

## An Electrifying Performance!

Wendy Kaplan shocks the boys in Illinois

Hugh Sconyers wins America Cup

Explored by Duane Jensen

I was raised less than a mile from Moo U. The Saint Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota was home to the College of Veterinary Science and the College of Agriculture and Forestry. Those students who attended the College of Liberal Arts or the Institute of Technology on the Minneapolis Campus ridiculed the "Farm Campus" by calling it "Moo U," but it was a great playground for us kids.

On Saturday mornings we would visit the animal pens at Moo U. One of the pens housed a solitary bull who was always glad to see us. The bravest of our group would stand close to the wire fence and wave a handkerchief as if it were a matador's cape. The bull would trot toward the fence and then make his charge at us. He would usually plant his front feet and stop just short of the fence, but sometimes he skidded into it. That's what we came to see.

The fence had two strands of electrified wire attached to it. The jolt of electricity would lift his feet off the ground and send him backwards. He wasn't hurt by our prank, but we could never get him to charge us twice on the same Saturday. It was probably a cruel thing to do, but we were just young kids looking for entertainment. Remember, this was before cable TV and video games.

After we were done teasing the animals, we went to the Saturday matinee movie at Coffey Hall, one of the large buildings on campus. For 10¢ we got to see a cartoon, previews, a short subject, a newsreel, and the feature film. After a new movie screen was installed, the price was raised to 12¢, but it was still a bargain.

The girls sat in the front rows, we boys sat in the middle rows, and the older kids (13–14 year olds) sat in the back rows with a smattering of adults. When the lights went out, we could begin shooting rubber

bands at the girls until we ran out of "ammo."

When the movie ended, we went up the stairs to the third floor which had small offices and labs. The labs had glass jars of animal parts preserved in formaldehyde—just what little boys love to look at.

Glass-covered cases ran down the length of the hallway. They were filled with insects from all over the world. Each insect was carefully pinned and labeled. I liked the big ones: the rhinoceros beetle and the colorful butterflies from South America. At that time, I knew all the insects by name; knowledge that has slipped away with the passing years.

At YAMIN YAMIN's Illinois State Championships and America Cup (2–5 October), I was unable to identify the small flies indigenous to the Rolling Meadows Holidome. They were smaller than house flies but larger than fruit flies.

I watched one walking around the lip of an abandoned coffee cup which sat in front

of me. The fly would stroll around the top of cup, pausing when he reached the lipstick smudge. The fly made seven laps around the cup. I know because I counted them while Richard Del Furia (Minneapolis, MN) was contemplating a cube from Chicago-land's Wendy Kaplan in Sunday's 15-point Illinois State Championship finals.



Wendy Kaplan and Richard Del Furia shake hands prior to their 15-point finals.

[Continued on page 7]

## AT THE RUSSIAN BORDER WITH A BOARD



As Russia and Georgia feud over vodka imports, hundreds of truck drivers get caught in the middle at the Verkhny Lars border checkpoint. Eventually they are able to return or proceed, but while they are forced to wait, backgammon is the most popular pastime. [Photo by James Hill, contributed by Roland Dieter.]



# 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](mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com)

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

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

**Harry Cohn (IL)**

**Danny Kleinman (CA)**

**Carol Joy Cole (MI)**

**Laila Leonhardt (DEN)**

**Jake Jacobs (IL)**

**Walter Trice (MA)**

**Duane Jensen (MN)**

**Kit Woolsey (CA)**

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## LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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

E-mail: [chipoint@interaccess.com](mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com)

## THE AUTHORS' VIEWPOINT

We thank Neil Kazaross for his thoughtful review of our Cubes and Gammons Near the End of the Match. We disagree, however, with his main criticism: "I must wonder why the authors continue to cling to match equity tables using 20% gammons when most neural networks win about 26% gammons?"

We used Kit Woolsey's empirically-based match equity table ("MET"), modified only to generate a third decimal place that we needed for reasons explained in our book. When rounded to two decimal places, our MET agrees exactly with Woolsey's (the most relied-upon nowadays). For example, at (needs 4, needs 1), where Woolsey gives 17%, we give 16.9% match chances to the trailer.

Woolsey's data base of expert matches showed trailers winning 22% gammons in games that had to be played to completion

[Continued on page 3]

coming attractions

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BACKGAMMON											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31					

by Carol Joy Cole

810/232-9731

E-mail: [cjc@flint.org](mailto:cjc@flint.org)

\* Denotes new or revised listing

## NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Nov 11-15	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Nov 16*	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	408/688-9722
Nov 16*	Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Tony's Grill & Tap, Roswell, GA	770/333-1876
Nov 18	15th Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	773/583-6464
Nov 20*	New England Bonus Tournament, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Nov 20*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Nov 23*	Austin Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Nov 29*	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Nov 28-30	<u>Northern Ohio Thanksgiving Tournament, Holiday Inn, Canton, OH</u>	<u>330/966-2811</u>
Nov 30*	Thanksgiving Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Dec 1*	Lainer's FIBS Monthly Tournament, via computer modem	<i>lainer@cyberbeach.net</i>
Dec 1*	Lainer's GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer modem	<i>lainer@cyberbeach.net</i>
Dec 5-7	<u>40th Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Dec 6*	Springfield Series #2, Ride the Nine, Bloomington, IL	217/782-2439
Dec 7	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyway's Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/252-7755
Dec 7*	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	408/688-9722
Dec 14*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Dec 18*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Dec 21*	Atlanta Holiday Festival Tournament, Tony's Grill & Tap, Roswell, GA	770/333-1876
Dec 26*	Flint Area Club Holiday Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Dec 26-28	<u>Ace Point New York Holiday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY</u>	<u>212/753-0842</u>
Dec 27*	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Dec 28*	Nation's Capital Jackpot Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jan 1-Mar 30*	FIBS 1998 Winter Blitz, via computer modem	<i>davide@sco.com</i> or 408/438-7947
Jan 3*	Springfield Series #3, Parkers Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/782-2439
Jan 8*	Backgammon On Board Warmup, Biscayne Bay Marriott, Miami, FL	773/583-6464
Jan 9-12	Backgammon On Board IV, Miami to Bahamas cruise tourney on NCL	773/583-6464
Jan 10-11*	Nation's Capital Winter Open, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jan 13*	Chicago Bar Point Club Awards Night, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	773/583-6464
Jan 18*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Feb 7*	Springfield Series #4, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, IL	217/782-2439
Feb 8*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Feb 11-15*	Pro-Am Invitational, Turnberry Isle, Aventura, FL	301/299-8265
Feb 13-15*	<u>20th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Mar 1*	Springfield Series #5, Parkers Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/782-2439
Mar 15*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Mar 20-22*	<u>1998 Midwest Championships, Radisson Hotel, Lisle, IL</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
Jul 2-5*	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Sep 4-7*	<u>46th Indiana Open, Radisson Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Oct 1-4*	<u>Illinois State Champs &amp; America Cup, Holidome, Rolling Meadows, IL</u>	<u>847/945-7801</u>

## OUTSIDE USA

Nov 8-9	Frederiksberg Open 1997, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Nov 12-16	1st Moscow Open, World Trade Center Hotel, Moscow, Russia	7095333-6355
Nov 15-16	Berlin Cup/Havel Cup '97, Medien-Café/Café Belmont, Berlin, Germany	4930-4619624
Nov 15-16	Grand Torneo "Citta di Bologna," Hotel Zola, Bologna, Italy	393387-187324
Nov 21-23*	Bodensee Grand Prix 1997, Casino Bregenz, Bregenz, Austria	41612-710137
Nov 21-23*	Finnish Open Tournament, Helsinki, Finland	35850-5930139
Nov 22-23	Townharbour TT Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Milton Keynes, England	441522-546993
Nov 28-30*	Hemsbach-Cup, Seehotel Hemsbach, Hemsbach, Germany	49711-486190
Nov 29-30	DM 1997 & DM U/21, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Dec 5-8	Santa Claus Tournament, Spielcasino Aachen, Aachen, Germany	4940-8306415
Dec 6-7	Åbne Bornholmske Mesterskaber, Hotel Griffen, Rønne, Denmark	4556-951215
Dec 13-14	11th National Championship, Jarvis International Hotel, Solihull, England	44161-4380966
Dec 13-14*	Berlin Cup/Havel Cup '97, Medien-Café/Café Belmont, Berlin, Germany	4930-4619624
Dec 18-22	Neurenberger Castle Tournament, Neurenberg, Germany	49911-737514
Jan 3-4*	Bright 'n Breezey Knockout Tourney, Stakis Brighton Metropole, England	44152-2546993
Jan 9-18	World Cup Challenge IV & SuperJackpot, Conrad Istanbul, Turkey	972-36727063
Jan 15-18	Thailand Open, 19th Hole Super Pub, South Pattaya, Thailand	6638-429152
Feb 21-22*	Grand Torneo "Citta' di Bologna," Hotel Zola, Bologna, Italy	39338-7187324
Feb 26-Mar 1*	2nd Warsteiner Cup, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Mar 4-8*	Grand Prix de Lugano, Hotel Splendide Royal, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425

## LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

with gammons not counting for leaders. Any case for a higher gammon rate argues

as much against Woolsey's MET as ours, and more pointedly, against empirically-based METs in general.

Empiricism has its limits, even in well-defined artificial domains like backgammon, but we have nothing better. Setting

aside deed epistemological issues, we can reconcile the 22% gammons experienced by human experts with the 26% gammons of neural networks. A lower gammon rate will result if the player who can be hurt by gammons (the leader) exerts more control over gammons than his opponent. He can do so in three ways: (1) avoiding "swinging" gammon-seeking and gammon-risking early-game plays that he would venture at other scores; (2) minimizing or breaking contact in mid-game positions which at other scores would justify maximizing or maintaining contact; (3) scampering home to save gammons in end positions that at other scores would warrant lingering in the back court for game-winning shots.

Does the trailer have equal influence over gammon rates? The data—gammon rates lower for human experts than neural networks—suggest not.—*Antonio Ortega (San Jose, Costa Rica) & Danny Kleinman (Los Angeles, CA)*

### OBTAINING THE RULES

Someone asked me about the US Rules? Are they available online? It seems like they should be.—*Butch Meese, Hoosier Backgammon Club, Indianapolis, IN*

Good idea, Butch. They're now online at: <http://homepage.interaccess.com/~chipoint/usrules.html> —Ed.

I have several Spanish-speaking friends who would like to know where they can obtain the backgammon rules in their language. Can you help?—*Martin Deschesnes, Boisbriand, QB, Canada*

[Continued on page 4]



## AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1997

Top 100 compiled through 19 Oct. 1997. 4 tournaments remain.  
(NE Regional, No. Ohio Thanksgiving, 40th G/A Invitational, Ace Pt. Holiday)



Doug Mayfield	35.36	Steve Sax	9.82	Lee Genud	5.08	Sonja Peacock	3.77
Art Benjamin	31.00	Joann Feinstein	9.61	Tim Mabee	5.06	Kurt Schurecht	3.69
John O'Hagan	27.75	Wally Kuester	9.54	Frank Frigo	5.06	Fred Badagnani	3.60
Fred Kalantari	27.63	Jim McGirr	9.53	Milad Doueihi	4.95	Bill Phipps	3.59
Alex Caraplis	20.78	Bill Davis	9.50	Malcolm Davis	4.93	Bruce Hall	3.34
Doug Roberts	20.59	Reza Nowbar	9.30	Terry Kayser	4.90	John Bryant	3.30
Rob Maier	17.94	Sam Pottle	8.96	Richard Heinz	4.75	Rick Bieniak	3.29
Stuart Hosen	17.09	Ed King	8.84	Chester Warzel	4.75	Bruce Russell	3.26
Mike Giordano	15.50	Leslie Lockett	8.61	Tim Lawless	4.75	Jim Pascoe	3.22
Ray Foglerlund	15.50	Bill Counts	8.40	Carlos Hamon	4.66	Jay Ward	3.20
Jon Stephens	15.31	Marty Storer	8.31	David Haddad	4.52	Ron Bruns	3.19
John Brussel	13.49	Eliot Bean	7.09	Ed Zell	4.38	Ron Genter	3.19
Harry Tokatlani	12.75	Garo Tchalabian	7.09	Michael Rayner	4.36	David Rockwell	3.08
Hal Heinrich	12.55	Elliott Winslow	7.05	Eden Windish	4.22	Neil Young	2.83
Steve Flam	12.50	Alan Fenster	7.00	David Montgomery	4.20	Reza Zaltash	2.82
Wendy Kaplan	12.30	Phil Simborg	6.61	Frank Talbot	4.16	Matt Reikaitis	2.78
Richard Del Furia	11.85	Mike Senkiewicz	6.58	John Jennings	4.16	Tom Penney	2.75
Peter Kalba	11.79	Andy Palumbo	6.40	Jake Jacobs	4.10	David Levine	2.64
Steve Klesker	11.44	Ray Bills	5.60	Jim Muirhead	4.00	Nayan Shah	2.64
David Wells	11.33	Michael Bureau	5.39	Perry Gartner	3.97	Mary Franks	2.63
Harvey Huie	11.20	Allen Levien	5.28	Bob Hill	3.88	Luisa Sequeira	2.61
Rich Catalano	10.56	Abbas Zaltash	5.28	Andy Rubien	3.88	George Barr	2.48
Mike Friedman	10.56	Drew Giovanis	5.28	Rick Barabino	3.88	Gary Stern	2.46
Nack Ballard	10.45	Alice Kay	5.23	Emil Mortuk	3.88	Denny Leatherman	2.45
Steve Hast	10.12	Hunter Jones	5.20	Joe Freedman	3.78	Paul Friedman	2.40



## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1997 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED  
THRU 31 OCT.

Neil Kazaross	19.96	Norma Shyer	6.92	David Rubin	1.52	Joe Esfahani	0.64
Herb Roman	17.20	Don Jayhan	6.40	John Stryker	1.44	Mark Murray	0.64
Rick Bieniak	15.48	John Demian	6.00	Georgina Flanagan	1.44	Dave Cramer	0.60
Gary Kay	15.48	Steve Mellen	5.60	Jolie Rubin	0.96	Greg Tomlin	0.60
Harry Cohn	15.44	Stu Katz	5.52	Mark Stone	0.96	Yamin Yamin	0.56
Paul Franks	14.08	Tak Morioka	4.76	Reggie Porter	0.96	Tom Meyer	0.56
Ed Buerger	12.16	Bobbie Shifrin	4.60	Roland Dieter	0.96	Steve Klesker	0.56
Phyllis Smolinski	11.72	Bob Koca	4.32	Jill Ferdinand	0.92	Todd Hengsteler	0.48
Bob Zavoral	10.96	Arlene Levy	3.76	Marty Tatosian	0.88	Ken Tysko	0.48
Alice Kay	10.60	Roger Hickman	3.36	Femi Owiku	0.88	Roz Ferris	0.44
Ken Bond	10.56	Mary Franks	2.96	Elliott Winslow	0.88	Jodie Feinstein	0.32
Bill Davis	10.56	Wendy Kaplan	2.84	Chuck Bower	0.88	Jerry Smith	0.32
Leslie Lockett	10.32	Fred Badagnani	2.80	Bob Steen	0.88	Jay Ward	0.28
Phil Simborg	10.24	Amy Valerio	2.60	Andy Krenitz	0.88	Sam Pottle	0.24
Paul Friedman	9.96	Richard Lloyd	2.56	Scott Richardson	0.84	Sarg Serges	0.24
Joann Feinstein	9.32	Dan Simborg	2.56	Larry Strommen	0.80	Nan Feiber	0.24
Joe Wollick	9.04	David Wells	2.56	Phil Barrett	0.80	Todd Permut	0.24
Bill Keefe	8.80	Jerry Brooks	2.16	Barbara Levinson	0.76	Romeo Kap	0.24
Tim Mabee	7.96	Frankie Farjood	1.92	Laila Leonhardt	0.72	Elaine Kehm	0.20
Peter Kalba	7.76	Michael Wilhoit	1.84	John Brussel	0.68	Diva Lauren	0.16
Paul Klein	7.32	John Jennings	1.60	George Barr	0.68	Marv Arnol	0.16
Jake Jacobs	7.12	Tim Helms	1.60	V.W. Zimnicki	0.64	Karen Meyer	0.12

September: **LESLIE LOCKETT** won two events and 3.84 points to capture top honors. Ken Bond had 3.76—good for second place. Phyllis Smolinski was third with 2.88.

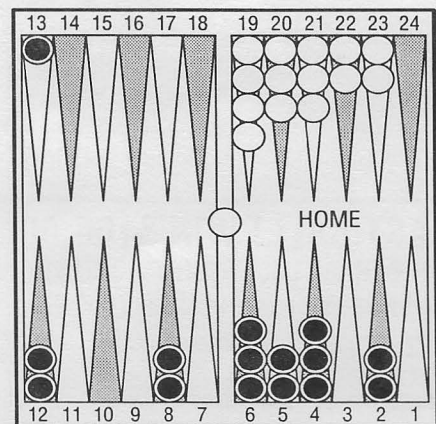
October: **ED BUERGER** was victorious in two tournaments and also won a consolation bracket to earn 5.04 points. Herb Roman had 3.84 and Phyllis Smolinski tied with newcomer Steve Mellen for the third spot (3.04).

your move

## PROBLEM #238

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

Match to 7 points. Black leads White, 4 to 1. Black has a 4-cube. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-2.**





# ASK DANNY

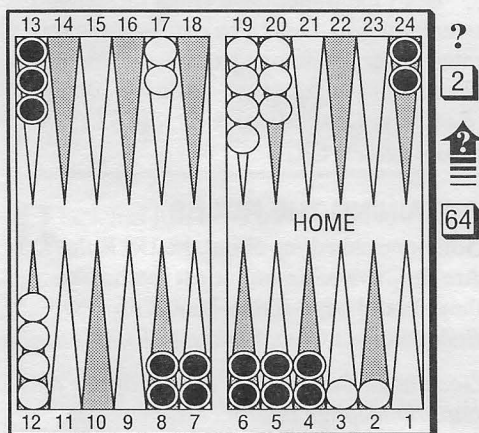
© 1997 by Danny Kleinman



## TOUGH, EVEN FOR JELLYFISH

**D**ear Danny: Here is a doubling position that I faced against Alex Caraplis in the semifinals of the recent Minnesota State Championships in September:

13-point match. Bill Davis (Black) leads Alex Caraplis (White) 9-8. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Last month, Alex wrote me back with a JellyFish™ analysis that showed:

	Wins	G/BG	BG
Bill D.	66.0	19.9	0.7
Alex C.	34.0	8.1	0.2

Equity Bill D. = 0.442

Volatility = 0.166

Cube Action: No double/Take

JellyFish may or may not be right (it's no doubt close), but I didn't have JellyFish at the table. Perhaps you can explain a human's thought process in determining the correct move.—Bill Davis, Chicago, IL

**DEAR BILL:** Black leads in all departments of the game. He has three inside points to White's two. Black has a 5-prime, White has only three of four consecutive points. Black has a small lead in the race (147 less

the shake to 152). White hasn't anchored. Though Black doesn't have spares along his prime, he has ammunition nearby on the midpoint. Double 5s now would be especially devastating, substantially enhancing Black's already decent gammon threat.

If Black doesn't have a *strong* money double, then I don't know what a double looks like and should be barred from ever touching a cube. The only features of the position that let White take at all are the absence of spares along Black's prime, the slight difficulty Black may have running his back men, and White's chance of achieving a treypoint game trailing only slightly in the race. Though White appears to have a take, and Alex's JellyFish results confirm this, the take is tough. In practice, I'd expect some opponents to pass, which gives Black all the more incentive to double.

Does Black's 9-8 lead in the 13-point match change anything?

Yes, slightly. With the cube at 2, gammons help both sides more heavily than in money play or early in a match. 2-level gammons win the match for Black exactly, making them extra valuable. 2-level gammons give White a 12-9 lead, Crawford-Odd, making them only marginally less valuable than Black's. However, because Black's gammon prospects are much better than White's, the extra weight that gammons carry with the cube at 2 benefits Black more than White.

Because Black needs 4 points for the match, White cannot redouble with the extra aggressiveness that helps the trailer under other conditions.

All in all, the score makes Black's double even stronger. My reluctant money take as White becomes a pass when trailing 8-9 in a 13-point match. Black's position looks better to me than JellyFish indicates. Is it possible that one of the leaks in JellyFish's otherwise strong play is rolling primes forward?—Yours, Danny

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]

We have a copy of the WBF international tournament rules in Spanish that was created by the Costa Rican Backgammon Association. To obtain a copy, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope (or \$1) to: CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155.—Ed

## QUESTIONS FROM ISRAEL

We organize backgammon courses and competitions in Israel and would be most grateful if you could provide us with information on the following: (1) Books, magazines and catalogues on backgammon; (2) Tournaments around the world; (3) Backgammon sets and equipment.—Jak and Ron, Hod Hasharon, Israel

The three best sources for backgammon supplies and equipment are: (1) Carol Joy Cole (Note new address): 3719 Greenbrook Lane; Flint, MI 48507. E-mail: [cjc@flint.org](mailto:cjc@flint.org) (2) The Gammon Press: PO Box 294; Arlington, MA 02174. E-mail: [robertie@world.std.com](mailto:robertie@world.std.com) (3) European Backgammon News: Aptdo. 81; Garrucha 04630; Almeria, Spain. E-mail: [backgammon@bitmailer.net](mailto:backgammon@bitmailer.net).

These suppliers sell BG boards as well. If you have Internet access, go to the CHICAGO POINT website and Mel Leifer's "Gammon Links" to check some out: <http://homepage.interaccess.com/~chipoint.links.html>

Carol Joy Cole's premiere events calendar can be found at <http://homepage.interaccess.com/~chipoint/calendar.html>

Finally, all of the above suppliers print publications. And don't forget us in that department!—Ed.

## STARTING A CLUB

I need your help. Many of my friends are backgammon lovers and good players; however, they are having a hard time to get visas (they live in Armenia) to come to the USA and participate in tournaments. I think if I can register a backgammon club or an association, then I can officially invite them to participate in any tournament. I tried to do so, but I didn't have any success. Please, if you have any ideas of how to register an organization (or club or association), let me know.—Levon Goukasian, Ph.D., via e-mail

There is no official US organization to "register" backgammon clubs. CHICAGO POINT prints a listing of Backgammon Clubs in North America each January, but for a club to be included, it must be legitimate and meet regularly in some public area (bar, restaurant, etc.).—Ed. Δ

## LAST CALL! WIN \$100.00 THE "HARD LUCK STORY" CONTEST

Entries must be postmarked by 11-15-97.

### CONTEST RULES

1. The story must be true.
2. Include the appropriate board diagrams

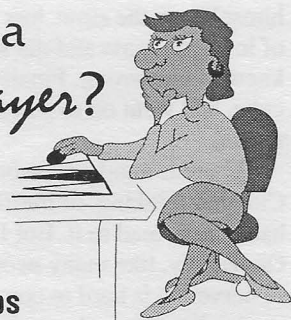
3. Limit your entire write-up to 200 words or less.
4. CHICAGO POINT Contributing Editors are ineligible.
5. The five best stories will be presented to a panel of directors who will vote for their favorites.
6. To enter, send your name & address by 11-15-97 to: CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr 504; Chicago, IL 60659. Fax: 773/583-3264. [chipoint@interaccess.com](mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com)



# Are you a Slow Player?

Here's why it's sometimes better to quickly pick a winner.

by Jake Jacobs



You've all taken them. The quizzes, I mean. The ones that let you know whether you have a gambling problem, or an aptitude for bird watching. There you are, waiting in line at Dominick's supermarket pretending that the only reason you're scanning *Cosmo* is to learn "75 Nutritious Dishes Made With Carrots," when all along you're reading, "How Likely Are You To Develop Cellulite?" Some sample questions:

## ARE YOU AN ALCOHOLIC?

Have you ever consumed seven Kamikazes before breakfast?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

## HOW COMPATIBLE ARE YOU?

Do you ever hit your roommate in the face with a hot waffle iron?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

What does this have to do with backgammon? I'm glad you asked. Over the years I have talked with many slow players. To a man, they are in denial. Everyone claims that their reputation is due to:

- a. Bad press;
- b. Misinformation;
- c. Jealousy;
- d. The way they *used* to play.

So here goes. It's time to take a short, backgammon related quiz.

## ARE YOU A SLOW PLAYER?

Have two or more people ever told you that you're a slow player?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

## SCORING/RANKING

For each question you answered yes, score 100 points.

**+50 to +100** You are a slow player. Get help!

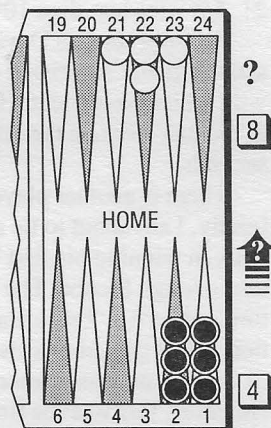
**0 to +50** You are on probation. Pick up the pace.

-1 to -50 Jeff Acierno! I didn't know you subscribed to the POINT.

I DEvised THIS QUIZ after playing in Indianapolis over Labor Day. Several people had come to me asking: "Why don't you do an article on slow play?"

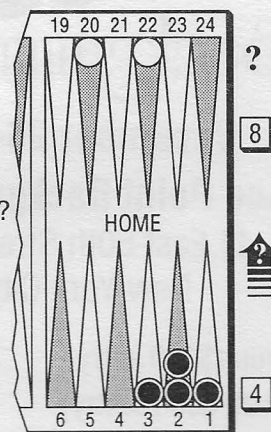
My flippant answer is: "I'm not a D.J., I don't do requests." But in fact, if the money is good, or the solicitor is cute, I will do pretty much *anything* if asked. Why the interest in slow play? . . .

**POSITION 1**  
9 point match.  
BLACK on roll tied at 1-1.  
**CUBE ACTIONS? HOW LONG UNTIL THE GAME ENDS?**



Well, how long? Did you answer 15 minutes? That was the actual time it took to finish this game. Black is a nice enough guy, when not wrestling with cube decisions, and I would like him to represent slow players everywhere, so I will not give his real name. I'll call him Oswald Obolensky. As it happens, I had met up with Obolensky earlier, in the second round of the Master's, when he spent 15 minutes deciding whether to redouble Position 2.

**POSITION 2**  
15 pt. match.  
Oswald Obolensky (Black) leads Jake 8 to 4.  
**CUBE ACTION?**



Which was exacerbated by his spending 10 minutes, two rolls earlier, deciding to take my redouble to 4.

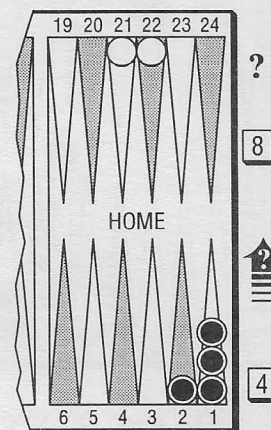
In Position 1 above, Oswald gritted his teeth and went to work crunching numbers. Not everyone can solve these at the table, but Obolensky is a competent player, and

up to the arithmetic gymnastics required to give it a close approximation.

Solving his problem for him, we might note that Black must be the favorite. If the cube is turned, there can be no redouble. Hence, this is more or less the "last shake" with more sequences leaving Black happy that he doubled.

After 10 minutes, Obolensky incorrectly elected to wait a turn. Each player rolled 3-2 to reach:

**POSITION 3**  
9 point match.  
BLACK on roll tied at 1-1.  
**CUBE ACTIONS? HOW LONG UNTIL THE GAME ENDS?**



Five minutes later he redoubled, correctly, and the match was soon over.

The winner was White, a player named David Wells. David is young, and not as well known as he deserves to be, but is the latest of Boston's young "phenoms." Over the last decade Boston has specialized in producing young marvels such as the "Intergalactic Supernova," Rick Barabino, and James Colen, who moved to a medialess backwater (Manhattan) before acquiring a cool nickname.

David Wells is the latest, but not the least of these, and like Rick and James, has departed Boston to seek his fortune. Wells now lives in Chicago where he is learning options trading from aging phenoms Neil Kazaross and Howard Ring. David plays backgammon regularly down on Rush Street, at the 3rd Coast, where Matt and Seif and Tim are teaching him cube refinements undreamed of in Boston.

Some time later in the tournament (and please bear with me; I promise this is all connected), David reached the finals of the Overflow Master's against Dr. Dave Williams, a California Podiatrist trying to establish a toehold in the world of backgammon. At 6-6, playing to 15, Wells was rolling toward an 8 point gammon when Dr. Dave rolled a 1-6 off the bar to put the gammon shoe on the other foot. Wells rallied, and actually became the match favorite just before Dr. Dave rolled another crusher, this time a 2-6 from the bar. A few

[Continued on page 6]

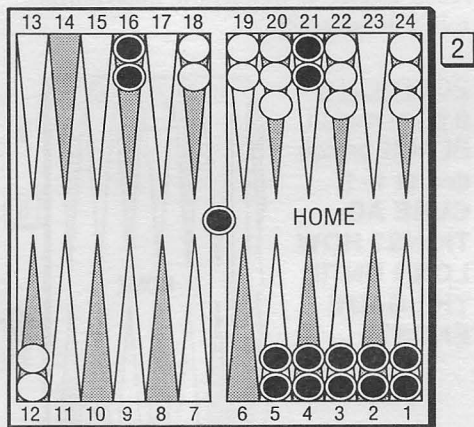
## SLOW PLAYER...

[Continued from page 5]

rolls later, Wells had to play a difficult 4-2:

### POSITION 4

15 point match. Black, (David Wells) trails White (Dr. Dave Williams) 14 to 11. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-2.**



David made the "Oops, my bra strap broke!" play, Bar/23, 21/17, breaking his anchor and leaving three blots strewn around the board waiting for the Reaper to harvest them. Dr. Dave obliged, hitting two and going on to win the match. (The winner, Dr. Dave, is outside the focus of this article, so he'll have to remain content with the title, trophy, and all that money.) The

spectators were at a loss. "Why did he leave all those blots? It was like he gave up."

On the contrary, David made the best play. His play is even best for money, and I know David is capable of making it no matter how many gammons he is about to lose.

But let's consider things from a match standpoint. Breaking up the board is hopeless, winning shots are those that come quickly—Black lacks the timing to wait much longer—and at the score, losing a gammon is irrelevant. Wells' play wins about 16% of his matches; the "safe" Bar/21, 5/3 wins less than 10%.

As surprising as David's play might seem, equally surprising was the speed with which he made it. His dice, from cast to pickup, were on the table a mere three seconds.

There is another player at the 3rd Coast (really, I am about to tie all this together!) who, in winning his first World title, had to take a tough 8-cube. The write-up at the time called it a "brave" take. My recollection is that the cube decision itself, posed as a problem, was routine. An "easy" take. However, this was the final match, a room full of people were watching it on TV, and whoever won the cube would have a nearly insurmountable lead in the match. The difference in prize money between first and second place was \$50,000.00. Our hero thought for a long time, not about whether it was a take, but whether he could talk

himself into the slow, less committal way of losing: to pass and die slowly, though he knew it was wrong. Finally, he took the cube, and went on to win the game and match.

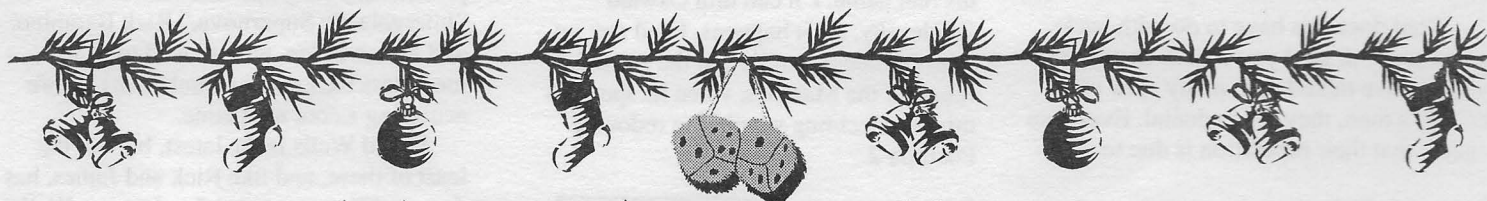
There is another reason for slow play. Clouded thinking, or inefficient work habits may lead to it. But I think Obolensky, like many people, is the victim of nerves. It is hard to commit to a play, especially a big cube, as in Obolensky's slowest decisions, when it may quickly cost the match.

Everyone thinks that given enough time, perhaps they can claw their way back to a win. Had David spent time pondering his 4-2, perhaps he might have talked himself out of it. Really, there is no way to "calculate" the differences between his choices at the table. All he could do would be to count shots. One way, nothing hits, the other practically everything.

Break the board now, it's easy to put back together! You can't outplay your opponent if you are on the bar.

I think maybe that is why David played the move so quickly: so that he wouldn't have time to listen to those little voices talk him (as I saw them talk Obolensky) out of making the play that he knew was right. David may have lost this match, but he showed he is a champion.

Will Oswald Obolensky show us he, too, can be a champion? We're still waiting. Δ



## Holiday Backgammon Tournament

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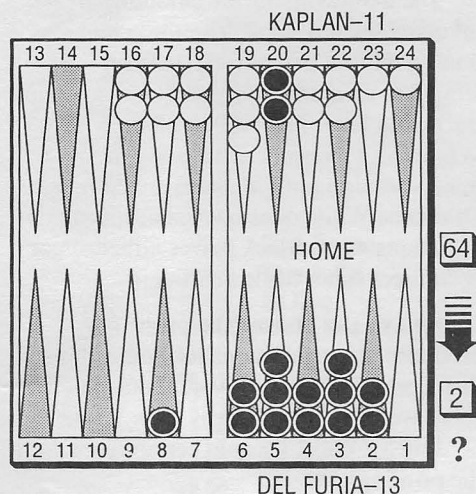




## ...Electrifying Performance!

[Continued from page 1]

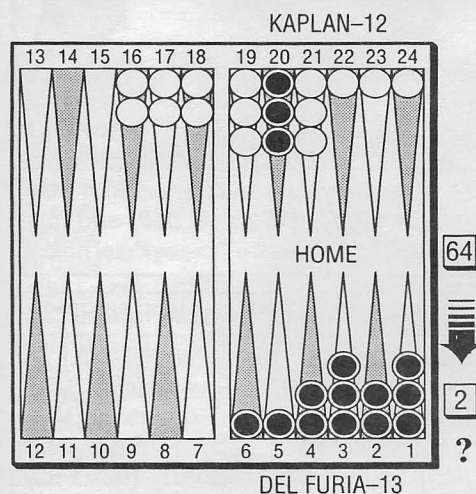
Illinois State Championship 15-point finals. Richard Del Furia (Black) leads Wendy Kaplan (White) 13-11. White doubles. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**



Admittedly this is not a very glamorous position; still, Richard must consider all the usual factors. If he drops, Richard's at 60% match equity. If he takes with no chance of being gammoned, he needs 20% wins.

There's little chance of being gammoned from here; so Richard should look at his racing (he trails 83 to 96) and hitting chances. I thought he had close to 20% and should have taken, but he eventually passed leading to another very similar position at 13-12:

15-point finals. Richard Del Furia (Black) leads Wendy Kaplan (White) 13-12. White doubles. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**

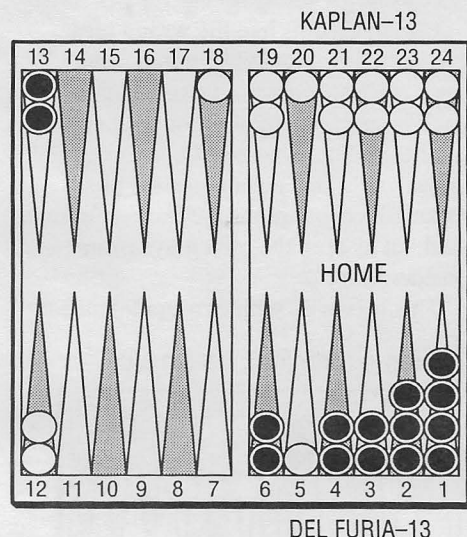


Not wanting Wendy to reach the Crawford game first, Richard correctly dropped this cube making the score 13-all.

These two mundane positions needn't be studied exhaustively. They're probably forgettable to everyone but Wendy, be-

cause they were stepping-stones to her victory. The final game had more excitement with a few difficult plays for both Richard and Wendy.

15-point finals. Richard Del Furia (Black) vs. Wendy Kaplan (White). Double match point. **WHITE TO PLAY 5-2.**



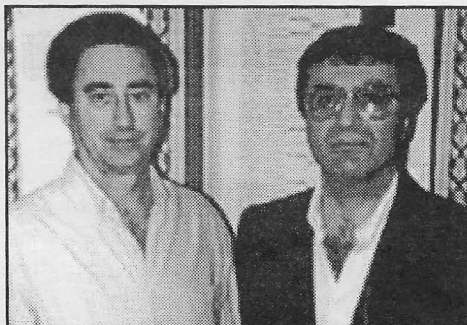
Wendy was too far down in the race to run (5/12). Certainly (12/17, 12/14) and (18/20, 19/24) are viable options, but Wendy chose to maintain a closed board and "tease" Richard by leaving a direct ace shot (12/17, 18/20).

Richard followed with a challenging roll of his own: 4-3. With Wendy's closed board, he decided against 13/7 (which leaves 17 shots) in favor of (6/2, 6/3). Wendy rolled a number forcing her to leave the mid-point.

Richard then rolled 5-1, and "charged" one of his mid-point checkers to the 7-point. Wendy then "electrified" the Minnesotan with a 6-2 (hitting both men) to become the Illinois State Champion.

This last sequence kind of reminded me how I used to spend my Saturday mornings as a boy in Minnesota...

**IN THE AMERICA CUP**, Hugh Sconyers (TX) crushed Ray Fogelund (CA) to claim the beautiful trophy and big prize money.



America Cup champion Hugh Sconyers (left) with director Yamin Yamin.

## ILLINOIS ST. CHAMPIONSHIP/AMERICA CUP

CHAMPIONSHIP-ABT (41): 1-Wendy Kaplan (IL), 2-Richard Del Furia (MN), 3/4-Elliott Winslow (CA) / David Rockwell (IL); 1C-Leslie Lockett (IL), 2C-Kurt Schurecht (IL); 1LC-Jake Jacobs (IL); High Performance: Noubar Tcheurekdjian (WI). AMERICA CUP (13): 1-Hugh Sconyers (TX), 2-Ray Fogelund (CA). ADVANCED-ABT (33): 1-Milad Doueihi (IL), 2-George Barr (IL), 3/4-Ed Buerger (IL) / Jim Bowman (FL); 1C-Mary Franks (IL), 2C-Alice Gerard (FL); 1LC-Sam Pottle (WI); High Performance: Curtis Lucas. LIMITED-ABT (10): 1-Michael Plog (IL), 1C-Sonja Peacock (WI); 1LC-Lee Pflugrad (WI). MASTERS (16): 1-Fred Kalantari (MN). DOUBLES (16): 1-Steve Mellen & Phil Simborg (IL), 2-Paul Klein (IL) & Laila Leonhardt (Denmark). PARLAY FROM HELL (64): 1-Steve Mellen (IL). KICKOFF (32): 1-Hugh Sconyers (TX), 2-John Ritchie (KS). BLITZ (32): 1-Steve McCormick (KS).

**Something 2 Remember**  
20-22 March 1998

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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**THE GUARANTEED SOLUTION TO THE DOUBLING CUBE**

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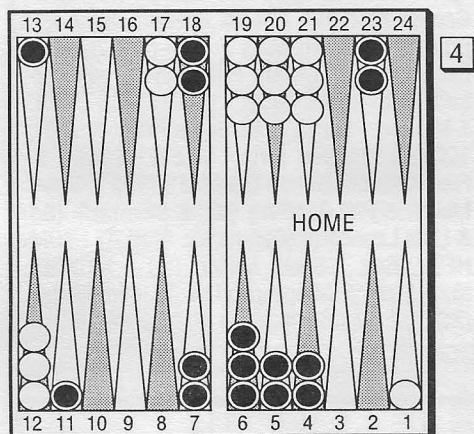
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Tel.: 208/756-4010

# PROBLEM #237 ANALYZED

by Harry Cohn

Match to 9 points. White leads Black, 4 to 3. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-5.**



**B**lack has just fired out a great roll and has a lot of possible plays to sort through. There are three major thematic plays from which to choose. Before looking at any checker plays, let's consider the match score issues.

First of all, what are gammons worth to each side? Using Kit Woolsey's match equity table, Black's gammon price is 25:65 which is slightly worse than in a standard money game (1:2). This means that winning a gammon is less valuable than usual. Hence Black should not be inclined to take high risks to win the gammon. This might be somewhat surprising since gammons are usually more valuable when behind in the match. In this situation, the high cube value and the corresponding "overage" on the gammon negates this.

White's gammon price is extremely high at 1:6.5. White owns a 4-cube and has a redoubling window of 71-90%. Since Black's take point is so low, White should tend to hold the cube until very high in the doubling window.

Now for the checker plays. The three major themes are:

**Priming:** 18/8; 13/8 with one more to play.

The only reasonable choices for the last 5 are 18/13 and 23/18. Since Black is trying to prime White's straggler, escaping his own back men must be Black's highest priority. Therefore, 23/18 is the clear choice for the last 5.

**Running:** 23/18(2) with two more to play.

With the running play, Black has the choice of continuing both checkers to the

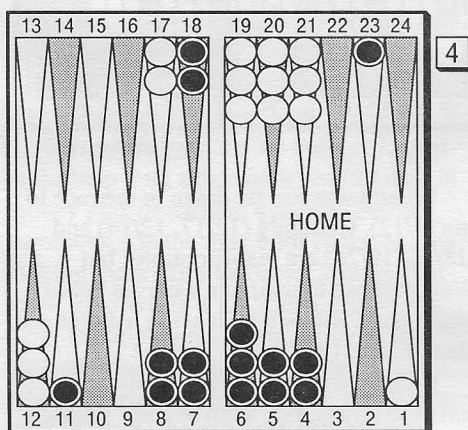
mid-point, or slotting the 8-point. Slotting leaves 18/13 as the only reasonable choice for the last 5. This seems inferior to the priming play above, so 23/13(2) is the best running play.

**Blitzing:** Either 11/1\*, 6/1 with one more to play or 7/2(2), 6/1\* with one more to play.

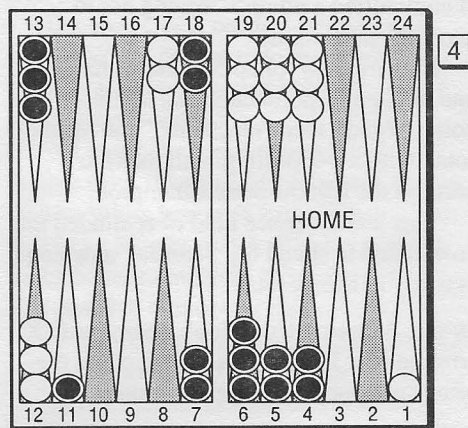
Blitzing seems like the wrong idea here. Any time that White enters, she immediately becomes a favorite. Also, Black is short on ammunition to complete the blitz and may have difficulty escaping his back checkers even when the blitz works. Since gammons are *less* useful than usual, let us drop the blitz plays from consideration.

This leaves us with two candidates:

**Position A (priming):** 23/8, 13/8



**Position B (running):** 23/13(2)



Both plays leave Black a solid favorite despite a 13 pip race deficit. The main advantage of the priming play is the 5-prime. White will find it very difficult to escape her back checker and often must leave blots either inside or when breaking the mid-point. However, White does gain some wins by attacking Black's straggler and wiggling out while Black dances. Also, Black sometimes has problems bringing home the straggler and may even be forced to break the 18-point if he doesn't roll a 5 soon.

The running play solves the problem of the back men at the expense of making it somewhat easier for White to escape. One strong advantage of the running play is that it leaves White zero shots this roll! This play also maintains the best defensive anchor while providing plenty of checkers to extend the prime in future rolls.

The main winning variation for White involves several steps: leap the prime, don't get hit in the outfield, safe up the straggler, clear the mid-point, and maintain the racing lead. This is a lot of work! White can't consider redoubling in the main variation until *all* steps are complete. Of course White does have shot-hitting variations when Black leaves either direct or indirect shots while bearing in.

**THE PLAYS ARE CLOSE.** The prime play produces more gammons for both sides and that works in Black's favor. If the match score were 4-away, 2-away with White holding a 2-cube, I would certainly go with the priming play.

However at this match score, the solid, safe running play gets the nod.  $\Delta$

## DAVIS IN A "DEFENSIVE" MOOD IN MINNESOTA

Bill Davis (IL) successfully defended his title at the 1997 Minnesota State Champs by besting the undefeated Tim Lawless (MN) twice, 15-14 and 15-7 in the double elimination format. Once again, the tournament fell on his birthday. Results below.  $\Delta$



Director Steve Maas (center) with Minnesota winner Bill Davis (left) and runner-up Tim Lawless. [Photo by Peter Kalba]

## MINNESOTA STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

**CHAMPIONSHIP (19):** 1-Bill Davis (IL), 2-Tim Lawless (MN); 1C-Fred Kalantari (MN). **INTERMEDIATE (11):** 1-Tom Penney (MN), 2-Harold Roberson (MN); 1C-Steve Maas (MN). **AUTUMN JACKPOT (8):** 1-Ray Foglerlund (CA), 2-Glenn Dowd (MN). **DOUBLES (8):** 1-Ray Foglerlund (CA) & Glenn Dowd (MN), 2-Bill Davis & Peter Kalba (IL). **1-POINT MINI-MATCH (16):** 1-Fred Kalantari (MN). **2-POINT MINI-MATCH (32):** 1-Glenn Dowd (MN). **\$25 SUNDAY JACKPOT (12):** 1-Sam Pottle (WI).



# WINNER'S CIRCLE



Aug.-Oct. 1997

•**St. Moritz Summer Championship** (St. Moritz, Switzerland; 14-17 Aug.)... CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Roland Ekström (SWE), 2-Mario Sequeira POR), 3/4-Jaques Torrión (SWITZ) / Marcus Rindesbacher (SWITZ); 1C-Michael Higatsberger (AUS), 2C-Ralf Ludwig (GER); 1LC-Gianmichele D'Ofrio (ITA), 2LC-Paul Magriel (USA). INTERMEDIATE: 1-Rolf Vetsch (SWITZ), 2-Simon Barget (ENG); 1C-Knoll (SWITZ), 2C-M del Monego (ITA); 1LC-Bambi de Bruin (GER/SPN), 2LC-Stefan Ackerman (SWITZ)... *Corrected results from last month's issue.*

•**1st Mind Sports Olympiad—Backgammon** (London, England; 18-24 Aug.)... MSO GOLD CHAMPION: 1-John Clark, 2-Martin Barkwill, 3-Alex Baron. WEEKEND TOURNEY: 1-George Christofides (CYP), 2-Steve Rimmer, 3-Liam Geoghegan. BEGINNER: 1-Richard Biddle (USA), 2-Alex Baron, 3-Paul Martin... *Results provided by National Backgammon Players Society.*

•**Ace Point Club Summer Open** (New York, NY; 31 Aug.)... OPEN (17): 1/2-Alan Grunwald / Michael Nathanson; 1C-Ann Lieb, 2C-Andy Palumbo. LIMITED (10): 1-Helene Spinner, 2-Thomas Rupprecht; 1C-Marc Freeman, 2C-Hy Kozak.

•**1997 Argentine Championship** (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mondays in Sep.)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Carlos Szechet, Rafael Dann, José Perel, Carlos Roccatagliata. JUNIOR WINNERS: Manuel Nogueira, Alberto Esmerian, César Paz, Eduardo Zuccotti, Alberto Esmerian. BEGINNER WINNER: Maria Sheridan.

•**Hong Kong Monthly** (Hong Kong; 1 Sep.)... OPEN: 1-Steve Nelson, 2-Bai Ling; 1C-Jonas Sjolander, 2C-Patrice Hattu. CHAMPIONSHIP: 1-Asdis Gudmann, 2-P. Jean Richard; 1C-Jon Johnsson, 2C-Chris Roberts.

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Cambridge, MA; 14 Sep.)... EXPERT (27): 1-Walter Trice, 2-Jim Kasarjian, 3/4-Norman Humer / Connie Machakos; 1C-Michael Urban, 2C-Ed Abou-Zeid. A DIV. (17): 1-Jim Williams, 2-Al Mason, 3/4-Jonathan Taggu / Alex Zamanian; 1C-Marty Gross, 2C-Fred Ferguson.

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (San Mateo, CA; 21 Sep.)... OPEN (16): 1-Carmi Brandis, 2-Paul Tanenbaum; 1C-Kit Woolsey, 2C-Paul Albert. INTERMEDIATE (15): 1-Michael Mitzenmacher, 2-Bart Davis; 1C/2C-Marc Lowe / J.C. Dill. BEGINNER (5): 1-Ted Chee, 2-Danilo Dacosta; 1C-Bill Gazes.

•**Atlanta Backgammon Assoc. Fall Doubles** (Atlanta, GA; 21 Sep.)... DOUBLES: 1-Bob Wilensky & Larry Taylor, 2-Carl Sorg & Samra Hadden. SINGLES CONS.: 1-Ray Gronek, 2-Simon Kennedy-Rose.

•**Scandinavian New Hair Clinic Open** (Malmö, Sweden; 25-28 Sep.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (40): 1-Ray Tannen (UK), 2-Jörgen Granstedt (SWE), 3/4-Jes Bondo (DK) / Asger Kring (DK); 1C-Navidi Afshar (DK), 2C-Karsten Bredahl (DK); 1LC-Mikael Löfblad (SWE), 2LC-Jerry Grandell (SWE). INTERMEDIATE: 1-Johan Nilsson (SWE), 2-Karsten Schmidt (DK); 1C-Karsten Nilsen (DK), 2C-Hannu Lyyssynen (FIN). BEGINNER: 1-Lennart Staarup (DK), 2-Claus Steensgard (DK); 1C-Jannika Tornquist (SWE); 2C-Marianne Jonsson (SWE); 1LC-Christen Johanson (SWE). SUPER JACKPOT:

1-Jan Clementsson (SWE), 2-Thomas Ribohn (SWE)... *Jake Jacobs reports: In one of the worst disasters in backgammon history, \$30,000 in prize money in a strongbox was stolen at 3:20 am Saturday morning prior to the start of the event. Directors and organizers generously came up with a replacement prize fund totaling half the prize money. The thieves remain at large.*

•**Towpath Inn Tournament—ABT** (Turin, NY; 26-28 Sep.)... OPEN (14): 1-Alan Fenster (NY), 2-Eden Windish (Canada), 3-Matt Relkatis (PA). DOUBLES (5): 1-M. Storer (NH) & E. Johnson (NY).

•**Dr. Bob Hill's "Sweet 16" at NYC&B** (New York, NY; 27 Sep.)... OPEN (14): 1-Al Tesoro (NY), 2-Perry Gartner (NJ).

•**Springfield Open** (Springfield, IL; 11 Oct.)... OPEN (17): 1-William Hutchison, 2-Randy Armstrong; 1C-Robert Farmer, 2C-John Jennings; 1LC-Michael Plog.

•**Nation's Capital Championships—ABT** (Bethesda, MD; 10-12 Oct.)... OPEN (20): 1-William Counts, 2-David Montgomery, 1C-Bruce Hall, 4-Peter Kalba (IL), 5-Dennis Culpepper (VA), 1LC-Paul Weaver. JACKPOT TOURNEY (11): 1-Dr. Bob Hill (NY), 2-Barry Steinberg (MD); 1C-Roy Dixon. DOUBLES (7): 1-David & Laura Montgomery, 2-Dennis Culpepper & Greg Lilley. SUNDAY OPEN TOURNAMENT (18): 1-Barry Steinberg (MD), 2-Ron Bernstein, 1C-Peter Kalba (IL), 1LC-Ed Maslansky.

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Cambridge, MA; 12 Oct.)... EXPERT (18): 1-Herb Gurland, 2-Jim Pascoe, 3/4-Norman Humer / Ed Ahola; 1C-Nora Luna, 2C-Linc Bedell. A DIV. (13): 1-Jim Glover, 2-John Lorenz, 3/4-Jim Williams / Jerry Padova; 1C-Doreene Johnson, 2C-Larry Yeager.

•**Florida State Championship—ABT** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 17-19 Oct.)... OPEN (21): 1-Steve Flam (FL), 2-Alex Caraplis (NJ), 3-Jim Pascoe (NJ). INTERMEDIATE (18): 1-Michael Bureau (FL), 2-Wally Swan (NY), 3-Ed Felton (FL). DOUBLES (6): 1-Al Tesoro (FL), 2-Katherine Willoughby (FL).

•**18th Opre Invitational** (Downers Grove, IL; 18 Oct.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (8): 1-Chris Stanford (TX), 2-Bill Davis. DOUBLES (4): 12-Paul Franks & Tom Walthes, 2-Jim Opre & Yamin Yamin... *Thanks to Jim & Carmel Opre and Stephi Walthes for the great New Orleans-style dinner party.*

•**Sandy Osborne Memorial** (Milton Keynes, England; 18-19 Oct.)... OPEN (51): 1-Julian Fetterlein, 2-Jens Neregaard; 1C-Simon Jones, 2C-Richard Granville; 1LC-Caroline East, 2LC-Jim Johnson. SUICIDE! (32): 1-John Thomas, 2-Jeff Barber. TEAM/DOUBLES: 1-Ealing Exiles.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 19 Oct.)... OPEN (21): 1/2-Harry Cohn / Rick Bieniak, 3/4-John Stryker / Steve Mellen; 1C-Tim Helms, 2C-Wendy Kaplan. INTERMEDIATE (17): 1-George Barr, 2-Scott Richardson, 3/4-Reggie Porter / Phyllis Smolinski; 1C-Alice Kay, 2C-Marv Arnol (WI).

•**Clarine's Monthly** (Los Angeles, CA; 25 Oct.)... OPEN (6): 1-Ray Baker, 2-Bob Glass... *Now meeting at A.R. Private Club.*

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (San Mateo, CA; 19 Oct.)... OPEN (21): 1-Tom Henson, 2-Odis Chenault; 1C-Paul Albert, 2C-Antoine Azzaria. INTERMEDIATE (13): 1/2-Elli Nache / Bart Davis; 1C-J.C. Dill, 2C-Vesko Marinov. BEGINNER (9): 1-Bill Caplan, 2-Sherry Dumont; 1C-Jim Milner. Δ

## AMALGAMATION

**FINAL CALL** for the Backgammon On Board Miami-to-Bahamas Cruise (9-12 Jan.). This is guaranteed fun! Call The Cruise Consultants (800/478-0433) by 15 Nov. to join us... Visiting the Bar Point Club in October: **Dave Groner** (IN), **Mark Stone** (CO), **Laila Leonhardt** (Denmark), **Elliott Winslow** (CA), **Tim Helms** (IA), **John Helms** (NB), **Carol Kendrick** (NB), and **Marv Arnol**, **Bruce Russell**, **Sam Pottle**, **Sonja Peacock** (WI)... Condolences to family and friends on the passing of **Ann Dickson** (NY). Ann had an active role in Pine Tree Point tournaments up until her death... California to Chicago: **Phil Nutting**... **Andy Krenitz** (IL) lost 70 pounds on the Fen-Phen diet. It may be dangerous, but it works!... When you're hot, you're hot! The day after her Consolation victory in the Illinois State Championships, **Leslie Lockett** (IL) was "on-the-air" winning \$1,000 in the US 99 radio Jukebox Contest... What comes up on the Internet when you key in: [www.backgammon.com](http://www.backgammon.com)? The American Backgammon Tour? The Worldwide Backgammon Fed.? The Nevada Backgammon Assoc.? No, it's Hasbro Games—and they're not even involved in backgammon! They registered it early for potential future value... Incredible error coincidence: the current and previous issues of Flint Area BackgammonNews are both #214. The current and previous issues of European Backgammon News are both #34... 1997 Giants of Backgammon voting is now under way. For details, contact **Yamin Yamin** (IL) at 847/945-7801. **Rick Bieniak** (IL) submitted an article from the 12 Oct. *Chicago Sun-Times* regarding the competitiveness of NFL coaches **Mike Ditka** (New Orleans) and **Dan Reeves** (Dallas). Said Reeves, "I remember the first time we played backgammon. [Mike] had never seen the game, and I was trying to explain the game to him because at least I had played it some. Immediately, he wanted to play for money." Δ

## CHICAGOLAND ACTION



Bill Davis  
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Peter Kalba  
773/252-7755

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

**Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON** at Anyway's Chicago Grill & Bar, 5 E. Roosevelt Rd., Oakbrook Terrace; 630/932-9323.

**PUB CLUB:** Tourn. Monday, 7:30 P.M. at Smithfield's, 300 S. Schmale, Carol Stream. V. W. Zimmnicki (630/924-8632).

**GAMES PEOPLE PLAY:** Tourn. Monday, 6:30 P.M. at The Clique, 2347 S. Michigan, Chicago. Reggie Porter (773/471-5066).

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



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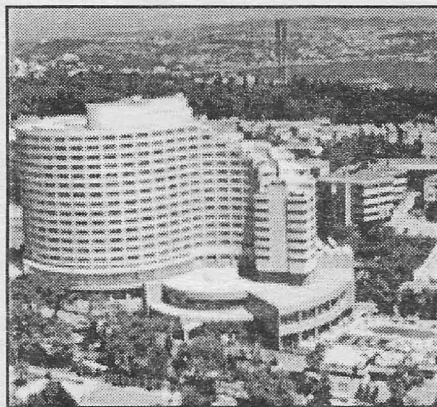
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