

florida state championships

MALCOLM SHINES IN FLORIDA

Edges Phil Simborg to take ABT lead.

by Bill Davis

Malcolm Davis, veteran master player from Dallas, Texas, defeated Chicago's Third Coast Club director Phil Simborg in last month's Florida State Championships in a thrilling double match-point battle. The win, coupled with his Midwest Championships victory in March vaults Davis into the ABT lead for 2003.



Florida champion Malcolm Davis.

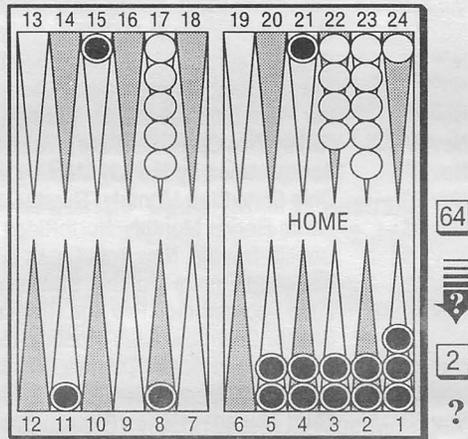
The event was staged by South Florida Club director Elayne Feinstein. Now it's its 8th year, the Florida State Championship has risen progressively from 24 main event participants in 1996 to 107 in 2003. The impressive growth can be attributed to Director Feinstein's ability to give the players what they want. This includes reasonable room rates, a food festival, great door prizes, a free side event, and an entertaining seminar, this year presented by Florida master Mike Corbett.

Malcolm Davis's semifinal victory over defending Florida champ Christopher Stanford (TX) assured him enough points to overtake Dean Adamian. But a win over Phil Simborg (who had bested Russell Sands in the round-of-4) would provide a little cushion with four 2003 events remaining.

The 15-point finals began Sunday afternoon under the watchful eye of Malcolm Davis's video equipment. After losing a doubled gammon in the first game, Phil

Simborg wanted to put some pressure on Davis and doubled in this unusual position:

Pos. 1. 15-point finals. Malcolm Davis (Black) leads Phil Simborg (White), 4-0. **WHITE ON ROLL. CUBE ACTIONS?**



A bad cube giving Malcolm a trivial take. But Phil redeemed himself after

rolling 2-2. Instead of hitting and covering 8/4*2, 3/1 (which creates numerous shot-leaving rolls containing 3s and 4s), he correctly chose to build a stronger position with 8/6(3), 3/1. Phil's non-hitting move is far more threatening to Davis's blot and

[Continued on page 6]



Malcolm Davis (right) receives his trophy from South Florida director Elayne Feinstein as Phil Simborg looks on.

BURNS & ALLEN PLAYED



Here are George Burns and Gracie Allen playing backgammon on the set of the 1935 movie Love in Bloom. Their quick wit made them naturals for the game. Δ

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS

c/o CHICAGO POINT

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REMEMBERING ED

I am deeply saddened by the death of Ed Buerger. Condolences to the Buerger family in their time of sorrow. Even though Ed and I were not that close, he was still a lot of fun to play backgammon with. I still remember one of the things he would ask me after I threw a good number: "Did they teach you that in rolling school?"

This is my closing remark: Sometimes we really don't appreciate people until something happens to them. And sometimes we never miss a friend until we lose one.—*Michael Peters, Chicago, Illinois*

THANKS FROM MARY ANN

I hope everyone had as much fun over the Indiana Open Labor Day weekend tournament as I did. I was moved by the "sea of pink" displayed at the Calcutta Auction and would like to express my sincere gratitude

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



by Carol Joy Cole
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cjc@tir.com

* Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined.

Oct 10-12	<u>Illinois State Championships, Springfield Hilton Hotel, Springfield, Illinois</u>	217/528-0117
Oct 11	Fall Classic, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Oct 12*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Howard Johnson Hotel, Berkeley, CA	831/688-9722
Oct 12*	South Florida Monthly, NorthRidge Raw Bar, 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, New York	212/888-2231
Oct 26	25th Flint Area Club Championships, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
<u>Oct 31-Nov 2</u>	<u>Minnesota Open, Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, Prior Lake, Minnesota</u>	<u>651/699-6758</u>
Nov 1*	MSN Gammonzone Medallion Monthly, via computer	GZMedallion@gammonzone.net
Nov 1*	Official GamesGrid Monthly Tournament, via computer	tournaments@cyberarts.com
Nov 5*	Miami Valley Club Monthly, Holiday Inn Sugars Lounge, Fairborn, Ohio	937/864-1748
Nov 7	Bar Point Club Fall Trophy Tourney, Clarion Hotel, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Nov 8*	Turkey Trot Open, Sansone's West Oaks Bar, Houston, Texas	281/556-0428
Nov 9*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Howard Johnson Hotel, Berkeley, CA	831/688-9722
Nov 9*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Thirsty Dog Brewery, Canton, Ohio	330/268-4610
Nov 9*	South Florida Monthly, NorthRidge Raw Bar, Fort Lauderdale, Florida	954/564-0340
Nov 15*	Double Trouble, New York Chess & Backgammon Club, New York, NY	845/373-7272
Nov 15*	Redwood Empire Monthly, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael, California	707/477-6430
Nov 15-19	2003 Backgammon Pro Am, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 16*	Greater Columbus Club Monthly, Lucky's Grille, Hilliard, Ohio	614/771-0981
Nov 16*	New England Bonus Tourney, Holiday Inn, Somerville, Massachusetts	617/779-8209
Nov 19-23	Las Vegas Open, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada	702/893-6025
Nov 20*	Third Thursday Bonus (Boston Open), Days Inn, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Nov 22*	Battle of Bull Run, Swim & Racquet Club, Manassas, Virginia	703/577-1927
Nov 22*	Atlanta Fall Doubles Tournament, Mazzy's Sports Bar, Roswell, Georgia	770/333-1876
<u>Dec 5-7*</u>	<u>52nd Gammon Associates Invitational, A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles, CA</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Dec 6	Bar Point Saturday Bimonthly, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois	773/583-6464
<u>Dec 26-28</u>	<u>Ace Point Holiday Tournament, Ace Point Club, New York, New York</u>	<u>212/888-2231</u>
Jan 15-19	3rd Boston Open & Masters Jackpot, Hyatt Harborside, Boston, MA	781/641-2091
Jan 16-18	4th Carolina Invitational, Holiday Inn-Woodlawn, Charlotte, NC	704/814-0850
Feb 8	BPC Doubles Club Championship, Champs Bar, Oakbrook Terrace, IL	773-583-6464
Feb 13-15*	<u>26th Pittsburgh Championships, Greentree Radisson, Pittsburgh, PA</u>	<u>412/823-7500</u>
Feb 26-29*	<u>2004 Southern Open, King & Prince Beach & Golf Resort, St. Simons, GA</u>	<u>770/333-1876</u>
Mar 19-21*	<u>2004 Midwest Championships, Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Lisle, IL</u>	<u>773/583-6464</u>

OUTSIDE USA

Oct 9-12	Austrian Open & Doubles Championship, Hotel Veronika, Seefeld, Austria	43512-287244
Oct 11-12*	13th Munkebjerg Open JM, Casino Munkebjerg, Vejle, Denmark	4540-621789
Oct 11-13	33rd Japanese Championship & Tokyo Open, Nakano Sun Plaza, Japan	813-33733814
Oct 15-19	1st Groupe Lucien Barrière Open, Enghien-les-Bains, near Paris, France	4989-152762
Oct 18-19	Centrebet Åbne Fynske Mesterskaber, Studenterhuset, Odense, Denmark	4533-363601
Oct 18-19*	CANCELLED: National Team Challenge, Hanover 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 Casino, 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*	Backgammon Live in London, YHA & Spice Island Pub, London, England	44207-7001798
Nov 7-9	Gran Prix de Suisse, Hotels Splendide & Eden, Lugano, Switzerland	4179-3374425
Nov 7-11*	Marrakech Tournament, Palmeraie Golf Palace, Marrakech, Morocco	331-42618080
Nov 8-9	Townharbour Trophy, Hilton National Hotel, Coventry, England	44152-2888676
Nov 22-23*	Hi-Rollers £2000 Event, Hanover Hotel, Daventry, Northants, England	44152-2888676
Nov 23-30	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 6-7*	SBA goes Germany/Open/Doubles Championship, Thun, Switzerland	4179-4552439
Dec 13-14	Rosey Bensley 50th Birthday Trophy, Grange Hotel, Bristol, England	44163-4304908
Jan 1-6*	9th Thai Open, 19th Hole Super Pub, South Pattaya, Thailand	6638-251461
Jan 9-11*	Bright 'n' Breezy, Hilton Metropole Hotel, Brighton, England	44152-2888676
Jan 30-Feb 1*	2nd Cotswold Fireside BG & Hold'em Poker, Crown Inn, Blockley, England	44145-3821479

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

to my friends in the backgammon community for all their support during my breast cancer treatment. The cards, phone calls, e-mails, thoughts, prayers, and donations to the American Cancer Society for breast

cancer research are all very much appreciated. Thanks to all!—*Mary Ann Meese, Director, Hoosier Backgammon Club, Indianapolis, Indiana*

A SHADY SOLUTION?

I do not agree with the answer given for Ruling #2 in Danny Kleinman's excellent Shades of Gray September column. In the

US Backgammon Tournament Rules & Procedures (March 1990), Rule 3.3 refers to "the four dice initially selected," but does not explicitly state how this initial selection should be conducted. Rule 3.3 does describe the pick-every-other-one process for pre-game selection among the four dice selected for the match. Therefore, I feel that Danny's statement that "The selecting of dice is supposed to be from a set of four, not from a set of twenty" is unsubstantiated. That may be true of all subsequent pre-game die selections, but is not necessarily true of the initial selection if the dice pool is larger than four dice.

In addition, there is no mention in the rules of any requirements regarding die color (or size, for that matter). Although choosing two dice each of two colors is customary in many circles, there is nothing illegal when players choose only one, or three, or even four different die colors. I believe a more correct ruling to be a slightly modified answer C: "Require a new initial dice selection using the pick-every-other-one process, which may be implemented again as a pre-game selection among the four initially selected dice prior to the start of any game."—*Dave Cardwell, Director, Atlanta Backgammon Association, Marietta, Georgia*

DISINTERESTED?

I was reading the rules and procedures today and noticed the following:

1.3 STAFF. A knowledgeable and disinterested Director or Directors, advised by a

[Continued on page 4]



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2003

AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2003

Compiled through 21 Sept. 2003 after 14 events
(Remaining 2003 events: Illinois, Minnesota, Los Angeles, New York)



AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2003

Malcolm Davis 37.88	David Rubin 10.57	Pat McCormick 6.63	Martha Ghio 3.90
Dean Adamian 28.67	Bill Finneran 10.57	Terry Leahy 6.44	Chris Stanford 3.61
Ray Fogelund 27.65	Richard Reasin 10.00	Daniel Dorinbaum 6.41	Russell Sands 3.61
Gyl Savoie 22.39	Beth Martinson 9.29	Carol Joy Cole 6.41	Kit Salisbury 3.61
Gregg Cattanach 19.36	Tak Morioka 9.18	Mary Franks 6.40	Al Tesoro 3.58
Bob Glass 19.06	Simon Kennedy-Rose 9.00	Jim Zimmerman 6.02	Doug Mayfield 3.58
Mike Ungerleider 16.81	Ron Sanders 8.89	David Rogers 6.00	Trina Smith 3.56
Ed Bennett 16.73	Wally Wolf 8.66	Chuck Bower 5.29	Michael Flohr 3.55
Sam Pottle 15.64	Curtis Lucas 8.66	Jeremy Bagai 5.27	Dan Mowczan 3.55
Bruce Russell 15.60	Sho Sengoku 8.36	Walter Trice 5.27	Karen Davis 3.53
Dave Cardwell 15.01	Betty Coppic 8.29	Paul Stebbing 5.20	Jon Vietor 3.37
Matt Reklaitis 14.33	Greg Merriman 8.03	Tom Hodous 5.15	Bruce Dimattia 3.37
Faddoul Khoury 14.15	Gary Fries 7.80	Marilyn Kubiak 5.15	Bob Wilensky 3.19
Howard Markowitz 13.82	Al Jones 7.80	Barry Gittleman 4.87	Steve Mellen 3.19
Brian Barber 13.80	Dana Nazarian 7.74	Doug Johnson 4.85	Carol Falk 3.10
Adam Versaw 13.53	Phil Simborg 7.33	Philip Smith 4.82	Karen Meyer 3.00
Steve Sax 13.18	Abbas Zaltash 7.18	Gayle Wolf 4.73	Rainer Stachowitz 2.96
Alan Fenster 13.00	Ray Woo 7.14	Vadim Musaelyan 4.50	Brian Farr 2.95
Petko Kostadinov 13.00	Drew Robinson 7.08	Eden Windish 4.50	Alain Azoulay 2.95
Paul Weaver 12.79	Neil Garvie 7.08	Herb Roman 4.44	Mary Downing 2.84
Raymond Rickard 12.29	J.A. Miller 7.08	Ed Ratajczyk 4.28	Mike Cyrkiel 2.58
Frank Talbot 11.98	Neil Kazaross 6.94	Bob Zavoral 3.94	Bob Green 2.57
Ilia Guzei 11.38	Jeff Kane 6.90	Stuart Katz 3.93	4 tied with 2.45
Hunter Jones 11.15	Emil Mortuk 6.73	Hy Halpern 3.93	
Ben Elliott 10.57	Perry Firooz 6.73	Greg Feller 3.93	



CHICAGO

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2003 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 30 SEP.

Bob Zavoral 23.92	Eric Johnson 6.80	Tim Serges 3.14	Nora Luna-Righter 1.04
Tim Mabee 19.24	Paul Franks 6.44	Wayne Wiest 3.04	Barry Miller 1.04
Lucky Nelson 17.40	Richard Stawowy 6.16	Wendy Kaplan 2.80	Kathy Sorci 0.96
Phyllis Smolinski 14.80	Georgina Flanagan 5.96	Royal Robinson 2.64	Linda Rockwell 0.96
Joe Wollick 14.68	Bob Steen 5.80	Larry Goldstein 1.92	Mike Sutton 0.96
Phil Simborg 13.44	Steve Klesker 5.36	Mitch Pomper 1.84	Richard Lloyd 0.96
Tak Morioka 13.06	Bill Bartholomay 5.12	Mary Franks 1.76	Aaron Ashmann 0.88
Carter Mattig 12.80	Norma Shyer 5.04	Glenn Martells 1.72	James Roston 0.72
Gary Kay 12.12	Ed Buerger 4.96	Rory Pascal 1.64	Elaine Andrews 0.72
Herb Roman 11.36	Bill Keefe 4.88	David Araiza 1.52	Mike Wolock 0.72
Michael Peters 11.04	Paul Friedman 4.88	Jake Jacobs 1.44	Paul Klein 0.72
Bill Davis 10.44	Howard Ring 4.80	Sakura Sugawara 1.44	Don Jayhan 0.64
Mark Murray 10.32	Tim Carroll 4.48	Ken Tibbs 1.36	Los Moshinsky 0.64
Alice Kay 10.24	Doug Rodgers 4.36	Joe Szvedo 1.28	Brian Levanthal 0.56
David Rockwell 10.20	Barbara Levinson 4.24	Dan Cox 1.28	Don Garner 0.56
Paul Baraz 10.00	Brian Barber 4.04	Phil Martorelli 1.12	Roz Ferris 0.56
Roger Hickman 9.60	Joann Feinstein 3.52	Carol Hooker 1.12	Bobbie Ivanova 0.48
Ken Bond 9.28	Joe Sylvester 3.40	Rodney Gonzalez 1.12	Lloyd Esses 0.48
Val Zimnicki 7.92	Roland Dieter 3.36	Ken Tyszko 1.12	Frank Ley 0.48
Arline Levy 7.44	Elaine Kehm 3.20	Mark King 1.12	David Marcus 0.48
Peter Kalba 6.92			

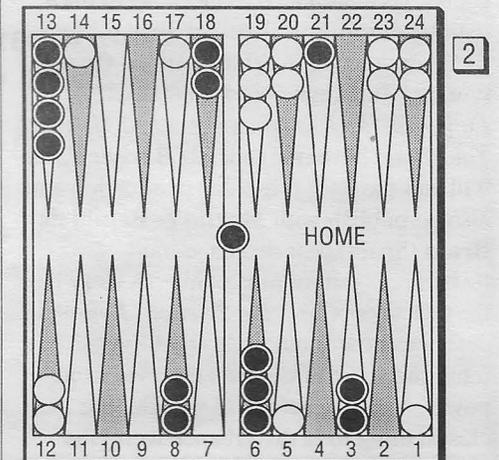
BOB ZAVORAL extended his Player of the Year lead by capturing September honors with 3.20 points. Steve Klesker (2.72) and Phyllis Smolinski (2.48) placed 2nd/3rd.

your move

PROBLEM #294

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

Match to 7 points. Black trails White 2 to 5. **BLACK TO PLAY 4-4.**



SHADES OF GRAY

A RULES AND RULINGS COLUMN

© 2003 by Danny Kleinman

THE IMPROPER POSTING

Dear Danny: William Worldbeater, having been knocked out of the Championship and the Consolation, enters the Last Chance where he advances to the quarterfinals. A fast player, he also enters an 8-player "Mini-Knockout" and wins his first match there. Instead of reporting his win to me or one of my staff, he marches to the wall where the draw sheets are posted and marks himself as having won his match. Inadvertently, he records the win on the draw sheet for the Last Chance instead of the Mini-Knockout.

Soon, one of my staff members posts a Last Chance quarterfinal win for Apple Annie, sees William's name listed on the draw sheet, and summons William to play a semifinal match with Annie. That match ends quickly with Annie beating William

and advancing to the Last Chance finals, which pays \$600 to the winner and \$200 to the loser.

When Bringer Bob reports for his quarterfinal match in the Last Chance, we notice that William's name has been posted erroneously as the winner. I won't tell you what I did to straighten this mess out, but I'd like your opinion how I should have handled it.—Deirdre the Director

DEAR DEIRDRE: William made two errors: a clerical error in posting his win on the wrong draw sheet, and a procedural error in posting it at all instead of reporting it to you. He is responsible for the harm that has been done to the tournament and bears a potential financial liability.

So, assign William to play his quarterfinal match against Bob. If William wins, nobody has been harmed, and the Last Chance continues just as if William had played quarterfinal and semifinal matches in the right order. If Bob wins, however, he is entitled to his equity, which is one-quarter of the pot, or \$200. William must pay Bob that \$200.

Bob may simply accept the \$200 as his equity, and relinquish any further opportunity to place first or second in the Last Chance. However, he has earned the right to continue in the Last Chance as a semifinalist, and to play a semifinal match against Annie. If he wants to exercise that right, he must relinquish William's \$200. Annie, having already won a semifinal match, has the right to go directly to the finals, where her equity is one-half of the pot, or \$400.

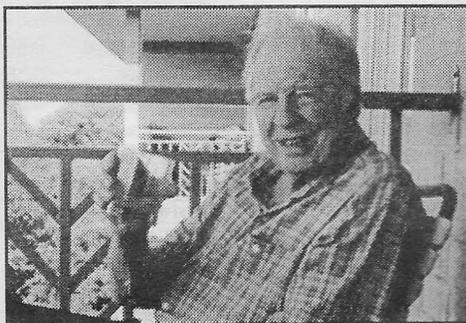
The two "rights" conflict. So propose to Annie that she play a second semifinal match against Bob. If she agrees, she gets William's \$200 whether she wins or loses to Bob. Her equity remains \$400: \$600 if she beats Bob, \$200 if she loses.

If Annie doesn't want to play the additional match, one of the two "rights" must be violated. Have Bob and Annie roll high die to see whose "right" prevails.—
Yours, Danny Δ

AMALGAMATION

Voting for **Yamin Yamin's** (IL) 2003 Giants of Backgammon is under way until the end of the year. For an official ballot, e-mail **Carol Joy Cole** (MI): cjc@tir.com ... New York City's Ace Point Club has moved to a new and improved clubhouse: 328 E. 61st Street (5th floor). For details, contact **Alan & Lourdes Steffen** at (212) 888-2231... Additionally, the South Florida Club meets Saturday afternoons at a new location: NorthRidge Raw Bar & Restaurant, 969 E. Commercial Blvd. in Ft. Lauderdale. Call **Elayne Feinstein** (954/564-0340) for details... **Dario de Toffoli** (Italy) has announced reduced accommodation rates for his Sharm el Sheikh Egyptian tournament 23–30 November. Go to www.studiogiochi.com for details... *European Backgammon News* and *Make Your Point* have merged. **Liz Barker** (UK) will edit the joint full-color publication and also co-publish with **Martin & Bambi de Bruin** (Spain). For details, e-mail liz.barker@gammonitis.com... A story in the 6 October *Christian Science Monitor* describes how Baghdad's night live is returning since **Saddam's** removal from power. "Shortly before 11 tonight, the closest thing to [a disturbance were] the shouts of men delighted to have rolled

double-sixes at backgammon"... Congratulations to **Gary Kay** (IL) who completed a run of 17 Bar Point Club match victories in a row 9 September. That's an all-time club record... *Pravda* reports that the Russian President's wife **Lyudmila Putin** prefers backgammon to chess... Gammonlab is now promoting itself as a "sparring partner to play practice games and matches." You can check positions and analyze matches with "the strongest backgammon engine on the net," and for now, it's free. If you don't have Snowie, you have to check this out... **María Coppoletta** and **Carlos Uberto** (Argentina) have announced the completion of their new book *Backgammon Now*. More to follow... Finally, I want to publicly acknowledge my father who celebrated his 80th birthday on 5 October. **William Davis, Jr.** (IL) has assisted in the bulk mailing of every CHICAGO POINT newsletter since 1988. "Happy Birthday, Dad! ... and thanks." Δ



LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

Tournament Committee, shall represent the Tournament.

To me, "disinterested" is a misleading word. I did go to my Webster's dictionary and was surprised to find that it can mean impartial or unbiased. But the fact is it also means uninterested or indifferent, hence the problem. Seems "impartial" would be the most appropriate word to use.—*Christopher Stanford, Houston, Texas*

Danny Kleinman answers: "Disinterested" in the sense in which educated persons use it (the first meaning given in my Random House dictionary) is even stronger than impartial, as it implies a lack of "property interest" as well as impartiality. I chose the word "disinterested" deliberately as I wished to exclude the following case:

Suppose I am a director who is married to, living with, in a business partnership with, or otherwise involved financially or emotionally with a participant in a tournament. I am perfectly capable of being impartial if called upon to make a ruling affecting that participant; I think you know my character well enough to believe me when I tell this to you.

However, I do not think it appropriate for me to give a ruling in such an instance, despite my impartiality. Nobody should be required to place trust in my, your, or anyone else's ability to be impartial when not disinterested.—Danny Kleinman Δ

DOUBLES WITH CAROL

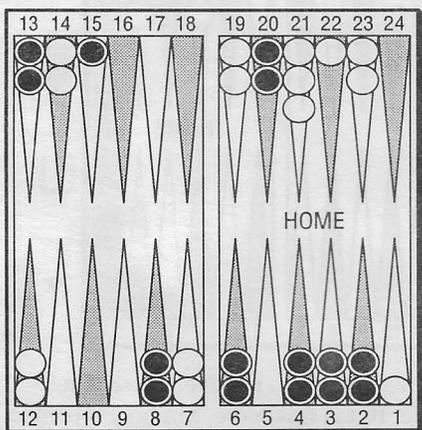


by Bill Davis

Flint Area Backgammon Club and Michigan Summer Championships director Carol Joy Cole won the Open Consolation at the Georgia Championships in August. Last month at the Indiana Open, she was a finalist in the Tournament of Champions. A fine player with an effervescent personality, Carol is a popular doubles partner who has won numerous doubles trophies over the years.

At last month's Indiana Open Doubles event, I was lucky enough to pair with her. After advancing past Terry Leahy and his niece in round one, we faced the very tough team of Doug and Wanda Roberts. Leading the 7-point match 3 to 1, a tricky 2-1 play surfaced. Which move gets your vote?

Position 1. 7-point doubles match. Carol Joy Cole & Bill Davis (Black) lead Doug & Wanda Roberts (White) 3 to 1. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-1.**



64

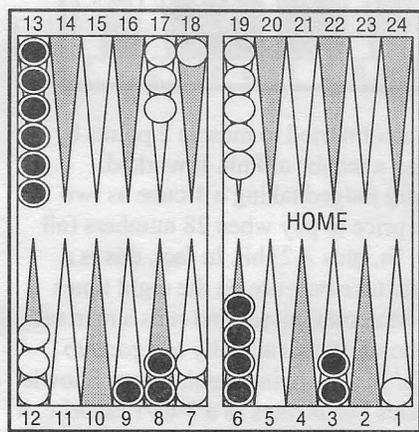
After studying the setup for a minute, Carol suggested 15/13, 2/1* with reasons

for her suggestion. At this stage, hitting inside and leaving two blots seemed uselessly aggressive to me. However, for the good of the team, I acceded to her wishes.

Before making the play, Carol sensed my displeasure and told me to "Take a picture!" with the digital camera I had in my pocket. I didn't really want a post-match Snowie analysis to embarrass her, but snapped the shot anyway. After being hit, we ended up getting doubled out and I had the feeling that Carol's unnecessarily wild play was a big reason for our loss.

LEADING 3 TO 2 in the next game, we faced a positional problem. The move looked rather straight-forward to me. Carol had a different view. Before I tell you our picks, make your move.

Position 2. 7-point doubles match. Carol Joy Cole & Bill Davis (Black) lead Doug & Wanda Roberts (White) 3 to 2. **BLACK TO PLAY 2-2.**



64

Carol stood firm with 13/11(2), 6/4(2). But having given in to her 2-1 move in the previous game, I forced my play of 13/9, 6/4(2) upon our team. Carol ended the discussion by saying, "Take a picture!"

After losing that game and later the match at DMP, I went up to my room looking forward to Snowie's confirmation that my plays had been correct. Not in this lifetime.

In Position 1, a Snowie full rollout of 720 games (3-ply, precise) confirmed CJC's bold 2-1 play as *clearly* right by a whopping 0.066 over the second best 8/5. All other moves were big blunders. [Snowie ranks differentials of 0.030 or greater as errors and 0.110 or greater as blunders.]

15/13, 2/1* offers some ace duplication, and benefits greatly 25% of the time when our opponents dance. Looking at wins and gammons alone, the two plays are close. But 8/5 loses 2.7% more gammons (16% vs. 13.3%) than hitting inside which becomes the deciding factor.

I'll guess that less than one in ten

POINT readers came up with Snowie's best play in Position 2. A full 720 game rollout (3-ply, precise) ranked Carol's blot-leaving 2-2 play ahead of mine by a very significant 0.091. Up 27 pips in the race (133-160), it seems strange to leave a voluntary blot. But that single checker on the 9-point is a "poison blot"—risky for White to hit—that serves as a valuable builder for the 5-point.

13/11(2), 6/4(2) is Snowie's first choice following 3-ply and mini-rollout analyses. After the following four candidate plays are put through the extensive 720 game rollouts, the results change as follows:

13/9, 3/1*(2)	0.897	
13/11(2), 6/4(2)	0.874	(-0.023)
13/11(3), 11/9	0.789	(-0.108)
13/9, 6/4(2)	0.783	(-0.114)

Snowie's deep analysis makes it right to blitz by a small margin. The hitting play generates more gammon wins (17.5%) than any of the others. Yet given this surprising rollout data, I would still make Carol's pure play. I better understand this position and would make fewer errors "bringing it home" vs. attempting to orchestrate an exotic blitz.

So what have I learned from this humbling experience? When I next play doubles with Carol Joy Cole, we'll still debate close plays. Sometimes I'll get my way; sometimes I won't. Of course we'll both make our share of mistakes; but henceforth, I'll always have a greater respect for her view of the game.

And I'll *always* fear hearing her say, "Take a picture!"—*Bill Davis* 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).

ED BUERGER 1926–2003

Edward W. Buerger, a 19 year veteran of the Chicagoland backgammon scene, died of a heart attack 23 September 2003 outside his home in Wilmette, Illinois. He was 77. A World War 2 veteran and civil engineer by profession, games were his passion.



Ed Buerger was a "Greed Dice" finalist at the 2003 Midwest Championships.

Buerger excelled in tournament chess (rating over 2100), and bridge (earning more than 2000 master points). He began playing Chicagoland tournament backgammon at the Bar Point Club in 1984. At the time of his passing, he was ranked first all-time at the Winnetka Backgammon Club winning Player of the Year honors four times. His combined Winnetka, Bar Point Club, and Pub Club master point total of 266.48 points ranks him 8th overall on the all-time Chicagoland list.

In May, 2001, Ed had triple heart bypass surgery prior to an operation on his knee. A few weeks later, he was in action finishing third at the Chicago Open.

For many years, Buerger was an active member at the Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints in Wilmette. He also enjoyed the study of languages, greeting all new foreign-born Bar Point Club players in their native tongue.

Ed Buerger had been married to his wife Rosalene for 49 years at the time of her passing in 2001. He is survived by two children (Douglas Buerger and Janice Buerger Erickson), seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Δ

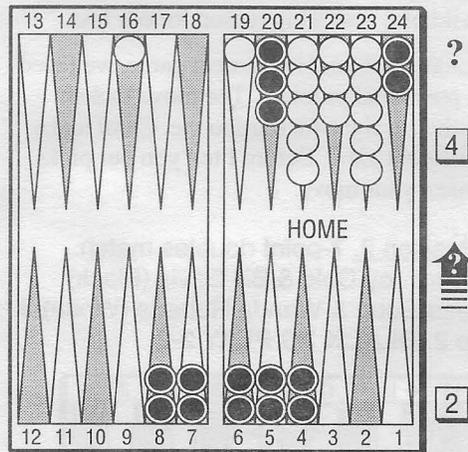
FLORIDA...

[Continued from page 1]

ended up earning him two points.

Ahead 4–2 in the next game, Malcolm was on roll playing a 1-5 "backgammon" and aiming at two blots:

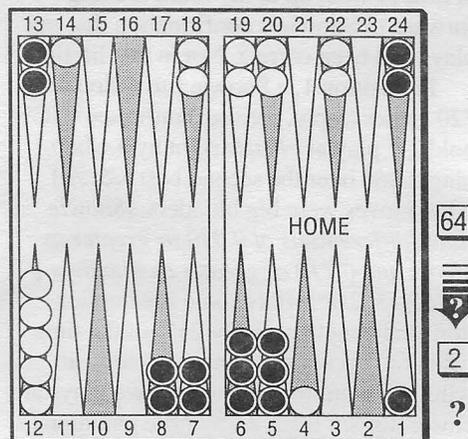
Pos. 2. 15-point finals. Davis (Black) leads Simborg (White), 4–2. **BLACK ON ROLL. RECUBE ACTIONS?**



Malcolm tried to muscle 2 points by flipping a recube at Phil. It worked. Simborg judged taking a 4-cube as two high a price to pay when 28 numbers (all 1s, 4s, 5s, plus 2-2) hit. In fact, this is a monster take because on the eight times when Malcolm misses and runs a man off his 5-point, Phil is actually *too good to double!* In a 15-point match where Snowie evaluates Davis rates as a 3-to-1 favorite, it is even more of a reason for Phil to gleefully accept the highly volatile 4-cube and try for a carload of points in one swoop.

Fast forward to 7-7 with Simborg on roll:

Pos. 3. 15-point finals. Davis (Black) and Simborg (White) tied at 7–7. **WHITE ON ROLL. CUBE ACTIONS?**

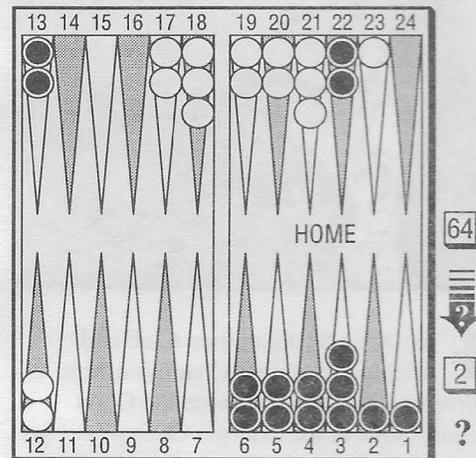


Malcolm passed this cube to rank as his biggest error of the match. Snowie rates

dropping well in excess of a double blunder. Although Simborg does have the best of the timing, the race is a toss-up and there is still a lot of play left. Additionally, Malcolm has some really nice rolls to pound on his opponent when Phil rolls one of 16 numbers that fail to leap the 4-prime.

Another interesting doubling problem surfaced at 8–8:

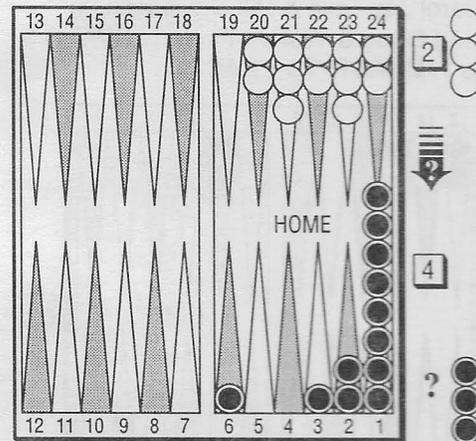
Pos. 4. 15-point finals. Davis (Black) and Simborg (White) tied at 8–8. **WHITE ON ROLL. CUBE ACTIONS?**



Davis took the cube and was able to hit a shot on the bear-in to go up 10–8. Later, Malcolm put the position into Snowie. A 324 game rollout (for both live and dead cube) showed that taking the double loses more than 0.060 compared to passing. [Snowie ranks –0.030 as an error.]

Fast forward three games with Davis leading 12–9 and Simborg (holding a 2-cube) on roll:

Pos. 5. 15-point finals. Davis (Black) leads Simborg (White), 12–9. **WHITE ON ROLL. RECUBE ACTIONS?**

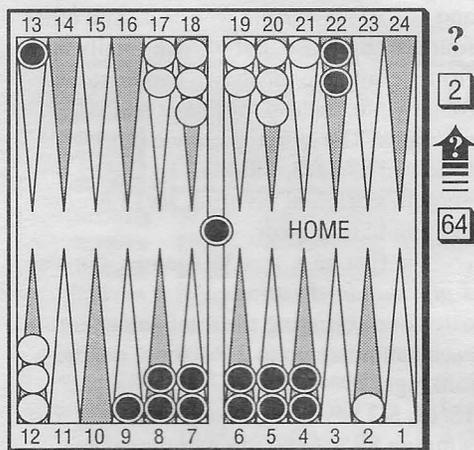


For money, it's not even close to a double. But at this score, Simborg's recube is excruciatingly painful for Davis who is forced to take. A few shakes later (including a timely 4-4), Simborg found himself

ahead, 13-12.

After suffering the tough 4-point beat, Malcolm came right back to double aggressively in the next game:

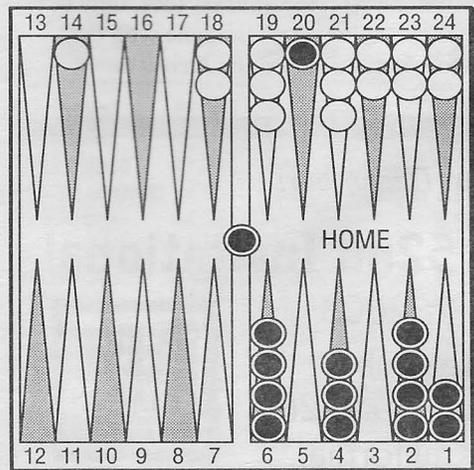
Pos. 6. 15-point finals. Davis (Black) trails Simborg (White), 12-13. **BLACK ON ROLL. CUBE ACTIONS?**



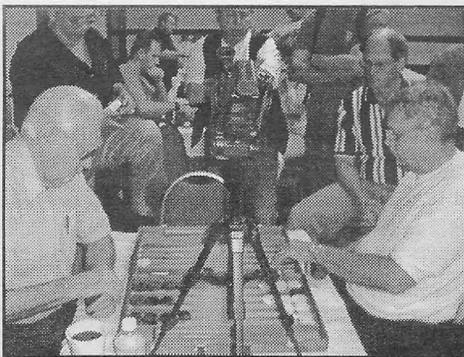
This is a very close double for Malcolm to make, but very close doubles (even if they are marginally wrong) are great plays, because they give one's opponent the chance to make a monster error by dropping. And that's exactly what happened. Passing this cube cost Phil over 6% in total match equity. That's a huge giveaway in one move.

And it got worse for Phil two games later at two-away, Crawford:

Pos. 7. 15-point finals. Davis (Black) leads Simborg (White), 14-13 Crawford. **WHITE TO PLAY 3-2.**



7/5*/2 is the only choice. With a gammon winning the match, a 720 game, 3-ply percise Snowie rollout shows the play is crystal clear. In a 7.39% match equity error caused by the pressure of the moment, Phil played 11/6 cutting his gammon chance down from 32.5% to 19%. The significant error may very well have



Malcolm Davis (left) and Phil Simborg do battle under the eye of the camera.

cost Phil the match as Malcolm barely slithered off the gammon, then proceeded to win the final game and title.

In defense of Phil Simborg's overall performance, he was facing a true master and still managed to play just a fraction out of the Advanced level. Hats off to both players for a great match which is available for download at www.gammonvillage.com.

CONGRATULATIONS to the other winners including Intermediate winner Ben Elliott (NC), Novice victor Steve Spudic (FL), Royal Palm Masters winner Leon Shore (FL), and Doubles champs Denise Hemingway (PA) and Paul Wick (PA).

Although Elayne Feinstein and staff made numerous errors in tournament direction, they had many friends around to offer assistance. We expect that next year, many of these problems will be ironed out and that attendance will continue to increase. Complete results at right. Δ

2003 FLORIDA STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

CHAMPIONSHIP (45): 1-Malcolm Davis (TX), 2-Phil Simborg (IL), 3/4-Russell Sands (FL) / Christopher Stanford (TX); 1C-Gregg Cattanach (GA), 2C-Kit Salisbury (FL); 1LC/2LC-Alex Caraplis (NJ) / Bill Davis (IL). **INTERMEDIATE (48):** 1-Ben Elliott (NC), 2-Stuart Katz (NY), 3/4-Robert Christensen (FL) / Ken Haan; 1C-Hy Halpern (FL), 2C-Lee Nevo (NY); 1LC-Doug Johnson (FL). **NOVICE (14):** 1-Steve Spudic (FL), 2-David Sha (FL); 1C-Sandra Sha (FL). **ROYAL PALM CLASSIC (11):** 1-Leon Shore (FL), 2-Ed Bennett (NM). **SUNSHINE CUP** for Zavoral board prize (16): 1-Stuart Katz (NY), 2-Denise Hemingway (PA). **BLITZ #1 (64):** 1-Russell Sands (FL). **BLITZ #2 (64):** 1-Lee Genud (FL). **DOUBLES (32 teams):** 1-Denise Hemingway (PA) & Paul Wick (PA), 2-Rick Cutler (FL) & Frank Talbot (MI). **DAVID MENKES MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT (25):** 1-Susan-Jane Berson (FL), 2-Murray Bryntessen (FL).

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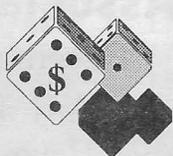
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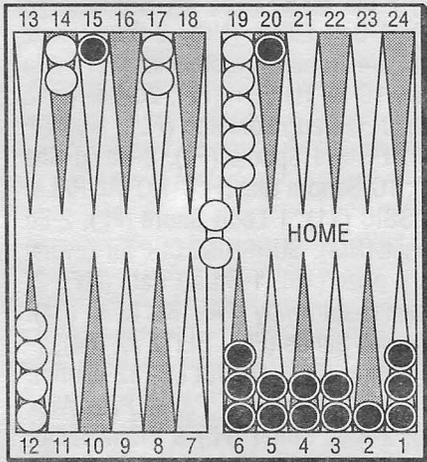
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★ Monday, February 16 is President's Day! ★

**PROBLEM #293
ANALYZED**

by Jake Jacobs

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

It is easy to see where Black went wrong. Prior to rolling Black yelled “gimme a four!” The dice snickered “tee hee!” and obliged him.

At first glance there are three obvious plays: 6/2, 6/3; 20/13, and 15/8. I would lean toward the latter, while Snowie would play 20/13. I don't know who would play 6/2, 6/3, but I am sure someone would, and perhaps they would be right. Let's see.

First, we'd better make sure we have found all the candidate plays. Since playing our three first leaves us fewer choices, why don't we try each possible four, and then see what threes go with them?

If we play 6/2 we can play a three from our 6-, 5-, or 4-point. I hope we agree that playing from the 6-point is superior to those other two, so we can ignore them.

If we play 5/1 then the only three we would consider is 5/2. This leaves no blots, while moving the gap higher, so it is, as they say, a “real play.”

If we play 15/11 we know 11/8 must be better than 6/3, so we can ignore 15/11, 6/3. (It may or may not be better than some of the other plays under consideration, but we can be fairly sure that it cannot be better than 15/8 so we needn't waste our time.) Similarly, we know that 20/13 must be better than 20/16, 6/3, and ignore that also.

But perhaps we are overlooking a different play of the three? Yes! We also have available 20/16, 5/2 and 15/11, 5/2; neither of those plays may be rejected out of hand. To our original triad we have added: 20/16, 5/2; 15/11, 5/2; and 5/1, 5/2. Interesting that all three plays have in common covering the deucepoint.

A 3-ply evaluation by Snowie 4.1 ranks its candidate, 20/13, as best (of course) with 15/11, 5/2 as a close second, my 15/8 as third, and 20/16, 5/2 as fourth. It sees relatively little difference between the top choices. It does not care for 5/1, 5/2, which it sees as a blunder, ranking between 20/16, 6/3 and 15/11, 6/3. Snowie *hates* 6/2, 6/3.

Before we roll the choices out, let's try to reason our way to the best choice.

What is wrong with 6/2, 6/3? Covering the deuce is good, but putting another builder lowdown is not (the main drawback to 5/1, 5/2 which piles another man on the *ace*). If White rolls a six we have no counterattack, greatly increasing her chance of anchoring on our 6-point before we have brought our three blots around.

Between 20/13 and 15/8 I still prefer 15/8. Neither play is crushed by anti-jokers; if I knew I was going to roll 3-3 or 4-4 next I'd slightly prefer 20/13; and if I knew I was going to roll 5-5 or 6-6 I'd prefer 15/8, but it isn't a big deal. I think 15/8 suffers more from multi-roll parlays, where after closing the board I am unable to extricate the last man back, but it has much better counterattack when White rolls an immediate deuce.

That leaves 20/16, 5/2 and 15/11, 5/2. Is there merit to shifting the slot? We do want to close White out if we can, but if we fail the deuce will be a problem for us. Keeping White behind a four-prime is good when we may have a lot of work still to do, but this late in the game the deucepoint (or even a phantom deucepoint game, where White stays on the bar, but we cannot close the deuce) is White's best chance. Covering with the three is looking better when it works.

How bad is it when White rolls an

immediate five? Not bad at all. If we played 15/11 with our four we will have twenty-one shots back at White from the bar. We win nearly 80% after being hit and nearly 80% of our wins are gammons.

It is still too close for me to call, so we'll do some rollouts. After a first pass 5/1, 5/2 proves, as predicted, to be a blunder, and 6/2, 6/3 is a triple whopper. The other four are still close, but we can finally and firmly eliminate those two candidates. Meanwhile, the top four have shifted positions. The new top choice is 15/11, 5/2, followed by 15/8, followed by 20/16, 5/2. Snowie's original favorite, 20/13 is now looking like an error.

The first pass was 360 games, done at 3-ply, standard settings. After several extensions bringing the total games for each candidate up to 2160 these are the rankings:

15/11, 5/2 has an expected value of 1.550, winning 89.5% (80.9% gammons won, 1.5% gammons lost);

20/16, 5/2 has an expected value of 1.544, also winning 89.5% (80.0% gammons won, 1.2% gammons lost);

15/8 has an expected value of 1.535, winning 88.9% (80.9% gammons won, 1.6% gammons lost – and a smidgen more BGs won for those checking my math);

20/13 has an expected value of 1.524, winning 88.9% (79.5% gammons won, 1.2% gammons lost).

Interesting, isn't it? This problem started out by rejecting covering, when it was done with the obvious four, only to embrace it, when it was done with the unobvious three.—Jake Jacobs Δ

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TO BEAVER OR NOT TO BEAVER?

Here There's No Question

BACKGAMMON DEDUCTIVE REASONING PUZZLER

by Joe Wollick

A careful reading of the backgammon poem shown below should provide you with all the information necessary to determine the original setup and what actually transpired.

Send your entries to CHICAGO POINT (e-mail or address) by October 25, 2003. The best synopsis of what actually happened will win a one year subscription to CHICAGO POINT. (Ties will be broken by random draw and the decision of CHICAGO POINT is final.)—*Joe Wollick*

How in the world could it possibly be that he was favored more than me?

A bear-off position, with two men each, but a lesson to me, it surely did teach.

He doubled me, it could not be believed. I scooped up the cube and beavered with greed.

I said, "I'm a favorite to get off in one roll. You sir are not. Now you'll pay the toll."

He cast his dice and rolled a failing four pips. I smiled and said, "Now you're in quite a fix."

He said, "We were tied in the pip count; it was right to double."
I said, "Now I'll send back the recube for all of your trouble."

It surprised me to see his calm disposition—to take an 8-cube in the resulting position.

With one mighty shake, as hard as I could, out came a double, but it was no good.

"I was favored when you cubed me!"
My temperature was hot.
He looked at me, then shook his head and countered, "You were not."

Almost two-thirds of the time, he would win, it was shown, because often my dice wouldn't even be thrown.

It was then and there, I was forced to relent that my wins totaled well under 40 percent.

WINNER'S CIRCLE



Aug.—Oct. 2003

•**7th Mindsports Olympiad** (Manchester, England; 16-25 Aug.)... ENGLISH OPEN (38): Gold-Bijan Mehdinejad, Silver-Rodney Lighton, Bronze-Vicky Chandler. OLYMPIAD CHAMPIONSHIP (18): G-Rodney Lighton, S-Kevin Stebbing, B-John Slattery. CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS (7): G-Steve Rimmer, S-Vicky Chandler, B-Dawn Coley. WEEKEND TOURNAMENT (22): G-Martyn Hamer, S-John Rudolf, B-Steve Rimmer. MANCHESTER BLITZ 912): G-Irving Czechowicz, S-Uldis Lapikens, B-Simonetta Barone. BEGINNER (5): G-Dawn Colley, S-David Rudolf, B-Pauline Rudolf. BIBA PENTAMIND COMPETITION (55): 1-John Slattery, 2-Rodney Lighton, 3-Jeff Barber, 4-Irving Czechowicz.

•**Newcastle Open** (Kotara, Australia; 24 Aug.)... OPEN (40): 1-Alex Falon, 2-Jay Deva, 3-Peter Brown.

•**Gammonitis Hare & Hounds Trophy** (Solihull, England, 30-31 Aug.)... OPEN (28): 1-Wayne Felton, 2-Ray Kershaw; 1C-Julian Minwalla, 2c-Pat Holly. TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER (15): 1-John Leavey, 2-Nigel Merrigan, 3-Andy Bell.

•**15th European Championship** (Nova Gorica, Slovenia; 5-7 Sep.)... MASTERS (64): 1-John Slattery (Scotland), 2-Rolf Vetsch (Switzerland), 3/4-Gia Abesadze (Georgia) / Christian Liebe-Harkort (Germany); 1C-Katja Sophie Spillum (Norway), 2C-Lars Trabolt (Denmark), 3C/4C-Arild Idsøe (Norway) / Gerhard Janotta (Germany); 1LC-Sven Odin Spillum Svendsen (Norway), 2LC-Maia Peicheva (Bulgaria). Ladies Prize: Katja Sophie Spillum (Norway). CHAMPIONS (50): 1-Horst Ernst (Germany), 2-Peter Blachian (Germany), 3/4-Andrey Markov (Bulgaria) / Robert Piccioni (Italy); 1C-Gianmichele D'Onofrio (Italy), 2C-Massimo Moretti (Italy), 3C/4C-Giuseppe Ricciardi (Italy) / Adam Robak (Poland); 1LC-Peter Gombert (Germany), 2LC-Bambi de Bruin (Germany/Spain). Ladies Prize: Rosemary Bensley (England). INTERMEDIATE (68): 1-Renato Sovani (Italy), 2-Vasilios Kyrkos (Greece), 3/4-Stefano Catani (Italy) / Gianluca Curzi (Italy); 1C-Herbert Höllreigel (Germany), 2C-Mattia Occhialini (Italy), 3C/4C-Roberto Piccinini (Italy) / Domenico Torrielli (Italy); 1LC-Alex Naylor (Italy), 2LC-Ingrid Neugebauer (Germany). Ladies Prize: Ingrid Neugebauer (Germany). SUPER JACKPOT (16): 1-Lars Bønding (Denmark), 2-Jean-Philippe Rohr (France). MASTER CONSULTING DOUBLES: 1-Paul Magriel (USA) & Andreas Nussbaecher (Germany), 2-Edgar

Altmayer (Romania) & Mihai Golopenta (Romania). CHAMPION CONSULTING DOUBLES (13 teams): 1-Daniel Bruni & Daniel Scheidiger (Switzerland), 2-Lise Howard & Marcel Liechti (Switzerland). ROGASKA SPECIAL DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Gia Abesadze & Nodari Gagua (Georgia), 2-Laurent Arnone (France) & Nadya Marinova (Bulgaria). HEINER HAUSSLEITER MEMORIAL WARM-UP (88); 1-Federico D'Onofrio (Italy), 2-Hans Liby (Norway). SPERTI TROPHY (76): 1-Sven Odin Spillum Svendsen (Norway), 2-Maria Krancheva (Bulgaria). ONE POINTTORNEO DEL PRESIDENTE #1 (64): 1-Stefano Catani (Italy). #2 (64): 1-Walter Landolt (Switzerland). #3 (64): 1-Ana Nguen (Bulgaria). MITTELEUROPA POKER TOURNAMENT: 1-Christian Liebe-Harkort (Germany), 2-Steffen Grosskopf (Germany), 3-Peter Gombert (Germany). MITTELEUROPA BLACKJACKTOURNAMENT: 1-Bianca Del Pont (Italy), 2-Werner Reisel (Austria/Germany), 3-Mario Periotti (Italy), 4-Gerhard Janotta (Germany), 5-Sandro Mescola (Italy), 6-Danila Pesavento (Italy), 7-Daniel Bruni (Switzerland).

•**Roy Hollands Trophy** (Coventry, England; 6-7 Sep.)... MAIN (24): 1-David Nathan, 2-John Wright, 3/4-Uldis Lapikens / Michael Crane, 5/8-Paul Christmas / Rachel Rhodes / Tony Lee / Emmanuel Di Bona. CONSOLATION (22): 1-Emmanuel Di Bona, 2-Myke Wignall, 3/4-Paul Barwick / Uldis Lapikens. LAST CHANCE (16): 1-Jeff Barber, 2-Peter Christmas, 3/4-Dave Motley / Leslie Singleton. SUICIDE! (32): 1-Rachel Rhodes, 2-Roy Hollands, 3/4-Peter Chan / Paul Christmas. FRIDAY KNOCKOUT (8). 1-Michael Crane, 2-Roy Hollands. DOUBLES (8): 1-Boxing Day Massacre, 2-Heaven Lee.

•**Red, White & Blue Open** (Houston, TX; 13 Sep.)... OPEN (22): 1-Gary Fomby, 2-Ira Hessel, 3-Tom Wright, 4-James Bray; 1C-Gonzalo Molina, 2C-Jim Woods.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 14 Sep.)... OPEN (4): 1-George Nader, 2-Al Tesoro. INTERMEDIATE (4): 1-Danielle Bastarache, 2-John Gdowik.

•**Towpath Inn Tournament—ABT** (Turin, NY; 19-21 September)... OPEN (9): 1-Eden Windish (Canada), 2-Rich Reasin (NY), 3-John Mansour (NY). DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Joanne Reid & Alan Robinson (Canada), 2-Robert Lessard & Sharon Smith (Canada)... *Directed by Eden Windish.*

•**21st Viator Cup** (La Jolla, CA; 20-21 Sep.)... OPEN (16): 1-Bob Glass, 2-Norm Wiggins, 3-Ray Fogerlund. LIMITED (15): 1-Dennis Rutkowski, 2-Bill Papa, 3-Saul Meier... *Directed by Pat Gibson.*

•**Bar Point Saturday** (Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 4 Oct.)... OPEN (14): 1/2-Herb Roman / Peter Kalba, 3/4-Nora Luna-Righter / Joe Wollick; 1C-Joe Wollick, 2C-Nora Luna-Righter. Δ

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