

23rd chicago open

BAGAI TAKES CHICAGO

An inconsistency by runner-up Steve Sax may have cost him.

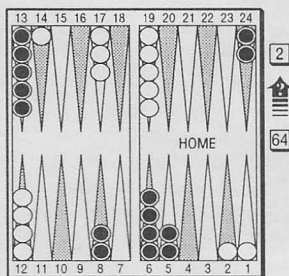
Woolsey over Markowitz in Masters

Philadelphia's Jeremy Bagai survived a tough battle with backgammon giant Steve Sax (CA) to capture the 23rd Chicago Open. The Memorial Day weekend event, staged 24-27 May at the beautiful Oak Brook Hills Hotel in western Chicagoland, drew 125 main event players. The return of the amicable Joann Feinstein as co-director with Howard Markowitz and capable staff definitely played a part in the 40% attendance increase over 2001.

Bagai, author of *Classic Backgammon Revisited*, bested Chicago's Brian Barber to win the undefeated sheet. His opponent in the double elimination finals was Gammon Village online columnist Steve Sax. An uneventful 13-2 Sax victory in the first final match set up one last 13-point battle for the glory.

Steve was in front 6-3 when Jeremy moved his game into gear winning eight straight points. Then, only two moves into game 12:

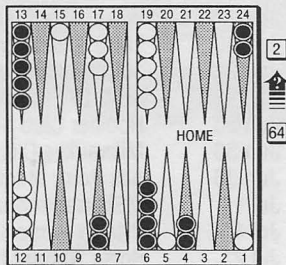
Pos. 1. 13-pt. finals. White (Bagai) leads Black (Sax) 11-6. **SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE?**



"Snowie says 'double,'" and that's exactly what Sax did. Snowie™ rollouts by author Antonio Ortega confirm Steve's decision by the slimmest of margins (0.540 vs. 0.533). Obviously Jeremy's take is trivial.

Following a single game victory by Sax and with Bagai's lead shaved to 11-9, Steve showed a thought process inconsistency at the start of game 14 that could have cost him a match-ending doubled gammon (see above right):

Pos. 2. 13-pt. finals. White (Bagai) leads Black (Sax) 11-9. **SHOULD BLACK DOUBLE?**



Ortega comments: "Steve Sax was not consistent in these two early positions. 4-away, 2-away, is one of the most aggressive doubling scores for the trailer, yet he chose to roll on. According to Snowie rollouts, a double increases the trailer's equity to 0.715 vs. 0.593 by not cubing."

Following the "no double," Steve rolled 3-1 (hitting and making his 5-point), Jeremy tossed 4-1 (B/24, 13/9), Steve doubled and Jeremy quickly dropped.

The next game ended the match as Bagai grabbed a doubled gammon to win 13-10.

After the match, Bagai commented, "I felt like I was playing poorly. It was a weird mental state to be in." No doubt the \$8,000 first prize money will sooth his mental state.

Watch for a special article by Paul Weaver in the July CHICAGO POINT covering the interesting end game doubling decisions in this exciting match.

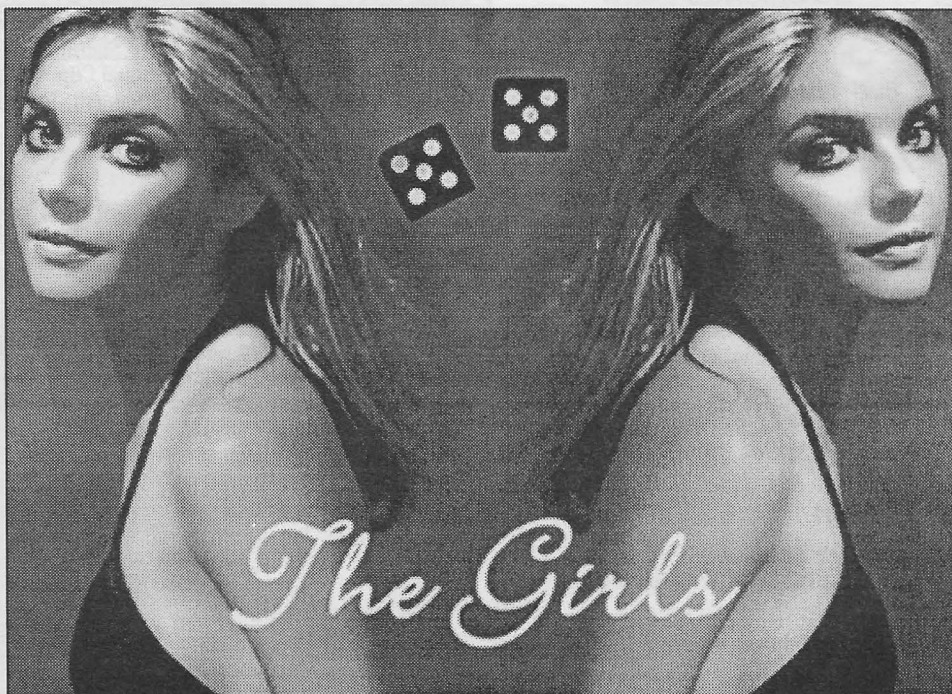
KIT WOOLSEY, backgammon and bridge master from Kensington, California,

[Continued on page 8]



Jeremy Bagai surveys the landscape.

A PAIR OF 'GIRLS'



Paul Magriel's Backgammon defines "The Girls" as "The roll of double 5s on the dice." Now you can have "The Girls" for the background wallpaper on your computer. Simply go to chicagopoint.com and click on the appropriate link under "Online Material." When the picture comes up, right click on it and select "Set as wallpaper." Δ

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

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THANKS FROM THE ANIMALS

I would like to thank all of the wonderful individuals who supported the Anti-Cruelty Society through the 2002 Midwest Backgammon Championships. Your group's \$2,065 contribution will help us to provide many important services to animals in need. Thanks again for your long-standing support.—*Gene E. Mueller, D.V.M., President, ACS, Chicago, Illinois*

SHISHBISH

Do you know of any Internet sites that offer either a PC or PDA version of Shishbish? I have backgammon, but would like to find Shishbish.—*Mike Kavas, via e-mail*

We're not sure if this is what you're looking for, but here's a downloadable e-mail version: <http://shishbish.portland.co.uk/> —Ed.

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



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

* Denotes new or revised listing

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

NATIONAL

Jun 8	Mid-Year Championship, Triple Crown Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Jun 8*	Northwest Indiana Gammon Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Jun 9	SPECIAL LOCATION: Bar Point Sunday, Champs Sports Bar, Oakbrook Terr., IL	773/252-7755
Jun 9	Backgammon by the Bay Monthly, TGI Friday's, Oakland, California	831/688-9722
Jun 9	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/491-8710
Jun 9	Austin Club Bimonthly Tournament, JC's Bar & Grill, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Jun 11-16	Worldwide Twin Championships, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Jun 20	Third Thursday Bonus Tournament (Georgia), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jun 22	30th Annual Hawaii State Championship, Elks Club, Honolulu, Hawaii	808/922-2674
Jun 22*	NEW DATE: Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites, San Rafael, CA	707/477-6430
Jun 23	Hoosier Club Summer Sunday, Arni's Restaurant, Indianapolis, Indiana	317/255-8902
Jun 30	Milwaukee Club Monthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	414/962-8549
Jun 30	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-8042
Jul 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer GZMedallion@gammonzone.net	
Jul 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer tournaments@cyberarts.com	
Jul 2*	Boise "Dinner for the Winner" Monthly, Papa Joe's Pizza, Boise, Idaho	208/342-8865
Jul 3	Michigan Summer Warm-Up, Novi Hilton, Novi, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 4-7	<u>Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, Michigan</u>	<u>810/232-9731</u>
Jul 6*	Northwest Indiana Gammon Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Jul 13*	Firecracker Classic, Triple Crown Sports Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Jul 14*	Backgammon by the Bay Monthly, TGI Friday's, Oakland, California	831/688-9722
Jul 14*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Akron, Ohio	330/866-2811
Jul 18*	Third Thursday Bonus (Indiana Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 20*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Jul 26-28*	Tahoe BG Fiesta, Horizons Hotel/Casino, South Lake Tahoe, Nevada	650/323-1111
Jul 27*	Georgia Warm-up & Peach Qualifier, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, GA	770/333-1876
Jul 27*	Michigan Club Challenge, Box Bar, Plymouth, Michigan	734/981-5706
Jul 28*	Milwaukee Club Monthly, John Hawks Pub, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	414/962-8549
Jul 28*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York	212/753-8042
Aug 2-4	<u>Thousand Islands Tourney, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	<u>716/387-0767</u>
Aug 3*	Northwest Indiana Gammon Monthly, VFW Hall, Porter, Indiana	219/785-2082
Aug 3*	Universal Mall Bimonthly Series #4, All the King's Men, Warren, Mich.	313/381-6639
Aug 4	Bar Point Sunday Tournament, Anyways Grill, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/252-7755
Aug 4*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Akron, Ohio	330/866-2811
Aug 6*	Boise "Dinner for the Winner" Monthly, Papa Joe's Pizza, Boise, Idaho	208/342-8865
Aug 8-11	<u>Georgia Championships & Peach Cup, Hilton Garden Inn, Atlanta, Georgia</u>	<u>770/333-1876</u>
Aug 17-18*	Summer Sizzler Picnic & Tourney, Zell's home, W. Peoria & Sly Fox, Lacon, IL	309/674-0557
Aug 30-Sep 2	<u>50th Indiana Open, Sheraton Hotel & Suites, Indianapolis, Indiana</u>	<u>317/255-8902</u>
Sep 14-15*	Jon Viorer Invitational Cup, Viorer residence, La Jolla, California	818/901-0464
Sep 27-29	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, New York</u>	<u>716/387-0767</u>
Oct 4-6	<u>Florida State Championships, Sheraton Suites, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida</u>	<u>954/564-0340</u>
Oct 11-13	<u>Illinois State Championships, Springfield Hilton, Springfield, Illinois</u>	<u>217/528-0117</u>
Oct 18-20	<u>Northeast Regional, Comfort Inn Albany Airport, Latham, NY</u>	<u>603/863-4711</u>
Nov 1-3	<u>Minnesota State Championships, Mystic Lake Casino, Prior Lake, Minn.</u>	<u>763/682-1716</u>
Feb 1-8	BG on Board VI, Ft. Lauderdale/ St. Maarten/ St. Thomas, Golden Princess	773/583-6464

OUTSIDE USA

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 9	Toronto Club Monthly, Smilin' Jack's, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	416/722-9709
Jun 13-20	Backgammon & Bridge Extravaganza, Peligoni Club, Zakynthos, Greece	44798-614800
Jun 14-16	3rd Süddeutscher-Cup, Hotel Mercure, Stuttgart-Gerlingen, Germany	49711-486190
Jun 15-16*	11th Danish Mixed Doubles, Foreningshuset Strandlyst, Humlebæk, Denmark	4520-671995
Jun 15-16	Tournament of Spirits, Europe's Go Cultural Centre, Amstelveen, Holland	3120-4633724
Jun 15-16*	1st Team Champs & 6th Montreux Open, Eurotel Riviera, Switzerland	4179-3584825
Jun 21-23*	3rd Casablanca Open, Casablanca Cafe, Witten, Germany	49230-2963977
Jun 23-Aug 25*	8th Summer Tournament, Cafe Nemoland, Christiana, Denmark	4539-401785
Jun 27-30*	Rio Tournament, Club Monte Libano, Lagona, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	55212-5570350
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	USA contact: 954/527-4033
Jul 17-21	4th Czech Open, Corinthia Towers, Prague, Czech Republic	Germany: 49911-409505
Jul 19-21*	1st Praia de Gauibim Open, Salvador, South Bahia, Brazil	55719-1357820
Jul 25-28	7th Grand Prix de Lugano, Hotel Splendide Royal, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Aug 3-4	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	441522-888676
Aug 16-18*	2nd Aracaju Open, Sergipe, South Bahia, Brazil	55719-1357820
Sep 6-8	14th European Championship, Nova Gorica, Slovenia	392-69018168
Sep 7-8*	Roy Hollands Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW

I read in the May POINT where John Drexel canceled his subscription as a direct result of your failure to remove the "barely dressed women" from chicagopoint.com. That won't do. Enclosed find a check for \$30. Please sign up a new subscriber to replace Mr. Drexel.—*Art Grater, Backgammon Portal, www.back-gammon.com*

Do not ever take the sexy "Point Girls" off your home page!!—Bruce Russell, Madison, Wisconsin

I for one would be offended if you *didn't* have the pretty girls at chicagopoint.com! They are really tasteful and I see nothing wrong. I will personally take up a collection to replace Mr. Drexel with someone a little more broad-minded (pun definitely intended) for your subscriber's list.—*Tom Wright, director, Houston Backgammon Club, Texas*

To Messrs. Grater, Russell, and Wright, thanks for the vote of confidence. We will use subscriber Grater's donation to purchase a subscription for a future contest-winner.—Ed.

BACKGAMMON IN MEXICO

I'll be moving to Mexico, 25 miles south of Guadalajara and was wondering if there is any backgammon in the vicinity.—*Dick Nelson, Peoria, Illinois*

Can any of our readers help subscriber Nelson?—Ed.

CUBS TICKET-WINNERS

Hopefully, the winner of our Cubs tickets enjoyed the game last night. I now realize that the SPCA actually stands for Society for the Provision of Cub's Access.—*Dave Cramer, Chicago, Illinois*

Thanks to Dave Cramer and Tom Walther for the complimentary Cubs tickets. Bar Point Clubbers Peter Kalba and Carter Mattig were the lucky recipients.—Ed.

PICK-AND-PASS

Aloha. Kindly settle the following dispute. Let's say I roll a 3-2 and use the 3 to hit my opponent's checker in my home board. Can I continue to move that same checker safetying it up with the 2? My friend says that when I hit with the 3, the checker must stay put but there is nothing in the rules to support his claim. Please enlighten us.—*Maurianne Nohejl, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii*

[Continued on page 5]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2002

Compiled through 27 May 2002 after 7 events
(Coming this Summer: Michigan, Thousand Islands, Georgia, Indy 50th)



Paul Klein	22.88	Wally Wolf	5.89	Boris Mindich	3.76	Charles Walter	1.71
Jeremy Bagai	22.69	Len Dangremond	5.75	Ilia Guzei	3.59	Connie Tipton	1.70
Ed O'Laughlin	22.35	Sam Yoyen	5.50	Bud Bowers	3.39	Luther Lute	1.70
Ray Fogelund	20.45	Bill Choi	5.45	Stan Livingston	3.20	Karen Meyer	1.27
Dennis Culpepper	16.99	David Rogers	5.40	Rudy Silich	2.76	Karim Jahangard	1.21
Emil Mortuk	16.78	Bill Bartholomay	5.29	Patrick Donnelly	2.65	Pete Esposito	1.20
Walter Trice	14.88	Chen-Fu Yu	5.29	Tim Carroll	2.64	Glen De Guzman	1.18
Jeb Horton	13.65	Jolie Rubin	5.20	Bud Olejniczak	2.50	Stephen Spudic	1.18
Keith Kuligowski	12.50	Jeff Acierno	5.18	Paula Estacolchic	2.42	Karen Chung	1.13
Owen Black	11.44	Marianne Gatenby	5.17	Bill Papa	2.42	Gil Evans	1.13
Takis Sakkalis	11.36	Dan Grogan	5.11	Jack Kissane	2.35	Mark Kushinsky	1.13
Barry Murphy	11.36	Eric Johnson	5.11	Abdi Zaltash	2.27	Ashley Farrow	1.10
Steve Sax	11.33	Ben Elliott	5.00	Glenn Ramsey	2.27	Shane Joos	1.06
Fred Kalantari	11.20	Gary Branton	5.00	Ray Woo	2.27	Arlene Austin	1.00
Denise Hemingway	10.59	Hank Chesko	4.99	Marc Gray	2.25	Michael Peters	0.91
Arman Karamian	10.59	Neil Kazaross	4.86	Dale Smith	2.11	Erik D. Erland	0.79
Joe Freedman	10.40	Dave Cardwell	4.80	Doug Rodgers	2.09	Mindla Fajtlowicz	0.78
Linda MacLean	10.02	Al Tesoro	4.71	Femi Owiku	2.08	Fran Miller	0.71
Vadim Musaelyan	10.00	Tom Green	4.44	Jena Rooney	2.08	Tim Johnson	0.68
Bob Wilensky	8.39	Kurt Schurecht	4.16	George Barr	2.06	Dennis Portell	0.68
Greg Lilley	8.39	Frank Talbot	4.16	Boris Dekhtyar	2.06	Marlene Murphy	0.63
Sho Sengoku	8.18	Dana Nazarian	4.09	Bill Chibnik	1.83	Joe Meyer	0.63
Doug Mayfield	8.18	Odis Chenault	4.09	Rachel Bass	1.76	Fran Photias	0.23
David Rubin	6.25	Brian Barber	3.78	Ed Ratajczyk	1.71	Malak Shirkhani	0.23
Chris Wilson	6.19						



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2002 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 31 MAY

Lucky Nelson	10.96	Richard Stawowy	3.76	Joann Feinstein	1.92	Ken Tibbs	0.88
Joe Wollick	10.80	Don Jayhan	3.76	Arlene Levy	1.52	John Brussel	0.88
Tim Carroll	10.08	Val Zimnicki	3.68	Bob Steen	1.52	Steve Klesker	0.64
Steven Coren	9.28	Tak Morioka	3.44	Barbara Levinson	1.36	Tia Bailey	0.64
Herb Roman	7.92	Wayne Wiest	3.44	Bill Davis	1.36	Terry Weiss	0.64
Tim Mabee	7.44	Tim Serges	3.36	Jon Vietor	1.28	Roz Ferris	0.60
Mike Sutton	7.44	David Wells	3.36	Bill Sandman	1.28	John Stryker	0.60
Norma Shyer	6.64	Alice Kay	2.80	Brian Barber	1.28	Ronora Stryker	0.60
Carter Mattig	6.32	Eric Johnson	2.80	Paul Franks	1.20	Kendra Welsey	0.56
Paul Baraz	5.68	Tom Meyer	2.48	Glenn Martells	1.20	Sakura Sugawara	0.56
Bob Zavoral	5.36	Joe Auszmann	2.16	Karen Meyer	1.16	Erik D. Erland	0.56
David Araiza	5.28	Fred Badagnani	2.16	Lindsay Mattig	1.16	Reginald Porter	0.56
Richard Lloyd	4.48	Ed Buerger	2.16	Femi Owiku	1.04	Erik A. Erland	0.40
Peter Kalba	4.28	Bill Bartholomay	1.92	Bill Keefe	0.88	Joe Szvedo	0.40
Phyllis Smolinski	4.00	David Rubin	1.92	Georgina Flanagan	0.88	Scott Zucker	0.24
Mitch Pomper	3.76	Paul Lombardo	1.92	Jason Fishbein	0.88		

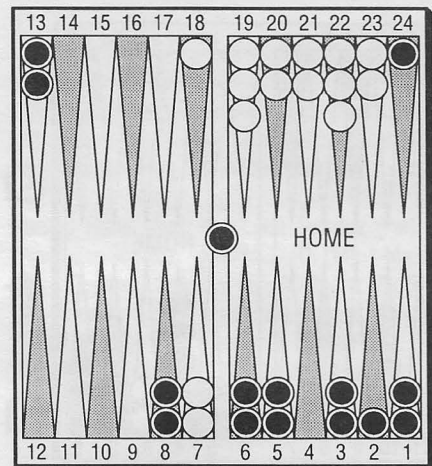
May's Player of the Month is **DAVID ARAIZA** who combined a semifinal finish and outright win to earn 3.12 points. Norma Shyer (3.04) and Lucky Nelson (2.56) were runner's-up.

your move

PROBLEM #282

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

Match to 11 points. Black leads White 8 to 7. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-1.**



Uncle Jake's California Quiz

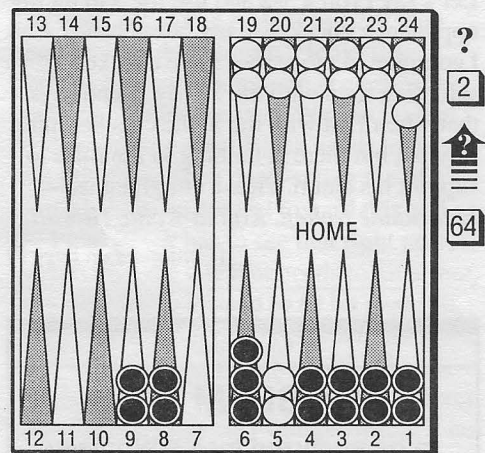
by Jake Jacobs

Your Uncle Jake went to California and all he brought us was this lousy quiz! That's right, kiddies: *it's Quiz Time!* All of these positions arose at Pat Gibson's 49th Gammon Associates Invitational in Beverly Hills April 26-28.

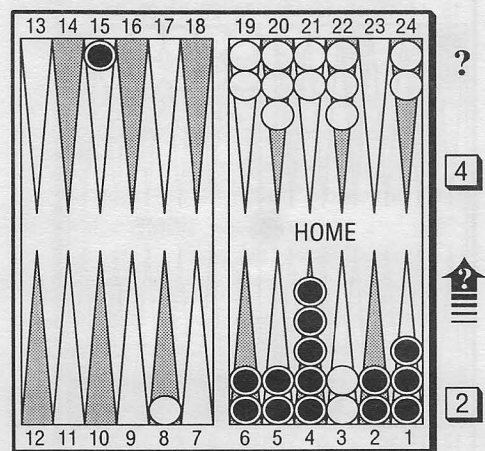
What did the California players make of these? They ate them for breakfast! (Literally. It being California, when I passed the position cards around the table, they thought they were some sort of macrobiotic wafer. If tourney winner Ray Fogerlund and Steve Sax hadn't tried to butter theirs, I might never have recovered them.)

As usual, I have employed my own arcane formula for scoring which is shown with the answers on page 7.—*Jake Jacobs*

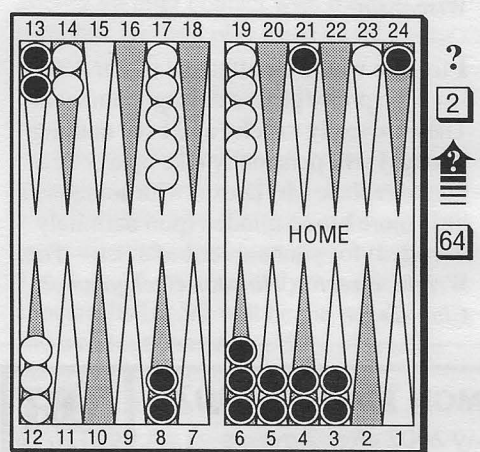
1. Money game. Should Black double? Should White take?



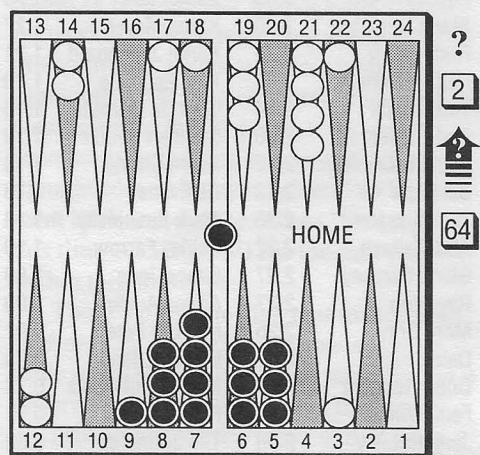
2. Money game. Should Black redouble? Should White take?



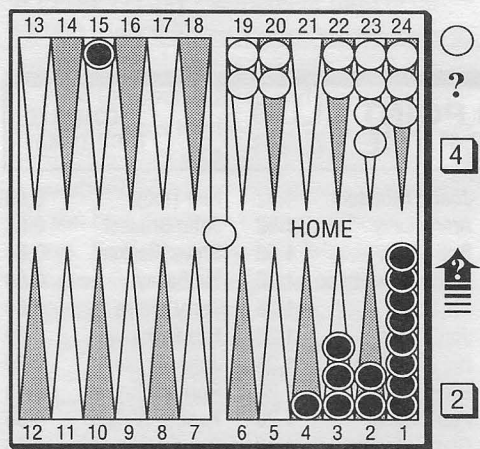
3. Black leads 7-6 to 11. Should Black double? Should White take?



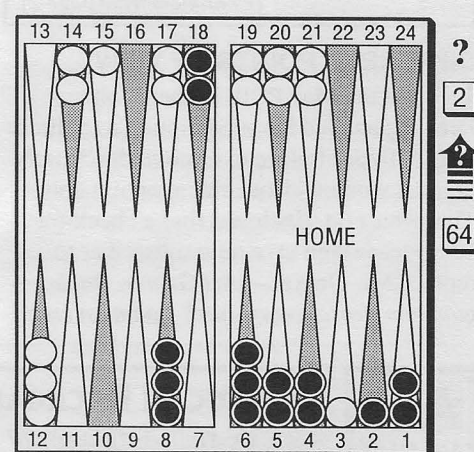
4. Black leads 5-2 to 9. Should Black double? Should White take?



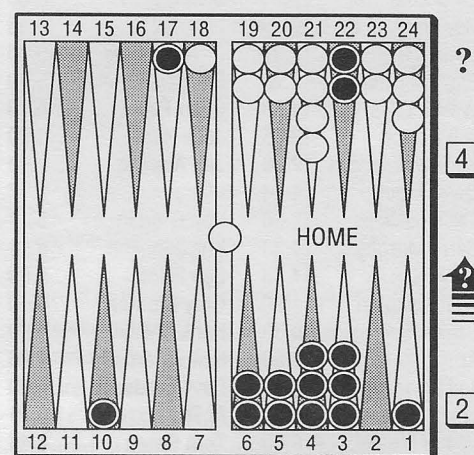
5. Money game. Should Black redouble? Should White take?



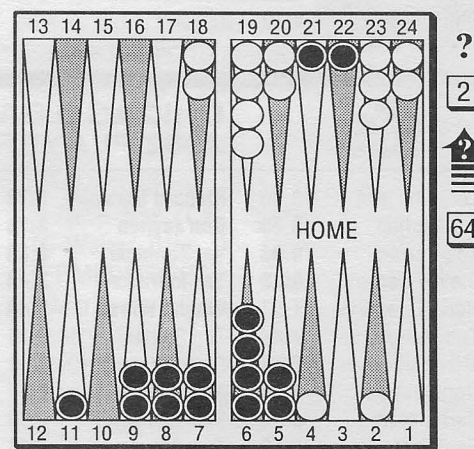
6. Black leads 6-5 to 9. Should Black double? Should White take?



7. Money game. Should Black redouble? Should White take?



8. Black leads 9-8 to 11. Should Black double? Should White take?



Backgammon on Board VI

Aboard GOLDEN PRINCESS

1-8 February 2003

Register by 1 Aug., 2002

773/583-6464

Fort Lauderdale

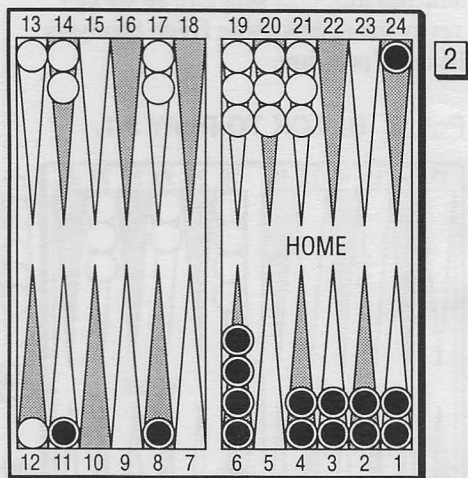
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St. Maarten

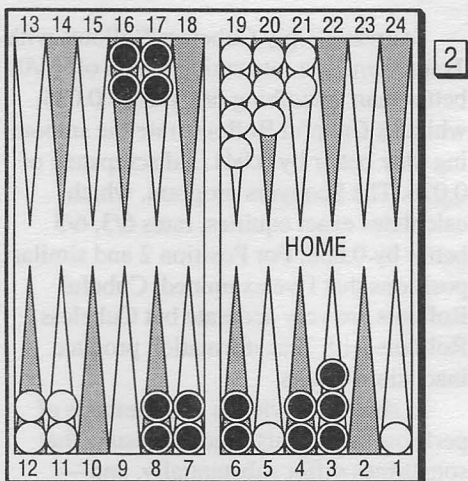
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St. Thomas

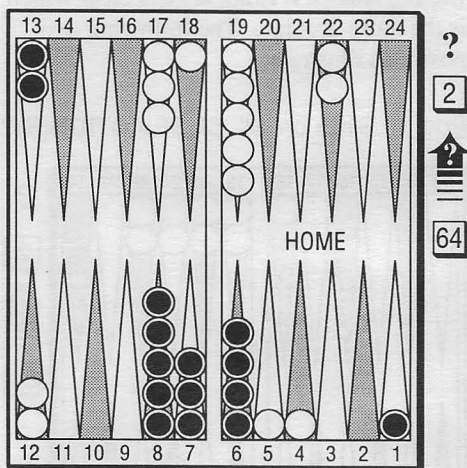
9. Black leads 7-6 to 11. How should Black play 6-3? If Black runs (24/15), should White double? Should Black take?



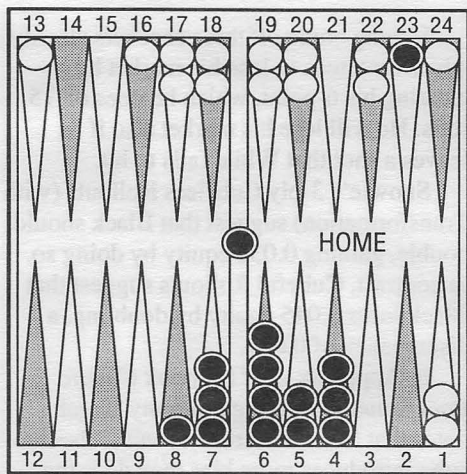
10. Black and White tied at 6-6 to 15. How should Black play 4-4?



11. Black leads 13-12 to 15. Should Black double? Should White take?



12. Tournament DMP. How should Black play 4-1? If Black chooses (Bar/21, 8/7), how should White play 4-2.



[Answers on page 7]

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

Yours is a common question for new players. Moving one checker this way is called "pick-and-pass" and is perfectly legal.—Ed.

MAKING BOARD DIAGRAMS

How do you make the board diagrams as shown at your Internet site?—*Michael Haney, director, Greater Columbus Backgammon Club, Ohio*

We use a board and pieces designed with Macromedia FreeHand. But anyone can create excellent backgammon diagrams online (suitable for printing and/or posting) at "Backgammon Board'O'Matic": <http://gammon.free.fr/bom/form.htm> —Ed. Δ

LAILA GIVES IT UP

I am now a certified non-smoker for over two months. I didn't use gum or a patch—I just stopped. Also, I'm now exercising every day. My asthma is pretty much gone and I feel like I have rediscovered life!

Back in Denmark again and am tasting my first Danish strawberries since 1996. I hope all is well in my favorite city of Chicago.—*Laila Leonhardt, via e-mail Δ*



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).

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Ride The Nine, 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Rob Farmer (309/821-9766).

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).

What Colour is the Wind?

Chris Bray's new book reviewed

What Colour is the Wind? © 2002 by Chris Bray. Published by the author. Soft cover, spiral bound, 250 pages. Price: \$20 (US) plus \$10 s&h. Available directly from Chris Bray, 18, Glendower Road, London SW14 8NY, England. Cash only. No personal checks.



What Colour is the Wind? is a 200 problem anthology culled from British author Chris Bray's *Independent* newspaper backgammon columns, as well as *NetGammon* and *Inside Backgammon*

articles from 1998–2001. Unlike Bray's previous book *Backgammon—An Independent View*, the articles (each approximately 275 words in length) are presented in chronological order with the idea of seeing the growing impact that JellyFish™ and Snowie™ have had on the game. The original articles are presented verbatim but "Authors Notes" are liberally sprinkled throughout the book where theory or thinking has changed.

Why the strange title? Bray explains it by first mentioning the thrashing his last book received from reviewer Walter Trice in the Aug. 1998 CHICAGO POINT. "He [Trice] could not comprehend that at the end of the day books are written for the readers [who each learn at a different pace] and not for the authors."

Bray's goal is to entertain the reader by providing a concise solution to each problem

that will be easily understood by everyone, regardless of their skill level. He succeeds.

That said, this book offers no groundbreaking material. But it comes highly recommended to beginner and intermediate players looking to learn from examples, and to advanced players who seek a pleasurable review.—*Bill Davis Δ*

Computer Rollouts With Snowie 3: Cubeful or Cubeless?

by Antonio Ortega

During the last 15 years, backgammon programs that are stronger than their predecessors have been developed using “neural network” techniques that allow programs to “learn” from their own experience and mistakes. The first such program was TD-Gammon, which Gerry Tesauro wrote in 1990 at IBM Research Labs in White Plains, New York.

In 1994, Frederik Dahl of Norway created JellyFish, the first commercially available neural network backgammon program. JellyFish not only plays well but can also suggest moves, comment about plays and cube decisions, and perform rollouts to estimate the outcomes of plays and cube actions in money play.

In 1998, André Nicolin and Oliver Egger created another neural network program, Snowie 1, and soon after, an improved version, Snowie 2. However, the real breakthrough came in December 1999, when Snowie 3 was given abilities to incorporate the doubling cube into its analysis of positions, to take the score into account in match play, and to roll positions out in two different ways: Cubeful and Cubeless.

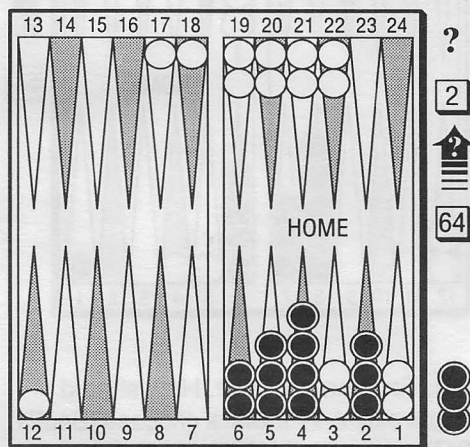
In a Cubeful Rollout, each game is played with a live cube. Some games end with the cube at 1 (when a double is passed), other games with the cube at 2, and so forth, just as in actual play.

In a Cubeless Rollout, each game is played to completion. Then a “cubeless-to-cubeful-transformation” of the results yields an estimate of the equity with a live cube.

Here I shall show that the two methods, Cubeful Rollouts and Cubeless Rollouts

with Transformation, have important differences that sometimes produce conflicting results. It is not always clear which is the more accurate. The following two positions illustrate:

Pos. 1. Black on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Having borne off three checkers already, Black threatens to lose his market by clearing his 6-point, which he does on 15 rolls. He will lose his market also if he leaves a shot that White fails to hit.

Snowie’s 3-ply Cubeless Rollouts (with Transformation) suggest that Black should double, gaining 0.032 equity by doing so. In contrast, Cubeful Rollouts suggest that Black *loses* 0.045 equity by doubling, a discrepancy of 0.077.

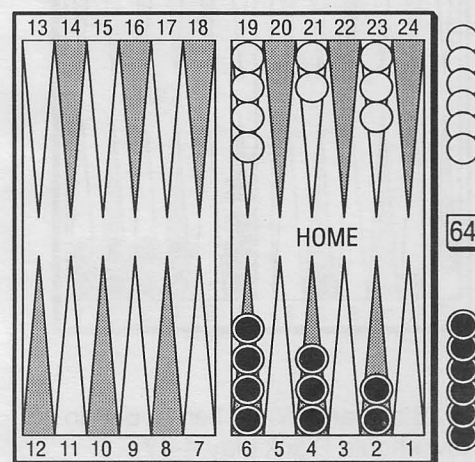
In Appendix A of his book *Classic Backgammon Revisited*, Jeremy Bagai notes that Snowie’s creators said, “the live cube introduces more bias than does the cubeless-to-cubeful-transformation.” Consequently, Bagai used Cubeless Rollouts throughout his book.

Because I’m convinced that Black should double in Position 1, I agree with Snowie’s creators: in *this* position, Cubeless Rollouts are more accurate. However, in other positions it is not clear which

method is best; in some, Cubeful Rollouts are demonstrably more accurate.

Position 2 is a bear-off in which each side has nine checkers left, so we can verify the results using Hugh Sconyers’ bear-off program.

Pos. 2. **BLACK TO PLAY 3.1.**



Snowie’s 3-ply Cubeless Rollouts with Transformation rate taking a man off (4/0) better than smoothing 6/3, 6/5 by 0.035, while its Cubeful Rollouts rate the smoothing play better by 0.041, a discrepancy of 0.076. The Sconyers program, which calculates exact equities, rates 6/3, 6/5 better by 0.038. For Position 2 and similar positions that I’ve examined, Cubeful Rollouts are very accurate but Cubeless Rollouts with Transformation produce inaccurate results.

In short, Snowie 3’s two methods of performing rollouts produce results that sometimes differ substantially, and—except for calculable positions like Position 2—we can’t always tell which is more accurate. Though I acknowledge the value of Snowie 3’s incorporation of live cubes, I wish that Snowie’s creators would resolve the discrepancies between Cubeful and Cubeless rollouts.—Antonio Ortega Δ

AMALGAMATION

Don’t forget the special location for Bar Point Sunday Backgammon 9 June at noon: Champs (6 blocks east of Anyway’s on Roosevelt Road in Oakbrook Terrace... **Art & Deena Benjamin** (CA) announce the birth of their new daughter **Ariel Frances Benjamin** on 2 May 2002... Visiting the Bar Point Club in May: **Jon Vietor** (CA) and **Phyllis Shapiro** (MO)... Good luck to **Rob Farmer** who takes over the reins of the Bloomington-Normal (IL)

Backgammon Club replacing **Gary Daniels**... “Let them eat cake.” That was the Bar Point Club philosophy in May. First we celebrated club leader **Lucky Nelson’s** 60th birthday (7 May). Then **Elaine Kehm** marked her return from major surgery (14 May) by bringing a cake... Want to play backgammon for money? Try truemoneygames.com. It’s all the rage... Get well wishes go out to **Al Tesoro** (FL) following major surgery. Also to **Martin de Bruin** (Spain) who is recovering from double bypass heart surgery... **Joanne Reid** informs us that the National Capitol BG

Club now meets every first Sunday monthly (no summer hiatus) at Bobby’s Bar & Grill in Gloucester, ON, Canada. For more info, go to: <http://joannereid.ca> ... Congratulations to **Rich Lloyd** who joined the Bar Point Club’s 1000-to-1 club with ten wins in a row on 14 May... Ocean’s Eleven was just released on DVD. It turns out that during the shooting, **Matt Damon**, **Brad Pitt**, and **Carl Reiner** were engaged in some serious backgammon action... Attention ladies: Go to www.beautyofasite.com/Shop/Essie/disc.htm and you can find “Backgammon Bronze” nail polish. Δ

'CALIFORNIA QUIZ' ANSWERS

[Quiz on pages 4-5]

As usual, I have employed my own arcane formula for scoring the 12 problems:

1. Double - 2, Pass - 5. Black leads 72-83, and White does not gain enough from the contact to have a take.

2. Redouble - 2, Take - 6. Black has a 30 pip lead, and six immediate shots, so he must redouble. On the other hand only ten of his misses get home safely. Those, combined with the 3-point anchor, give White a take.

3. Double - 6, Take - 1. Taking is easy, doubling is hard. The race is about even (Black trails 129-127 on roll), Black has eleven immediate shots, and has a prime on the other side of the board. When he misses, White will still have trouble. The one point lead doesn't matter; at this score the leader should be aggressive.

4. Double - 6, Take - 2. Despite the score not doubling would be a blunder. Too many good things might happen, and should Black win a gammon he can use all four points. Of course as Black, I lost an 8-game here, so there is a downside...

5. Redouble - 3, Take - 4. Sure, you could roll a 54 or 64, but otherwise White will probably only get one fly shot. He has enough race, combined with his shots, to take this.

6. No double - 6, Take - 4. Don't you hate these scores? Don't, don't double, tip the table over, what's a boy to do? Black has a powerful position, but what he should realize is that when he wins, he wins a lot of gammons - about 60% of his wins will be gammons. At this score that usually means it is better to play on. On the other hand White wins this nearly 35%. Taking is much better than passing.

7. Redouble - 2, Take - 6. Black is definitely not too good to double. Lots of bad things could happen on the way to a win. In fact, scary as it is, White should take. He could be on his way to gammoning Black in one roll.

8. Double - 7, Pass - 3. After reading the answer to question 6 one might wonder: why not play on here? Part of the trouble is that Black doesn't win that many gammons - at the moment he has only a 2-point board. White can almost take. He wins

24% needing 25%.

9. 24/15 - 4, No Double - 4, Take - 1. It may look tempting to close the board, running, after all, leaves 27 shots. But Black has exactly one problem to solve: escape. Every roll he waits the cell door is closer to clanging shut. If he runs he's almost gin every time White misses, and if he hit he isn't much worse off than he would be if he stayed back. Since hitting doesn't get White to much better than status quo ante, and missing is a disaster, he should avoid cubing Black into match.

10. 17/5*, 5/1* - 6. Yes, the 9-point is pretty, but then what? Even if White rolls an ace the game will be nearly even.

11. Double - 2, No Double - 6, Double - 8, Pass - 3. Okay, you probably want me to explain that. I am giving partial credit (2 points) to anyone who doubles, since the best answer involves doubling. Give yourself 6 points if you didn't double, but *only* if you thought it was too good. Give yourself 8 points if you doubled *knowing* it was too good. This position is theoretically too good, but the gain by waiting (and handling the cube perfectly) is tiny. The chance that your opponent may take easily offsets any gain by waiting. Despite the likelihood of anchoring there are just not enough wins to take.

12. Bar/21, 6/5 - 4, 8/4*, 4/2* - 5. Gammons aren't worth anything at DMP, and hitting doesn't get you to the edge of the prime. (The extra builders aren't worth that much, so bar/21, 8/7 isn't terrible, but they are worth something.) After bar/21, 8/7 (the actual play) White must attack. Black is threatening to either escape or extend his prime. After hitting on the four-point the best deuce is to press the attack by hitting the second checker. This play is optimum for the blitz, while retaining priming chances. (The actual sequence of 61, 63 illustrates this. Unfortunately the two rolls after that were 61, 44.)

In keeping with the California genesis, I have converted your scores into star power ratings:

100-81 Superstar. Tom, Mel, Julia (One name says it all. Yeah baby!)

80-61 Star. Denzel, Meg (You deserve \$20 million next time.)

60-41 Character Actor. Judy Dench, Wilford Brimley, Rhys Ifans.

40-21 You don't know my name, but... Could be famous someday.

who did what

WINNER'S CIRCLE



APR.-MAY 2002

•14th Nordic "Wide" Open (Helsingør, Denmark; 28 Mar.-1 Apr.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (92): 1-Morten Holm, 2-Raj Jansari (UK); 1C-Klaus Switon, 2C-Anders Nielander; 1LC-Reza Jamali. ADVANCED (94): 1-Alex Persson (Swe), 2-Morten Henriksen; 1C-Bengan Ehk (Swe), 2C-Kim Valeur; 1LC-Tue Rex. INTERMEDIATE (116): 1-Henrik Løber, 2-Michael Hansen; 1C-Mattias Alm (Swe), 2C-Karl Frogner (Nor); 1LC-Anatoly Malchulsky (Rus). NOVICE (62): 1-Ulla Juncker, 2-Poul La Cour; 1C-Mohammed Zangeneh, 2C-Michael Elgaard; 1LC-Anne Lise Wagner. BEGINNER (23): 1-Nadya Marinova (Bul), 2-Michael Sølberg; 1C-Flemming Petersen; 1LC-Emilie Haut. GAMESGRID TOURNAMENT: 1-Frank Mortensen, 2-Louise Olsen. UNDER 21 EVENT (12): 1-Peter Switon, 2-Mikkel Rotbøl. DOUBLES: 1-Steve Bibby & Paul Money (UK), 2-Melf & Dunja. TEAM EVENT (24): 1-Team Afshar, 2-Nuclear Nemesis.

•Redwood Empire Monthly (San Rafael, CA; 20 Apr.)... OPEN (6): 1-Bob Stringer, 2-David Montgomery. INTERMEDIATE (12): 1-Glenn Nunez, 2-Brian Draper.

•EBN 8th Mayday Tournament (Costa del Sol, Spain; 30 Apr-5 May)... CHAMPIONSHIP (64): 1-Morten Nielsen (Den), 2-Peter Jes Thomsen (Den), 3/4-Carsten Joh (Ger) / Najib Salamzy (Ger); 1C-Jeroen Kok, 2C-Mario Sequeira (Por); 1LC-Tobias Christensen (Den), 2LC-Nodar Gagua (Geo). INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Mark Werner (Ger), 2-Anatoly Machulsky (Rus); 1C-Lasse Madsen (Den), 2C-Sandro Mescola (Ita); 1LC-Kolya Mosoyan, 2LC-Rolf Vetsch (Swz). NOVICE (8): 1-Lars Rosquit (Den), 2-Isabelle Dafayes. ♂1,000 Super Jackpot (8): 1-Najib Salamzy (Ger), 2-Mathias Körner (Ger). PARTOUCHE SAN ROQUE KICK OFF (128): 1-Mario Sequeira (Por), 2-Arild Ildsø (Nor). GIN RUMMY (128): 1-Peter Jes Thomsen (Den), 2-Carsten Joh (Ger). TEAM (11): 1-Körner/Reinhardt/Witt (Ger), 2-Cross/Märtens/Joh (Ger). DOUBLES (23): 1-Torben Hassers & Tobias Christensen (Den), 2-Claude Marbleau & Patrick Gaillard (Fra).

•Country Cups Tournament (Coventry, England; 4-5 May)... CHAMPIONSHIP (70): 1-Julian Fetterlein, 2-Lawrence Powell, 3/4-Rachel Rhodes / David Startin. FRIDAY KNOCKOUT (22): 1-Tim Mooring, 2-Peter Bennet. DOUBLES (16): 1-Ali Her Fault, 2-The Diceperados.

•May Flowers Stakes Tournament (Houston, TX; 11 May)... OPEN (24): 1-James Bray, 2-Scott Ward; 1C-Daniel Verduzco, 2C-John Villon.

•NEBC Sunday Monthly (Somerville, MA; 5 May)... EXPERT (16): 1-Ed Abou-Zeid, 2-Gil Evans; 1C-Nora Luna, 2C-Matt Reklaitis. A/B DIV. (9): 1-Ahmet Baydar, 2-Martha Reed; 1C-Dean Carmeris, 2C-Alex Meyers.

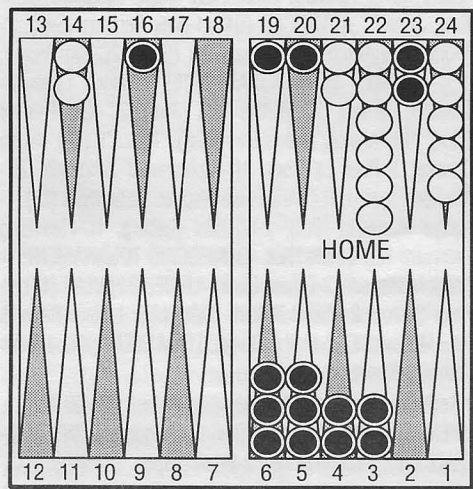
•1st Velden Open (Velden, Austria; 16-19 May)... MASTER (16): 1-Heinz Edy (Aus), 2-Chiva Tafazzoli (Iran/Ger); 1C-Heimo Krainer (Aus); 1LC-Andrea Sirch (Ita). CHAMPION (18): 1-Ivano Ceschia (Ita), 2-Wolfgang Haas (Aus); 1C-Manfred Hamal (Aus); 1LC-Luisa Sequeira (Por); Ladies Prize: Luisa Sequeira. INTERMEDIATE (14): 1-Maria Grigis (Ita), 2-Girolamo Castiglioni (Ita); 1C-Andrea Magalotti (Ita); 1LC-Christian Egger (Aus); Ladies Prize: Maria Grigis. WARM-UP (13): 1-Vincenzo David Riceputi (Ita). 1-POINT PRESIDENT'S TOURNEY: Chiva Tafazzoli (Iran/Ger).

•Ace Point Monthly (New York, NY; 26 May)... OPEN (8): 1-Arman Kramian. INTERMEDIATE (6): 1-Bill Wasley, 2-Elle Titler; 1C-Chris Semal. Δ

PROBLEM #280 ANALYZED

by Mary Hickey

Tournament double match-point.
BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.



This problem comes from the Ohio State Championships, held April 12-14, 2002 in Cleveland.

There are so many possible plays here (39 total, according to JellyFish™, with about half of them worth a look) that perhaps the best thing to do is eliminate some right from the start. We can do that by determining what Black needs to do to win this game, then deep-sixing the plays least likely to be helpful toward this end.

First, Black has to see that right now, though he's the one that needs to hit a shot, he's very likely instead to *be* hit next roll. If Black leaves all his blots where they are, after most of White's rolls he'll either be shooting only at indirects or a single direct from the bar, with very dim prospects if he misses. Surely he can do better by converting one or more of the blots to points. This means we can eliminate plays such as 16/9 that just run the front man, or making the 2-point, despite its potential value after contact.

Now that we know we want to make at least one point in front of White's 11-point, what's the best approach? Make the 16-point and preserve some later hitting options from the 23-point? Make the 19- or 20-point with one back checker, and run the man on the 16-point out of harm's way? Or should Black "go for the gusto" now by making both the 19- and 20-points with the men from the 23-point?

Within the first approach, we can look at two plays making the 16- from the 20-point, 20/16, 5/2 and 20/16, 6/3. Since

slotting the next needed point in the home board has to be better than worrying about getting hit after contact with the race this hopeless, the first play must be the better of these two.

The other good play within this general approach is 19/16, 6/2, keeping the blot back further behind the 16-point, which also roots particular rolls (4-1 versus 6-3 with the other play) but also risks a couple more disastrous pick-and-pass numbers (6-4, 6-2, and 6-1 versus only 5-3 and 5-2). It appears 20/16, 5/2 will be the winner here, and a rollout comparing these plays confirms this is the case.

Within the second approach, we can either make the point six away with 23/20, 16/12, or make the point five away with 23/19, 16/13. It was tempting to just throw out the second play since the point six away looks so much stronger, and the for the first round of rollouts that's what I did. Based on work I've done regarding splitting or not splitting various anchors versus an opponent's last outfield point, it seemed clear to make the 20-point, but I've also seen many surprising results when I thought something was "clear," so I later went back and did the rollout. No surprise this time—23/20, 16/12 is the best play within this strategy.

There's only one play that makes both anchors (23/19, 23/20), so now we have three plays to compare, each representing a different way of trying to win this game.

I rolled out the top plays within each strategy with JellyFish 3.0 Level 6 (2-ply), full, 1440 trials with variance reduction to 32,000 games (the maximum) or close to it for all cases. I also rolled them out cubeful at Level 5 (1-ply), settlement limit 0.550, 12,960 trials without variance reduction, to compare the plays for money.

The top spot at DMP and most other situations goes to playing all-out for the immediate shot with 23/19, 23/20. This wins about 54.4% of the games, and also has the best equity at Gammon Save scores. Sometimes the best way to save the gammon is to win the game, and this is one of the times where that holds. This play is also best for money, no matter who owns the cube. The Level 5 rollouts gave lower win rates than Level 6 for all three plays cubeless, but the play order was preserved, so I believe the difference was due to flaws in JellyFish's after-contact containment game at 1-ply versus 2-ply.

Second place at DMP goes to making the 16-point and keeping the 23-point made for later shots. This wins about 54% of the games. This play would be best at Gammon Go scores, since it gains 4.1 gammons

(12.2 versus 8.1 percent) in exchange for only 0.4 losses (54.4% versus 54.0%).

In third place is the temporizing play, 23/20, 16/12, with a bit over 52% winning chances. This was the play made in the actual game, and was a reasonable attempt to balance immediate and future hitting opportunities by converting target blots to blocking points. It loses out only to plays that do the same thing, only better. This particular day, reasonable wasn't good enough, as White rolled a 5-3, picking-and-passing. Black fanned with a 4-1, and the rest was history.—*Mary Hickey* Δ

CHICAGO OPEN...

[Continued from page 1]



Kit Woolsey (left) with Joann Feinstein and runner-up Howard Markowitz.

topped a strong 32-player field to earn the Memorial Day Master's trophy. Woolsey defeated David Wells and Fred Kalantari before meeting Howard Markowitz in the finals. With the match knotted at 6-6, a doubled gammon for Kit sealed Howard's fate. Final score: 11-6.

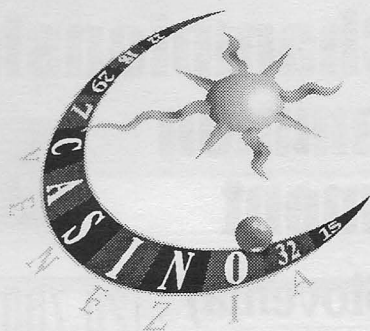
CONGRATS TO Intermediate winner Takis Sakkalis (MI) and also to BPC Beginner victor Doug Rodgers. Δ



Beginner champ Doug Rodgers.

23RD CHICAGO OPEN

CHAMPIONSHIP (54): 1-Jeremy Bagai, 2-Save Sax (CA), 3-Brian Barber (IL); 1C-Walter Trice, 2C- Neil Kazaross. INTERMEDIATE (59): 1-Takis Sakkalis (MI), 2-Marianne Gatenby (Canada), 3/4-George Barr (IL) / Boris Dekhtyar (NJ); 1C-Chris Wilson (IL), 2C- Tim Carroll (IL). BEGINNER (12): 1-Doug Rodgers (IL), 2-Michael Peters (IL). MASTERS (32): 1-Kit Woolsey (CA), 2-Howard Markowitz (NV), 3/4-Fred Kalantari (MN) / Hugh McNeil (IL). DOUBLES (20): 1-Marianne Gatenby (Canada) & Neil Kazaross (IL), 2-Richard Del Furia (MN) & Rudy Langenbach (WI). MINI-MATCH (128): 1-Save Sax (CA). BLITZ (64): 1-Lucky Nelson (IL).



CASINÒ DI VENEZIA

14th

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international

backgammon

tournament

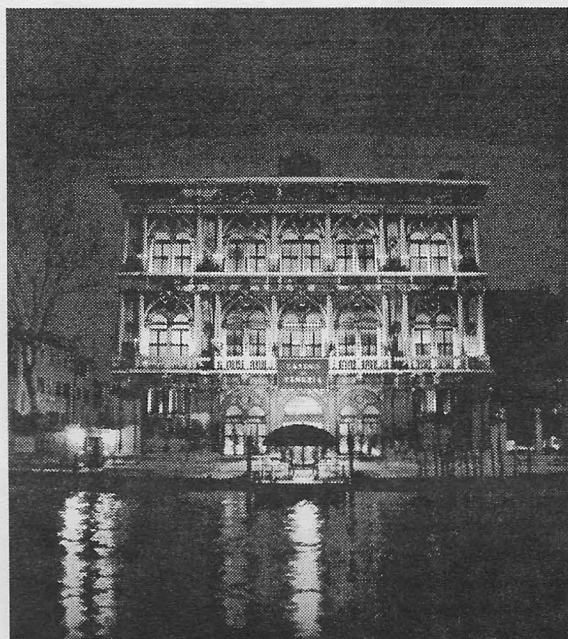


casino of venice
4th - 7th july 2002

the City of Venice International Backgammon Tournament has moved from the lido to the center of venice. the event will be held in ca' vendramin calergi, the historical 16th century palace on the gran canal, which hosts the glamorous casino of venice in the city center (www.vendramincalergi.com).

	entry fees €	registration €
champion	630	70
intermediate	250	50
amateur	50	20
double (champ.)	500 <i>per team</i>	50
double (interm.)	120 <i>per team</i>	30

• quarter entries will be organized for both categories.
• kick off: 1st entry free, one re-entry 30 €, three 60 €



thursday, 4th july

15.00 registration / jackpot programme
16.00 quarter entries begin
18.00 warm up / kick off begins
22.30 1st superjackpot

friday, 5th july

14.30 registrations
15.00 double consulting
17.30 champion public draw
18.00 champion tournament start
21.00 interm. & amateur public draw
22.00 interm. & amateur tournaments start

saturday, 6th july

14.30 progressive consolation
16.00 tournament continues
23.00 2nd superjackpot

sunday, 7th july

13.00 last chance
15.00 finals
19.00 prize-giving & cocktail

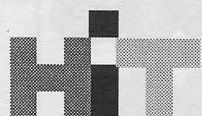
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www.backgammon.it/venice2002

The Worldwide Backgammon Federation is proud to present the

14th European Backgammon Championship

12th Mitteleuropa Backgammon and Black-Jack Tournament



HIT Casinò Park Nova Gorica (Slovenia)

6-8 September 2002

Backgammon week & Black-Jack 2-8 September 2002



20.700 Euro
Guaranteed
Backgammon Prize Money

Entry Fees

Master (13-pt) 500 Euro
Champion (11-pt) 150 Euro
Intermediate (7-pt) 50 Euro
Black-Jack Tournament 40 Euro
Quarter-entries offered in main tournament.

Registration Fees

2002 WBF members 25 Euro
Non-members 35 Euro
Includes Friday Cocktail & Sunday Gala Dinner.

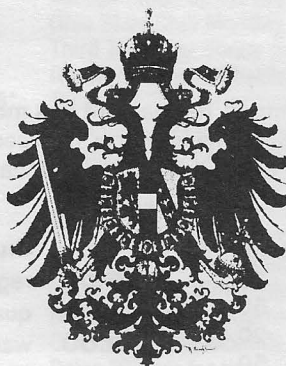
Tournament Committee

*To be announced at the tournament
under the Presidency of*
Alberto da Pra
President of the
Worldwide Backgammon Federation

Supported by Slovenian Ministry of Economy
Represented by State Undersecretary for Tourism

Valid for the official titles of:

WBF European Championship 2002
WBF Italian Championship 2002



PROGRAM

Monday, September 2

19:30-20:00 Registration Backgammon
Tournament at Park Hotel
20:00 Black-Jack Tournament at Casino.
Guaranteed prize money will be
10.000 Euro with 250 entrants
22:30 Quarters, Jackpots, and One
Point Matches

Tuesday, September 3

10:30 Excursion
19:30-20:00 Registration at Park Hotel
20:00 Black-Jack Tournament at Casino
22:30 Quarters, Jackpots, and One
Point Matches

Wednesday, September 4

10:30 Excursion
19:30-20:00 Registration at Park Hotel
20:00 Black-Jack Tournament at Casino
22:30 Quarters, Jackpots, and One
Point Matches

Thursday, September 5

17:30 Public draw for Warm-up Me-
morial Heiner Haussleiter (free
to registered players)
18:00 Warm-up begins. Quarters, Jack-
pots and One Point matches
20:00 Black-Jack Tournament at Casino.
Public draw for Sperti Trophy (free
entry— only for WBF supporters)
20:00-22:30 Break for Dinner
22:30 Start of Sperti Trophy

Friday, September 6

17:00 Warm-up, Sperti Trophy, Quar-
ters, Jackpots, and One Point
matches
19:00-20:00 Registration at Park Hotel
20:00 Welcoming cocktail: Park Hotel.
Black-jack Tournament at Casino
22:00 Last Registration
22:30 Public draw
23:00 Start of play. Quarters, Jack-
pots, and One Point matches

Saturday, September 7

16:00 Main tournament continues.
Start of Progressive Consolation
tournament
17:00 Quarters, Jackpots, and One
Point matches
20:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino
20:00-22:30 Break for Dinner
22:30 Start of Franz Josef Super-Jack-
pot. Tournament play continues

Sunday, September 8

14:30 Last Chance tournament
15:00 Finals, Quarters, Jackpots, and
One Point matches
17:00 Black-jack Tournament at Casino,
final rounds
20:30 Schönbrunn Dinner Party &
Awards Ceremony at Park Hotel

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

The HIT Park Hotel has agreed to offer two nights free of charge in the Hotel for players who stay one full week (arrival date Sept. 2, departure date Sept. 9, 2002) . . . 100% return of the entry fees . . . Trophies for Main events, Ladies Prize, Memorial Heiner Haussleiter, One Point Matches, Black Jack tournament. Special WBF trophies for European & Italian Championship 2002. Nova Gorica is in the country renowned for good food and wine. Air temperature in September is 15°-25° C.