

illinois state championships & america cup

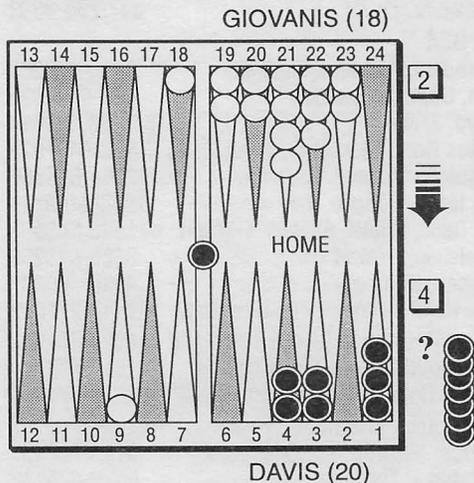
MALCOLM DEFENDS CUP

Tak Morioka is Illinois State Champ

Double match-point finishes highlighted the 1996 America Cup and Illinois State Championships. Yamin Yamin staged the event 3-6 Oct. at the Holiday Inn in Rolling Meadows, Illinois. Attendance topped 120.

Malcolm Davis, the hottest player in the world (see interview on page 6), captured the 1996 America Cup with wins over Stu Hosen, Mike Senkiewicz and Drew Giovanis. The 25-point finals went down to the wire with Malcolm prevailing in the final game. The following position from game 24 showed the patience of the tall Texan:

25-point America Cup finals. Malcolm Davis (Black) leads Drew Giovanis (White) 20-18. White redoubles to 4. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**



Malcolm weighed the positives and negatives and decided to play from 20-all. Good decision as he went on to eventually defeat Giovanis 25-24.

Tak Takes Title

Tak Morioka, backgammon board craftsman, won the first regional tournament of his life in a thrilling, come-from-behind

victory over another Chicagoan, David Rockwell. Trailing 12-5 and pretty much dead in the water, Morioka's dice turned into fireballs. Rockwell could do nothing



Friendly rivals: Illinois State Champ Tak Morioka and runner-up Dave Rockwell.

but watch his big lead dwindle down. In the end, Morioka won a doubled gammon to lock up the Illinois State title 13-12.

Krenitz Edges Feinstein

In another last game affair, Andy Krenitz survived a pivotal game before defeating Prime Club director Joann Feinstein in another double-match point victory. Congratulations to Andy and good luck in the Championship division.



Advanced finalists: winner Andy Krenitz, Yamin, and runner-up Joann Feinstein

IN OTHER RESULTS, Yamin Yamin won the Masters tourney. The Limited event was grabbed by Lee Pflugrad (WI) and Lucky Nelson (IL), teamed with Mike Cyrkiel (IN) to win the Doubles tourney.

A very nice tourney for Yamin and Staff (including Peoria director Linda Woods). Watch the attendance grow in 1997. Δ



Director Yamin Yamin congratulates Malcolm Davis (right) who successfully defended his America Cup title.

ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPS & AMERICA CUP

AMERICA CUP (10): 1-Malcolm Davis (TX), 2-Drew Giovanis (FL). **CHAMPIONSHIP (46):** 1-Tak Morioka (IL), 2-David Rockwell (IL), 3/4-Jeff Acierno (NY) / Dave Cramer (IL); 1C-Dean Muench (IL), 2C-Harry Cohn (IL); 1LC-Dave Cardwell (GA). **ADVANCED (52):** 1-Andy Krenitz (IL), 2-Joann Feinstein (IL), 3/4-Steve Maas (MN) / Mike Flohr (IL); 1C-Zar Petkov (CAN), 2C-Greg Varbanov (IN); 1LC-Ed Buerger (IL). **LIMITED (14):** 1-Lee Pflugrad (WI), 2-Trinna Lute (OH); 1C-Marina Petkova (CAN); 1LC-Harold Roberson (MN). **MASTERS (16):** 1-Yamin Yamin (IL), 2-Elliott Winslow (CA). **DOUBLES (16):** 1-Lucky Nelson (IL) & Mike Cyrkiel (IN), 2-Larry Strommen (IN) & Bob Holyon (WI). **OVERFLOW DOUBLES (4):** 1-Steve Maas & Richard del Furia (MN). **BLITZ (32):** 1-Neil Kazaross (IL). **KICKOFF (16):** 1-Mike Cyrkiel (IN). **PARLAY FROM HELL (128):** 1-Milad Doueihy (IL). **HIGH PERFORMANCE:** *Championship:* David Wells (MA), *Advanced:* Femi Owiku (IL).

MALCOLM DAVIS
Standing Tall
The interview begins on page 6.

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Bill Davis

3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue 504
Chicago, IL 60659-3155

Tel: 773/583-6464 ♦ Fax: 773/583-3264

E-mail: chipoint@interaccess.com

<http://homepage.interaccess.com/~chipoint>

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Carol Joy Cole (MI) **Danny Kleinman (CA)**
Jake Jacobs (IL) **Walter Trice (MA)**
Duane Jensen (MN) **Kit Woolsey (CA)**
Neil Kazaross (IL)

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT
3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504
Chicago, IL 60659-3155

E-mail: chipoint@interaccess.com

KG MUST CONTINUE

About the KG Ratings: they must continue. I believe international ratings represent a very important element of player status. So I hope Kent does everything possible to maintain the ratings.—*Tapio Palmroth, Tampere, Finland*

According to Kent Goulding, the KG International Rating List will continue. Approximately one year of ratings was lost. In order to reenter this data, Kent is asking directors to resubmit their tournament drawsheets from 1995 and 1996.—*Ed.*

CALLING THE ROLL

One of the most difficult problems to solve in backgammon is when a player rolls, plays, picks up his dice and then his opponent claims that a different number was rolled. Without a spectator, there's no way to solve the dispute.

[Continued on page 3]

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole

810/232-9731

E-mail: cjc@flint.org

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Nov 1-3*	Northeast Regional, Oak & Spruce Center, South Lee, MA	603/863-4711
Nov 2*	Springfield Series #1, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Nov 6-10	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Nov 9*	Midtown "Sweet 16" Invitational, Midtown Club, New York, NY	212/935-9800
Nov 9-10*	4th Annual Fall Classic, Captains Quarters, Louisville, KY	502/587-3672
Nov 17	Backgammon By The Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	510/838-7789
Nov 17*	Austin Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Nov 17*	Milwaukee Sunday Bimonthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, WI	414/463-2498
Nov 17*	18th Flint Area Club Championships, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Nov 17*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Nov 19	BPC 14th Annual Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	773/583-6464
Nov 21*	2nd Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Nov 29-Dec 1	<u>Third Thanksgiving Tournament, Best Western Hotel, Akron, OH</u>	<u>330/966-2811</u>
Nov 30	Beverly Hills Monthly Tournament, Clarine's, Beverly Hills, CA	310/273-1632
Dec 1*	Games Grid Online Tournament, via computer modem E-mail: lainer@vianet.on.ca	
<u>Dec 6-8</u>	<u>37th Gammon Assoc. Invitational, Holiday Inn, Woodland Hills, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Dec 7	Midtown "Sweet 16" Invitational, Midtown Club, New York, NY	212/935-9800
Dec 7*	Springfield Series #2, Ride the Nine, Bloomington, IL	217/528-0117
Dec 8*	Last Bar Point Sunday Tourney at Braxton Seafood Grill, Oak Brook, IL	773/252-7755
Dec 15*	Backgammon By The Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	510/838-7789
Dec 15*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Dec 19*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Dec 22*	Jackpot Tournament, Promenade Cardroom, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Dec 28*	Beverly Hills Monthly Tournament, Clarine's, Beverly Hills, CA	310/273-1632
Jan 4*	Springfield Series #3, Parkers Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Jan 14*	Bar Point Club Awards Night, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	773/583-6464
Jan 16*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Jan 25*	Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	773/583-6464
Feb 1*	Springfield Series #4, Location TBA, Peoria, IL	217/528-0117
Feb 14-16	<u>19th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Mar 21-23	<u>1997 Midwest Championships, The Drake Oakbrook, Oak Brook, IL</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
Apr 22-27*	4th Worldwide Twin Championships, Four Queens Hotel, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
May 23-26*	<u>18th Annual Chicago Open, Wyndham Hamilton Hotel, Itasca, IL</u>	<u>847/674-0120</u>
Jul 3-6*	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton Hotel, Novi, MI</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Aug 29-Sep 1*	<u>45th Indiana Open, Radisson Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Nov 1-3	Tampere Open Tournament, Hotel Rosendahl, Tampere, Finland	3580-676258
Nov 2-3*	Svenst Maesterskap, Vaemlands nation, Uppsala, Sweden	468-6524099
Nov 2-4*	2nd Japan Open, Nihonseinenkan, Tokyo, Japan	813-3373 3814
Nov 4*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tourney, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852-8461923
Nov 7-10	NRW Championships, Holiday Inn, Düsseldorf/Kaarst, Germany	49215-1501359
Nov 9-10*	Italian Championship Tourney #4, Euro Hotel, Rapallo, Italy	392-29409743
Nov 16-17	Townharbour TT Trophy Tournament #4, George Hotel, Sulihull, England	441522-546993
Nov 22-24	Finnish Open, Hotel Kalastajatorppa, Helsinki, Finland	3580-676258
Nov 23-24	DM 96 og DM u.21, Østerbro, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Nov 30-Dec 1*	1st "City of Florence" Tournament, Plaza Hotel Lucchesi, Florence, Italy	3941-5211029
Dec 2*	Hong Kong Club Monthly Tourney, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852-8461923
Dec 7-8*	GB Software British Open, Airport Hotel, Southend-on-Sea, England	44161-9453741
Dec 12-15	Rio de Janeiro Tournament, Miramar Palace Hotel, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	5521-2676033
Jan 4-5	Mary Rose Tournament, Hilton National Hotel, Portsmouth, England	441522-546993
Jan 5-12	Lasseters Casino Indoor Games Challenge, Alice Springs, Australia	018-3732580
Jan 9-12	2nd Thailand Open, Style Restaurant, Pattaya, Thailand	6638-425189
Jan 10-13	World's Giant Jackpot & Warm-up Tourney	9723-6727063
Jan 13-19	World Cup Challenge III, Conrad Istanbul Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey	9723-6727063
Feb 15-16*	Jarvis Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, East Midlands Airport, England	441522-546993
Feb 28-Mar 2*	Einladungsturnier, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Mar 5-9*	Grand Prix de Lugano, Hotel Splendid Royal, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Mar 11-12*	2nd European Pro-Am Tema Championship, Palace Hotel, Gstaad, Switz	4161-2710137
Mar 13-16*	Trophée des Alpes: Ted Basset Cup, Palace Hotel, Gstaad, Switzerland	4161-2710137
Mar 20-23*	Trophée des Alpes: St. Moritz, Badrutt's Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, Switz	4161-2710137
Mar 28-31*	9th Nordic "Wide" Open, Scandinavia Hotel, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Apr 12-13*	British Open, Hilton National Hotel, East Midlands Airport, England	441522-546993
May 1-7*	3rd EBN International Tournament, San Juan los Terreros, Spain	34950-133009

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

I propose a simple solution that can be solved with the incorporation of the following rule:

"It is the responsibility of the player to announce his opponent's dice roll immediately after the dice are cast. If he fails to do so and a dice-reading dispute ensues, the player will be at a disadvantage."—*Ralph Stowell, Stillwater, MN*

OOPS!

It seems that Position #6 from Jake Jacobs' first person World Cup and U.S. Open report is in error. Would you publish the correct one please?—*Saul Meir, Beverly Hills, CA*

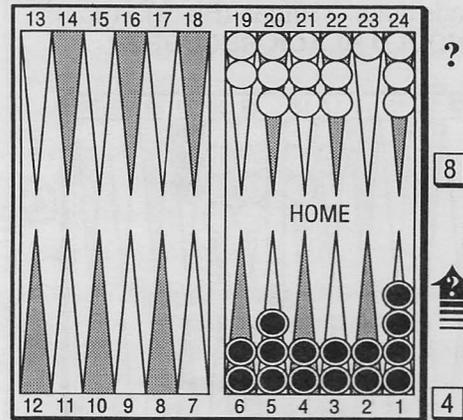
Here you are, Saul. Apologies to our readers and to Jake.—*Ed.*

AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1996

Compiled through 27 Oct. 1996 after 17 tournaments
(Last 3 Events: NE Regional, 2nd Thanksgiving, 37th Gammon Assoc.)

Dennis Culpepper 41.11	Kit Woolsey 10.40	Ray Glaeser 5.67	Ray Gronck 3.82
Dave Cardwell 31.30	Bob Glass 10.00	Ali Haddad 5.61	Gus Contos 3.79
Art Benjamin 30.00	Paul Magriel 10.00	Jeff Acerno 5.61	Odis Chenault 3.79
Tak Morioka 29.02	David Wells 9.67	Zar Petkov 5.46	Dave Cramer 3.45
Jake Jacobs 27.88	Dean Muench 9.66	Dave Groner 5.39	Jerry Ungar 3.43
John O'Hagan 27.53	Judy Collins 9.14	Bob Koca 5.38	Lloyd Hilling 3.38
David Jaffe 22.68	Bill Davis 9.00	Fred Badagnani 5.29	Neil Kazaross 3.37
Matt Reklaitis 20.01	Greg Lilley 8.35	Chester Warzel 5.29	Frank Dickerson 3.33
Dave Williams 20.00	Mario Sequeira 8.25	James Rosten 5.20	Georgina Flanagan 3.32
Bruce Brown 18.00	Andy Krenitz 7.80	David Montgomery 5.05	Jonathan Bennetts 3.25
Linda MacLean 15.50	Blake Sorem 7.60	Dean Adamian 4.80	Paul Friedman 3.20
Harry Cohn 15.48	Steve Petersen 7.60	Ralph Stowell 4.50	Pete Ryder 3.15
Ernest Ho 15.21	Al Jones 7.50	Bob Bishop 4.44	Ray Baker 3.15
Hersel Namdar 14.45	Jolie Rubin 7.23	Jack Kissane 4.44	John Gdowik 3.06
Marc Ingenoso 13.30	Neil Young 7.18	Perry Gartner 4.41	Lee Pflugrad 3.01
Bruce Pollack 12.93	David Rockwell 6.90	Dan Shapiro 4.41	Ron Weiner 2.89
Howard Levine 12.88	Ray Foglerlund 6.75	Frank Klein 4.20	Jeff Kaiserman 2.84
Janice Newman 12.54	Austin Healy 6.44	Jim Mieske 4.16	Ray Bills 2.84
Andy Palumbo 12.53	Tim Mabee 6.40	Clarine 4.13	Alkis Pappas 2.78
Kent Goulding 11.53	Marty Storer 6.30	Ron Bruns 4.12	George Photias 2.76
Rob Maier 11.44	Jim Pascoe 5.91	Lee Genud 3.91	John Brooks 2.75
Abdi Zaltash 11.34	Kevin Muench 5.86	Joann Feinstein 3.90	James Roston 2.75
Wally Watson 11.34	Elijah Miller 5.70	Drew Giovanis 3.87	Chris Rosin 2.67
Carl Adamec 10.96	Francois Margot 5.67	Doug Roberts 3.85	Ed Buerger 2.60
Bill Talmadge 10.80	Reza Nowbar 5.67	Mike Ungerleider 3.82	2 tied with 2.56

Position #6: 25-point finals. Black (Jake) has 2. White (David Montgomery) has 9. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



[Continued on page 4]

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1996 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED THRU 31 OCT.

Neil Kazaross 25.84	Bill Davis 5.80	Don Jayhan 2.52	Mark King 0.88
Herb Roman 19.36	Bobbie Shifrin 5.68	John Jennings 2.48	Gary Fries 0.88
Tim Mabee 16.36	Jeff Kane 5.48	David Rubin 2.16	Jim Painter 0.88
Reggie Porter 16.32	Phil Simborg 5.36	Jon Vietor 2.16	Jolie Rubin 0.82
Richard Lloyd 15.76	John Stryker 5.20	Fred Badagnani 1.92	Sarg Serges 0.80
Andy Krenitz 14.80	Alice Kay 5.12	Tak Morioka 1.76	Fred Gehlhoff 0.72
Paul Friedman 14.64	Paul Klein 4.96	Elaine Kehm 1.68	Scott Richardson 0.68
Jake Jacobs 13.52	Arline Levy 4.84	Henry Gray 1.60	David Flinn 0.64
Paul Franks 12.40	Steve Klesker 4.48	Marcy Sloan 1.52	Marv Arnol 0.60
Harry Cohn 11.92	Amy Valerio 4.12	Nora Luna 1.44	Peaches Stewart 0.56
Phyllis Smolinski 11.22	Tim Serges 4.08	Harold Seif 1.28	Roz Ferris 0.56
Peter Kalba 10.44	Bill Keefe 3.92	Russell Harris 1.28	Dave Groner 0.48
Joann Feinstein 10.04	Wendy Kaplan 3.92	Dave Cramer 1.28	Richard Stawowy 0.44
John Demian 9.88	Marty Tatosian 3.84	V.W. Zimmnicki 1.20	Elijah Miller 0.42
Mary Franks 9.24	Bob Koca 3.84	Bruce Pollack 1.20	Tom Fahland 0.40
Stu Katz 8.44	Leslie Lockett 3.80	Ernest Ho 1.12	Elaine Andrews 0.24
Gary Kay 8.16	Dean Muench 3.80	Ralph Levy 1.02	Travis Kane 0.20
Ken Bond 7.52	Georgina Flanagan 3.68	Wally Wolf 0.96	Nan Feiber 0.20
Norma Shyer 6.28	Jerry Brooks 2.88	George Barr 0.92	Scott Kaplan 0.16
Ed Buerger 6.16	Frankie Farjood 2.80	Darryl Purpose 0.88	

September Player of the Month: Credit **TIM MABEE** with the honors. Tim's 3.04 points outpaced runners-up Phyllis Smolinski (2.60) and Steve Klesker (2.56).

October Player of the Month: **ANDY KRENITZ** won 10 matches in a row and the last two tournaments of the month to capture October. Both Mary Franks (4.00) and Neil Kazaross (3.80) also had fine totals.

Change us now!

773

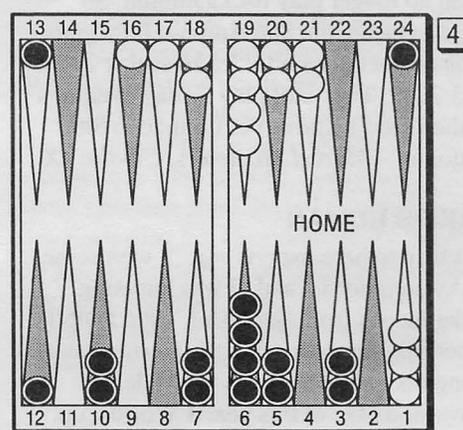
New Chicago Point Area Code:
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Fax: 773-583-3264

your move

PROBLEM #229

to be analyzed by Walter Trice

Match to 11 points. White leads Black, 4 to 2. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



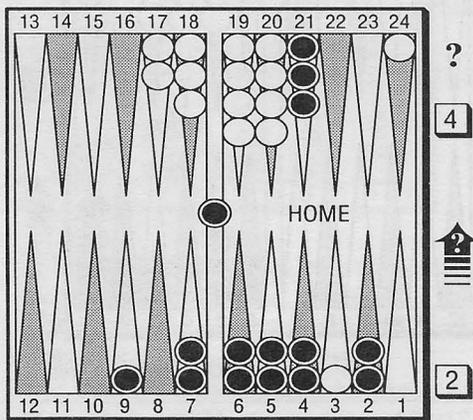
ASK
DANNY

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2-RECUBE OR NOT 2-RECUBE

Dear Danny: Last month, I faced the following recube decision in the finals of the Minnesota State Championship:

Match to 15 points. Bill Davis (White) leads John O'Hagan (Black) 11 to 9. **SHOULD BLACK RECUBE?**



I rolled on, winning the game, but eventually losing the match. After the tournament, some players felt that I should have offered an immediate 4-cube. I still don't think so, but would like to know your opinion.—John O'Hagan, Valparaiso, IN

DEAR JOHN: Nice to know you'd like my opinion. Nowadays most people prefer computer rollout results. Who needs neu-

rons in the Silicon Age? Just crunch the numbers.

I can understand your reluctance to redouble. Perhaps it flowed from an appreciation of the value of the two extra points a redouble puts at stake for White: the point that wins the match exactly is far more valuable than any other. Perhaps it flowed from knowledge of how easy White's take is. Perhaps it flowed from an accurate reading of the balance sheet of assets and liabilities.

ASSETS. You have four inside points to White's two and a chance to attack on your 3-point. White has a vulnerable blot on his 1-point, and a stripped 8-point that reduces his chances of making new inside points. The blot on White's 1-point encourages you to hit loose on your 3-point.

LIABILITIES. You are far behind in the race. You may fail to leap White's 4-prime before your own prime collapses. With only 11 men on your own side of the board, you may find it hard to contain White's back man (or two back men if you hit another).

Viewed statically, this balance sheet does not add up to a redouble. You appear to be only a small favorite in the game. Cube decisions, however, depend in large part on volatility, so let's ask how often you will lose your market.

Suppose you hit and White dances. Can he take next turn? I don't think so. You can hit with 1s; 6s and 4s except 6-6, 6-5 and 5-4; 2-2 and 3-3. That's 24 rolls. White dances with 16 rolls, yielding $24 \times 16 = 384$ market-losing sequences.

If you hit twice (five rolls: 6-1, 4-1, or 1-1), White has eight rolls that reenter only a single man on the acepoint. Will he be able to take a redouble next turn if he does?

Again no. That's another $5 \times 8 = 40$ market-losing sequences, for a total of 424 in 1296—more than 32%.

The elaborate research that Antonio Ortega, Mario Madrigal and I conducted for *Costa Rica 1994* suggests a relationship between market-loss chances and cube-turn thresholds. (See our many market-loss charts.) As a rough guideline, a 1-in-6 chance, on the cusp of a double; a 1-in-4 chance, on the cusp of a redouble. At 32%, you are well beyond the cusp.

Precious though that 4th point is to White, cube- and gammon-immunity help you even more in this position. Consider an unfavorable sequence: entry without hitting followed by White's leaping your prime. At other scores, this could lead to a return of the cube at 8 that you'd have to pass.

Consider another unfavorable sequence: entry with a loose hit followed by White's return hit on your 3-point. At other scores, or with you retaining the cube at 2, this could lead to a 2-4 or 3-4 back game and a gammon loss; but a gammon costs you nothing extra when the cube is at 4 at this score.

In other situations, redoubling reduces your game-winning chances; here redoubling keeps you from winning with a later cube-turn but also lets you win more games by playing heedless of gammons.

Did anyone who told you that you should have redoubled cite these reasons? They're enough to convince me. Do they convince you?—Yours, Danny Δ

Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: Ask Danny, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155.

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

NEW LEADER IN SAN ANTONIO

My eyes have deteriorated to a level where I can no longer play backgammon. So please change the San Antonio Backgammon contact person to: Ira Hessel at 210/493-2249. They still play Friday evenings at the I Don't Know Yet Lounge in San Antonio.—Marcel Mommers, Cibolo, TX

JAKE'S HUMAN

It's nice to here experts say, "I won some lucky gammons," and "I was guessing" [Jake Jacobs from Sept./Oct. 1996 POINT], especially for us confirmed Intermediates! Congrats on the big wins for Malcolm Davis and Jake at this year's World Cup.

I'll be off the backgammon circuit for five months, touring Canada in "Sunset Boulevard" starting 22 Nov. in Vancouver.—Richard "Cecil B. DeMille" Armbruster, Los Angeles, CA

NEW MOSCOW CLUB

We know you as a big specialist in backgammon. That's why we dare to ask you for a piece of advice. We are going to open a backgammon club in Moscow. Can you offer any standards for the club?—Irakly Abzianidze, Moscow, Russia

That's a great compliment, Irakly. We are sending you our tips on forming and operating a backgammon club from our 1990 seminar in Reno, Nevada.—Ed.

THE POINT GIRL

Exactly what does a girl's rear end on your



The "Point Girl" to include material that any idiot can pick up at the corner drugstore.—Linda Woods, Peoria, IL

Didn't you notice her pointing to the online material, Linda? She's the "Point Girl," of course! Overall, she has received a positive response (especially from our male readership) and is continuing to "point the way" at the Chicago Point website.—Ed. Δ

WINNER'S CORNER



Sep.—Oct. 1996

•**1996 Argentine Championship** (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Sep.)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Carlos Szechet, Paula Katakolchic, Hugo Ergueta. JUNIOR WINNERS: Carlos Eder, Carlos Rawson, Carlos Eder, Sergio Czemerinsky. BEGINNER WINNERS: Jorge Tarasov, Marta Funes, Gustavo Fernández, Perla Tocci.

•**South Australian BG Assoc. 1996 League** (First half)... OPEN: 1-John O'Grady, 2-Siegfried Pohlenz, 3-Bill Toubakar, 4-Peter Geelen.

•**Hong Kong Monthly** (Hong Kong; 2 Sep.)... OPEN: 1-Patrice Hattu, 2-Sunil Balani; 1C-Jonathan Barnes, 2C-Don Rae. CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Franz Kockendahl, 2-Pearl Liu; 1C-Max Modesti, 2C-Glen DeGuzman.

•**6th Mitteleuropa Tournament** (Nova Gorica, Slovenia; 6-10 Sep.)... MASTER (46): 1-Nicholas Kitt (ROM), 2-Roland Budimtschitsch (GER), 3/4-Walter Jarc (CAN) / Tristan Risselin (BEL); 1C-Piergiorgio D-Ancona (ITA), 2C-Wolfgang Kargl (Austria); 1LC-Dario De Toffoli (ITA), 2LC-Leo Fichtinger (Austria); Ladies Prize: Cathrine Bladh-Risselin (SWE). CHAMPIONSHIP (40): 1-Gordan Markotic (CRO), 2-Peter Blachian (GER), 3/4-Albert Reiter (Austria) / Peter Gittins (UK); 1C-Alfredo Sperti (ITA), 2C-Cordula Thiess (GER); 1LC-Jochen Lücke (GER), 2LC-Christian Liebe-Harkort (GER); Ladies Prize: Eleni Katsigiani (GRE). INTERMEDIATE (38): 1-Enrico Colanguuolo (ITA), 2-Alberto da Pra (ITA), 3/4-Nicoletta Astori (ITA) / Ewald Etmayer (Austria); 1C-Eirik Pedersen (NOR), 2C-Claudio Delvai (ITA); 1LC-Davide Riceputi (ITA), 2LC-Roberto Rai (ITA); Ladies Prize: Nicoletta Astori (ITA). WARM UP TOURNEY: 1-Svilen Todorov (BUL), 2-Leonid Riskin (RUS). SLOVENIAN BLITZ: 1-Andrea Sirch (ITA), 2-Peter Winkler (Austria). BLACKJACK TOURNEY: 1-Peter Gittins (UK)... *Director Marco Fornasir reports increased attendance with 19 countries participating. The gala awards dinner drew some 160 people including Peter Vesenjaj, Secretary of State for Tourism of Slovenia.*

•**Midtown "Sweet 16" Invitational** (New York, NY; 7 Sep.)... OPEN (16): 1-Bob Hill, 2-Ijaz Malik.

•**Milwaukee Sunday Bimonthly** (Milwaukee, WI; 8 Sep.)... OPEN (6): 1-Fred Badagnani (IL); 1C/2C/3C-Merrill Schragar / Bob Holyon / Marv Arnol.

•**Armbruster's Friday The 13th Bash** (Los Angeles, CA; 13 Sep.)... DOUBLES: 1-Richard Armbruster & Ron Bruns; 1C-Azzam Masarani & Toni Gillen. BLACK X AWARD: Janice Gillen. BLACK DOT AWARD: Janice Gillen. BLACK CAT TOSS: Pat Gibson.

•**2nd Panhellenic Tournament** (Porto Carras, Greece; 13-15 Sep.)... OPEN (40): 1-George Vadiakas, 2-L. Kontonis; 1C-John Adamis, 2C-K. Hiotinis; 1LC-George Parthenis. BEGINNER

(14): 1-S. Papadimitriou, 2-L. Vadiaka; 1C-M. Dimou, 2C-L. Michopoulou; 1LC-A. Isaakidis.

•**Northern Ohio Monthly** (Akron, OH; 15 Sep.)... OPEN (8): 1-Bob Green.

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Cambridge, MA; 15 Sep.)... EXPERT (23): 1-Jim Pascoe, 2-Evan Diamond, 3/4-Herb Gurland / Dan Judd; 1C-Alex Perry, 2C-Mark Damish. A DIV. (15): 1-Paul Sciaraffa, 2-John Koulopoulos; 1C-Paul Chatalbash, 2C-Zita Samuels.

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (San Mateo, CA; 15 Sep.)... OPEN (16): 1-Robert Caradien, 2-Ron Karr, 1C-Phil Laak, 2C-Elliott Winslow. INTERMEDIATE (11): 1-David Nordlinger, 2-Mark King; 1C-Duane Fuller, 2C-Ira Ofsink. BEGINNER (10): 1-Will Clipson, 2-Sherry Cramer; 1C-Avo Sadakian, 2C-Paul Ferguson.

•**Minnesota State Championships—ABT** (Minneapolis, MN; 20-22 Sep.)... OPEN (18): 1-Bill Davis (IL), 2-John O'Hagan (IN); 1C-Ralph Stowell (MN). INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Janice Newman (IN), 2-Fred Espie (MN); 1C-Gary Fletcher (MN). MASTERS (8): 1-Fred Kalantari (MN), 2-Bob Holyon (WI). DOUBLES (8): 1-Bill Davis & Steve Klesker (IL), 2-Steve Brown & Shel Segal (MN)... *A memorable birthday weekend for Bill Davis as he didn't lose a match.*

•**Towpath Inn Tournament—ABT** (Turin, NY; 27-29 Sep.)... OPEN (21): 1-Matt Rekalitis (PA), 2-Marty Storer (NH), 3-Frank Klein (CAN). DOUBLES (8): 1-Ann Dickson (NY) & Eden Windish (CAN).

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oak Brook, IL; 29 Sep.)... OPEN (18): 1/2-Harry Cohn / Jeff Kane, 3/4-John Stryker / Dave Groner (IN); 1C-Tim Mabee, 2C-Paul Franks. INTERMEDIATE (14): 1/2-Elijah Miller / Ralph Levy, 3/4-Arlene Levy / Nan Feiber; 1C-Phyllis Smolinski, 2C-Reggie Porter.

•**96/97 WBF Champs—#1** (Bologna, Italy; 29 Sep.)... MASTER (22): 1-Alberto Rusca, 2-Dino Visentin; 1C-Sergio Fragiaco. CHAMPIONSHIP (23): 1-Gordan Markotic, 2-Dami Plesec; 1C-Antonio Fini. INTERMEDIATE (19): 1-Mario Olivari, 2-Mihai Raducanu; 1C-P. Giov. Barbaglia.

•**3rd German Open** (Brakel, Germany; 29 Sep.—4 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Andreas Märten, 2-Chris Ternell (DEN), 3/4-Ian Macfarlane (BRAZ) / Walter Graml; 1C-Dirk Schiemann, 2C-Michael Grabarczyk; 1LC-Peter van Rooy (NL). INTERMEDIATE: 1-Anja Ewers, 2-Birgit Scheuerling, 3/4-Klaus Schicks / Mario Sequeira (POR); 1C-Holger Eng, 2C-Dirk Schelhove; 1LC-Herbert Waggemayer. BEGINNER: 1-Matthias Kopp, 2-Sigrid Mühlbauer, 3-Georg Minicki. SUPER JACKPOT #1-Thomas Lumber, #2-Ion Ressu / Leonid Riskin / Michael Friedrich. BLITZ 50: 1-Ekrem Basdas, 2-Leonid Riskin, 3/4-Matthias Körner / Manfred Gerlach. TEAM 3: 1-Bratwurst (Clemens Weigl & Albert Frommherz & Frank Mogler. LADIES CUP: 1-Sigrid Mühlbauer, 2-Birgit Scheuerling. MIXED DOUBLES: 1-Anja Ewers & Matthias Pauen, 2-Birgit Scheuerling & Peter Van Rooy (NL). TENNIS: 1-Norbert Lisiecki. ARCHERY: 1-Anja Ewers. MINIGOLF: 1-Matthias Werner.

•**Sandy Osborne Memorial** (Solihull, England; 5-6 Oct.)... OPEN (49): 1-Michael Crane, 2-Philip Ward-Ackland; 1C-Uldis Lapikens, 2C-Dave McNair; 1LC-Jim Johnson, 2LC-Corinne Sellens. SUICIDE! (28): 1-Brian Lever, 2-Rod Jones. CRACKSHOT (50): 1-Jim Johnson, 2-Corinne Sellens. FRIDAY WARM-UP (16): 1-Neil Webb, 2-Michael Crane.

•**Nation's Capital Championship—ABT** (Bethesda, MD; 11-13 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP—ABT (25): 1-Dennis Culpepper, 2-David Montgomery, 1C-Bill Counts, 4-Bill Wilner, 5/6-Neil Berkman / Andy Palumbo, 1LC/2LC-Mark Davis / Herb Avram. OPEN (19): 1-Hunter Jones, 2-Dennis Culpepper, 1C-David Montgomery, 4-Dan Shapiro, 5/6-Walt Swan / Francis Vasquez, 7/8-Mel Leifer / Dan Heisman, 1LC-Bob Hill. JACKPOT (14): 1-David Montgomery, 2-Barry Steinberg. KNOCKOUT TOURNEY (16): 1-Ed Maslansky.

•**96/97 WBF Champs—#2** (Milan, Italy; 13 Oct.)... MASTER (21): 1-Guido Flamigni, 2-Sergio Fragiaco; 1C-Bruno Fanan. CHAMPIONSHIP (16): 1-Carlo Melzi, 2-Andrea Simonetta; 1C-Vincenzo Riceputi. INTERMEDIATE (32): 1-Fabio Conserva, 2-Gabriele Tamborrino; 1C-Michele Marrei.

•**Springfield Open** (Springfield, IL; 19 Oct.)... OPEN (14): 1-Larry Whittenburg, 2-Greg Tomlin; 1C-Linda Woods, 2C-Ben Zemaitis; 1LC-Ed Zell.

•**Florida State Championships—ABT** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 25-27 Oct.)... OPEN (13): 1-Neil Young, 2-Lee Genud, 3-Jim Pascoe. INTERMEDIATE (11): 1-John Gdowik, 2-Jim Bowman, 3-Don Heinsler. DOUBLES (12 teams): 1-Neil Young & Steve Flamm, 2-J.P. & Jason McGirr... *Neil Young in a sweep: singles and doubles!*

•**Big Apple Series—ABT** (Hackensack, NJ; 25-27 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (21): 1-Hersel Namdar (NY), 2-Perry Gartner (NJ); 1C-Dan Shapiro (NY), 2C-Steve Jacobson (NJ). ADVANCED (22): 1-Dave Groner (IN), 2-Bob Sahagian (NJ); 1C-Matt Rekalitis (PA), 2C-Andrew Liebenthal (NY). INTERMEDIATE (10): 1-Brian Scorben (NJ), 2-Helene Spinner (NY); 1C-Dale Smith. BIG APPLE \$300 (150: 1-Bill Phipps (WA), 2-Perry Gartner (NJ). KICKOFF (16): 1/2-Steve Jacobson / Dave Groner. WORM IN THE APPLE: Feliks Goykhman (NY). \$120 DOUBLES (8): 1-Dr. Bob Hill & Larry Liebster. \$50 DOUBLES (8): 1-Dave Groner & Bob DeLisio.

•**1996 Autumn Gran Prix—ABT** (San Diego, CA; 25-27 Oct.)... OPEN (27): 1-Art Benjamin (CA), 2-Ray Fogelund (CA), 3-Lloyd Hilling (AK), 4-Neil Kazaross (IL). INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Judy Collins (CA), 2-Chris Rosin (CA), 3-Nicole Masarani (CA). NOVICE (2): 1-Kristine Andrysiak. LAST CHANCE (35): 1-Veronica Mooney. DOUBLES (8): 1-Linda MacLean & Mike Fujita. SUPER 8: 1-Dorn Bishop, 2-Ray Fogelund. CALIFORNIA CHALLENGE CUP (2): 1-Backgammon Club of San Diego... *Director Mike Fujita reports that this is Art Benjamin's third consecutive Gran Prix title. Judy Collins is a repeat winner among the Intermediates.* Δ



MALCOLM DAVIS

Standing Tall

But unless you're living in a cave, you certainly know that Malcolm Davis is currently the hottest backgammon player in the world. Can you imagine winning the Nevada Masters Invitational, the World Cup and the America Cup in a period of less than six months? This year, Malcolm can imagine it, because he's done it.

CHICAGO POINT conducted a telephone interview with the tall Texan in late September. Always the gentleman, Malcolm provided us with some interesting insight into the philosophy of winning, and what kind of temperament it takes to reach the top.

POINT: How tall are you?

DAVIS: Well, I used to be 6'-4". I haven't measured myself lately. [Laughs]

POINT: How old are you?

DAVIS: I'd rather not answer that.

POINT: How about if I rephrase the question in the form that baseball legend Satchel Paige preferred it: "How old would you be if you didn't know how old you were?"

DAVIS: Well, I would say that I'm somewhere between 25 and 105 depending on . . . [Laughs]

POINT: What makes you so darn tough?

DAVIS: I'm not very tough. I'm not as tough as I'd like to be.

POINT: Oh, I don't know about that. Let's talk about your tournament record since 1992:

Feb. 1992 ... Paradise Island 4th Pro-Am	2nd
Aug. 1992 ... World Cup III (TX)	1st Cons
Rifleman Shoot-Out	1st
Jul. 1993 2nd Riviera Cup (France)	2nd
Oct. 1993 3rd Illinois State Championship ...	1st
Oct. 1993 So. Amer. World Cup (Argentina) ...	1st
Aug. 1994 ... Las Vegas Open Super Jackpot	1st
Sep. 1994 ... WC IV Rifleman Shoot-Out	1st
Dec. 1994 ... 3rd Turkish Open	1st Cons
Jul. 1995 Michigan Summer Super Jackpot ..	1st
Jul. 1995 4th Riviera Cup Super JP (France) ..	1st
Oct. 1995 America Cup (IL)	1st
Mar. 1996 ... Midwest Doubles Champs (IL)	1st
Apr. 1996 Nordic "Wide" Open (Denmark) ...	2nd
Apr. 1996 Nevada Masters Invitational	1st
Aug. 1996 ... World Cup V (TX)	1st

DAVIS: I have had some pretty good luck. And I think a lot of it is luck, to tell you the truth. You can never go to any tournament assuming you're going to win; you just go and try to do the best you can. And if you

get lucky, you win; and if you don't, you don't.

So I'd be disappointed if I didn't win the next tournament I entered. On the other hand, it wouldn't surprise me if I never won another one. [Editor's note: Following this interview, Malcolm did win the next tournament he entered: the America Cup.] It seems like whenever someone wins a tournament, you can go back and find some roll, where if he hadn't rolled the key number, he would have been eliminated.

POINT: A backgammon tournament, especially if you're doing well, is a long series of sometimes-grueling matches. What do you do to stay in such great shape?

DAVIS: Absolutely nothing. I probably should exercise, but I just never seem to find the time. I take a lot of vitamins. To tell the truth, I've always been able to get by with very little sleep. For the World

Cup, I actually took some Melatonin to get 5 or 6 hours sleep a night.

POINT: What is Melatonin?

DAVIS: It's a sleep hormone that's become real popular in the last few months. It's very inexpensive. You can get it at the health food store. I never take sleeping tablets. But it seems like you have a better chance to perform in a match if you've had 3 or 4 hours sleep as opposed to 1 or 2.

POINT: Of course.

DAVIS: A lot of times when a person like me goes to a tournament, he'll see people he knows, he'll go over positions with Magriel or somebody, then he'll play in a chouette if he can. So you might go for a week without much sleep.

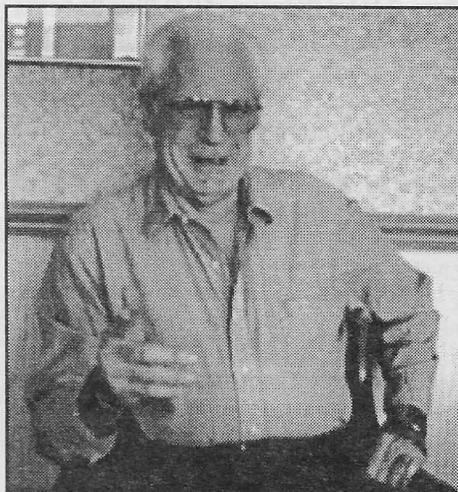
POINT: Do you follow any special practice when you're alive in a tournament?

DAVIS: Well, it's harder to get up for the first round of the consolation than it is for the finals of the main event. But to answer your question, not really. In the World Cup, I actually went out of my way to try to be sure that I had *some* sleep.

POINT: How did you get started in backgammon?

DAVIS: I've always loved playing games. I was an avid poker player, although I didn't play very frequently because it was difficult to find a game where the stakes were big enough to be interesting and you were sure that game was completely on the up and up.

I was privileged to meet Oswald Jacoby in 1972 and in the course of our relationship, I played poker with him about twice a month. During a conversation, backgammon came up and I'm embarrassed to admit it, but the truth of the matter is, I didn't even know it was a dice game. I didn't even



"I'd be disappointed if I didn't win the next tournament I entered. On the other hand, it wouldn't surprise me if I never won another one."

know that it was the game on the back of a checkerboard. I always thought that it was just some design for something. Then I asked him, "Well if it's a dice game, isn't there a lot of cheating going on?"

He said, "No, amazingly there isn't. It's a very clean game."

So I decided I would try to learn how to play and he was nice enough to play one game with me and then he said, "Read a book." [Laughs]

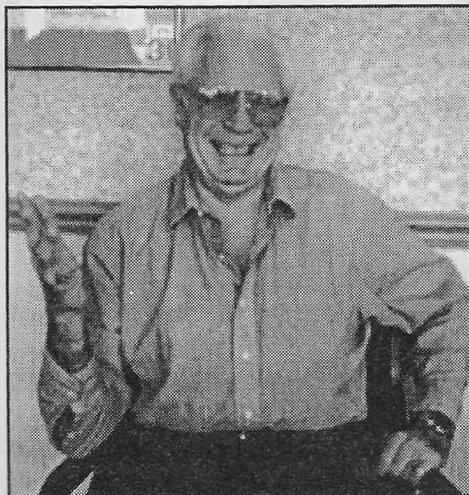
I understood that he didn't want to mess with me and I didn't blame him. So I started trying to learn how to play and of course hated the game. Absolutely hated it because it was so very, very hard. And I said, "I'll quit this game just as soon as I learn how to play. I can't quit it now because it would be like admitting it was too tough for me."

So I kept playing and kept playing and for about the first ten years, I didn't really like the game that much. But I finally got to the point where I could kind of tell, or I thought I could tell a little bit about what was going on. And I must say right now, I do think it's a great, great game. I think it's the greatest game there is. Even though I still don't feel like I've learned how to play, I've made enough progress so that I'd like to keep playing for awhile.

POINT: Would you classify yourself as a student of the game?

DAVIS: Yeah, I think so because I don't seem to exhibit any natural ability at all. And if people say I have any proficiency (although I'm not claiming that I do), it has been acquired through watching and listening to good players, and studying.

POINT: What individual has helped you the most in this game?



"So I decided I would try to learn how to play and [Oswald Jacoby] was nice enough to play one game with me and then he said, 'Read a book.'"

DAVIS: If it weren't for Paul Magriel, I'm sure I wouldn't be playing now.

POINT: How do you mean?

DAVIS: I attended the St. Martin tournament in 1975. Alfred Sheinwold, a very nice guy, was the director. I was talking with him for a while and then asked, "How can you possibly learn to play this game? The people who try to help me either don't know how to play, or if they do, I have trouble understanding them."

And he said, "Well, there's a guy here named Paul Magriel who's in the process of writing a book. You probably should introduce yourself to him and see if he can help."

So I raced to find Paul. Sure enough, he had his unpublished manuscript (*Backgammon*) with him. I explained my problem and he agreed to let me take it to my room to look at during the tournament. Of course everyone was down on the beach having fun while I was up there madly trying to memorize the book in a couple of days.

Well I was not able to do it, of course. So Paul agreed to let me take the manuscript back to Dallas if I kept it in complete confidence. So I was able to study a copy of *Backgammon* before it was published, which I am eternally grateful for. I never told anybody I had it—I guess this is the first time [Laughs].

So if it weren't for Paul's kindness, I probably wouldn't be playing. At that point, the game was so frustrating trying to learn. I mean obviously you learn the rules, but how do you know what to do? Paul's book *really* helped.

POINT: When did you know you had moved to a higher level?

DAVIS: [Thinking]

POINT: Was there something, perhaps a win or a feeling . . .

DAVIS: No, no. By the way. It may be of interest. The first tournament I ever played in I actually did win. That's going to sound braggadocious; I don't mean it to, but it's the truth. It was a local tournament in Dallas with one division. Shortly thereafter, on Oswald Jacoby's recommendation, I went to Las Vegas to play in a tournament. I played in the Open division and never played in anything less.

POINT: That might be the time when you reached that higher level I was . . .

DAVIS: No, no, no. No, I couldn't play. People were always telling me I was winning with good dice which was true. But at that point, I didn't know enough to steam [Laughs]. So I never got mad because I didn't know the difference. And

Malcolm Davis Personality Profile



Favorite movie: José Ferrer's version of "Cyrano de Bergerac."

My last meal would be: I don't like to think of that. "My next meal," how's that? A center cut tenderloin steak cooked medium to medium rare with a bottle of Chateau Lafit Rothchild.

If I had to live outside of Texas: I would consider Las Vegas for a while just to see what it was like.

I can't resist: Temptation.

One sports figure I have always admired: Babe Ruth. He was by far the greatest sports figure of his time. He didn't let the mediocrity of the people who surrounded him keep him from doing great things. He hit more home runs in one season than entire teams did.

I've been lucky enough to meet: Kris Kristofferson, NBA hall-of-famer John Havlicek and of course, Oswald Jacoby.

people that were playing me knew I couldn't play, so when I'd get lucky, they'd get mad, and then they'd play worse, so I'd win anyway.

To answer your question, Nathan Jones here in Dallas—the artist—helped me enormously a few years ago. I do consider him to be the finest natural piece-mover of any person that I ever have known in backgammon. I don't think he's ever read a book, but in my opinion, the guy is an incredible talent.

When I started talking with him about backgammon, he would say things that were very simple, things that I was ashamed of not ever having thought about, things I should have known but didn't. His tips were extremely valuable in helping me see and understand positions.

So I would say that I knew I was improving when I began to be able to see when people were making mistakes and weren't playing good. Now I can watch somebody play for 15 minutes and I can tell you with a pretty good degree of accuracy, how well they play.

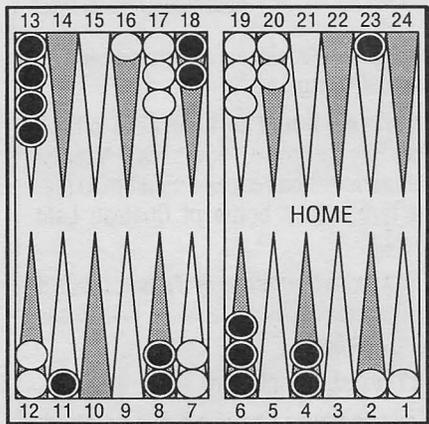
I think a lot of backgammon is seeing the board, I have trouble doing that, but I

[Continued on page 9]

PROBLEM #228 ANALYZED

by Kit Woolsey

Match to 7 points. Black leads White, 5 to 3. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-5.**



64

To blitz or not to blitz, that is the question. This problem examines several of the relevant factors which are involved in this important decision.

If Black goes for the blitz, he must choose between 13/8, 11/1*, 6/1 and 23/18, 11/1*, 6/1. Between these, the first play gets the nod. The key is the spare checker on the 8-point. When you are running a blitz, every checker which is brought into the firing range of your inner board is quite valuable. Even if the checkers are all on the same point, they are still potential attackers.

Leaving the back checker on the 23-point isn't necessarily disadvantageous. That checker provides more ways to hit White's outfield blot, and may provide some flexibility if things start to go badly.

If Black doesn't blitz, his choices are 23/8, 11/6 and 23/18, 13/8(2), 11/6. Here, 23/8, 11/6 is clearly the favorite. Black's game plan is to capitalize on his racing lead by safely bringing his men home. His first order of business will be to clear the enemy bar point with doubles. To do that, he wants to get down to two men on that point so both checkers can move all the way when he rolls the lucky set. By comparison, the fourth checker on the 8-point isn't too important. If Black plays 23/18, 13/8(2), 11/6 and fails to roll a 5 soon, he may run out of decent plays.

Now on to the big question. Which play is best? In favor of the blitz:

- 1) White has a blot in the outfield in addition to the other blot in Black's inner board. If White flunks, Black will have the opportunity to hit one or

both of these blots and take a commanding advantage.

- 2) The blitzing approach is not immediately dangerous. If White enters and anchors, Black is still in decent shape in the mutual holding game.
- 3) The positional play doesn't give Black a particularly strong advantage. White's game is solid, with the advanced anchor and good structure up front.

In favor of the positional play:

- 1) Black is very short on attack material, so it is likely that White will be able to survive the blitz. In particular, the blitzing play involves stripping the 6-point, which will result in an inflexible position for Black if White survives the initial attack.
- 2) White has a strong offensive structure, so if White does survive, she will be well placed to launch a counterattack should things go her way.
- 3) White's defensive anchor on Black's bar point provides plenty of blitz protection. That anchor makes it difficult for Black to flood his inner board with builders without taking a lot of chances.

SO WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE? All the above arguments look sound, and it appears that they are equally strong. Does that make the plays about equal? Quite possibly it does. However, there is one more thing to take into consideration: the match score.

Black needs only 2 points to win, while

White needs 4. Gammonish positions favor White far more than Black. If the cube is ever turned (and you can bet that White will be quick to turn it as soon as she gets an advantage), gammons will become completely worthless for Black but very valuable for White. Black, on the other hand, will never have an incentive to turn the cube as long as there are gammons floating around (winning an undoubled gammon wins him the match). The only way Black can make use of the cube is if he becomes a strong favorite in a race or a holding game, where the gammon probability is low or non-existent.

All this means that if two plays are close, Black should favor

the play which is less likely to lead to a gammon (for either side). In this

position, there is no question that the non-blitzing play of 23/8, 11/6 is that choice. The blitzing play will definitely lead to more gammons won, probably fewer games won, and more gammons lost since Black's position may get ragged if the blitz fails. If Black was behind 2 away-4 away, then he should choose the blitzing play: 13/8, 11/1*, 6/1.

Many players have a tendency to overrate the importance of the match score when choosing their play. You still have to find the best play to win, and that best play is likely to be best regardless of the match score. Only when the arguments for two different plays appear to be equally strong should the match score step in and be the final tie-breaker. Δ

The practical solution to the Doubling Cube is an unbiased **cubeless roll out** followed by a **cube equity** adjustment which converts it to a **roll out with cube**. When offered a **cubeless roll out**, one should ask:

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James Lortz



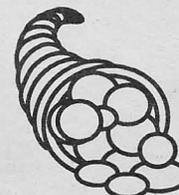
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AMALGAMATION

Chicago Point has a new area code: **773**. Please make a note of it... **Dean Muench** announced the close of his Chicago Board of Backgammon (CBOB) on 19 Sep., just 8 ½ months after the grand opening... The Bar Point Club began playing Sunday backgammon at the Braxton Seafood Grill in 1991. Sadly, new management has decided that we must leave. Join us for our last Braxton Sunday event 8 Dec. Call 773/583-6464 for more info... At the recent German Open, Portuguese expert **Mario Sequeira** arrived to late to play in the Championship division. Shame on organizer **Andreas Born** who asked Mario to play in the Intermediate division (where he cashed as a semifinalist)... The Hoosier BG Club has changed their play location to Bench Warmers Bar Thursdays In Indianapolis. For more details, call the **Butch & Mary Ann Meese** at 317/255-8902... Visiting the Bar Point Club: **Jim Painter** (MO), **Dave Groner** (IN), **Tom Austin** (TX), **Jon Victor** (CA)... Chicago to Las Vegas: **Harold Seif**... **John Wayne**'s backgammon set was auctioned off in Newport Beach, CA 28 Sept. at the "Rock & Reel '96 Auction." The minimum bid for the wooden set was \$1,250. It was expected to fetch over \$2,000. Thanks to **Todd Crosner** (CA) for the info... Our contributing editor **Kit Woolsey** has a new book on the market: *New Ideas In Backgammon*. It's a collection of backgammon problems analyzed by Kit, checked by JellyFish™, and judged difficult by a panel of eight experts. To order, sent \$40 + \$4 s&h (overseas \$5 surface, \$15 Europe & So. America, \$20 Pacific Rim) to: The Gammon Press; P.O. Box 294; Arlington, MA 02174. Δ

MALCOLM DAVIS . . .

[Continued from page 7]

can see it better now than I could a few years ago.

Today, neural network technology is improving my game. It helps us think more like the computer which seems to be better than the way we were playing.

POINT: Some players think you double too early in the beginning of a match. What do you say to that?

DAVIS: They're probably right. I make a lot of cube mistakes and a lot of piece move mistakes that I'm aware of, and I'm sure some I don't know about. Frankly, there was one in the World Cup where I doubled James Colen in a position that I'm embarrassed by. I robbed him, you know. I doubled him, he had no choice but to take, and I rolled a joker.

POINT: You know so few experts are readily willing to admit when they make a mistake and . . .

DAVIS: Oh listen, I make a lot of 'em. I'm sure I make more misplays and blunders than any other reasonably good player in backgammon by a big margin.

POINT: Which players' games do you most respect?

DAVIS: As far as the combination of what they deliver in money games, matches, analysis and all that, we all know there are some great match players around. We can name Neil Kazaross, Joe Sylvester, Mike Senkiewicz, Wilcox Snellings. But I also think Stuart Hosen from Dallas plays

extremely well—as good or better than many of today's top-ranked players.

There's also a guy I go to lunch with whenever I have the opportunity, and that's Harvey Huie. His instincts are remarkably good in my opinion and in a sense, he's helped me. When he just looks at a position and makes a decision at his pace, he's remarkably accurate. I think you play your best when you play at your own pace.

POINT: How do you rate your chances against the chouette players you regularly compete against?

DAVIS: Well . . . [Laughs], I've never thought about myself as being the best player, but I always thought I could win. When I first started playing, I figured I must be an underdog because I knew I couldn't play well, but I still wasn't afraid and thought I could win if I just tried, paid attention to what I was doing and stopped worrying about things. It seems like in the past, it's worked out good on balance for me.

So I try not to ever think about winning, or ever think about being up or down, or ever think about anything except what the right play is and what the right cube decision is.

POINT: Can you give our readers one good tip for improving their game?

DAVIS: I was over in Denmark for the Nordic Open in April. As you know, backgammon is very big over there. A lot of really nice people play it. Even the cab driver on the way to the airport knew about the tournament and asked me how I did. I said, "Well, I got to the finals, but I really didn't play so good."

And he said, "You've got to give luck its best chance." I believe he's right. Δ



ILLINOIS ACTION



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Tuesday, 6:15 P.M. at Golden Flame, 6417 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago; 773/792-0424.

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

PUB CLUB: Tourn. Monday, 7:30 P.M. at Harpo's, 290 S. Schmale, Carol Stream. 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 (773/734-9430).

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: Tourn. Thur., 6:30 P.M. at River Station, 212 Constitution Ave., Peoria. Linda Woods (309/686-6662).

PRIME BG CLUB: Tournaments Friday, 7:30 P.M. at Honest John's (Holiday Inn), 1000 Busse Road, Elk Grove Village. Joann Fenistein (847/674-0120).

MILLER'S ANGELS

Here's "Games People Play" (Chicago) Backgammon director J.A. Miller surrounded by "the most important women in my life." From left to right, Elaina Miller, Deianna Miller and Sandra Miller. Proud grandpa J.A. is holding granddaughter TaMiko Miller.

Starting this month, J.A. will be the chess instructor at the new James Jordan Boys and Girls Club on Chicago's West Side. Δ



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