

2002 pittsburgh championships

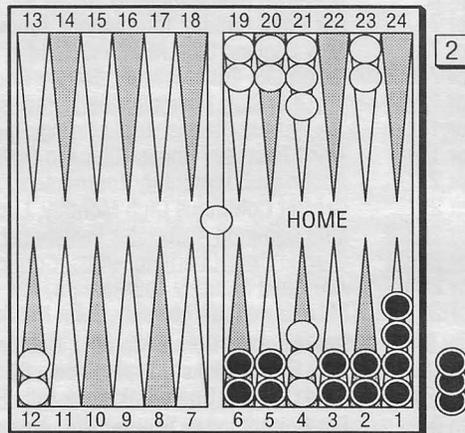
BIG PLAYS WIN PITT FOR O'LAUGHLIN

Jeff Acierno is Masters Champ

Florida's Ed O'Laughlin made two exceptional plays in the Open finals at the 2002 Pittsburgh Championships to defeat tourney newcomer Arman Karamian 13-11. The 24th version of this backgammon bacchanalia was held 15-17 February at the Greentree Marriott Hotel in Pittsburgh. Director Steve Hast welcomed 178 main flight players from across North America with lots of backgammon and lots of pizza, hoagies, bagels, donuts, chips, pretzels, candies, coffee, and every flavor of pop imaginable.

Ed found himself bearing off for a doubled gammon until . . .

Pos. 1. 13-point finals. Ed O'Laughlin (Black) trails Arman Karamian (White) 4-6. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-2.**



Extremely frustrated with his shake (the fourth in a string of awkward numbers), Ed took a little time to calm down. Then he



Pittsburgh director Steve Hast (left) flanks Open winner Linda MacLean and Masters Champion Jeff Acierno.

took a lot more time to come up with the correct play: 6/off, 2/off! Ed's aggressive take-off, shown clearly superior following Snowie rollouts by Butch Meese & Bob Zavoral, was sweetly rewarded, for had he made the more natural play of 6/off, 5/3, Arman's subsequent 4-1 would have hit. The eventual outcome: doubled gammon

[Continued on page 5]



2002 Pittsburgh Champ Ed O'Laughlin.

In his semifinal match, O'Laughlin defeated Atlanta Braves Chairman of the Board Bill Bartholomay (IL). On the other side of the single elimination drawsheet, Karamian was stopping Maryland's Chen-Fu Yu. Although Ed was the consensus favorite in the 13-point finals, spectators were unsure what to expect from the New York rookie who had played only two prior tournaments: 2001 Cancun Open (Super Jackpot Finalist) and 2002 Boston Open (1st Consolation).

Leading 3-1, Ed lost a doubled gammon to fall behind 3-5. Two games later, with the score 6-4 in favor of Karamian,

WHAT LUCY LOVED



One of Lucille Ball's greatest passions in the 1970s was backgammon. She was introduced to the game by Prince Obolensky and later was tutored by Paul Magriel. For many years, she held her own charity tournament at the 20th Century Fox Studios.

Ivy Ney is selling this 1978 photo of Lucy at: www.celebrity-pictures.net/bitem7.htm

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

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WHAT WE CAN LEARN

The photo on the front page of the Jan./Feb. POINT showing director John Huston and Paul Newman playing backgammon with intensity was much appreciated. Director Huston has three digits confidently on the man he is about to move while Paul Newman smugly stares at Huston's face. However, Newman is firmly grasping his dice cup with the whole hand, impatient to make his roll.

As Plato said: "You can learn more about a man by playing [backgammon] with him for one hour than you can from a year's conversation. CHICAGO POINT covers our game with class. Well done.—
Lee Hoge, Saratoga Springs, NY

HAPPY DUCK DAY

As you probably know, deuces in backgammon are often referred to as "ducks."

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
810/232-9731
cjc@tir.com

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Mar 9*	Ideas of March Doubles, Triple Crown Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Mar 10	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/491-8710
Mar 10*	19th Fleet Underwood Memorial, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Mar 21*	Third Thursday Bonus (Ohio State), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
<u>Mar 22-24</u>	<u>2002 Midwest Championships: "Case of Deadly Roll," Wyndham Lisle, IL</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>
Mar 24*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/771-0981
Mar 30*	Atlanta Doubles Tournament, Barnacles Restaurant, Doraville, Georgia	770/333-1876
Mar 31*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-8042
Mar 31*	Milwaukee Club Monthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	414/962-8549
Apr 1*	FIBS 2002 Spring Tournament, via computer	<i>david@escoffery.com</i>
Apr 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer	<i>GZMedallion@gammonzone.net</i>
Apr 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer	<i>tournaments@cyberarts.com</i>
Apr 6	Springfield Series #6, Parker's Sports Bar, Springfield, Illinois	217/528-0117
Apr 6*	Universal Mall Bimonthly Series #2, All the King's Men, Warren, MI	313/331-6639
Apr 7	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyways Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/252-7755
Apr 7*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/491-8710
Apr 7*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Akron, Ohio	330/966-2811
<u>Apr 12-14</u>	<u>8th Ohio State Championships, Radisson Cleveland, Middleburgh, Hts., OH</u>	<u>330/966-2811</u>
Apr 13*	Tax Refund Classic, Triple Crown Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Apr 18*	Third Thursday Bonus (Chicago Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Apr 21*	Austin Club Bimonthly Tournament, JC's Bar & Grill, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Apr 21*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/771-0981
<u>Apr 26-28</u>	<u>49th Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
<u>Apr 26-28*</u>	<u>Granite State Championships, Comfort Inn Albany Airport, Latham, NY</u>	<u>603/863-4711</u>
Apr 28*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-8042
Apr 28*	Milwaukee Club Monthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	414/962-8549
May 5*	New England Bonus Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/491-8710
May 11*	May Flower Stakes, Triple Crown Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
<u>May 24-27</u>	<u>23rd Chicago Open, Oakbrook Hills Resort, Oakbrook, Illinois</u>	<u>702/893-6025</u>
Jun 9*	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyways Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/252-7755
Jun 11-16*	Worldwide Twin Championships, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Jul 4-7	Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, Michigan	810/232-9731
Aug 2-4	Thousand Islands Tourney, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York	716/387-0767
Aug 8-11	Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Hilton Garden Inn, Atlanta, Georgia	770/333-1876
Aug 30-Sep 2	50th Indiana Open, Sheraton Hotel & Suites, Indianapolis, Indiana	317/255-8902
Sep 27-29	Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, New York	716/387-0767
Oct 4-6*	Florida State Championships, Sheraton Suites, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Oct 11-13*	Illinois State Championships, Springfield Hilton, Springfield, Illinois	217/528-0117

OUTSIDE USA

Mar 9-10	Slattery Scottish Open, Garforth Hilton, Leeds, England	441522-888676
Mar 9-10	3rd & 4th Ranglistenturniers, Kaiserbrunnen Hotel, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Mar 10	Toronto Club Monthly, Smilin' Jack's, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Mar 10-13*	39th Ted Bassett 7 Gstaad Palace-Cup, Palace Hotel Gstaad, Switzerland	4161-2710137
Mar 12-15*	4th International Championships, Health & Fitness Club, Abu Dhabi, UAE	9712-4436333
Mar 17-21	1st Bali Championship, Kudeta Restaurant, Bali, Indonesia <i>USA Contact:</i>	<i>212/222-7177</i>
Mar 28-Apr 1	14th Nordic "Wide" Open, Hotel Marienlyst, Helsingør, Denmark	4533-363601
Mar 29-Apr 1	1st Süddeutscher-Cup, Hotel-Pyramide, Fürth, Germany	49711-486190
Apr 6-7	British Open, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Apr 13-14*	5th & 6th Ranglistenturniers, Kaiserbrunnen Hotel, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
Apr 13-14*	Åbne Jyske Mesterskaber, Royal Casino Århus, Århus, Denmark	4540-621789
Apr 14*	Toronto Club Monthly, Smilin' Jack's, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Apr 25-28*	2nd Backgammon & Gin Rummy Tournament, Lido di Jesolo, Venice, Italy	3932-90513415
Apr 26-28*	9th Oslo Open, Vika Atrium, Oslo, Norway	4797-036786
Apr 27-28*	Sjællands Mesterskaber, Roskilde Backgammon Klub, Denmark	4546-366012
Apr 30-May 5	8th EBN Mayday Tournament, Casino San Roque, Costa del Sol, Spain	34950-113009
May 4-5*	County Cups Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
May 9-12*	2nd Süddeutscher-Cup, Hotel Seminaris, Bad Honnef, Germany	49711-486190
May 17-20*	6th Kaiserbrunnen Cup, Kaiserbrunnen Hotel, Brakel, Germany	49521-64314
May 23-26*	2nd Romanian Open Championship, Bucharest, Romania	9723-7516912
Jun 7-9*	Austrian Championship Finale, Cafe Laudon, Vienna, Austria	431-9715889
Jun 8-9*	Hilton Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Jun 14-16*	3rd Süddeutscher-Cup, Hotel Mercure, Stuttgart-Gerlingen, Germany	49711-486190
Jun 15-16*	Tournament of Spirits, Europe's Go Cultural Centre, Amstelveen, Holland	3120-4633724
Jul 4-7	14th Venice International Tournament, Venice Casino, Venice, Italy	3941-52111024
Jul 6-7*	Keren Di Bona Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Jul 8-14	World Championship, Grand Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco <i>USA Contact:</i>	<i>954/527-4033</i>
Aug 3-4*	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

Paul Magriel often plays to the crowd, animatedly exclaiming "Quack, quack" when double 2s is rolled. On February 2, 2002, I was able to send Paul the following e-mail:

"Happy Duck Day! Some people are featuring it as Ground Hog Day, but this year it is also Duck Day."

02-02 will not come again for another hundred years.—*Nack Ballard, Richmond, CA*

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME . . .

I'm new to all this computer stuff, but I thought I would try to look up the Midwest Championships website (www.chicagopoint.com/MBC2002.html). Unbelievably, I see that you have not changed my name back from "Amy Valerio" to "Amy Trudeau." It's been well over a year since the divorce. Can you please accept the fact that things just didn't work out with Hugo and it is over between us? I would appreciate my maiden name back. The judge approved it. Why won't you?—*Amy Trudeau, Chicago, IL*

Sorry about that, Amy! At least we got it right on the MBC invite. We look forward to your performance as Macie Lewis (opposite Greg Tomlin in the roll of Johnny Riddell) in the conclusion of "The Case of the Deadly Roll" at the Midwest Champs Calcutta Auction.—Ed.

NOT ON CAROL'S READING LIST

I hated the pandering review of *Trip Aces* (Jan./Feb. POINT, page 7) you said you didn't like & wouldn't read. You showed poor taste at best, giving it more space than your club's own Fall Trophy Tourney.—*Carol Joy Cole, Director, Flint Area Backgammon Club, Michigan*

SHAKE 'EM UP

Danny Kleinman's January article ("Protecting Yourself from a Suspected Dice Mechanic") hit the nail on the head. This challenging game of ours is too much fun to let it go to the dogs. We occasionally need to be reminded that backgammon cheaters do exist.

I believe that better enforcement of the vigorous shake rule is a good way to cut down on the possibility of cheating in backgammon. Although part of the US

Backgammon Rules (4.1 Random Rolls), there really is no satisfactory remedy for correcting violators. It is the single most important and least enforced rule. I have been using a single cup and a single pair of dice in all my chouettes. Using the same equipment helps to put the players' minds at ease. Additionally, it solves the "fast roll" problem and effectively ends misreading of dice.

If you're looking for players with fine rolling habits, just watch our most accomplished player, Neil Kazaross shake, rattle, and roll. There is also a director/player who sets a great example herself: the one and only Carol Joy Cole.

If everyone shook their dice like Neil and Carol, there would be no need for articles like the one in Danny's January column.—*Larry "Diceman" Strommen, Indianapolis, IN*

WHO IS LLK?

I recently bought an old backgammon set. It's very large in a linen-type case. It's the "Royal Brand" by Crisloid with 1 3/4 inch bakelite chips. It came out of an estate sale in Arizona.

Anyway, there are the initials on the case: LLK. I have a feeling that this belonged to a player that one of you may remember. If any of the POINT readers know who LLK might be, please let me know.—*Diane Varner, via e-mail, belechere@yahoo.com*

TAKI STARTER BOARD?

I've heard nothing but outstanding things

[Continued on page 4]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2002

Compiled through 17 Feb. 2002 after 2 events
(Upcoming: Midwest, Ohio, Gammon Assoc., Granite State)



Ed O'Laughlin	22.35	Dan Grogan	5.11	Bud Bowers	3.39	Luther Lute	1.70
Barry Murphy	11.36	Eric Johnson	5.11	Ben Elliot	2.50	Patrick Donelly	1.32
Arman Karamian	10.59	Vadim Musaelyan	5.00	Gary Branton	2.50	Rachel Bass	0.88
Dennis Culpepper	10.59	Denise Hemingway	4.99	Abdi Zaltash	2.27	Fran Miller	0.71
Linda MacLean	10.02	Hank Chesko	4.99	Glenn Ramsey	2.27	Glen De Guzman	0.59
Emil Mortuk	8.39	Larry Keating	4.71	Ray Woo	2.27	Stephen Spudic	0.59
Bill Bartholomay	5.29	Bob Wilensky	4.19	Tom Green	2.22	Ashley Farrow	0.55
Chen-Fu Yu	5.29	Greg Lilley	4.19	Connie Tipton	1.70	Joe Meyer	0.32
Jeff Acierno	5.18	Iliia Guzei	3.59				



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2002 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

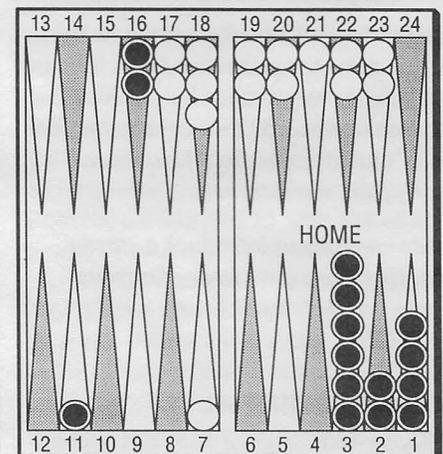
COMPILED
THRU 28 FEB.

Carter Mattig	5.04	Peter Kalba	2.52	Phyllis Smolinski	1.84	Tia Bailey	0.64
Mike Sutton	5.04	Tom Meyer	2.48	Arline Levy	1.52	Terry Weiss	0.64
Herb Roman	4.72	Richard Stawowy	2.16	Tim Serges	1.36	Roz Ferris	0.60
Tim Mabee	4.24	Joe Auszmann	2.16	Wayne Wiest	1.28	John Stryker	0.60
Tim Carroll	3.68	Bill Bartholomay	1.92	Karen Meyer	1.16	Ronora Stryker	0.60
Lucky Nelson	3.44	Alice Kay	1.92	Lindsay Mattig	1.16	Kendra Welsey	0.56
Joe Wollick	3.12	Eric Johnson	1.92	Bill Keefe	0.88	Glenn Martells	0.56
Paul Baraz	3.04	Richard Lloyd	1.92	Georgina Flanagan	0.88	David Wells	0.56
Norma Shyer	2.72	Steven Coren	1.92	Jason Fishbein	0.88	Sakura Wells	0.56
Bob Zavoral	2.56	Don Jayhan	1.84	Steve Klesker	0.64		

January's Player of the Month was **CARTER MATTIG**. Two wins in January netted him 3.88 points. Norma Shyer (2.72) was second. Bob Zavoral and Mike Sutton tied for third at 2.56.

February's Player of the Month was **HERB ROMAN** with 3.44 points. Close behind were Tim Mabee (2.80) and Peter Kalba (2.52).

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-4.**



ASK
DANNY

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LUCK VS. SKILL IN BACKGAMMON

Dear Danny: *I live in Cologne, Germany, but I come from Turkey, where backgammon is the top recreational game. Unfortunately, backgammon is not very popular here, and I have only one friend who is capable of giving me good competition.*

Recently, my friend and I have wondered: which predominates in backgammon, luck or skill? That's a philosophical question, isn't it? However, experienced backgammon players should know the answer.—
Ömer Dener, Cologne, Germany

DEAR ÖMER: In a way, it is a philosophical question, which is why even expert backgammon players often answer it wrongly. Some, for example, say that backgammon is 20% skill and 80% luck. This answer embodies a philosophical mistake, namely the supposition that luck and skill crowd each other out, and that one somehow reduces the other.

In fact, backgammon is a game par excellence of *luck-handling skills*. You must play to make the best use of whatever luck you have with your current roll (good or bad), and cater to future rolls by making more of the possible future rolls good for you (for example, by “diversifying” your numbers) and fewer of the possible future rolls good for your opponent (by duplicating his).

Many games that appear to be decided by luck are *also* decided by skill, and even

the most skillfully-played game may require luck to produce a win. Thus if you play a back game well, you may hit a lucky shot in the bear-off and win; but your skill in maintaining your anchors, conserving your timing, building your prime and containing the checker you hit is also decisive. The admittedly lucky rolls that win backgammon games often camouflage the skillful plays that prepare for them.

There is related question you may have in mind: “Who will win at backgammon, the luckier players or the more skillful?”

When we phrase it this way, the absurdity of the question becomes apparent. If the difference in luck exceeds the difference in skill, the luckier player wins. If the difference in skill exceeds the difference in luck, the more skillful player wins.

Who can measure the luck and the skill, and who can compare them when we have no common unit of measure?

Well, luck and skill can now be measured (roughly) by modern computer programs that provide *estimates of equities* for each backgammon position. Equity is the common unit of measure. A player's luck on a given roll is the difference between his equity before the roll and his equity *after playing the roll optimally*. For a game as a whole, a player's luck can be positive or negative. A player's skill on a given roll is the difference between his equity *after his actual play* and the equity *after the best play*, and it is always negative. The closer to zero this measure of skill is for a game as a whole, the better the player has played. Of course, inaccuracies in the program's estimates of equities produce inaccuracies in the measures of luck and skill.

Yes, there are players who are lucky or

unlucky over the course of any period of time (even a lifetime), some inordinately so. The distribution of luck, assuming the rolls are random, follows the *normal distribution* (“bell curve”) and that distribution has extremes at both ends. However, we cannot assume that a player who has enjoyed good luck in the past will continue to have good luck on future rolls, nor for that matter that he will have bad luck, for each roll is a new random event and luck *does not* “even out” in the end. The deviations from “average” luck tend to increase with the number of rolls. The only thing that (slowly) approaches zero is the “average” luck *per roll*, which decreases while the *total* luck deviates (in either direction) from zero more and more.

How long does it take before “in the long run” a difference in skill between players outweighs a difference in luck? Again, the answer depends on the sizes of the differences. The answer is important to people who play games of *luck-handling skills* for money, for it determines the bankroll they need relative to the stakes. The “long run” that is required for an expert backgammon player to be confident of success is much longer than for an expert bridge player, but not as long as for an expert poker player. And of course, the weaker the circle in which someone plays, the shorter the interval over which he can be confident of winning, and the greater the expected value of his winnings.—
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 or send e-mail to: bg@chicagopoint.com

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

about Tak Morioka backgammon boards. Unfortunately, the prices are just a little out of my league. Any chance he would sell a less expensive board? I love the game but just can't justify spending the money.—
Gary Ujifusa, via Internet

Tak has no plans to introduce a starter board. However, if we hear of anyone trying to sell their used board, we'll let you know.—Ed.

A LOT OF POTENTIAL

My 9-year-old daughter Joan has become quite good at backgammon and would like

to play in a tournament in the Chicago area. Do you have any information you could pass on to me?—Toby Davis, Lake Forest, IL

How about the Limited Division of the upcoming Midwest Championships (22–24 March in Lisle, IL)? The \$30 entry fee guarantees three matches and includes a free T-shirt plus free chances to win cash and prizes totaling over \$1000.—Ed.

STRENGTH IN COMBINED NUMBERS

I am a tournament organizer in a completely different medium, chess, and have recently been pondering a hypothetical: To your knowledge, has anyone considered organizing tournament events, not by sport/competition, but by region? I have surfed the Internet and found dozens of organiza-

tions with national memberships ranging from 10,000 to 100,000+, all encountering difficulties in raising membership numbers and/or gaining greater media recognition.

I would think that if there were a coordinated effort to run a whole cross-section of tournaments simultaneously at one site (or at least in one city/locale), it could be a huge boost for all involved, and could be duplicated in countless regions nationwide.

I know there's a movement in Europe to run what are called “Braingame Tournaments” and “Mind Sport Olympics,” but I know of nothing that attempts to attract wider appeal in the United States. Any readers have thoughts on this?—Robert Snow, Tamarac, FL, via Internet, Rasyeti@aol.com

[Continued on page 6]

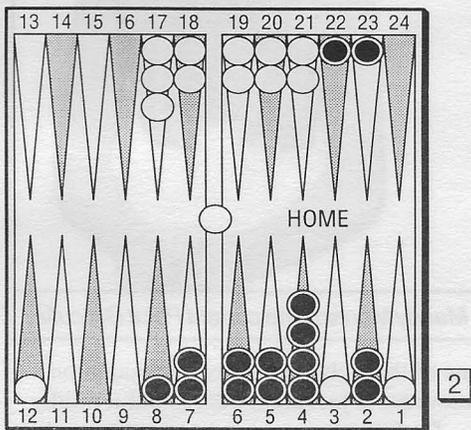
O'LAUGHLIN...

[Continued from page 1]

for O'Laughlin and a new match leader.

Ed faced another tester in the next game. Holding a 2-cube in a very tenuous prime-vs.-prime position, 4-3 jumped out of the cup.

Pos. 2. 13-point finals. Ed O'Laughlin (Black) leads Arman Karamian (White) 8-6. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.**

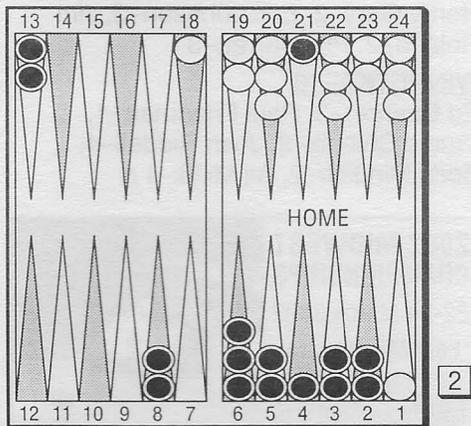


Another few minutes were spent deciding the best strategy. Eventually, Ed settled on the wide-open 7/3*, 4/1*! Karamian responded with a dancing double-2, Ed rolled 6-1 (22/16, 4/3) and was able to extricate his last straggler to win another doubled gammon.

A 12-6 Crawford leader will win the match roughly 90 percent of the time. Arman was not about to give up on his 10 percent factor. He won the next game and narrowly missed a match-ending BG in game 11. His gammon victory forced one final game for the trophy.

With momentum favoring Arman, Ed continued to make the right moves. Then in the following position with O'Laughlin on shake, a strange offer was proffered:

Pos. 3. Tournament double match-point. Black on roll. **ESTIMATE BLACK'S EQUITY.**



Prior to his roll, Ed suggested a 50/50 split of the prize money (1st-\$3800, 2nd-\$1800). An analysis of the dead cube/dead gammon position in Snowie shows Black to win just over 70% of the games.

Karamian quickly accepted the offer.

Why would Ed cut such a deal? When asked about this, he responded, "It wasn't for the money. Call it an impulse play. I had made an error in the prior game and was lucky to get a shot in the last one."

It seems that even the top players occasionally resort to impulse.

OTHER EVENTS

In other events, Jeff Acierno (NY) bested Steve Sax (CA) 13-5 in the Master's Jackpot with Stan Livingston (WI) and Tom Meyer (IL) winning Limited Jackpots I and II respectively. In the Overflow Open Linda MacLean (MA) returned from a two year tourney hiatus to triumph over Denise Hemingway (MD). The Advanced Division was captured by Barry Murphy (OH), and Bud Bowers (PA) won the 30-player Novice event.

Special recognition goes to Bar Point Club player Eric Johnson who, competing in his first weekend event, was a finalist in both the Advanced and Limited Jackpot.

Once again, Pittsburgh played host to the American Backgammon Tour Awards Ceremony at the successful Saturday Calcutta Auction (\$1400 was raised for charity). Although runner-up Rick Todd was the only top-3 finisher to attend, winner Jake Jacobs and 3rd place finisher

Richard del Furia sent their regards and will be honored at the Midwest Championships later this month.

All in all, it was one great backgammon weekend thanks to Steve Hast and a very competent staff. Results: Δ

24TH PITTSBURGH CHAMPIONSHIPS

CHAMPIONSHIP (64): 1-Ed O'Laughlin (FL), 2-Arman Karamian (NY), 3/4-Chen-Fu Yu (MD) / Bill Bartholomay (IL); 1C-Dennis Culpepper, 2C-Larry Keating (NJ); 1LC-Jeff Acierno

OPEN OVERFLOW (20): 1-Linda MacLean (MA), 2-Denise Hemingway (MD); 1C-Hank Chesko (PA), 2C-Walt Smith (MI) **ADVANCED (64):** 1-Barry Murphy (OH), 2-Eric Johnson (IL), 3/4-Glenn Ramsey (PA) / Ray Woo (NY); 1C-Dan Grogan (MI), 2C-Abdi Zaltash (TN); 1LC-Iliia Guzei (WI)

NOVICE (30): 1-Bud Bowers (PA), 2-Connie Tipton (PA); 1C-Luther Lute (OH), 2C-Fran Miller (OH)

MASTERS JACKPOT (32): 1-Jeff Acierno (NY), 2-Steve Sax (CA), 3/4-Jeremy Bagai (PA) / Phil Simborg (IL)

AMATEUR JACKPOT I (32): 1-Stanley Livingston (WI), 2-Simon Kennedy-Rose (GA), 3/4-John Greci (PA) / Paul Polatov (NY)

AMATEUR JACKPOT II (16): 1-Tom Meyer (IL), 2-Eric Johnson (IL)

OPEN DOUBLES (28): 1-Felix Goykhman (NJ) & Richard Munitz (NY), 2-John Rockwell & Ms. Rager (CA), 3/4-Marty & Ben Storer (NH) / Iliia Guzei & Stanley Livingston (WI)

LIMITED DOUBLES (13): 1-Barry Murphy (OH) & Pete Esposito (OH), 2-Vadim Musaelyan (NC) & Todd Obadal (MD)

CARLSTROM CUP (14): 1-Steve Brown (MN), 2-Sean Garber (IN)

MICROBLITZ (64): 1-Tom Meyer (IL)



ILLINOIS ACTION



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

Tuesday, 6:00 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. Mon., 7:00 P.M. at Danny's Grill and Bar, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Joe Wollick (847/942-2068).

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY: Tourn. Monday, Chicago location. Call for information. Reginald Porter (708/715-2917).

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

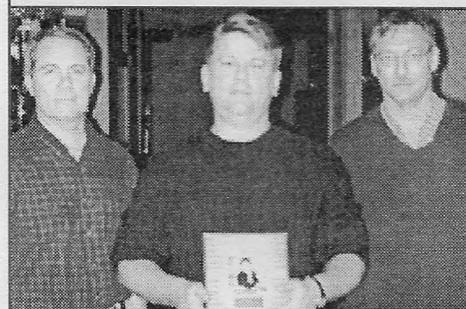
SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wed., 6:30 P.M. at Brewhaus, 617 E. Washington, Springfield. Ben Zemaitis (217/483-4028).

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

T/P BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tournaments Wednesday, 6:30 P.M. at Java Oasis; 2240 S. Michigan, Chicago. J.A. Miller (312/719-1245).

PEORIA BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tourn. Thurs., 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Ed Zell (309/674-0557).

BAR POINT CLUB'S TOP 3 FOR 2001



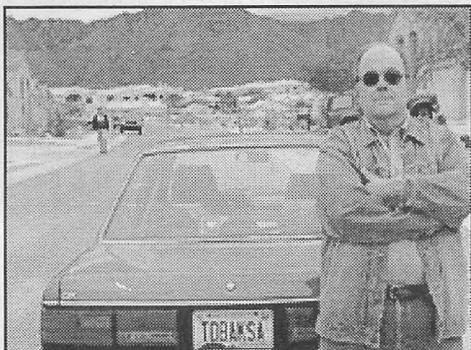
The Chicago Bar Point Club honored its top three finishers for 2001 at Awards Night 15. Jan. From left: Tim Carroll (2), Bob Zavoral (1), Tim Mabee (3).

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 4]

ARIZONA JAKE

I just wanted to let you know I feel your pain. Yes, we had snow here too. The flakes whirled around for maybe an hour, though the only thing they stuck to was the distant mountains. When I left the theater last night it was so cold I considered buttoning my coat. So, when the 12 inches hits today, you'll see that I know what you're going through.



Arizona adjusts to Jake Jacobs.

On the other hand, as I was brushing my teeth last night, I looked in the mirror, and what do you suppose was crawling on

the wall behind me? Perhaps the cold drove it indoors, but for whatever reason, there was a scorpion in my bathroom. When I killed it the stinger kept thrashing no matter how hard I squeezed. It was a fighter. However, it was only an inch and a half long. I ate one at least four times the size, and much fiercer looking when I was in Thailand.—*Jake Jacobs, Tucson, AZ*

Jake will receive his 2001 ABT Trophy at the Midwest Championships Calcutta Auction program this month.—Ed.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

We had a new member show up at the Charlotte Backgammon Club last month. Don't know if your Chicago players would recognize her name—Jennifer Dipple—but you certainly know her late father: Dean Muench! I think Jennifer is going to become a "regular."—*Jeb Horton, director, Charlotte (NC) Backgammon Club*

DOWNRIGHT SILLY

Every time I see the "Point Girl" at www.chicagopoint.com, I scratch my head and wonder what you think this adds to your site. I love scantily-clad women and even some porn on occasion, but seeing that sorta crap on (what I understand to be)



Mandy Moore is the current Point Girl cutie.

one of the web's premiere backgammon resources is just plain odd, to put it mildly.

Each to his own, but in my opinion, it is downright silly and completely out of place.—*Tom Hanlon, Colchester, CT*

Here's a suggestion. If you don't want to see the Point Girl, don't scroll down!—Ed. Δ

PUB CLUB PREVAILS. WINS 2002 ILLINOIS STATE CHALLENGE CUP

The Pub Club has won the 2002 Illinois State Challenge Cup in one of the closest competitions in the event's 22-year history. Eight backgammon clubs from across the state fielded 6-player teams (made up of their 2001 top finishers) in the annual affair. The event was held at Danny's Grill in Villa Park (the Pub Club's Monday night home) on 10 February.



2002 Illinois State Challenge Cup champs (from left): Mark Murray, Keith Kuligowski, Joe Wollick (captain), Tim Mabee, Tom Meyer and Roz Ferris. [Photo by Ed Zell]

The Pubbers got off to a slow start managing only 5 wins out of a possible 12 in the first two rounds. But then they went on a tear grabbing 16 out of 18 5-point matches in rounds 3, 4, and 5.

The last two rounds were pivotal. Sangamon outscored the Pub Club 3 to 1 in the 6th round to regain the lead 23-22 with only one round to play. But the Pub Club rallied for four wins in the final round to edge Sangamon by one win. Final score of the top four finishers: Pub Club-26, Sangamon Valley-25, Peoria-24, Chicago Bar Point Club-23.

Special congrats to John Jennings of Peoria who was the only player to go undefeated, winning all seven matches. Complete results:

PUB CLUB-26

Joe Wollick-4, Tom Meyer-5, Tim Mabee-5, Mark Murray-5, Roz Ferris-4, Keith Kuligowski-3

SANGAMON VALLEY-25

Michael Plog-2, Randy Armstrong-4, Ben Zemaitis-5, John Jennings-7, Mark Kaye-3, Jena Rooney-4

PEORIA-24

Milad Doueihy-4, Faddoul Khoury-4, Cliff Mayoh-4, Ed Zell-3, Fouad

Malouf-5, Sue Will-4

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB-23

Bob Zavoral-4, Tim Carroll-3, Glenn Martells-4, Lucky Nelson-2, Brian Barber-4, Tak Morioka-6

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL-21

Ed Bauder-5, Mike Flohr-4, Rob Farmer-5, Greg Feller-1, William Hutchison-4, Randy Reiff-2

T/P CLUB-17

J.A. Miller-3, Roger Hickman-4, Kent Williams-1, David Settles-3, Carter Mattig-4, George David-2

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY-16

Femi Owiku-3, Reginald Porter-3, Henry Gray-2, Eric Johnson-3, Jim Roland-2, Phil Barrett-3

WINNETKA-16

Ed Buerger-3, Paul Friedman-1, Trudie Chibnik-2, Josh Riddell-4, Boris Mindich-2, Ali Malik-4 Δ

2002 MIDWEST CHAMPIONSHIPS

22-24 March 2002

Last Minute Info:

773/583-6464

bg@chicagopoint.com



An Amsterdam Good Club

by Greg Tomlin

For a backgammon player, no trip to Amsterdam is complete without a visit to the Amsterdam Backgammon Club (ABC). The club meets every Saturday at 3:30 P.M. at Cafe de Roeter, conveniently located on Roetersstraat near a tram stop.

As I entered the cafe, I was greeted by ABC director Vincent Versteeg. Resplendent in his pink pants, purple shirt and checkered jacket, Vincent grinned and told me his nickname was "Smiley," for obvious reasons.

It seems everywhere I play, there is a JJ. Up in Chicago until recently, that was Jake Jacobs. In downstate Illinois, it's John Jennings. In Amsterdam, it would be John Jacobs, the 2001 Amsterdam Club champ. As he was introduced, this mild-mannered, bespectacled man said his nickname was "Animal J."

"Must be from the way you handle the cube," I ventured.

He looked a bit puzzled and said, without a hint of irony, "No, it's because of my appearance."

Go figure.

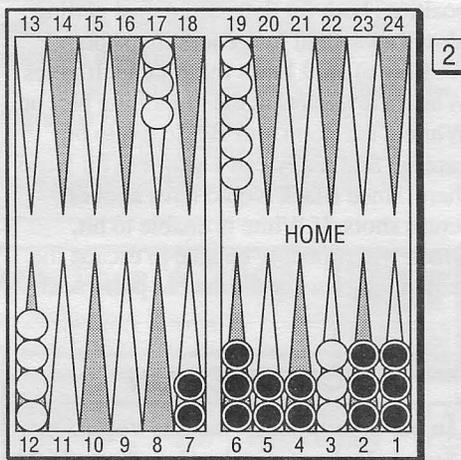
The colorful cast of club players included Rop Meyer (a quick-witted, good-natured man of Indian descent), Nis (a tall, studious young Dane), Lei (native Amster-

dammer by way of Hong Kong with a poker face and a warm personality), and a number of others I was not fortunate enough to meet. They spoke flawless English, as all the Dutch seem to do.

The ABC offers tournament entry for fees of 30, 20, or 10 Euros. All players enter the same tournament. Winning players who've paid the full 30 Euros collect the full prize. Those entering for 20 or 10 Euros receive 2/3 or 1/3 of the prize money respectively. Any cash not awarded in a tournament is carried over to the next week, creating the incentive to return.

I drew Lei for my first 7-point match, and in a fit of misplaced hospitality, I spotted him a quick doubled gammon. I battled back to trail 6-4 (post-Crawford) in this position:

7-point match. Greg Tomlin (Black) trails Lei (White) 4-6. **BLACK ROLLS AN AWFUL DOUBLE-4.**



I was thinking 'G for the match.' How bad are my double 4s? Not only did Lei hit the shot, he picked up a second checker, built a prime, and skillfully rolled his prime home for the match. Then he proceeded to win the tournament.

As the cafe played an eclectic mix of mostly American/British music—Zeppelin, Monkees, Elvis, U2 (yes, I know they are Irish), Red Hot Chili Peppers—I sat down with Animal J for my chance at redemption in the Consolation. He demonstrated the skills of a club champ opening a 5-2 lead to 7. But thanks to the magic of the trailer's aggressive cube, I was able to slip past him.

As we got up, Smiley, across the room, started shouting and waving his hands about a particularly bad turn in his match. Smiley is a cabbie, which may explain why he finds backgammon relaxing. Animal J assured me that Smiley doesn't stay mad for long, at least not about backgammon.

"Good thing," I said. "I might need a ride later."

After a delicious plate of stamppot (an exotic, ethnic Dutch dish consisting of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and gravy), I sat down for what proved to be my last match of the evening. In short order I was "hung" by Rop who was kind enough to relieve me of a few more Euros in a side bet. Sigh. It was probably karmic prepayment for the bad pun.

I didn't let my lack of success deter me from returning to play the following week, but that's another story. I heartily recommend the ABC for gammon action with some especially nice and interesting folks.

From Amsterdam, "Tot ziens." (Dutch for "See ya.")—Greg Tomlin

AMALGAMATION

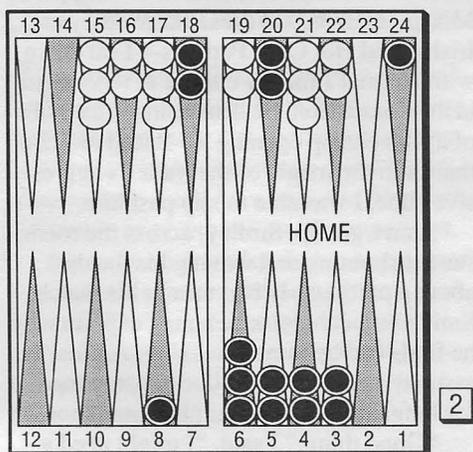
The Case of the Deadly Roll will be solved at the Midwest Championships Calcutta. Don't miss MBC staffers **Greg Tomlin** as "Johnny Riddell" and **Amy Trudeau** as "Macie Lewis"... The Backgammon On Board VI Invitations are out! Join the Bar Point Club 1-8 February 2003 for the cruise tournament of a lifetime as we sail the Golden Princess from Ft. Lauderdale to St. Maarten and St. Thomas. Contact CHICAGO POINT for an invitation or go to: www.chicagopoint.com/bgonboard.html ... Glad to see **Scott Zucker** (IL) back to the Bar Point Club following a December head-on car crash at 50 mph. His only significant injuries were a broken wrist and a cracked kneecap... Milwaukee director **Rudy Langenbach** (WI) reports that the chances of holding a 2002 Wisconsin State Championship are doubtful. Hopefully,

Madison and Milwaukee can team together for a 2003 event... **Mel Dragic** of GammonVillage.com tells us that his site is best viewed with Microsoft Explorer. But significant improvements have been made for Netscape (and Macintosh) viewers. Check it out, but remember, it's a pay site now... If you see **Carol Joy Cole** (MI) in a USA beret, it's because her son **Chris** (a former world racquetball champ) was part of the team as an athletic representative... Get well wishes go out to former Midwest Champ staffer **Elaine Kehm-Tallackson** (IL) who is recovering from 30 hours of reconstructive surgery to repair the damage that Scoliosis had done to her spine over the years. She's doing great... Also, all the best to **Gary Kay** (IL) who had open heart surgery (double bypass) in February. Gary plans on attending the Midwest Championships 22-24 March... Chicago's Midway Airport has been completely rebuilt and BPC player **Henry Gray** (IL) was fortunate to

obtain space for his newest venture: Chatham Business Center. For info, call Henry at 773/470-0111... When visiting Munich, Germany, check out **Chiva Tafazzoli's** new backgammon club. They meet every Sunday at 3:00 p.m. For more info, e-mail ckt@munich-backgammon.de. Chiva is also attempting to organize the World Backgammon Association. The web page for this venture is www.world-backgammon-association.com ... From what we've heard, **Bill Robertie's** (MA) new work Modern Backgammon could be his best ever. The 361 page text can be purchased directly from Robertie for \$45 plus \$5 s&h. For more info, e-mail Gammon_Press@msn.com... Like cats and backgammon? AllPosters.com has a nice art piece of both by Paul Jamieson at their website for a very reasonable price. Go to the site and search "Jamieson Cat" to find it ... Finally, here's a quote from **Paul Brown** that appeared in *Reader's Digest*: "When you win, say nothing. When you lose, say less." Δ

**PROBLEM #278
ANALYZED**

by Kit Woolsey

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-3.**

Something's gotta give. Black has four different types of plays, depending on what he wishes to give up. Let's first find the best candidate from each of these categories, and then look for the best play.

If Black runs the back checker, he can either play 24/18, 8/5 or 24/18, 6/3. 24/18, 8/5 looks like the more natural play. A spare on the 6-point is good, and there won't be any need to save 6s.

If Black runs from the 20-point, he could play 20/11, 20/14, 8/5, or 20/15, 6/3. 20/11 looks like the most flexible of these.

If Black runs from the bar point, he could play 18/9, 18/12, 8/5, or 18/12, 6/3. Once again, keeping the checkers in the outfield with 18/9 looks more flexible than playing inside and restricting future options.

If Black holds the fort, he can play 8/2, 6/3 or 8/2, 5/2. Since he will probably run a checker next turn and will need the 5-point, 8/2, 6/3 appears superior.

So now we have our four candidates. They are:

- a) 24/18, 8/5
- b) 20/11
- c) 18/9
- d) 8/2, 6/3

Play a) 24/18, 8/5 is the play to not get gammoned. It is also the play not to win. Black is so far behind in the race that he will almost certainly need to hit a shot in order to win the game. Without that back checker on the 24-point, his chances of even getting a shot are small. The defensive 5- and bar point holding can be strong, but that is only if White has some gaps to clear over. In the actual position, White has

no gaps. She has some spares to play with, and is likely to be able to clear her outer points one by one from the back without ever having to create a gap or leave a shot. Black needs that checker on the 24-point if he wants to win this game. Granted, in a couple of rolls Black may want to get that checker safe and be unable to do so, but that is a problem for the future. Right now, the checker is more of an asset than a liability.

Play b) 20/11 is downright scary. White would have a few rolls which make the 5-point on Black's head, and if that happens Black is in big trouble. White might also be able to pick and pass safely. Even if White is able to do nothing, Black will be faced with the problem of getting the other checker on the 20-point safe. Once Black has done this, his remaining structure of two checkers on the defensive bar point and one checker on the defensive ace point isn't so great for getting shots. Black needs that 20-point as the stronghold of his position, both for defense against getting blown away and for generating shots.

Play c) 18/9 looks reasonable. It gives White a few shots at the remaining blot on White's bar point, but White has to be careful. She really can't afford to hit loose there, since Black would have a lot of return shots. If White is unable to hit, Black will probably be able to escape the remaining checker off the bar point next

roll, and then he will have several men in the outfield to play with while he sits with two on the 20-point and one on the 24-point waiting for White to stub her toe.

If White is able to hit on the bar point, Black may enter with an ace and have a playable 1-5 game. This looks like a feasible game plan.

Play d) 8/2, 6/3 holds everything for one roll. However, it does cramp Black's position. No longer will Black be able to comfortably make his bar point. Worse, if Black is unable to escape a checker next roll his position will collapse. Black can't afford this risk. The gain from delaying the inevitable for one roll is not sufficient compensation.

All things considered, leaving the bar point looks very clear. This gives Black a comfortable structure which he can work with for the next few rolls. The other plays don't give him what he needs.

When you are faced with a critical decision and are forced to give up something, look at the position and plan what structure you most want to have. This will usually tell you what to do. In this position, the structure of two checkers on the 20-point and one on the 24-point is clearly Black's ideal defensive structure, with the rest of his men being used to build a solid board. This makes leaving the bar point a standout choice.—Kit Woolsey

CORRECTION

In our description of the Las Vegas Open Super Jackpot finals (Jan./Feb. 2002 POINT) between Rick Barabino and Fred Kalantari, we stated on page 7: "Both the dice and skill level favored Barabino . . ."

This was not meant as a slur against Mr. Kalantari, who is a world-class player and has had incredible success over the past few years. We were merely acknowledging the consensus perception of the BG world based on previous "Giants of Backgammon" listings (see the upcoming *Flint Area Backgammon News* March issue) that rank Barabino well ahead of Kalantari.

In fact, the consensus perception is just that—a perception. Rick Barabino graciously informed us that a Snowie review of his match with Kalantari shows that Fred outplayed him in both checker play and doubling cube handling.

The POINT sees nothing wrong in stating that one player is more skilled than another. However, in the future, we will attempt to avoid assumptions based solely on perception.—Ed.

HORROR STORY HOTLINE**WE LISTEN! WE CARE!****(212) 869 6057**New York Chess & Backgammon
Tournaments every Sunday**(212) 869 6057**

WINNER'S CIRCLE



DEC.—FEB. 2002

•**United Kingdom Finals** (Coventry, England; 8-9 Dec.)... MAIN (63): 1-Brian Lever, 2-Paul Lamford, 3/4-Richard Granville / Steve Johns. CONS. (60): 1-Kevin Stebbing, 2-Paul Watts, 3/4-Tom Duggan / Paul Barwick. SUICIDE! (64): 1-John Renicks, 2-Tim Mooring, 3/4-Michael Crane / Dave Motley. CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS (7): 1-Mike Butterfield, 2-Salvador leong. FRIDAY KO (20): 1-Edwin Turner, 2-Roy Holland. DOUBLES (19): 1-Throwing In The Wind, 2-Double Stubble Trouble.

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Somerville, MA; 16 Dec.)... EXPERT (20): 1-Bill Robertie, 2-Nora Luna, 1C-Ed Ahola, 2C-Dan Chicoine. A/B DIV. (9): 1-Rich Waddington, 2-Craig Clark; 1C-Mark Kushinsky, 2C-Jim McKenna.

•**7th Thailand Open** (Pattaya, Thailand; 2-6 Jan.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (47): 1-Wills Brunings (HOL), 2-Morten Daugbjerg (DK), 3/4-Paul Exapor (GER / Simon Naim (FRA); 1C-David Brown (UK), 2C-Melody Rae (HK); 1LC-Jani Toivola (FIN), 2LC-rikard Persson (SWE). SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-Vichai Kwatra (THAI), 2-Joachim Johansson (SWE), 3/4-Jake Jacobs (USA) / Shinichiro Kaneko (JPN).

•**Springfield Series #3** (Springfield, IL; 5 Jan.)... OPEN (21): 1-William Hutchison, 2-Ben Zemaitis; 1C-Faddoul Khoury, 2C-Greg Tomlin; 1LC-Sean Garber (IN).

•**Ohio Club Monthly** (Adron, OH; 6 Jan.)... OPEN (12): 1-Mike Vasilatos, 2-Paul Berg (MI), 3-Jim Slomkoski (MI).

•**Houston New Year's Special** (Houston, TX; 12 Jan.)... OPEN (19): 1-tom Wright, 2-Jorge Salazar; 1C-Gary Fomby, 2C-Kash Arfa.

•**Bright 'n' Breezy** (Brighton, England; 12-13 Jan.)... OPEN (116): 1-Brian Busfield, 2-Dod Davies, 3/4-Raj Jasari / Edwin Turner; 1C-Barry McAdam, 2C-Paul Lamford, 3C/4C-Vianney Bourgeois / David Nathan; 1CL-Tim Mooring, 2LC-Ray Kershaw. FRIDAY KO (50): 1-Paul Lamford, 2-Hubert De L'Epine. TIDAL WAVE (92): 1-Dave Raynsford, 2-Martin Barkwill, 3/4-Tom Duggan / Bob Parmley. DOUBLES (32): Sweet & Sour, 2-Blues & Twos.

•**Backgammon By The Bay Monthly** (Oakland, CA; 13 Jan.)... OPEN (9): 1-Robert Gage, 2-Dana Nazarian; 1C-Brian Farr. INTERMEDIATE (19): 1-Sean Holcombe, 2/3-Anna Estrada / Tony Rothschild; 1C/2C-Christian Stoddard / Brad Vogt. BEGINNER #1 (5): 1-Becky Malovany. BEGINNER #2 (5): 1-Loretta Bowen.

•**NEBC Sunday Monthly** (Somerville, MA; 13 Jan.)... EXPERT (20): 1-Tony Pirone, 2-Roger Rondeau; 1C-Seth Towle, 2C-Matt Reklaitis (PA). A/B DIV. (12): 1-Jim McKenna, 2-Patrice Robertie; 1C-Ahmet Baydar, 2C-Dean Carmeris.

•**Toronto Club Monthly** (Toronto, Canada; 13 Jan.)

... OPEN (28 + 4 buybacks): 1-Oscar Schoen, 2-Leo Tuin, 3/4-Gus Kritsonis / Milan Makovac.

•**Boston Open** (Boston, MA; 16-21 Jan.)... OPEN (24): 1-Herb Gurland (MA), 2-Doug Roberts (MA), 3/4-Falafel Natanzon (ISR) / Jose Salema (POR); 1C-Arman Karamian (NY), 2C-Alan Steffen (NY). ADVANCED (16): 1-Mark Kushinsky (MA), 2-Thomas Hanlon (CT); 1C-Roy Appey (NY), 2C-Joe Moore (MA). INTERMEDIATE (22): 1-Barry Gittleman (MA), 2-Howard Peele (MA); 1C-Dean Carmeris (MA), 2C-Tony Szabo (NJ). LAST CHANCE (All divisions): 1-Walter Trice (MA). MASTERS JACKPOT (2): 1-Roger Rondeau (MA). AMATEUR JACKPOT: 1-Linc Bedell (NH). LADIES CUP (8): 1-Nora Luna, 2-Mary Hickey (OH). QUIZGAMMON (11): 1-Falafel Natanzon (ISR). BEANPOT CHASE (64): 1-Russell Burke (NY), 2-Larry Liebster (NJ).

•**Carolina Invitational—ABT** (Charlotte, NC; 18-20 Jan.)... OPEN (19): 1-Emil Mortuk (MI), 2-Greg Lilley (VA); 1C-Bob Wilensky (GA), 2C-Tom Green (NC). INTERMEDIATE (25): 1-Vadim Musaelyan (NC), 2-Gary Branton (NC); 1C-Ben Elliott (NC), 2C-Patrick Donnelly (NC), 3C/4C-Glen de Guzman (CA) / Stephen Spudic (FL). NOVICE (7): 1-Rachel Bass, 2-Ashley Farrow (GA), 3-Joe Meyer (NC). QUEEN CITY MASTERS (12): 1-Gregg Cattanach (GA), 2-Paul Weaver (AL). DOUBLES (8): 1-Tom Green & Robert Ludwig (NC), 2-Bill Davis (IL) & Elayne Feinstein (FL). MLK JACKPOT (32): 1-Carl Sorg (SC), 2-Don Faix (NC)... *A big jump in attendance for the 2002 kickoff ABT event highlighted by great performances from Emil Mortuk and Gregg Cattanach and an excellent seminar by Paul Weaver.*

•**Redwood Empire Monthly** (San Rafael, CA; 19 Jan.)... OPEN (8): 1-Michael Davis, 2-Roger Gabrielson. INTERMEDIATE (14): 1-Peter Baumhoefer, 2-Paul Heidecker; 1C-Dave Ferguson, 2C-Fred Ciaramaglia.

•**Greater Columbus Club Monthly** (Hilliard, OH; 20 Jan.)... OPEN (9): 1-Drew Robinson, 2-Harry Cardillo.

•**Atlanta Backgammon Award Tourney** (Marietta, GA; 26 Jan.)... OPEN: 1-Bob Wilensky, 2-Gregg Cattanach.

•**Ace Point Monthly** (New York, NY; 27 Jan.)... OPEN (8): 1-Falafel Natanzon (ISR), 2-Phil Laak. INTERMEDIATE (8): 1-Ray Javadi, 2-Carlwo Salgado; 1C-Eydie Noble.

•**BPC Ground Hog Doubles** (Oak Brook, IL; 2 Feb.)... OPEN (19): 1/2-Carter Mattig & Lindsay Mattig / Tom & Karen Meyer, 3/4-Glenn Martells & Kendra Wesley / David & Sakura Wells; 1C/2C-John & Renora Stryker / Peter Kalba & Roz Ferris.

•**Springfield Series #4** (Peoria, IL; 2 Feb.)... OPEN (26): 1-Ramez Abi-Akar, 2-Randy Reiff; 1C-Jim Zimmerman, 2C-Milad Doueihy; 1LC-Andres Pabon.

•**Super Bowl Backgammon Bash** (Van Nuys, CA; 3 Feb.)... OPEN (16): 1-Ray Baker, 2-Rudy Citrom; 1C-Tad Bright, 2C-Patrick Gibson...

This annual party event for 16 friends is hosted by Patrick & Carla Gibson.

•**Valentine's Day Open** (Houston, TX; 8 Feb.)... OPEN: 1-Bill Riles, 2-Gonzalo Molina; 1C-Craig Mallinson, 2C-Paul Marshall.

•**Jarvis Trophy** (Coventry, England; 9-10 Feb.)... OPEN (80): 1-David Startin, 2-John Slattery, 3-Ian Tarr, 4-Peter Bennet. FRIDAY KO (26): 1-Elliott Smart, 2-Brian Busfield, 3/4-Rosey Bensley / Neil Young. DOUBLES (15): 1-Thelma & Louise, 2-All You Need Is Luck.

•**Vegas Madness III** (Las Vegas, NV; 15-17 Feb.)... OVERALL CHAMP: Tom Bassam (DC). ADVANCED (31): 1-Tom Bassam (DC), 2-Alan Sachs, NV; 1C-Bob Stoffer (AZ), 2C-Maibritt Ehlers (DEN). INTERMEDIATE (24): 1-Cathie Bennett (IN), 2-Nina Pollack (CA); 1C-Jim Pericharos (CO), 2C-Thomas Olsen (DEN). DOUBLES (32): 1-Peggy Neubig (NJ) & Alan Sachs (NV), 2-Carol Manzi (NV) & Ernesto Nassau (CA). BLITZ (32): 1-Andy Lowenthal (NM)... *The third annual Yahoo Internet BG bash held at the Las Vegas Club Hotel and organized by Carol Manzi. Results reported by Patrick Gibson.*

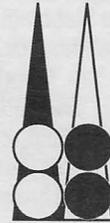
•**Paris Open & Masters** (Paris, France; 18-24 Feb.)... PARIS MASTERS (32): 1-Ralf Jonas (GER), 2-Leonid Riskin (GER), 3/4-Dirk Schiemann (GER) / Mads Andersen (DEN). PARIS OPEN (102 + 26 buybacks): 1-Nojibullah Sallamzy (GER), 2-Claude Marbleu (FRA), 3/4-Arild Idsoe (NOR) / Moshe Ben-David (ISR); 1C-Christopher Wagener (GER), 2C-Pedro Matos (POR), 3C/4C-Jan Bloxham (DEN) / Elliott Winslow (USA); 1LC-Jeremy Bagai (USA), 2LC-Chris Ternel (DEN). INTERMEDIATE (58 + 6 buybacks): 1-Jean-Vidal Padroni (FRA), 2-Henrik Fjordbak (DEN), 3/4-Christer Hagenfeldt (SWE) / Peter Winkler (AUS); 1C-Lie Man (HOL), 2C-Vladimir Georgiev (BUL), 3C/4C-Rosemary Bensley (UK) / Alain Alezra (FRA); 1LC-Georgy Balkandjiisky (BUL), 2LC-Carol Joy Cole (USA). BEGINNER (27 + 5 buybacks): 1-Tanya Skanstrom (DEN), 2-Elisabeth Dastmalichi, 3/4-Jean-Marie Etcheverry (FRA) / J.C. Marjorel; 1C-Madya Marinova (BUL), 2C-Sebastian Silva (FRA), 3C/4C-Nicole Frey (FRA) / Gayana Meyburg (GER). LADIES PRIZES: *Beginner:* Tanya Skanstrom (DEN), *Intermediate:* Carol Joy Cole (USA). DOUBLES: 1-Kikleshvili & Gagua (GEO), 2-Kahn (AUS) & Naim (FRA), 3/4-EIHaik & Martin / Serrero & Plagnol (FRA). 3-PLAYER TEAM (8): 1-Bielewicz & Vog & Granstedt, 2-Talbot & O'Laughlin & Mortuk. NACKGAMMON (8): 1-Teppo Salo (FIN), 2-Polly Cutting (USA).

•**Ace Point Monthly** (New York, NY; 24 Feb.)... OPEN (13): 1-Steve Elkin, 2-Henrik Gwinner; 1C-Ray Javadi. INTERMEDIATE (8): 1-Donald Gabbai, 2-Leif Johnson; 1C-Carlos Salgado.

•**Springfield Series #4** (Springfield, IL; 2 Mar.)... OPEN (16): 1-Ben Zemaitis, 2-Randy Armstrong; 1C-Mark Kaye, 2C-Greg Tomlin; 1LC-Jim Zimmerman... *Ben Zemaitis reports that 16 players "braved the heavy snow." Δ*

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