

CHICAGO POINT

NUMBER 64

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

NOVEMBER 1993

america cup & illinois state championships

AMERICA CUP TO MUENCH VIA TWO 8-CUBES

Malcolm Davis Is Illinois Champion

Dean Muench must like the CHICAGO POINT front page. After authoring last month's well-received "Steam" article, Dean finds himself in the headlines once again, this time for winning the prestigious America Cup tournament at the Illinois State Championships.



From left to right, America Cup runner-up Mike Senkiewicz, director Yamin Yamin and champion Dean Muench.

150 players (including eight from Europe) converged on the suburb of Arlington Heights, Illinois to partake in Yamin Yamin's third annual backgammon festival, staged this year at the Woodfield Hilton Hotel 6-10 October.

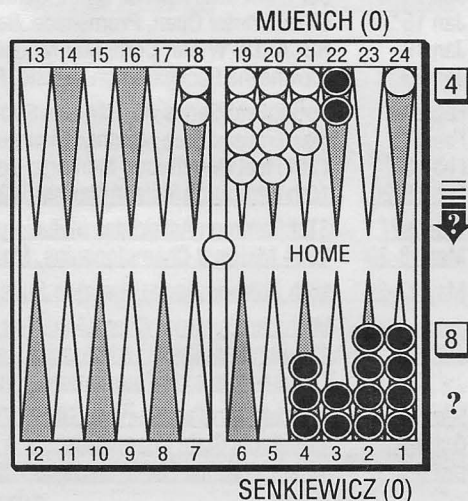
Muench and seven other master players (Hugh Sconyers, Kit Woolsey, Matthias Körner, Howard Ring, Malcolm Davis, Mike Senkiewicz and Jay Kurzet) were all that remained of a 21-player world class field when the Thursday night "Byzantine" auction dinner began. It was a very special affair, complete with live harp music and incredible table decorations created by Barbara Levinson. America Cup auctioneer Kent Goulding called it the most beautiful auction dinner room setup he'd ever seen. This reporter agrees.

On Friday, Muench bested "3-Checker

Hypergammon" programmer Hugh Sconyers and reigning European Open champion Matthias Körner (Germany) to reach the finals. Come Saturday, only one obstacle would remain in Dean's quest to win the America Cup: 1993 Costa Rican "El Cariari" champion Mike Senkiewicz.

The 25-point finals began Saturday afternoon with the first and last games providing most of the action:

25-point America Finals. Dean Muench (White) on roll vs. Mike Senkiewicz (Black). Game #1. CUBE ACTION(S)?

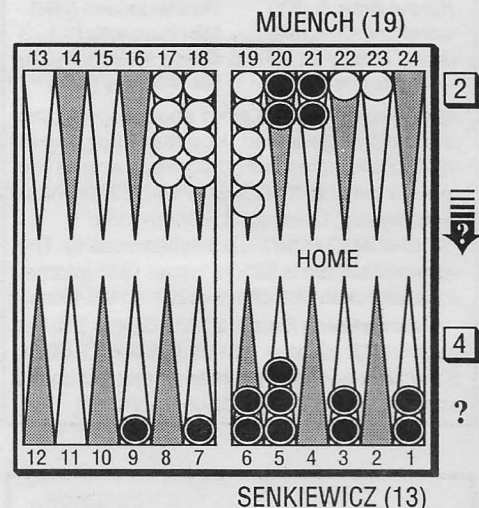


An easy take for Mike, even though Dean has gammon chances in this position. Muench brought the game home without a hitch to win eight points.

According to Muench, the first game set the tone for the rest of the match. Dean felt that Senkiewicz, in an effort to quickly recoup the eight points, chose to play on for gammons when he could (and perhaps *should*) have doubled and cashed single game victories. In fact Muench was able to turn a couple of these games around to take a healthy 14-3 lead.

Despite his huge lead, Dean continued to bear down, well aware of who his opponent was. Overcoming intense pressure, Senkiewicz was able to battle back to a 19-13 deficit when the following position developed—a position that would lead to the second 8-cube of the match (shown above right):

25-point America Finals. Dean Muench (White) on roll leads Mike Senkiewicz (Black), 19 to 13. CUBE ACTION(S)?



Senkiewicz grabbed the 4-cube and subsequently flipped a "snowman" back into Dean's face. Although Mike got two probable game-winning shots in the bear-off, he missed them both. Dean's 25-13 triumph earned him the symbolic America Cup eagle trophy and \$18,000.

THE 3RD ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP was equally exciting, pairing Chicago's Jake Jacobs against Dallas expert Malcolm Davis. Davis jumped out to a solid 7-2 lead in the Sunday 15-point finals. With Larry Strommen's Super VHS camera equipment recording all the action, Jake rallied to score 10 of the next 11 points and gain a 12-8 advantage.

Trailing 13-11, Malcolm offered Jake a dangerous double. Jake took and was barely able to scramble off a match-ending gammon.

At 13-all, Malcolm opened up by rolling 4-1 (13/9, 24/23). Jake responded with 4-3, hitting Davis on his 2-point and splitting his back men (24/21). Malcolm doubled, Jacobs took, and the match was on the line.

Jacobs commanded the better dice, forcing Malcolm into a poorly-timed back game. Get out your backgammon board and follow along:

[Continued on page 5]

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LETTERS

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

WHO WILL SPEAK FOR SAITEK?

I picked this up from the Internet computer modem service and thought your readers might be interested in it:

Date: Tue, 5 Oct 1993 21:59:29 GMT
From: Gerry Tesauro
(tesauro@WATSON.IBM.COM)
Subject: False Advertising by Saitek
X-To: bkgammon@indycms.iupui.edu
To: Multiple recipients of list
BKGAMMON (BKGAMMON@INDYCMS.BITNET)

In the back of Bill Robertie's new book "Backgammon for Winners" there's an ad for Saitek Electronic Champion Backgammon, a table-top backgammon computer. The ad claims that the machine was the "Winner of the 1989 Computer Olympiad." Well, as someone who was actually there and competed in the backgammon division, I have to dispute this claim. In fact, the backgammon competition that year was won by my program Neurogammon 1.0 (a precursor to TD-Gammon) with a 5-0 score in

[Continued on page 3]

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.

Nov 6*	Springfield Series #1, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Nov 6-7	Louisville Club Tournament, Captain's Quarters, Louisville, KY	502/587-3672
Nov 14	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8154
Nov 14	Austin BG Assn. Sunday Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/280-5945
Nov 14	South Florida Fall Tournament, Bridge Club of Tamarac, Tamarac, FL	305/785-1282
Nov 16	BPC 11th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	312/338-6380
Nov 18	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Nov 19-21	<u>NY/NJ BG CO-OP Big Apple Series, Oritani Hotel, Hackensack, NJ</u>	<u>201/833-2915</u>
Nov 20	3rd Bloomington-Normal Championships, Ride-The-Nine, Bloomington, IL	309/454-1947
Nov 20-21	<u>Autumn Gran Prix, Embassy Suites Hotel, La Jolla, CA</u>	<u>619/294-2007</u>
Nov 21	15th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Nov 27*	Metropolitan Open, Backgammon & Chess Express Club, New York, NY	212/587-8038
Dec 5	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Dec 5-10	First World-Wide Twin Championships, Treasure Island, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Dec 12*	Springfield Series #2, Peoria, IL	217/528-0117
Dec 12	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8154
Dec 16*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Dec 18*	Holiday Tourney, Backgammon & Chess Express Club, New York, NY	212/587-8038
Jan 8*	Springfield Series #3, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Jan 11*	Bar Point Club Awards Night, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	312/338-6380
Jan 15*	CPBC Winter Open, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0603
Jan 19	RSCARDS Winter Computer Modern Tournament, GEnie	800/638-9636
Jan 29	Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	312/338-6380
Feb 5*	Springfield Series #3, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Feb 13*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8145
Feb 13	12th Fleet Underwood Memorial Tournament, Ramada Hotel, Flint, MI	313/232-9731
Feb 18-20	<u>16th Pittsburgh Winter Champs, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Mar 2-2*	<u>31st Gammon Associates Invitational, Bombay Bicycle Club, Burbank, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Mar 18-20	<u>1994 Midwest Championships, Marriott Hotel, Oakbrook, IL</u>	<u>312/338-6380</u>
May 27-30*	<u>15th Chicago Open, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Elk Grove Village, IL</u>	<u>708/674-0120</u>
Jul 1-4*	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI</u>	<u>313/232-9731</u>
Jul 2-2*	<u>42nd Indiana Open, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/845-8435</u>
Jul 29-31*	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Sep 30-Oct 2*	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Turin, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Oct 5-9*	<u>4th Illinois State Championships & America Cup, Woodfield Hilton, IL</u>	<u>708/945-7801</u>
Oct 7-9*	<u>Nation's Capital Fall Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD</u>	<u>301/530-0603</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Nov 4-7	Swedish Open Championships, Fogg's Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	468/6524099
Nov 5-7	7th British Festival of Backgammon, Stratford Upon Avon, England	061/946 0828
Nov 5-7	NRW-Meisterschaft 1993, Hotel Antana/Kaarst, Düsseldorf, Germany	02151/503 591
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 12-14*	2nd Montréal Open Championship, Le Gammon, Montréal, QB, Canada	514/845-8370
Nov 13	Mencap Charity Tournament, Meridien Hotel, Piccadilly London, England	0624/851 045
Nov 18-21*	Appleton-Tabasco Tournament, Sheraton Acapulco Resort, Mexico	52748/5574163
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, Treff Hotel, Wiesbaden-Nordenstadt, Germany	49/631 60106
Nov 27-28	BIBA Ranking 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
Jan 14-16*	Backgammon-Meisterschaft, Hotel Klosterbräu, Seefeld/Tirol, Austria	08341/12825
Jan 20-23	3rd Dutch Open Championship, Hilton Hotel, Amsterdam, Netherlands	3120/625 4775
Jan 29-30	BIBA Ranking Tournament No. 1, George Hotel, Solihull, England	0522/53 68 36
Feb 17-20	4th French Open Championship, Lutetia Hotel, Paris, France	331/4288 6645
Feb 24-27*	8th Backgammon Tournament, Festival of Games, Cannes, France	061/331 58 16
Mar 17-20*	30th Ted Basset & Gstaad Palace-Cup, Palace Hotel, Gstaad, Switzerland	061/331 58 16
Mar 24-27*	International Winter Championship, Badrutt's, St. Moritz, Switzerland	061/331 15 16
Apr 1-4	6th Nordic "Wide" Open, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539/40 06 07
Apr 27-May 1	3rd Tournament of the Americas, Cariari Hotel, San José, Costa Rica	312/252-7755

Marty Storer	31.81	Felix Yen	10.44	Mike Pettigrew	6.50	Bill Bartholomay	3.79
Howard Markowitz	26.66	Mike Nelson	10.44	Ray Desforges	6.42	Carl Adamec	3.76
Ben Lang	26.00	Maurice Barie	10.01	Ken Cohen	6.28	Sam Hanna	3.76
Malcolm Davis	25.20	Jeff Acierno	9.76	Peter Kalba	6.09	Belle Pronman	3.73
Frank Talbot	22.16	Ed Pavilonis	9.71	Joseph Freedman	6.08	Carol Joy Cole	3.60
Walter Trice	21.71	Jorgen Granstedt	9.69	Karen Davis	6.08	Jerry Ungar	3.53
Paul Stebbing	21.44	Stuart Thomson	9.58	Marty Kohler	5.85	Randall Witt	3.53
Woody Woodson	21.12	Carol Falk	9.26	Frank Dickerson	5.70	Jerry Padova	3.50
Joe Harris	20.83	Mike Friedman	9.00	Fred Gehlhoff	5.63	Mark Damish	3.36
Bob Holyon	19.52	Ami Tennenbaum	8.82	Mike Shanas	5.60	Bob Wachtel	3.34
Jake Jacobs	18.47	Anthony Niakiani	8.74	Lila Swan	5.21	Carl Sellars	3.34
Doug Roberts	17.68	Paul Ladanyi	8.74	Rich Sweetman	5.21	Stu Hosen	3.34
Ken Bond	16.16	Dave Orandle	8.72	Larry Lau	5.20	Sharon Rochon	3.25
Jeff Kane	16.06	Ira Hoffberg	8.40	Neil Kazaross	4.94	John Lear	3.20
Quint McTyeire	14.53	Stu Katz	8.40	Norma Shyer	4.92	Dave Pink	3.06
David Hochron	14.40	Bob Bishop	8.30	Mark Donaldson	4.82	Leo Tuin	3.06
Al Jones	13.32	Steve Hast	8.06	Art Benjamin	4.34	Alex Caraplis	3.04
John Mansey	13.00	Herb Gurland	7.88	Zev Vered	4.34	Angelo Larceri	3.04
Ralph Levy	12.87	Evan Diamond	7.70	Bob Lumbr	4.16	Jan Carlstrom	2.94
Doug Huch	12.16	Yamin Yamin	7.34	Dean Adamian	4.03	Denny Leatherman	2.90
Andy Palumbo	12.09	Frank Frigo	7.24	Joe Sylvester	4.03	Nayan Shah	2.90
Dean Muench	11.33	Ron Weingrad	7.20	John Rockwell	3.96	Abbas Zaltash	2.80
Arnold Zousmer	10.85	Gabe Stiasny	7.18	Norm Wiggins	3.96	Paul Albert	2.80
Perry Gartner	10.84	Alan Steffen	6.68	Harry Cohn	3.92	Kyrrha Bell	2.50
Paul Strasberg	10.63	Jim Lakdawala	6.50	Michel Leveille	3.85	Michael Sharp	2.50

The ABT "Big Finish" weekend is set for 20-21 Nov. with the Big Apple in Hackensack, New Jersey and the Autumn Gran Prix in San Diego, CA ready to potentially decide the 1993 Champion. Details next month.


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

GARY KAY	22.44	Dave Cramer	4.88	Elaine Kehm	1.84	Dan Judd	0.64
NEIL KAZAROSS	22.00	Alex Itkin	4.80	Tim Serges	1.76	Jeff Kane	0.64
JOHN DEMIAN	17.68	Paul Klein	4.56	Dick McCall	1.68	Mike Cohen	0.64
TAK MORIOKA	16.88	Joann Feinstein	4.48	Lou Salzman	1.64	Greg Roland	0.60
YAMIN YAMIN	16.80	Richard Stawowy	4.40	Don Desmond	1.60	Kurt Schurecht	0.60
JAKE JACOBS	16.40	Georgina Flanagan	4.40	Steve Grubart	1.60	Richard Beagarie	0.56
DON JAYHAN	16.04	Danny DeRoche	4.08	Tony Schroeder	1.56	John Stryker	0.48
DAVID RUBIN	14.92	Marcy Sloan	3.92	Pim Van Haastert	1.32	Graham Sievers	0.48
PHYLLIS SMOLINSKI	12.40	Leslie Lockett	3.88	Betsy Miller	1.28	Paul Reiner	0.48
PAUL FRIEDMAN	11.28	Sarg Serges	3.84	Kevin McDonough	1.28	Frank Callea	0.44
TIM MABEE	10.72	Stan Kucharz	3.56	Steve Katz	1.24	John Meyers	0.40
STU KATZ	9.36	Peggy Fleming	3.28	Reggie Porter	1.22	Andy Bittman	0.36
ALLEN ZIMMERMAN	9.28	Andy Krenitz	3.20	Jim Pappas	1.12	William Frierson	0.32
PAUL FRANKS	8.76	Bob Ebbeler	3.16	Frankie Farjood	1.04	Harry Hayward	0.32
BILL DAVIS	8.12	Bill Keefe	3.16	Marty Tatosian	1.00	Jay Ward	0.32
DEEB SHALATI	8.00	Femi Owiku	3.14	George Barr	0.96	Katy Clark	0.32
RALPH LEVY	7.84	Arlene Levy	2.68	Ron Stur	0.96	Greg Try	0.32
JOHN BRUSSEL	7.80	Larry Strommen	2.56	Roland Dieter	0.96	Tom Shields	0.32
KEN BOND	7.36	Jill Ferdinand	2.44	Dave Rockwell	0.96	Barbara Levinson	0.24
MARY FRANKS	7.20	Bruce Wittert	2.16	Peter Bouman	0.96	Andy Argy	0.24
Jolie Rubin	7.16	Amy Trudeau	2.00	J.A. Miller	0.96	Joe Mangine	0.24
V.W. Zimnicki	6.72	Chuck Olson	1.92	Barry Miller	0.88	Mark Kay	0.24
Ed Buerger	6.72	Wilcox Snellings	1.92	Ray Kershaw	0.88	Mark Murray	0.24
Howard Ring	6.56	Don Woods	1.92	Earl Risch	0.88	Dean Muench	0.24
Bobbie Shifrin	6.48	Scottie Mitchell	1.92	Larry Yakowenko	0.88	Bob Zavoral	0.24
Peter Kalba	6.48	Jon Vietor	1.92	Joe Koucharian	0.80	Mary Vitale	0.20
Herb Roman	6.16	Phil Simborg	1.84	Jerry Brooks	0.80	Greg Feller	0.20
Norma Shyer	6.00	Howard Markowitz	1.84	Mike Spiropoulos	0.80	Barry Epstein	0.16
Alice Kay	5.00	Tad Wilson	1.84				

October Player of the Month **GARY KAY** and Neil Kazaross continue to play leapfrog with the Bar Point Club standings. Gary jumped ahead of Neil with a win on the last Tuesday of October. Finishing 2nd and 3rd to Gary's 4.48 total were Don Jayhan (3.20) and Neil Kazaross (3.04).

LETTERS...
[Continued from page 2]

11-point matches. Saitek's machine scored 3-2 which tied for second with Video Gammon, and Saitek was awarded third place on the basis of a tie-break. The facts are all documented in the following book:

D. N. L. Levy and D. F. Beal, eds., "Heuristic Programming in Artificial Intelligence: The First Computer Olympiad." Ellis Horwood Ltd., 1989.

I'd be interested to know whether Saitek has some excuse for incorrectly stating the facts, or whether it's just blatant false advertising.

—Gerry Tesauro
(tesauro@watson.ibm.com)

—Dave Cardwell, Indianapolis, IN

**REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF BG
COMPUTER SOFTWARE**

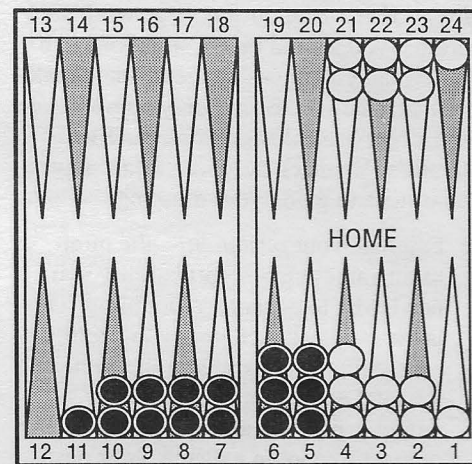
A suggestion for an article in a future edition of CHICAGO POINT: a critical review of the several backgammon software packages that are currently available. They have generated a lot of interest, and I gather, sales. It's time for a review.—
Murray Work, Carmichael, CA

TALE OF WOE

I'll bet I haven't won an opening 3-1 roll in two years, but I still enjoy reading CHICAGO POINT. Here's my 2-year renewal.—Rick Herwig, Burnsville, MN

[Continued on page 6]
your move
PROBLEM #199

Illinois State Championship 15-point finals. Double match point. Jake Jacobs (Black) vs. Malcolm Davis (White). **BLACK TO PLAY 2-2.**



ASK DANNY

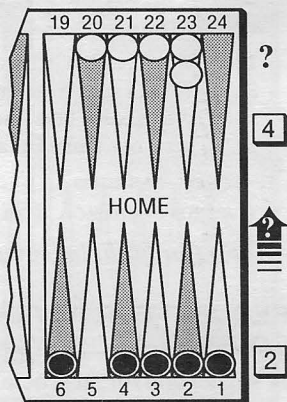
by Danny Kleinman



REDOUBLING FOR THE MATCH

Dear Danny: I was Black leading 4-1 in a 7-point match, when I redoubled to 4 in the following position:

Match to 7 points. Black leads White 4 to 1. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



White took, and after I rolled a mediocre 6-2, redoubled to 8 for the match. Naturally, he rolled boxcars, and won when I failed to roll a double of my own.

Afterwards, of course, the kibitzers voiced their opinions. One of the strongest players in our club said, "Hell no! You shouldn't redouble. If you hold on to the cube and win, you'll be up 6-1. The cube is too risky."

A second strong player concurred, but a third disagreed: "The redouble to 4 is clear. It's White's take that's questionable."

But even if a mathematical analysis shows that I should redouble, is this really the smart thing to do? If I won only two points, I'd still be a heavy favorite at 6-1 Crawford anyway. Just how careful should one be with the cube in situations like this?—Kati Pratt, Dallas, TX

SORRY KATI: I cannot say in general "how careful" you should be "in situations like this"...and you must engage in some mathematical analysis, even if only approximate.

Except in freak situations (such as Gerard's Paradox), however, I can suggest some steps to guide your thinking:

1. Estimate your *pushpoint*—the minimum game-winning probability you need even to consider redoubling. This is the ratio between your gain from redoubling when you win the game and the total extra gain-and-loss your redouble puts at stake. In a money game, or at a tie score in a match, your push-

point is always 50%, for when you turn the cube from 2 to 4 and win the game, you gain two points, while the total extra gain-and-loss is four points: the two extra points you can win plus the two extra points your opponent can win.

2. Estimate your *cashpoint*—the minimum game-winning probability you need before your opponent has a pass of your redouble. Your cashpoint, like your pushpoint, depends greatly on the score of the match.
3. Determine your *redoubling window*—the range between your pushpoint and your cashpoint.
4. Estimate your game-winning probability—in situations like this, on the assumption that your opponent will take and then return the cube to put the match on the line. If this falls short of your pushpoint, you must keep the cube. If this exceeds your cashpoint, of course, you can redouble your opponent out. If this falls within your redoubling window, you should consider redoubling your opponent in. The closer to your pushpoint, the more likely it is that you should keep the cube. The closer to your cashpoint, the more likely it is that you should redouble.

BEFORE WE CAN APPLY this procedure to your problem, we must ask: how heavy is a "heavy" favorite? Different theorists have different opinions.

Bill Robertie, in *Lee Genud vs. Joe Dwek*, makes the leader of a 7-point match 90% at 6-1 Crawford, and 60% at 4-3. If so, then by redoubling and letting your opponent put the match on the line, you are risking 60% to gain 10%. This means that you should not consider redoubling unless you are better than a 6-to-1 favorite to win the game, giving you a pushpoint of 86% to go with your 90% cashpoint.

Roy Friedman, however, in *World Class Backgammon, Move By Move*, makes the leader only 83% at 6-1 Crawford, and only 56% at 4-3. My own estimates are in between, but closer to Friedman's than to Robertie's. I think you're only a fraction of a percent better than 83% at 6-1 Crawford, and between 58% and 59% at 4-3. This means that you're risking about 59% to gain 17%, which gives you a pushpoint of 78% along with your 83% cashpoint.

What are your game-winning chances? In a 3-roll ending, they'd be closer to 79% than to 78%. In one way, this is better than a 3-roll ending for you: not all doublets work for your opponent. Double-aces and double-3s (on the first roll at least) get only two White men off, while double-2s leave

White with a probable miss next turn. Say White thus relinquishes about 1/3 of his 21% chances: 7%. But other ways, this is worse than a 3-roll ending for you. You have nearly a 10% chance of failing to get off in three, which will cost the game whenever White gets off in exactly three rolls (nearly a 70% chance). White thus gains close to 10% of 70%: almost the 7% he relinquishes because not all doublets work for him.

Credit White with an extra 1% because half your doublets won't work for you on the first roll and some may not work for you on the second roll. (This is a very small figure because you will seldom need those doublets.) All in all, I would estimate, your game-winning chances are within 1% of what they would be in a pure 3-roll ending: closer to 78% than 79%.

This analysis places you just above your pushpoint, at the lower edge of your redoubling window. Indeed, I would recommend a redouble if your opponent were substantially the stronger player.

Why? Because the match charts, whether Robertie's or Friedman's or mine, are based on the assumption of equally strong opponents. If a stronger player trails 1-6 Crawford, his match chances might be 23% instead of 17%, in which case he would have a proper pass.

By similar reasoning, if you are clearly the stronger player, you should definitely keep the cube.

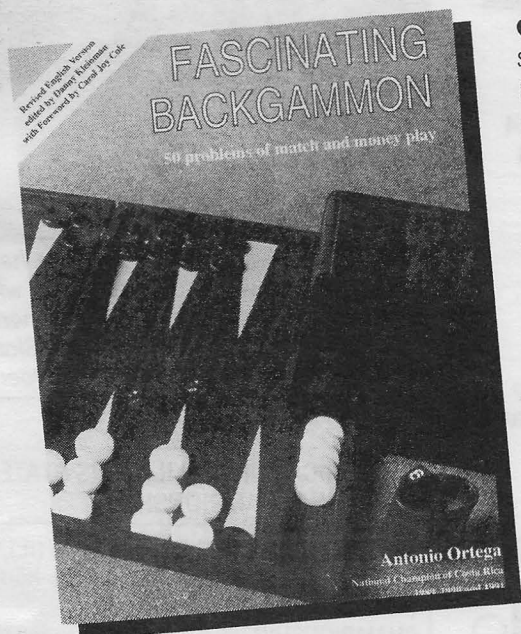
What if you and your opponent play about equally well?

Then, argue some theorists, "When in doubt, turn the cube." That's a plausible psychological argument, for nobody makes perfect cube decisions, and only by turning the cube can you give your opponent a chance to make a cube error. I would agree with a redouble here, if there were a real chance your opponent might pass. But unlike the third kibitzer, I would be genuinely surprised to see your opponent (unless much stronger than you) pass here.

And when you have little chance of getting a pass, there is a subtle but powerful argument against redoubling in this situation or in similar positions near the bottom of your redoubling window. *The cube still has value for you if you keep it.*

For your next roll will not be decisive unless you roll double-4s or better. Often you'll be able to redouble your opponent out next turn. When you do, you will deprive him of some of the matches he could otherwise win with an appropriate doublet on his second roll, and you will increase your game-winning chances beyond the 78% we estimated earlier.—
Yours, Danny Δ

Fascinating Reading.



Just in time for the holidays, 3-time Costa Rican Champion Antonio Ortega presents **FASCINATING BACKGAMMON**. Originally published in Spanish, Ortega has called upon the editing skills of world-renowned backgammon author **Danny Kleinman** to present this fully-revised English version of 50 challenging backgammon problems dealing both match and money play.

FASCINATING BACKGAMMON receives high praise from *Flint Backgammon* News editor **Carol Joy Cole**, who authored the book's foreword, and international master **Neil Kazaross**, who carefully reviewed the first draft.

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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).

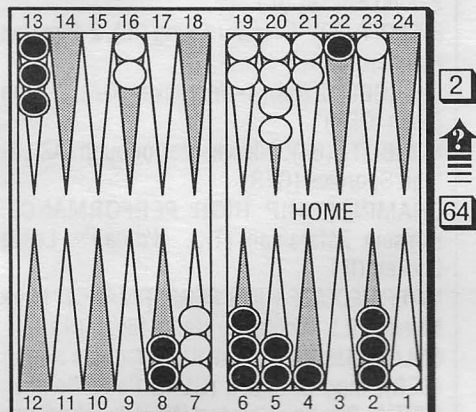
LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

MONTE CARLO DOUBLING CORRECTION

There was an error in the position shown in the Monte Carlo finals between myself and Peter Thomsen. We are sure of this because Peter's next roll was 3-1 and he pointed on me. With the slight shift in the three checkers, I think the position is a proper take.—
John Sjølin, Copenhagen, Denmark

Corrected 25-point World Championship position. John Sjølin (White) leads Peter Thomsen (Black) 23-21. White took the cube, lost a 'G' and the match.



Sorry about that, John. Backgammon Magazin editor Harald Johanni supplied

us with the position long distance from Germany. Evidently, something was lost in the translation.—Ed.

APPROVAL FOR 'STEAM'

I really enjoyed Dean Muench's "Steam" article last month. All of it was very true.—
Mary Franks, Chicago, IL

ANOTHER USE FOR DICE?

When I'm counting the position, is it legal to remove the dice from my cup and use them to remember the pip count (e.g. a count of 126 could be represented by putting the dice on 2 and 6.—Name withheld upon request

Although there is no written law about this, we would rule against you. It is against accepted tournament practice to remove your dice from the cup and manipulate them prior to your roll. We suggest you develop a count-memory system that involves your fingers... but please, keep your shoes on.—Ed.

A TRULY 'GOLDEN' CIRCUIT

I'm reading the results of the Byblos Challenge Cup in the October POINT and see a misinterpretation. The prize money was not paid in gold grams. It was paid in the convertible official money valid for the tournament (in this case, French Francs). The calculation into gold grams is done for the WBF Golden Circuit ratings. Gold acts

as a common denominator for all of the 18 1993 Golden Circuit events around the world. Currently, Sami Adirov of England is the leader with a gold gram rating of 2976.—Alberto da Pra, President, World-wide Backgammon Federation

Thanks for the correction, Alberto. Here is the current 1993 WBF Golden Circuit Top 20 after 13 tournaments:

1. Sami Akirov (ENG) 2976
2. Roberto Caprio (ITA) 1841
3. Matthias Körner (GER) 1605
4. Tino Lechich (AUL) 1357
5. Lucien Orsini (FRA) 1352
6. Roger Staiger (SWZ) 1285
7. Faik Gousseinov (AZB) 1250
8. Gustav Jacobsen (DEN) 1153
9. Alan Steffen (USA) 1142
10. Karl Laubmeier (GER) 1046
11. Rino Mathis (SWZ) 984
12. Wilcox Snellings (USA) 937
13. Paul Magriel (USA) 816
14. Ralf Jonas (GER) 588
15. Roland Ekstroem (SWE) 558
16. Joel Schiff (ISR) 487
17. Yves Robin (FRA) 484
18. David Bridges (ENG) 480
19. Thomas Lumper (GER) 480
20. Mario Sequeira (POR) 449

'NEED' X 2

Thank you, Bill. I need it, I need it! One year's subscription.—Greg Rocker, Philadelphia, PA Δ

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AMALGAMATION

Visiting the Bar Point Club last month: **Rudy Emmelot** (MO), **Pim Van Haastert** (Neth), **Peter Bouman** (Neth), **Doug Roberts** (NY), **John Vietor** (CA), **Mona Lisa** (GA), **Marta Hilworth** (IN), **Jon Stephens** (OH), and **Kevin McDonough** (AZ)... Speaking of Kevin, he was just named Musical Director of the Island Princess Cruise ship. Kevin took over his new position 26 Oct. in Venice, Italy...



Last month, Clark Oil changed its company logo. It looks as though the new design (shown left) could have been

created by a backgammon player... Best wishes to **Seth & Lou Ann Towle** who were married 10 Oct. in the Boston area. Also to **Chris & Nancy Cole** 9 Oct. Proud

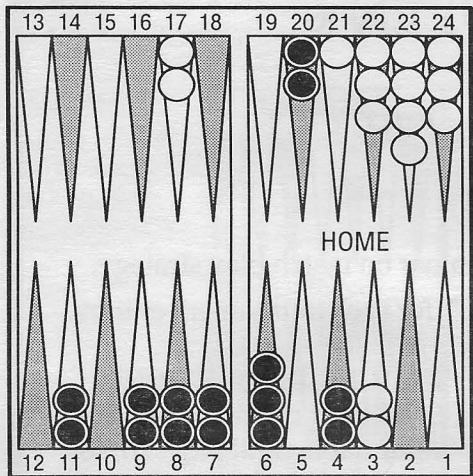
mama **Carol Joy Cole** is beaming... It may not be the world record, but Illinois State Champion **Malcolm Davis** is claiming the Texas state record for an individual point loss in a single game. On 11 Aug. 1993, Davis lost exactly 300 points playing the box in a ten man chouette in Dallas... At the Illinois State Championship, **Hugh Sconyers** showed us a new portable CD-Rom player that Sony is marketing. We played Sconyer's very addictive 3-checker Hypergammon game. Excellent!... **Jolie & David Rubin**'s housewarming party (Norridge, IL; 17 Oct.) was well attended by Chicago area backgammon players... Small world: On a Vegas vacation last month, BPC player **Paul Friedman** accidentally ran into CHICAGO POINT subscriber **Chuck Giallanza** at a Hold 'em poker table at the Rio Hotel... England to Denmark: **Jonathan Bennetts**... Pat's Pub, home of Chicago Bar Point Backgammon for ten years, has been remodeled into a Fiesta Del Sol Mexican restaurant... Thanks to **Peter Kalba** who bought caramel apples for all 42 BPC entrants at the 26 Oct. tourney ... **Jake Jacobs** left for Korea and the Philippines 30 Oct. He'll be back 21 Nov., which should give him just enough time to

promote his "Stake Jake" idea. Jake's looking for backing to attend the World-Wide Twin Championships in Las Vegas 5-10 Dec.... Congratulations to **Ed Maslansky**, the College Park Backgammon Club's '92-'93 Player of the Year... Condolences on the passing of **A. Bradley Eben**, a prominent Chicago lawyer for 56 years. When he wasn't arguing cases (including seven before the U.S. Supreme Court), Mr. Eben was an active member of **Valerie Valentine**'s Backgammon Club of Chicago, serving on the Chicago Cup tournament committee through 1983... **Richard Stawowy** informs us of an article in the Oct. 1993 *Scientific American* about the 1992 raising of the Swedish man-of-war ship "Vasa." Sunk in Stockholm Harbor 10 Aug. 1628, the ship contained a wealth of period pieces including a backgammon board... **Anthony Maltezopoulos** has published a new backgammon book in the Greek language. According to **Roy Friedman**, it appears to be a compilation of problems taken from American authors' works including Friedman, **Goulding**, **Kleinman**, **Magriel** and **Robertie**. For more information, write Anthony at 163 Peloponnesou St.; Argyroupoli; 164 51 Athens, Greece. Δ

PROBLEM #198 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

Tournament double match-point.
BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.



Black has one of those positions which looks like it should be easy to win, yet might prove quite difficult. If White's checkers were primed back on the ace point, Black would have no problem. He could just bring his men around while holding the prime, confident that even if White immediately escaped, the race would be well in hand.

With her checkers anchored on the 3-point, however, it is another story. White has plenty of racing equity if allowed to just sit there. In order to increase his winning chances, Black wants to either pick up another checker or squeeze White off the 3-anchor. However this squeeze must be done carefully. White does have a three point board which may improve to a four point board. If Black lets White get away too soon, it may be difficult to contain what is left.

NOW THAT WE HAVE AN IDEA of what Black is trying to do, we can examine the alternatives:

11/5, 9/5 immediately goes after the heart of the problem by making the 5-point. It is clear that Black will want that 5-point in all variations, so it could seem reasonable to make it now.

If Black were sure White would not roll a 6 next turn, this would be the correct play. However, White might roll a 6, and some of her 6s are devastating. 6-2 hits two blots, 6-4 hits and covers, and 6-6 hits and escapes both checkers while also covering the blot on the 4-point. It isn't worth it for Black to take this risk right now. White's board is as

big as Black's, so even if Black can squeeze White off the anchor, he may come out second best in the blot-hitting contest.

Black needs to lock up his 5-point prior to relinquishing the 9-point. After that, he can decide how best to handle the situation.

11/5, 11/7 is another approach. It isn't as risky since it doesn't allow White's checkers to escape with a single roll. It also goes directly after the important 5-point. Unfortunately, there is some danger of White escaping if she rolls a 2, or advancing her anchor up to Black's 5-point where things will be even more treacherous for Black.

Another problem with this play is that it gives up the valuable 11-point. As long as Black owns the 11-point—even if White is able to advance her anchor up to Black's 5-point—Black will have White's checkers well contained. Right now, White's inner board is stronger than Black's, so White will welcome a blot-hitting contest. Black should hold his offensive position where it is.

20/16, 20/14 safely brings both Black stragglers into White's outfield and prepares to concentrate all 15 checkers on White's back men. Unfortunately this play gives up on the opportunity to pick up another White checker.

As we have seen, Black's winning chances increase considerably if he can send a third man back. Not only will this put Black well ahead in the race, but now if White manages to escape one checker, there will still be two more behind the prime. Black should hang back on the 20-point with at least one man in an effort to pick up the third checker.

20/10 looks like it does the things Black wants to do. Black holds his offense in place, keeps one checker back, and brings in a new builder to aim at the 5-point. White has to roll a perfect 5-2 to hit, and even then, her remaining back checker will also need a 2 followed by a 5 to escape. On his next roll, Black will be able to safely slot the 5-point with an ace or a 5, since even if White hits, Black will still have the 11-point backing up his 4-prime.

Once Black makes his 5-point, he can then determine the best way to squeeze White off the anchor—probably by releasing the 8-point or the bar point in order to force White to break with a 4 or a 5. In the meantime, Black may have a shot at sending a third checker back.

THE SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM is not hard to find once Black understands what he is trying to accomplish. However, without the proper game plan, a player could be lured into an inferior alternative. Δ

WINNER'S CORNER



Sept-Oct. 1993

Campeonato Argentino 1993 (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Sept.)... **CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS:** Graciela Rossi, Mario López Ameghino, Eduardo Vaneskeheian, Mario López Ameghino. **JUNIOR WINNERS:** Osvaldo Tundis, Ramón Alkerman, José Papazian, Basilio Theocharidis. **BEGINNER WINNERS:** Marta Chab, Brenda Daich, Sergio Tomasini, Raúl Barcesat... Current AAB master point leaders through 30 Sept.: Juan Rosa (Champ) and Osvaldo Tundis (Junior).

10th Colegio de Ingenieros (San José, Costa Rica; 9-10 Sept.)... **OPEN (20):** 1-Rolando Coto, 2-Jorge Saprissa, 3-Javier Aguilar. **INTERM. (16):** 1-Erika Barrantes, 2-Gustavo Saprissa.

Hotel Corobici Torneo Heineken (San José, Costa Rica; 21-22 Sept.)... **OPEN (18):** 1-Jorge Tsao, 2-Mario Madrigal, 3-Mario Lizano. **INTERM. (16):** 1-Harold Bach, 2-Ana Herdon.

NY Chess & BG Sunday Tournament (New York, NY; 26 Sept.)... **Open (34):** 1/2-Gitte Dalgaard (DEN) / Alan Steffen, 3/4-Mike Singer / Ami Tennenbaum (NJ); 1C/2C-Jim Pascoe (CT) / Levin.

Hellenic Association Fall Championship (Loutsa, Greece; 25-26 Sept.)... **OPEN:** 1-Panos Yannopoulos, 2-Yannis Vallianos; 1C-Jim Caray, 2C-Costas Chiotinis... Reported by Jim Caray.

Baleares Open (San José, Costa Rica; 11, 13 Oct.)... **OPEN (18):** 1-Cesar Hernández, 2-William Charpentier, 3-Jorge Tsao. **INTERMEDIATE (16):** 1-Tatiana Saprissa, 2-Javier Villalobos.

Nation's Capital Backgammon Championships—ABT (Bethesda, MD; 22-24 Oct.)... **CHAMPIONSHIP (38):** 1-Doug Huch, 2-Joeseph Freedman, 1C-Karen Davis, 4-Andy Palumbo, 5/6-Alex Caraplis / Angelo Larceri, 7/8-Jim Baroff / Brad Paleg, 1LC-David Orandle. **OPEN (32):** 1-Mel Leifer, 2-Angelo Larceri, 1C-Joseph Freedman, 4-James Pascoe, 5/6-Paul Weaver / Bob Faucon, 7/8-Chen-Fu Yu / Jeff Acierno. **JACKPOT (13):** 1-Ed Maslansky, 2-Herbert Avram; 1C-Andy Palumbo. **DOUBLES (13):** 1-David & Sam Orandle, 2-Harry Zilli; 1C-Andy Palumbo & Jeff Acierno. **KNOCKOUT (BLITZ) (32):** 1-Greg Daniel, 2/3-Barry Steinberg / James Pascoe.

Springfield Open (Springfield, IL; 23 Oct.)... **Open (17):** 1-Greg Tomlin, 2-Ed Zell; 1C-Larry Whittenburg, 2C-Jeff Anderson; 1LC-Laurel Patkus.

Malmö "Aviation" Open 1993 (Malmö, Sweden, 23-24 Oct.)... **CHAMPIONSHIP/ADVANCED (65):** 1-Gitte Dalgaard (DEN), 2-Dag Edmark, 3-Lars Hammargren, Erik Gravgaard (DEN); 1C-Henrik Hartman, 2C-Oliver Fox. **BEGINNER/**

[Continued on page 9]

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TOTAL RETURNS FOR PERIODS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1993

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	24% to 53%	22% to 57%	19% to 29%	35%
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<i>Five Largest International Funds:</i>	23% to 29%	21% to 25%	10% to 15%	11% to 17%
<i>Five Largest Global Funds:</i>	17 to 23%	18% to 25%	7% to 16%	12% to 19%
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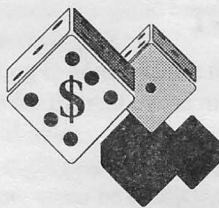
WINNER'S...

[Continued from page 8]

INTERMEDIATE (44): 1-Bill Nordström (DEN), 2-Tony Kluck, 3-Lars Raft, 4-Christine Höjhus; 1C-Pia Fagerholt, 2C-Fredrik Winberg. CITY CUP: Copenhagen... Upon opening the invitation to this tournament, a rubber band-loaded piece of cardboard popped into the shape of a doubling cube. Incredible!

New Hampshire Fall Classic—ABT (Bedford, NH; 29-31 Oct)... CHAMPIONSHIP (22): 1-Evan Diamond, 2-Michel Leveille, 3/4-Doug Roberts / Mark Teitelbaum; 1C-Marty Storer, 2C-Jay Giuttari. INTERMEDIATE (13): 1-Sharon Rochon, 2-Jerry Padova; 1C-Mark Damish. DOUBLES (8): 1-Jay Giuttari & Andres Corredor, 2-Mark Teitelbaum & Michel Leveille. 1-POINT MATCH (16): 1-Seth Towle. HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST: *Scariest*: Leslie Lockett, *Most Creative*: Maria Corredor. Δ

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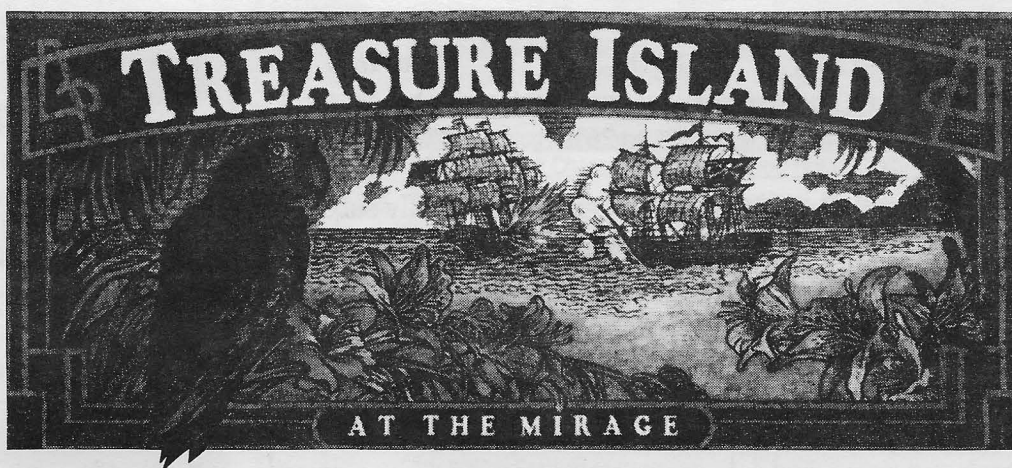
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