

CHICAGO POINT

NUMBER 84

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

NOVEMBER 1995

america cup & illinois state championships

1993 REVERSAL... AMERICA CUP TO DAVIS Dean Muench is Illinois Champion

In 1993, Dean Muench won the America Cup and Malcolm Davis was the Illinois State champ. Now, two years later, the roles (and CHICAGO POINT headline) are reversed. The Sheraton North Shore Hotel in Northbrook was the backdrop for Yamin Yamin's 5th annual event held 11-15 October.



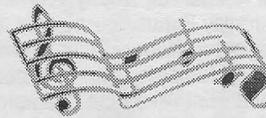
All smiles for winners Marta Hilworth (Inter-mediate) and Malcolm Davis (America Cup).

Although the attendance was down around 100, the best in the world showed up to do battle in the America Cup. The eventual victor was backgammon's "Mr. October," Malcolm Davis of Dallas, Texas. During October's alone, Malcolm, who is the proprietor of Chateau



1995 Illinois State Champ Dean Muench.

[Continued on page 6]



'Sixteen Cubes'

by Jake Jacobs

(With apologies to
Tennessee Ernie Ford)

Some people say they'd rather be playin' cards.

I say a great game is Malcolm and B'lard. Malcolm and Nack, rollin' along;

A game that's back with dice that're strong.

Another October. At Yamin Yamin's Illinois State Championships, a new winner, heavyweight champ Dean Muench, has been crowned. And the America Cup hath runneth over. X-22 and Senk, Dougie and Trice, Abbas and KG—in short, the usual collection of palooka and stumble-bums. Ho hum.

Searching for excitement, some diversion, I wandered over to the table where Nack Ballard of San Francisco and Texan Malcolm Davis were fighting a 21-rounder in the semifinals of the America Cup. The score was only 5-3 favoring Ballard. Would I stay to watch the whole 21-point match? Probably not, unless it moved swiftly.

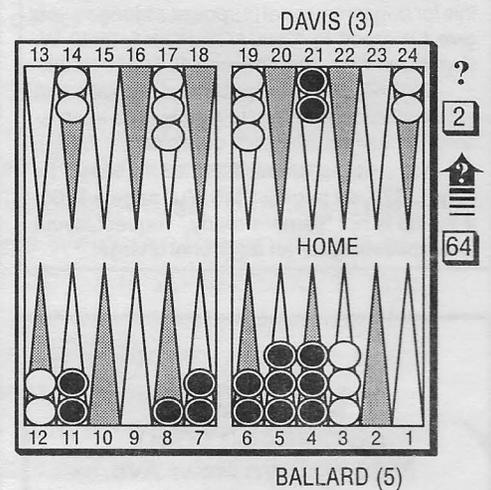
WARNING: READING OF THE NEXT TWO PARAGRAPHS MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH. THEY CONTAIN MIXED METAPHORS WHICH HAVE BEEN DETERMINED TO CAUSE CANCER IN LABORATORY ANIMALS.

Nack started the game with a flurry and soon had Malcolm on the ropes. His hand jabbed toward the cube, then stopped. While the fans held their breath, he paused to consider. Then, like a cat playing with its dinner, Nack elected to play on. After all, if bad things happened, he would only win one point. That was the *worst* that could happen . . . wasn't it?

Like many a cocky kitty, Nack soon learned that it's dangerous to toy with a Texas-sized mouse like Malcolm. Malcolm had just finished playing double 2s when Nack decided to go for the knockout:

When you see me doublin', better step aside . . .

POS. #1. America Cup 21-point semifinal match. Nack Ballard (Black) leads Malcolm Davis (White) 5-3. **CUBE ACTIONS?**



Mal was born one mornin' in the drizzlin' rains.
Fightin' and Trouble are his middle names.

Are you guessing he didn't pass? Actually, this is an easy take. The worst feature of Malcolm's game is his ownership of his own ace point. But for this particular game, that is not as bad as it seems. Nack has no time to retain his advanced anchor. He will try to run behind the shield of his hoped-for 5-prime, while Malcolm tries to blitz Nack's back men when they separate. In the impending blitz, owning the 1-point is quite reasonable.

This leads us to Position #2 shown on page 5. See! What's a poor Ballard to do?

It is troubling for many players to confront cubes in long matches since, at unfamiliar scores, it is hard to get a feel for how to proceed. One trick is to convert the unfamiliar to the familiar. Not comfortable thinking about 12-10 in a 15-point match? Pretend it's 2-0 in a 5-pointer. Here the score is Ballard leading 5-3 to 21, not your everyday score. Just treat it as 3-1 in a 19-pointer. There now. Isn't that a lot easier?!

[Continued on page 5]

CHICAGO POINT

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT
3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.
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TOO MUCH JELLY

I was disappointed with the October POINT. Practically the entire issue was devoted to very close doubling decisions or plays with the correct answer often determined by JellyFish™. In other words, the issue was very technical, filled with analysis appealing to number-crunchers. How about more focus on principles that can help the average player over the board.

Otherwise, I'm still enjoying CHICAGO POINT.—Henry Schwartz, Pompano Beach, FL

13 BEATS 12 ANY DAY

On my summer holiday in Sweden, I saw this true story at a Viking exhibition in Göteborg:

"The Kings of Norway and Sweden—father and son-in-law—met at Kungshalla. Torstein the Wise informed them that an area of Hising Island had at some time belonged to Norway and at other times, to the Swedish province of

[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
810/232-9731

* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

Nov 10-12	NY/NJ BG CO-OP Big Apple Series. Oritani Hotel, Hackensack, NJ	201/833-2915
Nov 11-12	Louisville Fall Classic, Captains Quarters Restaurant, Harrods Creek, KY	502/458-7468
Nov 12	Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, WI	414/463-2498
Nov 14	BPC 13th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	312/583-6464
Nov 16	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Nov 18	5th Bloomington-Normal Championship, Ride The Nine, Bloomington, IL	309/454-1947
Nov 19	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8154
Nov 19	17th Annual Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Nov 19	Greater New York Club Monthly Tournament, Ramada Inn, Woodbury, NY	718/341-3779
Nov 19	Austin Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Nov 24-25	"No Turkey" Thanksgiving Tournament, Best Western Hotel, Akron, OH	216/966-2811
Nov 24-26	<u>1995 Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Doubletree Hotel, Atlanta, GA</u>	<u>770/441-2074</u>
Dec 1-3	<u>35th Gammon Associates Invitational, Holiday Inn, Woodland Hills, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Dec 2*	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tourney, Ride the Nine, Bloomington, IL	217/483-4028
Dec 3	Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Dec 3	Beltway Club Jackpot Tournament, Promenade Cardroom, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Dec 17	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/643-8154
Dec 17	Atlanta Holiday Tournament, Three Dollar Cafe, Atlanta, GA	770/441-2074
Dec 17	Greater New York Club Monthly Tournament, Ramada Inn, Woodbury, NY	718/341-3779
Dec 21	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Dec 28	Flint Area Club Holiday Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Jan 1*	1996 FIBS Winter Blitz, via computer modem, Internet	E-mail: davide@sco.com
Jan 6*	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tourney, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/483-4028
Jan 13*	Winter Open Tournament, Promenade Cardroom, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jan 16*	Bar Point Club Awards Night, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	312/583-6464
Jan 17	RSCARDS Winter 1996 Computer Modem Tournament, GENie	800/638-9636
Jan 19-22	Backgammon On Board III, Miami to Key West cruise tourney on NCL	312/252-7755
Jan 27	Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	312/583-6464
Feb 3*	Sangamon Valley Monthly Tourney, Location TBA, Peoria, IL	217/483-4028
Feb 16-18	<u>18th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Mar 3	12th Fleet Underwood Benefit Tournament, Ramada Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Mar 8-10	<u>Commerce Casino Invitational, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Mar 22-24	<u>1996 Midwest Championships, The Drake Oakbrook, Oak Brook, IL</u>	<u>312/583-6464</u>
Apr 19-21*	<u>Spring Gran Prix, Embassy Suites Hotel, La Jolla, CA</u>	<u>619/294-2007</u>
Apr 24-28	Nevada State Championships, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Jul 4-7	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton Hotel, Novi, MI</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Aug 11-18	World Cup V and U.S. Open, Harvey's Hotel Addison, Dallas, TX	301/299-8265

OUTSIDE USA

Nov 4-5*	1995 Australian Open Championship, Artarmon Inn, Sydney, Australia	612-369 3620
Nov 9-12	NRW-Meisterschaft 1995, Senator Hotel, Kaarst/Düsseldorf, Germany	49215-150 1359
Nov 16-19	International Tournament, Intermar Kurhotel Bad Segeberg, Germany	4930-461 9624
Nov 18-19	Solihull Trophy Tournament #4, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44522-546993
Nov 21*	Turnier zum Bayern-Cup 1995, Garmischer Hof, Munich, Germany	4981-42 41112
Nov 25*	Bonzo-Backgammon, Tinneff, Bielefeld, Germany	49521-64314
Nov 26*	Milan Duomo Center Tournament, Lugano, Italy	392-4007 4658
Nov 26*	8th Niedersachsen-Cup, Kerem Kultur Kneipe, Delmenhorst, Germany	49422-117640
Dec 4	Hong Kong Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852-846 1923
Dec 10*	Milan Duomo Center Tournament, Rome, Italy	392-4007 4658
Dec 16*	Bonzo-Backgammon, Tinneff, Bielefeld, Germany	49521-64314
Dec 16-17*	Christiania Christmas Cup, Manefiskeren, Christiania, Denmark	4531-57 14 56
Jan 6-7	Mary Rose Tournament, Hilton National, Portsmouth, England	44522-546993
Jan 6-7*	Berlincup & Billard International, Berlin-Pavillon, Berlin, Germany	4930-461 9624
Jan 8*	Hong Kong Monthly Tournament, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852-846 1923
Jan 16-21	4th Turkish Open, Conrad International Istanbul, Turkey	Eitan Telefax: 972 3-672 8918
Feb 1-4*	Paradise Island/Atlantis Pro-Am, Ocean Club, Paradise Island, Bahamas	301/299-8265
Feb 10-11	Jarvis Trophy Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44522-546993
Feb 15-18	1st Monte Cassel Cup, Schlosshotel Wilhelmshöhe, Kassel, Germany	49561-898768
Mar 1-3	Einladungsturnier, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	495 21-64314
Apr 5-8	Nordic "Wide" Open, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-40 06 07
Apr 13-14	British Open, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44522-546993
Apr 20-27	Caribbean Open, San Juan to New York cruise tourney on Mv Zenith	4930-461 9624
May 25-26	County Cups Trophy Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England	44522-546993
Jun 24-30*	2nd Backgammon Olympiad, Casinò di Venice, Italy (tentative dates)	3941-521 1029
Jun 27-30*	2nd Kaiserbrunnen Cup, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	495 21-64314
Jul 2-4*	Pagano's 2nd Super Cup Villa Condulmer, Venice, Italy (tentative dates)	3941-521 1029
Jul 8-14	Monte Carlo World Championship, Loews Monte Carlo Hotel, Monaco	3392-16 21 33

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

Gotland. The two kings chose to cast dice to determine which of the tow

should control the district. The Swedish King cast a double 6. King Olav of Norway also obtained 6-6. The Swedish King tried again and once more cast two sixes. King Olav of Norway threw

the dice again and had a 6 on the one die; the other die split in half and presented a total score of 7. The area on Hising Island was from then on ruled by Norway."

It shows how much progress Mankind has made since then as the denouement would today be met with slaughter, mayhem and the intervention of a "rapid reaction force" (well, given a couple of years or so).—*Martin Lee, West Yorkshire, England*

DOUBLE... NOW? AUTHOR TAKES ISSUE WITH TRICE REVIEW

In response to Mr. Trice's kind review: To answer the trivial first, regarding What the reviewer considers an "analytical gem" on my part (October CHICAGO POINT, page 6, last paragraph), he correctly defines the variable *z* as the probability of winning needed to double = 75%. This is correct when the value of the game is 1; however in this special case, we have made the value of a plain game $\frac{3}{2}$. Trice obtains a value for *z* of $\frac{2}{3}$... which is exactly 75% of $\frac{3}{2}$!

Perhaps the reviewer had too much elixir and speed read my Chapter 4 in the dark. He has an enormous urge to compare the unbiased rollout statistics of *DOUBLE... now?* with the biased statistics of others (reference pages 91-98). The current method in vogue for rollouts is biased. There are as many different answers for a given position as there are players and computer programs to generate them. To compare them is simply chaos.

To achieve a valid stat, one needs a set

[Continued on page 4]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1995

Top 100 through 29 Oct. 1995 after 14 tournaments
(4 tournaments remain. Watch for the final standings in Dec. POINT)



Harry Cohn	33.82	Arnold Zousmer	10.40	Paul Franks	5.29	Peter Heitmüller	3.62
Doug Roberts	29.11	Steve Hast	10.21	Milad Doueihi	5.20	Jeff Kane	3.51
Walter Trice	24.61	Paul Stebbing	9.90	Norm Wiggins	5.16	Frank Dickerson	3.32
Mike Colgan	22.88	Jake Jacobs	9.63	Steve Goldstein	5.10	Bill Rudd	3.20
Abbas Zaltash	22.80	Trisha Hegland	9.46	Ed Johnson	5.00	Mike Rezai	3.06
Harry Brown	21.53	Hal Heinrich	9.45	Jim Forbes	4.95	Pete Ryder	2.79
Art Benjamin	21.18	Chuck Stimming	9.33	Pat Gibson	4.94	Troy Longman	2.79
Joe Russell	21.01	Clarine	9.03	Sally Woolsey	4.73	Andy Krenitz	2.76
Odis Chenault	20.83	Ray Foglerlund	9.03	Bill Hodes	4.66	Airan Friedman	2.76
David Rubin	19.91	Dean Adamian	9.00	Randall Witt	4.66	George Photias	2.67
Dave Williams	18.90	Peter Kalba	7.77	Dorn Bishop	4.56	Jerry Smith	2.60
Bob Paris	16.50	Jack Takala	7.50	William Counts	4.50	Jolie Rubin	2.60
Dean Muench	15.86	Toni Wuersch	7.25	Joe Freedman	4.49	Ron Bruns	2.55
Bob Koca	15.06	Eden Windish	6.67	John Smulders	4.38	Kathy Muench	2.55
Homer Hector	14.50	Bruce Pollack	6.47	Howard Ring	4.16	Lee Pflugrad	2.54
Paul Magriel	14.50	Joe Sylvester	6.40	Randy Douthat	4.12	Gayle Wolf	2.44
Maurice Barie	14.24	Wally Wolf	6.16	Paul Symington	3.90	Ed Buerger	2.40
Blake Sorem	14.10	Richard Armbruster	6.12	Elijah Miller	3.83	Larry Yudin	2.39
Nora Luna	13.79	Patti Beadles	6.08	Don Parker	3.78	Andy Palumbo	2.37
Jim Muirhead	13.25	Mike Senkiewicz	5.85	John Jennings	3.75	Dan Shapiro	2.37
Todd Doucet	12.31	Herb Gurland	5.78	Alan Steffen	3.75	David Montgomery	2.37
Judy Brown	12.18	Mike Pettigrew	5.75	Wally Watson	3.75	Bob Lumbr	2.35
Kit Woolsey	12.15	Martin Lee	5.60	Bill Davis	3.63	David DeVries	2.14
Gene Entel	11.73	Bob Green	5.58	Frank Talbot	3.63	Glenn Swanson	2.14
Ray Baker	10.59	Marta Hilworth	5.52	Mike Friedman	3.63	Lou Florio	2.13

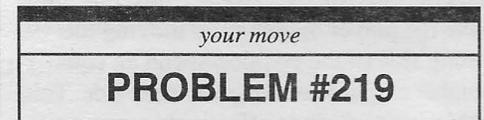


CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1995 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

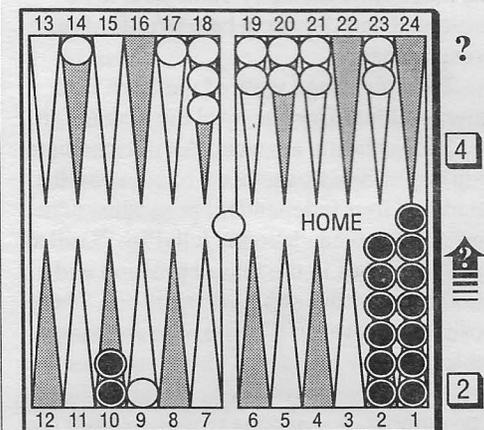
COMPILED
THRU 31 OCT.

Harry Cohn	30.28	Peter Kalba	5.20	Marcy Sloan	1.68	Doug Roberts	0.88
Neil Kazaross	28.32	Nora Luna	5.12	Stu Katz	1.68	Andy Krenitz	0.84
Jake Jacobs	17.64	Jolie Rubin	5.00	John Brussel	1.60	John O'Hagan	0.72
Tak Morioka	17.04	Ken Bond	4.80	John Stryker	1.60	Mike Flohr	0.72
John Demian	15.20	Bobbie Shifrin	4.76	Elijah Miller	1.52	V.W. Zimnicki	0.72
Tim Mabee	14.60	Stuart Thomson	4.64	Mojie Shishineh	1.52	Ali Morovati	0.64
Herb Roman	13.72	Jeff Kane	4.56	Elaine Kehm	1.48	David Rockwell	0.64
Gary Kay	11.08	Alan Zimmerman	4.16	Jon Hartman	1.28	Jay Ward	0.64
Paul Franks	10.96	Georgina Flanagan	3.92	Tim Serges	1.28	John Meyers	0.64
Alice Kay	10.66	Ralph Levy	3.76	Jerry Brooks	1.28	Wendy Kaplan	0.60
Richard Lloyd	10.64	Bill Davis	3.72	Mark Murray	1.22	Arlayne Simon	0.56
David Rubin	9.68	Paul Friedman	3.42	Jill Ferdinand	1.00	Larry Strommen	0.56
Ed Buerger	8.72	Yamin Yamin	3.12	Bruce Pollack	0.96	Jerry Smith	0.54
Don Jayhan	8.44	Leslie Lockett	2.96	Marty Tatosian	0.96	Barbara Levinson	0.48
Frankie Farjood	8.28	Alex Itkin	2.96	Ed Bauder	0.96	Tom Fahland	0.40
Reggie Porter	7.70	Sarg Serges	2.80	René Wojtysiak	0.92	Monica Miller	0.40
Joann Feinstein	7.64	Norma Shyer	2.80	Earl Risch	0.88	Mark Zoll	0.32
Arline Levy	7.52	Nan Feiber	2.64	Gregg Westrick	0.88	Patrick Desmond	0.32
Bill Keefe	7.44	Peter Heitmüller	2.56	Mitch Pomper	0.88	Willie Franklin	0.32
Phyllis Smolinski	6.88	Dean Muench	2.40	Richard Stawowy	0.88	Scott Richardson	0.30
Mary Franks	6.60	Dave Cramer	2.28	Roger Smith	0.88	Kurt Warning	0.24
Paul Klein	6.48	Paul Ruterman	2.08	Roland Dieter	0.88	Vinton Knarr	0.24
Amy Valerio	6.46	Roz Ferris	2.00	Wilcox Snellings	0.88	Stan Kucharz	0.18
Harold Seif	6.40	Andy Bittman	1.84	Walter Trice	0.88	Tim Carroll	0.16
Phil Simborg	6.24	Howard Ring	1.76				

JOHN DEMIAN's 4.36 points earns him October Player of the Month accolades, his first such honor since August 1993. Herb Roman (3.20) and Reggie Porter (2.80) placed 2nd/3rd.



Money game. Black holds a 2-cube.
CUBE ACTIONS?



DOUBLE FUN DOUBLE FUN

by Duane Jensen

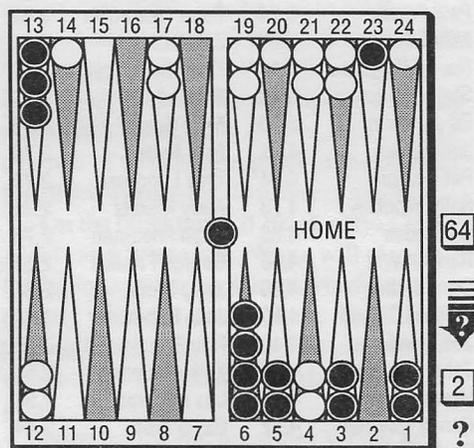
Doubles matches are a good source of information and entertainment for anyone who enjoys backgammon. The unique feature of doubles play is the opportunity to listen to the discussions between the partners.

Joe Sylvester will often take on an intermediate player as a partner. If you watch their match, you usually see Joe's preferred play along with his explanation as to why it is the best play available. You get a free backgammon lesson by standing at the shoulder of a master during a doubles match.

When both partners think they are masters or that they know the best play, you get entertainment rather than education. The fun begins when ego and stubbornness intersect.

At one of the Las Vegas tournaments, Peggy and Dennis Culpepper played against a team I'll call "Bob and Steve." There was little discord on the Culpepper team, but their opponents couldn't agree on the "obvious" plays or even agree on what was obvious. The fur began to fly after the Culpeppers doubled from this position:

Doubles match to 7 points. Peggy and Dennis Culpepper (White) vs. Bob and Steve (Black). First game of the match.
CUBE ACTIONS?



Bob, the shooter, wanted to take the double, but Steve wanted no part of it. "Accepting this cube would be suicidal! Famine, disease, and pestilence will surely follow," Steve warned.

Bob admitted that with their man on the bar, the gammon threat was intimidating, but he still wanted to take. Steve would not agree. "How did I get paired up with a crazy partner like you?"

After a few minutes of haggling, Bob sort of gave in, saying, "I'll agree to drop the cube if you let me continue to roll for the next game."

"No way!" said Steve.

"Do you want us to take the cube then?" asked Bob

"Sure," said Steve, "but I get to roll the next game because it will be my turn."

So after all the arguing and negotiating, it was more important to be the shooter in the next game than make the correct cube decision in this one. It is interesting the way the priorities line up in a backgammon player's mind.

Of course after Bob and Steve took the cube, Bob fanned five times, each roll accompanied by Steve's chorus of "I told you so!" The Culpeppers breezed to an efficient gammon and, later on, captured the match.

Did the position deserve all the discussion between the partners? It wasn't that clear to me at the time if it was a drop or a take. After several hundred roll-outs at home (the human kind), I'll go with Bob and take the cube. Δ

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

of numbers that represent the relative strength of the position regardless of the person or computer playing the checkers. This is an unbiased statistic. To produce this, one must have the player or computer moving the strong side of the position spend an equal number of games moving the weak side. This unbiassing technique effectively removes the player or program from the position.

The positions in *DOUBLE... now?* are the first mathematically valid stats to be presented and thus may be useful for future comparisons.

The long range view of the book is to direct rollout efforts toward the generation of valid scientific answers. An intermediate step might be a future book to compare the results of four independent programs. (The current recommendation is JellyFish™ rolled out 2000 times in the biased position and 2000 times in the unbiased position). Those positions where the four answers are comparable could be averaged. These answers could be regarded as a *near* scientific fact. The number of positions would go from the

150 rollouts of *DOUBLE... now?* to 300.

Finally, perhaps a decade from now, another book is envisioned that compares the results for 1000 positions from 10 independent programs with each position rolled out 10,000 times. The averaging of these 10 results would take on the distinct aura of scientific fact.

This path is a long and arduous one, but the alternative is the current wilderness of strong opinion backed up with biased rollouts. Many hands make the load much lighter. To those interested, feel free to forward your results (see address below), but please, *unbias the rollouts!*

The reviewer also misrepresents the doubling procedure of the book. The correct method is to turn the cube as close to the optimum doubling point (either side) as is practical. This maximizes the gain. The reason one doesn't double with just a slight advantage is that the position may easily be reversed followed by a lethal redouble. However, the end of the game causes what is described in scientific terms as an edge effect or boundary condition. The rule for doubling is now changed! Whenever one no longer fears the redouble, it can reasonably be argued that one gains with a 51% double. This was

omitted from the book since the author has yet to study the edge effect in depth.

Finally, the reviewer suggests that a 10% accuracy in one's data is sufficient for doubling purposes. Chapter 4 and virtually every example in the book refutes this. The difference between a position's optimum doubling point and its winning percentage is invariably less than 10%. This accuracy requirement is the reason 1000+ game rollouts are needed.—Dr. James Lortz, 111 N. Church St., Salmon, ID 83467

CALL FOR GAMMON ANECDOTES

CHICAGO POINT is "numero uno," Your publication is outstanding. However...

I would like to read more anecdotes of backgammon greats of the past. For example, how about Caligula and his buddies of ancient Rome? And even more modern people such as Barclay Cooke, Lucille Ball, O.J. Simpson, Dennis Connor and all the other well-known players of our game.

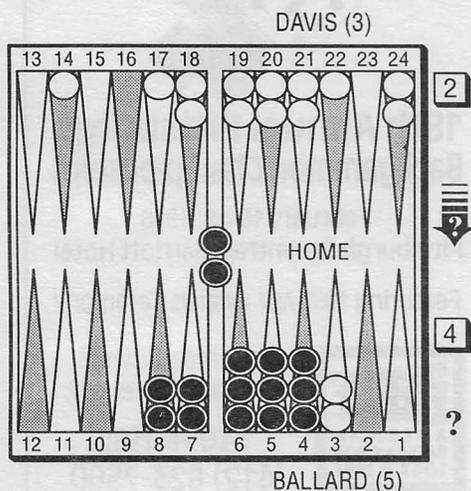
And their must be some interesting stories of Winston Churchill's style of play.—Dr. Lee Hoge, Saratoga Springs, NY

Can anyone describe Winston Churchill's or O.J. Simpson's style of play for Lee?—Ed. Δ

'Sixteen Cubes'...

[Continued from page 1]

POS. #2. CUBE ACTIONS?

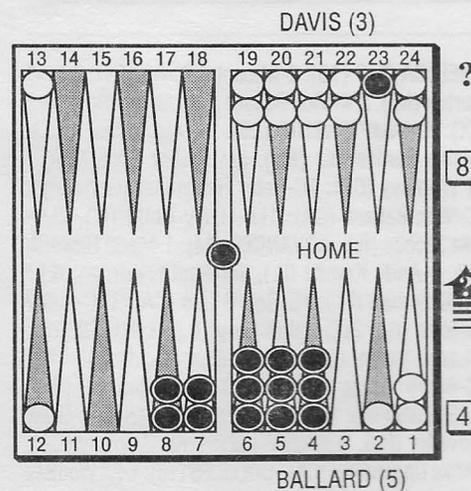


*Nack was raised in the canebrake by an old mama hound.
Ain't no high-tone Malcolm gonna push him around.*

Although Nack has a lead in the match, the cube is getting bigger. While this is a scary looking cube—a gammon loss costs 8 points—it is still an easy take. The powerful potential of a redouble by Nack is significant. For an initial money double, Nack would be giving up less than 0.80 on a 1-cube by taking. Passing at the 2-level obviously costs him 2 points. By taking, JellyFish™ rollouts show him losing only 1.54 points.

*If winnin's what you hanker, better leap that prime.
A lotta men didn't, a lotta men dyin'.*

POS. #3. CUBE ACTIONS?

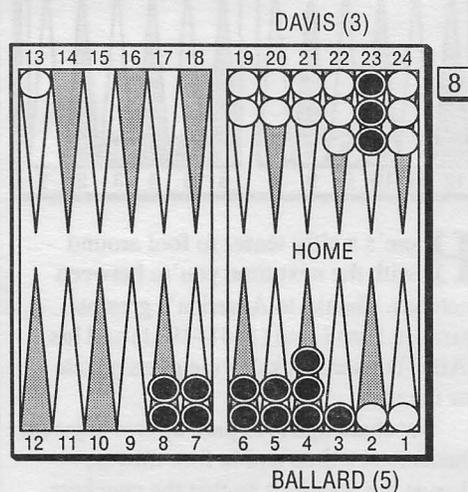


Fun is fun, but this was getting serious.

This is the first really tough cube of the match. JellyFish™ rollouts make this a small pass for money, which in turn, due to Jelly's inability to accurately assess recubes, suggests that it is probably a *small* money take. Before crunching all the numbers, I thought this was a pass. In fact, Jelly's figures multiplied by the match equities at the corresponding scores suggest that Malcolm would have 27.2% match equity by passing (trailing 9-3 to 21) and about 29.4% after taking. Very close.

MAYBE IT ONLY seems like the checker plays get harder as the cube gets bigger. What should Nack do with a 5-2 in this position?

POS. #4. BLACK TO PLAY 5-2.



After rejecting the running play (23/16) as giving too many shots, leaving too many blots, and being too subjunctive, two candidate plays quickly emerge. The super-safe 8/3, 8/6 is certainly best if Black has access to a live cube. Black will cash most of these games, and would want to leave no shots.

If White owns the cube, 8/3, 4/2* is preferable, though it is closer than one might think. Many players are fearful of making this type of play when White has such a strong board. They fear losing a gammon, and further rationalize that by playing passively, they make it easier for White to break up his own board.

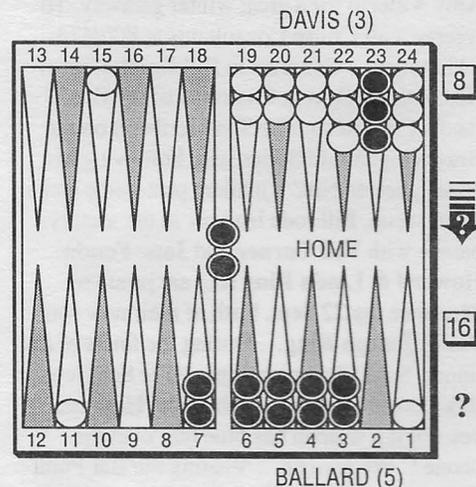
Nonetheless, basic strategy in prime-vs.-prime confrontations is to roll your own prime forward and hit your opponent off the edge of it. Therefore, it is not surprising that this is the play that Nack selected. What is surprising is that it is the wrong play. The correct play is none of the above!

Best here is 23/18, 3/1*. Though anti-positional, 3/1* does not leave White at the edge of the prime, or shooting at a blot at the edge. Meanwhile, running out (23/18) has its own merit.

*One die of iron, an' the other of steel;
If the right one don't get you, then the left one will.*

Is anyone surprised that Malcolm rolled a 2-6? One roll later, guess what came dancing 'cross the board?

POS. #5. CUBE ACTIONS?



This is the only cube error of the game. If Nack passes to trail 5-11, he has but 25.6% match equity. If he takes and wins, he wins the match outright and has minuscule additional chances if Malcolm fails to win a gammon. Nack wins this game outright 48.3%! Even if Malcolm rolls an ace, Nack *still has a take*. Only 1-6 is a market loser. Curiously, after 1-6, Malcolm's game is so good, he nearly wishes he hadn't doubled.

*Nack was in mournin', his dice didn't shine.
Lifted them up, he didn't whine.
Took a Sixteen Cube, 'cause winnin's his goal,
And Malcolm did'a holler, "Well, bless my soul!"*

Good take. Bad luck. Malcolm rolled an ace, then a 6, and left no shots until it was much too late. Nack was backgammoned, losing the match 51-5.

What about Malcolm Davis? Well he went on to defeat Emil Mortuk and win the 1995 America Cup.

*You take Sixteen Cubes, whaddya get?
Another day older an' deeper in debt.
Yamin, doncha call me to enter a Blitz
'Cause luck like this is really the pits! Δ*

[Jake Jacobs, Chicago's writer/analyst extraordinaire, recently won the Master's Jackpot at the 1995 Indiana Open.—Ed.]

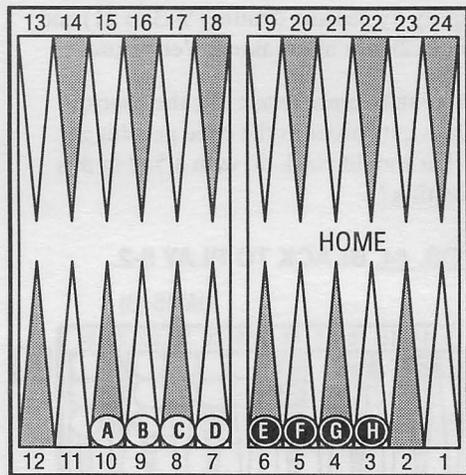
AMALGAMATION

Now that the cold weather has set in: **THINK CRUISE**. Backgammon on Board III—Miami to Key West—19–22 January 1996 is still accepting sign-ups. The price is great: \$662 including airfare or \$333 cruise only (plus port charges). Join **Bill Davis**, **Peter Kalba** and **Amy Valerio** for a great winter getaway. To reserve, call Cruise Consultants at 800/478-0433 today... Congrats to **Bill Bartholomay** (IL), Atlanta Braves Chairman of the Board (and a CHICAGO POINT subscriber!) on the Braves big World Series win. Following his appearance on NBC's jubilant post-game locker room scene, Bill rode lead car in the victory parade with **Ted Turner** and **Jane Fonda**... **Howard & Linda Ring** (IL) are proud to announce the 22 Sept. birth of their new son **Philip Joseph Ring**... During the finals of the Illinois State Championships, **Mike Senkiewicz** (NY) asked **Dean Muench** (IL): "How can you tell if a woman has blue hair over the phone?" We give up... Visiting the Bar Point Club in October: **Peter Heitmüller** (Germany), **Doug Roberts** (MA), **Walter Trice** (MA), **Bob Koca** (PA)... What a Christmas present to the backgammon community! **Stein Welle** of Effect Software AS announces JellyFish 1.6 Beta, a new and improved version of the popular computer program. It will be available soon from **Larry Strommen** (IN) at 317/545-0224 and **Carol Joy Cole** (MI) at 313/232-9731... Our condolences on last month's passing of tennis and backgammon hustler **Bobby Riggs** (CA) who died of prostate cancer. He was 77. We first met the personable Mr. Riggs at his celebrity charity backgammon tournament in Miami in April 1987... Thinking about an unusual Christmas gift? What about a big backgammon beach towel? \$25 + shipping from The Ultimate Thought (914/834-9128)... It was **Louis Pasteur** who said "Chance favors the trained mind." Δ

a CHICAGO POINT contest puzzle

Win \$25

CHECKER SWITCHEROO



Here's a nifty teaser to fool around with the next time you're between matches. Thanks to America's greatest puzzlist, Sam Loyd (1841–1911) and his "After Dinner Tricks" wine glass puzzle for the idea.

The challenge is to pick up two adjacent checkers at a time and in four moves, change the positions so that the checkers will alternate black and white in consecutive order beginning and ending within the 12 points on the bottom half of the board. The checkers are lettered to make it easy to describe your procedure.

All entries must be received by 1 Dec. 1995. Mail to: CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.; Suite 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3128. Or you can fax your solution to: 312/583-3264. Δ

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ILL. STATE & AMERICA CUP...

[Continued from page 1]

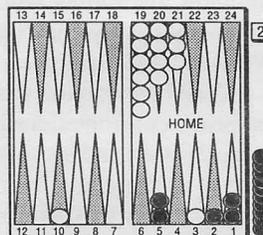
Texas Vineyards, has won the 1976 \$120,000 Williams Island Pro/Am, the 1983 BSO Benefit tournament, The 1993 Illinois State Champs and the 1993 South American World Cup.

After surviving a 16-cube in the semifinals (see related story on page 1), Davis went on to defeat Michigan's Emil Mortuk 23–17 to claim the five-figure prize money and a handsome eagle trophy.

Dean Muench showed why he's number 20 in the current KG international rating list by defeating the always-tough Mike Senkiewicz (NY) 15–3. Leading 7–3, Dean

had this very interesting 1-1 to play:

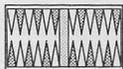
15-point finals.
Dean Muench (Black) leads
Mike Senkiewicz (White) 7–3.
BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.



Dean correctly peeled of three checkers giving himself the best chance to win a gammon (the outcome) or backgammon.

CONGRATULATIONS to Intermediate victor Marta Hilworth for her first big win. Also to Limited victor Larry Yudin of Canada. Results:

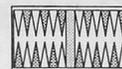
AMERICA CUP (16): 1-Malcolm Davis (TX), 2-Emil Mortuk (MI), 3/4-Nick Ballard (CA) / Hugh Sconyers (TX). **CHAMPIONSHIP** (36): 1-Dean Muench (IL), 2-Mike Senkiewicz (NY), 3/4-Walter Trice (MA) / Kit Woolsey (CA); 1C-Peter Heitmüller (Germany), 2C-Nick Ballard (CA); 1LC-Harry Cohn (IL), 2LC-Jake Jacobs (IL). **ADVANCED** (34): 1-Marta Hilworth (IN), 2-Andy Krenitz (IL), 3/4-Paul Friedman (IL) / Jim Bowman (FL); 1C-Ron Bruns (CA); 1LC-Kathy Muench (IL), 2LC-Ralph Levy (IL). **LIMITED** (22): 1-Larry Yudin (Canada), 2-Ellen Goldsmith (IL); 1C-Steve Maas (MN); 1LC-Lee Pflugrad (WI). **MASTERS** (16): 1-Howard Markowitz (NV), 2-Drew Giovonis (FL). **KICKOFF** (32): 1-Kit Woolsey (CA), 2-Mike Ungerleider (CA). **DOUBLES** (16): 1-Kit Woolsey & Steve Clark (CA), 2-Wendy Kaplan & Barry Miller (IL). **BLITZ**: 1-Kurt Schurecht (IL), 2-Wally Wolf (MI). Δ



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Program:

Saturday, 20th of April

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Arrival of participants

11:45 pm Departure

Sunday, 21st of April

St. Thomas

7:30 am-6:00 pm Daytrip

10:00 pm Warm-up

11:00 pm Jackpots

Monday, 22nd of April

St. Maarten

7:00 am-6:00 pm Daytrip

10:00 pm Superjackpot with
extra prizes

Tuesday, 23rd of April

At sea

2:00 pm Start of Tournament

Wednesday, 24th of April

At sea

1:00 pm Players Auction: Final 16

2:00 pm Tournament continues

2:30 pm Start of Consolation

9:30 pm Quarterfinals

Thursday, 25th of April

Bermuda

8:00 am-4:00 pm Daytrip

8:00 pm Semifinals

8:30 pm Start of Last Chance

Friday, 26th of April

At sea

2:00 pm Finals

9:30 pm Awards Ceremony

Saturday, 27th of April

New York, U.S.A.

8:00 am Arrival in New York City

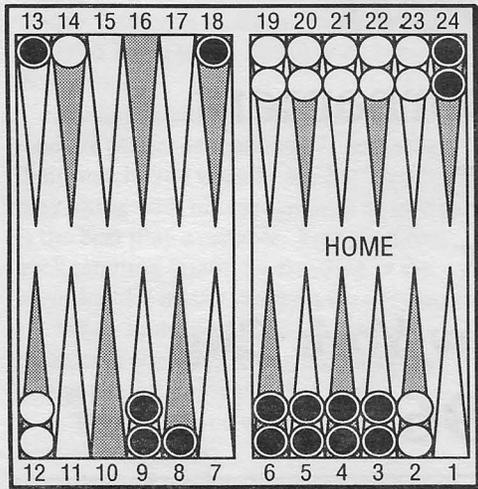


last month's position

PROBLEM #218 SOLVED

by Kit Woolsey

Match to 9 points. Black leads White 8 to 7, Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



Black has two possible plans. He can go for the prime by making his own bar point, or he can make the enemy bar point

and either play 13/11 or 8/6 with the deuce. These are the only plausible options.

For starters, let's suppose that Black will play 24/18 with the 6 and determine which 2 is best. 8/6 has the advantage of leaving fewer blots, which could be important. 8/6 also leaves two fewer shot numbers. 13/11 benefits by leaving the 8-point slotted, which gives Black the potential to improve his blockade next roll.

The most important factor, however, is which shot White would like to hit the most. If Black plays (24/18, 8/6) and White hits the ace shot (12/13*), White still has a lot of work to do. Her two checkers remain stuck back on Black's 2-point, and she has a bunch of targets strung out in the outfield for Black to shoot at if he enters quickly.

On the other hand, if Black plays (24/18, 13/11) and White hits, White will also be fleeing one of her back men which is exactly what she would like to do. This is the big factor which makes 8/6 the proper deuce . . . if we decide to make the 18-point.

Now for the big question: Which bar point should we make? Making the offensive bar point is nice, and White's 6s will be duplicated. However, this really isn't the

game plan which fits the position. White has the more advanced anchor and plenty of men in the outfield to play with, so Black's prime doesn't figure to be all that much of a nuisance.

If White hits one of Black's blots, which is likely, Black will be in immediate trouble. If he doesn't enter, White can practically waltz around the board. If Black does enter, his prime may be forced to crack pretty quickly.

After playing (24/18, 8/6), Black's game will be much more comfortable. He has spare checkers to play with if White doesn't hit the shot, and may be able to escape the last back man and win by containing White's back checkers. If he is hit, it isn't so good; however White's men are far away from the inner board, so Black still figures to be able to remake the defensive ace point and play from there. It really doesn't appear to be a close decision.

When your opponent has a 5-prime, it is vital to get any checker over that prime if possible. 6s just don't grow on trees. This position is no exception. Timing is the big issue in priming battles, and Black gives himself much more time by leaping a checker now. Δ

who did what

WINNER'S CORNER



Sep.-Nov. 1995

New England Monthly: (Cambridge, MA; 10 Sep.): EXPERT (26): 1-Rich Sweetman (NH), 2-Linc Bedell (NH); 1C-Marty Storer, 2C-Walter Trice. A DIV. (17): 1-Ernesto Adrienzen, 2-Daniel Gauland; 1C-Ming Lee, 2C-Ken Newman. B DIV. (5): 1-AI Mason; 1C-Ruth Moss.

Asian Championships (Hong Kong; 6-8 Oct.)... OPEN: (35): 1-Goran Hasselquist (THAI), 2-Steve Nelson, 3/4-Thomas Kong / Deng Deepfrong (THAI); 1C-Andre Hoffman, 2C-Tim Throsby; 1LC-Marc Mostacci, 2LC-Vinnie Ratnapath (THAI). CHAMPIONSHIP (21): 1-Lorenzo Andriolo (ITA), 2-Ronnie Nutzati; 1C-Rames Kumar (THAI), 2C-Kenneth Wong; 1LC-Bodo Sprungk, 2LC-Richard Goss. DRAGON SLAYER (128): 1-Katsuyuki Takahashi (JPN), 2-Shunsuke Hasegawa (JPN). SUPER JACKPOT (8): 1-Jerry Godsey, 2-John Simon. MINI-SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-Patrice Hattu, 2-Jonathan Barnes. TEAM EVENT (10): 1-Earthquakers (JPN), 2-Hong-Thai (HK, Thai, Bali)... *Hong Kong Club President Jerry Godsey was very happy with this year's showing. Attendance increased 20% and money was up 40% compared to 1994. The average auction price per player was an incredible \$1085!*

Nation's Capital Championships—ABT (Bethesda, MD; 6-8 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP

(30): 1-Steve Hast (PA), 2-Steve Goldstein; 1C-Blake Sorem; 4-David Montgomery, 5/6-Andy Palumbo (NY) / Dan Shapiro, 7-Carlo Russo; 1LC-Keith Meinelt (NC). OPEN (16): 1-Mel Leifer, 2-Bob Williamson; 1C-Bill Wilner. JACKPOT (8): 1-Herb Avram, 2-Bob Koca (PA). DOUBLES (6): 1/2-Paula Cook & Barry Steinberg / Bruce Hall (NC) & Andy Palumbo (NY). BLITZ: 1-Bill Wilner.

Bar Point Sunday (Oak Brook, IL; 8 Oct.)... OPEN (20): 1/2-Richard Lloyd / Harry Cohn, 3/4-John Demian / V.W. Zimnicki; 1C/2C-Dave Cramer / Wendy Kaplan. INTERMEDIATE (20): 1/2-Alice Kay / Paul Friedman, 3/4-Mary Franks / Bobbie Shifrin; 1C/2C-Amy Valerio / Scott Richardson.

Armbruster's Friday The 13th Bash (Los Angeles, CA; 13 Oct.)... DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Ray Foglerlund & Kim Rimmer, 2-Art Benjamin & Carla Gibson. BLACK CAT HUNT: Kim Rimmer. BLACK CAT TOSS: Patrick Gibson... *Once again, Richard Armbruster turns bad luck into a good time.*

Sandy Osborne Memorial (East Midlands, England; 14-15 Oct.)... OPEN (36): 1-Brendan Burgess (IRE), 2-Martin Lee, 3/4-John Broomfield / Richard Howes; 1C-John Broomfield; 1LC-Jeff Ellis. FRIDAY KO (8): 1-Nick Check, 2-Jim Moore. SATURDAY DOUBLES (10): 1-Peter Chan & Mike Waxman, 2-Michael Crane & Mike Shelton. SUICIDE! (18): 1-Roger Porter.

Northern Ohio Monthly (Akron, OH; 15 Oct.)... OPEN (12): 1-Ray Glaeser, 2/3-Bob

Green / Joe Miller.

Milan Duomo Center Tournament (Milan, Italy; 15 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (32): 1-Haghighat Navid Samuel, 2-Dario Mottola, 3/4-Gatti Raffaello / Matteo Ballarin; 1C-Nion Di Bella, 2C-Bolzoni Andrea. INTERMEDIATE (32): 1-Maria Grigis in da Pra, 2-Mario D'Osvualdo, 3/4-Gian Pietro Picco / Gobbo Roberto; 1C-Sergio Cagol, 2C-Roberto Rai.

Autumn Gran Prix—ABT (San Diego, CA; 27-29 Oct.)... OPEN (43): 1-Art Benjamin, 2-Trisha Hegland, 3-Norm Wiggins, 4-Sally Woolsey; 1LC-Kit Woolsey. INTERMEDIATE (24): 1-Patti Beadles, 2-Juli Carter; 1C-George Photias (NV), 2C-Sean O'Hara; 1LC-Treana Bouque, 2LC-Bob Bercu. NOVICE (5): 1-Charli Beth Joerger, 2-Kris Andrysiak. SUPER 16: 1-Mike Ungerleider, 2-Walter Jarc (Spain). MEGABLITZ WINNERS: Dorn Bishop, Arnold Zousmer, Larry Deckel. DOUBLES (8): 1-Dorn Bishop & Arnold Zousmer, 2-Paul Gedigian & Azzam Masarani. MIXED DOUBLES (8): 1-Carol Joy Cole (MI) & Dave MacBryde, 2-Cecilia Pedroza & Paul Stokes. CRYSTAL BALL (18): 1-Trisha Hegland, 2-Kris Andrysiak... *Lots of fun in San Diego. Mike Fujita reports 18 players dressed in Halloween costumes for the Crystal Ball tourney.*

16th Opre Invitational (Downers Grove, IL; 4 Nov.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (8): 1-Don Desmond, 2-Chris Stanford (NJ). DOUBLES: 1-Peter Kalba & Tom Walthes, 2-Jeff Henry & Chris Stanford... *Italian was the food theme of Jim & Carmel Opre's annual party tournament.* Δ

A New Backgammon Option in January!



Several traders on the Chicago Board Options Exchange (C.B.O.E.) have expressed a desire for a private club where they can meet players with similar interests in backgammon, bridge, and other games of skill. I am opening the C.B.O.B. in January 1996 at a location near the C.B.O.E. and Chicago Board of Trade (C.B.O.T.) buildings in Chicago's financial district.

C.B.O.B. will offer a refined atmosphere where members and their guests may come for dinner or relaxation as well as to play their favorite games. We will be open from 12:00 NOON to 9:00 P.M. on Monday through Friday. Daily playing fees will be determined by the stake at which the game is being played. All games are guaranteed by and cleared through the club's management. This club will be closed on weekends

and other days when the exchanges are closed, unless otherwise posted.

Membership seats for 1996 are available for \$500 and are renewable on a yearly basis. Traders, members of the financial community, and players from Chicagoland are welcome to apply. Out-of-state membership seats go for \$250. If you are interested in more details regarding the C.B.O.B., or would like to reserve your membership seat, please fill in the information form and mail it to the address shown below. If you are not interested, please forward this notice to a game-playing friend.

Thank you,

Dean Muench

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