

2003 monte carlo world championship

JON KRISTIAN RØYSET WINS IN MONTE CARLO

**David Wells Scores in Super Jackpot
by Harald Johanni**

28-year-old Norwegian Jon Kristian Røyset is the new World Backgammon Champion for 2003 (7–13 July at the Grand Hotel in Monte Carlo, Monaco). In a tough final match, he defeated Israel's Moshe Tissona 25–20. Røyset follows Sweden's Jørgen Granstedt (2001), and Mads Andersen of Denmark (2002) as the third Northern European in a row to win the World title.



2003 Monte Carlo World Champ Jon Kristian Røyset at the Award Ceremony.
[All photos by Harald Johanni.]

This year, the reigning European Champion Katja Sophie Spillum (Norway) gave female players hope that another woman would win the World Championship (Katie Scalandre was the last woman to accomplish the feat in 2000). She played very well, displaying concentration and toughness to reach the round-of-four by defeating Harald Johanni, Leonid Riskin, Sven Rümcker and Hugh Sconyers. But in the semifinal against fellow countryman and 2000 Norwegian Champion Jon Kristian Røyset, she didn't feel well, losing both her confidence and the match.

In the other semifinal, Germany's Dirk Schiemann, for sure one of the best players in the world, got zero dice scoring only 2 points in his 23-point match against Moshe Tissona. The 27-year-old Tissona not only



Røyset (right) defeated reigning European Champion Katja Sophie Spillum in the all Norwegian semifinals.

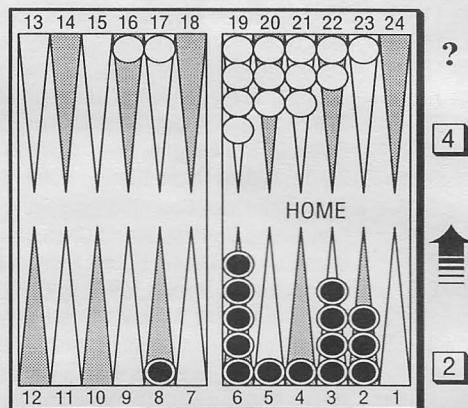
beat Dirk Schiemann, but also Thomas Kristensen, another world class player in the quarterfinals. Moshe, the son of 1995 World Championship finalist, Josef Tissona, won Monte Carlo's Intermediate flight in 1999. Since 2000, he has played in the Championship division.

THE FINALS

In the 25-point finals against Moshe Tissona, Jon Kristian Røyset quickly fell behind 5–12. With so much on the line, many players trailing by this margin would become rattled and start shooting from the hip. But one of the Norwegian's great strengths is his ability to stay focused and controlled whether ahead or behind. In fact, there was no change in his demeanor as he gradually equalized the score at 12–all.

At 17–all, Jon Kristian Røyset took a very long time determining whether to take or drop Moshe Tissona's well-timed redouble. It would turn out to be the biggest, most critical decision of the match:

23-point finals. Røyset (White) and Tissona (Black) tied at 17–all. Black redoubles. Should White take?



Trailing the race by 11 pips, would you have taken this 4-cube? To find the correct decision, the first thing to do is to think about the take-point.

I say "think about the take-point" because most of us don't want to learn take-points by heart or attempt strenuous mathematics over the board. In fact, the calculated take-point (utilizing Rick Janowski's match-winning chance formula) is approximately 21.5%. Now let's see if we can get this number by "thinking about the take-point," rather than exactly calculating it.

Backgammon is an easy game to play. Often it's easy to accurately estimate backgammon equity as well. Here, we'll look at the match situation as if it were a money game. In money games, we know the live cube take-point is about 22% in a race. The cubeless (or dead cube) take-point has to be a little bit higher in this match situation compared to in money game, because the points nearer to the end of the match are worth more than the equally-valued points in a money game. Additionally, the cube power of a redouble to 8 in this match situation is much higher than in a money game, because at 8-away vs. 8-away, a redouble to 16 is meaningless!

The take-point at this match score is only a little bit lower than for money. A little bit lower than 22% is 21.5%! Thus we have obtained a very good estimate of the correct number just by comparing the match situation with a money game situation and by tailoring the take-points. Don't go crazy trying to learn tables of numbers or doing long, complicated calculations over the board; just keep on thinking and simplifying and backgammon can be an easy game.

Finding the take-point was the first step on the way to finding the solution for this cube action problem. The second step is to determine the race-winning chances.

At first glance, 11 pips behind in a 65–76 race is a money pass. But if you look again, you find only one checker on the 5- and 4-points in Moshe's bear-off position with a total of six spares on his 6-, 3-, and 2-points. So we see that Tissona can

[Continued on page 5]

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Bill Davis

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

Tel: 773/583-6464 ♦ Fax: 773/583-3264

E-mail: bg@chicagopoint.com

www.chicagopoint.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Carol Joy Cole (MI)

Danny Kleinman (CA)

Mary Hickey (OH)

Antonio Ortega (C.R.)

Jake Jacobs (IL)

Steve Sax (CA)

Duane Jensen (MN)

Kit Woolsey (CA)

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

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

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

LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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

E-mail: letters@chicagopoint.com

JOHN BRUSSEL TRIBUTE

Heartfelt Thanks to CHICAGO POINT and all the clubs and individual backgammon friends who have sent sympathy to us and such wonderful tributes to John. We knew how much John loved backgammon, but had no idea how much you loved him. Gratefully.—*The Brussel Family (White Plains, New York) and Terry Phillips (Chicago, Illinois)*

Many players are known for their skills and abilities, but few are known far and wide for their personalities. John Brussel falls into the "unforgettable" category.

David and I were privileged to be the last ones to play backgammon with John just two weeks before he died. Though he needed help moving the checkers and his pain finally inhibited his ability to roll his dice, he played strong until the end and

[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.

Sep 13	Red, White & Blue Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Sep 14	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Shattuck Hotel, Berkeley, California	831/688-9722
Sep 14*	Michigan Club Challenge, Box Bar & Grill, Plymouth, Michigan	734/981-5706
Sep 18*	Third Thursday Bonus (Minnesota Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Sep 19-21	<u>Florida State Championships, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, FL</u>	<u>954/564-0340</u>
Sep 19-21*	<u>Towpath Inn Tournament, Towpath Inn, Turin, New Yrk</u>	<u>315/348-8035</u>
Sep 20*	Double Trouble, New York Chess & Backgammon Club, New York, NY	845/373-7272
Sep 20*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Sep 20-21	24th Invitational Vietor Cup, Jon Vietor's residence, La Jolla, California	818/901-0406
Sep 21*	Austin Club Bimonthly Tournament, JC's Bar & Grill, Austin, Texas	512/261-8518
Sep 21*	FIBS 2003 Fall Tournament, via computer	<i>david@escoffery.com</i>
Sep 21*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/771-0981
Sep 21*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Sep 27*	Atlanta Chouette Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Sep 28*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Oct 1*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Buffalo Wild Wings Bar, Beavercreek, Ohio	937/864-1748
Oct 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer	<i>tournaments@cyberarts.com</i>
Oct 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer	<i>GZMedallion@gammonzone.net</i>
Oct 4*	Bar Point Saturday Bimonthly, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Oct 4*	Universal Mall Bimonthly #5, All the King's Men, Warren, Michigan	313/330-7803
Oct 10-12	<u>Illinois State Championships, Springfield Hilton Hotel, Springfield, Illinois</u>	<u>217/528-0117</u>
Oct 11*	Fall Classic, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Oct 12*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Shattuck Hotel, Berkeley, California	831/688-9722
Oct 12*	South Florida Monthly, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Oct 16*	Third Thursday Bonus (Las Vegas Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Oct 18*	Double Trouble, New York Chess & Backgammon Club, New York, NY	845/373-7272
Oct 18*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Oct 19*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/771-0981
Oct 19*	New England Club Monthly, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Oct 25*	Atlanta Monthly Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
Oct 26*	Ace Point Monthly Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, NY	212/753-0842
Oct 26*	25th Flint Area Club Championships, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Oct 31-Nov 2	<u>Minnesota Open, Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, Prior Lake, Minnesota</u>	<u>651/699-6758</u>
Nov 7*	Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Clarion Hotel, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Nov 15-19	2003 Backgammon Pro Am, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 19-23	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Dec 6*	Bar Point Saturday Bimonthly, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
Dec 26-28	<u>Ace Point Holiday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York</u>	<u>212/753-0842</u>
Jan 15-19*	3rd Boston Open & Masters Jackpot, Hyatt Harborside, Boston, MA	781/641-2091
Jan 16-18*	<u>4th Carolina Invitational, Holiday Inn-Woodlawn, Charlotte, NC</u>	<u>704/814-0850</u>
Feb 8*	BPC Doubles Club Championship, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773/583-6464

OUTSIDE USA

Sep 12-14*	Stavanger Open 2003, Cementen Pub, Stavanger, Norway	4751-590940
Sep 13-14	First Antwerp Open, Café den Bengel, Antwerp, Belgium	32347-5256734
Sep 20-21*	Hi-Rollers Event, Hanover Hotel, Daventry, Northants, England	44152-2888676
Oct 2-5	10th German Open, Hotel GlockenSpitze, Altenkirchen, Germany	49521-64314
Oct 3-5*	Norwegian Championship 2003, Oslo, Norway	4798-219323
Oct 4-5*	Sandy Osborne Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Oct 9-12	Austrian Open & Doubles Championship, Hotel Veronika, Seefeld, Austria	43512-287244
Oct 11-13	33rd Japanese Championship & Tokyo Open, Nakano Sun Plaza, Japan	813-33733814
Oct 15-19*	1st Lucien Barrière Open, Enghein-les-Bains, near Paris, France	4989-152762
Oct 18-19*	Åbne Fynske Mesterskaber, Odense Backgammon Klub, Denmark	4533-363601
Oct 18-19*	National Team Challenge, Hanover Club & Hotel, Daventry, England	44152-2888676
Oct 25-26*	Gammonitis Birthday Trophy Tournament Jarvis, E. Grinstead, England	44163-4304908
Oct 25-26*	Swiss Championship, Allegro Grand Casion, Bern, Switzerland	4179-4552439
Oct 30-Nov 2*	23rd Swedish Open, Clarion Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	468-189346
Nov 1-2	11th Irish Open Championship, Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, Ireland	3531-6030891
Nov 5-8	Consulting Doubles World Championship, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Nov 7-9	Gran Prix de Suisse, Hotels Splendide & Eden, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Nov 8-9*	Townharbour Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Nov 22-23*	Hi-Rollers Event, Hanover Hotel, Daventry, Northants, England	44152-2888676
Nov 23-30*	1st Sharm El Sheik Open, Domina Coral Bay Resort, Sharm El Sheik, Egypt	39041-52111029
Dec 6-7*	United Kingdom Finals, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44153-2888676
Dec 13-14*	Rosey Bensley 50th Birthday Trophy, GrangeHotel, Bristol, England	44163-4304908

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

finished a winner. A fitting statement on his life as well.—*David and Linda Rockwell, Skokie, Illinois*

I was overwhelmed with sadness when I read about the passing of a great. I have known John for more than two decades. We shared many things. He will always be associated with the Pittsburgh and Chicago tournaments. My Illinois State Backgammon

Championships and America Cup would never have lasted seven years without John.

I read often KG's farewell letter. I can't add to it. He sums it all. I wish that John could read the letter.—*Yamin Yamin, Wilmette, Illinois*



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2003

Compiled through 1 Sept. 2003 after 12 events
(Coming this Fall: Florida State, Towpath, Illinois State, Minnesota Open)



Dean Adamian	28.67	Bill Finneran	10.57	Daniel Dorinbaum	6.41	Karen Davis	3.53
Ray Fogerlund	27.65	Beth Martinson	9.29	Carol Joy Cole	6.41	Jon Vietor	3.37
Malcolm Davis	22.88	Tak Morioka	9.18	Mary Franks	6.40	Bruce Dimattia	3.37
Gyl Savoie	22.39	Simon Kennedy-Rose	9.00	Jim Zimmerman	6.02	Bob Wilensky	3.19
Bob Glass	19.06	Ron Sanders	8.89	David Rogers	6.00	Steve Mellen	3.19
Mike Ungerleider	16.81	Wally Wolf	8.66	Chuck Bower	5.29	Carol Falk	3.10
Ed Bennett	16.73	Curtis Lucas	8.66	Jeremy Bagai	5.27	Karen Meyer	3.00
Sam Pottle	15.64	Sho Sengoku	8.36	Walter Trice	5.27	Rainer Stachowitz	2.96
Bruce Russell	15.60	Betty Coppic	8.29	Paul Stebbing	5.20	Brian Farr	2.95
Dave Cardwell	15.01	Greg Merriman	8.03	Tom Hodous	5.15	Alain Azoulay	2.95
Matt Reklaitis	14.33	Gary Fries	7.80	Marilyn Kubiak	5.15	Mary Downing	2.84
Faddoul Khoury	14.15	Al Jones	7.80	Barry Gittleman	4.87	Mike Cyrkiel	2.58
Howard Markowitz	13.82	Dana Nazarian	7.74	Philip Smith	4.82	Ben Elliott	2.57
Brian Barber	13.80	Abbas Zaltash	7.18	Gayle Wolf	4.73	Bob Green	2.57
Adam Versaw	13.53	Ray Woo	7.14	Vadim Musaelyan	4.50	Rich Madzel	2.45
Steve Sax	13.18	Richard Reasin	7.13	Herb Roman	4.44	Dixie McGaffick	2.45
Alan Fenster	13.00	Drew Robinson	7.08	Ed Ratajczyk	4.28	Terry Seymour	2.45
Petko Kostadinov	13.00	Neil Garvie	7.08	Bob Zavoral	3.94	Doug Johnson	2.45
Paul Weaver	12.79	J.A. Miller	7.08	Greg Feller	3.93	Josh Riddell	2.45
Raymond Rickard	12.29	Neil Kazaross	6.94	Martha Ghio	3.90	Wendy Kaplan	2.30
Gregg Cattanach	12.03	Jeff Kane	6.90	Al Tesoro	3.58	James Bray	2.24
Frank Talbot	11.98	Emil Mortuk	6.73	Doug Mayfield	3.58	Peter Roubicek	2.24
Ilia Guzei	11.38	Perry Firoom	6.73	Trina Smith	3.56	Alberto Montemayor	2.13
Hunter Jones	11.15	Pat McCormick	6.63	Michael Flohr	3.55	Mark Murray	2.04
David Rubin	10.57	Terry Leahy	6.44	Dan Mowczan	3.55	Kathy Garmise	1.94



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2003 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 31 AUG.

Bob Zavoral	20.72	Richard Stawowy	6.16	Wendy Kaplan	2.80	Mark King	1.12
Tim Mabee	17.80	Arlene Levy	6.16	Royal Robinson	2.64	Nora Luna-Righter	1.04
Lucky Nelson	16.44	Georgina Flanagan	5.96	Steve Klesker	2.64	Barry Miller	1.04
Joe Wollick	13.72	Peter Kalba	5.48	Joann Feinstein	2.32	Kathy Sorci	0.96
Phil Simborg	12.72	Ed Buerger	4.96	Elaine Kehm	2.00	Linda Rockwell	0.96
Phyllis Smolinski	12.32	Paul Franks	4.92	Larry Goldstein	1.92	Mike Sutton	0.96
Carter Mattig	11.36	Bill Keefe	4.88	Mitch Pomper	1.84	Richard Lloyd	0.96
Tak Morioka	10.90	Paul Friedman	4.88	Mary Franks	1.76	Aaron Ashmann	0.88
Herb Roman	10.64	Bob Steen	4.84	Glenn Martells	1.72	James Roston	0.72
Michael Peters	10.00	Norma Shyer	4.72	Rory Pascas	1.64	Elaine Andrews	0.72
Gary Kay	9.96	Tim Carroll	4.48	David Araiza	1.52	Mike Wolock	0.72
Mark Murray	9.20	Bill Bartholomay	4.40	Jake Jacobs	1.44	Paul Klein	0.72
Roger Hickman	8.88	Doug Rodgers	4.36	Sakura Sugawara	1.44	Don Jayhan	0.64
Alice Kay	8.56	Brian Barber	4.04	Ken Tibbs	1.36	Los Moshinsky	0.64
Paul Baraz	8.32	Barbara Levinson	3.76	Joe Szewdo	1.28	Brian Levanthal	0.56
David Rockwell	8.28	Joe Sylvester	3.40	Dan Cox	1.28	Don Garner	0.56
Bill Davis	8.28	Howard Ring	3.36	Phil Martorelli	1.12	Bobbie Ivanova	0.48
Ken Bond	7.84	Tim Serges	3.14	Carol Hooker	1.12	Lloyd Esses	0.48
Eric Johnson	6.80	Wayne Wiest	3.04	Rodney Gonzalez	1.12	Frank Ley	0.48
Val Zimnicki	6.80	Roland Dieter	2.96	Ken Tyszek	1.12		

July: **LUCKY NELSON** was July's Player of the Month winning 3.96 master points. Finishing 2nd/3rd were Bob Zavoral (3.24) and Joe Wollick (3.08).

August: **GARY KAY** wins August honors in style with 5.64 points and finishing the month with 11 wins in a row (Gary extended his streak 14 wins with another tournament victory on 2 September). Joe Wollick (3.76) and Phyllis Smolinski (3.28) were runner's-up.

THE LATTO PARADOX

In Paul Lamford's new book *Improve Your Backgammon*, I just read about the existence of the Latto Paradox—a position in a money game where it is right to redouble but not right to give an initial cube. Who is Latto, and can you give me an example of such a position?

Paul Lamford answers: The Latto Paradox position is on page 91 of my book labeled "Exercise 16(d)." The solution and reference is on page 122. The paradox is named after Andy Latto who years ago, contributed an article about the paradox to Bill Robertie's magazine Inside Backgammon.—Paul Lamford, London, England

BACKGAMMON TERMINOLOGY

I was wondering if there is a link to backgammon terminology. Blot, slot, shot, prime, bearing and pairing are but a handful of the terms that I run across when watching the good players . . . and I'm basically in the dark. If you have any other recommendations for a novice player, I would appreciate it.—*John Parschauer, Chicago, Illinois*

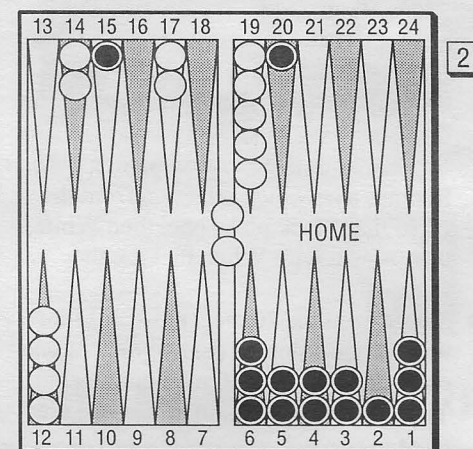
Go to Tom Keith's excellent: <http://www.bkgm.com>. Then scroll down to the bottom of the page and you'll find what you're looking for.—Ed. Δ

your move

PROBLEM #293

to be analyzed by Jake Jacobs

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-3.**



SHADES OF GRAY

A RULES AND RULINGS COLUMN

© 2003 by Danny Kleinman

2003 RULING QUIZ

United States tournament directors actually had to make a ruling on the following four situations over the past year. If you were director, how would you have decided? Make your ruling, then check Danny Kleinman's answers at the bottom of this page.—Ed.

1. The match between Black and White was delaying the weekly tournament, so the director issued a clock giving each side 35 minutes of time. Although Black is now ahead on time with 20 minutes remaining to White's 12 minutes, Black trails the 9-point match 3-4.

At this point, White wonders if enough time was initially placed on the clock and calls the director for verification. It turns out that director did err and should have placed 45 minutes on each player's clock.

The correct remedy is to:

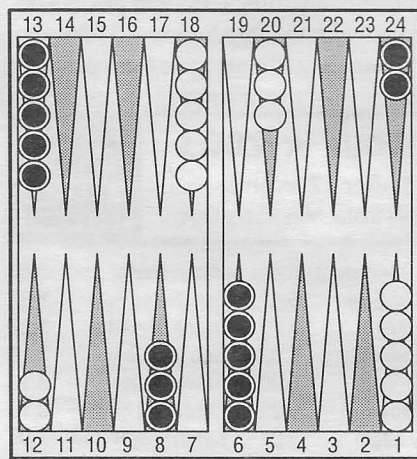
- Add 10 minutes to each clock and continue the match.
- Add 5 minutes to each clock and continue the match.
- Continue the match without the addition of time.
- Void the entire match.

2. Black sits down to play on White's board. White dumps out 20 multi-colored dice (all the same size) from her dice pouch, then says "Pick any two."

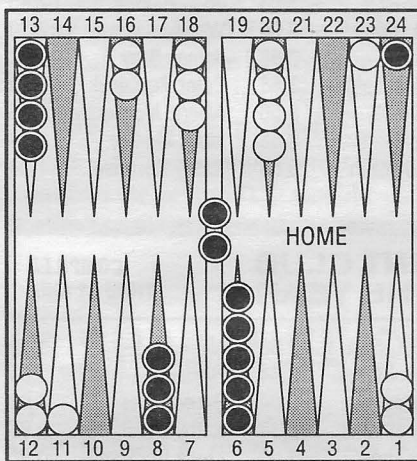
Black selects a red and green one. White then chooses a green and black one. Black is unhappy with the selected dice and calls the director to make a ruling. The director should:

- Allow Black to mix the four selected dice (alternating dice picks) prior to the first game and in any game thereafter.
- Order the selected dice to be used for the first game as is, but allow standard mixing of these four dice in subsequent games.
- Require a new dice selection from the 20 so that Black picks one, then White, then Black, with White picking the fourth die.
- Select from the 20 dice, either (a) four dice of one color, or (b) two dice of one color and two dice of another color. Then require a standard mix of the dice prior to play.

3. Late in the evening of a consolation match, Black and White set up the board so that each home board is to their right:



This means that both players will be moving counter-clockwise! White rolls 5-2 bringing two down from her midpoint (labeled the 1-point on the diagram). Black counters with 2-1, playing 24/23*, 13/11. White now rolls 2-2, hitting two and building her 4-point [Bar/11*, 1/23*, 18/16(2)] creating the following position:

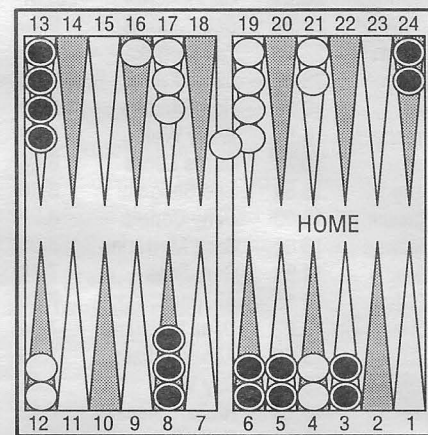


Finally, Black wakes up to the problem and calls the director who should:

- Rule the game void.

- Establish White's first move as the valid playing direction and require Black to complete the game from the existing position.
- Permit both players to reset their boards, then reconstruct a new position using the three previous rolls.
- Ban alcohol from the match.

4. White has a man on the bar and Black rolls 6-5, running a back man to the 13-point in the following position:



In the process of moving, Black's sleeve accidentally knocks White's checker off of the bar and almost perfectly onto White's 8-point. Black is unaware of this and picks up his dice. Then Black straightens the checker squarely onto White's 8-point (a fractional adjustment). White rolls a 5-3 (which would have danced). Before White has moved, Black calls for a ruling.

The director is called and decides to:

- Leave the checker in question on the 8-point and make White play 5-3.
- Void the 5-3 roll and give White the choice (before rolling) of whether she wants her man on the bar or on her 8-point.
- Place the checker back on the bar and require White to dance with 5-3.
- Place the checker back on the bar; then require White to reroll.

SHADES OF GRAY RULING ANSWERS

1. (A) A director should be ready to correct his own mistake.
2. (D) The selecting of dice is supposed to be from a set of four, not from a set of twenty. And why not play with four lovely red dice, four lovely green dice, or two of each, anyway?
3. (A) Whatever game Black and White have been playing, it isn't backgammon.
4. (A) The motion of Black's sleeve was not an action by Black. It was an accident, no more pertinent to the game than a passerby accidentally knocking a checker off the bar. However, Black's adjusting of White's checker after he'd lifted his dice was an illegal action, though apparently not deliberate. He could have adjusted it legally by putting it back on the bar. By rolling, White condoned it... her right, just as if in moving, Black had inadvertently shorted himself a pip.—Yours, Danny

MONTE CARLO...

[Continued from page 1]

quickly develop bearoff problems if he begins rolling 4s and 5s as these gaps are tough to fill.

All the race calculating models say that you can add penalty points to a position when there are unrepairable deficiencies. But there is not 100% agreement on how many pips you should add for these deficiencies.

For many years, I have been adjusting the pip count upwards for these kinds of positions with a method I call "mind smoothing." I smooth the position by mentally moving checkers from the stacked lower points to the empty or near-empty higher points. When I like the new position as much or more than the original position, I count the race.

For example, in the Røyset/Tissona recube position, I would move one checker from the 3-point to the 4-point. Although one pip worse in count, I like the position as well as before. Now I take the last spare on the 3-point and place it on the 5-point. Finally, I take the spare on the 2-point and place to the ace-point. The net pip count change is +2 which means Moshe Tissona's "smoothed" pip count increases to 67 pips.

Because Jon Kristian Røyset's bear off position is better still after "mind smoothing" Moshe Tissona's position, the nine pip deficit indicates a borderline money game take/pass and a take in this match situation.

By the way, if you make the Kleinman calculation for a 67-76 race (adding the two penalty points for Moshe's position and balancing the deficit of the additional outside checker with the advantage of the favorable bearoff position), you get race-winning chances of 21.8% which is what Snowie gets by rolling out the position.

I think most of the best tournament players would have passed this recube and can't say if Jon Kristian Røyset went through deep calculations or employed "mind smoothing" to come to his conclusion, but I can say that he took a lot of time and smoked a lot before making the right decision. Røyset's correct cube action was rewarded when he rolled two high doubles to win this decisive game. Well done!

All in all, the Norwegian played a World Class 3.2 according to Snowie 4 and was the deserving winner of the match and the 2003 World Championship title.

ABOUT JON

Incredibly, Røyset attained his high level of play without the assistance of any backgammon computer software. He's



Paul Magriel provided sparkling color commentary of the finals.

improved his game through play and by reading tons of internet articles.

Jon Kristian Røyset lives in the arctic circle city of Tromsø, Norway, 2000 km north of Oslo. He has a six-year-old son and works the night shift at a psychiatric hospital. He started playing regularly when the backgammon club in Tromsø was established in October 1998. He gained experience by playing lots of money game sessions in Tromsø. Then he won the Norwegian Championship in 2000 and now he is the 2003 World Backgammon Champion!

DAVID WELLS AND OTHER WINNER'S STORIES

Another incredible story can be told by the American David Wells. I recorded his first round match in the \$1,500 SuperJackpot where he lost against Tobias Hellwag.

Afterwards David asked me at what level he had played. I told him "World Class" (2.6 according to Snowie). I think this fine performance might have had something to do with his reentry into the 128 players field. Seven victories later, he had won the \$1,500 SuperJackpot and the following week, went on to win Riviera's Challenge Cup in Cannes, France. Chapeau!

The third Monte Carlo winner's story could be told by two Finns. In 2001 Teppo Salo and Pietri Pietilä were members of the Monte Carlo Fortis Championship Team. This year paired with Mati Haaksila, they chalked up another big success for Northern Europe, winning the Team Title again.

The fourth winner's story was written by all the backgammon players, winners and losers, attending the Monte Carlo World Backgammon Championship. We had the great weather, the competent organizers, the outstanding food and the fun that we deserved. ;-) We had a great time.

Each year, the Monte Carlo World Championship continues to flirt with 300 Championship players (2000-267; 2001-288; 2002-281; 2003-271). See you at Monte Carlo 2004. Next year, let's top 300 Championship players!—Harald Johanni Δ

2003 MONTE CARLO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

CHAMPIONSHIP (271). MAIN: 1-Jon Røyset (Norway), 2-Moshe Tissona (Israel), 3/4-Katja Spillum (Norway) / Dirk Schiemann (Germany). FIRST CONSOLATION: 1-Moshe Elbaz (France), 2-Alex Caraplis (USA), 3/4-Lars Degerman (Sweden) / Mogens Knudsen (Denmark). SECOND CONSOLATION: 1-Jan Bloxham (Denmark), 2-Kim Salomonsen (Denmark), 3/4-Bernard Chetrit (France) / Michael Friedrich (Germany). LAST CHANCE: 1-Jacques Elbilia (France), 2 - Fredrik Reinholdson (Sweden). LADIES PRIZE: Katja Sophie Spillum (Norway).

INTERMEDIATE (121). MAIN: 1 - Roimi Eli (Israel), 2 - Avetis Rostomian (Armenia), 3/4-Tommy Roubies (Sweden) / Andrea Wirth (Germany). FIRST CONSOLATION: 1-Gilbert Gimberg (France), 2-Rogier Van Gembert (Netherlands), 3/4-Yoshito Takeuchi (Japan) / Arthur Muradian (Armenia). SECOND CONSOLATION: 1-Gunther Lansch (Germany), 2-Ingo Meissner (Germany), 3/4-Nadja Marinova (Bulgaria) / Michel Chabrol (France). LAST CHANCE: 1-Yrjana Haahtela (Finland), 2-Andrey Markov (Bulgaria). LADIES PRIZE: Andrea Wirth (Germany).

BEGINNER (65). MAIN: 1-Haim Mizrahi (Israel), 2-Fabrizio Lo Surdo (Italy), 3/4-Ansarik Harutyanyan (Armenia) / Gaudent Radoslovich (USA). FIRST CONSOLATION: 1-Yilmaz Hasoglu (Turkey), 2-Samuel Gevorgyan (Armenia), 3/4-Alexandra Morel (France) / M. Genevaux (France). SECOND CONSOLATION: 1-Nami Nita (France), 2 -L. Weyl (Netherlands), 3/4-Peter Hershorn (Germany) / Markus Kornfeld (Norway). LAST CHANCE: 1-Jonas Nielsen (Denmark), 2-Robert Willems (Netherlands). LADIES PRIZE: Judy Olsen (Denmark).

SUPER JACKPOT (128): 1-David Wells (USA), 2-Carsten Joh (Germany), 3/4-Robert Lindbom (Sweden) / Marc Werner (Germany).

LIMITED JACKPOT: 1/2-Avetis Rostomian (Armenia) / Rogier van Gemert (Netherlands)

FORTIS TEAM EVENT (88 teams): 1-Finland: Matti Haaksila, Petri Pietila, Teppo Salo, 2-Denmark: Lars Bønding, Mogens Knudsen, Lars Trabolt.

ELEGANCE TROPHIES: Ladies—Martha Ghio (USA), Gentlemen—John Rockwell (USA)

CHAIRMAN'S TROPHY: Luigi Villa (Italy)

COURTESY TROPHY: The Neville Eber Family (South Africa)

FIDELITY TROPHY: The Dennis Carlston Family (USA)

TRAVEL TROPHY: Lindsay Boyd (USA)

TENNIS DOUBLES: 1-Andriev & Robin, 2-Hammerla & Jaakko Salava (Finland).

GOLF EVENT: 1-Oliver Schneider (Germany), 2-Dennis Carlston (USA).

WINNER'S CIRCLE

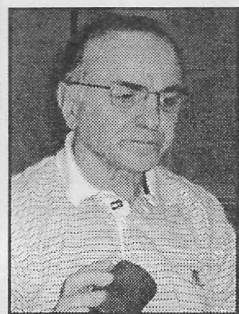
June-Sept. 2003



•**12th Danish Mixed Doubles** (Humblebæk, Denmark; 14-15 Jun.)... OPEN (33 Teams): 1-Majken Johansen & Carsten Simonsen, 2-Lone Flodager & Bjarke Skovgaard.

•**Zakynthos Festival** (Zakynthos, Greece; 19-26 Jun.)... OPEN (16): 1-Andrew Sarjeant. DOUBLES (8 Teams): 1-Harley Davidson & Levi Strauss.

•**Michigan Summer Championships—ABT** (Novi, MI; 3-6 Jul.)... OPEN (86): 1-Dean Adamian [Pictured] (MI), 2-Matt Reklaitis (PA), 3-Frank Talbot (MI), 4/5-Dana Nazarian (CA) / Al Tesoro (FL); 1C-Bob Glass (CA), 2C-Abbas Zaltash (PA), 3C/4C-Ilia Guzei (WI) / Doug Mayfield (CA). INTERMEDIATE (85): 1-Faddoul Khoury (IL), 2-



Michael Flohr (IL), 4/5-Joann Feinstein (IL) / Mary Lee Pinkney (Canada), 1C-J.A. Miller (IL), 2C-Dan Mowczan (MI), 3C/4C-Joe Maize (MS) / Bud Olejniczak (MI). NOVICE (17): 1-Ray Knes (MI), 2-Ron Wagner (IL); 1C-Sue Martin (IL), 2C-Lois Merriman (MI). MICHIGAN MASTERS (32): 1-Sue Sax (CA), 2-Herb Gurland (MA). GAMESGRID BLITZ (128): 1-Gary Margosian (MI). JOHN BRUSSEL MEMORIAL JACKPOT (32): 1-Harry Brown (MI). SUMMER FREEZE-OUT (32): 1-Doug Mayfield (CA). \$500 FIRECRACKER JACKPOT (8): 1-Perry Gartner (NJ). \$200 FIRECRACKER JACKPOT (16): 1-Mark Rozans (LA). \$100 FIRECRACKER JACKPOT #1 (16): 1-Bill Landry (IL). \$100 FIRECRACKER JACKPOT #2 (8): 1-Raymond Rickard. \$20 DETROIT QUICKIES WINNERS: Carter Mattig (IL), Perry Gartner (NJ), James Roston (NY). OPEN DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Sue Brown (MN) & Dana Nazarian (CA). OVERFLOW DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Mike Reza (OH) & Howard Rosenthal (MA). LTD. DOUBLES (11 teams): 1-Mary Lee Pinkney (Canada) & Gayle Wolf (MI).

•**15th City of Venice** (Venice, Italy; 3-6 Jul.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (34): 1-Giorgio Caldera (ITA), 2-Lars Bonding (DEN); 1C-Morten Holm (DEN). INTERMEDIATE (36): 1-Guilio Alessandri (ITA), 2-Valerio Scremin (ITA); 1C-Kolya Mosoyan. BEGINNER (41): 1-Alessandro Smerilli (ITA), 2-Paolo Satriani (ITA); 1C-Michelle China (ITA). WARM-UP (64): 1-Kahaber Natchkebia (GEO). DOUBLES: 1-Thomas Kristensen (DEN) & Katja Spillum (NOR). SUPERJACKPOT #1: 1-Morten Holm (DEN). SUPERJACKPOT #2: 1/2-Thomas Kristensen (DEN) / Jorge Pan (ARG).

•**San Remo Open** (San Remo, Italy; 4-6 Jul.)... MASTERS (24): 1-Pawel Bielewicz (POL); 1C-Arild Idsoe (NOR); 1LC-Vittorio Castro (SWZ). CHAMPIONS (30): 1-Marc Werner (GER); 1C-Werner Reisel (AUT); 1LC-Andrey Markov (BUL). INTERMEDIATE (46): 1-Alex Naylor (ITA); 1C-Alberto Profumo (ITA); 1LC-Staffan Tjus (SWE). WARM-UP (64): 1-

Staffan Tjus. ONE-POINT (64): 1-Fulvio Pazzi (ITA). SPERTI TROPHY (83): 1-Vittorio Castro (SWZ).

•**Keren Di Bona Memorial Trophy** (Coventry, England; 5-6 Jul.)... OPEN (22): 1-Mike Greenleaf; 1C-John Slattery. FRIDAY WARMUP (8): 1-Michael Crane. SUICIDE! (16): 1-Uldis Lapikens.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 13 Jul.)... OPEN (15): 1/2-Fabrizio Schaffrath / Dimitri Vesselinov.

•**Riviera's Challenge & Open** (Cannes, France; 15-20 Jul.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (42+11 rebuys): 1-David Wells (USA); 1C-François Tardieu (France); 1LC-John Rockwell (USA). INTERMEDIATE (16): 1-Tini Truong (France); 1C-Harutyun Martirosyan (Armenia); 1LC-Philippe Vouhe (France). BEGINNER (16): 1-Samuel Gevorgyan (Armenia); 1LC-Rosa Trombino (Italy). LADIES EVENT (14): 1-Liz Johansson (Sweden). WARM-UP: 1-Emmanuel Israel (France). DOUBLES: 1-Jean-Philippe Rohr (France) & François Tardieu (France). TEAM EVENT: 1-Casino: Mack Klein, Tini Truong, Mrs. Wolf (France).

•**5th Czech Open** (Prague, Czech Rep.; 16-20 Jul.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (32): 1-Neville Eber (SAF); 1C-Ken Arnold (US). INTERMEDIATE (21): 1-Ernest McCombs (USA); 1C-Yoshito Takeuchi (JPN). BEGINNER (13): 1-Christian Skærjan (DEN); 1C-René Thor Poulsen (DEN). LADIES CUP (9): 1-Irina Hansen (DEN). GAMESGRID CUP (8): 1-Hannu Lyyjynen (FIN). DOUBLES (8 Teams): 1-Ernest McCombs & Stuart Hosen (USA).

•**Firecracker Classic** (Houston, TX; 19 Jul.)... OPEN (25): 1-Brian Stine.

•**8th Liverpool Open** (Liverpool, England; 19-20 Jul.)... OPEN (44): 1-Darryl Artt; 1C-John Slattery. SAT. 1-PT. SHOOTOUT (64): 1-Darryl Artt. SUN. 1-PT. SHOOTOUT (64): 1-Michael Crane.

•**Wisconsin State Championships** (Madison, WI; 25-27 Jul.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (39): 1-Bruce Russell [Pictured] (WI), 2-Gary Fries (VA), 3-



Martha Ghio (NY); 1C-Ilia Guzei (WI), 2C-David Rogers (NC). ADVANCED (27): 1-Beth Martinson (WI), 2-Karen Meyer (IL); 1C-Terry Leahy (IL), 2C-Michael Plog (IL). LIMITED (13): 1-Philip Little (MN), 2-Carol Kerr (WI); 1C-Galina Guzei (WI). BADGER CLASSIC (13): 1-Sue Brown (MN). DOUBLES (16): 1-John Meyers (WI) & Rhonda Young (IA). OVERFLOW DOUBLES (4): 1-Michael Plog & Greg Tomlin (IL). EARLYBIRD JACKPOT (16): 1-Jim Slomkoski (MI). BLITZ (64): 1-Bob Holyon (WI).

•**Ace Point Club Monthly** (New York, NY; 27 Jul.)... OPEN (8): 1-Rageb Shadallah. INTERMEDIATE (6): Hayley Eber.

•**Thousand Islands—ABT** (Alexandria Bay, NY; 1-3 Aug.)... OPEN (26): 1-Alan Fenster (NY), 2-Al Jones (CAN), 3-Paul Stebbing (CAN). DOUBLES (8): 1-Lorraine & Al Jones, 2-Eden Windish/Robert Lessard.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 3 Aug.)... OPEN (13): 1/2-Joe Wollick / Gary Kay; 1C-Lucky Nelson. INTERMEDIATE (6): 1-Barb Levinson.

•**Georgia Championships—ABT** (Atlanta, GA; 7-10

Aug.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (32): 1-Paul Weaver (AL), 2-Daniel Dorinbaum (Canada), 3/4-Sue Mellen (NY) / Bob Wilensky (GA); 1C-Carol Joy Cole (MI), 2C-Vadim Musaelyan (NC). ADVANCED (22): 1-Barry Gittleman (GA), 2-Doug Johnson (FL), 3-Paul Teitelbaum (GA); 1C-Betty Coppic (GA), 2C-Cem Aslan (GA). LIMITED (15): 1-Alberto Montemayor (Mexico), 2-Richard Martin (NC), 3-Ken Carlson (GA). GEORGIA PEACH CUP (12): 1-Mike Corbett (FL), 2-Malcolm Davis (TX). DOGWOOD LIMITED JACKPOT (8): 1-Sue Elkin (NY), 2-Phil Simborg (IL). DOUBLES (16 teams): 1-Don Faix (NC) & Jim Hall (GA), 2-Sue Mellen (NY) & Phil Simborg (IL). CHOUETTE TOURNAY (24): 1-Hugh McNeil (Canada). SPEEDGAMMON BLITZ (8): 1-Cem Aslan (GA). 10th ANNIVERSARY TOURNAY (16): 1-Stuart Thomson (GA). FASTMATCH TOURNAY (8): 1-Phil Simborg (IL). KICKOFF TOURNAY (16): 1-Cem Aslan (GA). DICE CUP THROW: 1-Cem Aslan (GA). CHIPS GAME: 1-Alan Epstein (GA).

•**Hot As Hades Open** (Houston, TX; 9 Aug.)... OPEN (28): 1-Mary Morse; 1C-Ira Hessel.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 10 Aug.)... OPEN (8): 1-Alan Gaarder.

•**Angie Hambour Memorial** (Adelaide, So. Australia; 10 & 12 Aug.)... OPEN (15): 1-John O'Grady, 2-Chris Benham.

•**Peoria Summer Sizzler** (Peoria, IL; 17 Aug.)... MASTERS (12): 1-Bob Holyon (WI), 2-Ed Bauder; 1C/2C-Bill Davis/Tak Morioka. OPEN (26): 1-Rob Farmer, 2-Jena Rooney; 1C-Fouad Malouf. INTERMEDIATE (15): 1-Travis Kane, 2-George Ramia; 1C-Sue Oliver... *Always a great time at the Saturday Zell picnic.*

•**Ace Point Club Monthly** (New York, NY; 31 Aug.)... OPEN (6): 1-Sue Elkin. INTERMEDIATE (5): Eydie Noble.

•**51st Indiana Open—ABT** (Indianapolis, IN; 29 Aug.-1 Sep.)... CHAMPIONSHIP (69): 1-Ray



Fogelund [Pictured] (CA), 2-Adam Versaw (PA); 1C-Howard Markowitz (NV), 2C-Neil Kazaross (IL), 3C/4C-Chuck Bower (IN) / Karen Davis (NY). ADVANCED (50): 1-Petko Kostadinov (SC), 2-Ray Woo (NY); 1C-Betty Coppic (GA), 2C-Josh Riddell (IN), 3C/4C-

Greg Merriman (MI) / Lee Pflugrad (WI). INTERMEDIATE (13): 1-Wanda Roberts (MA), 2-Rica Tarnoff (NY); 1C-Claudia Imatt (IL). NOVICE (8): 1-Mary Downing (IL), 2-Laura Pinkerton (Canada). INDY 300 JACKPOT (32): 1-Stuart Thomson (GA), 2-Sean Garber (IN). AMATEUR JACKPOT (32): 1-Tom Meyer (IL), 2-Denny Leatherman (CO). TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS (16): 1-David Marcus (IL), 2-Carol Joy Cole (MI). DIRECTORS CUP (22): 1-Roger Hickman (IL), 2-Dr. Bob Hill (NY). DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-Betty Coppic (GA) & Abbas Zaltash (PA), 2-Doug & Wanda Roberts (MA). 51st JACKPOT (32): 1-Wally Wolf (MI). MICROBLITZ (64): 1-Matt Reklaitis (PA). QUICKIE #1 (64): 1-Sho Sengoku (CA). \$200 LABOR DAY JACKPOT (8): 1-Paul Franks (NV). \$100 LABOR DAY AMATEUR JACKPOT (8): 1-Bill Hodes (IN). Δ

3rd Coast Paradoxes

by Phil Simborg

I was reading about the Jacoby, Kauder, and Latto Paradoxes in Paul Lamford's new book *Improve Your Backgammon*. That got me thinking about the Paradoxes we face at the Third Coast Club here in Chicago:

The Dean Muench Paradox: You should take, even though it's a huge drop, because it's worth so much to keep the box.

The Bob Z. Paradox: You know it's wrong to double, but you probably should anyway because you'll get some drops.

The Sly Paradox: It's not a cube, but what the hell... it's not your money anyway.

The Wells Paradox: It's right to beaver, but just take because if you win too much, you might lose your fish.

The Stodder Split: Get ahead one point on the score sheet and split.

The Seif Slot: After your opponent's roll, spill coffee on his lap. When he jumps, slot your bar.

The Jacobs Paradox: You probably win more playing on, but you should still settle because you're the only one at the table who knows the correct settlement.

The Franks Parlay: You bring your wife to the game and she ends up cleaning you out.

The Rolf Rationale: Don't worry about how much you lost at \$10/point because you drank more than \$200 in brandy, compliments of the winner.—*Phil Simborg* Δ



ILLINOIS ACTION



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

Tuesday, 6:00 P.M. at Clarion Hotel, 5615 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago; 773/693-5800.

Saturday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at Champs Sports Bar, 17 W. 517 Roosevelt Rd., Oakbrook Terrace; 630/691-1888.

PUB CLUB: Tourn. Monday, 7:00 P.M. at Danny's Grill & Bar, 345 W. North Ave., Villa Park. Joe Wollick (847/942-2068).

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BACKGAMMON CLUB: Tourn. Monday, 6:30 P.M. at Damon's Place For Ribs; 1701 Fort Jesse Road; Normal. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967)

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).

NEW DAY

Bar Point Club 21ST FALL TROPHY TOURNEY

Friday, November 7, 2003 at 7:00 P.M.

Clarion Hotel ★ 5615 N. Cumberland ★ Chicago

Special \$75 room night. Call the Clarion at 773/693-5800.

Information: Bill Davis at 773/583-6464 ★ bg@chicagopoint.com

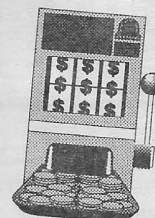
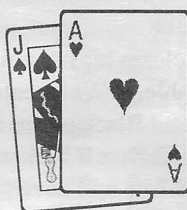
The Twin Cities Backgammon Club announces the

2003 MINNESOTA OPEN



Oct. 31–Nov. 2, 2003
Prior Lake, Minnesota

\$59.00
Room Rates!
800/813-7349



Mystic Lake Casino Hotel is a 4-star property located just minutes from Minneapolis and the amazing Mall of America. Aside from the casino, you'll find premiere gaming activity including slots, black jack and bingo, four restaurants, unique shopping and nightly name entertainment.

TOURNAMENT EVENTS

Open (\$250), Intermediate (\$120) and Novice (\$40) divisions with \$400 Masters, Doubles, Blitz, Mini-matches and \$1,000 Sunday Jackpot.

CO-DIRECTORS & INFORMATION

Steve Brown: 651/699-6758 • scbrown@visi.com
Fred Kalantari: 952/920-1413
www.twincitiesbackgammon.org

2003 Illinois State Backgammon Championships

October 10–12, 2003

Springfield Hilton
Springfield, Illinois

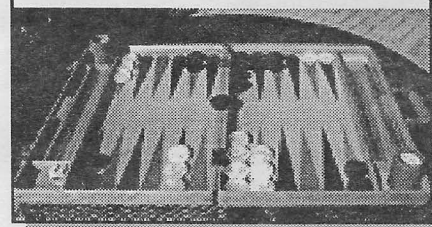
\$65 room rates

Cutoff date: September 18
800/445-8667

Information:

Randy Armstrong: 217/528-0117
randya@insightbb.com
Ben Zemaitis: 217/483-4028
bzemaiti@fgi.net

SPECIAL ADDED PRIZE
\$850 TAKI-BOARD



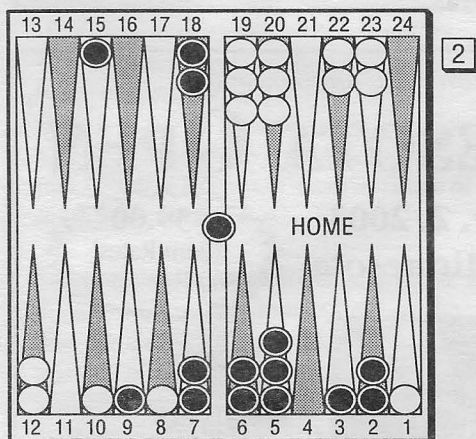
Featuring \$300
Land of Lincoln
Masters



www.geocities.com/bgczar_2000

PROBLEM #292 ANALYZED

by Kit Woolsey

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

Last man standing! Black has just rolled a great number from the bar, but what should he do with it? Black can do some good things, but he can't do everything, and he is going to have to leave a few shots and blots. If Black survives the next roll, he will be in great shape; but if White wins the blot-hitting contest, it will be ugly.

Black has one possible non-hitting play: B/21, 15/3. This play completes a broken five-prime, and leaves only two blots. The problem is that White isn't on the bar and she has plenty of hitting numbers. Black does have a four-point board. The gains when he hits and White flunks are huge. Black simply has to go for more than this. Since any play will leave several shots, Black wants to get the most for his money when his play works. He simply has to hit.

There are many plays which involve a hit on the ace point. B/21, 9/1*, 5/1 leaves the fewest blots, but the resulting position isn't very smooth. The gap on the 3- and 4-points is big, and it will be difficult to put the pieces together. Black will need to cover the blot and take care of other business even if White misses. If White hits, Black's position is a wreck.

Other possibilities involve hitting loose on the ace point. These plays leave a good structure when they work, but Black will still have to cover the blot on the ace point. If White hits back, it could be very painful. Black will have lost his bar point, and some of White's entries are double-hitters. All of these plays, such as B/21, 15/11, 7/3, 5/1* involve multiple blots and quite a bit of risk. Also, White will have only one man

back, and that back checker will have no trouble escaping if White gets going since Black will no longer have his bar point.

One of the main drawbacks of all of these plays is that they leave a direct shot from the bar. There is one other candidate which doesn't leave that direct shot. This is B/21, 18/10*, 7/3. This has several things going for it:

- 1) White doesn't have a direct shot from the bar. It is true that just about every number which enters will hit something, but except for doubles, these won't be double hits. White has only a four-point board, so Black will be a favorite to enter and continue the blot-hitting contest.
- 2) White will have a second man back. This can be quite significant, particularly if Black closes his bar point in the ensuing scramble. If White enters on the ace point and Black closes his bar point, Black will have a broken five-prime which White will have to navigate over.
- 3) Black won't have an inner board blot to worry about. He will be free to do his thing in the outfield if White flunks. That can make quite a difference. Black doesn't need to blitz White to attain a very strong position.
- 4) Black's diversification is great (if he survives the next roll). It would be hard to find a roll which doesn't make some

kind of significant improvement.

The main downside of this play is that it leaves six blots strewn around the table. That is very dangerous, but not as serious as it might seem. If White gets a counter-attack going, Black is either going to be able to get an anchor and survive or he won't. Most of the time he will, since White doesn't have too much ammunition up front. Of course having a bunch of checkers hit will delay Black from getting back on the offensive, but as far as getting blown away that can happen in any of the variations where White hits and Black flunks.

My conclusion is that B/21, 18/10*, 7/3 really is superior to the other alternatives which involve leaving an inner board blot. The gains when it works are going to be just as great, maybe even greater, as the gains from the other plays, particularly since Black won't have a stray blot in his inner board he needs to cover. The downside if hit is large, but that is true of all the candidates, and at least White can't double-hit.

B/21, 18/10*, 7/3 may be difficult to find even as a candidate at first, since it is unnatural to leave so many blots lying around when your opponent has a strong board. But when you see the play and think about what you are trying to accomplish and what you are trying to avoid, the attraction of the play becomes quite clear.—Kit Woolsey Δ

1st SHARM EL SHEIKH OPEN

International Backgammon Tournament
& Gin Rummy & Texas Hold'Em & Omaha Hold'Em



Participating shares
Packages starting from € 480
per person, in double room, half board
treatment, drink excluded

With flight from Italy packages starting from € 775

23rd-30th November 2003
Sharm El Sheik (Egypt)

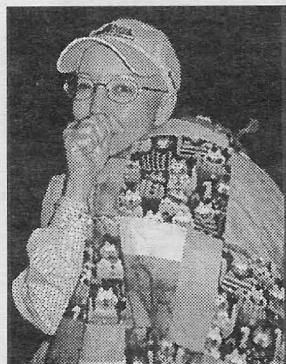
**A holiday & Backgammon week in the fantastic
Red Sea landscape**



www.studiogiochi.com

AMALGAMATION

Oops! Last month's POINT should have been #157, not #158. So this issue is #158A... In a show of support for Hoosier Backgammon codirector **Mary Ann Meese**, the Indiana Open raised over \$600 for breast cancer research. Why not send Mary Ann a card of support in her



Mary Ann Meese with her "security blanket"—a gift from Dru Heggen.

battle at: 1008 Tuckahoe St.; Indianapolis, IN 46260, or e-mail her at: mameese@comcast.net... **Andy Glazer** (CA) finished 6th at the recently-televvised Hollywood World Poker Tour, just ahead of **Mickey Rooney**... Due to NFL conflicts, BPC Oct. and

Dec. bimonthly tournaments meet Saturdays at Champs in Oakbrook Terrace, IL... **Neil Kazaross** (IL) purchased a Ferrari for his wife that nicely compliments his Lamborghini... Sangamon Backgammon Club director **Randy**

Armstrong (IL) received a nice writeup in the Springfield newspaper for his volunteer efforts on behalf of the LPGA State Farm Classic last month... Congratulations to **Jill Ferdinand** and **Ron Engler** (IL) who after a 10-year engagement, married spur-of-the-moment in Las Vegas on 15 August... truemoneygames.com is offering jackpots online (free to \$100 entry fees) with thousands in added money from Aug. 16 to Sep. 14... Two new math books by BG players: *Proofs that Really Count: The Art of Combinatorial Proof* by mathematician Art Benjamin (CA), and *Calculus for Dummies* by Mark Ryan (IL)... Congrats to Ace Point Club directors **Alan & Lourdes Steffen** (NY) on the birth of their son **Alan Paul Steffen** 25 July... Illinois to Tennessee: **Richard Lloyd** who accepted a teaching position at Vanderbilt University in Nashville... Chicago Open director **Joann Feinstein**'s husband **Jerry** had a busy summer coordinating the Viet Nam Wall exhibit at Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago last month... According to *USA Today*, "Seabiscuit" star **Tobey Maguire** passed time on the set playing "Pig Rolling," the mascot game of the Midwest Championships... During the Calcutta at the Peoria (IL) Summer event, auctioneer **Peter Kalba** spilled a glass of water on staffer **Darcey Brady-Wade**. "Now my legs are wet, Peter," Peter's quick quip. "I'll blow-dry them later." Δ

July Contest Results "Expediting The Entry" & Crossword

British Isles Backgammon director **Michael Crane** won \$50 for correctly solving last month's Backgammon Crossword Puzzle.

Steve Kovach of Roswell, Georgia won "Expediting the Entry." Steve correctly explained why the method that White suggested (shown below) was not fair because all rolls (1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, and 1-6) would be equally common. In reality, 1-1 is twice as difficult for Black to roll compared to any of the other entering shake.

To fairly expedite the entry, many of the 20+ entrants came up with the following: Assume the first number rolled is a one. Then roll the other die. If it comes up 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, then that would be the roll. But if it comes up 1, flip a coin or roll another die. If the coin comes up heads (or the roll is even), then the 1-1 roll stands. However, if the coin comes up tails (or the roll is odd), then you would have to start the entire process over again, a 1-in-12 occurrence.

Steve Kovach (Roswell, Georgia) and **Ray Kershaw** (London, England) saved a step by rolling two different colored dice at the same time, using the second color as an "indicator" when the first die was an ace. This system works on every backgammon set even if all four dice are the same color. In that case, you could cast the doubling cube as the indicator. Rolling the die and indicator simultaneously solves the problem 1/12 of the time and saves an extra dice roll 1/6 of the time."

By random draw, Steve Kovach extends his CHICAGO POINT subscription by one year. Δ

BackgammonCentral.com & WatchUsNow.com Present A Backgammon Event First!

FREE LIVE STREAMING VIDEO broadcasting on the INTERNET at the 2003 Florida State Championship in Fort Lauderdale, Florida September 19–21, 2003

Video Page is now under construction for the premiere broadcast. You can watch it now! Yes, that's right. Go and watch the site going up for this all-time first of its kind production.

Just go to my BackgammonCentral.com web site and click on the site link. Zip, you'll be there! This site will stay up even

after the tournament is over and will feature choice video clips and stills for your enjoyment.

This is a cutting edge effort in live streaming video broadcasting and my staff is still working on getting the technology down.

Please log in often, giggle when we goof up and clap when we get it right. OK?

Diane Varner, BackgammonCentral.com

May all your rolls be the ones you need and may all your matches end in wins!

High Roller Lead-in to the Las Vegas Open

Backgammon Pro Am

**Riviera Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada**

November 15-19, 2003

**First Prize
(Based on
32 teams)
\$230,400**

**Organized
Backgammon's
Big Money
Event**

Pro-Am Doubles Event

- (a) 2-person teams (each team may have only one player of a high championship level).
- (b) Entry Fee: \$12,000 per team. 100% of entry fees collected will be returned as prize money.
- (c) Registration Fee: \$1,000 per team.
- (d) Prize Money: Winning Team—60%, 2nd Place—20%, 3rd/4th—10% each.

Special Jackpots

\$1000, 1500, and \$2000 Jackpots will be held at the tournament (95% return).

Tournament Conditions

All fees paid at the tournament must be in cash.

This will be a clock event. However, if both teams agree to play without a clock, they may do so.

Hotel Information

\$59/night room rates (single or double occ.)! Reserve your room before Nov. 10 at 800/634-6753 or 702/734-5110.

For More Information

Howard Markowitz: 702/893-6025

E-mail: howard1@lvcm.com

Visit the tournament website:
nvbg.com/proam2003.htm

Be part of the biggest tournament in America

2002 Las Vegas Open

Calcutta \$10,000 Giveaway



**Riviera Hotel & Casino
November 19-23, 2003**

SCHEDULED EVENTS

Championship, Intermediate, Beginner, Super Jackpot, Limited Jackpot, Blitz, Mini-Match, Doubles, Seniors Tourney, Jackpots & After Tournament Tournament



HOTEL RESERVATIONS

\$59/night (single or double occ.)
Call 800/634-6753 or 702/734-5110
Cut-off reservation date: November 10
Info: Howard Markowitz • 702/893-6025

Tournament website: nvbg.com/lvopen2003.htm • To request an invitation, e-mail: howard1@lvcm.com