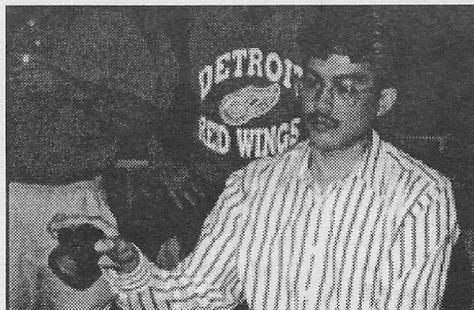


michigan summer championships

BARIE BESTS PERRY Jannica Takes Intermediate Title.

Maurice Barie of Ferndale, Michigan, surprised a strong 83 player Open field in winning the Michigan Summer Championships. Carol Joy Cole's summer bash took place at the Novi Hilton Hotel 2-5 July. Participation topped 200 players.

The youthful Barie, who has only been playing in the Championship division for a



Michigan Summer champ Maurice Barie.

handful of years, bested seven opponents en route to winning the undefeated bracket of the double elimination format. His final unbeaten opponent, Perry Gartner of Englewood, NJ, was skunked 13-0. But Gartner, who earlier won the World Cup Qualifier, was not through. He came back via the one-loss bracket to take another swing at Barie.

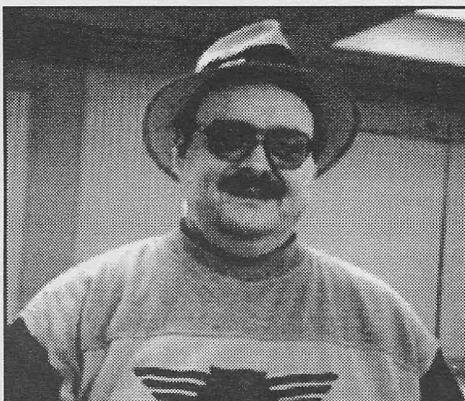
In the first match, with the score tied 9-all, Gartner marched to a 13-9 win to set up the deciding match. But Maurice, the 1997 Michigan Doubles champ, would not be denied. He jumped out to a 10-2 lead and reeled in his trophy by a final score of 13-8.

[Continued on page 4]



Intermediate victor Jannica Tornqvist.

DEAN THOMAS MUENCH 1949-1998



Chicago and the backgammon world lost a giant of the game with the recent passing of Dean Muench. The 49-year-old "Dean of backgammon" died in his sleep at his Palatine, Illinois home on 24 June 1998. The cause of death was listed as severe cardiomyopathy.

Although a computer consultant by profession (he attended Northwestern University), Muench's true passion was backgammon. He began playing publicly about 1974 at Butch McGuire's bar, then joined the more organized Chicago-based National Backgammon League in 1975.

In 1985, as a member of the Chicago

Bar Point Club, he made an international name for himself by winning the Las Vegas World Amateur Championship and \$62,500. In the July 1985 *Chicagoland Backgammon Newsletter*, Dean described his winning feelings thusly: "The Chicago area has a lot of strong players, yet we've never won the big prize in Las Vegas. I'm glad I won it for Chicago."



Dean with wife Kathy after winning the 1985 World Amateur Championship in Las Vegas.

He developed the "Muench Match Equity Formula" in 1987. His computer knowledge helped him author the highly-respected "Muench Bearoff Program" in

[Continued on page 6]

YADDA, YADDA, DOUBLE!



As we bid farewell to SEINFELD, let's review the show's backgammon connections. Here are Jerry and Elaine playing a game as George walks in (from episode #9, "The Phone Message").

Kramer is also a player. In episode #32 ("The Suicide"), he mentions spending his vacation on the beach playing backgammon with a swimsuit model. Δ

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Bill Davis

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

Tel: 773/583-6464 ♦ Fax: 773/583-3264

E-mail: chipoint@interaccess.com

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

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

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

All rights reserved. You may copy any of this for noncommercial purposes as long as you give full credit to "CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. 504, Chicago, IL 60659-3155." You may not reproduce any part of this publication on the internet or via other electronic media without the express-written consent of CHICAGO POINT.

CHICAGO POINT is published monthly. The subscription rate is \$30/12 issues (\$40 international airmail in USD check drawn on U.S. bank).

Advertising Rates: 2 3/8" x 3 1/4" = \$40. 1/4 page = \$70. 1/2 page = \$115. Full page = \$200. If the ad is not "camera ready," request layout and typesetting for an additional charge.



LETTERS

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

E-mail: chipoint@interaccess.com

ILLINOIS STATE CHAMPS CANCELED

I write to inform you that I have canceled my Illinois State Championships/America Cup for 1998. From now on, it will be held every two years commencing in 1999. Therefore, we will alternate years with the prestigious World Cup tournament in Dallas. The next Illinois State Championships will be held 8-10 October 1999. Look for a new format.—*Yamin Yamin, Deerfield, IL*

RANKING THE BEST

Listing the various backgammon player rankings in last month's issue was most interesting. I think there is another method worthy of consideration, though: online backgammon server standings.—*Paul Weaver, Birmingham, AL*

Many of the FIBS leaders are computer programs. It is also possible to manipulate

(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

* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

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 17-19*	FIBStock '98, FIBSters' homes, Federal Way/Tahuya, WA	206/838-5486
Jul 18	Hawthorne BG 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>
Aug 1-9*	World Cup VI & U.S. Open, Crown Plaza Addison, Dallas, TX	301/299-8265
Aug 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer tournaments@cyberarts.com	412/823-7500
Aug 1-2*	5th Annual Summer Cooker/Pool Party, Hast residence, Pittsburgh, PA	412/823-7500
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 16*	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	408/688-9722
Aug 20*	Connecticut Monthly Tourney, Stromberg Technologies, Southington, CT	203/592-9207
Aug 20*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Aug 22*	Dr. Bob's "Sweet 16" Invitational, New York Chess & BG, New York City	800/520-1809
Aug 23*	Peoria Summer Tourney, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon, IL	309/674-0557
Aug 30*	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Aug 30*	Louisville Monthly Tournament, Oldenberg Grill, Louisville, KY	502/458-9660
Sep 4-7	<u>46th Indiana Open, Sheraton/Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Sep 13*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Sep 13*	Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, WI	414/463-2498
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 rayb@cp.duluth.mn.us	716/442-8221
Sep 25-27	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, NY</u>	<u>716/442-8221</u>
Oct 2-4*	<u>CANCELED (See "Letters")—Illinois State Champs & America Cup</u>	<u>847/945-7801</u>
Oct 9-11	<u>Nation's Capital Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD</u>	<u>301/530-0604</u>
Oct 11*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyway's Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/583-6464
Oct 23-25*	<u>South Florida Championships, Day's Inn, Ft. Lauderdale, FL</u>	<u>954/938-4304</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

Jul 13-19	World Championship, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA contact: 954/527-4033
Jul 20-21	7th Nice Open, Lido Plage 7, Promenade des Anglais, Nice, France	33493-879436
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 13-16*	Palace Summer Championships, Badrutts Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	41612-710137
Aug 14-16*	Team Tournament, Grand Hotel, Leicester, England	44181-928-0639
Aug 20-21*	DM Mixed Doubles, Humlebæk Club, Humlebæk, Denmark	45491-93400
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 Tourament, Casinò 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 1-4*	4th Kaiserbrunnen Cup, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Oct 3-4*	12th British National Champs, Jarvis Hotel, Watford, London, UK	44161-438 0966
Oct 10-11*	Sandy Osborne Memorial Trophy, Stakis Birmingham Metropole England	44152-254-6993
Oct 13-18*	2nd Moscow Open, Cosmos Hotel & Casino, Moscow, Russia	Spain: 3450-133009
Oct 15-18*	CH-Meisterschaften '98 & Swiss Open, Kursaal Bern, Bern, Switz	4179-358-4825
Oct 27-Nov 1*	Grand Prix de Suisse 1998, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Oct 30-Nov 1*	Swedish Open, First Hotel Amaranten, Stockholm, Sweden	468-6523033
Nov 12-15*	Bodensee Grand Prix 1998, Bregenz, Austria	4179-337 4425
Nov 21-23*	1998 Japan Open, Nakano Sun Plaza, Tokyo, Japan	813/3373-3844

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

one's ratings by forming additional identities and playing oneself. Nonetheless, here are the ratings through 30 June for FIBS and GamesGrid:

FIBS:

1. Snowie 2100.08
2. SnowWhite 2056.46
3. DatJellyFish 2056.38
4. reno 2026.38
5. poirot 2001.47

6. melzi 1998.11
7. George_Klitsas 1996.47
8. madpopper 1986.50
9. tommyh 1974.81
10. one_pointer 1972.03

GamesGrid:

1. Iscorpio 2126
2. psaros 2067
3. Nack 2063
4. Levermann 2002
5. darren 1999
6. svilo 1990
7. Kaye 1987

8. Nashhomeplace2 1987
9. wells 1974
10. loner 1973

See also, our improved Calcutta Auction ratings on page 9 of this issue.—Ed.

To add to the confusion (or fun) of the ranking systems you outlined, I found the Top Ten List of the International Backgammon Association (not the Les Boyd organization) on the Internet. The IBA ranking system is based on the results of major tournaments worldwide. A weighing factor is applied to each event with larger events worth more than smaller ones. According to the German language website at <http://www.online-press.de/bgz/kalender.htm>, these are the top 10 as of April 1998:

1. Jerry Grandell (Sweden) 32.5
2. Kent Goulding (USA) 30.0
3. Mike Senkiewicz (USA) 28.0
4. Emil Mortuk (USA) 27.0
5. Elliot Winslow (USA)
6. Phillip Marmorstein (Germany) 24.5
7. Mike Svobodny (USA) 24.5
8. Kit Woolsey (USA) 24.0
9. Martine Oulès (France) 22.5
10. Mario Köhl (Germany) 22.0

—Mel Leifer, Germantown, MD

AN INDEPENDENT VIEW

For those of you who haven't run across my name, I write a weekly backgammon column for the Independent Newspaper in the United Kingdom (circulation 300,000). I have just published my first book: Back-

[Continued on page 7]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 1998



Compiled through 5 July 1998 after 7 tournaments
(The next 3: Thousand Islands, Indiana Open, Minnesota State)

Maurice Barie	27.73	Odis Chenault	6.11	Peter Kalba	3.92	Lenny Loder	2.08
Dennis Culpepper	23.53	Ray Fogerlund	6.11	Don Faix	3.67	Kieth Hramstad	1.81
Steve McCormick	22.88	Paul Stebbing	5.88	Karen Davis	3.41	Rob Keast	1.55
Bob Glass	17.42	Larry Yudin	5.88	John Graas	3.41	Julian Haley	1.44
Steve Hast	14.36	David Simpson	5.77	Richard Del Furia	3.41	Jolie Rubin	1.44
Doug Mayfield	13.74	Andy Glazer	5.77	Bob Wilensky	3.41	Ken Lazar	1.40
Perry Gartner	13.64	Mike Cyrkiel	5.60	Kim Haubert	3.15	Tom Machaj	1.35
Merrill Schrage	13.22	Jeremy Kirkpatrick	5.46	Eliot Bean	3.05	Bruce Brown	1.22
Mike Friedman	12.84	Bill Keefe	5.20	Butch Meese	3.00	Bill Tallmadge	1.22
Doug Roberts	11.76	Wendy Kaplan	5.04	Sam Pottle	2.88	Wilder Radford	1.17
Malcolm Davis	11.75	Jack Kissane	4.89	Francois Margot	2.88	Almon Hall	1.15
Jannica Tornqvist	11.63	Joe Freedman	4.80	John Mazur	2.81	Frank Rogers	1.15
Jim Hickey	11.55	Denny Leatherman	4.80	Linda Resnicoff	2.39	Dennis Cupp	1.14
Frankie Farjood	11.44	Mike Lauzon	4.74	Matt Reklaitis	2.39	Ray Bills	1.08
David Wells	11.20	Mike Hendrikson	4.72	Hunter Jones	2.36	Julius High	1.05
Mike Rezaei	9.59	Zia Afshani	4.68	Wally Wolf	2.35	Paul Armbruster	0.88
Art Benjamin	8.71	Lucky Nelson	4.55	Mark Cohen	2.34	Elaine Kehm	0.79
Lincoln Bedell	8.56	Dave Orandle	4.36	Gordon Bass	2.34	Boris Mindich	0.70
Jeff Acierno	8.09	Rob Maier	4.36	Adam Versaw	2.33	Jennifer Waller	0.63
Mike Fujita	7.97	Walt Swan	4.21	James Roston	2.16	Wanda de la Barre	0.63
Bob Holyon	7.00	Chuck Bower	4.16	Jobey Calitri	2.11	Betty Coppic	0.58
Jack Takala	6.82	John Brussel	4.16	Bob Bercu	2.11	Niel Borden	0.44
Frank Talbot	6.82	Mark Larios	4.11	Bruce Russell	2.08	Andre Mattar	0.44
Howard Markowitz	6.40	Paul Dibiasi	3.99				



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 1998 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 30 JUNE

Steve Mellen	16.44	Paul Franks	4.24	Norma Shyer	2.24	Wendy Kaplan	0.84
Joe Wollick	13.92	Gary Kay	4.08	Rodney Bell	2.00	Bob Steen	0.80
Paul Friedman	10.00	Jerry Brooks	3.48	Joseph Esfahani	1.92	Peter Kalba	0.80
Neil Kazaross	9.36	Bill Keefe	3.28	Paul Baraz	1.76	Greg Defotis	0.72
Laila Leonhardt	8.92	Rick Bieniak	3.24	Marc Rosset	1.32	Roland Dieter	0.64
Tak Morioka	8.52	Tim Carroll	3.24	Romeo Kap	1.28	Reginald Porter	0.56
Alice Kay	7.12	Phil Simborg	3.24	Richard Lloyd	1.28	Steve Rota	0.56
Paul Klein	6.84	Don Jayhan	3.16	Tim Mabee	1.28	Rich Gast	0.32
Herb Roman	6.76	Elaine Kehm	3.08	Val Zimnicki	1.16	Sonia Peacock	0.32
Harry Cohn	6.56	Jake Jacobs	3.04	George Barr	1.12	Jannica Tornqvist	0.32
Mary Franks	5.88	Marty Tatosian	2.80	Barry Miller	0.96	Henry Gray	0.28
Bob Zavoral	5.48	John Demian	2.72	Ed Zell	0.96	Barbara Levinson	0.24
Phyllis Smolinski	5.08	Arline Levy	2.42	Earl Risch	0.96	Georgina Flanagan	0.24
Ed Buerger	5.08	Richard Stawowy	2.40	Sam Pottle	0.92	Joann Feinstein	0.18
Andy Krenitz	4.64	Steve Klesker	2.40	Dave Cramer	0.88	Frankie Farjood	0.16
Bill Davis	4.60	Ken Bond	2.32	Rex Savage	0.88	Boris Mindich	0.16

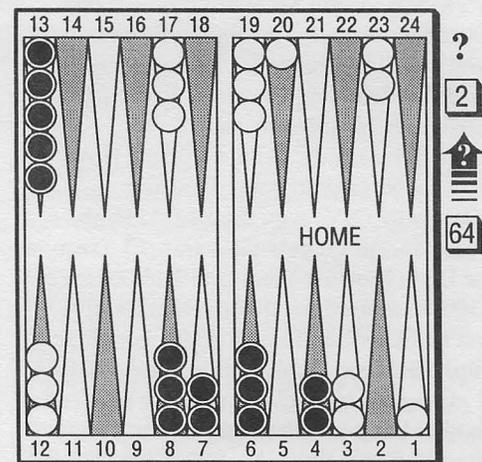
June Player of the Month honors go to **PAUL KLEIN**. Paul's 3.32 total (including a win on 23 June) was just enough to edge out runner's-up Bill Davis (2.68) and Joe Wollick (2.60).

your move

PROBLEM #245

to be analyzed by Jake Jacobs

Match to 5 points. Black leads White, 2 to 0. **Black on roll. CUBE ACTION(S)?**



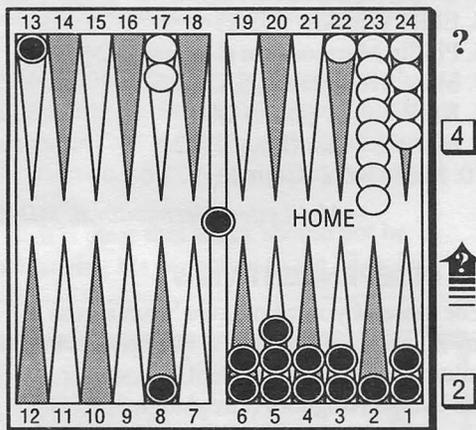
ASK
DANNY

© 1998 by Danny Kleinman

HEADLINE HERE

Dear Danny: I was watching a match between Jake Jacobs and Art Benjamin at the recent Michigan Summer Championships. In the position shown below, Jake (Black) trails Art (White), 2-8 in a match to 11 points. Jake (on roll) redoubled and Art accepted. I don't understand these cube actions. Were they correct, and if so, why?—Match Cube Novice

11-point match. Black trails White, 2-8.
BLACK ON ROLL. CUBE ACTION(S)?



DEAR NOVICE: I won't burden you with precise calculations based on match equity charts, but now is a good time to review the concept of your *redoubling window*. That

is the range of winning probabilities (properly adjusted for gammons) in which you may consider redoubling while your opponent has a proper take.

In money backgammon, or early in a long match where each point has equal value to each player, the window is determined by the *payoff odds*. You get even-money odds when you redouble, for you put an extra 2 points at stake for both sides, so the *bottom* of your window is 50%. Your opponent gets 6-to-2 odds when he takes, for by risking an extra 2 points, he not only gains 4 points when he wins, but also *avoids losing the 2 points* he would have surrendered by passing. That makes the *top of your window* 75%, corresponding to the 6-to-2 odds. The prospect that your opponent can use the cube profitably to redouble you lifts the top of your window a few inches, so that (depending on the position) it is usually about 78%.

Even in your window, you shouldn't always redouble. By redoubling, you (a) lose the chance to finish the game at 2 if your position deteriorates, and (b) give your opponent a chance to jack the stakes up to 8 if the game turns around. Therefore your best policy is to wait for a *threat* to improve your position so much by your next turn that your opponent dare not take (called *market loss*).

How do the payoff odds change when you trail 2-8 in a match to 11 points? By redoubling, you risk only 1 extra point, but you still stand to gain 2. Because that 1 extra point means the match, it is really worth more than 1, so instead of being about 33%, your window bottom is about 35%. Your window top also drops. For taking and winning, your opponent still

saves the 2 points he would have lost by passing, but he wins only 3. So instead of 6-to-2 odds, he receives only 5-to-2, which suggests a window top of about 71%—not an inch higher because the cube is useless to him.

(Don't anyone come running with precise calculations based on my old match equity charts or Kit Woolsey's empirically-based new ones to prove that this window is really a notch higher or lower. I'm presenting an *approximate* method that a novice can use without memorizing charts—when tiny deviations in the charts can produce significant deviations in windows calculated from them.)

In the game between Jake and Art, Jake *threatens* to lose his market by a wide margin if he hits. (Yes, if he hits without covering the 2-point, Art can recover by hitting back, but note that 2-4 and 2-3 are horror shakes for Art that expose new blots and create a gammon danger. Other 2s, though good for Art, still do not get him out of the woods entirely.) The chance of a hit is 11/36: between 30% and 31%. Even if Jake misses, Art is a favorite to leave repeat shots, so that Jake's total hitting chances may be half again that—about 46%. Of course, not all of the 46% will be wins for Jake, but enough will be to keep him within his redoubling window.

Thus Jake's "underdog" redouble is correct, by a clear if modest margin, and Art's take as the game-favorite is obvious.—*Yours, Danny Δ*

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

MICHIGAN...

[Continued from page 1]

Kudos also to Jannica Tornqvist of Sweden (currently residing in Illinois) who won the all-international Intermediate finals by defeating Canadian Paul Stebbing 13-6 in their rubber match.

In other results, Adam Versaw (PA) won the Novice division, Howard Markowitz (NV) won the \$1,000 High Roller Jackpot, Drew Giovanis (FL) won the Dean Muench Memorial Jackpot (over \$300 was raised for the Muench family) and Bill Davis & Tak Morioka won their third Michigan Doubles title since 1991.

Congrats to CJC and staff for yet another bang-up 4th of July affair. Complete results at right. Δ

OPEN (83): 1-Maurice Barie (MI), 2-Perry Gartner (NJ), Jack Takala (MI), 4/5-Karen Davis (NY) / John Graas (CA); 1C-Steve Hast (PA), 2C-Frank Talbot (MI), 3C/4C-Richard Del Furia (MN) / Bob Wilensky (GA). INTERMEDIATE (64): 1-Jannica Tornqvist (IL/Sweden), 2- Paul Stebbing (Canada), 3-Sam Pottle (WI); 1C-Larry Yudin (Canada), 2C-François Margot (MI), 3C/4C-Julian Haley (SC) / Jolie Rubin (IL). NOVICE (21): 1-Adam Versaw (PA), 2-Almon Hall (NC); 1C-Frank Rogers (IL), 2C-Wanda de la Barre (MA). WORLD CUP QUALIFIER (16): 1-Perry Gartner (NJ), 2-Mary Ritchie (KS). \$1,000 FIRECRACKER JACKPOT (8): 1-Howard Markowitz (NV), 2-Ray Glaeser (MI). \$300 DEAN MUENCH MEMORIAL JACKPOT (16): 1- Drew Giovanis (FL), 2-Herb Gurland (MA). \$100 FIRECRACKER JACKPOT (16): 1-Gary Fries (VA), 2-David Rubin (IL). SUMMER FREEZE-OUT (32): 1-Ray Glaeser (MI), 2-Steve Mellen (IL). MICHIGAN BLITZ (128): 1-Mike Rezai (OH), 2-Gail Latter (MI). OPEN DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Bill Davis & Tak Morioka (IL), 2-Bob Glass & Steve Sax (CA), 3/4-John Bashian (OH) & Jim Stomkoski (MI) / Sandy Kaplan & Norm Rivkin (MI). LIMITED DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Dan Loughren & Gary Marchenia (MI), 2-Joe Koenig & Bob Nevens (MI). DETROIT QUICKIES: \$20 (64): 1-John Gamalielson (OR), 2-Mike Ungerleider (CA). \$10-#1 (32): 1-Dan Cramer (MN). \$10-#2 (32): 1. Adam Versaw (PA). \$10-#3 (32): 1-Chester Warzel (IN). \$10-#4 (32): 1-Ed King (OH). EARLYBIRD JACKPOT: *Open* (16): 1-Linc Bedell (NH), 2-Dave Williams (CA). *Limited* (8): 1-Jim Price (MI), 2-Drew Liebenthal (NY). WEDNESDAY WARM-UP WINNERS: \$50 (24): 1-John Carrico (MI). \$30 (11): 1-Jack Takala (MI). \$20 (29): 1-John Richardson (MI). \$5 (5): 1-Jeanette Spilsbury (MI). Δ

Fourplay

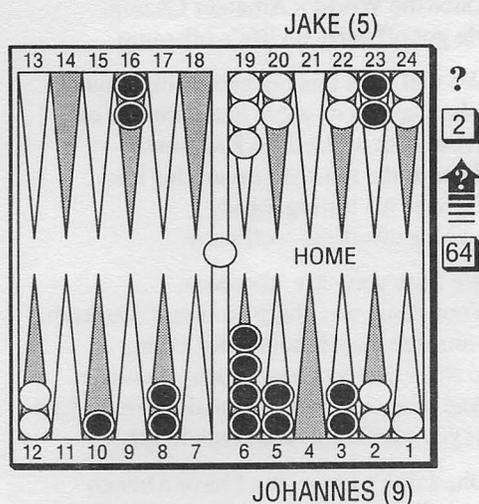
by Jake Jacobs

Does the name “Dirk Schiemann” strike fear in your heart? If not, perhaps it is because, living in the States, you have never heard the name. I guess it would surprise you to learn that when the Europeans start asking themselves who the world’s best money player is, Dirk’s name has been heard to cross their lips.

Generally though, Dirk is not placed at the top, because the consensus is that his running buddy, Johannes Levermann, is *even better!* Talk about a lethal one-two punch battering the money out of awe-struck opponents across the continent. And what is even scarier, they are awfully young. I think they are about twelve. That means that unlike the rest of us drooling fools, they still have brain cells left. Hell, they still have hair!

If, like me, you’ve traveled to the Nordic Open, you’ve probably had the chance to see them in action. I have not yet had the privilege of playing Dirk, but in the Open Consolation round-of-32, I squared off against Johannes. Leading 9–5 in our 13-point match, Johannes found himself on roll here.

13-point match. Johannes (Black) leads Jake (White), 9–5. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Johannes doubled, and I took. He then rolled 6-3, and ran 23/14. I entered with 1-1, hit him on my 11-point, then continued to the 10-point to get a builder for my four. He fanned, and I redoubled. He took, and then . . . Hold on a minute. Several fouls have been committed. Time for an instant replay.

How many errors did you spot? If you answered, “One every turn,” then good for you! I really want to talk about the cube decisions, so let’s get the checker plays out of the way.

First of all, Johannes does much better by playing both men from my 9-point. Breaking anchor is not a priority. Then, I should play 13/12 with my last ace. Playing to the 10-point serves only to duplicate the 6-2 that I would use to hit Johannes on his 10-point, while giving him two extra shots from the roof.

Johannes’ decision to cube was the pivotal error. As I mentioned, Johannes is a money player. I remember from my bridge-playing days the endless debate over who was more skilled, the rubber player, or the matchpoint player. Regarding backgammon, my position is that the top money players are almost always quite good match players, whereas some of the best match players are disastrously bad money players.

That said, Johannes is a money player, and some aspects of match play remain quite dim until lit by experience. It is not enough to believe that down that dark passageway lurks grim death; you must take torch in hand and go and see the bones of your unwary predecessors for yourself.

Among other interesting aspects of Johannes’ double is that it does not readily lend itself to analysis by JellyFish™ rollout. Here is a case where the danger is obscure to both human and fish. Jelly shows this to be a powerful money double; it claims this is a money pass. I must admit that I would take this, which perhaps explains why I am so beloved by my chouettemates.

If the double is so powerful, why not give it? The hitch is in the potential for later redoubles when I have a gammon threat.

Although we can’t trust the Fishy’s scaly little flippers near the doubling cube, here are the results of a cubeless rollout on level 6. Johannes wins 39.1%, wins a gammon 28.9%, and wins a backgammon 2.4%. I win 20.1%, win a gammon 9%, and win a backgammon 0.5%.

We don’t really know what my match winning chances are, either if Johannes doubles, or if he waits, but we do know within what range they will fall. Suppose that the cube is never turned. My winning chances would then be 21.8%, though we are assuming that Johannes’ cube is crippled by the score. As the game favorite, access to the cube still favors him.

That 21.8% represents my maximum possible match equity if Johannes does not

double this turn. A level 5 rollout, assuming that Johannes had doubled, and that I handled the cube just as for money, would push my match equity down to 18.3%. So the best Johannes could do is worse than that. When Johannes waits, I suspect my match-winning chances are in the 20-21% range.

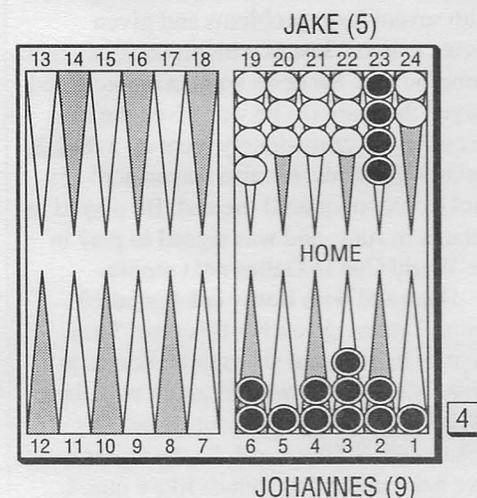
When Johannes doubles, my winning chances are at least 19.6%. I can get that much just by immediately redoubling. Now imagine that all of my losses come with the cube on 2, while all of my wins come with the cube on 4. (A similar mental exercise is performed when evaluating takes while trailing 4-away, 3-away.) In that case, my match-winning chances are 24.3%. This is the top of my range.

That the two ranges overlap prevents a categorical claim, but I don’t need perfect efficiency to gainsay Johannes’ double. I merely need to beat 21.8%. If all of my wins are redoubled, and I manage to avoid redoubling just half of his plain wins, I am up to 21.9% match equity.

As it turns out, I did miss my market in this game. When I rewhipped, after the fan, Johannes would have a proper money beaver. But the cubeless figures have me winning 27.2% gammons, and another 22.6% plain games. Johannes gets 64% by passing, and only 61.5% by taking.

We actually reached this position before my game took a turn for the worse:

Jake (White) on roll...



Johannes won game, set, and match. It is a measure of how sharp he is that as soon as the game ended he was asking: “How bad was my double?” I am sure this one is filed away, where he can refer to it next time the situation arises. It is that ability to foresee the 4-cube looming in the distance that stops the double. Johannes is too good not to have the “foursight” the next time. Δ

DEAN MUENCH...

[Continued from page 1]

1989. He was a contributing editor to CHICAGO POINT 1989–1990.

In the mid-1990s, Dean won the Michigan Summer Championship, the Illinois State Championship and the America Cup. The last KG international rating placed him 32nd in the world. He ranked 5th all-time on the American Backgammon Tour, and was always one of the top 64 internationally in Yamin Yamin's "Giants of Backgammon."

Muench opened up his own club, the *Chicago Board of Backgammon*, in January 1996. But the club ran into legal difficulties and was forced to close eight months later. "I have no regrets about trying it," Dean said. "Flying to play at the Coterie (in New York) was getting kind of expensive. We needed to see if a daily club could make it in this town."

Dean was a fixture late nights on the Internet. This venue allowed him to compete worldwide from his own home. Playing under the nickname "uberdean" on FIBS, he was currently ranked 16th worldwide.

Muench's last appearance in a major finals was in Las Vegas last April where he was runner-up to Ray Fogerlund in the Masters Invitational.

"Some Years Left"

ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO, Dean was diagnosed with severe heart problems and given "years to live." Just as with his backgammon game, he took the news without emotion and played the numbers he was given the best he could. He immediately went on a diet losing 40 pounds. He also stayed active in backgammon up until the end. He played in Atlanta in June, and was signed to play in the World Cup in Dallas next month.

Dean and wife Kathy celebrated 30 years of marriage earlier this year. They have 7 children and six grandchildren. In 1986, while Kathy was pregnant with their last child, they argued about names. As Dean put it, "If it's a girl, Kathy wants to give her a name that sounds like a nun. I said, 'that's fine, but if it's a boy, his name will be Maximilian Gammon Muench.'" It was a boy.

Dean Muench's final wish was to be cremated with his ashes scattered at the site of his grandparent's farm in Marengo, Illinois. Son Kevin says the farm was a place where Dean had many fond childhood memories.

A memorial to Dean Muench follows. Δ

Remembering Dean

I was stunned when I heard about Dean. He had just left a message on my machine saying he would be in Dallas for the World Cup in August.

I had become quite fond of Dean these past few years. Heck, we played more 1-point matches "for the championship of the universe" than I can count. I will truly miss him.—*Kent Goulding (Maryland)*

Sorry to hear about Dean's death. He was truly a nice person, an excellent backgammon player, and a gentleman.—*Max Esquivel (Costa Rican Backgammon Association)*

"Don't worry, be happy." This is the message that Dean leaves us with—the special thought he chose to record under his "uberdean" handle on GamesGrid. After only a short time, Dean had made it to being one of the top-rated players there, and deservedly so.

The day before Dean passed away, I had the honor of playing a 5-point match against him on the grid. It so happened that three other players, interested in practicing their Japanese (as I am), started watching and conversing with me in the game chat window. This must have slowed the game down, and read as gibberish to Dean; but if he was aggravated, he never said a word.

I regret never having apologized to him for this, but I say now for all to hear that Dean Muench was a gentleman to the end.—*Nick Ballard (California)*

"Big cubes, my boy. Big cubes." That was the advice that Dean Muench gave a certain promising young nuclear physicist on his method for winning.

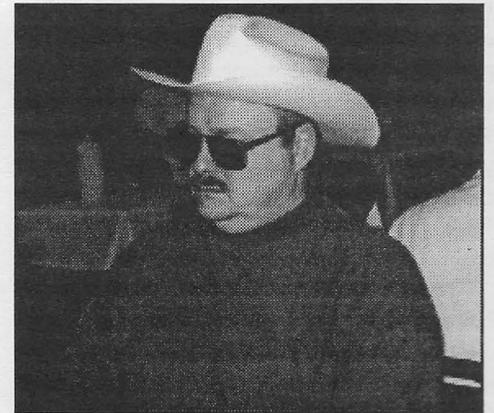
Big cubes sure, but everything about Dean was big. I will never forget walking into the Memphis backgammon club with Dean, and watching the jaws drop as the players caught sight of him. There he was, with a hat as big as Texas, and a backgammon board so large we had to put wheels and a trailer hitch on it just to tow it tournaments. Inside the board were rows of shiny cubes. "Why just take a 16-cube, when you can take 16 cubes?" That was Dean's motto.

Dean thought big, too. 25 years ago, when he first learned backgammon, he found himself down in the City (Chicago, of course) challenging a stranger in a bar to a game. "Be careful," Dean warned him, "I'm the Champion of Arlington Heights!"

As the years went by, Dean was the champion of mightier fields than that. Always, he looked around for new challenges. Together, we collaborated on a film script, and halfway through the outline he was already determined we should demand a percentage of the gross when we did the sequel.

With his will to win, Dean never backed down, and never quit. His friends sometimes hollered at him because he never wanted to pass a cube. On Thursday morning, 25 June 1998, Dean finally passed.

Buddy, this was one time I really wish you hadn't.—*Jake Jacobs (Illinois)*



ODE TO "uberdean"

There once was a man named uberdean,
as confident as there has ever been.
He played the best, disdained the blitz,
and never lost to Senkiewicz!
Once the World's Amateur Champ,
He got off early on life's off-ramp.

We will miss this big and smiling man,
who played our game like darn few can!
From Jake to Wells to Kazaross,
those at the top shall mourn his loss.
Perhaps his lasting legacy
was his effortless—efficacy.

We miss you, Mr. uberdean.
Your game was sharp, your wit was keen.
I am sure they'll hold a big event,
to show you just how much you meant.
And when it's over, we shall raise the Cup
in your direction, and drink it up!

Oh, I don't know, but I have a hunch
you will see us all, from above, Dean Muench.
Yes, you've moved on, got a new lease.
Here's hoping you will rest in peace.

—*Ray Fogerlund (California)*

Dean Muench was not only a great person, but he was especially generous in sharing his wide knowledge of the game. Some years before I had written anything about

backgammon, Dean spent time with me at his home going over his bear-off program. I have carried his take-point formula in my wallet for some time.—*Mario Madrigal (Costa Rican Backgammon Association)*

Dean Muench was the reigning practitioner of the Chicago School of backgammon. I'm really going to miss all his shtick.

Then there was "Okay, punk. Five 1-point matches for hundreds" at tournaments, and "10g/50" popping up in a window on GamesGrid. I'll miss those, too.

But especially, he and I shared a respect of peers, almost as a private aside, as if he didn't want anyone to know we were in fact just friends and not mortal combatants, and I'm going to miss that most of all.—*Elliott Winslow (California)*

I've known Dean close to 25 years. I never saw him pass up the chance to take an auto; I never saw him want to lower the stakes; I never saw him not get excited about a game. He was the fiercest competitor I've ever known, and I never saw him lose his sense of humor while he was winning.—*Phil Simborg (Illinois)*

After being eradicated by Dean in the finals of our group at this year's Las Vegas Masters tourney, we started talking about Star Trek and the show at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel. I really wanted to see it, but it's never as much fun going alone. Dean felt the same way. So we met the Monday afternoon after the tournament finished and ventured to the Hilton.

Upon entering the massive exhibit, there was an aisle that included clothes and gizmos from *Star Trek*, *Babylon 5* and *Voyager*, along with a timeline containing character profiles and when they joined the show.

Dean lit up like a child about to launch an attack on the Christmas tree. Then I got the Star Trek personal tour of my life. Dean knew every detail—what happened in each episode, how every gizmo worked, and so on.

Totally baffled and impressed, my mind turned into a sponge, absorbing all the fascinating knowledge of the "trekie" walking beside me. I had played against Dean numerous times at tournaments and exchanged superficial talk the way we BG players normally interact. Now I viewed Dean in a different light with a renewed respect!

All of sudden a huge Klingon warrior appeared next to me. He held his hands up in front of his chest, the palms facing me. I extended my hands to meet his greeting after shaking off the shock of his appearance. I could see that Dean was about to

crack up into laughter. Slightly puzzled, I looked at him questioningly. Dean dryly said "That how the Klingons mate!" Then we both started laughing.

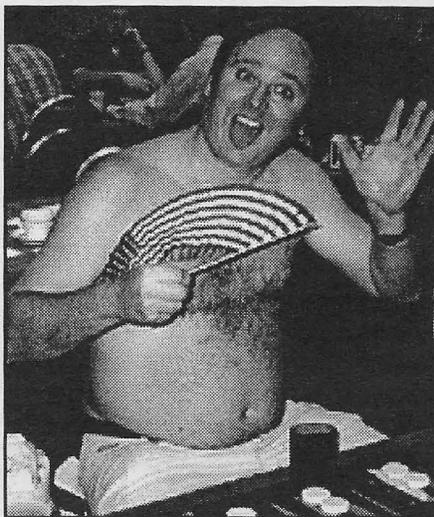
At the end of the exhibition aisle, everyone formed a line to enter the shuttle. It was a wild virtual reality ride complete with Klingon attacks.

At the conclusion of the experience, Dean and I lunched at Gorks—triangular burgers and huge bowls of drinks billowing dry ice smoke over the table.

Talking loosely about backgammon, Star Trek, and life in general, I found that Dean was a satisfied person. I was asking how he was feeling about the recent loss to Ray Fogerlund in the Masters finals. Dean expressed a relaxed attitude about his loss and his failure to achieve the glory. He told me that his family was what really counted in life.

We will miss you Dean Muench.—*Laila Leonhardt (Denmark/Illinois) Δ*

Caption Contest Results



"There is backgammon in Hell."

14 international directors voted on 24 captions to the above photo of Doug Roberts. The winning entry, submitted by Joe Wollick (Hoffman Estates, IL) is shown above. Joe wins \$50 for his caption.

Second place goes to Phil Simborg (Chicago, IL) for "Another version of 'fanning on the bored.'"

Third place is another Joe Wollick submission: "Four words you do not want to hear: 'You play me next.'"

Thanks to the directors who voted. And thanks also to Doug Roberts. For being such a good sport, Doug receives a lifetime subscription to CHICAGO POINT.

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

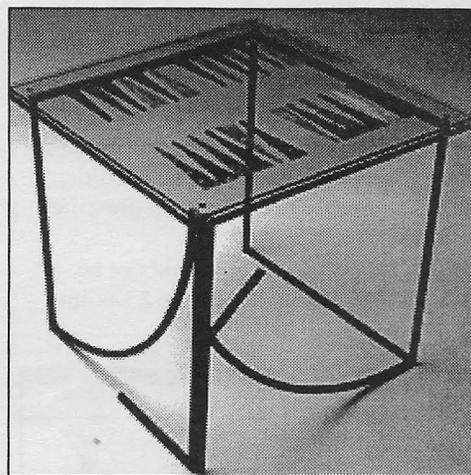
gammon—An Independent View" which is an anthology of my best newspaper and US articles. It covers the basics of backgammon from basics to complexity.

The price is £12 (\$20). Postage is £2 (\$5 for US airmail). I will accept currency, or cheques drawn on a UK bank.—*Chris Bray, 18-Glendower Road, London SW14 8NY, England*

Walter Trice will review Chris's new book in the August CHICAGO POINT.—*Ed. Δ*

GAME TABLE

I am interested in sharing my backgammon art glass work with your members. The game tables are 18" cubes with 20" x 20" tops. Game pieces come with all boards.



Interested parties can call me at 949/645-3309 or e-mail corfield@earthlink.net.—*Amy Kaplan, Costa Mesa, CA Δ*



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. Zimmnicki (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).

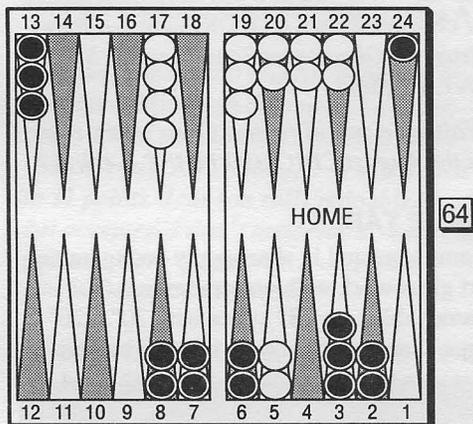
PEORIA BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/673-7622).

last month's position

PROBLEM #244 ANALYZED

by Kit Woolsey

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



Black is in a difficult position. He has to escape his back checker, and not have any accidents along the way. In addition, he must do what he can to keep pressure on White's back men.

It is clear that Black should not be advancing his back man to the 23-point.

This doesn't improve his escaping chance; it merely makes it easier for White to attack. If Black winds up with a extra ace to play, he is better off moving the spare checker from the 3-point to the 2-point than advancing the back checker.

Given that, it appears as though Black has three logical choices:

- He can make the blocking 11-point with 13/11(2),
- He can hold everything with 13/12(3), 3/2, or
- He can break the 8-point with 8/7, 8/6, 3/2 or (probably about the same) 8/6(2).

If Black isn't making the 11-point, there is no reason for him to leave a blot in the outfield. The cost of getting hit now or in the future far outweighs any possible gains from flexibility.

Making the 11-point is a big plus. White will be trying to leave the anchor if she can do so conveniently, so blocking her 6s is quite important. This block will be there for a few moves, which hampers White every time she rolls a 6. The downside is that dangling blot on the midpoint. It is a disaster if the blot is hit, and Black may not be able to get the blot to safety next roll.

13/12(3), 3/2 gives nothing away. Holding the bar point does hinder White's escape, which is important. The resulting

position is a bit inflexible with only the spare checker on the midpoint to move, but that probably isn't too critical.

8/7, 8/6, 3/2 helps in the flexibility department. The value of having a spare on the 6-point in this sort of position is quite large. Black should be able to play his next roll decently. The downside is the loss of the 8-point, which both makes it easier for White to escape and more difficult for Black to find safe landing places for his outfield checkers.

While it isn't clear, my preference is to make the 11-point. I see the blocking 11-point as an asset which will be there for a few moves. Many of White's 6s are blocked, which might force her to slot the 2-point.

If the back checker is attacked, the blocking 11 point may stall White just long enough for Black to escape. There are only three immediate numbers which hit the blot on the midpoint, and 4-4 is pretty strong anyway.

When you have a choice of plays which involve temporary gains vs. permanent gains, it is usually correct to take the play which gives you the permanent gain unless the danger from the play is severe. In this position, the 11-point will be there for some time, while the blot on the midpoint is a very temporary danger. Δ

who did what

WINNER'S CIRCLE



May-June 1998

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Cambridge, MA; 17 May)... **EXPERT** (20): 1-Seth Towle, 2-Evan Diamond, 3/4-Herb Gurland / Mark Damish; 1C-Connie Machakos, 2C-Ed Abou-Zeid. **A DIV.** (16): 1-Marcus Hermansen, 2-Paul Chatalbash, 3/4-Roy Chatalbash / Tom Girnius; 1C-Martha Stepnowsky, 2C-Al Mason.

•**Ace Point Monthly** (New York, NY; 31 May)... **OPEN** (11): 1-Harry Cohn (IL), 2-Jeff Acierno (NY); 1C-James Pascoe. **INTERMEDIATE** (8): 1-Henry Byzinski, 2-Eydie Nobel. **NOVICE** (4): 1-Carol Gonda.

•**Empire State Championships—ABT** (Rochester, NY; 5-7 June)... **OPEN** (22): 1-Lincoln Bedell (NH), 2-Jack Kissane (NY), 3-Don Faix (NY), 4-Mike Friedman (Canada), 5/6-Bill Tallmadge (NY) / Bruce Brown (NY).

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 7 June)... **OPEN** (16): 1/2-Joe Wollick / Earl Risch, 3/4-Laila Leonhardt / Paul Klein; 1C-Paul Franks, 2C-Tim Mabee. **IN-**

TERMEDIATE (14): 1-Rodney Bell, 2-Elaine Kehm, 3/4-Sam Pottle / Marc Rosset; 1C-Henry Gray, 2C-Boris Mindich.

•**1998 Georgia Championships—ABT** (Atlanta, GA; 12-14 June)... **CHAMPIONSHIP** (26): 1-Jim Hickey (GA), 2-Andy Glazer (CA), 3-Jeff Acierno (NY); 1C-David Simpson (NC). **ADVANCED** (21): 1-Zia Afshani (GA), 2-Mark Cohen (GA), 3-Dennis Cupp (OH); 1C-Gordon Bass (NC). **LIMITED** (7): 1-Wilder Radford (NC), 2-Betty Coppic (GA). **\$500 PEACH CUP** (13): 1-Stuart Thomson (GA/Canada), 2-Bill Davis (IL). **SUPERBLITZ** (16): 1-Arsalan Najafi (TX), 2-Steve Herman (TX). **DOUBLES** (16): 1-Kati Pratt & Arsalan Najafi (TX), 2-Steve Herman & Wilder Wadford (NC). **LAST CHANCE JACKPOT** (16): 1-Paul Weaver, 2-Art Grater (CA). **\$50 DICE CUP THROW**: 1-James Roston (NY)... *Lots of fun and games provided by Atlanta BG Association director Dave Cardwell and staff. The hotel and surrounding location was top-notch.*

•**BIBA Hilton Trophy** (Birmingham, England; 13-14 June)... **OPEN** (50): 1-Tim Mooring; 1C-Simon Gasquoine, 2C-Stewart Wilson; 1LC-Shaun Herd, 2LC-John Clark. **SUICIDE!** (34): 1-Richard

Granville, 2-Emmanuel DiBona. **CRACKSHOT** (52): 1-Sue Perks, 2-Dave McNair. **FRIDAY KO** (15): 1-Brian Busfield, 2-John Slattery. **DOUBLES** (13): 1-Gazza's Fitness Tutors, 2-Castle Escosse.

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (San Mateo, CA; 21 June)... **OPEN** (15): 1-David Marona, 2-Roger Gabrielson; 1C-Justin Bor, 2C-Emil Malek. **INTERMEDIATE** (11): 1-Jim Mason, 2-Timothy Jaxon; 1C/2C-Clint McClintic / Windy. **BEGINNER** (7): 1/2-Jim Milner / Brad Vogt.

•**Clarine's Monthly** (Los Angeles, CA; 27 June)... **OPEN** (16): 1-Joseph Bina, 2-Eliot Bean. Δ

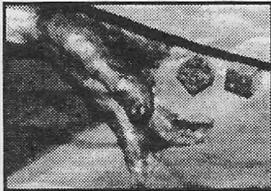
HAWTHORNE BACKGAMMON CLASSIC

Saturday, 18 July 1998
Hawthorne Race Course, Cicero, IL

Final registration at 11:00 AM
Play begins at 11:45 AM
Information: 773/583-6464

AMALGAMATION

After 13 years of elegant operation in Manhattan, NY, **Louise Goldsmith** (NY) has closed the Coterie Club. Ace Point owners **Lourdes and Alan Steffen** (NY) remind us that Louise was the backbone of **Henry Watson's** fantastic Las Vegas World Amateur Tournaments during the 1970s. We wish Louise and her husband **Russell** nothing but the best... **Dave Cardwell** (GA) sent us an article that claims when **President Richard Nixon** brought a backgammon set back to the United States from one of his international visits in 1972, mainstream America embraced the game... The Cavendish Club announces a new address (17348 12 Mile Rd., Southfield, Michigan) and weekly tournaments Monday at 7:30 PM. For more info, call **Bud Olejniczak** at 248/552-0300... What are you doing this summer? **Steve Sax** (CA) is doing the "Mark McGuire tour." Steve will travel around the country watching the St. Louis Cardinals star hit home runs in pursuit of **Roger Maris's** record... While restoring Chicago's 1920s Oriental Theatre (to be re-named Ford Center for the Performing Arts), workers uncovered a silver buccaneer up in the strato-



sphere rolling a pair of dice. We'll let you know if they next uncover a doubling cube!... A number of friends gathered at Shaw's Crab House in Chicago for **Peter Kalba's** (IL) surprise 50th birthday party on 8 July... **Howard Markowitz** (NV) was in Chicago for his daughter **Nikki's** June wedding at the Ambassador West Hotel... Joe Wollick (IL) is filling in as Pub Club director for **Val Zimnicki** (IL) who is heavily involved in Illinois politics this year... *Essential Backgammon* editor **Dan Frank** (Germany) has created the Baffle Cup™. It look like a regular cup except that the dice are automatically cast by means of a spring device. Look for a demo in Monte Carlo. Price: \$40/cup... Incredible Department: On his June trip to Bangkok, Thailand, **Jake Jacobs'** hotel safe box was robbed of \$1200. You'll recall that \$1300 was taken from his box at the Nordic Open in April... **Paul Weaver** (AL) tells us that **Herb Avram** (MD) was the last American chess player to defeat **Bobby Fischer**... **Doug Roberts** (MA) on counting pips: "**Stu Katz** (IL) counts the position three times and takes an average." Δ

RANKING THE BEST

Another Method Utilizing
Calcutta Auction Result Percentages

Last month's method of ranking players based on their Calcutta auction bids caused a lot of feedback—mostly positive. The method was to add up the individually-auctioned players' bids and average them.

The problem with this system was that the Las Vegas auctions generate higher bids than those in Chicago and Michigan. Our new method divides the individual's bid by the total of the eight highest individual bids. Then each player's percentages are added up and divided by the total number of tournaments they have participated in since 1996. This is listed in our table as **% Avg.**

Note: Data from the recent Michigan Summer Championships are included in the findings:

Michigan Summer Champs (2-5 July 1998) 83 player field.

Abbas Zaltash: \$400	Frank Talbot: \$300
Mike Senkiewicz: \$350	Art Benjamin: \$300
Neil Kazaross: \$325	Dennis Culpepper: \$300
Howard Markowitz: \$300	Doug Roberts: \$250
Harry Cohn: \$300	

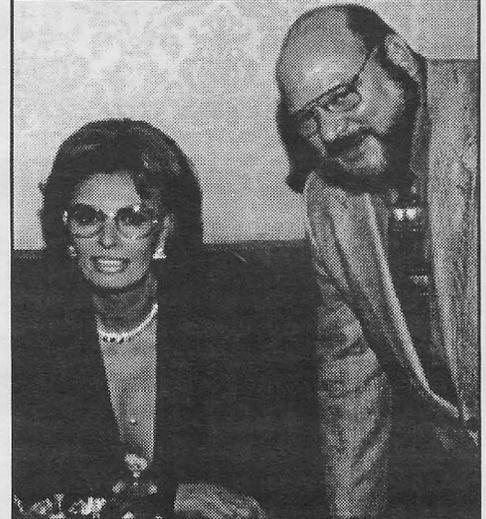
We have only ranked those players who have been individually-auctioned at least three times. Here are the public's top 10 Calcutta auction favorites based on our new ranking method:

Ranking/Name	# of Tourn.	Top Bids	% Avg.
1. Abbas Zaltash	4	3	15.06
2. Wilcox Snellings	3	2	14.98
3. Mike Senkiewicz	9	3	14.66
4. Bill Robertie	3	1	14.32
5. Kit Woolsey	6	2	14.22
6. Neil Kazaross	5	1	13.56
7. Paul Magriel	3	1	13.29
8. Malcolm Davis	8	2	13.13
9. Howard Markowitz	5	0	12.86
10. Nick Ballard	7	0	11.61

Back-gammon à la carte

Books, boards, dice, software and more. Contact Carol Joy Cole for your one-stop backgammon shopping.
810/232-9731 • cjc@flint.org

THIS IS WORKING?



Talk about a lucky guy! It's John Brussel with the legendary Sophia Loren at a cocktail party in Chicago 29 May. John's firm, Planned Television Arts, is publicizing Loren's new Italian cookbook, "Sophia Loren's Recipes and Memories."

Simborg's Laws of Backgammon #3 by Phil Simborg

- Everyone thinks they roll worse than the next guy.
- If two players break even, they will both be pissed.
- It's not a good box run until you've lost the box without getting killed on that game.
- Every roll makes somebody happy.
- Nobody *really* feels sorry for the other guy when he loses.
- Everyone likes cash.
- Everyone is superstitious about something.
- Nobody likes to drop a cube.
- A drunk opponent is the best opponent.
- Most "accidentally" wrong plays seem to work in favor of the player who moved the checkers.
- Everyone steams some time.
- It is better to cube too late than too early.
- If you are consistently unlucky, it probably isn't the dice at all.
- If you can't take all the cubes, you probably shouldn't take any.
- If you are playing this game for a living, you ain't living.
- Sometimes, you've just got to scream and shout and let it out! Δ

The Worldwide Backgammon Federation is proud to present the

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

58 MILLION Lire
(29,000 Euro) combined
Guaranteed Prize Money

HIT Casino Park - Nova Gorica, Slovenia

September 4-6, 1998

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

40 MILLION Lire
(20,000 Euro) European
Championship 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)

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**

<http://www.wbf.net>



PROGRAM

Monday, August 31

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

Thursday, September 3

17:30 Public draw for free Warm-up
18:00 Warm-up begins. Quarter Entries,
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,
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. 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 announced 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