

## STEVE MELLEN IS BAR POINT CLUB'S PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Kazaross's Streak Ends

Nothing lasts forever. After a five-year run as the Chicago Bar Point Club "top dog," Neil Kazaross has been dethroned by our 1998 Player of the Year Steve Mellen.

Mellen, a 28-year-old commercial litigation lawyer, played less than a year of tourney backgammon at the Flint (MI) club before moving to Chicago in mid-1997. Starting slowly in Chicago, Steve still managed to finish December in 18th place.

What a difference a year makes. In 1998, Steve lead the points race every month of the year equaling Tak Morioka's 1991 feat.

Mellen displayed great poise and determination in his 1998 victory. "In January, I made a commitment to improve



*Chicago Bar Point Club's 1998 Player of the Year: Steve Mellen.*

my game," said Mellen. "I'm proud of my accomplishment."

Steve rates the pinnacle of his Bar Point Club year as his 13 October victory over

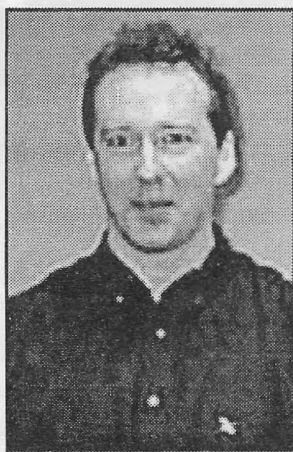
World Cup champ Howard Ring. "I had been on a two month losing streak and was only 0.32 points ahead of Joe Wollick at the time. I faced Howard in the finals and gave him my 'A' game. That win seemed to energize me for the last three months."

No doubt. Steve finished the year in a blaze of glory, winning December Player of the Month via an 11 match win streak—his second 1000-to-1 Club achievement of 1998. Hats off to Steve Mellen for a job well done.

**CONGRATULATIONS ALSO** to Joe Wollick, Tak Morioka, Neil Kazaross, Laila Leonhardt and Herb Roman for earning spots on the CBPC Illinois State Challenge Cup team (to be played 7 February in Springfield, IL). The Top-20 players will be honored at Awards Night 5 January at the Golden Flame.

The final 1998 CBPC standings appear on page 3. Δ

## ALEX CARAPLIS TAKES 1998 ABT TITLE



"I was so close to winning a trophy in 1997 that I decided to try it again." That explain's Alex Caraplis's

motivation and dedication in winning the 1998 American Backgammon Tour. 17 tournaments from across the country made up this year's tour. Alex earned 41.70 points for the following finishes: Thousand Islands (1st), Indiana Open (2nd), Minnesota State (1st), Nation's Capital (2nd). That was enough to hold off New Jersey

player Perry Gartner (34.44), and Michigan's Maurice Barie (27.73) who finished 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Caraplis, a 33-year-old chiropractor from West Paterson, NJ, is serious about the game. From 1994 to mid-1997, Alex gave up tournament play to study. "I read everything I could, put a lot of time in on "Matchqiz," worked with JellyFish™, and hundreds of positional rollouts. It really made a difference."

Following the 4-year hiatus, Caraplis won his return event (1000 Islands in August, 1997). He went on to finish 7th for the '97 ABT season.

Alex's dad introduced him to the game when he was just a kid. "My father was of Greek descent and played a Middle Eastern style: good checker play, but no cube knowledge."

How does Alex feel about his impressive result? "I wanted to prove to myself that I could do this. A lot of people talk the talk; I wanted to walk the walk.

"The ABT gives backgammon direction. It's something to work for. I played every ABT event since August of last year.

Right now, I'm relaxing. I'm not sure if I'll make the commitment to try for another title. But when Pittsburgh rolls around this February, who knows?!"

Caraplis, Gartner and Barie will receive their trophies at the ABT Awards Ceremony held at the Pittsburgh Championships in February. Top-100 1998 ABT results are on page 3 and the All-Time Top-50 standings are on page 4. Δ

## Grand Prix de Suisse

# 1999

## Lugano—October 26–31

# CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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## LETTERS

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## CONSISTENCY IN RULINGS

This is written in response to Jake Jacobs' commentary in the November 1998 issue of CHICAGO POINT. Being an advocate of much greater depth for backgammon tournament rules, I would have to be on the side of the "punishers."

Many years ago, I had an editorial asking for members of the backgammon community to send suggestions, and possible amendments, or recommendations for rule changes to me. I received only one response, and that was from a European organizer stating that I "did not have the authority" to make such a request. That is a different issue. Although, we are talking about bearoffs in noncontact positions, I am more interested in *ruling consistency* rather than the rulings themselves.

Some years ago, a position arose where White was on roll with three checkers the

*[Continued on page 3]*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

by Carol Joy Cole

810/232-9731

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

\* Denotes new or revised listing

## NATIONAL

*American Backgammon Tour events underlined.*

Jan 9	Springfield Heineken Series #3, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/483-4028
Jan 10*	Northern Ohio Club Monthly, Belden Commons Restaurant, Canton, OH	330/966-2811
Jan 10	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Jan 16	Rocky Mountain Tournament, Cheers, Denver, CO	719/574-5598
Jan 17	Backgammon By The Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	831/688-9722
Jan 17	Austin Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Jan 21	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Jan 23*	Rocky Mountain Tournament, Cheers, Denver, CO	719/574-5598
Jan 24	Sunday Bimonthly Tournament, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, WI	414/463-2498
Jan 24*	Pittsburgh Championships Warm-up, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA	412/823-7500
Jan 30	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Jan 31	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Jan 31	Louisville Monthly Tournament, Oldenberg Grill, Louisville, KY	502/458-9660
Feb 4-7	Rio Pro-Am Invitational, Rio Hotel/Casino, Las Vegas, NV	301/299-8265
Feb 5*	Flint Club Awards Party & Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Feb 6	Springfield Heineken Series #4, Hilton Hotel, Springfield, IL	217/483-4028
Feb 7	19th Illinois State Challenge Cup, Hilton Hotel, Springfield, IL	773/583-6464
Feb 7	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Feb 7*	Northern Ohio Club Monthly, Belden Commons Restaurant, Canton, OH	330/966-2811
Feb 12-14	<u>21st Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Feb 18*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Ramada Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Feb 21*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyway's Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/583-6464
Feb 21	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	831/688-9722
Feb 21*	Hoosier Club Awards Tournament, Wildcat Brewing Co., Indianapolis, IN	317/255-8902
Feb 27	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Feb 28	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Feb 28	Louisville Monthly Tournament, Oldenberg Grill, Louisville, KY	502/458-9660
Mar 5-7	<u>Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Mar 6*	Springfield Heineken Series #5, Peoria Pizza Works, Peoria, IL	217/483-4028
Mar 7*	16th Fleet Underwood Memorial & Benefit, Ramada, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Mar 14*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Mar 19-21	<u>1999 Midwest Championships, Radisson Hotel, Lisle, IL</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
Mar 21*	Backgammon by the Bay, San Mateo Bridge Center, San Mateo, CA	831/688-9722
Mar 27*	Clarine's Monthly Tournament, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA	213/822-9745
Mar 28*	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Mar 28*	Louisville Monthly Tournament, Oldenberg Grill, Louisville, KY	502/458-9660
Apr 9-11*	Nation's Capital Spring Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Apr 10*	Springfield Heineken Series #6, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, IL	217/483-4028
Apr 11*	New England Club Monthly, Sheraton-Commander, Cambridge, MA	508/829-3283
Apr 11*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyway's Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/583-6464
Apr 9-11*	Nation's Capital Spring Tournament, Promenade, Bethesda, MD	301/530-0604
Apr 20-25	International Twin Championships, Four Queens, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
May 28-31	<u>20th Chicago Open, Wyndham NW Chicago Hotel, Itasca, IL</u>	<u>847/674-0120</u>
Jul 2-5	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton Hotel, Novi, MI</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Aug 13-15*	<u>Minnesota State Championship, Location TBA, MN</u>	<u>612/378-1536</u>
Sep 3-6	<u>47th Indiana Open, Sheraton-Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, IN</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Oct 8-10	<u>Illinois Championships &amp; America Cup, Holidome, Rolling Meadows, IL</u>	<u>847/945-7801</u>
Oct 8-10	<u>Nation's Capital Championships, Promenade, Bethesda, MD</u>	<u>301/530-0604</u>

## OUTSIDE USA

Jan 5-10*	4th Thailand Open, 19th Hole Pub, South Pattaya, Thailand	USA Contact: 847/824-2466
Jan 15-24	Giant Jackpot & World Cup Challenge V, Hyatt Regency Istanbul, Turkey	9723-6727063
Jan 23-24*	bb99 Tournament #1, Great Barr Hotel, Birmingham, England	441522-888676
Jan 28-31	1st Principe Leopoldo Cup, Principe Leopoldo Hotel, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Feb 5-7	Italian Championship, 2nd City of Trento, Trento, Italy	39347-4529409
Feb 6-7*	Jarvis Trophy (Swiss #1), Stakis Leicester Hotel, England	441522-888676
Feb 26-28*	3rd Warsteiner Cup, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Mar 6-7*	Ryddale Scottish Open, Stakis Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland	441522-888676
Mar 11-14*	35th Ted Basset Cup & Pro Am, Palace hotel, Gstaad, Switzerland	4161-2710137
Mar 18-21*	25th Winter Championships, Palace Hotel, St. Moritz, Switzerland	4161-2710137
Apr 1-5	11th Nordic "Wide" Open, Scandic Hotel, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-400607
Apr 10-11*	British Open, Stakis Nottingham Metropole, England	441522-888676
Apr 26-May 2	5th European BG News Mayday Tournament, Almeria, Spain	34950-133009
Jun 2-6	6th German Open, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Jul 8-12*	City of Venice Tournament, Casinò Municipale, Lido, Venice, Italy	3941-5900769
Jul 10-11*	Monte Carlo Warm-Up Weekend, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	954/527-4033
Jul 12-18	World Championship, Loews Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA contact: 954/527-4033
Dec 8-12	6th Tournament of the Americas, Cancun, Mexico	USA contact: 773/583-6464



Alex Caraplis	41.70	Art Benjamin	8.71	Phil Williams	5.25	Gabe Davis	3.98
Perry Gartner	34.44	Richard Del Furia	8.66	Bill Keefe	5.20	Peter Kalba	3.92
Maurice Barie	27.73	Lincoln Bedell	8.56	Ed Johnson	5.11	Don Faix	3.67
Steve Hast	25.29	Steve Herman	8.04	Wendy Kaplan	5.04	Jeff Burdsall	3.64
Dennis Culpepper	25.08	Mike Fujita	7.97	Gary Payne	4.92	Mike Derylo	3.64
Steve McCormick	22.88	Joseph Bina	7.27	Jack Kissane	4.89	Bob Wilensky	3.41
Mike Friedman	22.45	Norm Wiggins	7.27	Joe Freedman	4.80	John Graas	3.41
Walter Trice	20.23	Jeremy Kirkpatrick	7.22	Denny Leatherman	4.80	Karen Davis	3.41
Doug Roberts	19.46	Ray Glaeser	7.00	Harry Cohn	4.78	Eden Windish	3.33
Tom Zarrinam	18.18	Frank Talbot	6.82	Mark Kaczmarczyk	4.78	Kim Haubert	3.15
Bob Glass	17.42	Jack Takala	6.82	John Brooks	4.75	Eliot Bean	3.05
David Todd	16.67	Todd Doucet	6.67	Mike Lauzon	4.74	Butch Meese	3.00
Chuck Papazian	16.04	Dave Orandle	6.54	Mike Hendrikson	4.72	Francois Margot	2.88
Doug Mayfield	13.74	Drew Giovanis	6.50	Zia Afshani	4.68	Sam Pottle	2.88
David Simpson	13.47	Sig Skolnick	6.44	Lucky Nelson	4.55	John Mazur	2.81
Jeff Acierno	13.42	Howard Markowitz	6.40	Janice Newman	4.50	Ray Kershaw	2.67
Merrill Schrager	13.22	David Groner	6.38	Rob Maier	4.36	Roger Baff	2.44
Gary Stern	13.05	Odis Chenault	6.11	Rory Pascal	4.35	Linda Resnicoff	2.39
Malcolm Davis	11.75	Ray Foglerlund	6.11	Walt Swan	4.21	Matt Reklaitis	2.39
Jannica Tornqvist	11.63	Larry Yudin	5.88	Chuck Bower	4.16	Toni Wuersch	2.39
Jim Hickey	11.55	Paul Stebbing	5.88	John Brussel	4.16	Harold Roberson	2.38
Frankie Farjood	11.44	Andy Glazer	5.77	Mark Larios	4.11	Ron Konpelien	2.38
David Wells	11.20	Ana Lucia Almeida	5.65	Gayle Wolf	4.08	Hunter Jones	2.36
Bob Holyon	9.90	Mike Cyrkiel	5.60	Tom McEvoy	4.00	Jim Bowman	2.35
Mike Rezaei	9.59	Sam Orandle	5.33	Paul Dibiase	3.99	Wally Wolf	2.35

**ALEX CARAPLIS, PERRY GARTNER and MAURICE BARIE** will be honored at the 1998 American Backgammon Tour Awards Ceremony (prior to the Calcutta Auction) at the Pittsburgh Championships on 13 February 1999.


**CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB  
1998 PLAYER OF THE YEAR**
**FINAL STANDINGS**  
*89 players earned pts.*

Steve Mellen	30.76	Bill Davis	6.92	Bob Steen	2.00	Jay Ward	0.64
Joe Wollick	26.44	Arlene Levy	5.86	Joseph Esfahani	1.92	Ralph Barnes	0.64
Tak Morioka	22.32	Andy Krenitz	5.52	Richard Lloyd	1.92	Steve Rota	0.56
Neil Kazaross	18.48	Norma Shyer	5.44	Paul Baraz	1.76	Sam Yoyen	0.56
Laila Leonhardt	16.60	Gary Kay	5.36	Sam Pottle	1.48	Dick Nelson	0.56
Herb Roman	15.52	Tim Mabee	4.68	Romeo Kap	1.28	Ken Tyszko	0.52
Paul Friedman	14.32	Tim Carroll	4.64	Howard Ring	1.28	Joe Wehrle	0.48
Jake Jacobs	14.32	Ken Bond	4.48	Joann Feinstein	1.22	Bob Holyon	0.48
Alice Kay	13.12	Jerry Brooks	4.36	Val Zimnicki	1.16	Rudy Langenbach	0.44
Phyllis Smolinski	12.84	Sah Dogan	3.92	John Stryker	1.04	Rich Gast	0.32
Paul Franks	10.96	Frankie Farjood	3.52	Barry Miller	0.96	Sonia Peacock	0.32
Paul Klein	10.92	George Barr	3.36	Earl Risch	0.96	Linda Woods	0.32
Mary Franks	10.80	Rodney Bell	3.28	Ed Zell	0.96	Sarg Serges	0.32
Ed Buerger	10.20	Steve Klesker	3.20	Amy Valerio	0.96	Joe Koucharian	0.32
Rick Bieniak	9.56	Richard Stawowy	3.08	Rex Savage	0.88	Henry Gray	0.28
Bill Keefe	8.64	John Demian	2.72	Roz Ferris	0.84	Steve Neidecker	0.28
Bob Zavoral	7.88	Carter Mattig	2.72	Wendy Kaplan	0.84	Bev Loder	0.28
Marty Tatossian	7.60	Peter Kalba	2.56	Jannica Tornqvist	0.84	Barbara Levinson	0.24
Don Jayhan	7.40	David Araiza	2.56	Mark Murray	0.76	Mark Ryan	0.16
Marc Rosset	7.40	Dave Cramer	2.48	Greg Defotis	0.72	Boris Mindich	0.16
Phil Simborg	7.36	Reginald Porter	2.48	Bobbie Shiffrin	0.72	Paul Lombardo	0.16
Elaine Kehm	7.08	Georgina Flanagan	2.12	Roland Dieter	0.64	Stan Kucharz	0.12
Harry Cohn	7.04						

This year's Chicago Bar Point Club Player of the Year, **STEVE MELLEN**, finished in a blaze of glory by winning December Player of the Month honors (5.04 points), including a run of 11 victories in a row. December runner's up were Joe Wollick (4.32) and Herb Roman (4.08). The new 1999 CBPC points race begins at our Awards Ceremony 5 January 1999 at the Golden Flame in Chicago.

**LETTERS...**
*[Continued from page 2]*

ace point against Black who had a checker on the trey point and a checker on the ace point. White rolled a non-double and Black rolled a 2-1. Black then requested a ruling because the White side neglected to bear off any checkers following his non-double.

Doesn't this constitute an illegal play? What is the difference if one has touched the checkers or not? It is still a *forced move* situation. In chess parlance, this is known as *zugzwang*, which is the compulsion to make a move regardless of the setup.

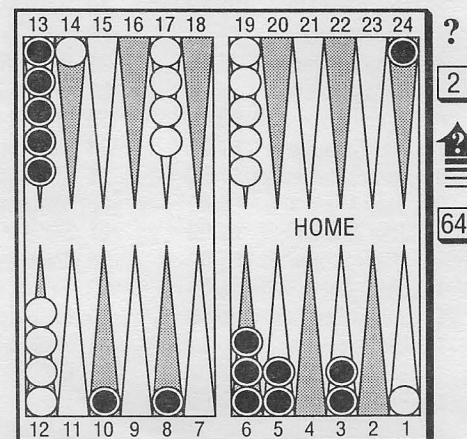
Indeed, the Snowie™ backgammon program will bear off checkers automatically in a forced move situation. It so indicates on screen by stating "Forced Move" in a rectangular box.

In my example, the ruling went in Black's favor—White still had three checkers on the 1-point. If *zugzwang* had been in effect, there would be no question how this ruling would have resulted: those checkers for White would have been borne off, pure and simple. That's also true for the one Jake described. There would be no "shades of gray" as to whether or not they had been touched, nudged, shifted, etc. Of course in my example, Black would not be a happy camper.

In Jake's scenario, White ended up getting a pass from his opponent (only to be punished by Lady Luck). In my example, White was punished yet both positions were similar in that they were both "forced

*[Continued on page 7]*
*your move*
**PROBLEM #251**
**to be analyzed by Antonio Ortega**

17-point match. White leads Black, 14 to 10. Black to roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



# ASK DANNY

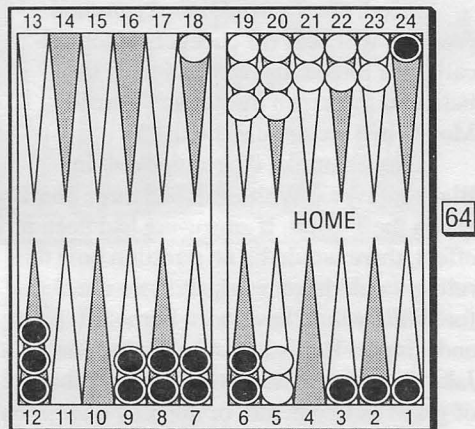


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## SAILORS TAKE WARNING

**D**ear Danny: Here is a strange position from a chouette in which I was captain of the ship with three rather outspoken sailors.

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-6.**



The first 6 is pretty easy. Unless we hit, we face being primed, and the race is rather poor as well. The main question was how many of the blots to cover on our 1-, 2-, and 3-points. (The less said about how this position was reached—I did mention the rather mutinous crew—the better!)

After listening to the troops argue for awhile, I covered all three points. White rolled 5-5, giving him quite a race lead. As uninteresting as the outcome was (I simply outrolled White ending with a set of

doubles to win the race on the last roll), I would be curious as to your analysis of the position.—Steve Robinson, Langhorne, PA

**DEAR STEVE:** What shall we do with the drunken sailors?

That is the toughest question raised by your letter, for it is clear that those who argued with your play must have been three sails to the wind. The second toughest question is why the Box hadn't doubled with the strong position he undoubtedly had before his last roll. The third toughest question is, "Why quarrel with success?" (You did win the game, after all, being only five pips behind even after your opponent's double-5s.)

Now for the easy question: your play of the double-6s.

It is almost axiomatic to cover inside blots when your opponent is on the bar. There are exceptions, of course: when playing a back game and needing to improve your timing, when trying to pick up an extra man after hitting a blot during your opponent's bearoff, when playing a priming game and needing to keep a strong prime.

Here none of the exceptions apply. Though you could over none of your blots and keep your 4-prime with 24/18\*, 18/6, 12/6, that 4-prime means nothing if White hits any of your blots, for (barring reentry and escape with 6-1) you won't be able to take the cube that will surely be coming next. Covering no blots is out.

How about covering only one or two? That is hardly better than covering none, even though it leaves fewer shots, for it breaks your 4-prime. There is little to be gained by keeping a 3-prime or broken 4-prime here.

Just look at your opponent's board. Can it possibly be right to leave extra shots when your opponent has his five best inside points and you have multiple blots? Absolutely not.

Though the prospect of an untakable cube focuses the issue here, covering all three inside blots would be right even if White had doubled earlier and you already owned the cube. Making all three points creates 16 dancing rolls for White and gives him only 11 combination shots. Making only two points (obviously the most important are your 3- and 2-points) creates only nine dancing rolls and gives White from five to seven combination shots in addition to 11 direct.

The extra dancing rolls are important; they give you another roll in which to clean up your blots, and perhaps even make the 4-point (seven numbers work).

With the cube already turned, leaving unnecessary shots would be the short road to gammon.

Oh, I just got a call from Stan, the gifted guitarist who accompanies me when I sing lead vocals in public performances. He tells me that the best answer to the toughest question raised by your letter is, "Lock 'em in a cabin with the Captain's daughter."—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.

## AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR: ALL-TIME TOP 50 (1993-1998)

1 Art Benjamin 150.47	18 Maurice Barie 53.55	35 Bob Holyon 33.58
2 Doug Roberts 123.32	19 Doug Mayfield 53.26	36 Howard Markowitz 33.06
3 Neil Kazaross 81.29	20 Odis Chenault 50.62	37 Dave Cardwell 31.30
4 Mike Friedman 75.70	21 David Wells 48.09	38 Peter Kalba 29.57
5 Abbas Zaltash 74.28	22 Arnold Zousmer 47.75	39 Jeff Acierno 28.79
6 Walter Trice 68.43	23 Paul Stebbing 46.22	40 Ed Johnson 28.39
7 Alex Caraplis 67.72	24 Tak Morioka 45.01	41 Andy Palumbo 27.30
8 Dennis Culpepper 67.39	25 Kit Woolsey 42.71	42 David Haddad 26.89
9 Dean Muench 65.60	26 Malcolm Davis 41.88	43 Todd Doucet 26.19
10 Jake Jacobs 62.90	27 Steve McCormick 39.70	44 John Mansey 26.11
11 Marty Storer 62.09	28 Joe Russell 37.81	45 Ben Lang 26.00
12 Harry Cohn 58.00	29 Patrick Gibson 36.94	46 David Rubin 25.28
13 John O'Hagan 56.96	30 Frank Talbot 36.76	47 Matt Reklaitis 25.18
14 Dave Williams 56.21	31 Fred Kalantari 36.03	48 John Brussel 24.90
15 Steve Hast 53.68	32 Bob Glass 34.96	49 Paul Magriel 24.50
16 Perry Gartner 53.66	33 Harry Brown 33.82	50 Steve Sax 23.77
17 Ray Fogelund 53.62	34 Rob Maier 33.74	

661 players have earned points

THE NAT. CHAMPION

ABT AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB

### The 1999 Midwest Backgammon Championships

March 19-21, 1999

**RADISSON HOTEL**  
Lisle, Illinois

Featuring:

**Grand Crystal Beaver (\$600 entry)**  
*The \$35,000 Lady's Treasure*  
(\$9,000 entry—Limited to 4 ladies)

Info: 773/583-6464 • [chipoint@interaccess.com](mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com)



CHICAGO POINT's 1999 Listing of...

# Backgammon Clubs in North America

Information for this listing has been obtained directly from the featured backgammon clubs. Changes are inevitable and we suggest that you always call before attending. As a service to our readers, CHICAGO POINT would like to maintain an accurate listing of Backgammon Clubs in North America. Please send information including updates, club closings and new clubs to: **CHICAGO POINT; 3940 W. Bryn Mawr 504; Chicago, IL 60659. 773/583-6464. Fax: 773/583-3264. E-mail: [chipoint@interaccess.com](mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com)**

## WEST

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT [E-MAIL]	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Phoenix Backgammon Club	George & The Dragon Pub	Phoenix, AZ	Tuesday-7:00 PM	David Hilton ( <a href="mailto:davnh@aol.com">davnh@aol.com</a> )	602/265-1992	635 W. Indian School Road 108; Phoenix, AZ 85013
Tucson Backgammon Club	Sanchez Burrito Company	Tucson, AZ	Sunday-4:00 PM	Terry Valentine ( <a href="mailto:backgammon@webtv.net">backgammon@webtv.net</a> )	602/791-0300	7014 E. Golf Links Road 350; Tucson, AZ 85730
Backgammon By The Bay	The Whole Shabang	Alameda, CA	1st Sunday monthly-12:00 N	Beth Skillman ( <a href="mailto:beth@backgammon.org">beth@backgammon.org</a> )	831/688-9722	308 Arthur Avenue; Aptos, CA 95003
"	Clubroom	San Mateo, CA	3rd Sunday monthly-12:00 N	"	831/688-9722	"
Backgammon Club of San Diego	Latino's Bar & Rotisserie	La Jolla, CA	Tuesday-6:00 PM	Ed Baize ( <a href="mailto:ebaize@pharmingen.com">ebaize@pharmingen.com</a> )	619/457-2273	2485 Elm Avenue; San Diego, CA 92154
Beverly Hills Backgammon	A.R. Private Club	Los Angeles, CA	Last Sat. monthly-7:00 PM	Clarine ( <a href="mailto:clarine@concentric.net">clarine@concentric.net</a> )	213/422-5854	8300 DeLongpre Ave. 308; W. Hollywood, CA 90069
Gammon Associates	A.R. Private Club	Los Angeles, CA	Sunday-2:00 PM	Patrick Gibson ( <a href="mailto:pgibson@concentric.net">pgibson@concentric.net</a> )	818/901-0464	7641 Orion Avenue; Van Nuys, CA 91406
"	Acapulco Cantina	Burbank, CA	Tuesday-6:00 PM	"	818/901-0464	"
Rocky Mountain Backgammon Club	Cheers	Denver, CO	Sunday bimonthly	Charlie Raichle ( <a href="mailto:charlier@earthlink.net">charlier@earthlink.net</a> )	719/574-5598	4725 Keith Court; Colorado Springs, CO 80916
Aloha State Backgammon Club	Call for current location	Honolulu, HI	Friday-6:00 PM	George Quillin ( <a href="mailto:MikeFujita@hawaii.rr.com">MikeFujita@hawaii.rr.com</a> )	808/922-2674	2999 Kalakaua; Honolulu, HI 96815
Las Vegas Backgammon	Elks Lodge	Las Vegas, NV	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Michael Maxakuli	702/458-9359	311 Pecos Way; Las Vegas, NV 89121
Nevada Backgammon Assoc.	Las Vegas Hotels	Las Vegas, NV	April & November	Howard Markowitz ( <a href="mailto:howard7@mindspring.com">howard7@mindspring.com</a> )	702/893-6025	2620 S. Maryland Pkwy, Box 230; Las Vegas, NV 89109
Oregon Backgammon Club	To be determined	Milwaukie, OR	To be determined	Susan Mazza ( <a href="mailto:corinna@aracnet.com">corinna@aracnet.com</a> )	503/794-0124	5658 SE Monroe Street; Milwaukie, OR 97222
Pacific NW Backgammon Assoc.	8th Avenue Sports Bar	Bellevue, WA	Monday-7:00 PM	Chuck Breckenridge	425/778-8181	7015 Olympic View Dr.; Edmonds, WA 98026
Puget Sound Backgammon Club	European Connection	Burien, WA	Tuesday-7:30 PM	Ruth Robbins ( <a href="mailto:Lerann@foxiinternet.net">Lerann@foxiinternet.net</a> )	425/226-3120	12611 155th Ave. SE; Renton, WA 98059

## CENTRAL

Bloomington-Normal BG Club	Ride The Nine	Bloomington, IL	Monday-6:30 PM	Gary Daniels ( <a href="mailto:gdaniels@dave-world.net">gdaniels@dave-world.net</a> )	309/452-3034	1708 Johnson Drive; Normal, IL 61761
Games People Play	The Clique	Chicago, IL	Monday-7:00 PM	Reginald Porter ( <a href="mailto:hbg@ameritech.net">hbg@ameritech.net</a> )	773/471-5066	7338 S. Claremont; Chicago, IL 60636
Chicago Bar Point Club	Golden Flame	Chicago, IL	Tuesday-6:15 PM	Bill Davis ( <a href="mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com">chipoint@interaccess.com</a> )	773/583-6464	3940 W. Bryn Mawr 504; Chicago, IL 60659
"	Anyway's Chicago Grill & Bar	Oakbrook Terrace, IL	Sunday bimonthly-11:45 AM	Peter Kalba ( <a href="mailto:chipoint@interaccess.com">chipoint@interaccess.com</a> )	773/252-7755	2510 W. Iowa Street; Chicago, IL 60622
Peoria Backgammon Club	Peoria Pizza Works	Peoria, IL	Thursday-6:30 PM	Ed Zell ( <a href="mailto:edzell@worldnet.att.net">edzell@worldnet.att.net</a> )	309/674-0557	2009 W. Clarke Avenue, West Peoria, IL 61604
Sangamon Valley BG Assoc.	Brewhaus	Springfield, IL	Wednesday-6:30 PM	Ben Zemaitis ( <a href="mailto:bzemaitis@fgi.net">bzemaitis@fgi.net</a> )	217/483-4028	301 Estes Park Drive; Chatham, IL 62629
"	Parker's Sports Bar	Springfield, IL	1st Sat/Nov to Apr-11:30 AM	"	217/483-4028	"
Pub Club	The Old Main Inn	Wheaton, IL	Monday-7:30 PM	Joe Wollick ( <a href="mailto:joe68@mediaone.net">joe68@mediaone.net</a> )	847/755-0887	2225 Harwinton Place; Hoffman Estates, IL 60194
Winnetka Backgammon Club	Winnetka Community House	Winnetka, IL	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Trudie Chibnik	847/446-0537	740 Ballantrae Drive B; Northbrook, IL 60062
Summit City Backgam'n League	Alumni Club	Ft. Wayne, IN	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Ken Bruck ( <a href="mailto:bruckshire@iexpress.net">bruckshire@iexpress.net</a> )	219/639-6898	P.O. Box 6546; Fort Wayne, IN 46896
Hoosier Backgammon Club	Wildcat Brewing Company	Indianapolis, IN	Thursday-7:00 PM	Butch Meese ( <a href="mailto:meese@worldnet.att.net">meese@worldnet.att.net</a> )	317/255-8902	1008 Tuckahoe Street; Indianapolis, IN 46260
Flint Area Backgammon Club	Ramada Inn	Flint, MI	Thursday-7:00 PM	Carol Joy Cole ( <a href="mailto:cjc@flint.org">cjc@flint.org</a> )	810/232-9731	3719 Greenbrook Lane; Flint, MI 48507
Plymouth Backgammon Club	Box Bar & Grill	Plymouth, MI	Wednesday-7:30 PM	Dean Adamian ( <a href="mailto:adamiancan@aol.com">adamiancan@aol.com</a> )	734/981-5706	42954 Barchester; Canton, MI 48187
Cavendish North BG Club	Clubroom	Southfield, MI	Daily except Sunday	Bud Olejniczak	248/552-0300	17348 W. 12 Mile Road 12; Southfield, MI 48076
Twin Cities Backgammon Club	Pracna on Main	Minneapolis, MN	Thursday-7:00 PM	Steve Maas ( <a href="mailto:smaas11@aol.com">smaas11@aol.com</a> )	612/378-1536	841 20th Ave. SE; Minneapolis, MN 55414
Rochester, Minnesota BG Club	The Greenhouse (Kahler Hotel)	Rochester, MN	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Ray Bills ( <a href="mailto:ray@us.ibm.com">ray@us.ibm.com</a> )	507/280-8956	618 23rd Street NE; Rochester, MN 55906

(Continued on opposite side)

**CENTRAL (continued)**

CLUB NAME	LOCATION	CITY & STATE	MEETING DAY & TIME	CONTACT (E-MAIL)	TELEPHONE	MAIL INQUIRIES TO
Northern Ohio Backgammon Club	Aroma Coffee & Tea	Akron, OH	Wednesday-6:30 PM	Joe Miller (jm@neo.rr.com)	330/966-2811	6633 Lake-O-Springs; Canton, OH 44718
Dallas Backgammon League	Jo Jo's Restaurant	Addison, TX	Wednesday-7:45 PM	Tom Wheeler (tzwheel@aol.com)	972-484-3038	3705 Pageant Place, Dallas 75244
Austin Backgammon Assoc.	Bombay Bicycle Club	Austin, TX	Monday-7:30 PM	Jackie Seiders-Smart (jseiders@mail.utexas.edu)	512/261-8518	30 Hightrail Way, Austin, TX 78738
Madison Backgammon Club	J.T. Whitney's	Madison, WI	Tuesday-7:00 PM	Bruce Russell (bruce.russell@dot.state.wi.us)	608/233-2046	5105 Tocora Lane; Madison, WI 53711
Milwaukee Backgammon Club	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	Wednesday-7:00 PM	Marv Arnol (marching@execpc.com)	414/355-5562	9031 N. 70th Street; Milwaukee, WI 53223
"	John Hawks Pub	Milwaukee, WI	Sunday bimonthly-11:30 AM	Merrill Schrager (marching@execpc.com)	414/463-2498	9043 W. Grantosa Drive; Milwaukee, WI 53225

**NORTHEAST**

Beltway Backgammon Club	Promenade Cardroom	Bethesda, MD	2nd & 4th Sunday-12:00 N	Barry Steinberg (bkgm@aol.com)	301/530-0604	5712 Quebec Street; Berwyn Hts., MD 20740
Cavendish Club of Boston	Clubroom	Brookline, MA	Thur.-6:00 PM, Sat.-1:00 PM	Carl Saldinger	617/734-2230	111 Cypress Street; Brookline, MA 02146
New England Backgammon Club	Sheraton Commander Hotel	Cambridge, MA	Mon-7 PM, Sun mthly-12:30 PM	Alex Zamanian (azamania@bbn.com)	617/873-2127	111 Locust St.; Bldg. 24 Apt. A-3; Woburn, MA 01801
Granite State Backgammon Club	American Legion Hall	Nashua, NH	Wednesday-5:00 PM	Marcus Hermansen (mhermansen@aol.com)	800/200-1457	14 Gregg Road; Nashua, NH 03062
New Jersey Backgammon Assoc.	Bergen Bridge Club	Bogota, NJ	Friday-7:45 PM	Ron Whitney	201/833-2915	279 Glen Court; Teaneck, NJ 07666
Mid Jersey Backgammon Club	Seagull Restaurant	Hazlet, NJ	Thursday-7:30 PM	Linda Resnicoff (lindares@worldnet.att.net)	732/332-0843	18 Beth Lane; Morganville, NJ 07751
Ace Point Backgammon Club	Clubroom	New York, NY	Daily-12:00 N, Tour. Sun. mthly	Alan & Lourdes Steffen (adslmt@prodigy.net)	212/753-0842	41 E. 60th Street; New York, NY 10022
New York Chess & Backgammon	Clubroom	New York, NY	Daily, Tour. Sun.-2:00 PM	Steve Manning (nycb@interport.net)	212/869-6057	120 W. 41st Street 3; New York, NY 10036
Cavendish Club of Philadelphia	Clubroom	Philadelphia, PA	Mon, Wed, Thu-7PM; Sat-1PM	Ken Reiver	215/878-5777	3801 Conshohocken; Philadelphia, PA 19131
Pittsburgh Backgammon Club	Niki's Pizza	Pittsburgh, PA	Tuesday-8:00 PM	Steve Hast (pghsteve1@aol.com)	412/823-7500	3560 Ridgewood Drive; Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Norfolk Backgammon Club	To be determined	Norfolk, VA	To be determined	Alex Marshall (amarsh@infi.net)	757/625-6928	718 Westover Avenue; Norfolk, VA 23507
Tyson's Corner Backgammon Club	Mr. Smith's Restaurant	Tyson's Corner, VA	Monday-7:00 PM	Bill Pow (pow@dtvms3.dt.navy.mil)	703/549-1808	8906 Hooes Road; Lorton, VA 22079

**SOUTH**

Suncoast Backgammon Assoc.	New York, New York Lounge	Clearwater, FL	Monday-7:00 PM	Drew Giovanis (dgiovan1@tampabay.rr.com)	813/726-1398	25350 US Hwy 19 N 67; Clearwater, FL 33763
Miami Backgammon Club	Jumpin' Java	Coral Gables, FL	Thursday-8:00 PM	Carl Kruse (carl@alumni.princeton.edu)	305/227-9378	P.O. Box 440545; Miami, FL 33144
South Florida Backgammon Club	Big Apple Sports Pub	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Saturday-1:00 PM	Elayne Feinstein (elaynegammon@webtv.net)	954/938-4304	2020 NE 56th Street 206; Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33308
Orlando Backgammon	Mulligan's	Orlando, FL	Tuesday-7:30 PM	David Thomas (dlt@iag.net)	904/736-2844	P.O. Box 803; Deland, FL 32721
Atlanta Backgammon Assoc.	Tony's American Grille	Roswell, GA	Thur-7 PM, Sat or Sun mthly-1 PM	Dave Cardwell (BGinGA@mindspring.com)	770/333-1876	111 Radford Circle SW; Marietta, GA 30060
Louisville Backgammon Club	Delta Restaurant & Lounge	Louisville, KY	2nd & 4th Tuesday-6:30 PM	Quint McTyeire (hnm@gdm.com)	502/896-9783	4906 Crofton Road; Louisville, KY 40207
"	Oldenberg Grill	Louisville, KY	Last Sunday monthly-1:00 PM	Frank Frigo (frigo@apbenenergy.com)	502/458-9660	2405 Seneca Valley Rd.; Louisville, KY 40205

**CANADA**

Beckwith Backgammon Club	Private Residence	Victoria, BC	Thursday-7:00 PM	Kent Cronin (kent.cronin@bc.sympatico.ca)	250/478-0532	4137 Beckwith Place; Victoria BC, V8X 4Z9; Canada
Halifax Backgammon Club	Tomfoolery's Alehouse	Halifax, NS	1st Tuesday monthly-6 PM	Terry Henley (henley@globalserve.net)	902/876-7718	90 Maplewood Dr.; Timberlea, NS, B3T 1G1; Canada
Nat'l Capital Backgammon Club	Lunergan's Pub	Gloucester, ON	1st Sun/Sep to Jun-12:30 PM	Eden Windish	613/741-2530	396 Talbot Street; Ottawa ON, K1K 2N6; Canada
Greater Toronto Backgammon Club	Coffee Time	Toronto, ON	Tues.-7:00 PM, Sun.-12:00 N	Jerry Brown (jmbpro@msn.com)	416/250-8174	17 Abitibi Ave.; Toronto, ON, M2M2V2; Canada
Toronto Backgammon Club	Sports Centre Café	Toronto, ON	Daily-6PM, Tour 1st Sun mthly-2PM	M. Ginsberg/V. Dobrich (merv@psinet.com)	416/722-9709	27 Fraserwood 4; Toronto ON, M6B 2N6; Canada



## 97/98 PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

### NATIONAL (Alphabetized by State)

1998 American Backgammon Tour: *Alex Caraplis*  
 Tuscon Backgammon Club (AZ): *Craig Miller*  
 Gammon Associates (CA): *Azzam Masarani*  
 San Diego Backgammon Club (CA): *Chris Rosen*  
 Backgammon By The Bay (CA): *Kit Woolsey*  
 Rocky Mountain BG Club (CO): *Bruce Penrod*  
 South Florida BG Club (FL): *Mark Kormienko*  
 Atlanta Backgammon Assn. (GA): *Jim Hickey*  
 Aloha State Backgammon Club (HI): *George Quillin*  
 Chicago Bar Point Club (IL): *Steve Mellen*  
 Pub Club (IL): *Sarg Serges*  
 Games People Play (IL): *Reginald Porter*  
 Peoria Backgammon Club (IL): *Milad Doueih*  
 Winnetka Backgammon Club (IL): *Ed Buerger*  
 Sangamon Valley BG Assn. (IL): *John Jennings*  
 Bloomington-Normal BG Club (IL): *William Hutchison*  
 Hoosier Backgammon Club (IN): *Don Woods*  
 Beltway BG Club (MD): *David Montgomery*  
 New England BG Club (MA): Points Race: *Herb Gurland*. King of Monday Night: *Norm Hunter*  
 Flint Area Backgammon Club (MI): *Art Gillis*  
 Plymouth Backgammon Club (MI): *Dean Adamian*  
 Twin Cities BG Club (MN): *Richard Del Furia*  
 Granite State BG Club (NH): *Paul Sprogis*  
 Ace Point Backgammon Club (NY): *Harry Cohn*  
 Northern Ohio BG Club (OH): *Mary Hickey*  
 Pittsburgh Backgammon Club (PA): *Steve Hast*  
 Dallas Backgammon League (TX): *Rich Weaver*  
 Austin Backgammon Assn. (TX): *Bob Toellner*  
 Puget Sound Backgammon Club (WA): *Cam Trenor*  
 Madison Backgammon Club (WI): *Gary Hines*

### INTERNATIONAL

1998 European Champion: *Elio Hamoui (ISR)*  
 British Isles BG Champion: *John Broomfield*  
 BIBA Ranking Winner: *Mardi Ohanessian*  
 Hong Kong Backgammon Club: *Jerry Godsey*



## 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. Joe Wollick (847/755-0887).

**GAMES PEOPLE PLAY:** Tourn. Monday, 7:00 P.M. at The Clique, 2347 S. Michigan, Chicago. Reginald Porter (773/471-5066).

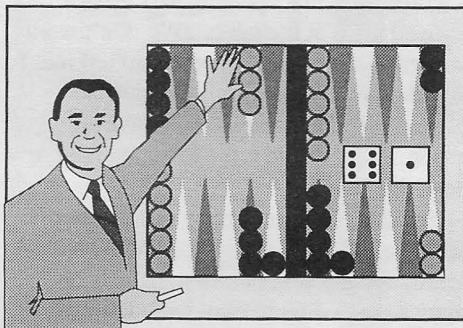
**BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BG CLUB:** Tournaments Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Ride The Nine, 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Gary Daniels (309/452-3034)

**SANGAMON VALLEY BG ASSN:** Tournaments Wednesday, 6:30 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 (309/674-0557).

## Simborg's Backgammon Tips!



By Phil Simborg

- Never drop the cube if it means losing the box.
- If you're not sure, double!
- Only nerds count pips.
- Never hesitate. It's a sign of weakness.
- If your opponent isn't doubling, then you probably should.
- Be creative. Any idiot can make the bar with a 6-1.
- The best way to break a streak of bad rolls is to double.
- Almost every cube is a take.
- Always go with your gut feeling, even if logic tells you otherwise.
- If you win the opening roll, you're probably going to win the game. So double!
- The faster you play, the better you play.
- The more you hit, the better.
- Don't take advice from the better players. They're just luckier.
- If you're stuck, raise the stakes. It might change your luck.
- If you're not sure, double.
- Most of the time, the best move is an illegal move.

*Study my tips. Commit them to memory. When you're comfortable with the concepts and ready for some side action, give me a call.*

*After just one session, you'll note significant changes in your results!—Phil Simborg* Δ

## LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

move" situations. We need consistency in rulings!—*Maurice Barie, Ferndale, MI*

### ZERO EQUITY POSITION

Is there a position (as simple as possible, please) with an equity of zero? The best I found so far (with no help from a computer) is Black (on roll) with 14 men off and one man on his 8-point and White with 13 off, one on his 3-point and one on his 1-point.

The winning chances for Black are 23368/46656 (0.500857338). Do you know of any positions with exactly equal equity?—*Helge Keller, Germany*

*Thanks to the late computer expert Dean Muench, of the 850,084 5-man or less possible bearoffs, the position below is the only one with a zero expectancy. This problem first appeared as part of Dean's "Grizzly" Bearoff quiz in the March and April 1989 CHICAGO POINT.—Ed.*

### HOW DOES JELLYFISH™ DO AGAINST THE EXPERTS?

Regarding those articles in the last two issues of CHICAGO POINT about whether or not JellyFish™ "cheats," it would be great if you could do an article showing how the experts do against JF in match and money play. It would also be nice to see how they compare JF vs. Snowie™. *Marty Weber, Williamsburg, VA*

### SENIOR DISCOUNT?

Enclosed is my subscription rate for 1999. How about a senior discount? I'm 79 years old.—*Dr. Jules Marcus, Higganum CT*

*Sorry Jules, but you're too young! CHICAGO POINT senior discounts (1/2 price) will start for 80-year-olds effective in 2000.—Ed. Δ*

## CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB Sunday Backgammon

**21 February 1999**



Anyway's Grill

5 East Roosevelt Road

Oak Brook Terrace, Illinois

Register by 12:00 noon

Play begins following the draw.

Open: \$40 – Intermediate: \$20

(Included \$5 food coupon)

Bill Davis—773/583-6464 • Peter Kalba—773/252-7755



## A Blonde's-Eye View of

# Sex in Backgammon

by Laila Leonhardt

*Like the bodies, the sweet scent of perfume, clinging dresses outlining the curves of the female form.*

*Erotic feminine glances, the glow of excitement, and well-manicured hands gracefully moving the checkers around.*

Is that what makes us women the "inferior" players? Or is it that the female mind has less capability of comprehending playing strategy, mathematics or just plain logic?

Men always have, and always will fear losing to a woman—most of all, to a superior woman. For male BG players, it's something in their *prime*—all instinct that allows their ego to get hurt by losing to a "fragile being."

True, there aren't many women playing high-level, competitive backgammon. But this is not a factor of intelligence, as many men like to think. Most women are by nature, less interested in competitive games; they don't have huge egos that need constant feeding. Therefore women in the

sport of backgammon are less noticeable. There are fewer of them for one thing. And like every other male-dominated group, it's harder to find the respect that could elevate their game to a higher level.

Years ago when I started playing poker at a little club in Copenhagen, I wasn't allowed to sit at the table. "We don't want women in the game," they would tell me. I would patiently wait until the games thinned out. Then they didn't have an option. They would have to let me play or close the table.

In backgammon, I have never actually being barred from entering a chouette because of my sex, but there have been many frowns directed my way. How do you change someone's mindset?

On an individual basis, when I see new women players at tournaments, I try to make them feel welcome by offering encouragement and playing advice in an effort to boost their egos. My desire is to awaken their self-confidence so that they are more likely to come back—win or lose.

Should there be separate prizes and/or jackpots for women in backgammon? (e.g.: lady's prizes for those advancing furthest in their division, or women-only events.) Viewed from a narrow perspective, it could be interpreted as sexism. But with the world of backgammon as male-dominated as it is, these actions place the public eye on a group of players who really can benefit by extra motivation and more self-esteem.

I am sure that men as well as women would like to see many more female players at backgammon tournaments. Even though it may be for different reasons (!), it is clearly in the best interest of our game.

Personally, I don't see women-only events as chauvinistic in any way. Participation is optional—not mandatory. It would be much different if the flights were partitioned into men's and women's divisions. I shiver at the thought of woman's-lib demonstrations at the Calcutta Auctions!

A few events specifically set up for women-only is a way to build interest among the female players (and male players, for that matter), to help them gain more confidence, and who knows, one day to be thought of by both sexes as a respected *master player*.

Let's focus the spotlight on all women backgammon players in 1999. Let them feel welcome and give them the respect that they deserve.

A real man is a man who dares to see a woman as his equal.

Happy 1999.—Laila Δ

*Editor's note: As we go to press, Laila is the first and only woman thus far to pre-register for "The Lady's Treasure" event at the 1999 Midwest Championships (19–21 March in Lisle, Illinois). The tournament boasts a \$9,000 entry fee and is limited to four ladies. First prize is \$35,000.*

## AMALGAMATION

The December issue of *Playboy* has a picture of **Hugh Hefner** playing backgammon against "backgammon pro" **John Rockwell** (the photo's caption). What ever happened to him, you wonder? John currently works for the Las Vegas Rio Hotel and is the tournament ambassador for the upcoming \$15,000 Pro-Am Doubles event being held there in February... Shame on the Riviera Hotel for the way they treated wheelchair players **Martin Lee** (England) and **Antoinette Williams** (NY) at the November Las Vegas Open. Riviera spokesman **Dan Bickmore** answered Martin's complaints by citing "specific union and insurance concerns that restrict certain individuals' availability to render wheelchair assistance" and that "although we are not required by Federal law to provide any type of personal services, good customer service would require individuals to extend themselves." Duh!... Congrats to **Art & Deena Benjamin** (CA) on the 3

Dec. birth of daughter **Laurel Ruth Benjamin**... Following 10 years of directing the Danish "Wide" Open tournament, **Chris Ternel** will instead play in the Easter weekend event. Winners from last year still remain unpaid resulting from a hotel safe deposit box robbery. Not good... Get well wishes are extended to our friend **Wally Wolf** (MI) following prostate surgery in December... The late **Paul Sprogis** was named Granite State Club's Player of the Year in memoriam. Also passing last month were **Frank Prouse** (Dec. 2) and son **Cliff Prouse** (Dec. 5), both from Washington state. Cliff was a quadriplegic except for the use of one finger that allowed him to play on GamesGrid as "cwheels." At live backgammon tournaments, Frank would shake the dice and move the pieces for his son... The New England BG Club has a new website: <http://nebg.org>... **Bill Robortie** (MA) has been named the official North and South American distributor of Jelly-Fish. A&K of Germany will serve the rest of the world... Backgammon gets a plug in

the new movie "You've Got Mail." **Tom Hanks** and his movie dad **Dabney Coleman** sit around a board while having a martini... A new Swiss backgammon watch is on the market selling for \$550. For more info, e-mail [aoc@elender.hu](mailto:aoc@elender.hu)... Did you know backgammon expert **Laila Leonhardt** ([www.bg-info.com](http://www.bg-info.com)) is also a jazz vocalist? Catch her sometime at Andy's (Chicago)... And finally, as posted at [rec.games.backgammon](http://rec.games.backgammon) by "**rosovsky**": The **King of Persia** was visiting the **King of India**, who told him: "Look at this great game my wise men have made for me. It's called chess. It's great because it's like life. The smartest win." On his return home, the **King of Persia** told his wise men to create a better game than this chess stuff, or else." After much effort, the Persian wise men came to the king and said: "Oh great sire, we humbly present you with the game of backgammon." "And why is this backgammon better than chess?" asked the King. "Sire, in chess only the smartest win. But backgammon is more like life. You need both brains and luck to win!" Δ



# WINNER'S CIRCLE



Oct.-Dec. 1999

•**First Tryolean Backgammon Cup** (Seefeld, Austria; 15-18 Oct.)... **MASTERS:** 1-Michael Brand (GER), 2-Andreas Fischer (AUS); 1C-Thomas Lumber, 2C-Udo Geib (GER); 1LC-Wolfgang Kargel (AUS). **INTERMEDIATE:** 1-Herbert Höllriegl (GER), 2-Thomas Altmann (GER); 1C-Markus Haselwanter (AUS), 2C-Michael Waldauer (AUS); 1LC-Franz Hasenmüller. **SUPERJACKPOT:** 1-Thomas Lumper (GER). **WARMUP:** 1-Johann Thalwitzer (AUS). **LADIES PRIZE:** Gisala Nowak (AUS).

•**Swiss Masters & Swiss Open 1998** (Bern, Switzerland; 15-18 Oct.)... **MASTERS (60):** 1-Roland Ekstrom (SWE), 2-Volejnik; 1C-Oliver Egger (SWIT), 2C-R. Vetsch (SWIT); 1LC-R. Grütter. **OPEN (21):** 1-Claus Weisbarth (SWIT), 2-Roland Ekstrom (SWE); 1C-Zesiger (SWIT), 2C-R. Mathis (SWIT); 1LC-J. Torrione. **INTERMEDIATE (32):** 1-R. Grütter (SWIT), 2-R. Geng; 1C-G. Volejnik, 2C-A. Schwenk; 1L-Danial Bruni (SWIT). **1-POINT (128):** 1-R. Vasella... Results from Seefeld and Bern found in the *European Backgammon New*.

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Cambridge, MA; 15 Nov.)... **EXPERT (18):** 1-Alex Zamanian, 2-Walter Trice, 3/4-Mark Damish / Ed Ahola; 1C-Jim Kasarjian, 2C-Herb Gurland. **A DIV. (9):** 1-Joe Moore, 2-Tom Girnius; 1C-Hank Youngerman, 2C-Jim Sullivan.

•**1998 Hilton International Hotel Spring Tournament** (Adelaide, So. Australia; 22 Nov.)... **OPEN (32):** 1-Peter Geelen, 2-John Kobek, 3/4-Terry Efthimiou / Steve Way.

•**24th Finnish Open** (Helsinki, Finland; 27-29 Nov.)... **CHAMPIONSHIP (52):** 1-Mika Inkinen, 2-Arno Stormbom, 3/4-Arto Tiainen / Luis Rico-Ruiz; 1C-Jurgen Orlowski (GER), 2C-Timo Vaatainen. **BEGINNER (11):** 1-Enno Pihlakas (ESTONIA), 2-Henri Kunnas; 1C-1-Arto Alenius. **SUPER JACKPOT (17):** 1/2-Mika Inkinen / Antti Lehmusvirta. **BLITZ (64):** 1-Tapio Palmroth, 2-Jonas Lofblad (SWE). **LAST CHANCE (17):** 1-Hannu Lyyjynen, 2-Luis Rico-Ruiz

•**Northern Ohio Thanksgiving Tourney—ABT** (Canton, OH; 27-29 Nov.)... **OPEN (29):** 1-Gary Stern (OH), 2-Todd Doucet (PA); 1C-David Groner, 2C-Bob Holyon (WI). **ADVANCED (20):** 1-Janice Newman (IN), 2-Nancy Takala (MI); 1C-Bonnie Rogoff (OH), 2C-Gary Payne (MI). **NOVICE (4):** 1-Luther

Lute (OH), 2-Trinna Lute (OH). **OPEN DOUBLES (11):** 1-Carol & Denny Leatherman (PA). **ADVANCED DOUBLES (6):** 1-Joan Hac (KY) & Michael Zahl (OH). **BLITZ (28):** 1-Abbas Zaltash (PA). **\$10 QUICKIE (52):** 1-Jon Stephens (OH).

•**Clarine's Monthly** (Los Angeles, CA; 28 Nov.)... **OPEN (16):** 1/2-Bob Glass / Steve Sax.

•**Gammon Associates 43rd Invitational—ABT** (Los Angeles, CA; 4-6 Dec.)... **OPEN (40):** 1-Tom Zarrinam (CA), 2-Joseph Bina (CA), 3-Mike Derylo (CA); 1C-Norm Wiggins (CA), 2C-Jeff Burdsall (CA). **ADVANCED (16):** 1-Tom McEvoy (NV), 2-Ned Yamin (CA); 1C-Charles Toots (CA), 2C-Dave Hart (CA). **LIMITED (9):** 1-Terry Valentine (AZ), 2-Sandy Barnes (CA); 1C-Joyce Aaronson (CA). **SUPER-32 (32):** 1-Bob Wachtel (CA), 2-Bob Glass (CA), 3/4-Dorn Bishop (CA) / Odis Chenault (CA). **DOUBLES (12):** 1-Ricky Sax & Steve Sax, 2-Cecilia Pedroza & Barry Corchnoy (CA), 3-Nan Spector & Jona Alexander (CA). **1-POINT BLITZ (80):** 1-Cecilia Pedroza (CA), 2-Jon Vietor (CA). **CALIFORNIA CHALLENGE CUP** (San Diego vs. Los Angeles): 1-Gammon Associates of Los Angeles (Steve Sax, Mike Ungerleider, Paul Gedigian, Rudy Citrom, Judy Collins, John Prato).

•**Springfield Series #2** (Bloomington, IL; 5 Dec.)... **OPEN (24):** 1-Randy Reif, 2-Don Schiller; 1C-Greg Tomlin, 2C-Fouad Malouf; 1LC-Mark Jennings.

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (San Mateo, CA; 6 Dec.)... **OPEN (13):** 1-Robert Caradien, 2-Rawlin Pullen; 1C/2C-Elliott Winslow / Kit Woolsey. **INTERMEDIATE (11):** 1-Sho Sengoku, 2-Ted Chee; 1C-Christina Stoddard, 2C-Rich Orwell.

•**Double Five Club Christmas Tournament** (London, England; Dec. 6): **OPEN (19):** 1-Brendan McInerney, 2-Julian Fetterlein, 3/4-John Clark / George Sulimirski.

•**Hoosier Club Monthly Tournament** (Indianapolis, IN; 13 Dec.)... **OPEN (16):** 1-Larry Strommen, 2-Jim Curtis, 3-Chuck Bower.

•**Ace Point Holiday Tournament—ABT** (New York, NY; Dec. 25-27)... **OPEN (28):** 1-Chuck Papazian (NY), 2-Harry Cohn (IL); 1C-Mark Kaczmarczyk (NY), 2C-Toni Wuersch (NY). **INTERMEDIATE (8):** 1-David Gasner (NY), 2-Stuart Katz (NY); 1C-Laurent Colli (CT). **NOVICE (6):** 1-Boris Bektyar (NJ), 2-Haley Eber (South Africa); 1C-Alex Lehman (NY). **SUPER JACKPOT #1 (8):** 1-Jeffrey Westheimer, #2 (8): 1-Chuck Papazian (NY). **DOUBLES (8):** 1-Francois DeMornes & Rhonda Bigman, 2-Morton Holm & Phil Laak. **WARM-UP (64):** 1-Perry Gartner (NJ). Δ

## MYSTERY SURROUNDS MICHAEL VALENTINE'S DEATH

Las Vegas Michael Valentine, original owner of the New York Ace Point Club, is dead. The 75-year-old died from a gunshot wound to the head on 8 December. However, there was no gun found in the apartment, and police Lt. Wayne Petersen believes that Valentine's death was probably an assisted suicide.

Valentine, who as a young man sneaked out of his native Bulgaria after repeated run-ins with Russian soldiers who had taken over the country at the end of World War II, worked for years as a management consultant until 1988.

Then he started the successful Ace Point Backgammon Club in New York, which was taken over by Alan and Lourdes Steffen when Valentine moved to Las Vegas in 1997 due to failing health. Neighbors and police said he suffered from advanced emphysema, and in

recent months his condition became so severe that he had to rely on the help of neighbors to complete routine tasks.

In January 1998, Valentine opened "The Oasis of Las Vegas," The game club failed miserably, and friends said that devastated Valentine.

But there is another twist to the story. According to American Chess Association's Tom Klem, "Valentine had recently made business commitments to guarantee \$15,000 of the American Chess Association's \$21,000 US Summer Open, to be held in Laughlin, Nevada August 10, 1999. The only serious business competitor to the ACA is the United States Chess Federation.

Klem continues, "On the same day that Valentine may have been murdered, officials of the Nevada State Chess Association were informed by the principal of St. Joseph's Elementary School that individuals had threatened her in an attempt to prevent the school from hosting the ACA-sanctioned 1999 Nevada State Scholastic Middle School Chess Championship to be held there on Feb. 27, 1999." The school refused to accede to these threats.

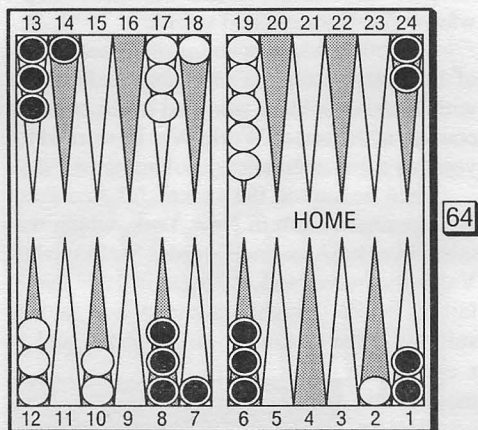
A resolution to subtitle the 1999 US Summer Open as the "Michael Valentine Memorial" has been received by NSCA for consideration at January board meeting. Δ



Mike Valentine (seated left) in an August 1998 Las Vegas chouette. [Photo provided by Michael Maxakuli, pictured left in back row.]

**PROBLEM #250  
ANALYZED**

by Kit Woolsey

Match to 7 points. No score. **BLACK  
TO PLAY 2-2.**

**D**ouble-deuces again. So many choices. Black can hit, with either 24/18\*/16 or 24/18\*, 24/22. The latter is probably a bit better since it keeps all his checkers in communication. Non-hitting plays involve making the defensive 5-point, making the bar point with 24/22, 13/7, or even making the 4-point with 8/4, 6/4, 24/22. How can we decide between all these choices?

The plays which make offensive points

just leave White too many good things. 4s and 2s to hit, and a lot of other numbers which make the bar point or a good inner board point. In addition, Black risks getting the worst of a priming battle, with his own ace point made and at least two checkers stuck behind White's growing prime. These just can't be right.

Making the defensive 5-point is more reasonable. Black will be able to hold that point for quite a while, so White can't do too much damage. In addition, having the advanced anchor guards against a priming battle, so Black's offensive ace point will be more of an asset than a liability.

Still, making the 5-point pretty much assures taking the worst of it. White has a lot of hitting numbers, and these hits will leave Black well behind in the race. Black will probably wind up with a decent holding game, but will still be at a considerable disadvantage.

Now let's look at the hitting plays. Hitting has a lot of advantages:

1. Hitting puts White on the bar. This means that White can't use her full roll to best advantage, since she must use half of it to enter. So unless White rolls doubles, she won't be able to make any new offensive points. Also, there is always the possibility that White will flunk against the two-point board, which would be great for Black.

2. Hitting gains in the race. While the race may not be everything, the basics of backgammon are that the first player to take all his checkers off wins. Therefore you must at some point get ahead in the race in order to win.
3. Hitting halts White's offense. Unmolested, White is well-placed to make a new offensive point, either the bar point which is slotted, or a good inside point. Hitting rips away a vital builder.
4. Hitting starts getting Black's back checkers moving with relative safety. Black would like to make an advanced anchor and possibly move into a favorable mutual holding game.
5. Hitting sends another White checker back. Right now White has only one back checker, and this checker may be difficult to contain. It is much easier to contain two checkers.

It is true that the hitting play leaves a lot of blots and return shots. However, Black shouldn't mind that too much. It is Black who has the stronger inner board, so he should welcome a blot-hitting contest. It really isn't a close decision. Hitting is by far the best approach. I would choose 24/18\*, 24/22.

It is often said that in the early stages of the game, when in doubt hit. There are exceptions, of course, but it is a fine guideline. This position is no exception. Δ

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### Pittsburgh Schedule of Events

#### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1999

- 5:00 pm Registration Opens
- 5:30 pm Micro Blitz Event Begins
- 6:00 pm Doubles Tournament
- 7:15 pm Amateur Jackpot
- 7:30 pm Masters Jackpot
- 9:30 pm Hoagies (play continues)

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1999

- 9:00 am Bagels and Coffee
- 9:30 am Registration Opens
- 10:30 am ABT Awards Presentation
- Calcutta Auction (Champ. & Adv.)
- 12:30 pm Play Begins (All Divisions)
- 5:00 pm Dinner Break
- 7:15 pm Play resumes
- 10:00 pm Pizza (play continues)

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1999

- 9:30 am Doughnuts and Coffee
- 10:00 am Tournament play resumes
- 11:30 am Special Jackpot Events
- 12:00 pm Micro Blitz Playoffs
- 12:30 pm Knock-Outs begin
- 3:00 pm Finals—Main Event





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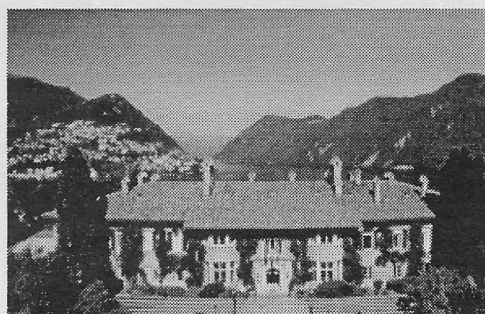
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### organizators

*James Ballié-Raffaello Gatti-Fabrizio Sommaruga*

*Jacket and tie after 7 pm  
and proper dress at all time  
are required, failing which  
access will be refused*

### programme

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>  
14.30 Registration  
15.00 Chouette  
21.00 Warm-up  
23.00 Double Consulting

Friday 29<sup>th</sup>  
18.00 Registration  
18.30 Welcome Cocktail  
21.00 Start of Tournament

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>  
14.30 Quarter finals  
17.00 Start of Consolation  
23.00 Superjackpot

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>  
14.00 Start of L.Chance  
14.30 Finals  
19.00 Prize giving &  
Farewell Cocktail

### prizes

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700.-val.  
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700.-val.  
1 leather watches box +Champagne  
1'500.-val.  
1 Week-end x two at the P.Leopoldo

### fees

Champion. 800.- + 90.-  
Intermed. 280.- + 70.-  
Chouette 270.- + 30.-  
Double 200.- + 50.-  
Superjackpot 1'500.-

The tournament is by invitation only and the  
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