

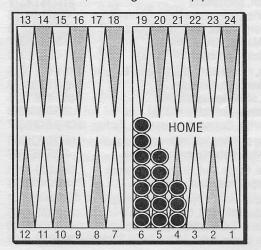
THE 000357 TRICE OPTIMAL BEAROFF POSITION by Paul Weaver

Trillions of games of backgammon have been played by hundreds of millions of men and women over the past centuries and millennia, yet until the year 1990, no one knew for certain, the most efficient way to bring the checkers into the home board in preparation for the bearoff. How can anyone pretend to be a halfway competent backgammon player when he doesn't even know the correct technique for bringing his checkers into his home board in a non-contact position?

Four years ago, one of the greatest scientific discoveries in the history of our planet occurred without fanfare as Walter Trice, of Holden, MA, wrote and executed a program which gave the definitive solution to this important problem. A quiet and humble man, Walter kept this vital discovery to himself, eventually confiding in me. I can keep the secret no longer. The human race has the right to know the solution and also the name of the individual who has provided us with this essential information.

Everyone who plays backgammon should be deeply indebted to Walter for making this discovery and for sharing it with us. Now, without further ado, here is the most efficient bearoff position for 15 checkers in the home board:

Pos. 1. Trice Optimal Bearoff Position. EPC = 86.07, Wastage = 7.07 pips



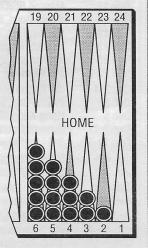
I will now give rigorous definitions of the terms involved. The *Effective Pip Count* (EPC) of a position is the product of 49/6 (= 8 $\frac{1}{6}$, the average number of pips in a roll) and the average number of rolls required to bear off all the checkers in a given position. *Wastage* is the difference between EPC and actual pip count.

Position 1 has an EPC of 86.07. This means that if you or your computer had nothing better to do than to execute millions of rollouts for Position 1, and if you kept track of the number of pips you rolled each time in taking off all 15 checkers, you would find that the average number of pips rolled to complete the bearoff is 86.07.

The raw pip count in Position 1 is 79. You will almost always need to roll more than 79 pips to bear off a position with a raw pip count of 79. If, for example, you roll 89 pips in bearing off in Position 1, you have wasted 10 pips. On average, in Position 1, you will waste 7.07 pips. There is no other arrangement of 15 checkers in the home board which will yield a smaller wastage.

Let us look at the wastage in some other candidate positions:

Position 2. The Woolsey Wedge. EPC = 77.35, Wastage = 7.35 pips



[Continued on page 5]

illinois state championships & america cup

HARRY'S ON A ROLL DEFEATS KG TO WIN AMERICA CUP Roberts Tops Morioka in Illinois

The time off has certainly helped my game." So said Harry Cohn after winning \$15,000 in the America Cup tourney at the 1994 Illinois State Championships.

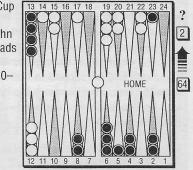


America Cup victor Harry Cohn (right) flanked by runner-up Kent Goulding.

On 1 July, the 43-year-old Chicago area player put in for a leave of absence from his job as the director of R&D for a computer software company. Since then, Harry has won a World Cup Qualifier in Flint, the Masters tournament in Indianapolis, and an America Cup Qualifier prior to this huge payday at the Indian Lakes Resort in Bloomingdale, IL 5–9 October. [Add the 32nd G/A Special 16 to Harry's list.—Ed.]

Oddsmakers made Harry a 13-to-10 underdog in his final 23-point test against Kent Goulding of Kensington, MD. After trailing 12–5, Harry fought back to go on top 13–12. KG regained the lead at 19–16, but Harry rallied again. Ahead 20–19, Harry flipped an interesting cube to Kent:

America Cup 23-point finals. Cohn (Black) leads Goulding (White) 20– 19. Black doubles. SHOULD WHITE TAKE?



[Continued on page 8]



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WHERE TO FIND UP-TO-DATE CHOUETTE RULES

I would like to see a thorough exposition of the various schemes that are generally in use for determining the order of change and rotation in chouettes. (By the way, did you know that chouette is the French word for owl? Very fitting, I think.)

I never have understood the rules on whether the box keeps the box when he wins from some players and loses to others. It seems that in some areas of the country, he keeps it if he beats the captain and loses it if he does not. In other areas, retention seems to be a matter of whether his net outcome in a game is positive or negative.

I also have questions on order of rotation. For example, if the captain and next in line drops and the second in line takes and beats the box, who becomes the box and who becomes the new captain?-Bart Levin, Aspen, CO

Your questions are answered in an excellent article on "Chouette Rules" by Bill

[Continued on page 7]

2

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole 810/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing <u>American Backgammon Tour events underlined.</u>			
<u>Nov 11-13</u>	<u>NY/NJ BG CO-OP Big Apple Series, Oritani Hotel, Hackensack, NJ</u>	<u>201/833-2915</u>	
Nov 13	Austin Sunday Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/280-5945	
Nov 13	New England Monthly, Sheraton-Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8154	
Nov 15	BPC 12th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	312/338-6380	
Nov 15-16	22nd Annual Hawaii Championships, Honolulu Club, Hawaii	808/955-7565	
Nov 17	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731	
Nov 19*	4th Bloomington-Normal Championships, Ride The Nine, Bloomington, IL	309/454-1947	
Nov 19 Nov 19-20 Nov 19-20* Nov 20	CANCELLED—Mayfair One Thousand Tournament, New York, NY South Florida Fall Tournament, Big Apple Sports Pub, Ft. Lauderdale, FL Louisville Fall Classic, Captain's Quarters, Louisville, KY	212/779-1750 305/785-1282 502/587-3672	
Nov 20	Beltway Club Jackpot Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0603	
Nov 20	16th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731	
Nov 20	Atlanta Backgammon Association Monthly, Caffeinds, Atlanta, GA	404/682-1969	
Nov 27	Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755	
Dec 3-4	Autumn Gran Prix, Embassy Suites Hotel, La Jolla, CA	619/294-2007	
Dec 4	New York City Open, New York Chess & BG Club, New York City	212/302-5874	
Dec 4-7*	2nd Eldorado BG & Blackjack Invitational, Eldorado Hotel, Reno, NV	702/893-6025	
Dec 11	New England Monthly, Sheraton-Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8154	
Dec 15*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731	
Dec 18	Atlanta Backgammon Association Monthly, Caffeinds, Atlanta, GA	404/682-1969	
Dec 18	NY/NJ Co-op Regional Tournament, Ramada Inn, Woodbury, NY	718/341-3779	
Jan 14-15* Jan 17* Jan 18 Jan 20*	Nation's Capital Winter Open Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD Chicago Bar Point Club Awards Night, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL RSCARDS Winter Computer Modem Tournament, GEnie Third Thursday Bonus & Flint Club Awards Night, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI		
Jan 28	Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	312/338-6380	
Feb 7-12	2nd World-Wide Twin Championships, Eldorado Hotel, Reno, NV	702/893-6025	
<u>Feb 17-19</u>	<u>17th Pittsburgh Winter Champs, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>	
Mar 5*	Fleet Underwood Benefit Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint MI	810/323-9731	
<u>Mar 10-12*</u>	<u>33rd G/A Invitational, Grand Slam Bridge Club, Woodland Hills, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>	
<u>Mar 24-26</u>	<u>1995 Midwest Championships, Marriott Hotel, Oak Brook, IL</u>	<u>312/338-6380</u>	
Apr 1-2*	Nation's Capital Spring Open Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0603	
Apr 28-30	<u>16th Granite State Open, Woodbound Inn, Jaffrey, NH</u>	603/863-4711	
<u>Jun 30-Jul 3</u>	Michigan Summer Championships. Novi Hilton. Novi. Ml	810/232-9731	
<u>Sep 1-4</u>	43rd Indiana Open. Ramada Inn East. Indianapolis. IN	317/845-8435	
<u>Oct 6-8*</u>	Nation's Capital Fall Championships. Promenade. Bethesda. MD	301/530-0603	
<u>Oct 11-15*</u>	5th Illinois Champs/America Cup. Indiana Lakes Resort. Bloomingdale. IL	708/945-7801	
<u>Nov 3-5*</u>	35rd G/A Invitational. Grand Slam Bridge Club. Woodland Hills. CA	818/901-0464	
Nov 3-6	OUTSIDE USA 1994 Swedish Open, Foresta Hotel, Lidingö Island, Stockholm, Sweden	AND AN PARK	
Nov 4-6	Asian Backgammon Championships, Ladies Recreation Club	852-846 1923	
Nov 5-6*	Japan Championship Tournament, Nippon Seinenkan, Tokyo, Japan	813-3373 3814	
Nov 10-13	CANCELLED NRW Championship 1994, Kaarst (Dusseldorf), Cermany	2151-501359	
Nov 12	Mencap BG/Chess/Bridge Tournament, Meridian Hotel, London, England	4481-943 0493	
Nov 18-20	Swiss Open, Hotel Nova Park, Zürich, Switzerland	41-1381 3177	
Nov 19*	Hessen-Cup, Gasthof zum Engel, Wiesbaden-Erbenheim, Germany	49631-60106	
Nov 19-20	Solihull Trophy Tournament #4, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44522-536836	
Nov 23-27	1st Kenyan Open, Malindi Casino, Malindi, Kenya, Africa	972-3 544 5347	
Nov 25-27*	3rd Montreal Open, Le Gammon Club, Monntreal, QB, Danada	514/845-8370	
Dec 2-4	8th British Festival of Backgammon, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, England	4461-946 0828	
Dec 3*	BAWÜ-Cup, Motodrom-Hotel, Hockenheim, Germany	49621-698539	
Dec 5	Hong Kong Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club	852-846 1923	
Dec 9-11*	Finnish Open Championships, Helsinki, Finland	3580-676258	
Dec 13-18	3rd International Turkish Championship, Conrad Hotel Istanbul, Turkey	972-3 544 5347	
Jan 6-8	BIBA's Interesting Birthday Adventure, Hilton International, England	44522-536836	
Jan 7-8	Danish Mixed Doubles, Prime BG Klub, København Ø, Denmark	4535-261587	
Feb 2-6	Paradise Island Pro-Am Invitational, Ocean Club, Nassau, Bahamas	301/299-8264	
Feb 11-12	Jarvis Trophy Tournament #1, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44522-536836	
Apr 14-17*	Nordic "Wide" Open, SAS Scandinavia Hotel, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607	
Apr 19-23	4th Tournament of the Américas, Marriott Hotel, Oak Park, IL	312/252-7755	
Jun 2-5*	1995 Swedish Open, Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Malmö, Sweden	040-74000	
Jul 10-16*	World Backgammon Championship, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	305/527-4033	



American Backgammon Tour **±** 1994

Top 100 through 16 Oct. 1994 after 14 tournaments (Three '94 events remain: Berkshires, NY/NJ Big Apple, Autumn Gran Prix)

Neil Kazaross	58.09	Ed
Abbas Zaltash	31.18	Pa
Dean Muench	28.75	Ra
Arnold Zousme	r 26.50	Joi
Mike Friedman	23.35	Da
Kit Woolsey	20.16	Ma
Charlie Morriso	n 18.86	Sig
Doug Roberts	18.80	Ra
David Williams	17.31	Pe
Steve McCormi	ck 16.82	Ric
Rudy Citrom	16.80	To
Tak Morioka	15.99	Ra
Ed Johnson	15.00	Du
Lincoln Bedell	14.96	Ro
Mike Darooge	14.35	Od
Art Benjamin	13.25	An
Bill Szirtes	12.81	Da
Lucky Nelson	11.58	Ke
John Stryker	11.56	Jo
Judy Brown	11.50	J.A
Mary Ann Mees	e 11.44	Ku
Ami Tennenbau	m 10.35	Ma
Rick Bieniak	10.07	Na
Judy Field	9.61	Jo
Paul DiBiase	9.61	Ric

O'Laughlin 9.52 ul Stebbing 9.00 y Bills 8.51 n Vietor 8.40 avid Wells 8.00 arty Storer 7.83 g Skolnick 7.54 y Fogerlund 7.52 eter Zacks 7.25 chard Armbruster 7.25 dd Doucet 7.21 alph Schaffner 7.18 urb Oldham 7.11 by Springer 6.69 dis Chenault 6.56 ndy Palumbo 6.44 arl Brooks 6.44 ent Goulding 6.40 hn Rather 6.30 A. Miller 6.29 **Irt Schurecht** 5.26 ary Franks 5.20 ack Ballard 4.80 hn Brussel 4.78 chie Adams 4.78

	Contract of the local division of the	the second second second
Steve Lentz	4.76	Bob B
Harry Zilli	4.76	Jake
Jeff Spencer	4.64	Lou F
Mike Ungerleider	4.64	Joann
Howard Ring	4.33	Mark
Jon Stephens	4.24	Alber
Donald Bernstein	4.20	Joe F
Phil Leak	4.20	Sam
Lefteris Moskos	4.19	Carol
Bob Holyon	4.16	Ali Re
Doug Mayfield	4.16	Julie
Carl Adamec	3.76	Lois I
Marc Gray	3.74	Ken T
David Rubin	3.72	Walte
Ed Pavilonis	3.60	Richa
Jerry Hays	3.59	Mark
Mariano Rocca	3.59	Ken E
Bruce King	3.58	Andy
Bill Gheen	3.55	Tony
Kevin Muench	3.55	Greg
Paul Klein	3.36	Tim k
Jim Muirhead	3.22	Bill S
Nancy Takala	3.22	Mich
Frank Dickerson	3.20	Paul
Bob Lumbra	3.12	Wally

4.76	Bob Bishop	2.82
4.76	Jake Jacobs	2.82
4.64	Lou Florio	2.75
4.64	Joann Feinstein	2.40
4.33	Mark Davis	2.38
4.24	Albert Lazar	2.38
4.20	Joe Freedman	2.24
4.20	Sam Orandle	2.24
4.19	Carol Falk	2.09
4.16	Ali Rebatchi	2.08
4.16	Julie Crandall	2.05
3.76	Lois Richards	1.91
3.74	Ken Truman	1.88
3.72	Walter Trice	1.88
3.60	Richard Heinz	1.79
3.59	Mark Murray	1.75
3.59	Ken Bronstein	1.75
3.58	Andy Bittman	1.75
3.55	Tony Pow	1.67
3.55	Greg Shoults	1.67
3.36	Tim Kirby	1.63
3.22	Bill Slater	1.59
3.22	Michelle Colpo	1.59
3.20	Paul Farah	1.59
3.12	Wally Wolf	1.59

TOUR + 1994

COMPILED

0.88

0.88

0.80

0.72

0.68

0.64

0.64

0.64

0.64

0.60

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0.48

0.44

0.40

0.40

0.32

0.30

0.24

0.12

0.12

THRU 31 OCT.

CHICAGO BAR POINT

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB **1994 PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

Neil Kazaross 24.00 Mary Franks 6.44 Ed Buerger 2.40 **Rick Janowski** Herb Roman 19.12 Georgina Flanagan 5.92 Tom Fahland 2.32 Scottie Mitchell Tak Morioka 18.68 **Bobbie Shifrin** 5.44 Ed Bauder 2.24 Glen Garber **Jake Jacobs** 17.64 Jolie Rubin 5.38 Amy Trudeau 2.20 Peggy Fleming 5.12 Tim Mabee 12.96 Bob Zavoral Don Desmond 2.00 Mick Dobratz **Paul Franks** 12.72 V.W. Zimnicki 5.04 Frank Dickerson 2.00 Igor Sheyn **David Rubin** 12.08 Ralph Levy 4.48 Marc Ingenoso 1.92 Jerry Brooks Peter Kalba 12.00 **Richard Stawowy** 4.04 Harry Cohn 1.88 Jill Ferdinand Alice Kay 11.08 Alex Itkin 3.92 Mick Nowak 1.88 Mike Kaczmarek Phyllis Smolinski 10.20 Dean Muench 3.80 **Betsy Miller** 1.76 Mary Vitale Barry Miller Sarg Serges 9.76 Paul Klein 3.72 1.60 **David Rockwell** Norma Shyer 9.60 Marcy Sloan 3.44 Kevin Muench 1.60 Earl Risch Ken Bond 9.56 Yamin Yamin 3.36 Marty Tatosian 1.52 Tom Walthes Allen Zimmerman 9.44 3.20 Brigid O'Meara Bill Keefe John Meyers 1.40 3.20 **Gregg Westrick Tom Shields Paul Friedman** 9.16 John Stryker 1.28 **Leslie Lockett** 8.96 Rob Silvav 3.20 Wilcox Snellings 1.28 Barbara Levinson 2.96 **Dave Cramer** Don Javhan 8.48 Dan Braden 1.12 Tim Serges Joann Feinstein 7.84 John Brussel 2.88 **Roland Dieter** 0.96 Lou Salzman 2.84 **Bill Davis** 6.72 Jeff Kane Andv Bittman 0.88 Mike Siegel Stu Katz Arline Levy 2.56 Frankie Fariood Judy Feinstein 6.64 0.88 2.56 Paul Weaver 0.88 Mike Budz Gary Kay 6.60 George Barr Phil Simborg 6.56 Andy Krenitz 2.48 **Richard Lloyd** 0.88

As a result of his 1st and 1st Consolation finishes in Bar Point Club tournaments in October, HERB ROMAN earned 3.52 points and moved into second place in the 1994 standings. Alice Kay, also having an excellent year, rose to 9th place with a strong 3.20 points. Four players (Ken Bond, Don Jayhan, David Rubin, and Phil Simborg) tied for third with 1.92 points.

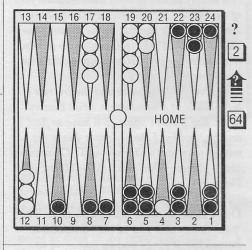
f you finish in the Top 20 for 1994 (bold-faced names on list), you'll be entered in a drawing for over \$300 worth of valuable merchandise. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st-Trophy+\$200, 2nd-\$125, 3rd-\$75. 1st through 20th-one ounce silver coin. 1st through 6th–Invitation to participate in the 1995 Illinois State Challenge Cup as a member of the Chicago Bar Point Club team.

OCTOBER CORRECTIONS

In the letters column, we listed the individual winners in the 1994 Illinois State Challenge Cup but neglected to include the 6th place finishing team: Central Illinois 15-21 (Dick Nelson 1-5, Ed Zell 0-6, Carl Severino 4-2, Fouad Malouf 4-2, Ed Bauder 3-3, John McCabe 3-3). Our apologies.

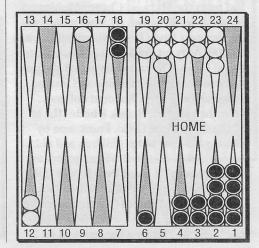
The cube decision Joe Sylvester faced in his World Cup final match vs. Billy Horan was different from what was diagrammed on page 1. The corrected position (which makes the decision to take more difficult) is as follows:

World Cup finals. Best 3-out-of-5, 11point match format. Billy Horan (Black) leads Joe Sylvester (White) 2 matches to 0. Match #3. Sylvester leads Horan 6-0. CUBE DECISION(S)?

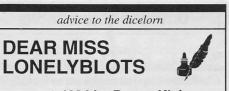




Tournament double match-point. BLACK TO PLAY 2-1. (Submitted by Jake Jacobs.)



3



© 1994 by Danny Kleinman

THE DANGER OF WINNING

Dear Miss Lonelyblots: I have a big problem. I'm actually too good at backgammon. Let me explain. For the past five years, I've played in the "Intermediate" division at backgammon tournaments. I've enjoyed considerable success including a some second place finishes and many semifinalist results. Last month, finally, I came in first.

I like the beautiful trophy, but now I am fearful of entering another tournament. If I win again, directors will certainly insist that I play in the Championship division. I can barely afford paying Intermediate fees of \$100 to \$150, plus plane fare and hotel. Against the top experts in the Championship division, I'd have less chance to win, and entry fees of \$250 and up would soon break me.

I love backgammon and the friends I have made at tournaments, Miss Lonelyblots. But if I win again, I'll have to find another hobby. I simply can't spare the money to enter (and lose) as a "Championship" player. What can I do?—Horns of a Dilemma

DEAR HORNS: Alas, *you* can do little. The "two strikes and you're out" criterion is misguided: it gives you an incentive to

hedge and *dump* in the finals. The system is poor, and only the organizers can change it.

Why is the system poor? Consider a group of 32 true "Intermediates" who compete against each other in tournaments. Somebody—a true Intermediate—must win each time. By the 33rd tournament, at least one Intermediate would be "kicked upstairs" to the Championship division. In fact, my mathematician boyfriend says that if all entrants had equal chances, a repeat win for *somebody* would be more likely than not after only *seven* tournaments. By hypothesis, however, this two-time winner is a true Intermediate, not a Championshiplevel player.

Classification by *rating points* would be fairer, but players near the line between divisions would have an incentive to manipulate their ratings by *hedging* and *dumping*.

Only a radical change can prevent dilemmas like yours: admit players of all levels to all divisions, and offer incentives for better players to enter stronger divisions. This can be achieved with *steep* *gradients* in the fees and percentage returns in each division.

- Longer matches in stronger divisions. The longer the matches, the truer to form they tend to run, which improves the chances of the better players.
- (2) Higher entry fees for stronger divisions. (This is already a common practice.)
- (3) Greater percentage returns in stronger divisions.

To see how this can work, let's construct a simplified example. Suppose that each of three 32-player divisions pays only one place. Suppose Cathy Champion has 5% winning chances in the Championship division, $7 \frac{1}{2}$ % chances in the Intermediate division, and 10% chances in the Novice division. Suppose also that Ira Intermediate has 3%, $4 \frac{1}{2}$ % and 6% chances, and Nora Novice has 2%, 3% and 4% chances in these divisions. Finally, suppose the match lengths, entry fees, and prizes are as shown below in Table 1. Who will choose to play in each division?—*Miss Lonelyblots* Δ

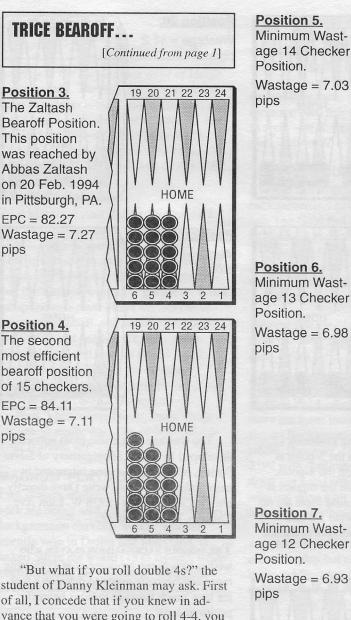
TABLE 1			
	Novice (7 pts.)	Intermediate (9 pts.)	Championship (11 pts.)
Fees	\$50	\$100	\$200
Returns	60%	75%	90%
Prize	\$960	\$2400	\$5760
CC's Equities	\$96 (+\$46)	\$180 (+\$80)	\$288 (+\$88)
II's Equities	\$57.60 (+\$7.60)	\$108 (+\$8)	\$172.80 (-\$27.20)
NN's Equities	\$38,40 (-\$11.60)	\$72 (-\$28)	\$115.20 (-\$84.80)

AMALGAMATION

Visiting the Bar Point Club in October: Rick Janowski and Derek Matheson (England), and Marty Brown (TX)... Good news and bad news for Midwest Championships staffer Amy Trudeau (IL) last month. On the Empress River Boat, with the jackpot at \$5,000, Amy hit the \$1 poker machine Royal Flush. The bad news is that she only had one coin in the machine and instead collected only a few hundred dollars... Over the summer, Frank Rhode (IL) hit \$218,000 in Little Lotto. Frank won by picking the ages of his children and oldest grandchild.... Get well wishes go out to Phil Simborg (IL) and Pete Ryder (OH) who both suffered October heart attacks... Jolie and David Rubin (IL) are mourning the loss of their one-year-old dog "Spinner" who was hit by a car and died on 29

October... Why did Hugh Sconyers recently move from L.A. to Texas? One word: earthquakes... Sources tell us that during the Illinois State Championships at Indian Lakes Lodge in Bloomingdale, IL, Ira Hoffberg (IL) was parking in the handicapped spot. Why?... Congratulations to Thomas Lumper (GER) who was voted 1994 European Player of the Year in recently-completed European Backgammon News voting. In a 3-way tie for second were Phillip Marmorstein (GER), Mario Sequeira (POR) and Evert van Eijck (NL). Matthias Körner (GER) placed fifth. Incidentally, what is Ron Chronister doing on the European list in the Honorable Mention category? Chronister is barred from organized BG for life by the Worldwide Backgammon Fed Did you recognize former Chicagoland player Darrell Marcus (IL) visiting at the Illinois State Championships? ... Jeff Henry's (IL) wife

Charlene is resting at home following major surgery last month. Our prayers for a speedy recovery ... Congratulations to Leslie Lockett (IL) who won yet another \$1,000 on a radio contest 18 October. This time, the station was WJMK (Oldies 104). How did she do it? "I heard Elvis the Cash Cow moo and I was the seventh caller." Sounds simple enough... Chicago Open director Joann Feinstein's husband Jerry just returned from Atlanta where he was an extra in a new Ted Turner Civil War movie... As president of the Lawndale Business and Local Development Corporation, Jim Opre (IL) of Morton International has dealings with many powerful politicians-most recently Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown... Madeline Binder wrote to tell us that the Chicago Bar Point Club is listed in her new "Singles Guide to Chicagoland." For more info, contact Madeline at 708/705-2495. A



student of Danny Kleinman may ask. First of all, I concede that if you knew in advance that you were going to roll 4-4, you would certainly want to have more checkers on the 4-point. Notice, however, that after rolling double 4s in Position 1, you still have not wasted any pips.

"Contrary to popular rumors, you can have too many checkers on the 4-point" is a direct quote from Walter Trice himself. If you had more checkers on the 4-point and fewer checkers on the 6-point, then you would risk getting stripped on the 6-point after rolling double 6s and you would waste at least a full pip on each subsequent 6.

I cannot explain to everyone's satisfaction the reason that Position 1 has the minimum wastage of all 15 checker positions; I can only report as a fact that it is true. The findings have been independently verified by David Hochron of Stanford, CA. If it is not consistent with your intuition, then it is your intuition that is in error, and not the stated result.

I will now give the positions of minimum wastage with fewer than 15 checkers:

Position 5. Minimum Wastage 14 Checker

Wastage = 7.03

Position 8.

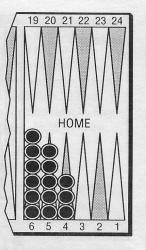
Position.

pips

Minimum Wast-

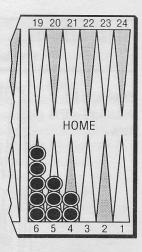
age 11 Checker

Wastage = 6.82



Position 9. Minimum Wastage 10 Checker Position.

Wastage = 6.75pips



19 20 21 22 23 24 pips HOME

3 2

19 20 21 22 23 24

3

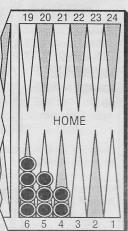
19 20 21 22 23 24

4 3 2

5

5

Position 10. Minimum Wastage 9 Checker Position. Wastage = 6.63



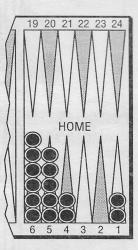
And of course, the question on everyone's mind, after reading my two-part article "The Naked Ace Point" in the May/ June and July 1994 Flint Area BackgammoNews is this: "Based on information in your recent study, I now make my ace point as soon as my opponent vacates it. I desperately need to know the Trice Optimal Bearoff Position given this constraint."

Position 11 (below) yields the answer:

Position 11.

The position of minimum wastage given the constraint that you have two checkers on the ace point

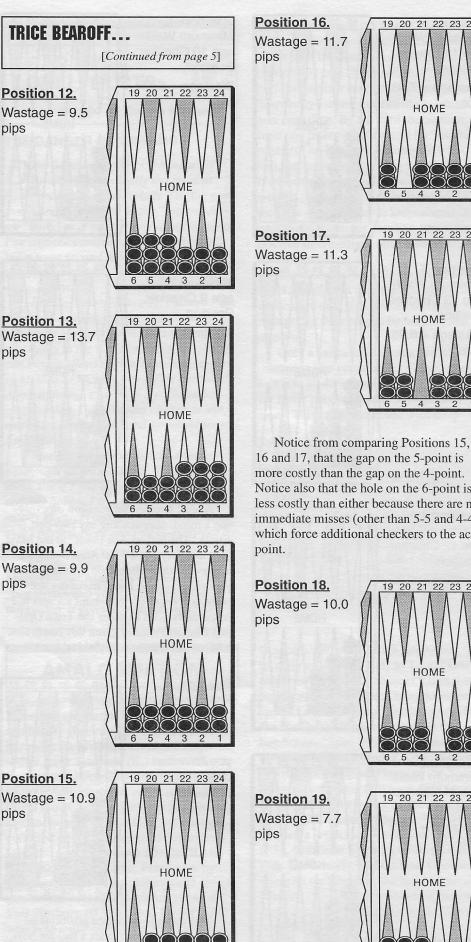
Wastage = 8.1 pips



The wastage reference positions on page 6 will give the reader a feel for how much wastage other bearoff positions have:

[Continued on page 6]

November 1994



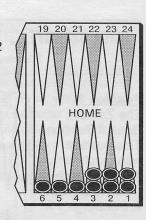
immediate misses (other than 5-5 and 4-4) which force additional checkers to the ace Position 18. Wastage = 10.0 Position 19. 20 21 22 23 24 Wastage = 7.7

16 and 17, that the gap on the 5-point is more costly than the gap on the 4-point. Notice also that the hole on the 6-point is less costly than either because there are no

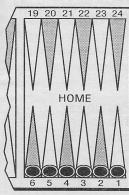
HOME

Position 20. Wastage = 11.2 pips

pips



Position 21. Wastage = 7.3



The wastage data come from software developed by David Montgomery of Silver Spring, Maryland. Anyone interested in more information may write Dave directly c/o CHICAGO POINT; 2726 W. Lunt Ave.; Chicago, IL 60645-3039.

THE SERIOUS BACKGAMMON PLAYER WhO wishes to achieve proficiency at evaluating races and bearoffs needs to develop a feel for how much wastage various bearoff positions have.

The backgammon player who is unaware of the Trice Optimal Bearoff Position cannot possibly experience the rush that comes when he reaches it. It is comparable to the rush that comes from hitting four checkers on the same roll, which I have experienced only once thus far in my life. Walter Trice himself has not yet played a game in which he has reached the 000357 position. It has happened to me three times already this year.

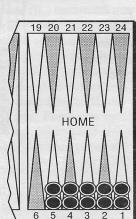
Decades and centuries from now, backgammon trivia fanatics may need to know the answer to the following questions:

(1) When was the Trice Optimal Bearoff Position first reached in the Monte Carlo World Championships?

(2) When was the Trice Optimal Bearoff Position first reached in World Cup competition?

[Continued on page 8]

Position 15. pips



LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

Robertie in the July/August issue of Inside Backgammon. The only problem is that in order to get this article, you must subscribe to the entire 1994 six-issue volume . . . but how bad a problem is that? Mail \$40 for six issues (\$60 overseas) to: The Gammon Press; Box 294; Arlington, MA 02174.—Ed.

FUN IN GERMANY

Emil Mortuk, Frank Talbot, Wally and I have just returned from the First German Open in Halle/Westfalen. It was truly a friendly event. The gala cocktail party and buffet on Sunday evening was spectacular. And the Sportpark Hotel is gorgeous. It is a full sports complex. There are dozens of tennis, racquetball, and badminton courts both inside and outside. There is also a beautiful pool and a water park for children. What a place for a tournament! Unfortunately, it's just a little bit small for this size event (near 200 players).

Well, I just wanted to let know about this one. It really was a lot of fun.—*Gayle Wolf, Warren, MI*

'MAGNUM' PLAYS ON FIBS

Two players studying with our neural network are doing well on FIBS (First Internet Backgammon Server). "EDO," who has recently won in Dallas and Maryland, is ranked 5th in the world (1875 rating), while someone using the nickname "Magnum" (of all the nerve!) is 25th (1829 rating). This is among an international cast of thousands.

By the way, your own contributing editor Kit Woolsey is still number one (1975 rating). He has also studied with a neural network from Norway who goes by the unlikely name of "Jellyfish." I hear there are such fish in the Chesapeake Bay as well.—*M.K. Magnum, 1828 W. Glen Ave., Peoria, IL 61614.*

THE GOLD BUG

I would like to develop Sacramento (CA) backgammon. I have a club name picked out: The Gold **BuG**, but as yet have no club or format. I have much scouting to do.

The plan is to find a nice Sunday place and start out with tournaments twice a month. Please send any helpful information. —Gerry Spalding, Auburn, CA

We sent you the "Starting A Club" handout from our 1990 seminar in Reno, NV. Good luck, Gerry.—Ed.

MORE ROLLOUTS NEEDED

Donald Kahn is correct in pointing out that there are some inconsistencies in the Expert Backgammon[™] opening rollout tables. However, Donald's sample size of 2592 with duplicate dice is too small to draw any valid conclusions. As an author who has done a lot with EXBG rollouts, here are a few things to keep in mind.

The equity differences in opening rolls are small. If EXBG misplays the responses after one play but not after another, it could make a difference. More importantly, if one play leads to a position type which EXBG can't play well, the results of the rollout could be skewed. One hopes that EXBG will lose equal amounts of equity through mistakes for each play, but certainly this is not always the case.

On another subject, I think Hal Heinrich misinterpreted by advocacy of round-robin tournaments. I advocate Swiss events with elimination of those players who *can't win a money prize* due to having too many losses. I agree with Hal that players with like results should be paired together if possible.—*Neil Kazaross, Barrington, IL* Δ



CENTRAL ILL. BG CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Chi-Chi's, 4415 N. Rockwood, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/673-7622). 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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ILLINOIS STATE...

[Continued from page 1]

Should KG play this one for the match? Goulding thought for quite a while before passing—the right choice. Up 21–19, Harry went for the throat in the next game, winning an undoubled gammon and the America Cup 23–19.



To CONQUER ILLINOIS, Doug Roberts marched through Chicago in his final three matches. Down 7–4 in the quarterfinals, Roberts rallied to defeat Dave Cramer 11–9. Jake Jacobs was Doug's next victim (13–10).

The finals pitted Roberts against Chicago's all-time master point leader Tak Morioka. On the heals of a wild 13–11 victory over Neil Kazaross, Morioka seemed unstoppable. But after leading the 15-point finals most of the way, Tak's dice ran out. Roberts tied the match at 13–all. Doug then turned the last doubled game around on the strength of very timely double-5s.

"I was calling for 'flakes' and I got them," said Roberts. But he wasn't out of the woods yet. In the end, he was forced to leave a shot on the bear-off. But Tak missed and resigned.

How did Doug feel about that last shot

TRICE BEAROFF...

[Continued from page 6]

(3) What was the first documented instance of a game ending with one side having the Trice Position?

(4) What was the first documented instance of a player who managed to reach the Trice Position even though he had no knowledge of it?

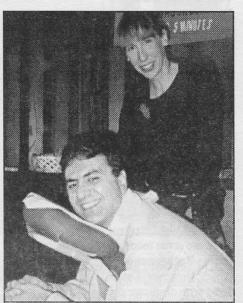
Pay close attention to the following answers if you intend to successfully compete in future *Inside Backgammon* trivia quizzes.

(1) On 14 July 1994, in a third round match in Monte Carlo against James Colen, I was trailing 15-7 to 17. I had given away the cube and I trailed by thirty pips, but I had the consolation of reaching the Optimal Bearoff Position.

Jim Colen already knows too much about backgammon, and I am usually opposed to the concept of contributing to his backgammon education. But in my and the money swing involved? "I imagined his fanning numbers: think positive."

"THIS IS PROBABLY the last tournament I'll ever win, cause now I gotta play Open." So said Lucky Nelson after winning the Advanced event. Nelson defeated Jeff Spencer (MN) 13–8 in his "Swan Song" as an intermediate player.

YAMIN YAMIN, who has been working on the biggest engineering project of his life,



Director Yamin Yamin takes a break with massage therapist Suzanne LeGoff. Seated 5-minute massages were available to the players throughout the weekend.

excitement, I could not keep from sharing the (then) secret with him. He has since attributed much of his recent success to concepts behind the Trice findings.

(2) On 9 September 1994, in a semifinal World Cup match against Michigan's Joe Sylvester (certainly one of the top twenty match players in the world) in front of several witnesses including Kit Woolsey, I once again reached the Trice Optimal Bearoff Position. Even though my clock was running, I took the time to explain to the kibitzers the significance of the occasion. In spite of the fact that Joe defeated me 3-0 in matches, I walked away with the satisfaction of knowing that I had reached the Trice 000357 Position and Sly had not.

(3), (4) Most amazing of all was what occurred in Copenhagen, Denmark in the wee hours of the morning on 26 July 1994. Christiania is a unique and supercool, selfgoverning community of about one thousand people. For the last 23 years, they have been occupying abandoned army barracks within the city of Copenhagan. I've travelled in at least 20 countries in still managed to organize another very successful event with the help of an able staff. This included an excellent Auction Dinner where Yamin presented "Giant 64" certificates to the honorees present. Results: Δ

ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS/AMERICA CUP

CHAMPIONSHIP (47): 1-Doug Roberts (MA), 2-Tak Morioka (IL), 3/4-Jake Jacobs (IL) / Neil Kazaross (IL); 1C-Ray Fogerlund (CA), 2C-David Wells (MA); 1LC-Abbas Zaltazh. AD-VANCED (58): 1-Lucky Nelson (IL), 2-Jeff Spencer (MN), 3/4-Mark Murray (IL) / Ken Bronstein (OR); 1C-Mike Ungerleider (CA), 2C-Andy Bittman (IL); 1LC-Ray Bills (MN). LIMITED (19): 1-Albert Lazar (IL), 2-Eric Donaldson (MN); 1C-Lee Pflugrad (WI). AMERICA CUP (16): 1-Harry Cohn (IL), 2-Kent Goulding (MD), 3/4-Perry Gartner (NJ) / Emil Mortuk (MI). BATTLE OF THE STATES (8): 1-Abbas Zaltash/Jeff Acierno (East Coast). MASTERS (16): 1-David Wells (MA), 2-Ray Fogerlund (CA). DOUBLES (32): 1-Jill Ferdinand & Neil Kazaross (IL), 2-John Bashian (OH) & Dave Cramer (IL), 3/4-Barry Miller (IL) & Burt Miller (WI) / Howard Markowitz (NV). KICK-OFF (32): 1-Yamin Yamin (IL), 2-Jerry Elam (FL). MINI-BLITZ (64): 1-Richard Armbruster, 2-Fred Gehlhoff (WI), 3/4-Ken Bronstein (OR) / Dave Thomas (FL). MICRO-BLITZ (32): 1-Dave Thomas (FL), 2-Bob Holyon (WI). HIGH PERFOR-MANCE CHAMPS: Carol Joy Cole (MI), Mike Senkiewicz (NY), Jolie Rubin (IL), John Bashian (OH). COLUMBUS PATH: Rosalie Johnson, Derek Matheson, Rick Janowski. MINIATURE GOLF: 1-Richard Armbruster.

Europe, but I've never been to a place as interesting or as much fun as Christiania.

Backgammon is very popular in Copenhagen and perhaps 10% of the people in Christiania play the game. There, playing outdoors in a chouette with Peter Mikkelsen and Jens Lauritsen, the most incredible event of my life occurred.

Peter Mikkelsen, who had absolutely no knowledge of the Trice Position, randomly reached it, and the game ended immediately with the cube. Something that Walter Trice has tried in vain to achieve for four years was done purely by accident!

I was so blown away and stunned by what occurred that I quit the game, the chouette broke up, and I kept on staring in disbelief for several minutes at the 000357 arrangement of the checkers on the board. I didn't dare attempt to explain to anyone at the time the significance of the occasion because I knew that they could not possibly have understood.

But I know that what happened that night in Copenhagen, under the dim light of an almost full moon, will be remembered by me throughout eternity. Δ



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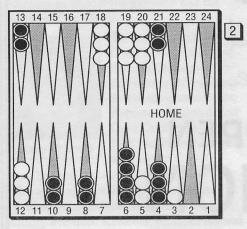
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PROBLEM #208 SOLVED by Kit Woolsey

Match to 7 points. White leads Black, 6 to 1. BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.

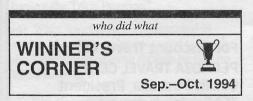


Black has rolled an awkward number. Six possible alternatives appear:

- (1) 13/9, 13/8
- (2) 13/4
- (3) 13/8, 6/2
- (4) 8/4, 8/3*
- (5) 6/2, 6/1
- (6) 21/17, 21/16

What are the main characteristics of the position? It is a mutual holding game with Black leading the race. This is counterbalanced by White possessing stronger structure (both 5-points) and better distribution. What should Black be trying to do?

The three plays which break the midpoint are all similar. 13/8, 6/2 looks supe-



1994 Argentine Championship (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Sept.)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Andrés Korn, Joaquin Viejobueno, Eduardo Khurlopian, Carlos Szechet. JUNIOR WINNERS: Osvaldo Vazquez, Nieves Macchiavelli, Karina Patlis, Sergio Satyr. BEGINNER WINNERS: Hernán Garcia, Juan Reston, Lionel Logan, Jaime Sasson.

German Open (Halle, Germany; 29 Sep.–3 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (79): 1-Michael Grabarczyk, 2-Mathias Pauen, 3/4-Manfred Hollederer / Torsten Haase; 1C-Sigrud Karwen, 2C-Thomas Lumper; 1LC-Ekrem Basdas. INTERMEDIATE (57): 1-Günther Holzinger, 2-Johannes Levermann, 3/4-Norbert Liesicki / Ewald Eichhorn; 1C-Dirk Schiemann, 2C-Axel Steglmaier; 1LC-Carsten Lindner-Emden. BEGINNER (47): 1-Lasha Tabutsadze (GEO), 2-Harald Winkler, rior to 13/4 simply because it is more flexible—not dumping a fourth checker on the 4-point. 13/9, 13/8 is the most flexible of all, but has the disadvantage of leaving a double shot.

None of these plays accomplish much if they work; White still has her solid position and Black will now be playing without a midpoint. If his shot is hit, Black loses a lot of ground in the race and has to worry about leaping a third checker over White's blockade.

8/4, 8/3* is very ugly. In addition to leaving a direct shot, the play loses the 8point and piles a fourth checker on the 4point. The gain from putting White on the bar is pretty small. This play may be the weakest of all the alternatives.

6/2, 6/1 is safe, which means a lot here. Playing safe in a mutual holding game is more important than most players realize. Mutual holding games often turn into races or straight holding games when one or both sides roll doubles. If that happens, you do not want to be the player behind in the race.

The problem with 6/2, 6/1 is that it leaves Black very little flexibility. Losing the builder on his 6-point is a big minus. Still, Black does start a couple of usable inner board points, and maybe next turn he'll roll something better. In the meantime, he keeps his racing lead.

21/17, 21/16 is quite thematic. Black is ahead in the race, so it could be right to break the anchor and make a run for it rather than ruin the offensive structure. If Black could run one of his checkers to safety, this approach would probably be correct. With both checkers vulnerable, it is too risky. Black's racing lead will become meaningless if he gets a checker stuck behind

3/4-Gogier van Gemert (NL) / Dirk Schelhove; 1C-Jörg Grote, 2C-Sigrid Mühlbauer; 1LC-Kees van Roijen (NL). SUPER JACKPOT: 1-Michael Friedrich, 2-Frank Kirschner. WARM-UP: 1-Frank Gillar, 2-Frank Talbot (USA). TEAM: 1-Fire (Riskin, Laitadze, Tabutsadze), 2-Bielefeld 18.15 (Kotzoridis, Städter, Evi).

NEBC Monthly (Cambridge, MA; 11 Sep.)... EXPERT (25): 1-Roy Friedman, 2-Ray Mosher, 3/4-James Pascoe / John Mansey; 1C-Doug Roberts, 2C-Marty Storer. A DIV. (16): 1-Sakura Sugawara, 2-Mark Damish, 3/4-John Leonard / John Koulopoulos; 1C-Ken Newman, 2C-Larry Liebster.

Hong Kong Monthly (Hong Kong; 3 Oct.)... OPEN: 1-Steve Nelson, 2-Greg Westrick; 1C-Thomas Kong, 2C-Ernest Ho. CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Bodo Sprungk, 2-Ed Cartledge; 1C-Chris Gawan-Taylor, 2C-Peter Wong. INTERMEDIATE: 1-Rob Rosenthal, 2-Barry Clark; 1C-Olivia Lee, 2C-Henry Donne.

Nation's Capital Fall Championships—ABT (Bethesda, MD; 7-9 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (28): 1-Ed O'Laughlin, 2-Stephen Lentz, 1C-Harry Zilli, 4-Mark Davis, 5/6-Joe Freedman / Sam Orandle, 7-Howard Shapiro, 1LC/2LC-Ron Genter / David Orandle. OPEN White's growing prime, which is a very likely scenario if Black breaks his 4-anchor.

It's not a happy choice, but it looks like the safe 6/2, 6/1 is the winner. The play is thematic: Black has the racing lead, so he hangs onto it and hopes something good happens next roll. Maybe he'll roll doubles and escape the back men. If that doesn't happen, perhaps he will roll something like 4-2 and be able to clear the 10-point or 5-3 and clear the midpoint. Both of these plays will leave him some flexibility for the future, while he sits on the 21-point and waits for his large doubles.

If none of these good things happen, Black may have to make a play similar to one of the alternatives next turn. In addition, maybe White won't roll so well and will be forced to weaken her position.

It isn't always necessary to rush things. Sometimes patience is best. When you are ahead in the race and have an advanced anchor, the game plan is to roll big doubles and bring the back men home. You may have to make some awkward plays while waiting for those big doubles, but you can live with that.

What you cannot afford is to be hit and squander the racing lead. This is the type of position a fairly weak player might get right, but a more advanced player would be afraid to play too awkwardly and make one of the more aggressive plays.

The race may not be everything, but it can be quite a lot. Remember, in essence, all backgammon games are races. It is better to be ahead than to be behind. Δ

Author/analyst Kit Woolsey is ranked number one among FIBS Internet worldwide computer backgammon players.

(23): 1-Joe Freedman, 2-William Counts, 1C-Stephen Lentz, 4-Brad Paleg, 5/6-Ali Rebatchi / Hunter Jones, 7/8-Blake Sorem / Barry Steinberg. JACKPOT (10): 1-Blake Sorem, 2-Ed O'Laughlin; 1C-Sam Orandle. BLITZ: 1-Brad Paleg, 2-Barry Steinberg.

Gammon Associates 32nd Invitational—ABT (Woodland Hills, CA; 14-16 Oct.)... OPEN (42): 1-Rudy Citrom, 2-Jon Vietor, 3-Don Bernstein; 1C-Neil Kazaross (IL), 2C-Phil Laak. LIMITED (9): 1-Carlos Hamon, 2-Thomas Polk; 1C-Ron Coffin. SPECIAL 16 (16): 1-Harry Cohn (IL), 2-Jona Alexander. SPECIAL 0VERFLOW (8): 1-Zev Vered. DOUBLES (16): 1-Ray Fogerlund & Tim Singer, 2-Ron Bruns & Paul Gedigian. SPEED-GAMMON WINNERS: #1-Phil Laak, #2-Steve Sax. CALIFORNIA STATE CHALLENGE CUP: 1-Gammon Associates of L.A., 2-Backgammon Club of San Diego... Patrick & Carla Gibson report a great success with over \$16,000 in prize money awarded.

Opre Invitational XV (Downers Grove, IL; 29 Oct.)... CHAMPEENSHIP (8): 1-Jake Jacobs, 2-Peter Kalba. DOUBLES (4): 1-Jim Opre & Chris Stanford, 2-Bill Davis & Joann Feinstein... This year's dining theme: Italian. Thanks to Jim & Carmel Opre for a great party. Δ

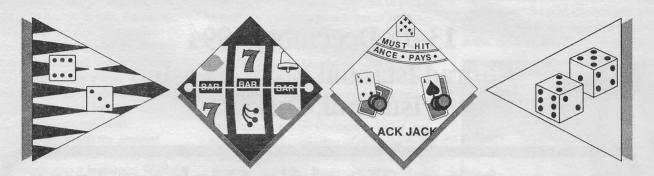
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