

CHICAGO POINT

NUMBER 62

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

SEPTEMBER 1993

5 fewer men off

by Jerry Godsey

This year, I've been hit at least four times in the bearoff after removing exactly five checkers. In each instance, my opponent had closed, or was positioned to close his home board, but still had a few men to bear in. Obviously, my opponent is the favorite, but what are the correct cube actions?

Bill Robertie in his *Advanced Backgammon* says the proper time to redouble is with five fewer men borne off than your opponent and all your other men home. With good distribution, this would be a close take.

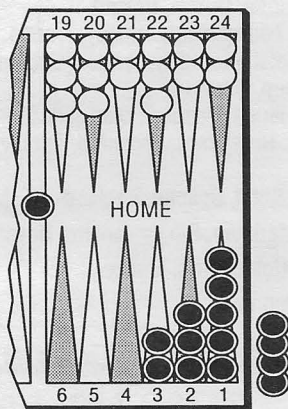
In Danny Kleinman's excellent book *Vision Laughs At Counting With Advice To The Dicerlorn*, the article entitled "A Nine-To-Five Job" (pp. 198-199) has a different opinion. Danny says that if you get hit with five men borne off against your opponent's closed board, you have a "clear pass."

Which is correct?

I used *Expert Backgammon*® to examine this question. First, I looked at Position 1 to see the situation if Black had only four men off.

Position 1

Black has borne off four men before being hit and closed out.

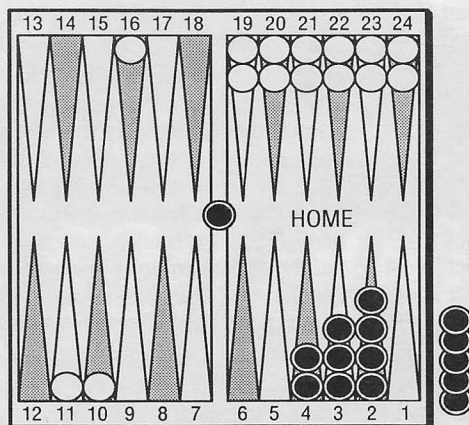


This is a clear pass for Black as White wins 81.64% of the games with an equity of +0.633 points per game (PPG). Remember that +0.50 PPG is the cubeless break-even point. If the cube was already turned, you would simply multiply this equity by the value of the cube.

In Position 2 (below), White was playing an ace-point game when she hit Black. In Position 3, we'll assume that White was on the bar, Black had to leave a back door shot in the bearoff and White hit. In both positions, Black has five men off. When should White properly turn the cube?

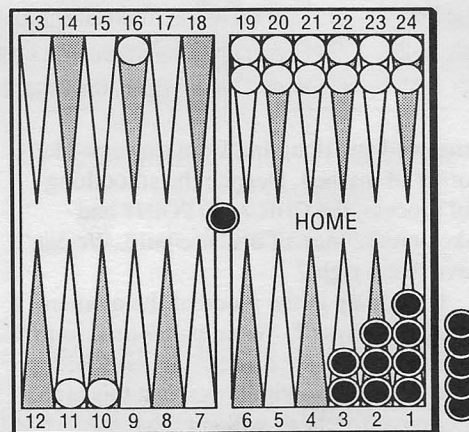
Position 2

Black has borne off five men before being hit from the ace-point. White is bringing her men home.



Position 3

Black has borne off five men before being hit from the bar. White is bringing her men home.

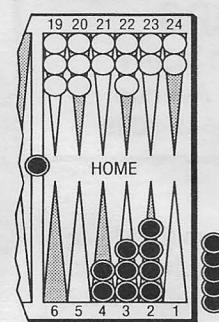


You should notice that the gap on the ace-point is a major weakness for Black as he will be missing with aces when he comes in and around for the bearoff. It's such a weakness that if he has a '1' to play as he's coming home, he should probably use it to slot the ace-point.

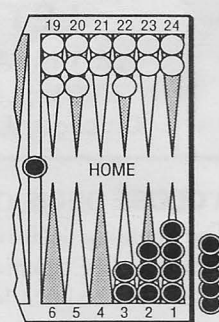
In Position 2 with the ace-point gap, White wins 77.16% of the games for an equity of +0.54 PPG. Black's equity is the opposite of this at -0.54 PPG. With cube ownership adding 3-5% to your winning chances, this becomes at best, a borderline take for Black.

There is a big difference if Black has the ace-point filled. In Position 3, White wins only 68.6% of the games with an equity of +0.372 PPG—an easy take for Black and not yet a redouble for White.

Position 4



Position 5



In Positions 4 and 5, I have moved White's outfield men home to a very strong bearoff position. In ace-point gap Position 4, White wins 81.4% of the games with an equity of +0.628 PPG. This is a clear pass for Black (his equity is -0.628 PPG) even though he has five more checkers off than White. Therefore, it would seem that White's proper cube action with Black having the ace-point open is to double or redouble while still not home.

With men in the outfield, it's a borderline take at best for Black, but with a strong distribution in the bearoff it's a clear pass. White should put the pressure on Black and make him pay to see her roll badly.

Gapless position 5 is about as good as Black can hope for. If doubled by White, he has a take as he wins 25.93% of the

[Continued on page 8]

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LETTERS

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A CLOSE DECISION

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Howard Ring and I played the World Championship doubling position out a number of times at the Bar Point Club last month. Howard thinks it's a take and probably not a double. I'm sure it's a double but not certain it's a take. Quite a discrepancy!—*Neil Kazaross, Northbrook, IL*

ENIGMATIC SIGN-UP

The other day, I surfaced in a pool of glorious golden sunshine laced with cracker crumbs to discover my complimentary copy of the CHICAGO POINT

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BACKGAMMON	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

by Carol Joy Cole
313/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Sep 16	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
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Feb 18-20	<u>16th Annual Charity Tournament, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Mar 18-20	<u>1994 Midwest Championships, Marriott Hotel, Oakbrook, IL</u>	<u>312/338-6380</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Sep 11-12*	DM Consultation Doubles, Prime BG Klub, Copenhagen, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Sep 16-19	Byblos Challenge Cup, Hotel Byblos, Saint-Tropez, France	331/4288 6645
Sep 23-26	12th Internat'l Austrian Open, Hotel Schloß Seefelds, Pörschach, Austria	08341/12825
Oct 2-4*	Australian Open Backgammon Championship, Sydney, Australia	02/369 3620
Oct 3*	BAWÜ-Cup, Motodrom-Hotel, Hockenheim, Germany	49 631/60106
Oct 4	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852/846 1923
Oct 10*	BAWÜ-Cup, Motodrom-Hotel, Hockenheim, Germany	49 631/60106
Oct 14-17	1st Israeli Open Championship, Moriah Plaza Hotel, Tel Aviv, Israel	3120/625 4775
Oct 16-17	Sandy Osborne Memorial Tourney, Hilton, East Midlands Airport, England	0522/53 68 36
Oct 16-17*	Annual Fynsmesterkaber, Bridge Union lokaler, Odense, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Oct 21-24	3rd Rio de Janeiro Open Tournament, Hotel Meridien, Rio, Brazil	5521/267 6033
Oct 25-29*	2nd S.A. World Cup & XIV Tournament, Las Naciones, Buenos Aires, Arg.	541/790 4769
Oct 29-31*	Annual Hong Kong Championships, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852/846 1923
Nov 5-7	NRW-Meisterschaft 1993, Hotel Antana/Kaarst, Düsseldorf, Germany	02151/50 35 91
Nov 6-7*	First Irish Open Championships, Sachs Hotel, Dublin, Ireland	3531/661 4771
Nov 11-14	1st International Impérial Palace Trophy Tournament, Annecy, France	061/331 58 16
Nov 13	Mencap Charity Tournament, Meridien Hotel, Piccadilly London, England	0624/851 045
Nov 20*	BAWÜ-Cup, Motodrom-Hotel, Hockenheim, Germany	49 631/60106
Nov 20-21*	National Danish Championships, Hotel Marina, Vedbæk, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Nov 24-28	2nd International Turkish Championship, Hotel Penta, Istanbul, Turkey	3120/625 4775
Nov 27*	Hessen-Cup, Weisbaden, Germany	49/631 60106
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
Feb 17-20	4th French Open Championship, Lutetia Hotel, Paris, France	331/4288 6645
Apr 1-4*	6th Nordic "Wide" Open, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539/40 06 07

crumpled and dangling from the least likely corner of my bed. Despite the smoothing-out process, the CHICAGO POINT had taken on the look of obscure pulp. We can't have that—right?

Caught up in the mood of the moment, I thought to myself, "What better time to *roll with the POINT for a year.*" So enclosed is what you need—with hopes that this high, intelligent forehead will get what she

needs.—*Mona Lisa, Atlanta, GA*

YOU'RE A BG FAVORITE WITH THE SIXTH MAN

A great article by Jerry Godsey last month ("How Many Men To Hit"). Judging from my primitive work of 15 years ago, I predict that if he tried with six (!) men on the bar, the Backgammon rate would

[Continued on page 3]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1993

Top 100 through 6 Sept. 1993 after 13 tournaments
(Includes Green Mt. Festival, 30th G/A Invitational and Nat'l Labor Day)



Howard Markowitz	26.66	Jorgen Granstedt	9.69	Mike Shanas	5.60	John Lear	3.20
Ben Lang	26.00	Stuart Thomson	9.58	Lila Swan	5.21	Dave Pink	3.06
Marty Storer	23.83	Carol Falk	9.26	Rich Sweetman	5.21	Leo Tuin	3.06
Frank Talbot	22.16	Andy Palumbo	9.05	Larry Lau	5.20	Jan Carlstrom	2.94
Walter Trice	21.71	Ami Tennenbaum	8.82	Neil Kazaross	4.94	Denny Leatherman	2.90
Woody Woodson	21.12	Anthony Niakiani	8.74	Norma Shyer	4.92	Nayan Shah	2.90
Joe Harris	20.83	Paul Ladanyi	8.74	Mark Donaldson	4.82	Kyrrha Bell	2.50
Bob Holyon	19.52	Ira Hoffberg	8.40	Art Benjamin	4.34	Michael Sharp	2.50
Ken Bond	16.16	Bob Bishop	8.30	Zev Vered	4.34	John Brussel	2.47
Paul Stebbing	16.00	Steve Hast	8.06	Maurice Barie	4.31	John Stephens	2.47
Quint McTyeire	14.53	Herb Gurland	7.88	Bob Lumbra	4.16	Holly Stowe	2.41
David Hochron	14.40	Yamin Yamin	7.34	Dean Adamian	4.03	Ed Zell	2.40
Al Jones	13.32	Frank Frigo	7.24	Joe Sylvester	4.03	Marc Gray	2.29
John Mansey	13.00	Dave Orandle	7.20	John Rockwell	3.96	Tony Siegel	2.16
Doug Roberts	12.96	Ron Weingrad	7.20	Norm Wiggins	3.96	Dale Haukenfrers	2.13
Ralph Levy	11.44	Gabe Stiasny	7.18	Bill Bartholomay	3.79	Ed Buerger	2.13
Dean Muench	11.33	Alan Steffen	6.68	Carl Adamec	3.76	Wally Watson	2.12
Arnold Zousmer	10.85	Jim Lakdawala	6.50	Sam Hanna	3.76	George Barr	2.08
Perry Gartner	10.84	Mike Pettigrew	6.50	Belle Pronman	3.73	Larry Strommen	2.08
Paul Strasberg	10.63	Ray Desforges	6.42	Carol Joy Cole	3.60	Miriam Bureson	2.00
Felix Yen	10.44	Ken Cohen	6.28	Jerry Ungar	3.53	Javad Farjood	1.92
Mike Nelson	10.44	Jeff Kane	6.09	Randall Witt	3.53	Arkady Kuperman	1.87
Jake Jacobs	10.07	Peter Kalba	6.09	Bob Wachtel	3.34	Jerry Padova	1.87
Jeff Acierno	9.76	Marty Kohler	5.85	Carl Sellars	3.34	Jill Ferdinand	1.76
Ed Pavilonis	9.71	Fred Gehlhoff	5.63	Stu Hosen	3.34	Richard Heinz	1.75

With 13 tournaments down and six to go, the 1993 ABT race is up for grabs. Note the addition of a new event: the NY/NJ Backgammon CO-OP Big Apple Series 19–21 November.



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1993 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 31 AUG.

GARY KAY	17.96	Alice Kay	4.12	Elaine Kehm	1.84	Jeff Kane	0.64
NEIL KAZAROSS	17.68	Danny DeRoche	4.08	Tim Serges	1.76	Mike Cohen	0.64
YAMIN YAMIN	15.04	V.W. Zimnicki	4.00	Don Desmond	1.60	Greg Roland	0.60
JOHN DEMIAN	14.88	Marcy Sloan	3.92	Steve Grubart	1.60	Kurt Schurecht	0.60
DAVID RUBIN	14.44	Paul Klein	3.68	Tony Schroeder	1.56	Mike Spiropoulos	0.56
TAK MORIOKA	13.12	Peter Kalba	3.68	Andy Krenitz	1.36	Dick McCall	0.56
JAKE JACOBS	12.64	Sarg Serges	3.60	Lou Salzman	1.32	Richard Beagarie	0.56
DON JAYHAN	12.20	Joann Feinstein	3.60	Jill Ferdinand	1.28	John Stryker	0.48
PHYLLIS SMOLINSKI	11.20	Stan Kucharz	3.56	Betsy Miller	1.28	Graham Sievers	0.48
PAUL FRIEDMAN	9.36	Richard Stawowy	3.52	Jim Pappas	1.12	Paul Reiner	0.48
DEEB SHALATI	8.00	Georgina Flanagan	3.28	Larry Strommen	1.12	Frank Callea	0.44
RALPH LEVY	7.84	Bob Ebbeler	3.16	Marty Tatossian	1.00	John Meyers	0.40
PAUL FRANKS	7.48	Alex Itkin	3.04	George Barr	0.96	William Frierson	0.32
JOLIE RUBIN	6.92	Femi Owiku	2.72	Ron Stur	0.96	Harry Hayward	0.32
STU KATZ	6.56	Arlene Levy	2.68	Roland Dieter	0.96	Jay Ward	0.32
ALLEN ZIMMERMAN	6.56	Bill Keefe	2.36	Dave Rockwell	0.96	Katy Clark	0.32
BILL DAVIS	6.52	Peggy Fleming	2.24	J.A. Miller	0.96	Greg Try	0.32
BOBBIE SHIFRIN	6.48	Bruce Wittert	2.16	Steve Katz	0.92	Barbara Levinson	0.24
MARY FRANKS	6.32	Amy Trudeau	2.00	Barry Miller	0.88	Andy Argy	0.24
HOWARD RING	6.32	Leslie Lockett	1.96	Ray Kershaw	0.88	Joe Mangine	0.24
Ed Buerger	6.24	Chuck Olson	1.92	Earl Risch	0.88	Mark Kay	0.24
Herb Roman	6.16	Wilcox Snellings	1.92	Joe Koucharian	0.80	Mark Murray	0.24
John Brussel	5.68	Don Woods	1.92	Jerry Brooks	0.80	Mary Vitale	0.20
Ken Bond	5.60	Scottie Mitchell	1.92	Reggie Porter	0.80	Greg Feller	0.20
Norma Shyer	5.04	Phil Simborg	1.84	Frankie Farjood	0.76	Andy Bittman	0.16
Dave Cramer	4.88	Howard Markowitz	1.84	Dan Judd	0.64	Barry Epstein	0.16
Tim Mabee	4.72	Tad Wilson	1.84	Larry Yakowenko	0.64		

JOHN DEMIAN strung together 9 victories in a row to win back-to-back BPC tournaments, 3.84 master points, and August Player of the Month accolades. Stu Katz finished a close second (3.76) followed by Ed Buerger (2.88).

With four months remaining, defending BPC Player of the Year Gary Kay has regained the lead.

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

approximate 55%.—*Harold Branch, Louisville, KY*

QUITE A COMPLIMENT

I must tell you again that I am very satisfied with **CHICAGO POINT**, which is the most interesting backgammon newsletter in the world. So to make sure that I will receive all future issues, I am enclosing my new address.—*Torkil Espenhain, Farum, Denmark*

BUENOS AIRES DATE UPDATE

I would like to correct the dates for the upcoming 2nd South American World Cup and 14th South American Tournament in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The World Cup dates are 26–29 October, but the action in the 14th South American event begins *Monday, 25 October*. The printing error first occurred in the combined Rio de Janeiro/Buenos Aires invitation.—*Claudio Salamone, Director, Argentina Backgammon Association, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

RULING QUESTION

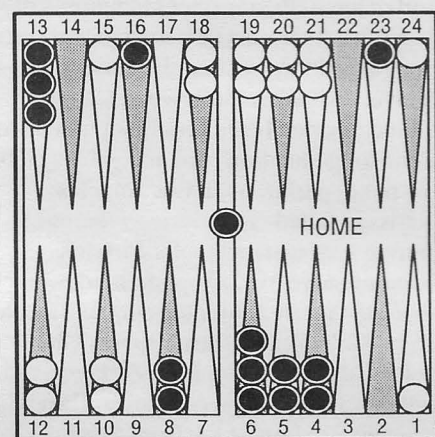
A player has a '5' left to move. He picks up his opponent's blot (five pips away) and puts it on the bar. He then moves his own man four spaces (instead of five) and picks up his dice. What's the correct ruling?—*Tom Brizendine, Greenville, KY*

It is your option to accept the illegal play, or require your opponent to replay the entire roll legally.—*Ed. Δ*

your move

PROBLEM #197

Match to 9 points tied at 6-all. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-1.**



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Nov 13	Mencap Charity Tournament, Meridien Hotel, Piccadilly London, England	0624/851 045
Nov 20*	BAWÜ-Cup, Motodrom-Hotel, Hockenheim, Germany	49 631/60106
Nov 20-21*	National Danish Championships, Hotel Marina, Vedbæk, Denmark	039/40 06 07
Nov 24-28	2nd International Turkish Championship, Hotel Penta, Istanbul, Turkey	3120/625 4775
Nov 27*	Hessen-Cup, Weisbaden, Germany	49/631 60106
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
Feb 17-20	4th French Open Championship, Lutetia Hotel, Paris, France	331/4288 6645
Apr 1-4*	6th Nordic "Wide" Open, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539/40 06 07

crumpled and dangling from the least likely corner of my bed. Despite the smoothing-out process, the CHICAGO POINT had taken on the look of obscure pulp. We can't have that—right?

Caught up in the mood of the moment, I thought to myself, "What better time to *roll with the POINT for a year.*" So enclosed is what you need—with hopes that this high, intelligent forehead will get what she

needs.—*Mona Lisa, Atlanta, GA*

YOU'RE A BG FAVORITE WITH THE SIXTH MAN

A great article by Jerry Godsey last month ("How Many Men To Hit"). Judging from my primitive work of 15 years ago, I predict that if he tried with six (!) men on the bar, the Backgammon rate would

[Continued on page 3]

Howard Markowitz	26.66	Jorgen Granstedt	9.69	Mike Shanas	5.60	John Lear	3.20
Ben Lang	26.00	Stuart Thomson	9.58	Lila Swan	5.21	Dave Pink	3.06
Marty Storer	23.83	Carol Falk	9.26	Rich Sweetman	5.21	Leo Tuin	3.06
Frank Talbot	22.16	Andy Palumbo	9.05	Larry Lau	5.20	Jan Carlstrom	2.94
Walter Trice	21.71	Ami Tennenbaum	8.82	Neil Kazaross	4.94	Denny Leatherman	2.90
Woody Woodson	21.12	Anthony Niakiani	8.74	Norma Shyer	4.92	Nayan Shah	2.90
Joe Harris	20.83	Paul Ladanyi	8.74	Mark Donaldson	4.82	Kyrrha Bell	2.50
Bob Holyon	19.52	Ira Hoffberg	8.40	Art Benjamin	4.34	Michael Sharp	2.50
Ken Bond	16.16	Bob Bishop	8.30	Zev Vered	4.34	John Brussel	2.47
Paul Stebbing	16.00	Steve Hast	8.06	Maurice Barie	4.31	John Stephens	2.47
Quint McTyeire	14.53	Herb Gurland	7.88	Bob Lumbra	4.16	Holly Stowe	2.41
David Hochron	14.40	Yamin Yamin	7.34	Dean Adamian	4.03	Ed Zell	2.40
Al Jones	13.32	Frank Frigo	7.24	Joe Sylvester	4.03	Marc Gray	2.29
John Mansey	13.00	Dave Orandle	7.20	John Rockwell	3.96	Tony Siegel	2.16
Doug Roberts	12.96	Ron Weingrad	7.20	Norm Wiggins	3.96	Dale Haukenfrers	2.13
Ralph Levy	11.44	Gabe Stiasny	7.18	Bill Bartholomay	3.79	Ed Buerger	2.13
Dean Muench	11.33	Alan Steffen	6.68	Carl Adamec	3.76	Wally Watson	2.12
Arnold Zousmer	10.85	Jim Lakdawala	6.50	Sam Hanna	3.76	George Barr	2.08
Perry Gartner	10.84	Mike Pettigrew	6.50	Belle Pronman	3.73	Larry Strommen	2.08
Paul Strasberg	10.63	Ray Desforges	6.42	Carol Joy Cole	3.60	Miriam Bureson	2.00
Felix Yen	10.44	Ken Cohen	6.28	Jerry Ungar	3.53	Javad Farjood	1.92
Mike Nelson	10.44	Jeff Kane	6.09	Randall Witt	3.53	Arkady Kuperman	1.87
Jake Jacobs	10.07	Peter Kalba	6.09	Bob Wachtel	3.34	Jerry Padova	1.87
Jeff Acierno	9.76	Marty Kohler	5.85	Carl Sellars	3.34	Jill Ferdinand	1.76
Ed Pavilonis	9.71	Fred Gehlhoff	5.63	Stu Hosen	3.34	Richard Heinz	1.75

With 13 tournaments down and six to go, the 1993 ABT race is up for grabs. Note the addition of a new event: the NY/NJ Backgammon CO-OP Big Apple Series 19–21 November.


**CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB
1993 PLAYER OF THE YEAR**
**COMPILED
THRU 31 AUG.**

GARY KAY	17.96	Alice Kay	4.12	Elaine Kehm	1.84	Jeff Kane	0.64
NEIL KAZAROSS	17.68	Danny DeRoche	4.08	Tim Serges	1.76	Mike Cohen	0.64
YAMIN YAMIN	15.04	V.W. Zimnicki	4.00	Don Desmond	1.60	Greg Roland	0.60
JOHN DEMIAN	14.88	Marcy Sloan	3.92	Steve Grubart	1.60	Kurt Schurecht	0.60
DAVID RUBIN	14.44	Paul Klein	3.68	Tony Schroeder	1.56	Mike Spiropoulos	0.56
TAK MORIOKA	13.12	Peter Kalba	3.68	Andy Krenitz	1.36	Dick McCall	0.56
JAKE JACOBS	12.64	Sarg Serges	3.60	Lou Salzman	1.32	Richard Beagarie	0.56
DON JAYHAN	12.20	Joann Feinstein	3.60	Jill Ferdinand	1.28	John Stryker	0.48
PHYLIS SMOLINSKI	11.20	Stan Kucharz	3.56	Betsy Miller	1.28	Graham Sievers	0.48
PAUL FRIEDMAN	9.36	Richard Stawowy	3.52	Jim Pappas	1.12	Paul Reiner	0.48
DEEB SHALATI	8.00	Georgina Flanagan	3.28	Larry Strommen	1.12	Frank Callea	0.44
RALPH LEVY	7.84	Bob Ebbeler	3.16	Marty Tatossian	1.00	John Meyers	0.40
PAUL FRANKS	7.48	Alex Itkin	3.04	George Barr	0.96	William Frierson	0.32
JOLIE RUBIN	6.92	Femi Owiku	2.72	Ron Stur	0.96	Harry Hayward	0.32
STU KATZ	6.56	Arlene Levy	2.68	Roland Dieter	0.96	Jay Ward	0.32
ALLEN ZIMMERMAN	6.56	Bill Keefe	2.36	Dave Rockwell	0.96	Katy Clark	0.32
BILL DAVIS	6.52	Peggy Fleming	2.24	J.A. Miller	0.96	Greg Try	0.32
BOBBIE SHIFRIN	6.48	Bruce Wittert	2.16	Steve Katz	0.92	Barbara Levinson	0.24
MARY FRANKS	6.32	Amy Trudeau	2.00	Barry Miller	0.88	Andy Argy	0.24
HOWARD RING	6.32	Leslie Lockett	1.96	Ray Kershaw	0.88	Joe Mangine	0.24
Ed Buerger	6.24	Chuck Olson	1.92	Earl Risch	0.88	Mark Kay	0.24
Herb Roman	6.16	Wilcox Snellings	1.92	Joe Koucharian	0.80	Mark Murray	0.24
John Brussel	5.68	Don Woods	1.92	Jerry Brooks	0.80	Mary Vitale	0.20
Ken Bond	5.60	Scottie Mitchell	1.92	Reggie Porter	0.80	Greg Feller	0.20
Norma Shyer	5.04	Phil Simborg	1.84	Frankie Farjood	0.76	Andy Bittman	0.16
Dave Cramer	4.88	Howard Markowitz	1.84	Dan Judd	0.64	Barry Epstein	0.16
Tim Mabee	4.72	Tad Wilson	1.84	Larry Yakowenko	0.64		

JOHN DEMIAN strung together 9 victories in a row to win back-to-back BPC tournaments, 3.84 master points, and August Player of the Month accolades. Stu Katz finished a close second (3.76) followed by Ed Buerger (2.88).

With four months remaining, defending BPC Player of the Year Gary Kay has regained the lead.

LETTERS...
[Continued from page 2]

approximate 55%.—*Harold Branch, Louisville, KY*

QUITE A COMPLIMENT

I must tell you again that I am very satisfied with CHICAGO POINT, which is the most interesting backgammon newsletter in the world. So to make sure that I will receive all future issues, I am enclosing my new address.—*Torkil Espenhain, Farum, Denmark*

BUENOS AIRES DATE UPDATE

I would like to correct the dates for the upcoming 2nd South American World Cup and 14th South American Tournament in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The World Cup dates are 26–29 October, but the action in the 14th South American event begins *Monday, 25 October*. The printing error first occurred in the combined Rio de Janeiro/Buenos Aires invitation.—*Claudio Salamone, Director, Argentina Backgammon Association, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

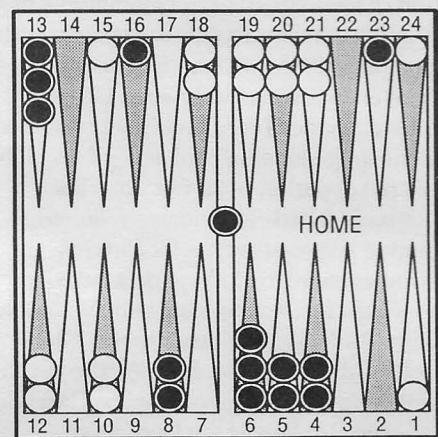
RULING QUESTION

A player has a '5' left to move. He picks up his opponent's blot (five pips away) and puts it on the bar. He then moves his own man four spaces (instead of five) and picks up his dice. What's the correct ruling?—*Tom Brizendine, Greenville, KY*

It is your option to accept the illegal play, or require your opponent to replay the entire roll legally.—*Ed. Δ*

your move
PROBLEM #197

Match to 9 points tied at 6-all. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-1.**


64

DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS



PROTECTING THE PIGEON

Dear Miss Lonelyblots: Palooka Joe must have some kind of death wish. Until six months ago, he played in the medium-stakes chouette game at the club, where he couldn't quite hold his own. Then he stepped out of the chouette to play William Worldbeater (you know how good he is!) heads up. After losing a thou (which William let him owe) at twenties, Joe upped the stakes to hundreds. Several sessions later, Joe's debt had climbed to ten thou.

"Aw, c'mon, Billy," said Joe. "Let's start the cube at 2."

William agreed, and since then, Joe has been losing at \$200 a point. Now, however, to keep playing, Joe must make installment payments on his debt. This is backgammon's dark side, Miss Lonelyblots, and it bothers me.

Whom do you blame more for this de facto robbery: predator or prey? Is there anything I can do to stop the slaughter without appearing to butt into someone else's life? I hate to see anyone get hurt so badly.—Witness to a Massacre

DEAR WITNESS: Perhaps it is tragedies like Palooka Joe's which have prompted anti-gambling laws and their application to backgammon, along with the refusal of courts to enforce "gambling" debts.

You are mistaken, however, in trying to assess blame for a "de facto robbery": it isn't even theft or fraud. Nothing you say suggests that William has understated his own backgammon ability, pressured Joe into raising the stakes, or so much as stolen a pip. Indeed, it was Joe who begged William to raise the stakes.

You might approach Joe as a friend and warn him that he is overmatched. You'd appear to be butting in, of course, and you would be. But you'd have scant chance of success. By now, Joe must surely know the score. If his results in the last six months haven't convinced him, nothing you or I can say will.

What Joe has done cannot be undone, and it *would* be fraud for Joe to default on his debt. That doesn't mean that nothing should be done to prevent such occurrences as you describe, however. You mention that Joe and William have been playing at a club. A conscientious proprietor or director should act before a member can run up a large debt.

A director should *know* each patron. This means knowing the patron's bankroll as well as his backgammon skills. A director should set different limits on the stakes

for which each patron may play, and inform each about the strength of chouettes he joins or opponents he plays heads up. Ideally, all money should change hands at the club's desk, and nobody should be permitted to play while still owing losses from a previous session.

In that way, a director protects not only his patrons, but the club. The patron who plays above his level and beyond his means, sooner or later, is lost to the club. A club thrives when many players are available to form chouettes, not when pigeons plucked to the last feather are driven to flee the coop.

All who love backgammon hate to see anti-gambling laws invoked against it. Yet governments *do* have a stake in what goes on in clubs, at least so long as governments provide a financial "safety net" for individuals who go broke or the families that depend on them. To prevent the harm that Joe and others like him may bring upon themselves and their families, I believe, governments should regulate clubs by requiring adequate management control of stakes and debts.—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.

AMALGAMATION

Visiting the Bar Point Club in August: **Don Woods** (IN), **Phil Franklin** (NJ)... **Mary Vitale** (IL) couldn't be prouder of her brand new Harley Davidson Electra-Glide Sport Police Edition motorcycle... "Searching for **Bobby Fischer**," a must-see movie for games aficionados, begins with a brief glimpse of backgammon play. Watch for grandmaster **Roman Dzindzichashvili**, a former Gammon's of Chicago member, in a cameo appearance... We neglected the mention the closing of the Cavendish West Hollywood Club in late June. Owner **Jerry Gould** attempted to turn the long-standing card and games club into a poker parlor, but a Los Angeles ballot issue failed. The closing required Gammon Associates director **Patrick Gibson** to move his 2:00 p.m. Sunday tournament location to the Bombay Bicycle Club in Burbank... Central Illinois Club director **Ed Zell**'s wife, **Lisa Zell** received excellent reviews staring in Seven Brides For Seven Brothers at the Corn Stock

Theater in Peoria 6-15 August... When in Reno, **Mark Richardson** invites you to his Richardson Gallery of Fine Art. The former Northern Nevada Backgammon director opened his new gallery, located at 3670 S. Virginia in August. It features contemporary paintings, limited edition graphics and sculptures. For information on the October grand opening, call Mark at 702/828-4329... A fire at "On Broadway" has forced the Sangamon Valley BG Association to house their Tuesday night tournaments at The Atrium (First St. and Cook, Springfield) until at least October. For more information, call **Randy Armstrong** at 217/528-0117... Congratulations to Sangamon Valley BG co-director **Mark Kay** and **Melinda Pitt** who are engaged to be married... Also, Mark and Melinda, along with **Jim Zimmerman**, **Laurel Patkes** and **Dan Eatherington** ran a "challenge" backgammon booth at the Decatur Street Celebration in Springfield 6-8 August. Who says backgammon's all luck? The Sangamon regulars managed to win 90% of their matches against the public!... **Jill Ferdinand**'s divorce was

finalized 20 August, just in time for the new school year. Jill's a *single* first grade teacher at the John Jay grade school in Mt. Prospect, Illinois... **Don Smolen** (Philadelphia, PA) has recently completed filming a Jeopardy TV show. Watch for it this fall... Here's a warning to polar bears in Alaska: **Dean Muench** is on his way up there for a vacation in September and he's bringing his backgammon board. Δ

18-20 March, 1994



The NEVADA BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION proudly presents

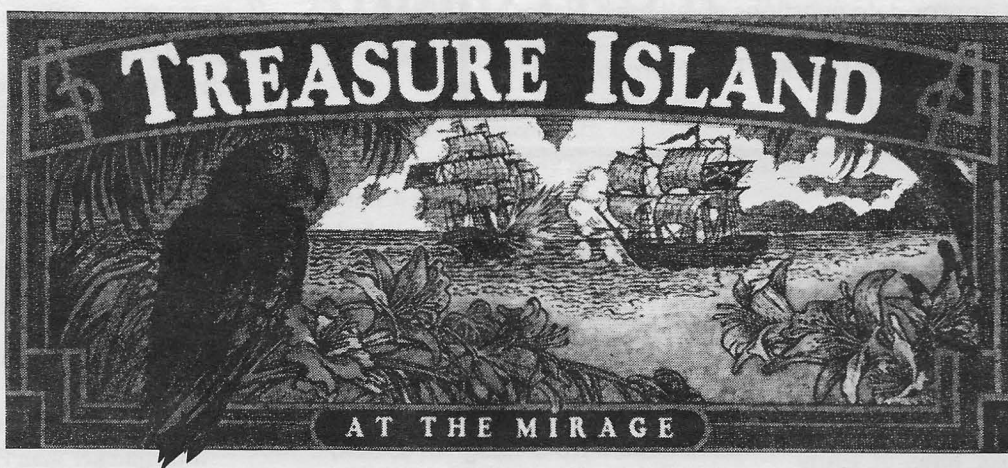
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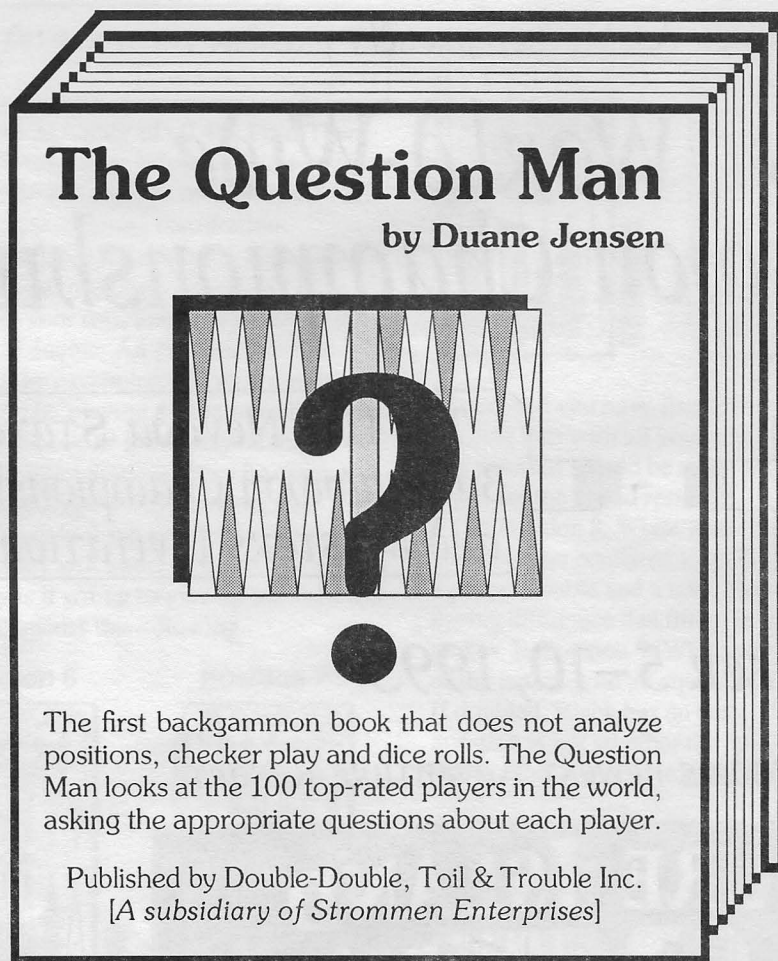
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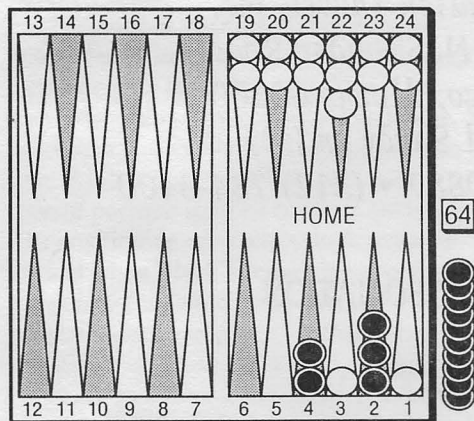


The first backgammon book that does not analyze positions, checker play and dice rolls. The Question Man looks at the 100 top-rated players in the world, asking the appropriate questions about each player.

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The following are excerpts taken from The Question Man, Chapter 12 entitled: "Spock, help me! I'm trapped in the Ed O'Laughlin time warp!" (Note: These positions and pairings actually occurred at a Labor Day tournament a few years back.)

Position 7. Indianapolis, Indiana. Early in a match. Ed O'Laughlin (Black) vs. Bill Robertie (White). **BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.**

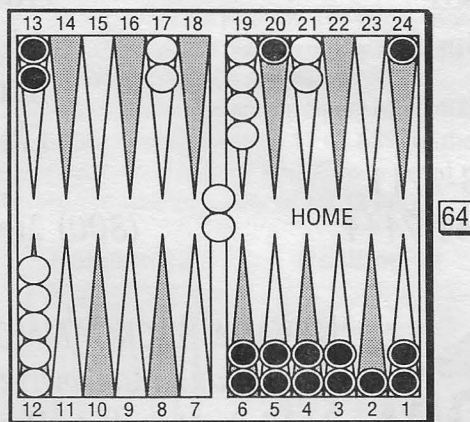


Questions:

1. Which player wore a plaid shirt?
2. Which player wore glasses?

3. Which player wore tan shorts, black shoes and no socks?
4. How long did Ed O'Laughlin take to play 1-1?

Position 8. Indianapolis, Indiana. 9-point match. Ed O'Laughlin (Black) leads Steve Brown (White) 6-1. **BLACK TO PLAY A '4.'**



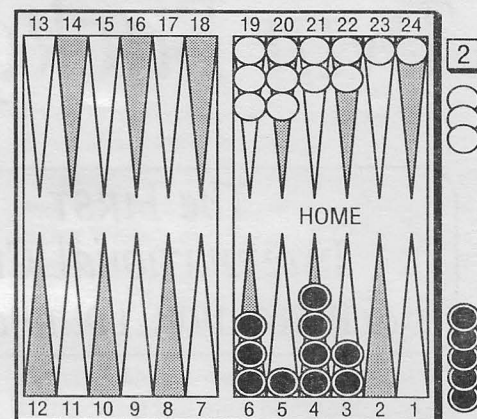
Question 5:

How long did it take Ed O'Laughlin to play the 4?

- (a) 30 seconds

- (b) 8 minutes
- (c) 21 minutes
- (d) 59 minutes

Position 9. "Let's Review." Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY A '1.'**



Question 6:

Which of the "Eds" listed below would play the ace most quickly? (Warning: trick question.)

- (a) Ed O'Laughlin
- (b) Ed Pavilonis
- (c) Ed Wynn
- (d) Mr. Ed

Answers

1. Both players
2. Both players
3. Ed O'Laughlin
4. 4 minutes, 30 seconds
5. (b) 8 minutes
6. (b) Ed Pavilonis would play the ace a little quicker than Ed O'Laughlin. Actor-comedian Ed Wynn would finish a close third—remarkable considering he's been dead for a quarter century.

As I said, this is obviously a trick question because choice (d), Mr. Ed, is a horse (of course), and a dead one at that. Who said you can't beat a dead horse?!

WIN \$25. Will the current Top 3 Chicago Bar Point Players (Gary Kay, Neil Kazaross, Yamin Yamin) be in 100% agreement with each of the three checker plays in Duane Jensen's book parody? For each position, choose either "YES-100%" or "NO—difference of opinion." Also select the best moves and mail to: CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039 by **1 October 1993**. Or you can fax your answers to us at 312/338-6384.

Ties will be broken by random draw.

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Dear Backgammon Friend,

After directing several successful backgammon tournaments, I now have the great honour to invite you to the First Israeli Open Backgammon Championship in my home town of Tel Aviv, which will be held in cooperation with the Israeli Backgammon Association.

It will be a fantastic opportunity, especially for players who have never been to the country, to experience the beauty of Israel, to visit the swinging city of Tel Aviv and the holy city of Jerusalem through special tours organized by us.

It will be my great pleasure to welcome you to this first international tournament to be held in Israel—a country with a large number of backgammon players.

Hotel Moriah Plaza, situated right on the beautiful beach of Tel Aviv, is an excellent 5-star hotel with superb facilities, such as an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, several restaurants and bars, a health centre, tennis courts and 24-hour room service. They will be very proud to be your host during your stay.

With pleasure and best regards, looking forward to seeing you in Tel Aviv,

Abraham Eitan, Tournament Director

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Expected Weather Conditions: October, Sunny, 20°c

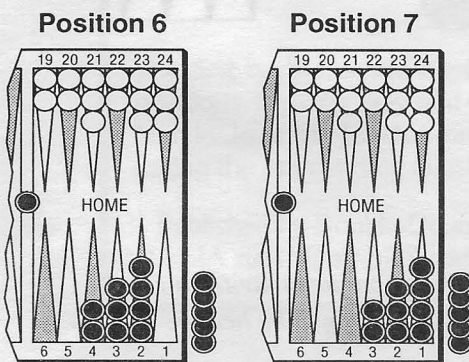
5 fewer men off...

[Continued from page 1]

games for an equity of -0.481 PPG. Therefore, it is wrong for White to double this position before she gets all her men home and sees the resulting distribution.

A guideline for doubling in backgammon is that if your opponent would still have a take after your roll, then it is probably not correct to double. An exception to this involves the psychology of your opponents. For example, playing as box in a chouette, if you think one or more players might drop now, then doubling may be correct. (Since CHICAGO POINT readers will carefully study these positions, you can assume they will know to take.)

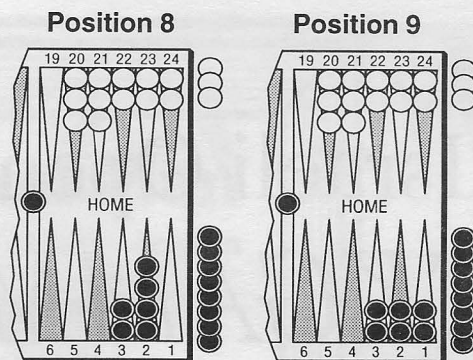
Why is it wrong to give up the cube too early? Consider the following.



In Positions 6 and 7, I've give White poorer than average distribution and an inflexible position. In the case of the ace-point gap position, White wins 74.58% with the equity of $+0.492$ PPG. This is still a very strong double for White and a close take for Black. In the three previous ace-gap positions, White has a strong double and Black only marginal takes or a clear pass. So White should double while still bearing her men home.

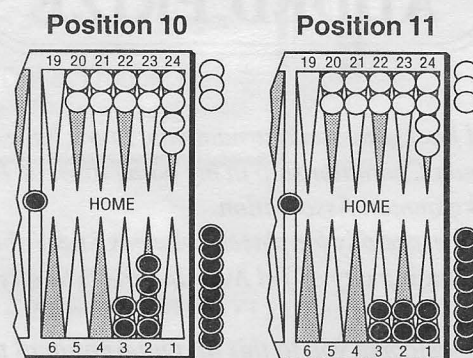
What about Position 7 with the ace-point filled? Black wins 32.33% of the games with an equity of -0.353 PPG. This is an easy take and maybe not an initial double much less a redouble. This is a key reason why White should not be doubling this type of position until all her men are home. The positioning of White's three extras is critical when Black's remaining checkers are poised for a quick bear-off. Let's look at some more examples from Bill Robertie's excellent book *Advanced Backgammon*.

Position 8 (above) is #307 from *Advanced Backgammon Volume 2: Technical Play*. The only difference is that the ace-point is now filled. Note that Black has eight men off and White three. Using Robertie's guidelines (your opponent is on

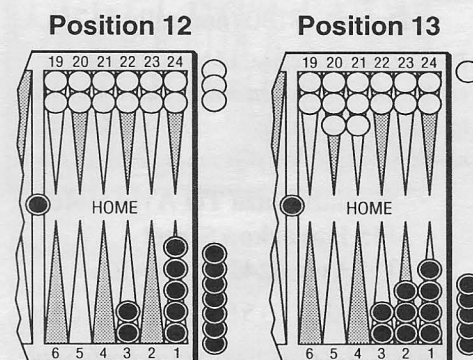


the bar and you have five fewer men borne off than him with all your checkers home), this position should be a double and take. What are the actual results?

In Position 8, White wins 70.31% of the games for an equity of $+0.406$ PPG. This is a proper double and a take. However, note the big difference that filling in the ace-point makes. In Position 9, White wins 66.02% of the games with an equity of $+0.32$ PPG. If doubled, Black has an easy take. The question is not whether the take is proper, but whether the double was correct.



Shown above are two other variations of #307 with White having a very inflexible position with all her spare men on the ace-point. In these cases, the distribution is not as critical as in the earlier positions, but it is still important. In Position 10, White wins 70.95% of the games with an equity of $+0.419$ PPG, compared to the results of #307—70.31% of the games and an equity of $+0.406$ PPG. White wins Position 11 64.62% of the time, with an equity of $+0.292$, compared to 66.22% and an equity of $+0.32$ PPG.



At the beginning of this article, I showed a position with only four men off for Black and it was a pass. Is four fewer off than your opponent always a pass? Positions 12 and 13 (below) are two of many legitimate takes.

In Position 12 (#311 in *Advanced Backgammon*), White is hampered with many of her rolls because they cause her position to deteriorate. Her aces, in particular, play quite badly. White wins this position 72.61% of the time with an equity of $+0.452$. Black should take.

In Position 13, White has borne off one man but Black still has a take. The problem is that White's distribution is awkward with some immediate blot-making rolls. White wins 72.18% of the games with an equity of $+0.444$. Here too, Black has a take.

As you can see, each feature of a position is important and must be considered when deciding whether to double or take. If you are going to play backgammon at the expert level, you need to be aware of different positional features and incorporate them into your game. As you learn to do this, you should see an improvement in your results.

At the start of this article I noted a difference in the conclusions of Bill and Danny and asked which was right. As you can see, they are both right depending on the position. Although it is usually reasonable to follow the established guidelines of backgammon, be aware that there are always exceptions to the rules. Δ



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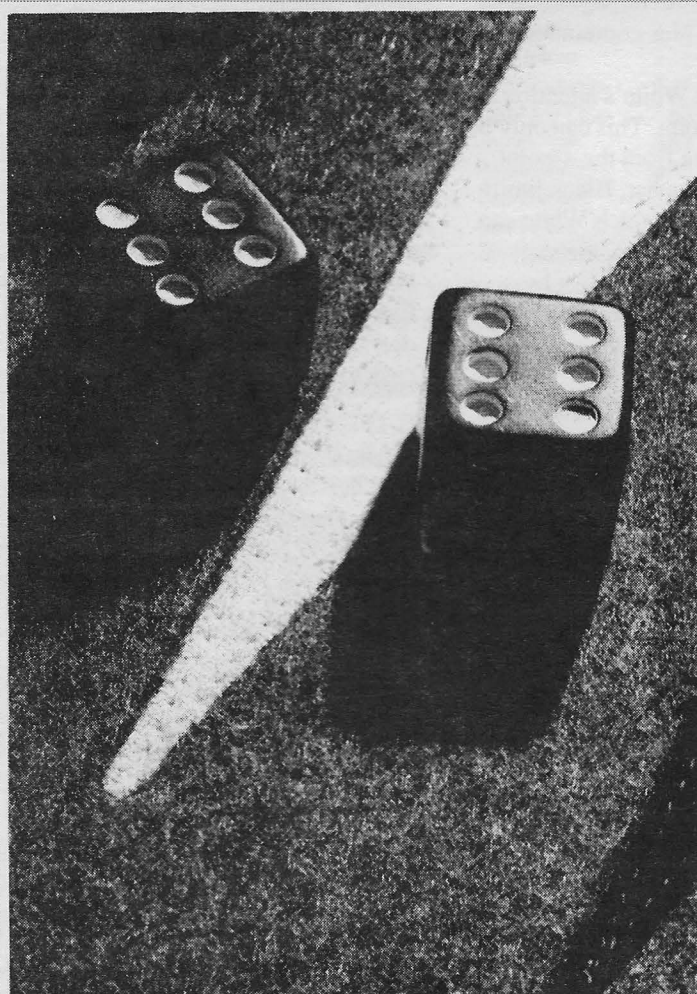
WINNETKA BG CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Stern (708/446-0537).

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 TJ'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).

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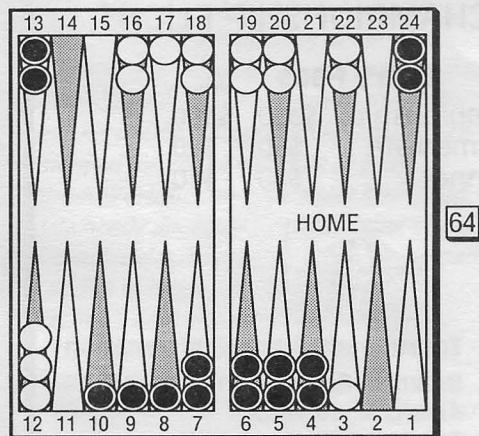
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last month's position

PROBLEM #196 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

Match to 11 points. White leads Black, 7 to 1. **BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.**



Before attempting to solve a backgammon problem (or any problem, for that matter), it is important to understand the overall position and determine the primary goals. Once these are established, various alternatives can be evaluated to decide upon the best way to proceed.

Although Black's checker structure appears poised to crush White, he is actually losing the priming battle. There are two reasons for this. First, Black has two men stuck on the 24-point, while White has only one checker back and that checker is at the edge of Black's prime. Second, White has three men on the midpoint, whereas Black has only two. These two factors indicate that Black's timing is going fast. He should develop a game strategy other than prime-vs.-prime.

It is clearly important for Black to get at least one of his back men moving. A passive play like 10/8, 9/7 is just asking to lose.

If Black plays quietly with [24/23(2), 10/8] or [24/23, 10/8, 9/8], White will be a solid favorite to cover her structurally-valuable 8-point (all 5s and 1s plus combinations). This will not do.

Black must divert White's attention by hitting her on the 3-point. This can only be done safely by shifting from the 4-point. By putting White on the bar, Black limits the number of rolls with which White can make her 8-point. In addition, the shift prevents White from escaping just by rolling a 6: a decent side benefit.

Putting all this together, the only two real candidates are [24/23(2), 4/3*(2)] and

[24/23, 9/8, 4/3*(2)]. Which should Black choose?

It doesn't appear important to anchor on the 23-point. Black is in very little danger of being blitzed. Not only is White on the bar, but White is very short on attack material. Besides, Black's strategy is not to play a 2-point backgame, or make this anchor and try to win the priming battle.

Black is better off with his back men split. The split gives him extra ways to hit the blot on White's 8-point and also increases his chances of anchoring on White's 4-point (which would be great).

On the other side of the board, making the offensive 8-point (9/8) is clearly better than leaving loose blots strewn around. Black at least remains with a broken 5-prime, which is better than a broken 4-prime.

It isn't even close. 24/23, 9/8, 4/3*(2) comes out the winner no matter how you look at it.

WHEN THIS PROBLEM IS ANALYZED in the proper manner, the correct play just stands out. I would wager that many experts would make this play in a flash and not even stop to consider the possible alternatives. However, as with all problems, if you don't know where you are heading, it is easy to lose the forest through the trees. Δ

who did what

WINNER'S CORNER

June–Sept. 1993



NJ/NY Co-Op Regional (Woodbury, NY; 27 June)... CHAMPIONSHIP (18): 1-Larry Keating, 2-Andy Palumbo; 1C-Alex Barsel, 2C-Al Lee. OPEN (9): 1-Donny Lomuto, 2-Phil Franklin; 1C/2C-James Roston / Anton Rusin.

Campeonato Argentino 1993 (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in July)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Alberto Daich, Andranik Safarian, Juan Rosa, Horacio Anitua. JUNIOR WINNERS: Sol Fuentes, Mario Pesah, Walter Katz, Ricardo Wainstein. BEGINNER WINNERS: Brenda Daich, Gustavo Goldfarb, Gustavo Goldfarb, Hraj Seropian... Current AAB master point leaders through 31 July: Juan Rosa (Champ) and Osvaldo Tundis (Junior).

RSCARDS Summer 1993 Tournament (Genie computermodem, Jul.-Aug.)... OPEN (22): 1-Kurt Schurecht (IL), 2-Albert Lee (CA), 3/4-Dan Shirley (NY) / Glenn Daily (NY), 5/8-David Hamilton (WA) / Jon Hiratsuka (MD) / Lynn Kern (GA) / Judi Weiler (NY).

Bar Point Summer Cool Tournament (Oak Brook, IL; 8 Aug.)... OPEN (32): 1-Howard Ring, 2-Yamin Yamin, 3/4-Jake Jacobs / Tad Wilson; 1C/2C-Dave Cramer / Gary Kay. INTERMEDIATE (19): 1-Frankie Farjood, 2-Allen Zimmerman, 3/4-Arlene Levy / Jolie Rubin; 1C-Joann Feinstein, 2C-Greg Feller.

Green Mt. Festival (Stratton Mt., VT; 9-15 Aug.)...

U.S./Canadian Open... OPEN (48): 1/2/3-Jeff Acierio (NY) / Ami Tennenbaum (NJ) / Walter Trice (MA); 4/5/6-Rick Barabino (NY) / Doug Roberts (NY) / Al Tesoro (FL). INTERMEDIATE (23): 1-Marcy Kossar, 2-Fred Bement, 3/4-Jeremy Bagai / Tom Green. **U.S./Canadian Open—ABT**... CHAMPIONSHIP (16): 1-Bob Bishop (NY), 2-Fast Eddie Pavilonis (NY); 1C-Doug Roberts (NY). INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Bob Lumbra (VT), 2-Marc Gray (NY); 1C-Mark Kaplan.

10th Palace Summer Championships (St. Moritz, Switzerland; 12-15 Aug.)... MASTERS (37): 1-Karl Laubmeier (GER), 2-Mario Sequeira (POR), 3/4-Roberto Caprio (ITA) / Wolfgang Wellhausen (GER); 1C-Lothar Wolf (GER), 2C-Giovanni Saladino (ITA); 1LC-Rolf Stern (GER). CHAMPION (22): 1-1-Erik Schwizer (SWIT), 2-Hakimzadeh (IRAN); 1C-Claudia Utinger (SWIT), 2C-Luisa Sequeira (POR); 1LC-Stefan Keller (SWIT)... WBF President Alberto da Pra reports that this was Mario Sequeira's third time losing in the finals.

Armbruster's Friday the 13th Bash (Los Angeles, CA; 13 Aug.)... DOUBLES: 1-Azzam Masarani & Barbara Foglerlund, 2-Norm Wiggins & Jerry Nestlerode. CONSOLATION: 1-Paul Armbruster, 2-Norm Wiggins. BLACK CAT TOSS: 1/2-Judy Collins / Ron Bruns. BLACK CAT HIDE & SEEK: Jerry Nestlerode... Richard Armbruster's annual party tournament proved that even on Friday the 13th, *somebody* has to get lucky.

CIBC Summer Sizzler (Lacon, IL; 22 Aug.)... OPEN (31): 1-Yamin Yamin, 2-Cinda King, 3/4-Greg Tomlin / Cliff Mayoh; 1C-Julius High (TN), 2C-Neil Kazaross. INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Randy Reiff, 2-William

Hutchison; 1C-Mary Vitale, 2C-Randy Peterson... A great directing debut for new CIBC leader Ed Zell.

South Florida Summer Tournament (Pompano Beach, FL; 22 Aug.)... OPEN (26): 1-Rami Mansour, 2-Sig Skolnick; 1C-Les Boyd, 2C/3C-Arnold Cohen / Elaine Feinstein. INTERMEDIATE (9): 1-Charlie Martin, 2-Lenore Steelman; 1C-Gail Cohen.

G/A 30th Invitational—ABT (Burbank, CA; 27-29 Aug.)... OPEN (47): 1-Joe Harris, 2-Anthony Niakiani, 3-Zev Vered; 1C-Paul Ladanyi, 2C-Art Benjamin. LIMITED (20): 1-Kyrrah Bell, 2-Jeff Heriot; 1C-Craig Rogers. SPECIAL 16: 1-Steve Sax, 2-Odis Chenault. OVERFLOW 8: #1-Art Benjamin / David Hochron, #2-Anthony Niakiani / Karoon Fathi. DOUBLES #1 (8): Joe Russell & Median Anderson. DOUBLES #2 (8): Norm Wiggins & Ron Bruns.

National Labor Day Tournament—ABT (Indianapolis, IN; 3-6 Sep.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (49): 1-Walter Trice (MA), 2-Doug Roberts (NY); 1C-Jeff Acierio (NY), 2C-Neil Kazaross (IL), 3C/4C-John Stephens (OH) / John Brussel (IL). ADVANCED (42): 1-Steve Hast (PA), 2-Carol Falk (MI); 1C-Maurice Barie (MI), 2C-Tony Siegel (CO), 3C/4C-Bobbie Shifrin (IL) / Mary Franks (IL). INTERMEDIATE (14): 1-Richard Heinz (IN), 2-Judy McHale (IN); 1C-Gail Latter (MI). DOUBLES (16): 1-Mary Franks & Jake Jacobs (IL), Tak Morioka & Ken Bond (IL). OPEN JACKPOT (30): 1-Frank Frigo (KY), 2-Dean Muench (IL), 3/4-Ed Petrillo (FL) / Frank Talbot (MI). AMATEUR JACKPOT (16): 1-Zohreh Zafarianian (TX), 2-Kurt Schurecht (IL) / Alex Caraplis (NJ). OPEN MICRO-BLITZ (32): 1-Paul Albert (CA). ADVANCED MICRO-BLITZ (32): 1-Carl Severino (IL). Δ

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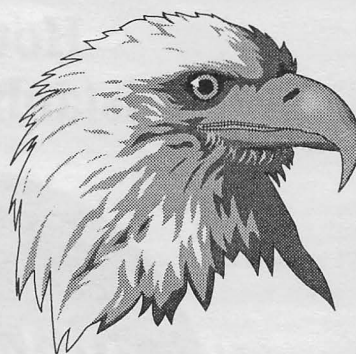
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