

19th chicago open

## CULPEPPER TAKES THE 'SCENIC TOUR'

Wins Chicago Open by way of the last chance bracket.

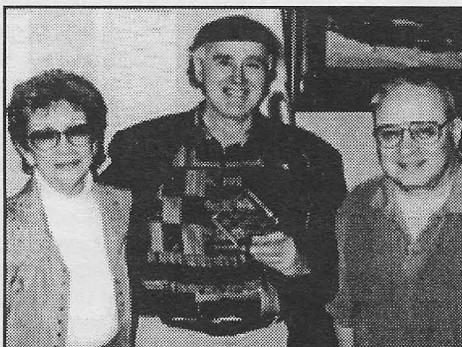
It's never easy when you play Doug Roberts. Dennis Culpepper and five other opponents found that out at this year's Chicago Open. 19 years old and going strong, this year's Chicago Open attracted over 120 players to the Wyndham Hotel in Itasca, Illinois over the Memorial Day weekend (22-25 May). Joann Feinstein and Howard Markowitz co-directed with skilled assistance from John Brussel and Linda Woods.



Dennis Culpepper maintains a cool composure in his march to the Chicago Open championship.

The double elimination format was a blessing for Culpepper, a top-notch player from Chesterfield, Virginia. Dennis faced Doug Roberts (Amherst, Massachusetts) in the finals of the undefeated bracket only to go down in flames. Now Dennis would have to win two more matches to get another crack at Dougie. He was successful, defeating Chicagoan Peter Kalba en route. Kalba finished third.

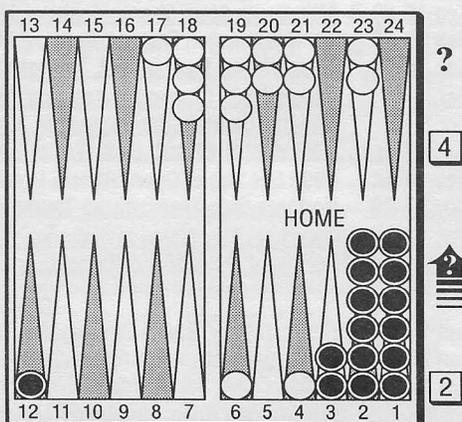
With a Roberts/Culpepper rematch set, Dennis needed two 13-point match victories in a row to take the title. After an hour of sparring and with Culpepper leading 7-5,



Intermediate Champ Merrill Schrage (center) receives congratulations from co-directors Joann Feinstein and Howard Markowitz. Howard also won the Master's Tourney.

the following volatile redoubling decision arose:

Chicago Open Finals. 13-point match #1. Dennis Culpepper (Black) leads Doug Roberts (White), 7 to 5. **CUBE DECISION(S)?**



Dennis pondered the recube for over 5 minutes. Dougie took an equal amount of time deciding on whether to take or drop. He eventually accepted. Dennis tossed a 4-3, Roberts missed the ace shot, and Dennis was in command 11-5.

Two games later, Culpepper evened things up with a 13-6 victory in the first tilt. Now for the rubber match.

"I think I'm going to take a break," were Doug Roberts' words immediately following his first defeat of the tournament. He returned a half hour later with a determined

[Continued on page 9]

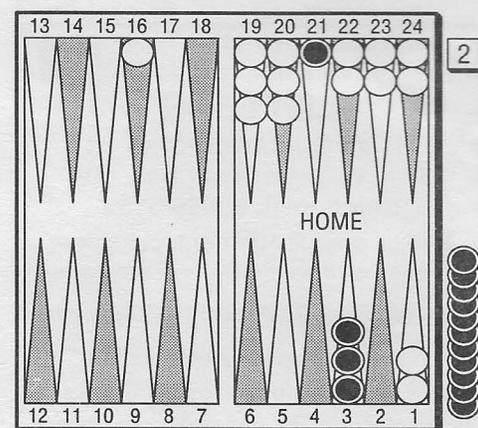
## What's in a Name?

by Jake Jacobs

Consider the name Bernd Schmude (pronounced "burnt schmoo duh"). An ordinary name, you say? An innocuous name? One that might be worn, quietly, albeit proudly, by a hundred men: your neighbor, your coworker, the man who tunes your piano. Not a name to conjure with; a name to strike terror in the heart, a name that can, by its mere mention, alter the course of backgammon as we know it today. Ah, how little we really know about the game.

It all started a long time ago. It began with a game between friends of mine, and the strange position they produced.

Pos. #1. Money game. **WHITE ON ROLL.**



White, playing an ace-deuce backgame, had hit after Black had borne off 11 checkers. In the diagram above, Black had just entered with a 4-2. White rolled 6-4, and ran a back checker. Then, Black threw a devious 2-1, a shameless ploy to induce cube error by White in Position #2 (shown on page 4).

White now rolled 1-1 to instantly hit all four checkers—the Hoover Maneuver—leading to a most unusual position wherein Black had eleven men borne off, and the other four closed out.

Skip ahead 20 years (covered elsewhere) (or, buy me a drink, and I'll tell it

[Continued on page 4]

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

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## NORDIC ROBBERY UPDATE

Regarding the Nordic Open Safe box robbery in April: no news is good news! The hotel still maintains that the insurance company will pay up (what the tournament and players lost). However, the insurance company must wait for the police to finish their investigation.—Chris Ternel, director, Nordic "Wide" Open, Copenhagen, Denmark

As of our June press date, our contributing editor Jake Jacobs, a Nordic participant, has not received the \$1300 that was stolen from his safe box.—Ed.

## CHALLENGE BACKGAMMON

I propose a new form of backgammon competition for average to good players (not for top, expert players), whereby the

[Continued on page 3]

coming attractions

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

### NATIONAL

Jun 12-14	1998 Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Atlanta, GA	770/333-1876
Jun 14	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Jun 14*	Northern Ohio Monthly, Belden Commons Restaurant, Canton, OH	330/966-2811
Jun 18	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Jun 18	Connecticut Monthly Tourney, Stromberg Technologies, Southington, CT	203/592-9207
Jun 20	Dr. Bob's "Sweet 16" Invitational, New York Chess & BG, New York City	800/520-1809
Jun 21	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	408/688-9722
Jun 27*	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Jun 28	Louisville Monthly Tournament, Oldenberg Grill, Louisville, KY	502/458-9660
Jun 28	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Jul 1	FIBS 1998 Summer Blitz Tournament, via computer	<a href="mailto:davide@sco.com">davide@sco.com</a>
Jul 1	Michigan Summer Warm-Up Tourney, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI	810/232-9731
Jul 2-5	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Jul 11*	Hawaii State Championships, Pacific Club, Honolulu, HI	808/735-5252
Jul 11-12	Nation's Capital Summer Open, Promenade Cardroom, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Jul 16*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Jul 16*	Connecticut Monthly Tourney, Stromberg Technologies, Southington, CT	203/592-9207
Jul 18	Hawthorne Backgammon Classic, Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL	773/583-6464
Jul 19*	Austin Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Jul 19*	Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, WI	414/463-2498
Jul 19*	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	408/688-9722
Jul 25*	Dr. Bob's "Sweet 16" Invitational, New York Chess & BG, New York City	800/520-1809
Jul 25*	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Jul 26*	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Jul 26*	Louisville Monthly Tournament, Oldenberg Grill, Louisville, KY	502/458-9660
Jul 31-Aug 2	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Jul 31-Aug 9	World Cup VI & U.S. Open, Harvey's Hotel Addison, Dallas, TX	301/299-8265
Aug 2*	Rocky Mountain Sunday Tournament, Cheers, Denver, CO	719/574-5598
Aug 9*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyway's Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/583-6464
Aug 23*	Peoria Summer Tourney, Location TBA, IL	309/673-7622
Sep 4-7*	<u>46th Indiana Open, Sheraton/Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Sep 18-20	<u>Minnesota State Championships, Minneapolis Athletic Club, MN</u>	<u>612/378-1536</u>
Sep 25-27*	1st NetGammon Festival, Comfort Inn Airport, Bloomington, MN	<a href="mailto:rayb@cp.duluth.mn.us">rayb@cp.duluth.mn.us</a>
Sep 25-27	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Oct 2-4	<u>Illinois State Champs &amp; America Cup, Holiday Home, Rolling Meadows, IL</u>	<u>847/945-7801</u>
Oct 9-11	<u>Nation's Capital Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD</u>	<u>301/530-0604</u>
Oct 30-Nov 1*	<u>Northeast Regional, Best Western Airport Hotel, Albany, NY</u>	<u>603/863-4711</u>
Nov 10-14	1998 Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Nov 27-29	Northern Ohio Thanksgiving Tournament, Belden Holiday Inn, Canton, OH	330/966-2811
Dec 4-6*	<u>Gammon/Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Dec 26-27	<u>Ace Point Holiday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY</u>	<u>212/753-0842</u>

### OUTSIDE USA

Jun 13-14	Hilton Trophy, Stakis Birmingham Metropole, Birmingham, England	44152-2546993
Jun 20-21	Dal Negro Italian Championship #8, Venezia Hotel, Torino, Italy	3941-5900769
Jun 27-28	British Open, Jarvis International Hotel, Watford/London, England	44161-4380966
Jul 3-8	5th German Open, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Jul 9-12	10th City of Venice International Tournament, Venice, Italy	3941-5900769
Jul 10-12	M-C Warm-Up Tourney, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA contact: 954/527-4033
Jul 11-12	Bonus No. 1, Stakis Birmingham Metropole, Birmingham, England	44152-2546993
Jul 13-19	World Championship, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA contact: 954/527-4033
Jul 20-21	7th Nice Open, Lido Plage, Nice, France	33493-879436
Jul 26	1998 Newcastle Open, Mattara Hotel, Charlestown, NSW, Australia	612-49469222
Aug 8-9	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Stakis Birmingham Metropole, England	44152-2546993
Aug 13-16	Franken ganz Open IV, Hotel Schwarzer Adler, Uttenreuth, Germany	49911-737514
Aug 22-23	Jarvis Trophy, Jarvis International Hotel, Watford/London, England	44161-4380966
Aug 24-30	2nd Mind Sports Olympiad, Royal Festival Hall, London, England	44171-4859146
Aug 29-30	Sjællandsmesterskaberne, Roskilde BG Klub, Roskilde, Denmark	4539-400607
Sep 4-6	8th Mitteleuropa Tournament, Casino Park, Nova Gorica, Slovenia	392-40074658
Sep 5-6	Bonus No. 2, Stakis Birmingham Metropole, Birmingham, England	44152-2546993
Sep 19-20	6th Irish Open, Camden Court Hotel, Dublin, Ireland	3531-6689332
Sep 25-27	Inner Table Tournament #3, Grand Hotel Leicester, England	44152-2721630
Oct 1-4	Asian Championships, Ladies Recreation Club, Hong Kong	852-28461923
Oct 7-11	2nd Moscow Open, World Trade Center Hotel, Moscow, Russia	Spain: 3450-133009

# LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

player is rewarded strictly on the basis of skill—not luck! It's a match play where you win or lose points based on the quality of your analysis of the plays, not on who wins or loses.

Two players play a match (to 5, 7, or 9 points) with an "expert" acting as the judge. The expert can be a very top player, a panel of three top players, a top player and Jellyfish™, or just JF. Every time a player makes a play (either checker play or cube decision), the other player may challenge it. The challenger states which play he thought was incorrect, and what he thinks the correct play should be. Then the judge makes his ruling as to who is right. (The judge's decision is final, though the players may ask the judge to reconsider

after briefly providing their own explanation and thought.)

If the play is judged to be incorrect, the challenger gets 2 points. If the challenger can then recommend the correct play, he gets an additional 1 point; and if the challenger recommends an incorrect play, he loses 1 point (and thereby nets 1 point instead of 3). If the player made the correct play, he gets 3 points. If the expert determines that it is a tie, or so close as to not materially matter (in his opinion), or the expert isn't really sure which is right, then no points are awarded. (For cube decisions, whoever is correct simply gets 3 points.)

The winner of the match gets a bonus of 5 points, so it is possible to trail slightly in points, and still win (but in effect, that rewards the player who made the better plays that were not challenged). In the event of a tie, the winner of the match gets

the victory. To avoid blowouts, if a player gets up 12 points or more, the match ends.

This would not only be an interesting and fun way to play, but a truly excellent learning experience, particularly if the expert provides some explanation with the decisions. And of course, this format would also be excellent for money play at X per point and Y for the match.—*Phil Simborg, Chicago, IL*

## WANTED: BG BOARD FOR SENIORS DAY

I work for the Lake County, Illinois Forest Preserves, and every year we host roughly 6,500 seniors from Lake County and the surrounding areas for a picnic at our Lakewood Forest Preserve near Wauconda. I'm writing in hopes that you can point me toward a vendor that might be willing to donate a backgammon set or two as prizes for our 26th annual Seniors Day Celebration. Any advice you have would be most appreciated.

In case any of your members are interested in attending the event, Seniors Day is Wednesday, June 24 at Lakewood Forest Preserve on Route 176 near Wauconda. All attendees 55 and better are welcome!—*Catherine Vojtas <cvojtas@co.lake.il.us>, Lake County Forest Preserves, 2000 N. Milwaukee Ave., Libertyville, IL 60048*

We e-mailed your request to Carol Joy Cole. Carol has sent you two backgammon boards—and we'll cover the shipping. Good luck with your picnic!—*Ed. Δ*



## AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1998

Compiled through 25 May 1998 after 4 tournaments  
(Upcoming June events: Empire State Championship, Georgia Champs)



Dennis Culpepper	23.53	Odis Chenault	6.11	Chuck Bower	4.16	Bob Bercu	2.11
Steve McCormick	22.88	Ray Fogelund	6.11	John Brussel	4.16	Bruce Russell	2.08
Bob Glass	17.42	Mike Cyrkiel	5.60	Mark Larios	4.11	Lenny Loder	2.08
Doug Mayfield	13.74	Jeremy Kirkpatrick	5.46	Paul Dibiasse	3.99	Kieth Hramstad	1.81
Merrill Schrager	13.22	Bill Keefe	5.20	Peter Kalba	3.92	Rob Keast	1.55
Doug Roberts	11.76	Jeff Acierno	5.19	Kim Haubert	3.15	Ken Lazar	1.40
Malcolm Davis	11.75	Wendy Kaplan	5.04	Eliot Bean	3.05	Tom Machaj	1.35
Frankie Farjood	11.44	Joe Freedman	4.80	Butch Meese	3.00	Ray Bills	1.08
David Wells	11.20	Denny Leatherman	4.80	John Mazur	2.81	Julius High	1.05
Mike Friedman	10.40	Mike Lauzon	4.74	Linda Resnicoff	2.39	Paul Armbruster	0.88
Mike Rezai	9.59	Mike Hendrikson	4.72	Matt Reklaitis	2.39	Elaine Kehm	0.79
Art Benjamin	8.71	Lucky Nelson	4.55	Hunter Jones	2.36	Boris Mindich	0.70
Mike Fujita	7.97	Dave Orandle	4.36	Wally Wolf	2.35	Jennifer Waller	0.63
Bob Holyon	7.00	Rob Maier	4.36	James Roston	2.16	Niel Borden	0.44
Howard Markowitz	6.40	Walt Swan	4.21	Jobey Calitri	2.11	Andre Mattar	0.44



## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1998 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED  
THRU 31 MAY

Steve Mellen	16.44	Paul Klein	3.52	Elaine Kehm	1.92	Wendy Kaplan	0.84
Joe Wollick	11.32	Bill Keefe	3.28	Paul Baraz	1.76	Bob Steen	0.80
Paul Friedman	10.00	Rick Bieniak	3.24	Steve Klesker	1.76	Sam Pottle	0.72
Tak Morioka	8.52	Tim Carroll	3.24	Phil Simborg	1.68	Roland Dieter	0.64
Laila Leonhardt	8.44	Jake Jacobs	3.04	Ken Bond	1.44	Reginald Porter	0.56
Neil Kazaross	7.04	Marty Tatosian	2.80	Romeo Kap	1.28	Steve Rota	0.56
Alice Kay	6.56	John Demian	2.72	Val Zimnicki	1.16	Rich Gast	0.32
Mary Franks	5.88	Don Jayhan	2.52	Arline Levy	1.14	Sonia Peacock	0.32
Harry Cohn	5.76	Ed Buerger	2.48	Marc Rosset	1.12	Jannica Tornqvist	0.32
Andy Krenitz	4.64	Richard Stawowy	2.40	Jerry Brooks	0.96	Barbara Levinson	0.24
Herb Roman	4.20	Paul Franks	2.40	Barry Miller	0.96	Georgina Flanagan	0.24
Phyllis Smolinski	4.20	Norma Shyer	2.24	Ed Zell	0.96	Joann Feinstein	0.18
Gary Kay	4.08	Bill Davis	1.92	Tim Mabee	0.96	Frankie Farjood	0.16
Bob Zavoral	3.80	Joseph Esfahani	1.92	Dave Cramer	0.88		

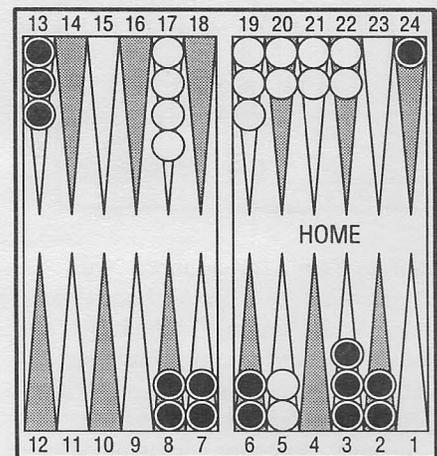
Give May Player of the Month honors to **BOB ZAVORAL**. Bob's victories on May 5 and 26 earned him 3.80 points. In second place (also with two May wins) was Alice Kay (3.68). Steve Mellen (3.52) finished third.

your move

## PROBLEM #244

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

Match to 5 points. No score. **BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.**



# DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS

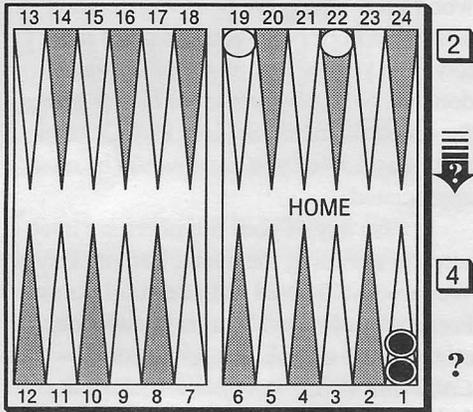


© 1998 by Danny Kleinman

## SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

**D**ear Miss Lonelyblots: Until I met him in the Last Chance at a recent midwestern tournament, I respected Crazy Craig as a fine player—my equal in backgammon. In the third game of our semifinal match, he redoubled me:

5-point match. Black leads White, 2 to 1. White on shake. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



*I saw that Craig was a big underdog. Naturally, I was delighted to accept his gift of the cube. Justice triumphed: he rolled 6-2, and I won game and match to move on to the finals.*

*Tell me, Miss Lonelyblots. Can any experienced player really be so bad as to turn the cube here? Might the martini on which he was sipping (the third one I saw him drink that evening) have impaired his backgammon judgment? Or, as I suspect, is he just plain crazy?—Big Beneficiary*

**DEAR BIG BEN:** You shouldn't have been so surprised to see Craig redouble as an underdog. Only one of the two additional points his redouble put at stake was working for you, while both worked for him. That suggests, as a rough guide, that he could redouble as a 2-to-1 underdog. Odd-even considerations let him redouble more aggressively still, for losing the game with the cube at 2 would send him into the Crawford Game needing 4 points (an undesirable even number) to win the match.

A more precise calculation shows just how low Craig's redoubling threshold can be at this score. Keeping the cube and losing puts him behind 1-4 entering the Crawford Game, with 17% match chances.

Keeping the cube and winning puts him ahead 3-2, with 60% match chances. Thus by redoubling, he risks 17% to gain 40%. To justify redoubling, he needs a 17/ (17+40) chance to win the game, almost 30%, equivalent to somewhere between 10.5 and 11 game-winning rolls in 36.

With men on the 6- and 3-points, he had only 10 winning rolls. Perhaps he counted 11 by mistake. Perhaps he counted rolls correctly, but underestimated the number of winning rolls he needed for a proper redouble. Or perhaps he realized that under the influence of two or three martinis, he might be unable to play well in the two or three games that would otherwise remain in the match, so he chose a slightly intemperate redouble to end the match quickly.

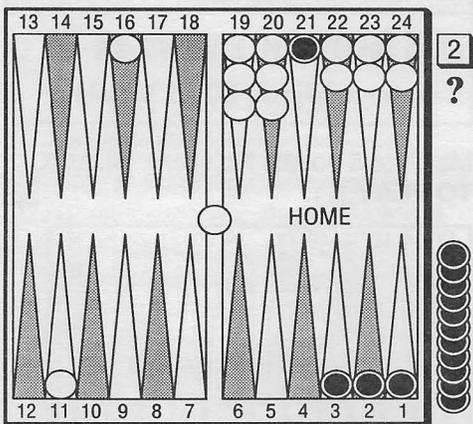
If he was able to draw inferences from his own inebriation, however, his backgammon judgment might not have been very impaired. At worst, Craig was mistaken, not crazy.—Miss Lonelyblots Δ

*Do you have a backgammon-related question for Miss Lonelyblots involving people problems, game etiquette or the play itself? Write: Dear Miss Lonelyblots, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155.*

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?...

[Continued from page 1]

**Position #2.** Money game. White on roll. **SHOULD WHITE DOUBLE?**



White should have cubed this.

The night before, Neil Kazaross and I, positioning ourselves near the tappers of draft training fluid, had worked on sharpening our games until, oh, 4 a.m., or thereabouts. This morning, peering through eyes made bleary by over-training, I scanned the position and remarked that it looked like a beaver to me. (Train right and they all look like beavers!) One fellow scoffed, so I played the above position as a beaver. And, I do mean the above position, for I neglected, as Black, to take possession of the cube! It was my lucky day. (Really! I won the Last Chance too.) To the amazement and delight of the crowd, well, their amazement, and my delight, I won for an hour.

Finally my score began to drop towards even. "Ho hum," I yawned. "I'm bored with this one." It had finally penetrated that I was on the wrong side. I took it home, rolled it out (no double/no beaver), and filed it away in my mental cabinet.

Skip ahead several months (recounted nowhere—buy me that drink!) to the 3rd Thai Open. I'm sure you don't want to hear the gruesome details of my being offered up as a living sacrifice to the dice demons (You do? Ghouls!), so I will omit them.

By Sunday night I was free to join the other unfortunates, telling tales instead of living them. The story of the four blot ending came up, and once again I was challenged to a prop. This time, we got possession of the cube on 2, and, we were paid a point to take it. I say 'we' because there were four of us who felt this to be a take. Four against the multitudes. Most players find a position with *no* points and *all* blots disturbing, though some, like KG, find it reassuring.

The crowd that night had few KGs in their midst, and were all against us. It was a crowd. There were still a few players doing important backgammon things. Ramon Eleazar was winning the tournament. My soon to be future ex-girlfriend Nam was winning the Intermediate Consolation. Shoop, the tournament director was running around saying: "Cest le gammon." (Shoop is French, so pardon me if I have trouble with his dialogue.) Otherwise, we propsters had the floor.

When the matchup is group against group, as here, there is a matter more important than choice of color and direction to resolve. That is, who rolls for each

[Continued on page 5]

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?...

[Continued from page 4]

side? Displaying brilliant technique, their side picked Schmude! Here was where we were done in. You see, not only is Schmude one of the great rollers of our time, but—this is the important part—he has a perfect name for chanting. As he flayed us with each lash of his dice, the crowd roared their approval: “Schmude! Schmude!” (“Schmoo duh! Schmoo duh!”) It was a powerful incantation that inspired him to conjure ever more awesome apparitions from the stygian depths of his dice cup.

Desperate, I tried a counter charm, but unfortunately we had picked our own roller unwisely, and not well. You see, our man in the chair was Jan Clementsson. Just try it a minute, chanting: “Jan!” (Pronounced “yon.”) You see? Not enough syllables, and the syllables it does have are awfully puny. I could have tried “Jan and Jake” (not pronounced “yake”), but that is hardly better. I could have tried the name of one of our teammates, Goran, but people might have thought we were playing bridge.

Besides, every time Schmude hit one of our blots, Goran displayed a really interesting facial twitch. Schmude was hitting us every roll, so Goran looked like the poster boy for Tourette’s Syndrome.

I now know what I should have done. Throughout the prop, one of the crowd had an open phone connection to Turkey, and would burst in with updates on Jerry Grandell’s performance. The crowd was mostly Swedish. (It was Thailand, what else would they be?) Half our team (heck, half their team) was Swedish. Our roller was most definitely Swedish. I should have chanted: “Sweden! Sweden!” (Pronounced “swee den.”) That would have taken the crowd out of it.

In fairness, I will point out that one of the opposition, Joachim Johanssen (unpronounceable) was directing their bearoff in a manner much more effective than that used by JellyFish™ in its rollouts (open up the low points, leaving blots). Still, they were on the wrong side. Didn’t matter. With Schmude rolling, there could be only one home for our hard earned baht, and that was in their wallets. Well, actually it found a home in Shoop’s cash register, as Joachim bought B-52s, and bottles of champagne (known as the “Malmo Happy Meal”) for everyone.

Now you know. When the going gets tough, your back is to the wall, when your dice seem haunted, you know who to call. “Schmude! Schmude!” He can do it all. Δ

prudence

## HASTY PLAYS

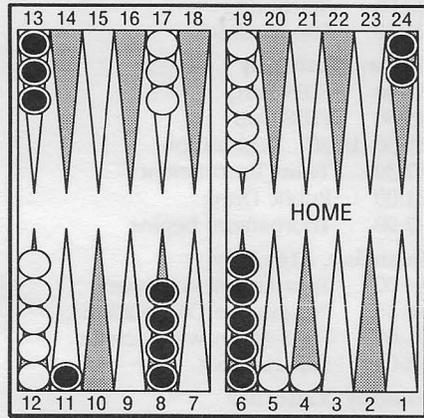


by Duane Jensen

### HASTY PLAY 3-PACK

A hasty play often looks so familiar and comfortable that you never consider searching for a better one. Here are three of my favorites pulled from my personal collection of blunders.

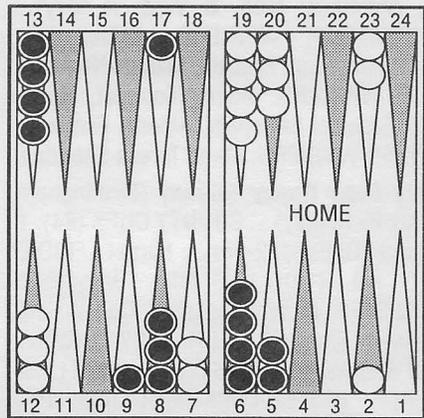
#### 1. Money game. BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.



There was no question in my mind how to play the 4-1; I’d done it many times before: make my bar point. I never considered 8/4\* and 6/5\*!

The double hit is not just a better play; it’s a *much* better play. The routine of making the bar point with the 4-1 roll was so fixed in my mind, I didn’t bother looking for an alternative.

#### 2. Money game. BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.

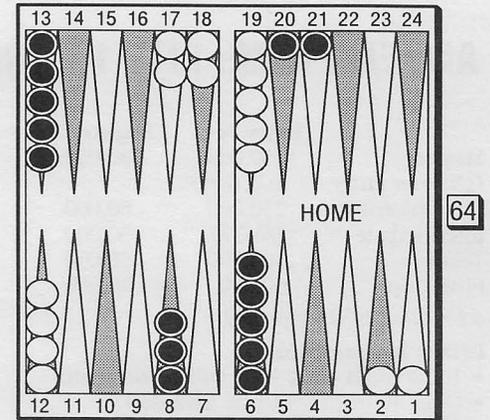


No problem here: 8/2\* and 6/2\* pointing on the blot. If he failed to come in, I could consider doubling.

I was too preoccupied with a quick kill. I should have been thinking of a more constructive, long-term play such as 17/11, 13/9. This play leaves a direct 4-shot, but it’s a better play than attacking the blot on

the 2-point. If you don’t get hit by a 4-shot, this play leaves you with a game that is relatively “simple” to play. You can bring this game home by rolling “well” without the need of “miracle rolls.”

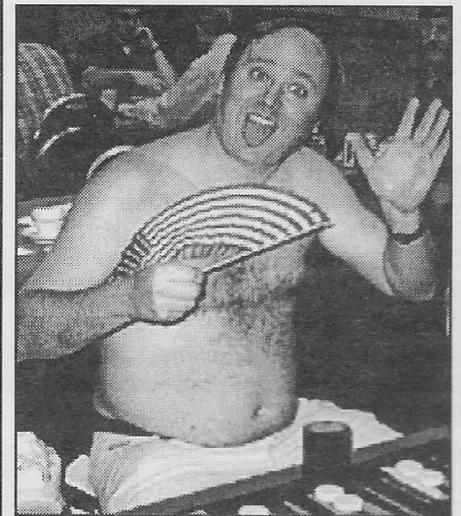
#### 3. Money game. BLACK TO PLAY 5-5.



Another “no brainer” for me; I built my 1- and 3-points with double 5s. I’d made this play dozens—no thousands of times.

Unfortunately, it’s not the right play here. I would have been better off running my two blots to my outfield, 21/11 and 20/10. If they weren’t hit with 8s, 9s, or 10s, I’d have a racing lead and builders in great position. Δ

## Caption Deadline: June 24 —WIN \$50—



Last chance to tell us what’s on Dougie’s mind. Caption this photo of Doug Roberts in the most humorous way and you may win \$50. Entries will be judged by a panel of national backgammon directors.

MAIL YOUR CAPTIONED ENTRIES BY 24 JUNE 1998 TO: Chicago Point; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr 504; Chicago, IL 60659, or [chipoint@interaccess.com](mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com). Δ

# 10th International Backgammon Tournament

## CITY OF VENICE

Casinò Municipale • Lido of Venice

9–12 July 1998

**ADDED PRIZE: LIT. 10,000,000 • 1st PRIZE MINIMUM GUARANTEED: LIT. 20,000,000**

	Entry Fees	Registration
Master	750,000	80,000
(Quarter entry	200,000)	
Championship	250,000	50,000
Intermediate	70,000	30,000
Team	300,000	50,000
FIBS Cup	50,000	10,000

\$1 = Lit. 1,800 (approx.)

### Prizes & Conditions

- 100% of all entry fees will be returned
- Over 40 trophies to be awarded
- FIBS Party & FIBS Cup reserved to Fibsters
- Tournament Director: DARIO DE TOFFOLI
- Assistant: Alfonso Sara
- Jackpot Man: Dario Zaccariotto
- Precision Dice available at the tournament
- Playing room open until 5:00 am
- Free pass to the Casino rooms

### INFORMATION: studiogiocchi

S. Polo 3083 - 30125 Venezia  
tel. +39-41-521 1029 fax +39-41-524 0881  
mobile 0335/5331 1773  
E-mail: [dariodet@tin.it](mailto:dariodet@tin.it)  
Website: [www.backgammon.thex.it/venice](http://www.backgammon.thex.it/venice)

### Thursday, 9th July

15:30–20:00 Registration  
16:00 Jackpot Programme  
18:00 Quarter Entries  
22:00 Warm up  
23:30 Superjackpot

### Friday, 10th July

14:00 FIBS Party  
15:00 FIBS Cup  
15:30–19:30 Registration  
17:30 Team Tournament  
21:00 Public Draw  
22:00 Tournament begins

### Saturday, 11th July

14:00 Tournament continues  
16:00 Progressive Consolation  
21:00 Football on wide screen  
23:00 Superjackpot

### Sunday, 12th July

13:00 Last Chance  
15:00 Finals  
19:00 Prize-giving & Cocktail  
21:00 Football on wide screen



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who did what

## WINNER'S CIRCLE



Mar.–May 1998

•**15th Fleet Underwood Memorial Tournament** (Flint, MI; 15 Mar.)... OPEN (19): 1-Steve Mellen (IL), 2-Frank Talbot, 3-Rick Todd. INTERMEDIATE (27): 1-Sal Chehayeb, 2-Saad Ghiso, 3-Scottie Flora. NOVICE (12): 1-Lois Merriman, 2-Jennifer Waller (OH), 3-Mary Lee Pinkney (Canada).

•**Austin Bimonthly Tournament** (Austin, TX; 22 Mar.)... OPEN: 1/2-Chris Stanford / Tom Wheeler.

•**4th EBN Mayday International** (Almeria, Spain; 27 Apr.–3 May)... CHAMPIONSHIP (40): 1-Viacheslav Priadkin (UKR), 2-Dirk Schieman (GER), 3/4-Claude Marbleu (FRA) / Carsten Linderner-Emden (GER); 1C-Torsten Haase (GER), 2C-Gordon Cross; 1LC-Mike Senkiewicz (USA), 2LC-Leo Fernandez. INTERMEDIATE (21): 1-Hendrik Meuyers (GER), 2-Nonglak Prosertham (THAI); 1C-Dario De Toffoli (ITA), 2C-Peter Janzen (GER); 1LC-Eddie Velasco (SPA), 2LC-P. D'Ancona (ITA). WARM-UP (132): 1-Dario de Toffoli (SPA), 2-Veronica Dabul (ARG). \$1000 SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-Giammichele D'Onofrio

(ITA), 2-Peter Heitmüller (GER). AUCTION (8): 1-Bambi de Bruin (GER/SPA). GIN RUMMY (64): 1-Howard Markowitz (USA), 2-Dario de Toffoli (ITA)... *Martin and Bambi de Bruin's European Backgammon News-sponsored tournament gets bigger and better every year.*

•**1998 Argentine Championship** (Buenos Aires, Argentina; Mon. & Wed. in May)... CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS: Rafael Dna, Daniel Priani, Hugo Ergueta, Manuel Nogueira. JUNIOR WINNERS: Jimmy Fouquet, Héctor Ohana, Ezequiel Silberleib, Alberto Esmerian. BEGINNER WINNERS: María Teresa Sheridan.

•**County Cups Trophy Tourney** (Birmingham, England; 9–10 May)... COUNTY CUPS (84): 1-Emmanuel Di Bona, 2-Simon Barget. FRIDAY NIGHT KO (12): 1- John Broomfield. DOUBLES: (21+5 buy backs): 1-Dod Willing, 2-Shakey's Shakers. TOP LADY TROPHY: Rachel Rhodes (Corinne Sellens refused to accept it). BETTER-LUCK-NEXT-TIME: Paul Cohen. SWISS TEAM EVENT: 1-Mardi Ohannessian's Team.

•**Gammon Associates 41st Invitational—ABT** (Los Angeles, CA; 15–17 May)... OPEN (29): 1-Doug Mayfield, 2-Odis Chenault; 1C-Ray Foglerlund, 2C-Eliot Bean. ADVANCED (20): 1-Mike Lauzon, 2-Jobey Calitri; 1C-Bob Bercu, 2C-Julius High. LIMITED (7): 1-Paul Armbruster, 2-Niel Borden; 1C-Andre Matter

(BRAZ). SUPER-32 (30): 1-Dave Williams, 2-Fred Kamani, 3/4-Joseph Bina / Bill Ellis. DOUBLES (16): 1-Jon Vietor, 2-Steve Sax & Patrick Gibson. 1-POINT BLITZ (32): 1-Steve Sax, 2-Ray Baker.

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (San Mateo, CA; 17 May)... OPEN (23): 1-Kit Woolsey, 2-Richard McIntosh, 3/4-Danny Epstein / Johan Ericsson; 1C-Nicky Nicknam, 2C-Emil Malek. INTERMEDIATE (14): 1-Bear Reeves, 2-Jean Reeves; 1C-Hristo Zahov, 2C-Marc Lowe. BEGINNER (5): 1-Jim Milner, 2-Jen Wickboldt.

•**Freixenet Tournament** (Helsinki, Finland; 28–31 May)... OPEN (32): 1-Jorma Tattari, 2-Matti Kuortti, 3/4-Risto Ponnio / Petri Pietila; 1C-Tommy Westerlund (SWE), 2C-Jyri Lammi, 3C/4C-Paul Magriel (USA) / Sampo Niskanen; 1LC-Dag Ekmark (NOR), 2LC-Teppo Salo. FIBS TOURNEY (8): 1-mxi (Mika Makinen), 2-hapu (Hannu Lyyjynen). DIRECTOR'S AWARD: Paul Magriel (USA).

•**Inner Table Tournament #2** (Leicester, England; 29–30 May)... STAINES CUP: 1-Uldis Lapikens, 2-Mardi Ohannessian; 1C-Dod Davies, 2-Brian Lever. SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT: 1-Nicholas Check, 2-Emmanuel Di Bona; 1C-Bob Parmley, 2-Martin Lee.

•**Clarine's Monthly** (Los Angeles, CA; 30 May) ... OPEN (12): 1/2-Steve Sax / Bob Wachtel. Δ

# RANKING THE BEST

A look at how the current rating systems rank the top players of today.

Who are the best players in backgammon? Different ranking sources yield different answers.

The **Kent Goulding International Rating List** is patterned after the International Chess Federation system where your point total goes up or down based on whether you win or lose. The relative rating of your opponent also plays a factor in points won or lost. The last-published KG Rating List (July 1996) yields these top five names:

1. Ed O'Laughlin
2. Billy Horan
3. Harry Zilli
4. Matthias Pauen
5. Mika Inkinen

The **American Backgammon Tour** annual points race is very similar to the American Contract Bridge League. Points are earned by placing in any of the 20 ABT-rated events throughout the United States. Every year, the slate is wiped clean and the race begins again. The ABT top 5 for 1997 were:

1. Art Benjamin
2. Doug Mayfield
3. John O'Hagan
4. Fred Kalantari
5. Steve Sax

And the **American Backgammon Tour All-Time** top 5 1993-1997 are:

1. Art Benjamin
2. Doug Roberts
3. Neil Kazaross
4. Abbas Zaltash
5. Dean Muench

There is one other recognized ranking system that was just published in the March/April *Flint Area Backgammon News*. That is Yamin Yamin's **1997 Giant's of Backgammon**. Every two years, directors and prominent players from around the world are asked to select their personal top-32 players. The most recent vote went this way:

1. Wilcox Snellings
2. Mike Senkiewicz
3. Nick Ballard
4. Mike Svobodny
5. Paul Magriel

Being chosen by one's peers is a fine way to determine the finest backgammon players in the world. The only downside is

with a closed vote—past popularity can take precedence over results. For example, can you name the last tournament Paul Magriel has won? There is also the chance of the "vote for me and I'll vote for you" syndrome.

**THERE IS ONE OTHER RATING SYSTEM** that takes place before every backgammon tournament. It requires people to "put their money where their mouth is." It is the Calcutta Auction.

Below is a listing of the Calcutta Auction individually-sold players and the price they sold for at the five largest annual USA tournaments 1996 to present (Midwest Championships, Nevada State, Michigan Summer Championships, 1996 US Open, and the Las Vegas Open).

## Nevada State Tournament (14-19 Apr. 1998)

### *93 player field.*

Kit Woolsey: \$400	Hugh Sconyers: \$300
Elliott Winslow: \$350	Abe Mosseri: \$300
Nick Ballard: \$350	Jim Pasko: \$275
Paul Magriel: \$325	Kent Goulding: \$250
Mike Senkiewicz: \$300	Mike Corbet: \$250
Malcolm Davis: \$300	

## 1998 Midwest Champs (20-22 March 1998)

### *64 player field.*

Mike Senkiewicz: \$300	Kent Goulding: \$220
Neil Kazaross: \$300	Malcolm Davis: \$220
Art Benjamin: \$280	Doug Roberts: \$200
Nick Ballard: \$240	Frank Talbot: \$200

## Las Vegas Open (11-15 Nov. 1997)

### *91 player field.*

Mike Senkiewicz: \$350	Hal Heinrich: \$250
Bill Robertie: \$300	Nick Ballard: \$250
Malcolm Davis: \$300	Elliott Winslow: \$200
Kit Woolsey: \$250	Kent Goulding: \$200

## Michigan Summer Champs (3-6 July 1997)

### *93 player field.*

Malcolm Davis: \$400	Dennis Culpepper: \$300
Mike Senkiewicz: \$350	Frank Talbot: \$275
Howard Markowitz: \$300	Hal Heinrich: \$250
Harry Cohn: \$300	Dean Muench: \$250

## Nevada State (22-27 April 1997)

### *87 player field.*

Wilcox Snellings: \$350	Joe Sylvester: \$250
Malcolm Davis: \$300	Hal Heinrich: \$250
Mike Senkiewicz: \$300	Mike Corbett: \$200
Kit Woolsey: \$300	Elliott Winslow: \$200
Nick Ballard: \$250	Kent Goulding: \$200
Chuck Papazian: \$250	

## 1997 Midwest Champs (21-23 March 1997)

### *64 player field.*

Malcolm Davis: \$280	Jake Jacobs: \$240
Howard Markowitz: \$260	Elliott Winslow: \$220
Frank Talbot: \$260	Abbas Zaltash: \$220
Neil Kazaross: \$260	Hal Heinrich: \$200

## Las Vegas Open (6-10 Nov. 1996)

### *95 player field.*

Mike Senkiewicz: \$425	Kent Goulding: \$250
Kit Woolsey: \$350	Ed O'Laughlin: \$250
Bill Robertie: \$300	Hal Heinrich: \$250
Paul Magriel: \$275	Paul Weaver: \$225
Nick Ballard: \$250	Joe Russell: \$225
Malcolm Davis: \$250	

## 1996 US Open (11-18 Aug. 1996)

### *73 player field.*

Wilcox Snellings: \$500	Nick Ballard: \$300
Mike Senkiewicz: \$400	Billy Horan: \$300
David Ben-Zion: \$400	Sandy Lubetkin: \$300
Hal Heinrich: \$400	Chuck Papazian: \$200

## Michigan Summer Champs (4-7 July 1996)

### *85 player field.*

Abbas Zaltash: \$350	Harry Cohn: \$300
Dean Muench: \$325	Hal Heinrich: \$300
Joe Sylvester: \$300	Frank Talbot: \$275
Howard Markowitz: \$300	

## Nevada State (23-28 April 1996)

### *119 player field.*

Paul Magriel: \$500	Philip Marmorstein: \$350
Bill Robertie: \$500	Nick Ballard: \$350
Joe Russell: \$500	Chuck Papazian: \$300
Mike Senkiewicz: \$450	Evert Van Eijck: \$300
Neil Kazaross: \$400	Malcolm Davis: \$300
Wilcox Snellings: \$400	Gustav Jacobson: \$300
Kit Woolsey: \$375	Harry Cohn: \$175

## 1996 Midwest Champs (22-24 March 1996)

### *64 player field.*

Kit Woolsey: \$320	Harry Cohn: \$240
Abbas Zaltash: \$320	Malcolm Davis: \$220
Neil Kazaross: \$280	Howard Markowitz: \$200
Frank Talbot: \$260	

**OUR CALCUTTA AUCTION RANKING** includes all the players who attained a top auction bid at any of the above 11 tournaments. Here are these eight players with rankings assigned according to their bid average:

Ranking/Name	# of Tourn.	Top Bids	\$ Avg.
1. Wilcox Snellings	3	2	\$417
2. Paul Magriel	3	1	\$367
3. Bill Robertie	3	1	\$367
4. Joe Russell	2	1	\$367
5. Mike Senkiewicz	8	3	\$359
6. Kit Woolsey	6	2	\$326
7. Abbas Zaltash	3	2	\$297
8. Malcolm Davis	9	2	\$286

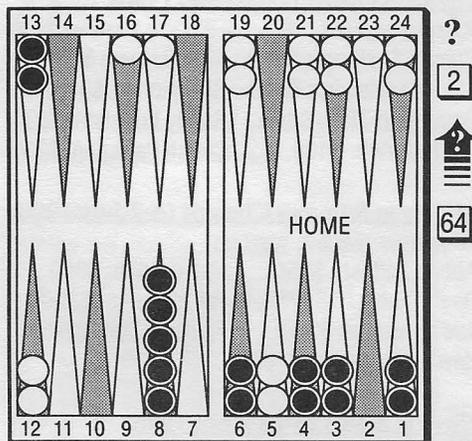
As with the **Giants of Backgammon** vote, a **Calcutta Auction** says nothing about a player's actual results. But you can be sure that if a player doesn't produce, he will quickly fall out of favor with the bidding public. Δ

last month's position

# PROBLEM #243 ANALYZED

by Antonio Ortega

13 point match. White leads Black, 11 to 10. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



In this simple, nearly gammon-free holding game from the third round of the April 1998 Masters Invitational in Las Vegas, Black enjoys a substantial 19 pip lead in the race (94 to 113, plus the shake). Though none of Black's rolls forces a blot now, he will probably leave an indirect shot while clearing the midpoint later.

In money play, Black's big lead in a holding game gives him a sound double, but White's combined racing and shot

chances permit a take even of a dead cube. A 7776-game cubeless JellyFish™ rollout shows Black winning 74.1% of the games (2.5% being gammons) and White winning 25.9% of the games (1.1% being gammons). With the vigorish of cube ownership, White's take becomes clear.

Let's see what is different in a match where Black needs 3 points for victory and White needs only 2:

- (a) The cube is useless to White if he takes.
- (b) White's (very few) gammons become meaningless.
- (c) Black's gammons (about one of every 30 games he wins) win the match and thus still have value.
- (d) Winning two points brings Black to match point with White needing an even number of points. This makes the "cube protection" of the Crawford Rule especially valuable.

Are these differences enough to turn a money take into a pass at this match score? Let's calculate.

White obtains 0.500 match equity by passing (the score will be tied at 11). If he takes and wins, he wins the match (1.000 match equity). Therefore his gain is 0.500. If he takes and loses, he trails 11-12 entering the Crawford Game (0.300 match equity). But because 1/30th of his losses are match-losing gammons, that .300 match equity decreases by 1/30th, leaving

Black with an average match equity of 0.2900. Therefore his average risk is  $0.500 - 0.290 = 0.210$ .

White's takepoint is determined by the ratio of risk to swing (risk plus gain). Here that is  $0.210 / (0.500 + 0.210)$ , about 29.6%. However, as the rollouts with a dead cube show, White's winning chances are only 25.9%. His clear money take becomes a clear pass at this score in the match.

Note that White would have a clear pass even if none of his losses were gammons. For then his risk-to-swing ratio would be  $0.200 / (0.500 + 0.200)$ , about 28.6%. At this score, Black should double aggressively and White should take cautiously even in non-gammonish positions.

If Black has a cash by a clear margin, shouldn't he have doubled one turn earlier, while White may still have been able to take? No. Last turn, Black still had two men back on White's 5-point. Then he rolled 6-6, which lifted him from a roughly even position to a cash.

Actually, Black's play of 20/8 (2) wasn't as strong as 20/14 (2), 13/7 (2), which fills in a gap and gives Black's midfield checkers another landing spot. After the match, Black said that he deliberately chose the weaker play in hopes that White would take the coming cube. However, White, one of backgammon's very finest experts, contemplated this cube decision for about half a minute and then decided to drop. Δ

# SNOWIE ON • THE • SCENE

by Larry Strommen

Snowie is the newest backgammon-playing program/analyzer which will soon be released by Oasya SA in Switzerland. Olivier Egger who created Snowie, has teamed up with Oasya to write the user interface. It features a neural network-based program which previously played under the name of "Snow White" on FIBS. The name was changed to avoid any potential copyright conflict with Walt Disney.

The impressive user interface (designed for Windows95) features some of the most advanced options that any player could ever expect in a game-playing program. There are three skill levels which are the number of plies looked at to define the plays with the best equities. If you are

playing at the one-ply level and want to see what the equity would be if you used a three-ply, just highlight a play (or plays) and click on "3" to find out.

You can play and save a match or a game, then hit a key to ANALYZE same. Snowie will go through the entire saved file and detail all possible plays with equity figures showing the best plays and cube actions. It will highlight joker rolls, poor plays, wrong cube decisions and more. While playing a game, one can run a MINI rollout or a FULL rollout of the current position.

Snowie is expected to be available by the middle of July on a single CD-ROM. Installation will be limited to one computer. Updates will be via patches posted on the Internet. It will initially be offered at \$300 including shipping. After a few months, a price increase is planned.

For more information, go to the Oasya SA website at [www.oasya.com](http://www.oasya.com) or call me at 317/545-0224.—Larry Strommen Δ

## MICHIGAN SUMMER BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS

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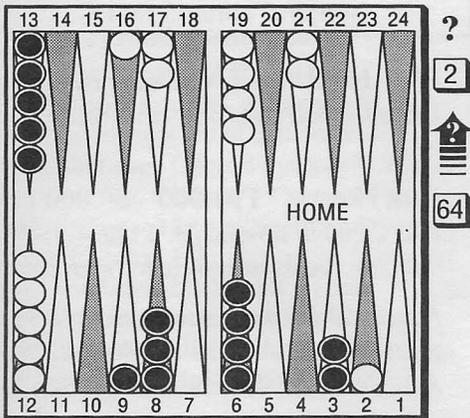
## CULPEPPER...

[Continued from page 1]

look and a \$15 bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon.

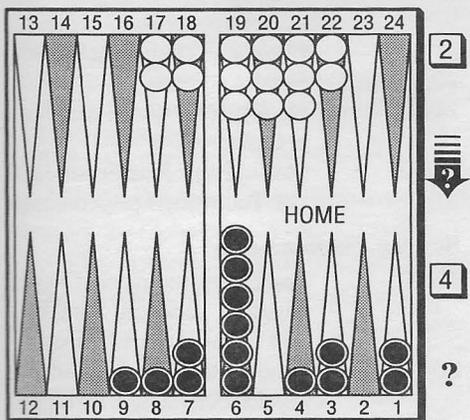
After losing the first game, Culpepper rallied for eight unanswered points including a doubled gammon in game 3. Then in game 7, with Dennis ahead 9-2, Dennis gave Doug the following doubling decision:

Chicago Open Finals. 13-point match #2. Dennis Culpepper (Black) leads Doug Roberts (White), 9 to 2. Black on shake. **CUBE DECISION(S)?**



An easy take for Doug based on the race (128 to 146), shot potential, and the match score. Although Dennis was able to safely bring the position home, Dougie rolled bigger numbers in the process. He eventually reached this position and another cube decision:

Chicago Open Finals. 13-point match #2. Dennis Culpepper (Black) leads Doug Roberts (White), 9 to 2. White on shake. **CUBE DECISION(S)?**



Doug reshopped. Although the race is tied at 81-81, considering the checker distribution, the score, and the potential for rolling a market-loser, Doug's double seems reasonable. In fact, Roberts tossed an immediate double 6. But it wasn't

enough. Culpepper eventually answered with two sets of double 5s and was able to bring the position home to claim the 1998 Chicago Open Champion's trophy.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO Intermediate Champion Merrill Schrager (WI) who defeated the always-tough Lucky Nelson (IL). Also to Beginner winner Mark Larios who has now "hit for the cycle" in Beginner events this year (1st in Chicago Open, 1st Cons. in Pittsburgh, 1st Last Chance at the Midwest Championships).**

In other results, Howard Markowitz (NV) topped Kent Goulding (MD) to win the Memorial Day Masters. And Doug Roberts & Linc Bedell (NH) bested Jodie Kraft (IL) & Ray Fogelund (CA) to win the Doubles event. Complete results:

### 19TH CHICAGO OPEN

**CHAMPIONSHIP (56):** 1-Dennis Culpepper (VA), 2-Doug Roberts (MA), 3-Peter Kalba (IL); 1C-Malcolm Davis (TX), 2C-Wendy Kaplan (IL). **INTERMEDIATE (52):** 1-Merrill Schrager (WI), 2-Lucky Nelson (IL), 3/4-Walt Swan / Kieth Hvamstad; 1C-Jeremy Kirkpatrick, 2C-Wally Wolf (MI). **BEGINNER (11):** 1-Mark Larios (IN), 2-Elaine Kehm (IL). **MEMORIAL DAY MASTERS (32 with reentries):** 1-Howard Markowitz (NV), 2-Kent Goulding (MD), 3/4-Wendy Kaplan (IL) / Fred Kalantari (MN). **DOUBLES (16):** 1-Linc Bedell & Doug Roberts, 2-Ray Fogelund & Jodie Kraft. **2-POINT MINI-MATCH (128):** 1-Jeff Acierno, 2-Kit Woolsey. **MINI-BLITZ (64):** 1-Steve Brown (MN). **\$500 JACKPOT (8):** 1-Ed Petrillo.



### ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis  
773/583-6464  
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 The Old Main Inn, 2330 N. Main St., Wheaton. V.W. Zimnicki (630/924-8632).

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

**BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB:** Tournaments Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Ride The Nine, 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Gary Daniels (309/452-3034)

**SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASSN:** Tournaments 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 Chibnik (847/446-0537).

**PEORIA BACKGAMMON CLUB:** Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/673-7622).

## AMALGAMATION

On July 18, 1928, Chicagoland gangster Al Capone spent the day in Cicero, Illinois. Later that evening, he dined at his favorite speakeasy on South State Street. The Chicago Bar Point Club will duplicate that itinerary on July 18, 1998. Join us for the 10th annual Hawthorne Backgammon Classic at Hawthorne Race Course in Cicero. After the tournament, we'll attend the dinner show at Tommy Gun's Garage, a modern day Chicago speakeasy at 1239 South State Street. Call **Bill Davis** for details (773/583-6464)... Thanks to GamesGrid online backgammon who is donating one year of GamesGrid fees to the Open and Intermediate winners of the Hawthorne Classic... Visiting the Chicago Bar Point Club in May: **Jon Viotor (CA)**... Get well wishes go out to **Antoinette-Marie Williams (NY)** who is mending following a broken arm. A tip of the hat to Ace Point Club (NY) owners Alan and Lourdes Steffen (a registered nurse) who have been caring for her during her recovery... **Yamin Yamin's (IL)** biennial "Giants of Backgammon" list is out. For your copy (included in the March/April *Flint Area BackgammonNews*), send \$3 to: **Carol Joy Cole**; 3719 Greenbrook Lane; Flint, MI 48507... Have you heard of the Svilo BG-Clock? The instrument includes a chess clock, dice roller, cube handler and score keeper, all in one unit measuring only 7" x 1.5" x 1.25" deep. For more information, contact Svilen Todorov (Bulgaria) at <svilo@techno-link.com>... The British Isles Backgammon Association (BIBA) is now selling a nice backgammon watch displaying the BIBA logo. The second hand is a pair of dice. Price: £15. **Michael Crane (biba@compuserve.com** or phone 01522-829649) can supply you with information on how to order yours... **Jill Ferdinand (IL)**, who has had 5-out-of-6 Lottery numbers three times in her life, now has a big slot machine jackpot in the bank. On Mother's Day, she hit a riverboat one-armed bandit for \$12,000... **Walt Swan (NJ)** has thrown away his eyeglasses. He recently had laser surgery to return his eyes to 20-20, and it was a great success... **Dave Cramer (IL)** happily announces the marriage of son **Dan Cramer to Cassie Walsh** in Minnesota on 24 May... For those of you strong intermediate players who are afraid to move up to the Open division, read the words of **George Eliot (1819-1880):** "Any coward can fight a battle when he's sure of winning; but give me the man who has pluck to fight when he's sure of losing. That's my way, sir, and there are many victories worse than a defeat." Δ

The Worldwide Backgammon Federation is proud to present the

# 8th Mitteleuropa Backgammon and Black-jack Tournament 10th Backgammon European Championship

## HIT Casino Park - Nova Gorica

### September 4-6, 1998

(Black-jack Tournery & Jackpots begin August 31, 1998)



**58 MILLION**  
Lire Guaranteed  
Combined Prize Money

#### Entry Fees

Master (13-pt) ..... 750.000 Lire (\$430)  
Champion (11-pt) . 250.000 Lire (\$140)  
Intermediate (7-pt)... 100.000 Lire (\$55)  
Black-jack ..... 300.000 Lire (\$170)

Quarter-entries offered in main tournament.

#### Registration Fees

1998 WBF members . 30.000 Lire (\$18)  
Non-members ..... 50.000 Lire (\$30)  
WBF Gold Card available at tournament.

#### Backgammon Tournament Committee

To be announced at the tournament under the Presidency of

**Alberto da Pra**

*President of the*

*Worldwide Backgammon Federation*

Supported by the Slovenia Ministry of Tourism

Valid for: **EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP 1998**

Final stage **WBF 1998 Italian Championship**

*(stemma aquila bicipite)*

<http://www.wbf.net/Ngori998/Gori9801.html>



## PROGRAM

#### Accommodations

Park Hotel ★★★★★. Delpinova 5 -  
Nova Gorica (Tel. 386-65-28225)

	Single	Double
Park Hotel	110.000	80.000 pp
Plus 2.200 Itl taxes/night. 1 USD = 1.755		
Itl Lira. Breakfast is included each day.		

Rates valid for direct reservation only. Fax  
reservations by Aug. 16 to 386-65-22381,  
Attn: Reception. Mention "Backgammon."

#### WBF-Recognized Tournament Director

**Marco Fornasir**

WBF, Box 1207, CH-6850, Mendrisio, Switz.

Information: 39-240074658

Fax: 39-240073420

E-mail: [fornasir@iol.it](mailto:fornasir@iol.it)

#### Monday, August 31

19:30-20:00 Registration Backgammon  
Tournament at Park Hotel  
20:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino  
22:30 Quarter Entries, Slovenian Blitz,  
Jackpots, Mini-Jackpots &  
Speedy Mini-Jackpots

#### Tuesday, September 1

10:30 Excursion  
19:30-20:00 Registration at Park Hotel  
20:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino  
22:30 Quarter Entries, Slovenian Blitz,  
Jackpots, Mini-Jackpots &  
Speedy Mini-Jackpots

#### Wednesday, September 2

10:30 Excursion  
19:30-20:00 Registration at Park Hotel  
20:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino  
22:30 Quarter Entries, Slovenian Blitz,  
Jackpots, Mini-Jackpots &  
Speedy Mini-Jackpots

#### Thursday, September 3

17:30 Public draw for free Warm-up  
18:00 Warm-up begins. Quarter Entries,  
Slovenian Blitz, Jackpots, Mini-  
Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots  
19:00 Challenge Italia-Austria  
20:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino.  
Public draw for Sperti Trophy (free)  
20:00-22:30 Break for Dinner  
22:30 Start of Sperti Trophy

#### Friday, September 4

17:00 Warm-up. Challenge Italia-Austria,  
Sperti Trophy Quarter Entries,  
Slovenian Blitz, Jackpots, Mini-  
Jackpots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots  
19:00-20:00 Registration at Park Hotel  
20:00 Welcoming cocktail: Park Hotel.  
Black-jack Tournament at Casino  
22:00 Registration closes  
22:30 Public draw  
23:00 Start of play. Slovenian Blitz,  
Jackpots, Mini-Jackpots and  
Speedy Mini-Jackpots

#### Saturday, September 5

16:00 Main tournament continues.  
Start of Progressive Consolation  
tournament  
17:00 Quarters, Jackpots, Mini-Jack-  
pots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots  
18:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino  
20:00-22:30 Break for Dinner  
21:30 Black-jack Semifinals and Finals  
at Casino  
22:30 Start of Franz Josef Super-Jack-  
pot. Tournament play continues

#### Sunday, September 6

15:00 Last Chance tournament. Finals,  
Quarters, Jackpots, Mini-Jack-  
pots & Speedy Mini-Jackpots  
20:30 Schönbrunn Dinner Party &  
Awards Ceremony at Park Hotel

*The organization reserves the right to change the  
program in any of its parts. Changes will be an-  
nounced in advance and posted on the Notice Board.*

*Park Hotel offers two free Hotel nights for players who stay one full week (arrival date Aug. 31, departure date Sept. 7, 1998) . . . 100% return of the entry fees . . . Trophies to be awarded in all three divisions and Black-jack tournament, plus HIT Resort holidays to divisional winners . . . Nova Gorica is in the country renowned for good food and wine. Air temperature in Sept. is 15/25 °C*