton Tara Wayfarer, Bedford, NH</u>	<u>603/863-4711</u>
Nov 9*	BPC 11th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	312/338-6380
<u>Nov 20-21*</u>	<u>Autumn Gran Prix, Embassy Suites Hotel, La Jolla, CA</u>	<u>619/294-2007</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Jun 17-20	Scandinavian Open, Arkipelag Hotel, Mariehamn, Åland Islands, Finland	021/440 3428
Jun 19	9th Schwaben-Cup, Bürgerhaus Botnang, Stuttgart, Germany	0711/486 190
Jun 24-27	Brazilian BG Assoc. Tournament, Hotel Meridien, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5521/267 6033
Jun 25-27	5th International City of Venice Tournament, Casinò Municipale, Italy	041/5211029
Jun 30-Jul 4	Mitteleuropa Blackjack & BG Tourney, Casino Nova Gorica, Slovenia	392/48019343
Jul 3-4	Monte Carlo Cup '93, Skjoldgården Restaurant, Charlottenlund, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Jul 5	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846 1923
Jul 10-11	The Hilton National, Hilton Hotel, East Midlands Airport, England	0522/53 68 36
Jul 15-18	European Championships, Hotel des Ambassadeurs, Menton, France	392/48019343
Jul 19-25	18th World Backgammon Championship, Hotel Loews, Monte Carlo	33/9330 9931
Jul 29-Aug 1	Riviera's Cup Championship, Hotel Martinez, Cannes, France	331/4288 6645
Aug 2	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846 1923
Aug 7-8	Annual Sjællands Championship, Stenløse, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Aug 28-29	BIBA Trophy Tournament No. 3, George Hotel, Solihull, England	0522/53 68 36
Sep 2-5	Brazilian BG Assoc. Tournament, Hotel Meridien, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5521/267 6033
Sep 6	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846 1923
Sep 23-26	12th Internat'l Austrian Open, Hotel Schloß Seefels, Pörschach, Austria	08341/12825
Oct 4*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846 1923
Oct. 16-17	Sandy Osborne Memorial Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, England	0522/53 68 36
Oct 21-24	3rd Rio de Janeiro Open Tournament, Hotel Meridien, Rio, Brazil	5521/267 6033
Oct 25-29	2nd S.A. World Cup & XIII Tournament, Las Naciones, Buenos Aires, Arg.	541/790 4769
Nov 1*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846 1923
Nov 27-28*	BIBA Trophy Tournament No. 4, George Hotel, Solihull, England	0522/53 68 36
Dec 2-5*	Brazilian BG Assoc. Tournament, Hotel Meridien, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5521/267 6033

that 10/4, 3/1* is inferior to 21/13 even at double match-point. Not only is breaking the 3-point harmful, but the hit on the 1-point turns White's 5-1, 4-1, 3-1 and 2-1 from horror shakes into good ones. But Jim's play, 21/19, 18/12 is also inferior. The point isn't for Black to get hit more often at all. True, getting hit gives him a

whack at a second blot, but if he misses, he's in trouble because White has escaped.

No, Black should want to get hit on White's 2-point, or on his own 1-point after a loose hit. This can wait. Black's main goal must be to prevent White from escaping with impunity. Though 21/13 provides

[Continues]

two more returns when White hits with 6-3, three more shots when White rolls 6-2 and only one shot fewer when White rolls 6-1, its main advantage over 21/19, 18/12 arises when White rolls 6-5. If hit on the 12-point, Black has only the 11 aces to hit back on White's 1-point. But if not hit at

all, Black has 6s and 1s—24 direct and indirect shots—to send White's escapee back.—*Danny Kleinman, Los Angeles, CA*

CORRECTING THE TITLE

In your last issue, you write that Alberto da Pra is the Director of the Worldwide

Backgammon Federation. This is incorrect. Mr. da Pra is the President of WBF.—*Marco Fornasir, Milano, Italy*

KIND WORDS FROM BOSTON

Work and family have kept me out of play for a while, although I hope to "recirculate" soon. The POINT, as the "journal of record," keeps me in touch. Keep up the great work.—*Chris Hughes, Boston, MA*

NO FIRM DATE FOR COSTA RICA IN '94

On behalf of the Costa Rican Backgammon Association, I want to thank all the players attending this year's Tournament of the Americas. I hope you all had as much fun at the tournament as we had putting it on.

I want to set next year's tournament dates A.S.A.P. We must avoid 8 May 1994, as our new President will assume office at that time. Should we move the event two to three weeks before or after this date? What do the players think?—*Mario Madrigal D., President, Costa Rican BG Association*

AN EXPERT BG™ STUDY OF WORST OPENING ROLLS

I just received the May POINT and read Danny Kleinman's article on "Using Your Free Pass." Danny answered the question as to whether any opening rolls actually result in negative equity for the roller.

Using a 2,592 2-ply Expert Backgammon™ cross-sectional rollout, the worst opening roll is 5-1. 6-3 is also slightly negative. All other rolls if opened according to Expert BG™ can be played with positive equity.

Anyone wishing the two page study should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to CHICAGO POINT.—*Jerry Godsey, Hong Kong Backgammon Club Δ*

AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1993

Standings through 31 May 1993 after 8 tournaments
(Includes Spring Gran Prix & Chicago Open)

BEN LANG	26.00	Mike Pettigrew	6.50	John Lear	3.20	Farzan Garmroodi	1.32
MARTY STORER	23.83	Bob Holyon	6.20	Jan Carlstrom	2.94	Peter Zacks	1.32
FRANK TALBOT	22.16	Marty Kohler	5.85	Ken Cohen	2.94	Ray Fogelund	1.32
Woody Woodson	21.12	Mike Shanas	5.60	Denny Leatherman	2.90	Javad Farjood	1.29
Ken Bond	16.16	Ed Pavilonis	5.21	Nayan Shah	2.90	Lance Jenkins	1.29
Quint McTyeire	14.53	Lila Swan	5.21	Michael Sharp	2.50	Johnnie Roberts	1.25
David Hochron	14.40	Rich Sweetman	5.21	Holly Stowe	2.41	Gardner Soule	1.00
John Mansey	13.00	Larry Lau	5.20	Ed Zell	2.40	George Photias	1.00
Ralph Levy	11.44	Carol Falk	4.95	Ed Buerger	2.13	Randy Peterson	0.93
Arnold Zousmer	10.85	Norma Shyer	4.92	Wally Watson	2.12	Alex Perry	0.88
Perry Gartner	10.84	Dean Muench	4.65	Walter Trice	2.12	Ed Nyitray	0.88
Felix Yen	10.44	Fred Gehlhoff	4.10	George Barr	2.08	Marc Poe	0.88
Mike Nelson	10.44	Dean Adamian	4.03	Larry Strommen	2.08	Tony Pascuzzi	0.88
Jake Jacobs	10.07	Joe Sylvester	4.03	Miriam Bureson	2.00	Jamie Curtis	0.74
Jorgen Granstedt	9.69	John Rockwell	3.96	Arkady Kuperman	1.87	John Miranda	0.70
Andy Palumbo	9.05	Norm Wiggins	3.96	Jerry Padova	1.87	Lance Weesner	0.70
Ami Tennenbaum	8.82	Bill Bartholomay	3.79	Jill Ferdinand	1.76	Zita Samuels	0.70
Ira Hoffberg	8.40	Carl Adamec	3.76	Mark Damish	1.73	Nancy Ishac	0.67
Herb Gurland	7.88	Sam Hanna	3.76	David Rubin	1.65	Dan Bloch	0.65
Yamin Yamin	7.34	Belle Pronman	3.73	Kurt Schurecht	1.65	Amy Trudeau	0.61
Frank Frigo	7.24	Carol Joy Cole	3.60	Bob Howington	1.61	Josh Schwartz	0.61
Dave Orandle	7.20	Jerry Ungar	3.53	Mike Lawless	1.50	Mary Vitale	0.51
Ron Weingrad	7.20	Randall Witt	3.53	Allen Levien	1.35	Ed Baker	0.35
Gabe Stiasny	7.18	Mark Donaldson	3.29	David MacBryde	1.32	Margot Jacqz	0.35
Jim Lakdawala	6.50						

1993 CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU 31 MAY

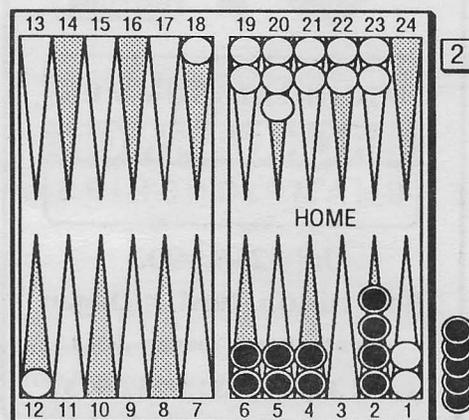
NEIL KAZAROSS	14.64	Jolie Rubin	3.48	Don Desmond	1.60	Mike Spiropoulos	0.56
GARY KAY	9.44	Tim Mabee	3.44	Steve Grubart	1.60	Dick McCall	0.56
DAVID RUBIN	8.76	Dave Cramer	3.44	Tony Schroeder	1.56	Richard Beagarie	0.56
YAMIN YAMIN	8.76	Stan Kucharz	3.16	Alice Kay	1.56	Jim Pappas	0.48
JAKE JACOBS	7.92	Norma Shyer	3.12	Andy Krenitz	1.36	John Stryker	0.48
DON JAYHAN	7.64	Ed Buerger	3.12	Jill Ferdinand	1.28	Joe Koucharian	0.48
DEEB SHALATI	7.52	Marcy Sloan	3.04	Joann Feinstein	1.28	Graham Sievers	0.48
TAK MORIOKA	6.80	Femi Owiku	2.72	Amy Trudeau	1.12	Jerry Brooks	0.48
JOHN DEMIAN	6.00	Bob Ebbeler	2.68	Peter Kalba	1.12	Frank Callea	0.44
BOBBIE SHIFRIN	5.60	Stu Katz	2.56	Larry Strommen	1.12	John Meyers	0.40
PHYLLIS SMOLINSKI	5.56	Bill Keefe	2.36	Marty Tatosian	1.00	Steve Katz	0.36
RALPH LEVY	5.28	Georgina Flanagan	2.24	Ron Stur	0.96	William Frierson	0.32
MARY FRANKS	5.20	Bruce Wittert	2.16	Roland Dieter	0.96	Harry Hayward	0.32
JOHN BRUSSEL	4.80	Alex Itkin	2.16	Dave Rockwell	0.96	Jay Ward	0.32
KEN BOND	4.72	Sarg Serges	2.16	Tad Wilson	0.96	Katy Clark	0.32
HERB ROMAN	4.64	Bill Davis	2.16	J.A. Miller	0.96	Greg Try	0.32
PAUL FRANKS	4.36	Leslie Lockett	1.96	Lou Salzman	0.88	Andy Argy	0.24
PAUL FRIEDMAN	4.24	Chuck Olson	1.92	Reggie Porter	0.80	Joe Mangine	0.24
DANNY DEROCHE	3.84	Phil Simborg	1.84	Dan Judd	0.64	Mark Kay	0.24
HOWARD RING	3.76	Howard Markowitz	1.84	Larry Yakowenko	0.64	Mary Vitale	0.20
Allen Zimmerman	3.60	Arline Levy	1.76	Greg Roland	0.60	Andy Bittman	0.16
Richard Stawowy	3.52	Tim Serges	1.76	Kurt Schurecht	0.60	Barry Epstein	0.16

NEIL KAZAROSS and RALPH LEVY tied for BPC May Player of the Month with 3.44 master points. John Demian and Howard Ring were not far behind with 2.88 points each.

your move

PROBLEM #194

Money game. BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.



DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS



SMOKING AND BACKGAMMON

Dear Miss Lonelyblots: Most backgammon players are charming, intelligent and good company. Yet many are unable to play without the compulsive sucking of cigarette filth, just like the mindless degenerates at the casino tables. It seems that gambling and smoking go together, whether or not there is any skill involved. Why is this?—Nosmo King

DEAR NOSMO: I will address only your scientific curiosity, not the disgust your choice of words conveys.

You're right. Backgammon has a gambling element that is not present in other skill games such as chess or tournament bridge. Gambling and smoking are correlated, though far from completely. Each is an addiction. Psychologists speak of an "addictive" personality, which can manifest itself in compulsive smoking of cigarettes, compulsive hours spent at the craps table or the backgammon board, and compulsive taking of hopeless cubes.

There is relatively little correlation

between addiction and intelligence, though obviously intelligence is an asset to anybody determined to free himself from an addiction.

I suspect that susceptibility to addiction is a hard-wiring of the nervous system to crave (and become bored without) external stimulation, to seek "action" and excitement. Yet the addictions any particular person forms depend on his particular culture and life history. In some societies, for example, alcoholism is very rare. In others, nearly all adult males smoke.

In the United States, until recent generations, few women smoked. Then with the lifting of cultural taboos against smoking and other "unladylike" behavior, rates of female addiction rose to traditional male levels.

I and other women now in our forties faced powerful social pressures in our youth to become smokers. I don't mean only the incessant advertising depicting smoking as glamorous and the free little packets of cigarettes handed to us by "campus reps"—fellow students hired by the tobacco companies to hook us. No, I mean also the sincere advice offered by our elders even in the 1960s. I remember feeling very tense just before final exams during my freshman year at college. Mrs. Davis, the housemother at my dorm, observed this. She counseled me to take up smoking . . . "to calm your nerves, my

dear." Behind this bad advice lay a piece of the truth. Smoking does "calm the nerves" . . . of those already hooked.

Lacking any previous parental admonitions against smoking, I tried to act on the housemother's advice. Fortunately, it did not occur to Mrs. Davis that I needed any instruction. I lit my first cigarette, inhaled deeply, and nearly choked on the foul-tasting smoke. I promptly abandoned the attempt. I regard it as sheer luck that I did not persevere in the experiment. The results of its "success" would have been very hard to undo.

Mrs. Davis grew up when the hazards of smoking were unknown and the taboos had just been lifted. Scientific knowledge about smoking still hadn't filtered down to the general public when she held her position of trust as housemother. Mine is the last generation of Americans to be subjected to pro-smoking pressures. As new generations reach adulthood, you can expect to see fewer and fewer cigarette smokers . . . even among backgammon players and other gamblers.—Miss Lonelyblots Δ

Do you have a backgammon-related question for Miss Lonelyblots involving people problems, game etiquette or the play itself? Write: Dear Miss Lonelyblots, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 2726 W. Lunt Avenue, Chicago, IL 60645-3039.

shake 'em UP

ABT AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1993

MICHIGAN SUMMER BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS

July 2-4, 1993
Novi Hilton / Novi, Michigan
 Thursday Bonus Tourney—July 1
Carol Joy Cole 313/232-9731

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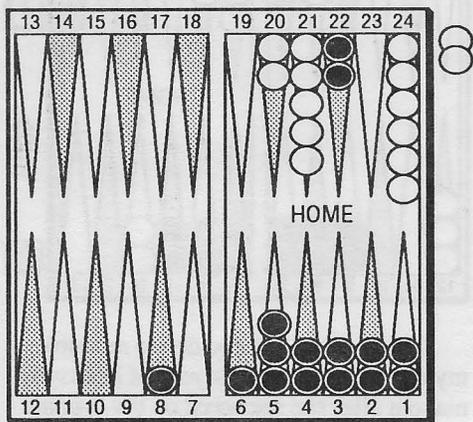


Costa Rica

by Jake Jacobs

How would you like to find yourself, as Black, in this position?

Position 1. 15-point match. White (leading 14-0 Crawford) to roll. Calculate Black's chance to win the match.



Suppose further that it is the first round of the El Cariari in Costa Rica, your opponent is Kent Goulding (White), and you are trailing 14-0 Crawford?

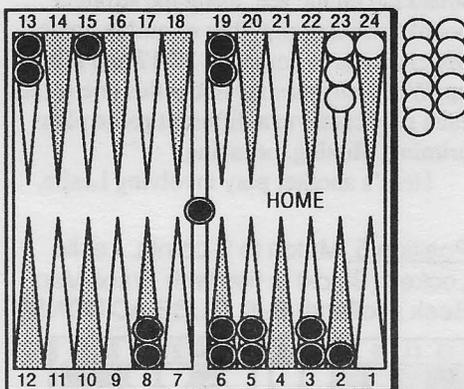
At this point, my equity in this big money event was down to about 50 colones . . . enough to buy a copy of the San José newspaper, and read all about the Supreme Court hostage drama that was consuming the attention of all Central America. All except those of us in the backgammon room at the Cariari Resort; we who were concerned with more important matters, such as beating K.G.

"Kent, you're providing material for the greatest comeback story ever written. Don't blow it now!" The score had reached 14-7. Since my total was exactly half of Kent's, that meant I had 50% match equity, right? Unfortunately, we had reached the point in the match beyond which Kent refused to cooperate, and the greatest comeback story remains unwritten. If at the end of this article, you are not completely satisfied, mail the unused portion to Kent Goulding for a full refund.

MEANWHILE, THERE WAS another incredible comeback occurring. This one was from the round-of-32 in the Tournament of the Americas. [See Position 2]

Tino Lechich (Black) trailed Mario Madrigal (White) 12-8 Crawford. Not only was Tino's situation desperate, but, shooting at Mario's blot in this position, he

Position 2. 13-point match. Tino Lechich (Black) trails Mario Madrigal (White) 12-8 Crawford. White to roll.



missed! Tino went on to win the tournament anyway. No credit for guessing what he rolled. (By the way, if the position of Tino's checkers is not 100% accurate, it is because it was given to me by Mario while he, Frank Talbot, and I were participating in the finals of the International Heineken Drinking Competition. Mario, by dint of home coaster advantage, is claiming victory, but Frank and I are training hard for next year, and one of us will surely bring the "Americas' Stein" back to the Midwest where it belongs.)

SINCE TINO AND MIKE SENKIEWICZ, winner of the Cariari and semifinalist in the Tournament of the Americas, were busy winning all of the matches, the rest of us had plenty of free time to enjoy the Cariari Resort and the lures of Costa Rica. The Cariari has golf, tennis, and two swimming pools.

The first day I spent over an hour in the equatorial sun. Now, I'm not exactly bald, but I will admit to being pilarically challenged. By Wednesday, my head was a mass of blisters which popped and trickled like pus-filled Rice Krispies. Fortunately, Hossein and Zohrah Zafarianian gave me some Vitamin E caps to squeeze onto my scalp. The theory is to treat oozing yellow goop with more oozing yellow goop. Whenever people asked, I warned them not to stand under the parrots in the lobby.

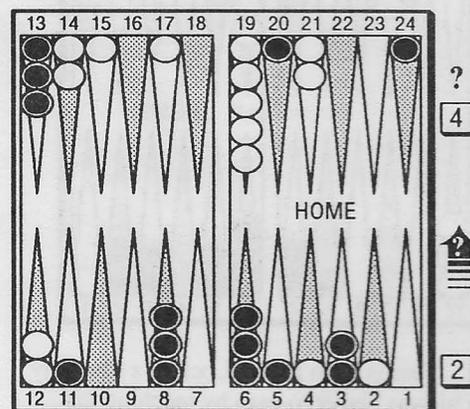
Concentrating on indoor activities after that, I found some pretty nice bars and restaurants in San José. On the nights when the Costa Rican Backgammon Association wasn't providing free food, drink, music and dancing to the backgammon players (about every other night), I went with groups to a Japanese restaurant and sushi bar, and Italian restaurant with homemade pasta, and a place called the Lobster Inn. I also visited a Hemingwayesque bar called Key Largo, where even tourists who speak no Spanish are guaranteed to make new friends.

BACK ON THE TOURNAMENT SCENE, it seemed like every time I turned around, I was facing another world class player, usually to my detriment. After Kent knocked me out of the El Cariari, Leslie Lockett and I lost in the Doubles money round to Wilcox Snellings and Ken Cohen. Lee Genud took care of me in the Last Chance, and Rick Barabino whipped me mercilessly in the finals of the Cariari Jackpot.

Venezuelan experts Georges Badra and Fabio Pizzi offered a 1-2 punch to knock me out of the Tournament of the Americas. Their relentless blitzing style and aggressive cube handling had me sitting on the sidelines before I finished my morning coffee.

With plenty of time to kibitz, I did collect some interesting positions:

Position 3. 13-point match. Rageb Shadallah (Black) trails Mike Senkiewicz (White) 8-2. CUBE ACTIONS?



[Continued on page 6]



ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis
312/338-6380
Peter Kalba
312/276-4144

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. at Golden Flame, 6417 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago; 312/792-0424.

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. Zimmnicki (708/924-8632.)

SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASSN: Tournaments Tuesday, 6:00 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 Chi-Chi's, 4415 N. Rockwood, Peoria. Sue Will (309/699-6005).

PRIME BG CLUB OF CHICAGO: Tourn. Friday, 7:00 p.m. at T.J.'s Lounge, Radisson Hotel, 4500 W. Touhy, Lincolnwood. Joann Feinstein (708/674-0120).

NORTH CLUB: Daily side play except Sunday at 4747 W. Peterson (402), Chicago. Greg Defotis (312/286-6719).

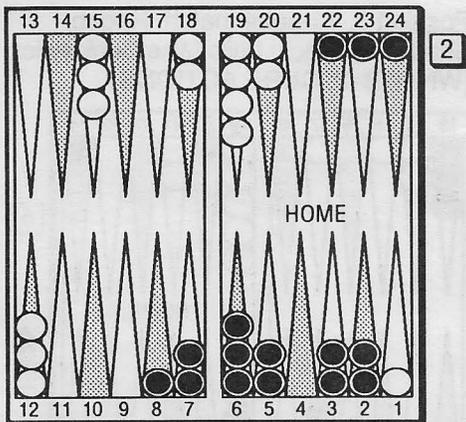
Costa Rica...

[Continued from page 5]

In Position 3, Rageb Shadallah, trailing Mike Senkiewicz 8-2, redoubles to 4: the sexiest cube of the tournament. Each side has a two point board, and four blots. In a sense, all Black has going for him is the roll; but in practice, I didn't find anyone who would take this.

The next two positions are controversial. I cannot give you a definitive answer, only my opinion (would that they were the same!).

Position 4. 9-point match. Leslie Lockett (Black) leads Sandy Grassel (White), 8-7. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**

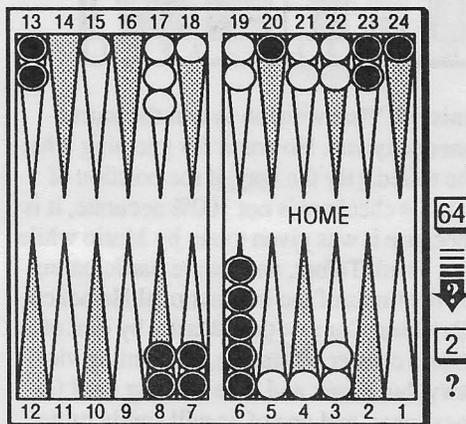


This is from Leslie Lockett's (the only Chicago player to cash by reaching the Intermediate Consolation finals) match with Sandy Grassel. Leslie made the 22-

point and slotted her 4-point—certainly a strong play with chances for an immediate gain. A few strong players advocated smacking on the ace, using the stronger board to blitz or possibly scramble home. My choice is to come out 22/17 and mix it up. What intrigues me about this one is that each play caters to a different game plan: priming, blitzing, or racing.

Here's another play involving Leslie.

Position 5. Match to 9-points. Leslie Lockett (Black) is tied with Frank Van Beek (Holland) 6-6. **CUBE ACTIONS?**

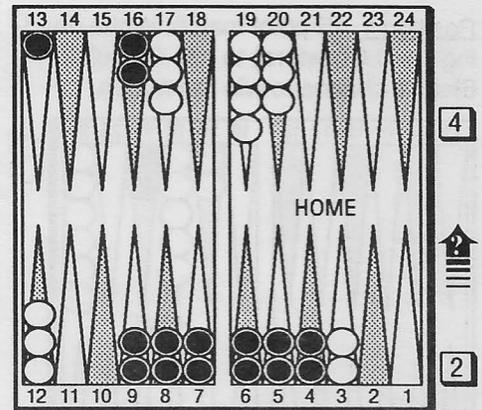


Experts often disagree about checker plays, but here is a cube decision with some of the opinions miles apart. Some players say they would pass this one, even for money (and at this score the take point is over 30%). Others would not even double. I think it is a clear take, but would double because of the high take point, and

the fact that some players might pass.

SPEAKING OF PASSING, it's not a good idea to double when you have no chance of losing your market.

Position 6. Match to 5-points. Jake Jacobs (Black) leads Florrie Snyder (White) 3-2. **WHAT COULD I HAVE BEEN THINKING TO REDOUBLE TO 4?**



Leading 3 to 2, I decided to redouble my opponent, Florrie Snyder of Pennsylvania, out after she anchored on my 3-point. After she took, I remembered it was a five point match. Oops! Florrie escaped with double 5s at her first opportunity. Double oops! Fortunately, my rolling was better than my cube play and I won the game and match in a photo finish.

WELL, NEXT YEAR—and I will certainly return to Costa Rica next year—I won't make any mistakes like that. Next year I resolve to play flawlessly, roll better, and not sit out in the sun too long. Meanwhile, pardon me while I go peel my scalp. Δ

ACE POINT BACKGAMMON CLUB

Michael Valentine, Director

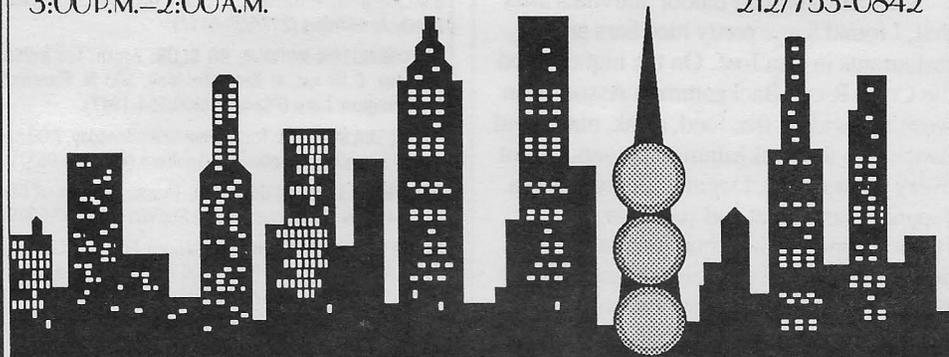
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who did what

WINNER'S CORNER



Apr.–May 1993

RSCARDS Spring 1993 (GENIE, April-May)... OPEN (23): 1-Durf Freund (CA), 2-Glenn Daily (NY), 3/4-Peter Abrams (NY) / Mike Murray (CA), 5/8-Gerald Spalding (FL) / Douglas Johnson (NC) / Mark Damish (MA) / Dan Shirley (NY). **NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Cambridge, MA; 19 Apr.)... EXPERT (19): 1-Evan Diamond, 2-Rich Sweetman, 3/4-Mike Nelson / Linc Bedell; 1C-Herb Gurland, 2C-Walter Trice. A DIV. (18): 1-Andy Latto, 2-David Wells, 3/4-Fred Millman / Alex Perry; 1C-Albert Steg, 2C-Joe Moore. B DIV. (10): 1-Mark Damish, 2-Billy Doran; 1C-Ron Mak, 2C-Al Mason. **NY/NJ Fifth Club Championship Invitational** (Woodbury, NY; 23 April)... **PLAYOFFS** (9): 1-Fast Eddie Pavilonis, 2-Dave Sporn, 3/4-Jeff Baldino / Jeff Acierno. **NY/NJ Co-op Regional** (Woodbury, NY; 25 April)... OPEN (28): 1-Jim Pascoe, 2-Bob Bishop, 3/4-Angelo Larceri / Ami Tennenbaum; 1C-Perry Gartner, 2C-Jeff

Acierno. **LIMITED** (14): 1-Bob Molitor, 2-Mark Simon; 1C-Denise Berkowitz.

World Series of Backgammon (Nassau, Bahamas; 5-11 May)... **OPEN** (20): 1-Mark Rozands, 2-Phyllis Ames **INTERMEDIATE** (19): 1-Al Saller, 2-Alberto da Pra.

Spring Gran Prix—ABT (La Jolla, CA; 15-16 May)... **OPEN** (52): 1-Ben Lang, 2-John Mansey, 3/4-Jim Lakdawala / Mike Pettigrew.

Torneo Yamin Yamin (San José, Costa Rica; 17, 19-20 May)... **OPEN** (32): 1-Antonio Ortega, 2-Mario Madrigal, 3-Milton Gonzalez... First prize was an elephant leather backgammon board. Yamin also supplied quality T-shirts to the runners-up.

South Florida Spring Tournament (Pompano Beach, FL; 23 May)... **OPEN** (21): 1-Bob Paris, 2-Vinnie Del Guidice; 1C/2C-Howard Robinson / Elli Turgell. **INTERMEDIATE** (7): 1-Bobby Kuhn; 1C-Roberta Liquori.

Hotel Corobici Tournament (San José, Costa Rica; 24-25 May)... **OPEN** (19): 1-Mario Madrigal, 2-Pierre Zakia (Congo), 3-Antonio Orgeta, 4-Rolando Coto. **INTERMEDIATE** (16): 1-Javier Aguilar, 2-Carlos Brenes. **NOVICE** (16): 1-Catalina Coto, 2-Ana Herdon. Δ

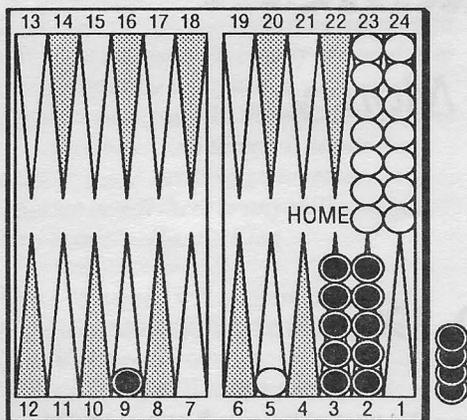
AMALGAMATION

Visiting the Chicago Bar Point Club in May: **Howard Maddux** (Saudi Arabia), **John Vietor** (CA) and **Judy McHale** (IN). Judy got the most out of the \$10 entry fee tournament, knocking off (in order) club masters **Tak Morioka** and **Gary Kay**... The next time you visit the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas, look up baccarat dealer **Linda Compton**. We met Linda at the Chicago Open: her first-ever national event... Spotted kibitzing **Don Desmond**'s matches at the Chicago Open: weatherman/TV producer **John Coleman**... Two American Backgammon Tour updates: Due to scheduling problems, the College Park ABT event is switching from summer to the Nation's Capital Tournament 22-24 Oct. Also, The Autumn Gran Prix date is set for 20-21 Nov.... **Carol Joy Cole** reminds you to book your hotel reservations for the Michigan Summer Championships (2-4 July) by 11 June. Call the Novi Hilton at 313/349-4000 and mention "Backgammon"... We think Chicago Bulls superstar **Michael Jordan** should switch his hobby from blackjack to backgammon. It's more challenging and far less costly. Δ

PROBLEM #193 SOLVED

by Neil Kazaross

Tournament double match-point.
BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.



Here I was as Black, coasting to an easy victory vs. John Bashian in the Blitz playoffs at the recent Indiana Open. All I had to do was jump over a blot four pips away to virtually lock up the race, when up pops this cute little pair of aces. (Yech!) Four plays were worth considering:

- (A) 9/6, 2/1 (C) 9/7, 2/1(2)
- (B) 9/5* (D) 9/6, 3/2

After long thought, I decided to hit (B). It's only two more shots and nearly eliminates White's racing chances, I reasoned. John, rolling like a full-blooded Armenian (I'm only half), proved me wrong by missing with 4-4 and then winning the 3½% vig race that remained with a few more doubles.

The following Tuesday at the Chicago Bar Point Club, Director Bill Davis argued in favor of (C), building a third point and guarding against an ace void in the bearoff. I still liked hitting (B) and told Bill, "Put your money where my mouth is and make a dinner bet on which of our plays is correct."

A mutual friend assisted us by doing an extensive cross-sectional simulated rollout (36 x 36 x 20 times) for each play on Expert Backgammon™ (v. 1.61). I also rolled out over 100,000 games for each of the four plays on another program. The order of finish was identical.

Table 1 shows the cubeless probability

of winning (CPW) for each play from the Expert Backgammon™ rollout:

Table 1—Black's Overall Winning Chances Based On Rollout Results From Expert BG™

(A) 9/6, 2/1	87.12%
(B) 9/5*	86.41%
(C) 9/7, 2/1(2)	86.26%
(D) 9/6, 3/2	84.93%

It looks like I made the second best play. 9/5* was slightly ahead of Bill's 9/7, 2/1(2), but it wasn't the correct play, so Bill and I (along with Jake Jacobs and Tak Morioka) had dinner at Ron of Japan's "Dutch treat."

AS AN ANALYST, I must try to explain the small differences between the top three plays. (We will eliminate play D from further discussion because its rollout results were significantly lower than the others.)

Table 2 was generated with the help of Larry Strommen's BPA™ (v. 4.01). Column 1 shows Black's race chances when White misses. It was created by taking the race equity from every White missing number for each play and then combining the results.

What about when Black is hit? Giving Black an average 6-2 roll from the bar, I placed him on the 17-point for all three plays. To determine the location of the White straggler, I looked at each individual play and recorded where White would land following all his possible hitting numbers. I then used weighted averages to calculate the race equity from each final location. Results (assuming no further contact) are shown in Column 2.

Combining the two tables based on actual hitting/missing probabilities yields Column 3—an estimate of Black's combined racing chances.

As Column 1 shows, (B) is indeed best for the race if not hit. But White is in very bad shape if he misses after any play.

(C) is clearly correct if White hits; however, since (C) gives one more shot than (A), and getting hit costs substantially in racing equity, (C)'s combined racing chances are not as good as (A)'s (see Column 3). Since (B) gives two more shots than (A), the same reasoning applies.

Why are Black's chances in Column 3 slightly better than his chances as shown in Table 1 rollout results? Intangibles such as Black's loss from dancing and future rehit chances must be considered.

Column 3 of Table 2 shows that (B) is worse than (C) while the rollout indicates otherwise. Compare the way big doubles play, especially 5-5. Following (B), Black is hit and gets 15 returns from the bar at White's 5-blot. After (C), White's 5-5 keeps the race very interesting.

Rehitting chances are very difficult to quantify since they can go back and forth. However, Black can't get rehit if he's not hit initially, so give the edge to (A) here.

What about Black's blot on his ace point following (A)? Over the board, I was afraid of this. However, the bearoff benefits of slotting greatly outweigh the long parlay of White picking up the second checker.

These intangibles make this problem perfectly suited for computer analysis. I do agree with the output showing the rehit chances of (B) rank it slightly ahead of (C). But (A) is correct here because it leaves the least amount of shots and slots the ace point, thus speeding the ensuing bearoff, whether or not Black is hit. Δ

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Aug. 9-10: Chouette Tournament

Aug. 11-13: Vermont State Championship (\$300/\$150/\$60)

Aug. 14-15: ABT event: 18th U.S.-Canadian Championship (\$250/\$120/\$40)



Tournament Accommodations:

Stratton Mountain Inn Rates: \$71

Village Lodge Rates: \$59

For information and reservations: (802) 297-2500

For tournament information on this event and the

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July 19-25, 1993

Les & Sue Boyd at (305) 527-4033

Table 2—Black's Winning Chances Based on BPA™ Analyzer (No Further Contact Is Assumed)

	1—Black Is Missed	2—Black Is Hit	3—Black Combined Chance
(A) 9/6, 2/1	97.05%	68.38%	88.26%
(B) 9/5*	99.28%	67.33%	87.74%
(C) 9/7, 2/1(2)	97.04%	70.18%	88.12%

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European Backgammon Championship

Hotel des Ambassadeurs — Menton, France

15–18 July 1993



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY 15 JULY 1993

- 16:00–19:00 Master Tournament registration
(5000 ff entry fee with 97% return)
Mini-jackpots
- 21:30–22:30 Final registration: Masters
- 22:30 Manual public draw and start of
Master Tournament

FRIDAY 16 JULY 1993

- 17:00–19:00 Master Tournament resumes
Mini-jackpots and Registration, all
divisions
- Entry Fees (100% return)
- Championship 2000 ff (Reg.: 300 ff)
- Intermediate 1000 ff (Reg.: 200 ff)
- Beginner 500 ff (Reg.: 200 ff)
- Reg. discounts for WBF members and women*
- 21:20–22:30 Final registration: Main Events
- 22:30 Manual public draw and start of
Main Tournaments

SATURDAY 17 JULY 1993

- 17:00 Progressive Consolation begins
- 18:00 Mini-jackpots
- 22:00 Super-jackpot

SUNDAY 18 JULY 1993

- 15:00 Last Chance, all divisions
- 16:00 Finals
- 20:00 Cocktails and Prize-giving ceremony

Total expected prize money

500.000 ff

(all events included)

PARTICULARS

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

... will be announced at the Tournament under the auspices of Alberto da Pra, President of the Worldwide Backgammon Federation.

OFFICIAL TITLES

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- 1989 Barry McAdam (England)
- 1990 Thomas Lumper (Germany)
- 1991 Michael Meyburg (Germany)
- 1992 Ion Ressu (Switzerland)

(All members of the WBF)

TROPHIES

Trophies will be donated by the City of Menton, the Tourist Office and the Casino.

DIRECTOR / INFORMATION

Marco Fornasir, International Director, recognized by the WBF.

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Marco Fornasir
Tournament Director

Monday, 28 June

- 7:30-8:00 P.M. Registration (Blackjack and BG) at Park Hotel.
8:00 P.M. Welcoming cocktail in Park Hotel lounge.
10:30 P.M. Slovenian *BLITZ*. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.

Tuesday, 29 June

- 10:30 A.M. Excursion.
7:30-8:00 P.M. Registration at Park Hotel.
8:00 P.M. Cocktail in Park Hotel lounge.
10:30 P.M. Friuli-Venezia Giulia Cup. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.

Wednesday, 30 June

- 10:30 A.M. Excursion.
5:30-6:00 P.M. Final registration: Blackjack tournament (200.000 Italian Lire + 30.000 reg. fee).
6:00-9:00 P.M. Blackjack tournament at the Casino.
9:00 P.M. Blackjack cocktail in Park Hotel lounge.
10:30 P.M. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.

Thursday, 1 July

- 10:30 A.M. Casino Nova Gorica Tennis Cup (players and friends).
5:00 P.M. City of Gorizia Trophy.
7:00-8:00 P.M. Registration at Park Hotel.
8:00 P.M. Tennis cocktail in Park Hotel lounge.
10:00 P.M. Public draw for BG Warm-up tourney (Free event).
10:30 P.M. Warm-up tournament commences. Super-Jackpot (3% deduction). Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.

Friday, 2 July

- 10:30 A.M. Casino Nova Gorica Tennis Cup continues.
5:00 P.M. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.
7:00-8:00 P.M. Backgammon registration at the Park Hotel.
8:00 P.M. Welcoming cocktail in Park Hotel lounge.
10:00 P.M. Final registration: Main Backgammon tournament (Open-400.000, Advanced-150.000, Limited-50.000 Italian Lire).
10:30 P.M. Public draw and start of play. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.

Saturday, 3 July

- 10:30 A.M. Casino Nova Gorica Tennis Cup continues.
4:00 P.M. Main tournament continues (progressive consolation).
5:00 P.M. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.
8:00 P.M. Backgammon cocktail in Park Hotel lounge.
8:00-10:30 P.M. Scheduled dinner break.
10:30 P.M. Franz Josef Super Jackpot. Main tournament continues.

Sunday, 4 July

- 3:00 P.M. Last Chance tournament. Finals: all divisions. Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots.
8:30 P.M. Schöbrunn Dinner Party and Awards Ceremony at Park Hotel.

Hotel Accommodations

Park Hotel, Delpinova 5, Nova Gorica
New Park 77.000 Sgl 52.000 pp Dbl
Old Park 54.000 Sgl 47.000 pp Dbl

For Information, or to Request An Invitation:

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