

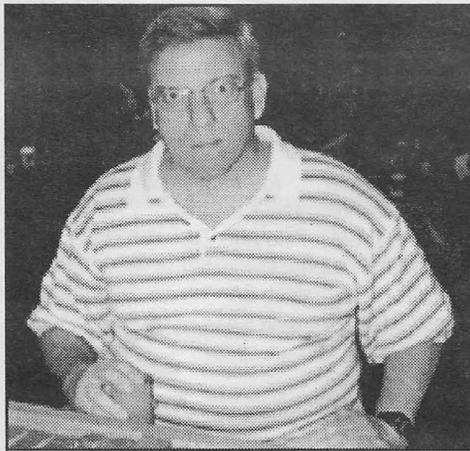
first person account—indiana open

MY ERRORS IN INDY

Paul Weaver reviews a critical match en route to winning the Indiana Open

by Paul Weaver

A fantastic four-day tournament. That's how to describe this year's Indiana Open. Butch & Mary Ann Meese's Labor Day weekend event, held at the Sheridan-Indianapolis Hotel, attracted 120 participants, including 58 in the Championship Division.



Indy Open Champion Paul Weaver.

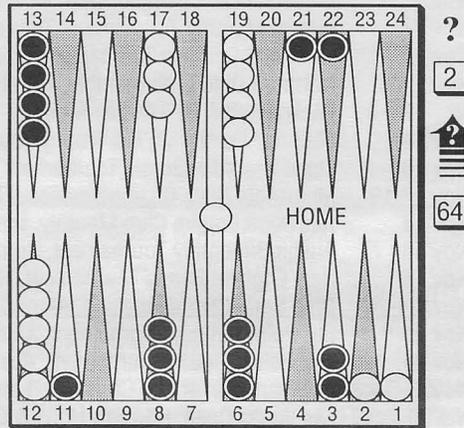
The Swiss Format allowed each participant to play up to eight 9-point matches, provided he had fewer than four losses. After losing two of my first three matches, I believed that there was no realistic chance for me to win the tournament. However, I was fortunate enough to win my next five matches, enabling me to qualify for the Saturday evening playoffs with a 6-2 record.

My semifinal opponent was Jeremy Bagai of Philadelphia. Jeremy is probably one of the ten best backgammon players in the country in the under-32 age bracket, so I knew I was in for a tough battle. Our important match began just after midnight on Labor Day morning.

Whether I win or lose a given match, I always make an effort to remember positions that I may have played incorrectly, so that I can study and learn from my mis-

takes. The positions that follow show some of my errors from the match with Jeremy.

Position 1. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 1-0. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Position 1 arose from the four roll sequence 3-2 (24/21, 31/11); 2-1 (24/23, 6-4*); 3-3 (B/22, 24/21*, 6/3(2)); fan. The position may look quite benign, but on closer inspection, Black has several advantages.

[Continued on page 5]

first person account—florida state champs

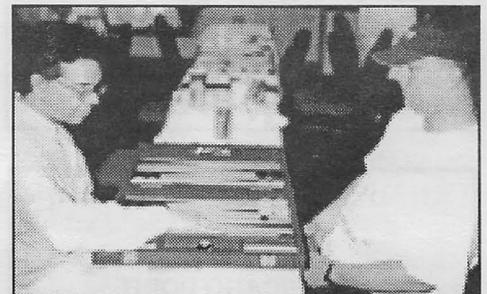
AN AMAZING TURN OF EVENTS

I learn a valuable lesson with my victory in the Florida State Championships

by Bob Zavoral

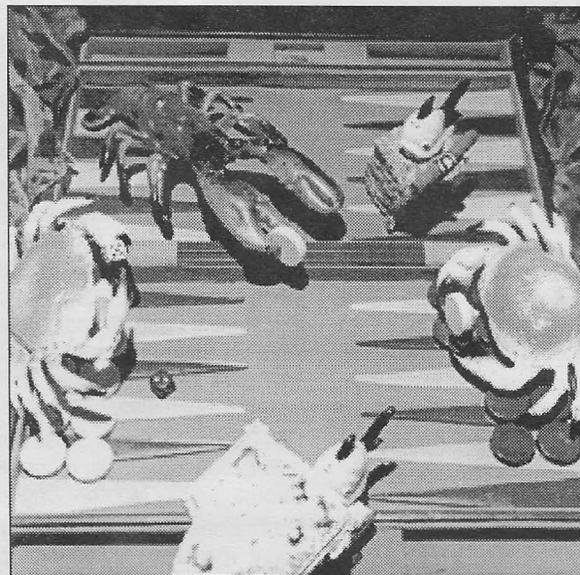
Despite warnings that it was hurricane season in Florida, almost 100 players turned out for the 2000 Florida State Championships 22-24 September in Fort Lauderdale. Although no hurricanes were

[Continued on page 7]



A cool Bob Zavoral (right) survives Bill Robertie's best shots to win the Florida State Championship.

CONTEST: TITLE THIS PHOTO



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The entry deadline is 8 November 2000.

CHICAGO POINT

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT
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KUDOS TO KATIE

I appreciated the coverage on Katie Scalandre's big win in Monte Carlo. I've known her for many years and she is well deserving of the victory.

By the way, my renewal check is enclosed and although I'm 84 years old and entitled to your 1/2 price over-80 offer, your newsletter is worth the full rate.—*Lee Hoge, Saratoga Springs, NY*

PRAISE FROM DENMARK

Sorry I'm late with my renewal. Here is a check for 12 issues of your great newsletter. I wouldn't miss it! It gives me good insight into the backgammon community on the other side of the sea.—*Torkil Espenhain, Farum, Denmark*

HENRY'S STILL ROLLING

I read in the Sept. POINT that subscribers

[Continued on page 3]

coming attractions

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole

810/232-9731

E-mail: cjc@tir.com

* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

Oct 13-15	Illinois State Championships, Springfield Hilton, Springfield, IL	217/528-0117
Oct 14	Rocky Mountain Fall tournament, Arthritis Foundation Office, Denver, CO	719/574-5598
Oct 19	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Days Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Oct 21	Redwood Empire Club Monthly, Embassy Suites, San Rafael, CA	707/824-9715
Oct 22	Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Tony's American Grille, Roswell, GA	770/333-1876
Oct 22	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, MA	781/938-7852
Oct 27-29*	Northeast Regional Tournament, Comfort Inn, Albany, NY	603/863-4711
Oct 29	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Oct 29	22nd Flint Area Club Championships, Holiday Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
Nov 1	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer <i>tournaments@cyberarts.com</i>	
<u>Nov 3-5</u>	<u>46th Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Nov 4	Universal Fall Championship, All The King's Men, Warren, MI	810/558-4790
Nov 11	Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Tony's American Grille, Roswell, GA	770/333-1876
Nov 12*	Ace Point Doubles Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Nov 12*	Northern Ohio Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, OH	330/966-2811
Nov 12	Backgammon By The Bay Monthly Tournament, Q Cafe, Palo Alto, CA	831/688-9722
Nov 14*	18th Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Golden Flame, Chicago, IL	773/583-6464
Nov 16*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Days Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
<u>Nov 17-19</u>	<u>Minnesota State Championships, Thunderbird Hotel, Bloomington, MN</u>	<u>612/378-1536</u>
Nov 18	Redwood Empire Club Monthly, Embassy Suites, San Rafael, CA	707/824-9715
Nov 19	Austin Bimonthly Tournament, Bombay Bicycle Club, Austin, TX	512/261-8518
Nov 19	New England Bonus Tournament, Holiday Inn, Somerville, MA	781/938-7852
<u>Nov. 24-26</u>	<u>Ohio State Championships, Akron/Fairlawn Holiday Inn, Akron, OH</u>	<u>330/966-2811</u>
Nov 26	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyway's Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/252-7755
Nov 26	Ace Point Sunday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Nov 26-Dec 3	Backgammon at Sea Cruise, Ft. Lauderdale-St. Thomas-Bahamas	819/685-2078
Nov 29-Dec 3	Las Vegas Open, Harrah's Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	702/893-6025
Dec 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer <i>tournaments@cyberarts.com</i>	
Dec 3-10	Backgammon on Board V Cruise, New Orleans-Montego Bay-Cozumel	773/583-6464
Dec 10*	Backgammon By The Bay Monthly Tournament, Q Cafe, Palo Alto, CA	831/688-9722
Dec 10*	Northern Ohio Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, OH	330/966-2811
Dec 16*	Redwood Empire Club Monthly, Embassy Suites, San Rafael, CA	707/824-9715
Dec 17*	Atlanta Holiday Tournament, Tony's American Grille, Roswell, GA	770/333-1876
Dec 17*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, MA	781/938-7852
Dec 21*	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament, Days Inn, Flint, MI	810/232-9731
<u>Dec 30-31*</u>	<u>ABT Holiday & Ace Point Club Championship, Ace Point Club, New York, NY</u>	<u>212/753-0842</u>
<u>Feb 16-18*</u>	<u>23rd Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Radisson, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
<u>Mar 23-25*</u>	<u>2001 Midwest Championships, Radisson Hotel Lisle-Naperville, Lisle, IL</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Oct 12-15	Salvador Open, Clube da Bahia, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil	5571-3511478
Oct 14-15	9th Åbne Fynske Mesterskaber, Bridgehuset, Odense, Denmark	4566-177719
Oct 20-21	Swiss Meisterschaft 2000, Zurich, Switzerland	4179-401 5811
Oct 25-29	Consulting Doubles World Champ. & Grand Prix de Suisse, Lugano, Switz.	4179-337 4425
Oct 28-29	8th Irish Open, Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, Ireland	3531-6689332
Oct 28-29	Solrød Open, Solrød Backgammon Club, Solrød, Denmark	4566-144282
Nov 1-5	7th German Open, Hotel am Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Nov 3-5*	20th Swedish Open, Scandic Hotel Slussen, Stockholm, Sweden	468-6523033
Nov 11-12	Town Harbor Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Nov 12	Toronto Sunday Monthly, Doghouse Riley's, Toronto, ON, Canada	416/722-9709
Nov 18-19	Swiss Meisterschaft 2000, Restaurant Roter Turm, Baden, Switzerland	4179-401 5811
Nov 18-19	XXV Finnish Open, Scandic Hotel, Espoo, Finland	35840-5433778
Nov 18-19	Denmark Speed Tournament, Funke Klub, Copenhagen, Denmark	4539-202204
Nov 18-19	9th & 10th Ranglisteturnier 2000, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Nov 25-26*	Denmark Championship, Dansk BG Federation, Copenhagen, Denmark	4533-363601
Dec 9-10	13th Open von Thun & Swiss Doubles, Hotel Seepark, Thun, Switzerland	4179-656 9700
Dec 9-10	United Kingdom Finals, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Dec 10*	Toronto Sunday Monthly, Doghouse Riley's, Toronto, ON, Canada	416/722-9709
Jan 3-7*	6th Thailand Open, Style Restaurant, Jomtien Beach, Pattaya, Thailand	6638-303136
Jan 6-7*	Bright 'n' Breezy, Hilton Metropole Hotel, Brighton, England	44152-2888676
Jan 18-28*	2nd South Pattaya Cup, 19th Hole Super Pub, Nongprue, Thailand	6638-428293

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

over 80 are entitled to a 50% discount. I was born in 1913 so I'm taking advantage of same. Best wishes.—Henry Schwartz, Coconut Creek, FL

Good to hear from you, Henry. In the 70s

and early 80s, we remember you playing lots of backgammon in Chicago. Although nearly 20 years have passed, your 49.21 points still rank you 99th on the all-time Chicagoland master point list (over 1800 players have earned points).—Ed.

HERE'S 'WHAT GIVES'

Thanks for providing cool BG info at

www.chicagopoint.com, but your "quiz" page is a dud. For one thing, you can't see the answer to Problem #1 and there is no way to advance beyond the first problem. What gives?—Mark, via Internet

In order to get Jake Jacob's entire quiz, you'll have to give, Mark—\$30 for 12 issues to be exact. The online site offers a lot of free info, but the monthly articles are printed only in the CHICAGO POINT newsletter.—Ed. Δ



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2000

Top 100 compiled through 24 Sept. 2000 after 10 events
(Coming in Oct. & Nov.: Illinois, Gammon Assoc., Minnesota, Ohio)



Bob Bishop	35.99	Sean Garber	9.10	Steve Flam	4.60	James Roston	2.30
Mike Senkiewicz	27.33	Sal Chehayeb	8.81	Bob Wilensky	4.60	Jim Hickey	2.29
Paul Weaver	23.53	Bill Tallmadge	8.78	Steve Bromfield	4.38	Dennis Culpepper	2.29
Paul Franks	22.88	Bill Robertie	8.33	Roz Ferris	4.37	Bobbie Shifrin	2.24
Doug Roberts	21.83	Jack Takala	8.33	Laila Leonhardt	4.16	Marianne Gatenby	2.23
Sam Pottle	20.74	Walter Trice	7.92	Linda Rockwell	4.16	Tom Machaj	2.08
Mike Ungerleider	16.36	Jeb Horton	7.22	Garo Tchalabian	3.78	Don Heinsler	2.08
Hugh McNeil	16.05	Dave Wetzell	6.85	Ed King	3.68	David Rubin	1.90
Len Dangremond	15.98	Neil Kazaross	6.84	Wendy Kaplan	3.65	Ken Ellenberger	1.89
Roy Appey	15.46	Jona Alexander	6.55	Steve Michelson	3.53	Charles Toots	1.89
George Barr	15.39	Bob Glass	6.55	Ellen Allen	3.47	Joe Davidson	1.81
Bob Zavoral	13.89	Carl Sorg	6.47	Ralph Dietz	3.42	Dee Webster	1.81
Herb Gurland	13.64	Drew Giovanis	6.01	David Todd	3.42	Andy Natale	1.76
Mike Friedman	13.22	Steve Sax	5.88	Adam Versaw	3.40	J.A. Miller	1.70
Joe Ausmann	11.44	Steve Maas	5.60	Eliot Bean	3.27	Larry Yudin	1.70
Jeff Kane	11.40	Walt Swan	5.47	Perry Firooz	3.27	Cam Trenor	1.70
Dion Hogan	11.35	Phyllis Smolinski	5.25	Tom Leahy	3.21	Paul Lombardo	1.58
Jeremy Bagai	11.35	Mark Anshus	5.20	Jim Price	3.20	Vince Frigo	1.47
Ed Zell	11.20	Ron Sanders	5.17	Ed Johnson	3.00	Leon Weiner	1.46
Hugh Sconyers	10.92	Timothy Jaxon	5.00	Abbas Zaltash	2.94	John Gdowik	1.38
John Greci	10.75	Steve Kovach	5.00	Jerry Soskin	2.94	Diane Varner	1.37
Andy Palumbo	10.59	Alan Gaarder	5.00	Kate Elmore	2.61	Alan Epstein	1.31
Ray Baker	10.40	Guy Nicosia	5.00	Gary Fries	2.50	Wildner Wadford	1.31
Chris Wilson	9.62	Matt Reklaitis	5.00	Phil Michelson	2.50	Tom Hodous	1.25
Renée Rosenbloom	9.50	Jake Jacobs	4.68	Elayne Feinstein	2.40	Boris Mindich	1.23

SEXY WOMEN ARE 'NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE'

No, I'm not a subscriber to your newsletter. The main reason I don't subscribe are the sexist graphics you post of women at your Internet website. Clearly, this is not appropriate unless you just want men to subscribe. I find it offensive and not at all considerate of the women who come to your site. It indicates



Karen McDougal for Cutty Sark's 1940s ad campaign.

your attitude towards women when you use sexually suggestive poses of them on your front page.

[Continued on page 4]



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2000 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 30 SEP.

Herb Roman	18.56	Phil Simborg	4.76	Peter Kalba	2.64	Brian Barber	0.64
Tim Carroll	15.92	Richard Lloyd	4.56	Rodney Bell	2.28	Bobbie Shifrin	0.64
Jake Jacobs	15.44	Bill Bartholomay	4.56	Harry Cohn	1.92	John Brussel	0.48
Tim Mabee	13.28	Paul Friedman	4.40	Matt Surecki	1.92	Dimitri Giannakopoulos	0.48
Ken Bond	12.96	Bob Steen	4.16	Reginald Porter	1.68	Roger Blaine	0.36
Harold Elgazar	11.08	Val Zimnicki	4.08	Wendy Kaplan	1.60	Howard Chow	0.36
Joe Wollick	10.40	David Araiza	4.08	Elaine Kehm	1.32	Mike Anderson	0.34
Phyllis Smolinski	10.24	Paul Baraz	4.00	Ralph Byrns	1.28	Brooke Gottshall	0.32
Tak Morioka	9.68	Bill Keefe	4.00	Bob Gekas	1.28	Jerry Brooks	0.24
Paul Franks	8.96	Norma Shyer	3.96	Andy Natale	1.12	Jim Roland	0.24
Mike Sutton	8.88	Alice Kay	3.84	Chris Wilson	1.12	Richard Stawowy	0.20
Sinan Yoyen	7.76	Romeo Kap	3.76	Mike Cyrkiel	0.88	Joe Szvedo	0.20
Bob Zavoral	7.44	Georgina Flanagan	3.76	Dave Cramer	0.88	Ann Thomas	0.16
Marc Rosset	7.08	Joann Feinstein	3.72	Scott Richardson	0.88	Brian Kozin	0.16
Ed Buerger	6.74	Paul Lombardo	3.68	Shah Dogan	0.88	Jim Anderson	0.16
Gary Kay	6.72	Steve Klesker	3.52	Keith Kuligowski	0.84	Tom Machaj	0.12
Joe Ausmann	6.48	Paul Klein	3.44	Bridget McCoy	0.80	Bob Sexton	0.12
Carter Mattig	6.48	John Jennings	2.80	Jill Ferdinand	0.80	Jon Sion	0.08
Mary Franks	6.08	Bill Davis	2.76	George Marasas	0.64		
Don Jayhan	5.20						

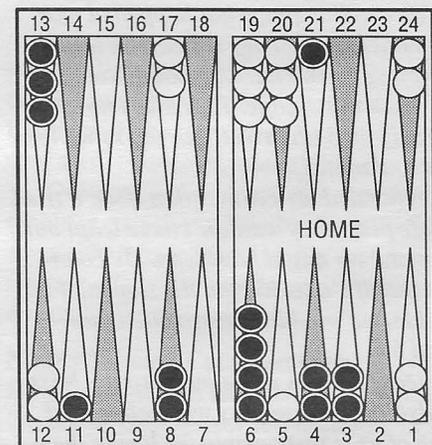
JAKE JACOBS captured September monthly honors by earning 3.28 points. Mike Sutton was runner-up with 2.56 points. Tak Morioka and Bill Keefe tied for 3rd with 1.84 points each.

your move

PROBLEM #267

to be analyzed by Antonio Ortega

Venice 1999. 15-pt. finals. Neil Kazaross (Black) leads Francois Tardieu (White), 14 to 12. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**



2

DEAR MISS LONELYBLOTS



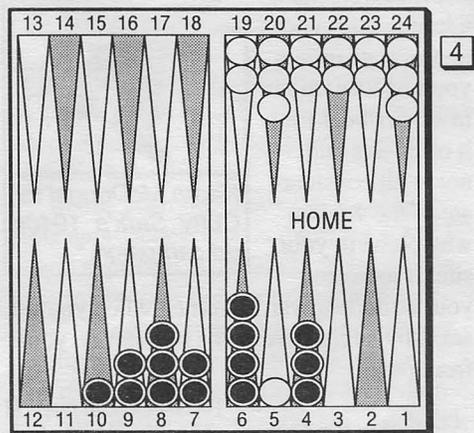
© 2000 by Danny Kleinman

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Dear Miss Lonelyblots: My favorite tournament event is the Doubles. I have a very pleasant partner who listens as much as he talks, which makes for very good teamwork.

In our last 7-point match, we faced superior opponents. We played them on even terms, trailing 4-5 with the cube at 4, until this crucial position arose. Before we rolled, I thought we were the favorites. Then a nasty 6-2 tumbled out of my cup:

7-point Doubles match. Team Black trails Team White 4-5. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



After a bit of moaning, we discussed our plays. I wanted to play safe, 10/4, 6/4, figuring that if they didn't roll a 5 or 6, we might roll a pointing number next turn, or at least hit loose leaving only one blot. My partner, however, pointed out that we were hopelessly behind in the race (102-68), insisted on hitting. So against my will, I played 7/5*, 10/4.

You can imagine what happened next, Miss Lonelyblots. They rolled 3-4, hitting the blot we left on our bar-point, then another 3-4 to escape. There was no "Miracle on 34th Street" for us, so we lost game and match.

I reminded my partner that if we'd tried my safe play, they wouldn't have leapt our prime and we might have won. He countered that if I'd let him do the shaking for our side, we wouldn't have rolled that horrid 6-2.

Please help us settle our dispute, Miss Lonelyblots: whose play was better, and which of us is responsible for losing the

match?—*Double Trouble*

DEAR TROUBLE: I'd have to say that your partner's play was better. Your play effectively left White 20 winning rolls (the escaping 5s and 6s). His play left White 19 hitting rolls that win less certainly (they *might* break their board before escaping, and you *might* reenter and hit).

However, just counting White's good rolls ignores another key issue: how well do you stand after each play if White rolls badly?

After 7/5*, 10/4, you are in position to cover your 5-point, but you also have a blot on your bar-point to cover. After 10/4, 6/4, you are again faced with the need to point on White's blot, but now you have only four builders instead of the five you had before the roll.

Wait! You needn't make either play.

Why kill a builder by lifting the blot on your 10-point at all? White's 5s will be decisive even if they don't hit your blot. By playing 8/2, 4/2, you leave White the same 20 winning rolls, but retain all five builders when White doesn't roll a 5 or 6. And it can't be bad to make another inside point.

You and your partner must share responsibility for losing the match. Perhaps each of you was so busy arguing against the other's play that neither of you saw the third play that was clearly best of all.—

Miss Lonelyblots Δ

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

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

Won't you rethink what you are putting forward here? Or, tell me this: what does a sexually suggestive picture of a woman have to do with backgammon? Is it meant to sexually excite your male readers or to let your female readers know up front how females are regarded by this group?

It's a statement about women that is no longer acceptable to most women and many men. This is a new age of acceptance of women as equals in life and at the backgammon tables all over the world.

Just a suggestion meant in good spirit. Thanks for reading and for your understanding.—*Diane Varner, Asheville, NC*

Statistics show that a monthly Point Girl increases traffic to our website which means more people exposed to the backgammon-related material: tournaments, clubs, etc.

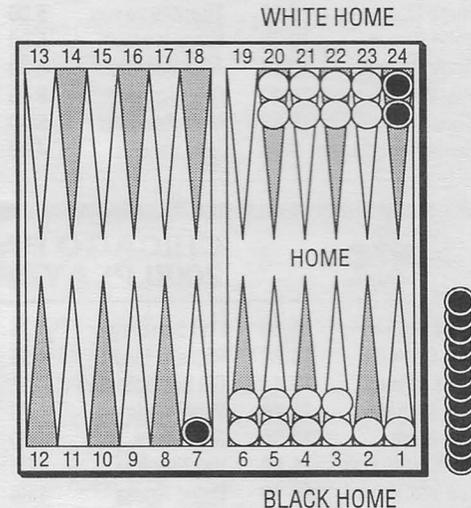
Karen McDougal is this month's lovely Point Girl. By clicking on her image, online readers are transported to Cutty Sark Scots Whisky's website where they can see more of Cutty's clever 1940s ad campaign (www.cuttysarkusa.com). Like CHICAGO POINT, Cutty Sark knows that sex sells.—*Ed.*

SHOT REDUCTION

In his June \$100 challenge ("Phantom Direct Shots"), Ray Kershaw was able to create positions where double direct shots

yield only 8 hitting numbers. I have bet-tered Ray's solution. In the following position, my double direct shot can only be hit with 6 numbers:

Black has a double shot at White's blots on his ace- and deuce-points, but has only 6 ways to hit (5-1, 5-6, 5-5, 6-6).



I would like my \$100 prize to be paid in tens and twenties.—*Joe Wollick, Director, Pub Club, Hoffman Estates, IL*

Nice try, Joe. Our rules said: "Reduce the number of shots in any of the five categories... and CHICAGO POINT will pay you \$100 for each acceptable reduction." Your reduction is not acceptable because you used 18 White checkers to make it happen. However, we will give you a \$10 free entry at the next weekly Bar Point Club tournament for creativity.—*Ed.*

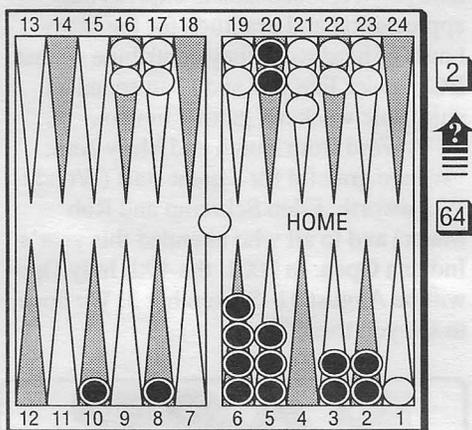
INDY...

[Continued from page 1]

Black has a 31 pip lead in the race, a stronger board, and more advanced rear checkers. Finally, White is on the roof. The combination of these four advantages is enough to make Black's double correct, although I failed to turn the cube. White has an easy take.

A Snowie rollout indicates that Black's equity for money is 0.76 if he doubles, but only 0.72 if he leaves the cube in the center.

Position 2. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 2-1. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



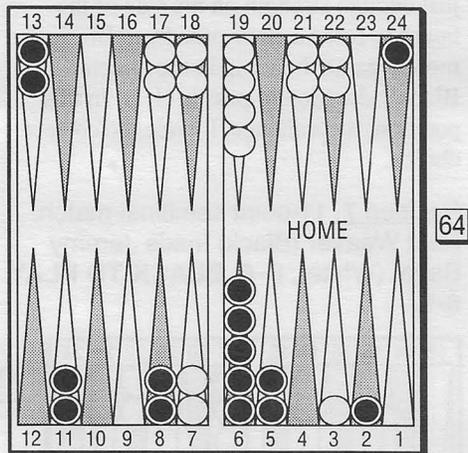
In Position 2, I had just turned the game around by rolling double fours. Jeremy responded by generously fanning. Excited by my good fortune, I quickly doubled Jeremy and collected two points. However, I could have done better by playing on for a gammon. 17 of my numbers allow me to make a five point board, and even if I do not strengthen my board, I can almost always cash on my next roll.

A Snowie™ rollout indicates that I win a gammon in 41% of the games while losing only 20%. If I cash the game I win 2 points. By playing on, I win 2.2 points, on average. Not playing on for the gammon was a serious error in Position 2.

Leading 6-1 in Position 3 (shown above right), I had a 4-1 to play. I played 24/20, 6/5, hoping to escape next turn. A better play, however, was covering the blot in my board by playing 6/5, 6/2, thereby strengthening my offensive position.

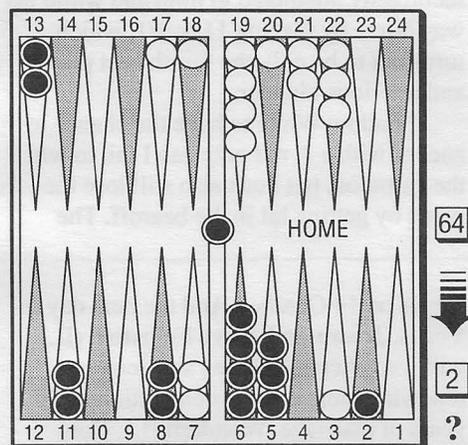
As a general rule, and certainly in this position, covering a blot in the home board takes priority over advancing a back checker a few pips.

Position 3. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 6-1. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-1.**



If Black stays back while covering the blot in his board, then he will have a good chance to attack after several of White's bad rolls. By stepping up to the 20-point, Black will frequently become the attacked instead of the attacker, and he may find himself on the roof or with a second checker back.

Position 4. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 6-1. White doubles. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**



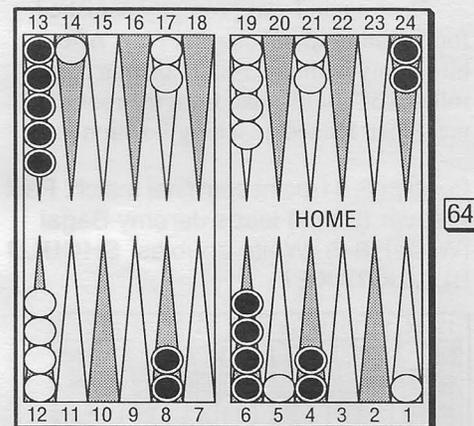
I was promptly punished for misplaying my 4-1. A split second later, I found myself on the roof facing a cube in Position 4. Although White has serious threats and will win a gammon in about 30% of all games, Black will win 34% of all games, and therefore has a close take for money.

Even after White rolls one of his 27 covering numbers, he will still have only a 4-prime, and Black will have 6 numbers each turn that escape from the bar into the outfield as long as White's 4-prime hasn't expanded. After White's 9 non-covering numbers, Black's chances are clearly much better.

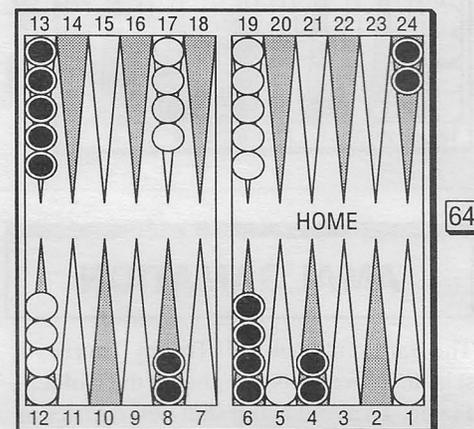
White is a long way from bringing his three back checkers home, and there will be a lot of opportunities for accidents along the way.

Although Black has a close take for money, he has a close pass at the score. With a 6-1 lead, Black must pass earlier than he would for money, especially in a gammonish position. This time I made the right decision, correctly conceding in Position 4.

Position 5. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 8-5. **BLACK TO PLAY 3-2.**



Reference Pos. 5A. With Black ahead 8-5 to 11 and White with a weaker board, Black should play 3-2 aggressively: 13/11, 8/5*.



Position 5 arose after the sequence 4-2, 4-2. Jeremy played his third roll correctly, 24/20, 13/11. On the fourth roll, with my 3-2, I had to choose between the passive 13/8 and the aggressive 13/11, 8/5*.

I was aware of the fact that on the third roll in reference Position 5A, the aggressive play 13/11, 8/5* is correct with 3-2. Black should fight for his 5-point, even at the expense of breaking his 8-point, in order to prevent White from playing his full roll.

But in Position 5, Black should respect

[Continued on page 6]

INDY...

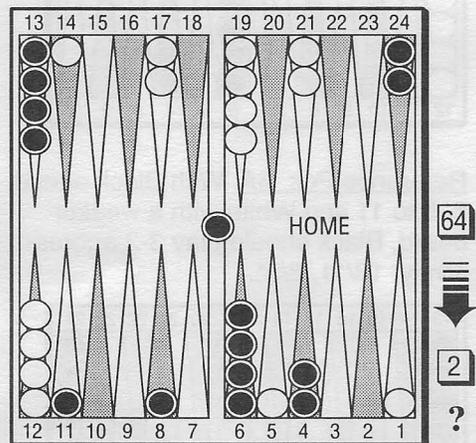
[Continued from page 5]

White's stronger board and play more cautiously because the consequences of getting hit are now far more serious. The aggressive hitting play 13/11, 8/5* is no longer the clear choice. The mundane 13/8 is right (although 13/11, 8/5* is only 0.01 worse according to Snowie).

In general, with exactly two checkers on your 8-point early in the game, the beginner's play of 13/8 with 32 is correct more often than most good players realize.

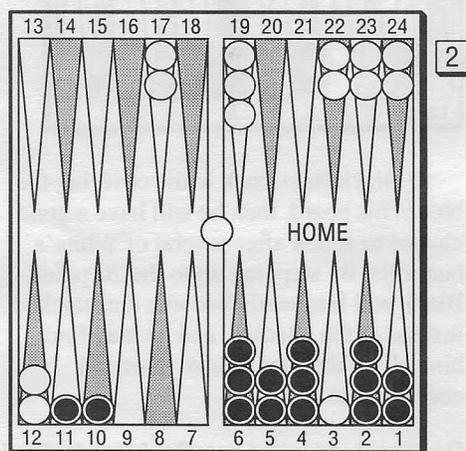
Once again I was promptly punished for my sub-optimal checker play. After I hit Jeremy with my 3-2 in Position 5, he rolled a 3-2 of his own from the roof to hit me. I then fanned, reaching Position 6:

Position 6. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 8-5. White doubles. **SHOULD BLACK TAKE?**



Shooting at two blots, White has a very strong double in Position 6. White's 4-point and builder on the 11-point give him just enough strength on his side of the board to force a close pass from Black in a money game. Leading in the match 8-5, Black's decision to pass is clear. In this position, for a change, I made the correct choice.

Position 7. 11-point semifinal match. Paul Weaver (Black) leads Jeremy Bagai (White), 8-6. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-1.**



Threatening to win a gammon and the match, I had a 6-1 to play in Position 7. I incorrectly attempted to limp and wimp my way home by playing 11/5, 2/1, which turns out to be only the fourth best play, and a serious blunder.

If I allow White to have the chance to anchor with a 3, not only can I fail to win the gammon, but I can also still lose the game by getting hit in the bearoff. The

correct play, 10/3*, takes advantage of my stronger board and puts a second White checker on the roof. Although it is possible that White will enter both of his checkers while I fan, it is very unlikely. Hitting loose with 10/3* is well worth the risk.

In the actual game Jeremy cooperated by fanning, and I fortunately rolled a number that closed my board, enabling me to win a gammon and defeat a very tough competitor.

MY OPPONENT in the finals was Dion Hogan, an up-and-coming player from Michigan. Once again, I was blessed with fortunate dice and won the final match by the score of 13-8.

INSTEAD OF TAKING backgammon directors and their staffs for granted, we should all take just a few seconds to express our appreciation and gratitude for the many hours of hard work they contribute so that BG junkies like you and I can spend an enjoyable weekend getting our fix.

A word from Butch and Mary Ann: "We are grateful for a great staff (Woody Woodworth, Ellen Schremp and Rob Maier) and to all who attended this year's Indiana Open. In 2001, the 49th Indy Open will be August 31-September 3. We hope to see you there." Δ



AMALGAMATION

The Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney is scheduled for 14 November at the Golden Flame. To avoid being shut out, register in advance with **Bill Davis** at 773/583-6464... Swan Games new online bridge server is getting rave reviews. Stop by their site and you'll find a column by **Danny Kleinman**. Or take a lesson from **Kit Woolsey** at \$125/hour. **Laila Leonhardt** and **Matt Reklaitis** (PA) invite you visit them at: www.swangames.com... **Phil Simborg** (IL) is offering an interesting added prize at Bar Point Club Tuesday night tournaments. The first person to beat **Paul Franks** (IL) wins a bottle of Merlot wine... Congrats to **Andy and Darlene Krenitz** (NV) who will marry in Las

Vegas on 14 October. And the next day in Vegas, **Joann and Jerry Feinstein** (IL) will wed. Actually Joann and Jerry are renewing their vows in celebration of 50 years of marriage. Wonderful!... Congratulations also to **Tim Serges** (IL) who marries **Laura Toren** on 28 October. To get in the spirit of the Halloween weekend, their honeymoon will begin with a Halloween Ball at the real **Dracula's** Castle in Transylvania, Romania... Denmark to Japan: **Mika Laukkanen**... **Mike Cyrkiel** (IN) and his new blackjack bet "Guarantee 20" is catching on all over the country (you can always collect a minimum 50% of your bet if your first two cards total 20). Mike was recently featured in the 29 September Chicago Sun-Times Gaming column by **John Grochowski**... **Bob Neuman** (MI), expert wooden cup craftsman has competition. **Tim Johnson's** (IL) cups are at least

as good at less the cost. Contact Tim at 309/674-8552 or sent him an e-mail at: samuelj97@aol.com... Best of luck to **Bob Gekas** (IL), a Second City comedy performer, who had his graduation show on 4 October... Finally, it was Thomas Alva Edison who said: "I'll never give up, for I may have a streak of luck before I die." Δ

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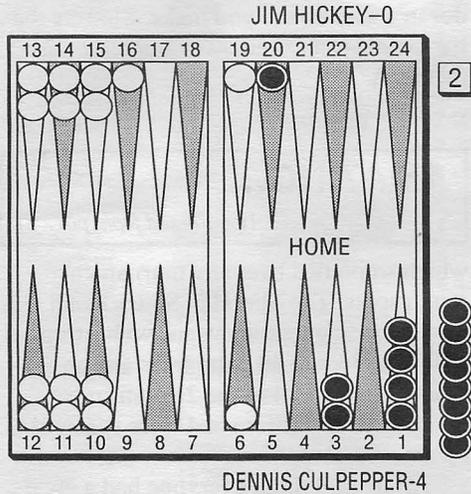
AMAZING...

[Continued from page 1]

near, there was a tropical storm a few days before . . . well, Jim Hickey was there. Does he count?

Speaking of Jim, he had this classic position against Dennis Culpepper (the eventual event champion) in the Royal Palm Tournament:

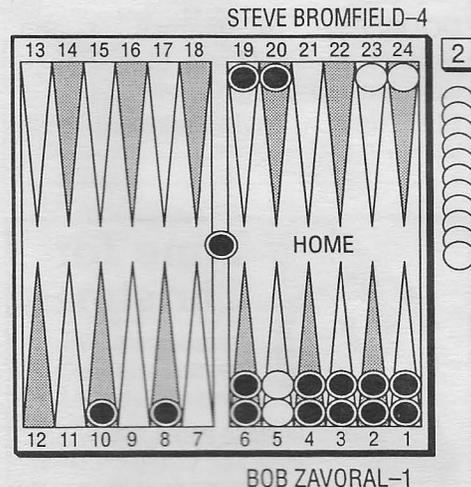
Royal Palm Classic. 11-point match. Dennis Culpepper (Black) leads Jim Hickey (White), 4-0. **WHITE TO WALTZ HOME HIS PRIME.**



Maybe we should call him "Jersey" Jim Hickey from now on. Unfortunately, after completing the close-out, he threw a bad set of 4s in the bearoff and lost the game by one roll.

I started off on the wrong foot on Thursday night losing 5-0, then 5-1. I lost the following game to Steve Bromfield after eschewing the hit (he rolled 2-2 and 6-6):

Thursday Warm-up. 5-point match. Steve Bromfield (White) leads Bob Zavoral (Black), 4-1, post-Crawford. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-2.**



Snowie™ says hitting is right, but since when do I believe what a computer says?

Friday, after a visit to the Lauderdale beach (sunny and 90°), I came back to play in a Blitz qualifier and lost 5-0. Then I drew German master Dirk Schiemann (lucky me!) in the \$500 Royal Palm Classic and lost 11-0.

Next, I paired up with Pro-Gammon's Susan Berson in Doubles. We managed to win two games (mostly because she was rolling), but still lost the match.

Saturday morning after John Brussel's very entertaining Calcutta auction, my team owners, Steve Hast and Carol Joy Cole tried to convince me to buy back, but it sure seemed like it wasn't going to be my weekend (I had won just three games in five matches), so I declined. Boy, did that decision seem like the right one when Kit Salisbury shut me out 9-zip in my first round. I was beginning to think my opponents were playing backgammon and I was playing Parcheesi.

Well, anyone who has played with me at all knows that after winning a total of three games in six matches, I wasn't the least bit steamed. I calmly went to my room, gently placed my board on the couch and leisurely dialed ATA to reschedule my return flight for that afternoon. ATA, being the service giants of the industry, allowed me plenty of time on hold to reconsider my course of action.

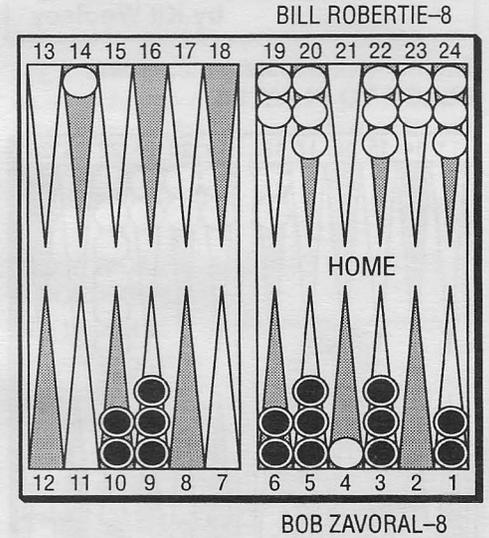
I correctly decided that dumping on my Calcutta owners by forfeiting the second chance wasn't the kindest or wisest thing I could do, so I returned to the trenches and played my next match against, who else? . . . Dirk Schiemann. Much to my surprise, I won, confirming that I actually could play, or at least that the dice had not permanently forsaken me.

I next defeated (in order) last year's champ Maddy Russell, Alan Gaarder, Gary Garabedian, Harry Pace and Steve Bromfield. By some miracle of dice, I found myself in the finals against two-time world champion Bill Robertie with the unenviable task of having to beat him twice. Although the odds of winning were against me, I was glad to be guaranteed second place.

After 12 tough games in the first match we reached double match-point with the following position staring me in the face (see "Finals Position 1" above right):

I reaffirmed that you can win even after making a really bad move. What can I say? Instead of hitting loose, I chickened out and "played safe" giving Bill great racing equity (I trailed the pip count 85-75 before my

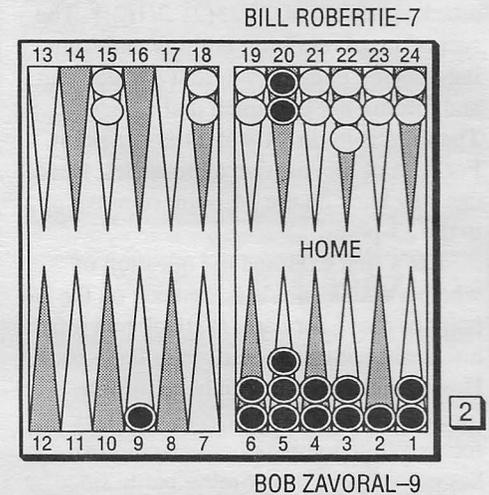
Finals Position 1. 9-point match #1. Bob Zavoral (Black) and Bill Robertie (White) are tied at double match-point. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.**



play). I'm certain I would have made the right play easily for money but for some reason in this situation . . .

The next match I jumped out to an early lead, but Bill fought back to reach this setup:

Finals Position 2. 11-point match #2. Bob Zavoral (Black) leads Bill Robertie (White) 9-7. **WHITE TO PLAY 4-2.**



Bill cleared the 6-point which Jelly-Fish™ slightly favors, then left me a shot on his next turn with 5-2. I responded by hitting with the most welcome '5' I have ever seen. Game, set, match and tournament.

Quite an amazing turn of events that taught me a valuable lesson about surviving a cold streak. Had I let my emotions get the best of me, I would have never experienced this wonderful victory.

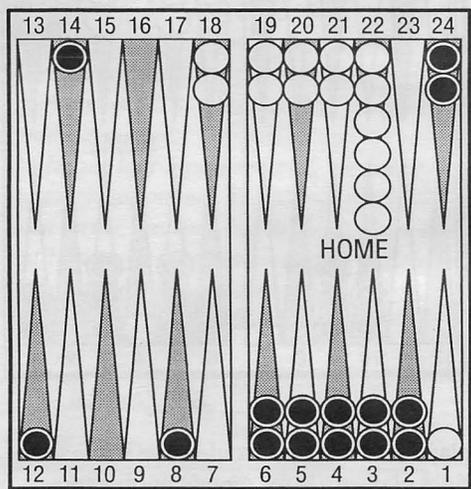
SOUTH FLORIDA CLUB DIRECTORS Elayne Feinstein and Don Heinsler displayed incredible enthusiasm and friendliness

[Continued on page 8]

PROBLEM #266 ANALYZED

by Kit Woolsey

Tournament double match-point.
BLACK TO PLAY 1-1.



Prime vs. prime positions can be the trickiest of all. The difference between adopting the correct and incorrect game plan can be enormous.

In this position, Black has three possible approaches. One is the brute force attack approach of 24/23(2), 2/1(2)*. The second involves doing nothing and waiting—trying to catch White if she gets out and forcing her to crunch if she doesn't. The third is to directly slot the bar-point. For both of the last two approaches, Black can stay back on the 24-point or move up to the 23-point.

Let's first examine the question of whether Black should hang back on the 24-point or move forward. If Black had infinite timing, it might be right to hang back. However Black does not have infinite timing. By staying back, even if Black forces White to break her bar-point, Black has not yet won the priming battle since he will only be able to escape with 6s. 5s may still be particularly disastrous for him. 24/23(2) is better for escaping.

Moving up also forces White to crunch faster since White will have to play all of her numbers. To see this, suppose that White is forced to break her bar-point with something like a 3-1. If Black has stayed back, White won't be forced to crunch any more very quickly. 5s won't play, and she can take a four to the 2-point. If Black has moved up, however, White's board goes fast. She has to play any 5 from the 6-point, and her 4s break the 5-point. The only variations where it might be correct to hang

back are when White escapes, since the chances of winning an ace-point game (if well timed) are generally better than the chances of winning a deuce-point game. However Black should be assuming that White won't escape and play to maximize his chances of winning forward. Thus, 24/23(2) must be part of Black's play.

The brute force approach of 24/23(2), 2/1(2)* doesn't appear to make much sense. Why prevent White from playing when most of White's rolls crack the prime? It is true that not shifting points does leave White 11 very good numbers, while the shift only leaves her four good numbers. However the downside of the shift is big. If White stays on the bar for a while, Black may fail to roll the necessary 6 and thus be forced to crunch himself. Also Black may escape one checker and just then White could enter and attack the other back checker. There are just too many bad things which can happen if Black takes this approach.

The wait-and-see approach of 24/23(2), 8/6 seems reasonable. If White doesn't roll a 6 she will be forced to crunch, and then Black can go after White's back checker. If White does roll that 6, Black will have a double shot at the fleeing blot unless White has rolled 6-5 or 6-6. This seems quite reasonable.

But can Black do better? What kind of shape is he in if White escapes? Not particularly great shape. Black will first have to hit the shot. Then he will have to sweat extricating the back checkers, while White may not have to play since she is on the bar. If Black misses the shot, he will be left with a 2-point holding game which will probably be poorly timed. If White doesn't escape, Black will be in a commanding position, but he will still have plenty of work to do. That lone White checker is a slippery creature which may be difficult to contain.

Given all that, perhaps Black should take the bull by the horns and slot the bar-point immediately with 24/23(2), 14/13, 8/7. He won't like it if White rolls the 6, but he will still have a few enter-and-hit numbers. If White gets away, Black will be reduced to a 2-point game, but at least the 2-point game will probably be decently timed since Black has had another checker sent back and may stay on the bar for a roll or two. Thus Black will wish he hadn't slotted if White rolls the 6, but the cost of slotting isn't as great as it first appears.

What if White doesn't roll the 6. Now there are big gains from slotting. Black will have a whopping 28 numbers to cover the blot and complete the prime. White's board

will start and probably continue to collapse, so Black does not figure to get stuck. Of course if Black can complete his prime and escape one back checker, he is virtually gin to win the game. All things considered, this looks like the winning approach. The slot has very good chances to immediately get to a near-claim, and if it backfires, Black will have plenty of life after death.

Put yourself in White's shoes. How would you feel with that blot on the bar-point staring you in the face, knowing that if you don't roll a 6 immediately, you are history? I wouldn't like it either. One of the fundamental principles of successful backgammon is to make the move your opponent doesn't want to see you make. Slotting the bar-point is an excellent example of this theme. Δ

AMAZING...

[Continued from page 7]

which smoothed over any tournament rough spots. The Sheridan Suites Hotel was an outstanding tourney venue with a tropical atrium including 40 palm trees and an indoor stream. All of the 2-room suites overlooked the atrium and were spacious by any standards.

All in all, I think everyone had a great weekend in Florida. I know that from Saturday afternoon on, I certainly did! Δ

FLORIDA STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS—ABT

OPEN (38): 1-Bob Zavoral (IL), 2-Bill Robertie (MA), 3-Steve Bromfield; 1C-Jack Takala, 2C-Drew Giovanis (FL)
INTERMEDIATE (31): 1-Carl Sorg, 2-Jerry Soskin; 1C-Ellen Allen, 2C-John Gdowik; 1LC/2LC-Alice Gerard (FL) / Walter Fradin (FL).

ROYAL PALM CLASSIC (12): 1-Dennis Culpepper (VA), 2-Tom Suzanski (Canada)

DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-John Brussel & Bill Davis (IL), 2-Mark Kormienko & Greg Kurrell

BLITZ (64): 1-David Steinberg, 2-Bill Wilner (MD)

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WINNER'S CIRCLE



AUG.-OCT. 2000

•**7th Annual Summer Cooker** (Pittsburgh, PA; 5-6 Aug.)... SATURDAY JACKPOT (17): 1-Steve Hast, 2-Rich Catalano. SUNDAY OPEN (24): 1-Rich Catalano, 2-Nayan Shah; 1C/2C-Steve Hast / Denny Leatherman.

•**Studio Anne Carlton Trophy** (Coventry, England; 6-7 Aug.)... OPEN (56): 1-Richard Granville, 2-Paul Barwick. FRIDAY KO (10): 1-Michael Crane, 2-Bayram Akay. DOUBLES (15): 1-Bill & Ben, 2-Sikidim Sikidim.

•**Grand Prix De Lugano 2000** (Lugano, Switzerland; 11-15 Aug.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (15): 1-Nino DiBella (ITA), 2-Peter Sarzynski (GER); 1C-Kazuhiro Shino (JPN/UK), 2C-Raffaello Gatti (SWZ); 1LC-Guido Flamigni (ITA). INTERMEDIATE (11): 1-Gayzag Magdassian (GB), 2-Nicoletta Astroi (ITA); 1C-Roberto Catalano (ITA); 1LC-Sam Ahmed (USA). SUPERJACKPOT: 1/2-Vittorio Castro (ITA) / Heinz Edy (AUS). DOUBLES: 1-Jeremy Bagai (USA) & Kazuhiro Shino, 2-Olivier Egger (SWZ) & Francois Tardieu (FRA). WARM-UP: 1-Kazuhiro Shino... *Raf Gatti informs us that Ingeborg Haussleiter was presented a special award by director James Ballié honoring the memory of her late husband Heiner Haussleiter.*

•**Danish Doubles Championship** (Solrød, Denmark; 19-20 Aug.)... OPEN (49 teams): 1-Torben Hasseriis & Tobias Christensen, 2-Rasmus Møhr & Thomas Jespersen.

•**Mind Sports Olympiad & British Open 2000** (London, England; 19-28 Aug.)... **Olympiad**

CHAMPIONSHIP (34): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-George Christofides, 3-Helen Helm-Sagar. WEEKEND OPEN (30): 1-John Clark, 2-Simon Gasquoine, 3-Richard Biddle. BEGINNER (36): 1-Gary Lee, 2-Robert Kimchi, 3-Hugh Swann. JUNIOR: 1-Rajit Gholap, 2-Josiah Lutton, 3-Peter Petras. **British Open** OPEN (85): 1-Rachel Rhodes, 2-Felix Vink; 1C-Tom Townsend, 2C-Michael Damianou; 1LC-Corinne Sellens, 2LC-Gerry Carolan. SUICIDE! (64): 1-Ashfin Foulad, 2-Shaun Herd.

•**12th European Backgammon Championships—Mitteleuropa Decennial** (Nova Gorcia, Slovenia; 1-3 Sep.)... MASTER (56): 1-Harald Johanni (GER), 2-Werner Schmuck (AUS), 3/4-Ivo Zwaaf (NL) / Matteo Di Napoli (ITA); 1C-Pedro Matos Fonseca (POR), 2C-Heinz Edy (AUS); 1LC-Gordan Markotic (CRO), 2LC-Carlo Facchetti (ITA); Ladies Prize: Martine Oules (FRA). CHAMPION (59): 1-Paolo Satriani (ITA), 2-Michele Muratori (ITA), 3/4-Antonio Fini (ITA) / Marcel Molderings (ITA); 1C-Massimo Armeni (ITA), 2C-Emanuele Isidori (ITA); 1LC-Andrea Sgardi (ITA), 2LC-Martin Barkwill (UK); Ladies Prize: Bambi De Bruin (GER). INTERMEDIATE (36): 1-Stefano Catani (ITA), 2-Michele Molinari (ITA); 1C-Roberto Biagiotti (ITA); 1LC-Bruno Marone (FIN); Ladies Prize: Maria Grigis (ITA). SUPER JACKPOT (8): 1-Nino Di Bella (ITA), 2-Dod Davies (UK). WARM UP MEMORIAL FOR HEINER HAUSSLEITER (70): 1-Gordan Markotic (CRO), 2-Carlo Faccio (ITA). ONE POINT TOURNAMENT: 1-Damian Plesec (SLO). SPERTI TROPHY: 1-Hans-Heinrich Stahl (GERMANY), Paul Turnbull (UK)... *Director Marco Fornisir reports participation from 21 countries with over 150 total players in the main events.*

•**Roy Hollands Trophy** (Coventry, England; 2-3 Sept.)... OPEN (40): 1-Peter Wilson, 2-Paul Barwick; 1C-David Nathan, 2C-Ralph Eskinazi.

SUICIDE! (64): 1-Jon Sharpe, 2-Robert Bush. FRIDAY KO (18): 1-Jeff Barber, 2-Michael Crane. DOUBLES (16): 1-Blood, Chouette and Tears, 2-Don't Run, We Are Your Friends.

•**28th Hawaii State Championships** (Honolulu, HI; 8 Sep.)... OPEN (21): 1-Prince Joli Quentin Kansil, 2-Ernie Pong; 1C-Nahapet Boyahjian, 2C-Rick Fried... *After 27 years, Kansil again gets his name inscribed on the Prince Joli Kansil Cup which he donated to the club back in 1973.*

•**Backgammon by the Bay Monthly** (Palo Alto, CA; 10 Sep.)... OPEN (8): 1-Paul Tanenbaum, 2-Elliott Winslow; 1C/2C-Ron Dumont / Rawlin Pullen. INTERMEDIATE (4): 1-Michael Austin. BEGINNER #1 (6): 1-Comet. BEGINNER #2 (7): 1-Eileen Wilkins.

•**Towpath Inn Tournament—ABT** (Turin, NY; 22-24 Sep.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (15): 1-Mike Friedman (Canada), 2-Walter Trice (MA), 3-Ed Johnson (NY). WARM-UP (14): 1-Walter Trice (MA). DOUBLES: 1-Walter Trice (MA) & Bob Lumbra (VT).

•**2000 Asian Championships** (Hong Kong, China; 29 Sep.-2 Oct.)... OPEN: 1-Steve Nelson (HK), 2-Harold Sepsa; 1C-Osamu Omo, 2C-Jake Jacobs (USA); 1LC-Nasu. DRAGONSLAYER: 1-Jake Jacobs, 2-Michael Meyburg (GER). BLITZ: 1-Kaneko, 2-John Simon (HK).

•**Sandy Osborne Trophy** (Coventry, England; 30 Sept.-1 Oct.)... OPEN (42): 1-Peter Bennet, 2-David Fall; 1C-Rosemary Bensley, 2C-David Nathan; 1LC-Paul Barwick, 2LC-Bob Young. SUICIDE! (32): 1-Martin Barkwill, 2-Michael Crane. FRIDAY KO (15): 1-John Slattery, 2-Peter Bennet. DOUBLES (12): 1-Me And My Teddy Tubb, 2-Clitoris Allsorts.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 8 Oct.)... OPEN (14): 1/2-Tim Mabee / Jerry Brooks, 3/4-Mark Murray / Sam Pottle (WI); 1C-John Meyers (WI), 2C-Peter Kalba. INTERMEDIATE (6): 1-Richard Stawowy, 2-Steve Neidecker. Δ

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GAMES PEOPLE PLAY: Tournaments Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Chatham Computers; 8119 S. Cottage Grove, Chicago. Reginald Porter (708/715-2917).

PUB CLUB: Tourn. Mon., 7:00 P.M. at Danny's Grill and Bar, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Joe Wollick (847/755-0887).

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

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wed., 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).

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"My thanks to all the players who have supported the Nevada Backgammon Association since 1991."

—Howard Markowitz, Director