

CHICAGO POINT

NUMBER 89

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

MAY 1996

3rd worldwide twin championships

PHIPPS, SOREM AND DAVIS SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT IN VEGAS

April 23–28 was a gamer's paradise in Las Vegas, Nevada. Downtown at Binion's Horseshoe Casino, the World Series of Poker was in high gear. At the Riviera Hotel, players were mating at the National Chess Open. And also at the Riv, 300+ players were rolling dice at the 3rd Worldwide Twin Backgammon Championships.



Bill Phipps (left) and Wilcox Snellings draw a huge crowd for the Nevada State finals.

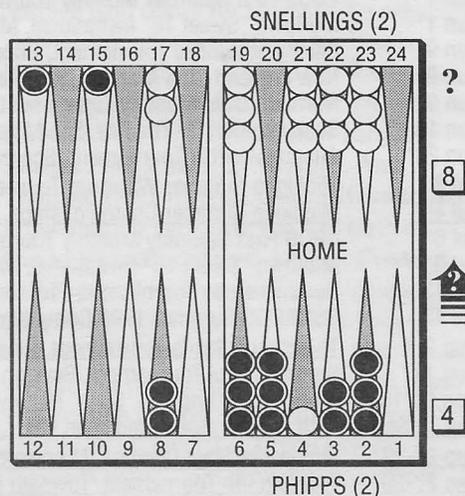
The most popular half of the Worldwide Twin Champs is the Nevada State Tournament. Surviving the brutal 121 player field were Bill Phipps from Seattle, WA and defending champ Wilcox Snellings of Reno, Nevada. Let's go directly to the pivotal position from their 13-point final match (shown above).

Ahead in the race 82–89, this is a trivial take for Wilcox. Phipps immediately justified his double by rolling what would have been a market-loser: double-6. Trailing 10–2, Snellings could not recover, eventually losing 13–7.

THIS YEAR, THE INTERNATIONAL CUP proved nearly as popular as the Nevada Championship. With 106 entries and 178 reentries, the \$28,722 first prize was the largest of the tournament.

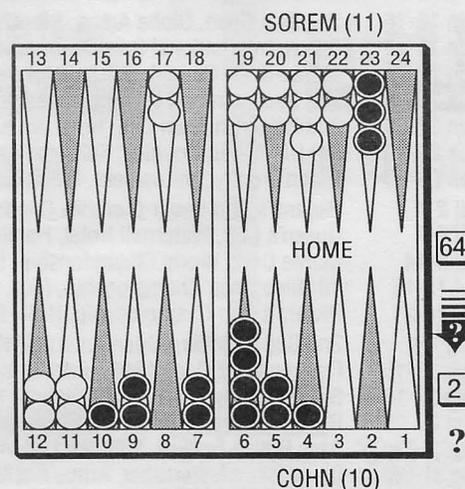
In the 13-point finals, Chicago's Harry Cohn took a quick 7-1 lead over FIBS

Nevada State 13-point finals. Bill Phipps (Black) and Wilcox Snellings (White) are tied at 2. **CUBE ACTIONS?**



aficionado Blake Sorem (Livermore, CA). But Blake failed to collapse. He worked his way back to an 11–10 advantage before offering this well-timed double:

International Cup 13-point finals. Black Sorem (White) leads Harry Cohn (Black) 11–10. **CUBE ACTIONS?**



Harry took and redoubled, but never got a shot. Blake was the victor.

Later, Sorem fed the position to Jelly-Fish™ which gave Black only a 17.8% chance to win. This would make Harry's take wrong by a lot (he needs 25%). Harry

[Continued on page 9]



Blake Sorem (right) and Harry Cohn battle in the International Cup championship.

3rd WORLDWIDE TWIN CHAMPIONSHIPS

13TH NEVADA STATE TOURNAMENT

CHAMPIONSHIP (121): 1-Bill Phipps (WA), 2-Wilcox Snellings (NV), 3/4-Beth Skillman (CA) / Ricardo Spinola (BRAZ); 1C-Mario Sequeira (POR), 2C-David Wells (MA), 3C/4C-Jim Hickey (GA) / Ian Macfarlane (BRAZ); 1LC-Sally Woolsey (CA), 2LC-Eliot Bean (CA). INTERMEDIATE (105): 1-Fred Dardashti (CA), 2-Bob Ebbeler (CA), 3/4-Chris Campbell (NV) / Azzam Masarani (CA); 1C-Dirk Schelhove (GER), 2C-Patti Beadles (CA), 3C/4C-Mark Ferran (OR) / Artie Kamien (MS); 1LC-Carol Starr (NV), 2LC-Ed Schau (WA). BEGINNER (43): 1-Alan Cowan (CA), 2-Jim Mason (CA), 3/4-Mike Peckham (NE) / Ruth Robbins (WA); 1C-Karl Newkirk (OH), 2C-Jeff Rodgers (CA); 1LC-Eduardo Almeida (BRAZ), 2LC-Fran Miller (OH).

3rd INTERNATIONAL CUP

CHAMPIONSHIP (106 plus 178 reentries): 1-Blake Sorem (CA), 2-Harry Cohn (IL), 3/4-Michael Friedrich (GER) / Stuart Hosen (TX). INTERMEDIATE (83 plus 117 reentries): 1-Nicky Niknam (CA), 2-Elijah Miller (IL), 3/4-Andy Palumbo (NY) / Sakura Sugawara (MA). BEGINNER: (25 plus 31 reentries): 1-Mike Norman (CAN), 2-Mike Peckham (NE), 3/4-Eduardo Almeida (BRAZ) / Ky Richards (AZ).

MASTERS INVITATIONAL (16)

1-Malcolm Davis (TX), 2-Wilcox Snellings (NV), 3/4-Stuart Hosen (TX) / Elliott Winslow (CA).

LIMITED JACKPOTS

#1 (16): 1-Phil Laak (CA), 2-Peter Heitmuller (GER). #2 (16): 1-Drew Giovanis (FL), 2-Jochen Luecke (GER).

DOUBLES (64 teams)

1-Andreas Born & Jochen Luecke (GER), 2-Ary Nogueira & Carlos Pinto (BRAZ).

BLITZ (456)

1-Andy Palumbo (NY), 2-Rafael Lopez de Lara (MEX).

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

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THANKS FROM ACS

Thank you so very much for the wonderful donation of \$1,345. I understand a few things went wrong for you personally. Thankfully, the 13th annual Midwest Championships are behind you and you can look forward to a nice even-numbered event (14th) in 1997.

We truly appreciate the support from Chicago Bar Point Club and your participants. It is a great donation each year and we feel very special being the charity that you continue to choose. Thanks for all your support over the past years.—*Jane Stern, Executive Director, Anti-Cruelty Society of Chicago*

IF YOU MUST KNOW . . .

I would like to know what is this "Pig-Rolling," "Beaver Bowling," "Dice Simon," and other strange-named events

[Continued on page 3]

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BACKGAMMON						
7	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	1	2	3	4	5	6
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

carlcole@alumni.sils.umich.edu

* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

May 10-12	1996 Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Harvey Hotel, Atlanta GA	770/441-2074
May 16	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
May 19	New England Bonus Tournament, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/784-6114
May 19	Backgammon By The Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	510/838-7789
May 24-27	<u>17th Chicago Open, Woodfield Hyatt Regency Hotel, Schaumburg, IL</u>	<u>847/674-0120</u>
May 25	Beverly Hills Monthly Tournament, Clarine's, Beverly Hills, CA	310/273-1632
May 26	Austin Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Jun 1	CBOB First Saturday Monthly Tournament, Clubroom, Chicago, IL	312/922-0404
Jun 1*	Midtown "Sweet 16" Invitational, Midtown Club, New York, NY	212/935-9800
Jun 9	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Jun 9	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	617/784-6114
Jun 9*	Northern Ohio Monthly Tournament, Andrew's Brews, Akron, OH	330/966-2811
Jun 16	Backgammon By The Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	510/838-7789
Jun 23*	Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Scores Sports Club, Atlanta, GA	770/441-2074
Jul 3	Michigan Summer Warm-up Tourney, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI	810/232-9731
Jul 4-7	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton Hotel, Novi, MI</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Jul 6*	CBOB First Saturday Monthly Tournament, Clubroom, Chicago, IL	312/922-0404
Jul 6*	Midtown "Sweet 16" Invitational, Midtown Club, New York, NY	212/935-9800
Jul 13	Summer Open Tournament, Promenade Cardroom, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jul 17	RSCARDS Summer 1996 Computer Modem Tournament, GEnie	301/294-2212
Aug 2-4	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Aug 11*	Summer Cool Tournament, Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	312/252-7755
Aug 11-18	World Cup V and U.S. Open, Harvey's Hotel Addison, Dallas, TX	301/299-8265
Aug 30-Sep 2	<u>44th Indiana Open, Radisson Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Sep 20-22	<u>Minnesota State Champs, Minneapolis Athletic Club, Minneapolis, MN</u>	<u>612/378-1536</u>
Sep 27-29	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Oct 3-6*	<u>Illinois State Champs & America Cup, Holiday Inn, Rolling Meadows, IL</u>	<u>847/945-7801</u>
Oct 11-13	<u>Nation's Capital Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD</u>	<u>301/530-0604</u>
Nov 6-10*	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Nov 29-Dec 1	<u>2nd Thanksgiving Tournament, Best Western Hotel, Akron, OH</u>	<u>216/966-2811</u>
Dec 6-8	<u>Gammon Assoc. Invitational, Holiday Inn, Woodland Hills, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>

OUTSIDE USA

May 9-12	2nd EBN Tourney, Apartahotel Las Colinas, Almeria, Spain	34-50 460080
May 25-26	County Cups Trophy Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England	441522-546993
May 25-26	De Åbne Københavnske Mesterskaber, Skjoldtgården, Ordrup, Denmark	4539-400607
May 25-26*	First Istrian Open Tournament, Hotel Casino Parentium, Parenzo, Croatia	392-40074658
May 30-Jun 2	Rio de Janeiro Tournament, Miramar Palace Hotel, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5521-267 6033
Jun 13-16	Swedish Open, Globe Arena, Stockholm, Sweden	468-652 4099
Jun 15-18	Balkan International Open Tournament, Duni Black Sea Resort, Bulgaria	359-723612
Jun 22-23	Monte-Carlo Cup 96, Selskabslokalerne, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Jun 25-30	2nd Backgammon Olympiad, Casinò of Venice, Italy	394-1521 1029
Jun 27-30	2nd Kaiserbrunnen Cup, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	495 21-64314
Jun 29-30*	5th DM Mixed Doubles, Selskabslokalerne, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Jun 29-30	Hilton Trophy Tournament, Hilton Hotel, East Midlands, England	441522-546993
Jul 2-4	Pagano's 2nd Super Cup Villa Condulmer, Venice, Italy	394-2296 9305
Jul 6-7	Queen's Cup, Watermill Hotel, Hemel Hempstead, England	44161-9453741
Jul 8-14	Monte Carlo World Championship, Loews Monte Carlo Hotel, Monaco	3392-16 21 33
Jul 15-16	4th Nice Open Championship, Nice, France (tentative)	3393-879 436
Jul 18-21	Riviera's Cup Championship, Hotel Martinez, Cannes, France	331-4359 1080
Aug 1-4	2nd Bad Segeberg Open, Intermar Kurhotel, Bad Segeberg, Germany	4930-461 9624
Aug 16-18*	Franken Ganz Open 1996, Hotel Schwarzer Adler, Uttenreuth, Germany	49911-669 9678
Aug 17-18	S.A.C. Trophy Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England	441522-546993
Aug 22-25	Rio de Janeiro Tournament, Miramar Palace Hotel, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5521-267 6033
Aug 30-Sep 1*	Bass British Festival, 10th Nat'l Championship, Hemel Hempstead, UK	44161-945 3741
Aug 31-Sep 1*	De Jydske Mesterkaber, Århus Backgammon Club, Århus, Denmark	4586-134963
Sep 6-8*	6th Mitteleuropa Tournament, Casinò Park, Nova Gorica, Slovenia	392-4007 4658
Sep 7-8*	DM Doubles, Selskabslokalerne, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Sep 14-18*	Balkan International Open Tournament, Duni Black Sea Resort, Bulgaria	359-723612
Sep 29-Oct 4*	3rd German Open, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	495 21-64314
Oct 4-6*	Asian Championships, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852-846 1923
Oct 5-6*	Sandy Osborne Memorial Tournament, George Hotel, Solihull, England	441522-546993
Oct 25-27*	Two Nations Cup, Hemel Hempstead, UK	44161-945 3741
Oct 25-28*	Rio de Janeiro Internat'l Tournament, Hotel Intercontinental, Rio, Brazil	5521-267 6033
Oct 31-Nov 1*	First São Paulo Open, Club Homes, São Paulo, Brazil	5521-267 6033

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

you have each year at your tournament?—
Claudio Salamone, Argentina Backgammon Association

Good question, Claudio. I suppose you have to try them to know them. "Pig-Rolling" is just that: participants roll miniature rubber pigs. Our Pig Mistress Dru Heggen scores up points based on the position the pigs take (Hooper, Snouter, Leaning Jowler, Makin' Bacon). High scores qualify for last-day playoffs where this year's prize was a color TV and a coveted place in the "Hog of Fame."

The other events we've had (Beaver

Bowling, Football, Baseball, Hockey, Golf, Basketball) get physical, but it's all for fun. Come some year and see for yourself.—Ed.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MODIFIED SWISS FORMAT

I attended the Spring Gran Prix in San Diego last week and enjoyed the organization. However, I'm still puzzling over the tournament format.

After winning my first four matches in the Intermediate division, I lost in the semifinal and was given no second chance. Meanwhile, a player who won his first three matches and lost the fourth did get a second chance. He had to win three matches in order to play in the division final. This gave him a 1/16 chance to win

first place and 1/8 to win second.

I think that a player who compiles a 4-1 record deserves a better chance than a player with a 3-1 record.—*Saul Meir, Beverly Hills, CA*

San Diego Club Director Mike Fujita responds: The tournament format was Modified Swiss. This gave the Intermediate players plenty of play. Each played four matches. Based upon their record, they were placed into the single elimination playoff. Two players finished with a 4-0 record. They were placed in the semifinals (not paired against each other). They awaited eight players with a 3-1 record who played down to the two other semifinal spots.

Saul Meir and Judy Collins, each with a 4-0 record going into the playoff, had a 1/4 chance to win first place, whereas the eight players with a 3-1 record each had a 1/16 chance. Judy capitalized on her position and took home the first place trophy.

I am constantly trying to improve the tournament format and thank Saul for his letter. I looked at the format on the last night of the tourney and decided to make the playoffs a main flight with a progressive consolation (instead of single elimination) at the next Gran Prix in Autumn. See you there, Saul!—Mike Fujita

RULING CONTEST 3

Here's my answers to Ruling Contest 3. Thanks for the challenging situations. They certainly are difficult ones! I look forward to Danny's analysis.—*Steve Klesker, Lake Zurich, IL*

[Continued on page 6]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1996

Compiled through 21 April 1996 after 4 tournaments
(Coming in May: Backgammon in the Berkshires, Chicago Open)



Jake Jacobs	22.88	Tim Mabee	6.40	Gus Contos	3.79	Larry Deckel	1.88
David Jaffe	22.68	Elijah Miller	5.70	Odis Chenault	3.79	Lee Pflugrad	1.61
Art Benjamin	16.50	Francois Margot	5.67	Georgina Flanagan	3.32	Gary Fries	1.57
Ernest Ho	15.21	Reza Nowbar	5.67	Paul Friedman	3.20	Wally Wolf	1.57
Marc Ingenoso	13.30	David Wells	5.67	Pete Ryder	3.15	Kandice Kane	1.50
Rob Maier	11.44	Ray Glaeser	5.67	Ray Baker	3.15	George Foster	1.39
Harry Cohn	11.34	Jolie Rubin	5.60	Jeff Kaiserman	2.84	Bruce Ballance	1.19
Abdi Zaltash	11.34	Judy Collins	5.57	Ray Bills	2.84	Harold Roberson	1.19
Wally Watson	11.34	James Rosten	5.20	Alkis Pappas	2.78	Gary Gardner	0.94
Dave Cardwell	11.20	Dean Adamian	4.80	George Photias	2.76	Walt Swan	0.94
Kit Woolsey	10.40	Hersel Namdar	4.16	Russ Hoser	2.40	Bruce Russell	0.93
Mario Sequeira	8.25	Jim Mieske	4.16	Keith Jackson	2.38	Boris Mindich	0.70
Blake Sorem	7.60	Clarine	4.13	Janice Newman	2.08	Ron Weiner	0.60
Steve Petersen	7.60	Ron Bruns	4.12	Frank Dickerson	2.08	Kwong Chan	0.60



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1996 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 30 APR.

Neil Kazaross	11.48	Arline Levy	3.52	Bobbie Shifrin	2.16	Don Jayhan	0.84
Richard Lloyd	10.72	Phil Simborg	3.44	Jerry Brooks	2.00	Sarg Serges	0.80
Paul Friedman	9.44	Leslie Lockett	3.32	Ken Bond	1.92	Tak Morioka	0.80
Peter Kalba	6.60	Bill Keefe	3.28	Dean Muench	1.88	Ralph Levy	0.60
Andy Krenitz	6.08	Norma Shyer	3.16	Bill Davis	1.88	Elaine Kehm	0.48
Jake Jacobs	6.00	Ed Buerger	3.00	Joann Feinstein	1.88	Jolie Rubin	0.46
Herb Roman	5.84	Alice Kay	2.96	Stu Katz	1.76	Richard Stawowy	0.44
Reggie Porter	5.44	Georgina Flanagan	2.96	John Stryker	1.68	Tom Fahland	0.40
Phyllis Smolinski	5.42	Harry Cohn	2.80	Marty Tatosian	1.52	Bruce Pollack	0.32
Tim Mabee	4.92	Frankie Farjood	2.80	Bob Koca	1.44	Roz Ferris	0.32
John Demian	4.16	Paul Franks	2.72	Harold Seif	1.28	Peaches Stewart	0.32
Tim Serges	4.08	Amy Valerio	2.60	Russell Harris	1.28	Scott Richardson	0.20
Mary Franks	4.00	David Rubin	2.16	Paul Klein	1.20	Scott Kaplan	0.16
Jeff Kane	3.68	Wendy Kaplan	2.16	Darryl Purpose	0.88		

RICHARD LLOYD's 3.84 April points challenges Neil Kazaross for the Bar Point Club lead after 1/3 year. Peter Kalba (3.28) and Tim Mabee (2.88) finished 2nd/3rd respectively.

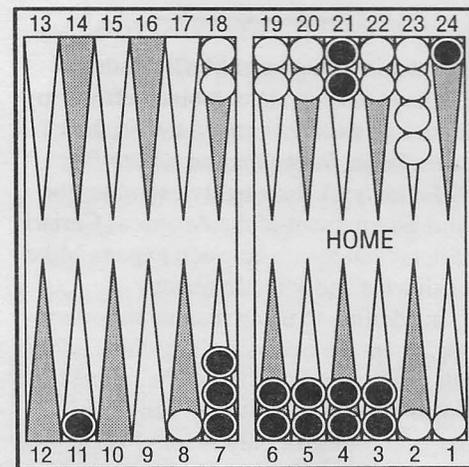
If you finish in the Top 20 for 1996 (bold names on list), you'll be entered in a drawing for over \$300 worth of valuable merchandise. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st—Trophy + \$150, 2nd—\$100, 3rd—\$50. 1st through 20th—one ounce solid silver coin. 1st through 6th—Invitation to participate on the Chicago Bar Point Club team in the 1997 Illinois State Challenge Cup.

your move

PROBLEM #224

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

Match to 11 points. Black leads White, 10 to 6, Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-6.**



SHADES OF GRAY

THE RULINGS CONTEST 3 RESULTS & ANSWERS

© 1996 by Danny Kleinman

Art Benjamin, a regular CHICAGO POINT contest winner from Pasadena, CA, added another \$50 to his wallet by matching Danny Kleinman on five out of six answers. Art's one difference with Danny was on Ruling 3. In fact, none of our 25 entrants agreed with Danny on Ruling 3!

The composite answers of our 25 entrants were: 1-B, 2-D, 3-B, 4-C, 5-A, 6-C. The Chicago Bar Point Club is in agreement with the composite rulings, although we are torn on problems 5 and 6. Here are Danny's rulings and explanations:

1. (B) The play stands, even if illegal. Help from a kibitzer, especially a partisan kibitzer, must not be allowed to affect the game. There is no reason to suppose your opponent would have noticed that his dice were 6-2 rather than 6-1 without his wife's gesture. Your opponent should bar his misbehaving wife—to protect his own right to correct a future illegal or inferior play before lifting his dice.

2. (D) Your 5-4 stands. By dropping his die, even inadvertently, the opponent has interfered with your dice. You get the benefit of the doubt as to whether the 4 had stopped spinning at the time of the interference. But why didn't your opponent apologize for the accident and restore your 4 voluntarily?

3. (D) You may double; and if your opponent takes, you must roll. To "cast" your dice by dropping your cup is not to roll. Nor may an intention not to double be inferred from shaking the dice: players sometimes shake the dice while thinking whether to turn the cube.

4. (C) No monitor and no committee. A player does not have a right to help with the mechanics of the game. This is not to say, however, that exceptions may not be made for physically handicapped players. Having a monitor punch the clock for both players would slow the match, interposing an extra step (lifting the dice or informing the monitor) between completion of a move and punching the clock. Perhaps that is why the director rejected Jim's request. Regardless, this situation calls for summary judgment by the director. The ruling affects neither the position nor the score, and convening a committee would slow the match even further.

5. (B) The match is to 11. I covered this in "The Wrong Target Rule" (...but only the

hogs win backgammons, page 241). To shorten the match below 11 would violate constraint (c) by requiring Paul to win at least twice as many points as Steve for the match. Of course if it can be shown that Paul deliberately misinformed Steve about the playto, then Paul is subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, forfeiture of the match.

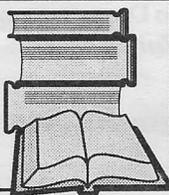
6. (D) The director should tell both players that the match is to 11. The Wrong Target Rule still applies. Again, I would rule otherwise if Paul deliberately misinformed Steve.

The rule says that a director must be summoned promptly—presumably to take some action. Promptness is of the essence. Failure to notify the players may let another kibitzer inform a player, who may then choose a strategic moment to complain. Suppose Paul wins 2 points to trail 6-7. Then if Steve learns of the wrong playto, he can complain and get the match shortened to 9. Or suppose Paul wins 4 points to lead 8-7. Then if Paul learns of the wrong playto, he can complain and get the match shortened to 10. Δ

Have you ever been involved in a questionable ruling? Get Danny Kleinman's opinion. Write to: Shades of Gray; c/o CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155.

Backgammon: Costa Rica 1994

quick review by
Kit Woolsey



cube analysis. Utilizing these features, Ortega and Madrigal have supplied very valuable information on doubling and market losers in critical positions, an excellent type of innovative analysis.

Although the annotations were very good, they were not quite of as high a quality as with their previous book, *Costa Rica 1993*. Perhaps the authors may actually have leaned too heavily on the Jelly-Fish rollouts.

Also, there was much discussion of how much time the players took to make their individual moves. The time was recorded from the match videotapes. This is really not very educational because a player may have been thinking about lots of things, or he may have been distracted. The time he takes may have nothing to do with whether or not he feels he has a difficult choice.

Still, there is a lot of valuable material in *Backgammon: Costa Rica 1994*, which is quite entertaining as well as instructional. I would certainly recommend it to any serious student of the game.—Kit Woolsey Δ

Backgammon: Costa Rica 1994, © 1996 by Antonio Ortega, Mario Madrigal and Danny Kleinman. Soft cover, spiral bound, 161 pages. \$35.

Antonio Ortega and Mario Madrigal have once again combined efforts to produce an excellent annotation in their newest book, *Backgammon: Costa Rica 1994*. The book thoroughly examines the Third Tournament of the Américas Cariari Masters final match between experts Mike Senkiewicz and Mike Svobodny.

In addition to using manual rollouts to supplement the analysis, the authors, along with guest coauthor Danny Kleinman, have also employed the powerful JellyFish™ computer tool. Not only is JellyFish able to produce rollouts, but it can also help with



ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis
312/583-6464
Peter Kalba
312/631-8350

Tuesday, 6:15 P.M. at Golden Flame, 6417 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago; 312/792-0424.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:30 P.M. at Braxton Seafood Grill, 3 Oakbrook Center Mall, Oak Brook; 708/574-2155.

PUB CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 7:30 P.M. at Cricket's Pub & Grill, 602 W. North Ave., Glendale Hts. V. W. Zimnicki (708/924-8632).

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY: Tourn. Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Alexander's, 3101 E. 79th St., Chicago. J.A. Miller (312/734-9430).

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB: Tourn. 1st, 3rd, 5th Monday, 6:15 P.M. at Ride The Nine, 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Lane O'Connor (309/454-1947)

SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASSN: Tourn. Wednesday, 6:00 P.M. at Brewhaus, 617 E. Washington, Springfield. Ben Zemaitis (217/483-4028).

WINNETKA BG CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. at 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Trudie Stern (847/446-0537).

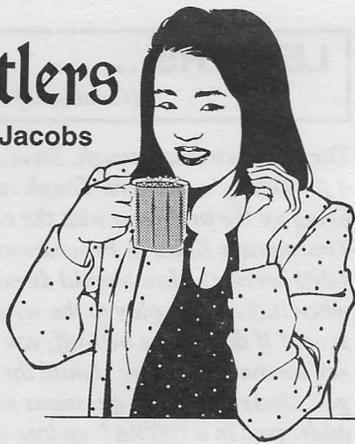
CENTRAL ILL. BG CLUB: Tournaments Thursday, 6:30 P.M. at River Station, 212 Constitution Ave., Peoria. Linda Woods (309/686-6662).

CHICAGO BOARD OF BACKGAMMON: Daily except Sun., 12:00 to 9:00 P.M. Tourn. 1st Sat., 12:00 at 175 W. Jackson (Suite 1103), Chicago. Dean Muench (312/922-0404).

NORTH CLUB: Daily except Sunday, 1:00 P.M. at 4747 W. Peterson (Suite 2), Chicago. Greg Defotis (312/286-6719).

Hustlers

by Jake Jacobs



“5 baht!” She held out her hand and I handed over a 5 baht coin.

“Now what?” I asked. Noi began tossing dice and flipping clappers.

“5 baht!” Her hand was out again. I might not be good at this game, but at least I was consistent.

We were painting the town red, Andy Krenitz, Marty Itzkowitz and I. Earlier that evening, I had won the Pattaya (Thailand) International Open Backgammon Championship, and it was time to celebrate. We had wandered into the Friendship Bar and were making friends.

“Into” is not quite the right word. The Friendship Bar has no walls, and is not really one bar; it’s more like 15 bars. The Friendship is a slab of concrete and a roof. Under that roof are a bunch of small square bars, numbered 1–15 for easy reference. There are also a couple of boxing rings so that one can watch live mayhem from every direction, and not have to turn around and possibly fall off a bar stool. (Later that night, somebody did fall off a bar stool and drew a bigger crowd than the fights.)

With so many bars, competition for customers is fierce. Besides the usual lures—beautiful bar maids, 15-foot pythons, panhandling elephants—most kept a supply of games to help everyone get acquainted.

Games! I was the reigning Pattaya backgammon champ, Marty is one of the top gamblers in Asia, and Andy, like Marty, is originally from New York. New Yorkers may be confused about many things (what constitutes good pizza springs to mind), but they are above average game players. Little did these girls know they were playing with hustlers. Soon, I was sure, we would be the game-playing kings of the bar; “Lords of the Lounge” as it were.

“So, you flipped over all those thingies. What does that mean?”

“5 baht!”

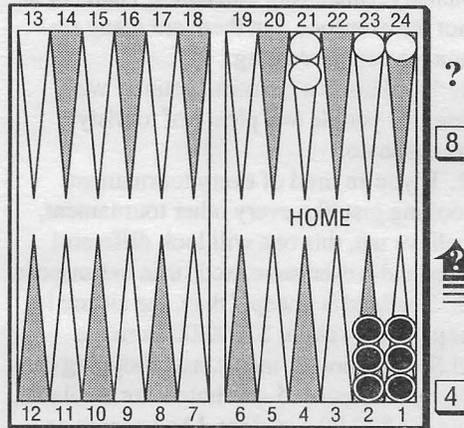
It was good to get such direct answers.

It speeds the learning process. Meanwhile, I didn’t let on to her that she was playing a champion anything. I didn’t want to scare her off before I started winning.

The Championships were the brainchild of Goran Hasselquist, the Asian Champion. 40 players from 15 countries competed in two divisions. Besides the U.S. and Thailand, I remember seeing players from Indonesia, Sweden (I personally played three including my finals opponent, Lars Hammargren), Denmark, Russia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany and Spain. I know that’s not 15... Hey! Do I look like a census taker?

The tournament was held at the Style Restaurant on Jomthien Beach. The Style is also the site for chouetting every afternoon. The tables are under a grove of coconuts, and a player was recently beamed by a falling coconut. Compassionate local rules allowed him to keep the box. (There is also a rule... I had ordered a banana shake and they brought a watermelon shake instead. Dibs on wrong orders, I was instructed, go in strict order of rotation, with the box allowed to preempt at any time.)

Money game. CUBE ACTION(S)?



This position arose one afternoon on the beach during a high-stakes joust among the Swedish contingent. It was shown to me by Joachim Johansson, who had redoubled Lars to 8, had to eat a 16-cube, but swallowed it just fine, thanks, after Lars threw a repeat ace.

I thought, bleary-eyed though I was (my training regimen involved staying out all night, and downing lots of Singha beer which I had been told was rich in carbohydrates), that whoever owned the cube was the favorite. I so opined loudly enough to draw a challenge on the field of honor from Vichai Kwatra, one of Bangkok’s top players, and the first Thai player to hook up to FIBS (VC on FIBS).

Vichai had correctly calculated that

Black was, cubeless, a significant favorite. But having worked on a lot of these problems, I was able to factor in the cube in my head. So long as rounding errors or carbohydrate poisoning didn’t lead me astray, I was sure I had a small edge. Various others including Andy, Joachim, and Thomas Ribohn (my semifinal opponent) jumped in and out of both sides of the prop. We were playing sets of ten, and I went nine of ten the last round to net a few points. It turns out White wins 50.5% when owning the cube, and has an edge of about 4.5%.

“5 baht!” Noi snapped my attention back to the game at hand. I hadn’t won a game yet. Of course, I still didn’t understand the rules. Andy at least, knew how to play his game. It was called “Connect 4,” and was sort of like a large tic-tac-toe played by dropping slugs into a plastic frame. The object was to get 4 in a row, and Andy was making progress; he was getting as many as 3 in a row almost every other game.

Marty was suffering too much to play his game: Jenga™. He was recovering from an attack of gout, and from an elephant I had talked him into riding. Carsick and seasick I had heard of; but who knew you could get “elephantsick”?

Instead of playing games, he was teaching his waitress the four English phrases essential for success in her chosen profession: “Hello,” “What’s your name?,” “Where do you come from?,” and “Buy me drink!” For the sake of logical consistency, if she repeated the last properly, he was obliged to buy her a drink. Like all good

[Continued on page 6]

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Hustlers...

[Continued from page 5]

students, she realized that, onerous though it might be, the only way to master a new language was to drill. Marty was buying her a sixth drink in half an hour.

The game Noi was teaching me is called "Clapper." It is played by throwing two dice into a wooden box, then flipping over clappers numbered 1-9 when one or both dice match the number on a clapper.

"When you flip 'em all over, you win?"

"Yes. 5 baht!" the hand was out.

"What about this time? You don't match, so you can't flip the last one?"

"I flip for you! You lose! 5 baht!"

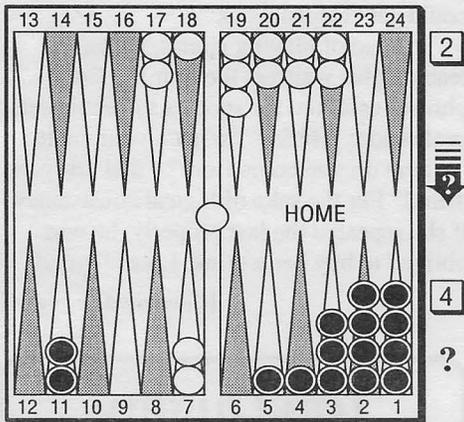
"This is fun! Would you like another drink? Oh, oh! I'm out of 5 baht coins. Now what?"

"10 baht!"

High stakes couldn't scare me. This was from the 200 baht chouette.

Money game. White redoubles.

SHOULD BLACK TAKE?



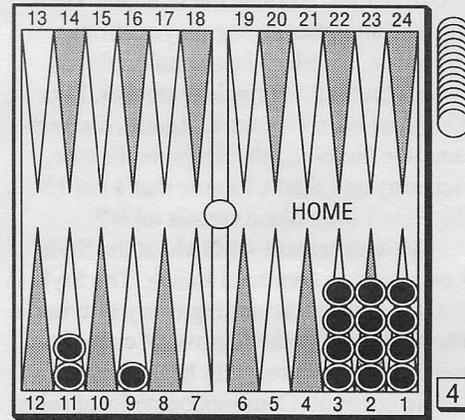
Tournament Co-director Billy Bloch was in the box along with Khun Kim, two of Pattaya's finest. Our captain, auctioneer David Brown from Bali, had rolled 4-4 then 4-3, bringing us from the verge of winning a gammon, to the verge of being gammoned in just two rolls. What a way to end the day! David and Lars passed, as did Claus Vallo of Denmark.

I didn't want to take it either, but I suspected I could win this one way too often to pass. Just for starters, White dances 25%. Sometimes he comes in without hitting, and sometimes I win after he hits. Sure, I could get gammoned, vaporizing most of the points I spent the day winning, but White still has two open points and may not be able to get a second man. JellyFish™ puts this at 0.457 on a one cube,

so the take is pretty clear—but *uuuugly!*

It was an exciting last game. They closed out 4 of my men. I hit their 15th checker from the bar to temporarily save the triple.

White on roll . . .



We reached this position, then they rolled 6-6. Then I did, too. The next day I became the first player among the six of us to realize our 4-3 had not been forced, and we had left an unnecessary double shot!

NEXT YEAR'S TOURNAMENT will be in January. Mark your calendars. Thailand is not for everyone, but there are many reasons to consider going.

1. Thailand is a beautiful country with friendly people and plenty of touristy things to do.
2. If you're tired of every tournament looking just like every other tournament, believe me, this one will look different! Thailand is even more exotic than Indianapolis.
3. Thailand is cheap. Okay, the airfare is expensive—about \$1000.00 from the U.S.—but hotels, meals, and shopping can be real bargains. 5-star hotels are available, but for \$30.00 per night, I had a large and comfortable room at the Diana Inn.
4. The prize money should be pretty respectable. Goran says he hopes for 32 in the Open at \$200.00–\$250.00. I am predicting over 40 (and possibly a \$300.00 entry). With Calcutta, this adds up to a fair chunk of change.
5. Goran is hoping to tie in a golf tournament for interested parties.
6. Goran has invited me to give a talk.

I don't know if that last one will lure people, or horrify them. I have always considered myself a man of few words—sort of the Gary Cooper of backgammon—but I've got a whole year to think of something to say. So I'll be back there.

Besides, Noi and I are up to 20 baht per game. She says she's never seen anyone progress so fast! Δ

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

They are extremely tough, Steve. See page 4 for Danny's answers. Tough rulings bring up the problems with the current U.S. Tournament Rules & Procedures (March 1990 version). How should directors rule when individuals play to the wrong match score? If during the bearoff, you put yourself on the bar, where should the checker go? These and other questions need to be addressed in a USTR&P update so that players can get uniform rulings on the more common and controversial situations.—Ed.

CANCEL THAT ROLL

My brother and I have developed a form of backgammon that, to come extent, reduces the luck factor, and I suggest this might be employed in tournament play. At any one time during each game, we each have the option of making the other person roll over one time. (The exception is when we are into a non-contact racing situation.) This, to some extent, eliminates the "joker." By eliminating, or greatly reducing the odds of the one miracle roll that can turn the game around, we are both more assured that the better player, or more likely-to-be winner, actually does win.

Also note that there is skill and decision as to when to use up the onetime option. We play that this option can only be used after the doubling cube has been turned, and I believe this also has merit. I would be interest in hearing what others think of this idea.—Phil Simborg, Chicago, IL

PRAISE FOR JAKE

I liked Jake Jacobs' article ("A Quick Match") in last month's POINT. It's a keeper just like the excellent one by Jerry Godsey ("Five Fewer Men Off") in issue 62.—Martin Lee, West Yorkshire, England

BACKGAMMON IN BULGARIA

It is my pleasure to inform you that we are organizing two international tournaments in the Duni Holiday Village of Bulgaria on the Black Sea coast this year. The events will be held 15–18 June and 14–18 Sept.

If your readers have any questions or would like to receive a brochure, have them contact me.—Svilen Todorov, Sofia, Bulgaria. Phone/fax: 0359-2-723612; e-mail: <gammon@sf.cit.bg>

A LITTLE STAR WARS LINGO

You're doing a great job with CHICAGO POINT. Right on. May the force be with you.—Dr. Mike Rezai, Madison, OH Δ

WINNER'S CORNER



Mar.-May 1996

•**1996 Argentine Championship** (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Mar.)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER: Mario Suárez. JUNIOR WINNER: Fernando Neumark. BEGINNER WINNERS: Dora Gilberg, Ara Akopian.

•**1996 FIBS Winter Blitz Tourney** (Internet)... OPEN: 1-Todd Crosner (CA)

•**1996 Argentine Championship** (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Apr.)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Jorge Stolkner, Alberto Fernandez. JUNIOR WINNERS: Juan Carlos Kuperman, Antonio Kepaptaoglou, Eduardo Zuccotti. BEGINNER WINNERS: Fernanda Alesandro, Mónica Dilorenzo, Mindla Fajtlowicz.

•**RSCARDS Spring 1996 Tournament:** (GEnie computer service, Apr.)... OPEN (3): 1-Dan Shirley (NY)

•**Hong Kong Monthly** (Hong Kong; 1 Apr.)... OPEN: 1-Ed Cartledge, 2-Jonathan Barnes; 1C-Thomas Kong, 2C-Steve Nelson. CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Peter Wong, 2-Cynthia Roberts; 1C-Chris Roberts, 2C-Samson Tang.

•**Nordic "Wide" Open** (Copenhagen, Denmark; 5-8 Apr.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (113): 1-Mike Svobodny (US), 2-Malcolm Davis (US), 3/4-John Sjölin / Gustav Jacobsen; 1C-Mathian Pauen, 2C-Steve Nelson (HK); 3C/4C-Peter Gelpke (NL) / Evert van Eijck (NL); 1LC-Peter Jes Thomsen, 2LC-Manfred Gerlach (GER). ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE (128): 1-John Andersen, 2-Clæs Dahlström (SWE), 3/4-Rolf Andersen / Maiken Larsen; 1C-Franz Gräper (GER), 2C-Jacob Rasmussen, 3C/4C-Frederik Enge (SWE) / Hans Liby (NOR); 1LC-Mel Fenger, 2LC-Andrea de Zandonati (ITA). INTERMEDIATE (188): 1-Brian Pedersen, 2-Carsten Jørgensen, 3/4-Stig Eide (NOR) / Steen Maglehøj, 5-Kathy Rudnick (USA); 1C-Bjarke Jacobsen, 2C-Raju Steffens, 3C/4C-Flemming Jensen / Rita Lonroth (SWE); 1LC-Jan Schmidtsdorf, 2LC-Jan Maribo Pedersen. BEGINNER (52): 1-Jacob Andersen, 2-Ronnie Sørensen, 3/4-Ulrik Hansen / Peter Fenstorp; 1C-Mogens Fogh, 2C-Bjørn Kruse, 3C/4C-Peter Friberg / Anita Olsen; 1LC-Clement Bream, 2LC-Anna Carlsson. TEAM EVENT (36): 1-Russia (Nekrasov, Jelezhyiakov, Rats), 2-Sweden "Icebreakers" (Isberg, Bäckström, Reinholdsen). DOUBLES (60): 1-Lars Leth & Michael Jourdan, 2-lars Andersen & Martin Rasmussen. INTERNATIONAL MATCH: Sweden defeats Denmark 3-2... *With attendance of 481 players (including 180 foreigners), this Danish Backgammon Federation event is the best attended backgammon tournament in the world. The closed circuit finals between Svobodny and Davis with commentary by Paul Magriel and Asger Kring at the controls of JellyFish™ is available from the DBF. For information, fax Chris Ternel at 4539-40 01 44 or e-mail Erik Gravgard at <erikg@pip.dknet.dk>.*

•**7th Carlsberg Backgammon Cup Finals** (Copenhagen, Denmark; 13 Apr.)... OPEN (288

qualifiers): 1-Rolf Andersen, 2-Jan Maribo Pedersen, 3-Michael hansen, 4-Claus Steensgaard; 1C-Andrea Taddei, 2C-Lars Henrik Braun, 3C/4C-Jørgen Helle / Mads Kristensen; 1LC-Hanne Gjørup, 2LC-Uffe Thorup Petersen... *Tourney qualification takes place in Cafés throughout Denmark in Feb. and March. Total entrants for this event was an incredible 4,911!*

•**1996 British Open** (Solihull, England; 13-14 Apr.)... OPEN (114): 1-Stephen Turner, 2-Simon Baker, 3/4-Tim Cross / Dave McNair; 1C-Joachim Johannsson (SWE), 2C-Gerry Cornish, 3C/4C-Jerry Smith / Mardi Ohannesian; 1LC-Philip Ward-Ackland, 2LC-Don O'Neal, 3LC/4LC-Corrine Sellers / Brendan Burgess. SUICIDE! (72): 1-Mike Ellerby, 2-Bob Young, 3/4-Richard Howes / Paul Money. FRIDAY NIGHT KO (32): 1-Roy Hollands, 2-Paul Lamford. DOUBLES (29): 1/2-Dusty Bins / Next Week's Rent Boys... *114 players is a record for BIBA.*

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oak Brook, IL; 14 Apr.)... OPEN (15): 1-Jerry Brooks, 2-Peter Kalba, 3/4-Paul Franks / David Rubin; 1C-Wendy Kaplan, 2C-Jeff Kane (WI). INTERMEDIATE (15): 1/2-Phyllis Smolinski / Jolie Rubin, 3/4-Richard Stawowy / Scott Richardson; 1C-Bobbi Shifrin, 2C-Scott Kaplan.

•**Rio de Janeiro Tournament** (Rio, Brazil; 18-21 Apr.)... OPEN (102 with reentries to 384): 1-Pedro Sergio Bursizian, 2-Paulo Ramos, Jr., 3-Antonio Bandeira, 4-Luiz Carlos Torres, 5-Alexander Drumond, 6-João Mauro. BEGINNER (99 with reentries to 256): 1-Andreia Nosella, 2-Manoel Cid. COMBINED LAST CHANCE: 1-Ricardo Spinola, 2-Bruno Palermo. SUPER JACKPOT (24): 1-Alvaro Savio, 2-Sergio Gelabert (ARG), 3/4-Ricardo Spinola / Paul Weaver (US).

•**Spring Gran Prix-ABT** (La Jolla, CA; 19-21 April)... OPEN (33): 1-Art Benjamin, 2-Mario Sequeira (PORT), 3-Clarine, 4-Ron Bruns. INTERMEDIATE (25): 1-Judy Collins, 2-Alkis Pappas, 3-George Photias, 4-George Foster. COMBINED LAST CHANCE (50): 1-Richard Armbruster, 2-Peter Heitmuller (GER). SUPER 16: 1-Ray Foglerlund, 2-Dennis Rutkowski. MIXED DOUBLES (4): 1-Kit & Sally Woolsey. MEGABLITZ (32): 1-Treen Bouque, 2-Chris Rosin.

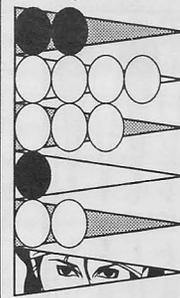
•**Springfield Series Grand Finale** (Springfield, IL; 27 Apr.)... OPEN (14): 1-Caro Severino, 2-John Jennings; 1C-Milad Doueihii, 2C-Jim

Zimmerman; 1LC-Linda Woods... *Participants qualified based on '95/'96 Springfield Series standings. Results submitted by Randy Armstrong.*

•**CBOB First Saturday Monthly** (Chicago, IL; 4 May)... OPEN (8): 1/2-Jake Jacobs / Harry Cohn. Δ

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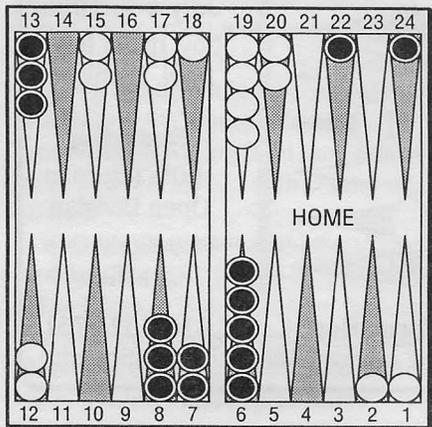
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PROBLEM #223 ANALYZED

by Walter Trice

Match to 5 points. Black leads White, 3 to 2. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-1.**



Let's look at the three feasible choices:

- A) 8/5, 6/5
- B) 24/21, 22/21
- C) 22/18*

Black's decision would be easy at double match point, because the strategic advantages of the 5-point make Play A clearly best for the win. 8/5, 6/5 efficiently uses one of the checkers on the stacked 6-point, it builds a solid 4 point prime, and also makes the most important offensive point.

Compared with the 21-point anchor Play B makes, the 5-point is a longer-term asset. (If Black makes the anchor, he may find that his next objective is to break it and escape.) Finally, Play A is "playing to win" whereas Play B is "playing not to lose."

The match situation complicates things. Owing a dead cube, Black gains nothing by winning a gammon; but losing a gammon would lose the match. The best insurance against a gammon loss is an advanced anchor, and Play B is best for that purpose. Black's gammon price is about 1/2, nearly the same as for money (although a live cube always magnifies the importance of wins relative to gammons; hence our intuitions are likely to be a bit skewed here). At any rate, B needs to save more than twice as many gammons as it forgoes wins to be preferable to Play A.

FACED WITH THIS PROBLEM, I would make Play A without too much thought. Looking for obscure reasons not to make the 5-point, build primes, or play for the win isn't my approach to the game over the board. However, given that we now have computer

programs that can do fairly reliable rollouts for us, any checker-play problem that isn't completely trivial provides material for analysis. A number of interesting questions about this problem can be posed. For example:

1. There must be some gammon price that makes Play B superior to Play A. What is it?
2. Suppose Black is a significantly stronger player than White. Does this make him more or less inclined to choose the gammon-avoidance play?

I asked Harald Wittmann if he would be willing to have his neural network program *Loner* do some rollouts of the three candidate plays. If you haven't yet connected with FIBS (First Internet Backgammon Server), you probably haven't met Harald or *Loner*. *Loner* has been terrorizing the online backgammon community for almost a year now, playing about as well as the best humans.

The Evil Robot's creator is a 29-year-old student of Computer Science who lives in Passau, a small town in Bavaria. Harald discovered backgammon three years ago and, having read about Gerry Tesauro's TD-Gammon, decided to write his own backgammon playing program using a similar approach.

Loner rolled out each play 12,960 times, selecting its moves using a 2-ply look-ahead and playing each side in a manner appropriate to the match score. It was assumed that a score of 2-away/Crawford yields a match equity of 31.5%, so that Black's gammon price is 0.46. Results:

	Black Wins	White Plain Wins	White "G" Wins	Match Equity
A	54.6%	29.3%	16.1%	0.639
B	48.7	42.6	8.8	0.621
C	51.2	33.3	15.5	0.617

Play A is clearly best at this score. Play B gives away 5.9% wins to avoid 7.3% gammons, so we can surmise that a gammon price of 81% would make B preferable, although the results would be somewhat different because the program would move the checkers differently. For example, if the score was 3 to 1 instead of 3 to 2, Black should make the anchor.

The 4-away/4-away score is an interesting case. Here we can compute a gammon price of 0.88. You might think that, holding a 2-cube, Black should anchor up with Play B. The fact that the cube is alive, though, makes a profound difference. Since Black only needs to get to a position where his cubeless probability of winning is 68% to cash the game, the importance of winning is magnified. Moving his CPW from 48.7% to 54.6% gets him a huge 30% of the way to

the "goal line," so Play A once again becomes best.

What if Black is the stronger player? Does this make a difference? In the past it has been essentially impossible to quantify the effect of steering for complications against a weaker opponent (or, for that matter, steering for simplicity when you are outgunned).

But Harald, who has recently become interested in the "complexity" issue, devised a simple and sensible way to address this problem. He had two versions of *Loner* oppose each other in trials of the three plays. *Loner-2* can look ahead one more roll, while *Loner-1* bases its play on a numerical assessment of the positions resulting from the plays being considered. Harald estimates that *Loner-2* plays about 100 KG (or FIBS) rating points better than *Loner-1*, and that *Loner-2*'s match equity at 2-away/Crawford is 34.3%.

Again, 12,960 trials of each play were carried out with the checker-play algorithms reflecting the (slightly) different gammon price. *Loner-2* played Black and *Loner-1* played White. The results:

	Black Wins	White Plain Wins	White "G" Wins	Match Equity
A	56%	29.1%	14.9%	0.660
B	49.6	42.3	8.1	0.641
C	53.2	32.7	14.2	0.644

At first glance, it seemed to me that Play A would pose harder problems for White than Play B, so that any tendency to avoid gammons more against a weaker opponent would be outweighed by the benefits of "mixing it up." The rollout confirmed this: B now gives up 6.4% wins to avoid 6.8% gammons, and a gammon price of 94% would be required to make B better than A. The 100 rating-point difference has only increased Black's gammon price from 0.46 to 0.53, though. B would still be better at 2-away/4-away.

WHAT SURPRISED ME about the *Loner-2* vs. *Loner-1* results was that Plays B and C switched places. I had dismissed Play C as hopeless, simply because it steers for a tactical slugfest when Black has the weaker board and inferior checker distribution.

Actually C has a couple of things going for it. It gains in the race, makes a modest bid for the 18-point anchor or partial escape, and it puts a White checker where White doesn't want it to go. By increasing the confusion factor and leading to longer games, it outperformed the constructive Play B against *Loner-1*. It is even possible that with some huge (400 rating point?) skill difference, Play C would turn out to be the best of them all. Δ

VEGAS...

[Continued from page 1]

still contends the position gave him very close to 25%. His comment: "To be blunt, JellyFish [1.2] level 5 butchers the position."

More study of the position (perhaps including manual rollouts) is required.

THE 16-PLAYER MASTER'S INVITATIONAL pitted 1996 Nordic "Wide" Open runner-up Malcolm Davis of Dallas, Texas against Wilcox Snellings. Determined not to lose two finals on the same day, Wilcox leaped ahead 4-0 in the 19-pointer.



A pivotal cube occurred in game 8. Tied at 7, Snellings cubed a volatile racing position. Malcolm took and three moves later, recubed Snellings to 4. Wilcox passed and took a break. When play resumed, Davis rolled off 10 of the next 11 points to win 19-8. For Snellings, it was his 10th finals loss in 11 tries.

At the gala awards party, Nevada Backgammon Association Director Howard Markowitz invited all the players (including many from Europe and South America) back to the Riviera Hotel and the Las Vegas Open 6-10 November. Δ

AMALGAMATION

Chicago Point OnLine has a new Internet website address. Check us out at <<http://homepage.interaccess.com/~chipoint/>>. While you're there, try **Duane Jensen's** all-new puzzler "The Backgammon Bugs." ... A new backgammon publication premiered last month: *Essential Backgammon* by **Dan Frank Verlag**. The quarterly 36-page magazine is written in German with good English translations. Price: \$32 postage paid (extra for airmail). To preview one issue, send \$10 to Dan Frank Verlag; Vorsteigstr. 1, D-70193 Stuttgart, Germany... Congrats to **Jolie & David Rubin** on the birth of their new baby boy **Mason Paul Rubin** on 30 April. And Thailand Open director **Goren Hasselquist** is celebrating with wife **Pla**, the birth of **David Hasselquist** on 8 April... **Frederik Dahl** entered his outstanding program JellyFish™ 2.01 into a \$1000 jackpot during the Nordic "Wide" Open last month, but the jackpot never came to pass. Not enough players were willing to go up against JF on level 7... If you saw the movie "Casino" you probably remember the wedding scenen between **Robert DeNiro** and **Sharon Stone**. Did you know

the scene was filmed in the Riviera ballroom where the Nevada tournaments are currently being held?... Condolences to the family of **Walter Guleserian** (MA), co-owner of the Sheridan Commander Hotel, the home of New England BG Club. Walter, a backgammon fan for many years, died of a heart attack on 26 March... New York Chess & Backgammon proprietor **Steve Manning** calls it a precision dice price breakthru. His House of Games is now offering two pair of precision dice for \$14.95. That's over \$5.00 cheaper than any other vendor in the world. And he claims the quality to be equal to or better than any. To order, call 800/520-1809... Visiting the Bar Point Club in April: **Darryl Purpose** (CA), outstanding musician and blackjack player... Bar Point Club trivia department: **Herb Roman** used to perform with the Yo-Yo professionally. Over the years, he's won many tournaments, and within the year, finished 2nd in a Seattle event... Here's a good line from **John Brussel** at the Vegas Calcutta: "**Gus Contos** is so slow, he studies cocked dice to figure out which play would have worked."... Finally, here's **Wolf Rinke** on the difference between a winner and a loser: "Winners are not afraid of losing. Losers are afraid of winning." Δ

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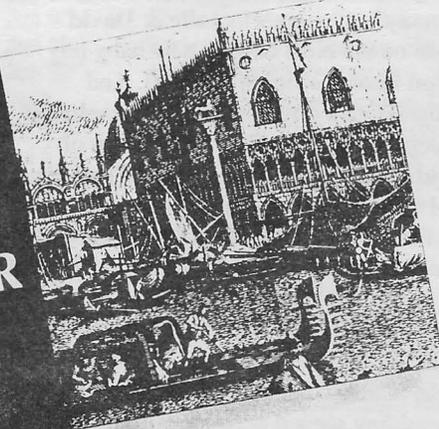
Alvaro Savio, Director

Tel: 55 21 247.8594
Tel/Fax: 55 21 267.6033

25/30 June 1996, Casinò Municipale, Venice Lido

THE 2ND BACKGAMMON OLYMPIAD VENICE 1996

**FORESEEN
TOTAL PRIZE
MONEY OVER
\$ 150,000**



**ADDED PRIZE
MONEY OVER
Lit. 30,000,000
(about \$ 20,000)**



OVER 70 TROPHIES



CASINO'
MUNICIPALE
DI
VENEZIA

The 2nd Backgammon Olympiad is organized by **studiogiochi**, under license from the **Worldwide Backgammon Federation** and on behalf of the **Casinò Municipale di Venezia**.

- Warm Up
- Quarter Entries
- Olympic Individual Tournament
- 8th International Tournament "Cith of Venice"
- Progressive Consolation
- Last Chance
- Venice Kickoff
- Olympic Team Tournament
- Double Gammon
- Jackpots & Superjackpots
- One-point Tournament
- Backgammon School
- Internet FIBS Trophy
- Speed Gammon with chess clock
- WBF Tournament Rules
- Backgammon Lectures with **Bill Robertie**
- International Committee
- Tournament Director **Dario De Toffoli**
- Coordinators **Alfonso Sara & Marco Fornasir**
- Tournament Committee under the presidency of **Alberto da Pra**
- **Dal Negro** Tournament Boards
- Precision Dice
- Closed Circuit Television
- Cocktails & Gala Dinner
- And much more
- In addition from 2 to 4 July 1996 the **2nd Backgammon Super Cup** organized by **Claudio Pagano** near Treviso

Brochures are now available.

Organization:



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fax +39-41-5240881
e-mail: dariodet@mbox.vol.it

