

michigan summer championships

A WOOLSEY WEEKEND

But John Jennings Stops Kit's sweep in the Michigan Masters

At one point during the Michigan Summer Championships, backgammon and bridge author/analyst Kit Woolsey of Kensington, California was alive and in the money in the Masters, Open, and Doubles events. It was clearly going to be his weekend. The only question was how many sacks would he need to carry away his prize money?

Carol Joy Cole and a very capable staff ran the annual Independence Day weekend tournament at the Sheraton Novi Hotel 30 June–4 July. There were 162 main event participants, down 10% from the previous year, but still a solid showing.



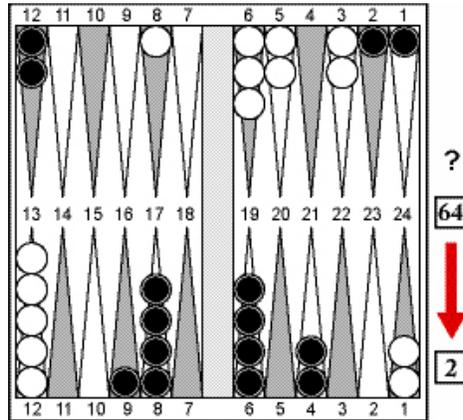
Open winner/Masters finalist Kit Woolsey.

Kit, the world's #13 Giant of Backgammon rolled through the tournament on skill and outstanding dice. In the Open event, he blew out Neil Kazaross and Bill Davis to win the undefeated sheet. eXtreme Gammon rated his luck advantage near six in both matches. But this was a true double elimination tournament, so whoever survived the one-loss bracket would still have a shot at him.

That individual was former Pittsburgh tourney director Steve Hast. Steve defeated CSI co-director, Bill Davis in the second chance finals to get his shot at Kit.

The first 13-point match was initially close. After six games, the match was tied at 4-all. In the next six games, Kit outscored Steve five to two. Then in game 13 with Kit leading 9–6, Steve contemplated a double:

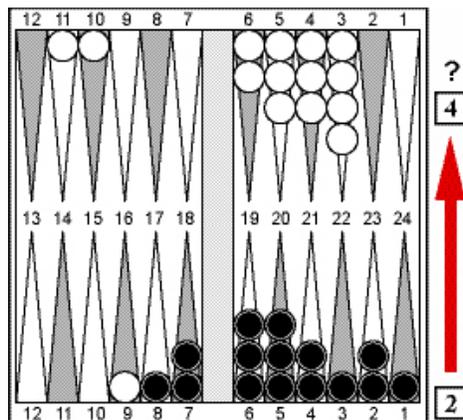
Michigan Open finals. Kit Woolsey (Black) leads Steve Hast (White) 9–6 to 13. White on roll. **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



Steve Hast cubed early. Kit's take (with all of his checkers in play and his back men split) was trivial. Steve still must extricate two back men buttoned up on the 24-point. Additionally, he lacks the firepower necessary to pull off a quick closeout.

After the smoke cleared, the following non-contact recube opportunity developed for Mr. Woolsey:

Michigan Open finals. Kit Woolsey (Black) leads Steve Hast (White) 9–6 to 13. Black on roll. **RECUBE ACTION(S)?**



Kit redoubled and was prepared to take his two points when Steve took the 4-cube and rewhipped on 8 for the match! This massive blunder cost him about 6% match equity on its own.

Following the match, Steve explained why he decided to put the match on the line in this position:

"Many times during the match when I had rolled a joker, Kit immediately came back with a great counter roll. Aware of Kit's incredibly high luck factor over his past four matches, I decided to take this cube and put the first match on the line. Dropping would put me down 6–11 to 13, yielding me around 16% match wins against normal rolling. I calculated I had about 10% equity in this position, but still decided to take the recube anyway.

"If I win the the first match in this fashion, I psychologically gain a huge boost and possibly get him talking to himself. I didn't play the first match particularly well, but felt I would be mentally sharp for the rubber match. So I sacrificed 5–6% equity (and maybe not that much due to Kit's superior dice) for the small chance I would hit the jackpot with high dice the balance of the game."

Kit breezed home to victory winning over \$6000 in prize money, not counting the side pool and Calcutta.

MICHIGAN MASTERS

After knocking off (in order) Harvey Gillis, Stacy Turner, Steve Sax, and David Rockwell, Kit faced Illinois expert John Jennings. John had a tough road as well besting Richard Munitz, Steve Mellen, Mike Senkiewicz, and Al Hodis. Additionally, John had a nice run in the Open tourney placing 4th/5th.



Director Carol Joy Cole awards John Jennings the Michigan Masters trophy.

It looked like another run-away with Kit winning the first three games. Then things started to go John's way. Trailing 2–4 to 11, John ran off five straight points. Then in game seven with John leading 7–4,

[Continued on page 6]

CHICAGO POINT

A Prime Source of Backgammon Information

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LETTERS



c/o CHICAGO POINT
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A NICE THANK-YOU

Enclosed is my two year renewal. Thanks for 25+ years of pleasure with CHICAGO POINT.—*Don Bernstein, Aventura, Florida*

REQUEST FOR LOWER ENTRY FEES

The economy stinks and Bar Point Club Sunday games are suffering! Nowadays people just don't want to spend \$50 (with the \$10 side pool) for Backgammon! Sunday tournaments are double points. Why increase the entry cost by four times? (\$10 to \$40).—*Mike Wolock, Chicago, Illinois*

We have five singles tournaments per year and the Open entry fee is \$35 plus a \$5 food coupon (Intermediates pay \$15 + \$5). Compare this to the New York Club with a \$100 entry fee meeting monthly. Our \$35 fee is really not so bad for a bimonthly

[Continued on page 3]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
31				

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

*Denotes new or revised listing

NATIONAL

American Backgammon Tour events underlined

Jul 15*	Third Thursday Bonus (Wisconsin State), Liquid Sports Bar, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Jul 18*	Bellingham Monthly, Pacific Martial Arts, Bellingham, Washington	360/733-6173
Jul 23-25	15th Minnesota Open, Courtyard by Marriott, Bloomington, Minnesota	612/718-2613
Jul 24*	Cincinnati Club BarbeCube V, Peter & Gina's, West Chester, Ohio	513/807-6926
Jul 24*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/261-4583
Jul 25*	Atlanta Northside Club Monthly Tournament, Atlanta, Georgia	770/612-0818
Jul 30*	3rd Annual Pub Club Summer Trophy, Playoffs Bar, Carol Stream, Illinois	630/606-2388
Jul 30-Aug 1	<u>Thousand Islands Tournament, Pine Tree Point, Alexandria Bay, New York</u>	<u>585/396-0969</u>
Jul 31*	Tampa Bay Saturday Special, Hampton Inn, Clearwater, Florida	727/786-9133
Aug 1*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Brubaker's Pub, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Aug 8	Bar Point Club Sunday Tournament, Holiday Inn-O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois	773/583-6464
Aug 8*	Cincinnati Club Monthly Tournament, Max & Erma's, Sharonville, Ohio	513/807-6926
Aug 10*	Arizona Club Monthly, Teakwoods Tavern & Grill, Phoenix, Arizona	602/762-2288
Aug 14*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Peking Express, Berkeley, California	831/261-4583
Aug 15*	Bellingham Monthly, Pacific Martial Arts, Bellingham, Washington	360/733-6173
Aug 15*	Pair-O-Dice Monthly Tournament, Lincoln Center Atrium, New York, New York	212/222-7177
Aug 19*	Third Thursday Bonus (Illinois State), Liquid Sports Bar, Flint, Michigan	810/232-9731
Aug 19-22	<u>Florida Championship, Marriott Hotel North, Fort Lauderdale, Florida</u>	<u>954/564-0340</u>
Aug 28*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Britannia Arms, Cupertino, California	831/261-4583
Aug 29*	Atlanta Northside Club Monthly, Jerry Godsey's residence, Atlanta, Georgia	770/612-0818
Sep 3-6	<u>Wisconsin State Championships, Radisson Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin</u>	<u>608/516-9109</u>
Sep 5*	Ohio State Club Monthly, Brubaker's Pub, Akron, Ohio	330/268-4610
Sep 10-12	SOLD OUT: New Orleans Sweet 16, Inn on Bourbon Street, New Orleans, LA	504/366-7498
Sep 11*	Backgammon By the Bay Monthly, Peking Express, Berkeley, California	831/261-4583
Sep 11*	Tampa Bay Club Monthly, Hampton Inn, Tarpon Springs, Florida	727/786-9133
Sep 12*	Cincinnati Club Monthly Tournament, Max & Erma's, Sharonville, Ohio	513/807-6926
Sep 18-19*	Vietor Cup Invitational, Jon Vietor's residence, La Jolla, California	818/901-0464
Sep 24-26	<u>Colorado State Championships, Hilton Hotel, Aurora, Colorado</u>	<u>303/791-0271</u>
Oct 8-10	<u>Illinois State Championships, Grand Hotel, Peoria, Illinois</u>	<u>847/677-6852</u>
Oct 14-17	<u>Mid-Atlantic Championships, Marriott Hotel, Towson, Maryland</u>	<u>954/249-1416</u>
Nov 10-14	<u>Las Vegas Open, Bally's Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada</u>	<u>702/218-8238</u>
Dec 3-5	<u>California State Championship, Airtel Hotel, Van Nuys, California</u>	<u>818/901-0464</u>
Jan 22-29	2011 Backgammon & Poker On Board, Western Caribbean Princess Cruise	773/583-6464

OUTSIDE USA

Jul 11-18	35th World Championship, Fairmont Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco	USA: 212/222-7177
Jul 16-18	Festival of Games 7th Czech Open, CEZ Arena, Pardubice, Czech Republic	420602-222282
Jul 20-25	CANCELLED: 7th Riviera & Nations Cup, Pullman Mandelieu, Cannes, France	336-75841247
Jul 31-Aug 1*	Bergen City Championship, Torgallmenningen, Bergen, Norway	47920-27713
Aug 1-5	EBGT: 4th Gogi Bukia Memorial & Georgian Open, Tbilisi, Georgia	491715-422222
Aug 6-8	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Barceló Hotel, Hinckley, England	441522-888676
Aug 7-8	TBT: 5th Karadeniz Championship/WBF-TR, Kordon Café, Eregli, Turkey	905332-352555
Aug 19-22*	Backgammon on the Beach, Grado Beach, Gorizia, Italy	390331-923537
Aug 20-22	ESOB: Bristol Open 2010, Artillery Grounds, Bristol, England	447904-546188
Aug 27-29	Swiss Championships 2010, Casino Barrière, Montreux, Switzerland	4179-3584825
Aug 28-29	17th Danish Mixed Doubles Championship, River Club, Valby, Denmark	4533-363601
Sep 1-5*	19th Mitteleuropa Championship, Congress Casino Baden, Vienna, Austria	390331-923537
Sep 3-5	Backgammon in London at BIBA, Barceló Hotel, Hinckley, England	447985-941729
Sep 3-5	WBGT: 30th Swedish Open, Quality Globe Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden	46708-541362
Sep 10-12*	20th Norwegian Championship, Thon Hotel, Åsgårdstrand, Norway	47-91-99-7155
Sep 11-12	BBT: 8th Antwerp Open, Café den Bengel, Antwerp, Belgium	32475-256734
Sep 11-12	Hessen-Cup, Restaurant Stadthalle Bergen, Frankfurt, Germany	491743-397363
Sep 16-19	5th Sorrento Coast Tournament, Villa Angelina, Sorrento, Italy	39335-221412
Sep 17-19*	TBT: 5th Bodrum Championship/WBF-TR, Delfi Hotel, Bodrum, Turkey	905332-352555
Sep 18-19*	36th Annual Finnish Open, Puotilan Kartano, Helsinki, Finland	358466-153751
Sep 24-26*	1st Kharkiv Open, Hotel Mir, Kharkiv, Ukraine	49241-74140
Sep 24-26*	WBGT/ESOB: 2nd London Open, London, England	442077-001798
Sep 25-26*	TBGT: 2nd Izmir Open, Best Western Hotel Konak, Izmir, Turkey	905324-279454
Sep 29-Oct 3*	13th Austrian Open/Doubles Challenge, Hotel Veronika, Seefeld, Austria	390331-923537
Oct 1-3*	23rd Italian Championship, Hotel Veronika, Seefeld, Austria	390331-923537
Oct 1-3*	Sandy Osborne Memorial, Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, UK	441522-888676
Oct 7-10*	EBGT: 1st Mallorca Challenge, Marriott Son Antem, Llucmajor, Mallorca	491715-422222
Oct 8-11*	WBGT: 16th Japan Open, Shidax Hall, Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan	817-55481741
Oct 15-17*	5th Milano Open, Castello di Carimate, Carimate near Como, Italy	393474-330340
Oct 15-17*	2nd German Masters, Hotel Kaiserbrunnen, Brakel, Germany	49711-486190
Oct 16-17*	Australian Open, City Tattersalls Club, Sydney, Australia	612405-373225

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 2]

venture. And as for attendance, we have been drawing mid to upper 20s for quite a number of years.—Ed.

OLDSTERS WELCOME

I am writing because I have the desire to play backgammon again. I am 82 years of

age (not 82 years OLD).

I came to your club some years ago and drew a very disturbed person who slammed the board shut when I landed (luckily) on his two open men. I had never played the game with another player, before in my life, and have never played another person since.

I would love to try my self-taught skill with a knowledgeable player. I can make my moves quite rapidly and “expertly,” in

spite of the fact that I have never competed.—Charles Melidosian, via email

Sorry for your past problems, Charles. Come again and we're sure you'll have a better time.—Ed.

THAT AIN'T ME!

That picture you got out of the 1978 BG Guide magazine and printed in May and June is wrong. I don't know who it is, but it wasn't me pictured with Fran Goldfarb.

The same issue did have me pictured correctly on another page, though. Here I am with Gertrude Bayne and John Karikas at the 1977 New York State Championship.—Alan Grunwald, Mid-Jersey Backgammon Club, Morganville, New Jersey

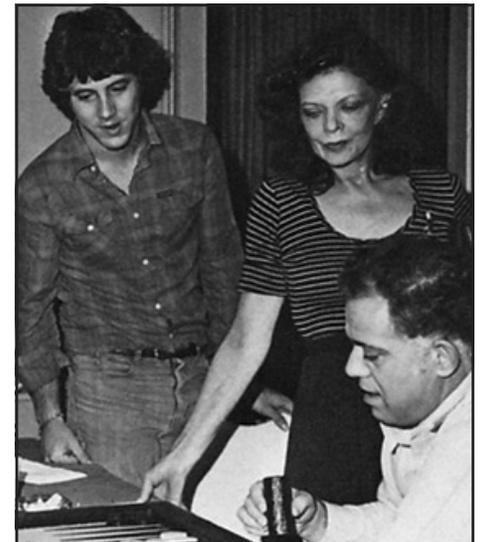


AMERICAN BACKGAMMON TOUR ★ 2010

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Top 100 through 4 July 2010 after 11 tournaments
 (Upcoming events: Minnesota, 1000 Islands, Florida, Wisconsin)

Kit Woolsey	31.34	Justin Nunez	9.09	Alfred Mamlet	4.83	Barry Silliman	3.15
John O'Hagan	26.67	George Haskour	9.09	Josh Racko	4.69	Al Faller	3.15
Richard Munitz	25.74	Jeremy Bagai	9.05	Johnny Jigamian	4.65	David Rockwell	3.11
Gary Fries	25.20	Scott Cole	8.89	Mark Andrus	4.50	Garry Kallos	3.04
Dorn Bishop	18.60	Ray Fogelund	8.64	Elli Nache	4.49	Damian Plesec	3.04
Ed O'Laughlin	18.31	Joe Russell	8.55	Sergiy Rybiy	4.45	Marcy Kossar	2.97
Bob Steen	17.33	Ary Nogueira	8.00	Lynn Ehrlich	4.44	Eden Windish	2.91
Gary Bauer	16.78	Ken Bame	7.67	Damon Singer	4.44	Jolie Rubin	2.91
David Rubin	16.77	Sasan Taher	7.33	Sal Chehayeb	4.38	Terry Weiss	2.83
Jesse Eaton	16.06	Greg Cottle	7.33	Faddoul Khoury	4.33	Rob Reynolds	2.70
Patrick Gibson	16.00	Prince Barlow	7.20	Lucky Nelson	4.33	Terry Seymour	2.70
Mary Hickey	14.67	Bill Davis	6.92	Mark Antranikian	4.33	Pete Mostoufi	2.58
Steve Hast	13.83	Dean Adamian	6.92	Dujuan Meekins	4.20	Jesse Jestadt	2.58
Dana Nazarian	13.83	Jerry Godsey	6.40	Ken Tyszko	4.20	Ed Johnson	2.58
Stick Rice	12.83	Mike Corbett	6.40	Gary Schachtschneider	4.00	Ryan Hast	2.58
Mike Senkiewicz	12.80	Gregg Cattanach	6.30	Tom Wheeler	4.00	Sheri Peters	2.44
Sean Garber	12.60	Paul Polatov	6.07	Roz Ferris	3.83	Carol Joy Cole	2.42
Lynda Clay	11.69	Oleg Raygorodsky	5.82	Rick Barabino	3.78	Michael Flohr	2.42
Larry Yudin	11.64	Dave Pink	5.82	Michelin Chabot	3.78	Bob Koca	2.42
Al Hodis	11.23	Bob Weigel	5.40	Neil Kazaross	3.67	Daniel Stroberger	2.40
Paul Weaver	11.00	Donny Lomuto	5.17	Bob Hickey	3.60	Ben McCracken	2.29
Rory Pascar	10.39	Glenn Ramsey	5.17	John Jennings	3.46	Aaron Foust	2.22
Patty Geoffroy	10.33	Ernest Ho	5.17	Steve Sax	3.46	Adrian Rios	2.10
Mel Rappaport	10.08	John Baron	5.05	Stacy Turner	3.46	Richard Stawowy	2.10
Tak Morioka	9.67	Carter Mattig	5.04	Steve Nelson	3.20	Larry Taylor	2.00



The “real” Alan Grunwald (left) at the 1977 New York State Championship.

[Continued on page 5]



Chicago

CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB
2010 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 6 JULY

Rory Pascar	20.32	Julius High	6.80	Alice Kay	2.76	Paul Baraz	0.88
Phil Simborg	16.80	Mike Minkovski	6.72	Ken Bond	2.64	Greg King	0.88
Bill Bartholomay	12.36	David Rockwell	6.64	Ken Tibbs	2.32	Mihai Pop	0.80
Howard Markowitz	10.48	Carter Mattig	6.48	Amy Trudeau	2.24	Stefan Pop	0.72
Bob Steen	10.00	Mike Peters	6.40	Jerry Brooks	2.16	Rolf Boettger	0.72
Bill Davis	9.96	Nora Luna Righter	6.40	Mitch Pomper	2.00	Richard Pearlman	0.64
Tim Mabee	9.28	Wayne Wiest	6.40	John Gaski	1.92	Dean Livas	0.64
Larry Goldstein	8.76	Tak Morioka	6.24	Royal Robinson	1.68	Alex Owen	0.56
Michael Ginat	8.04	Georgina Flanagan	5.36	Adrian Rios	1.60	Linda Rockwell	0.48
Mike Sutton	8.04	Dujuan Meekins	3.84	Ralf Boettger	1.56	Beth Whitney	0.48
Herb Roman	7.60	Steve Klesker	3.76	Mark Murray	1.28	Kwong Chan	0.48
Reginald Porter	7.48	Scott Casty	3.60	Shaw Dogan	1.28	Paul Lombardo	0.48
Dave Settles	7.36	J. A. Miller	3.24	Wendy Kaplan	1.28	Mike Pufpaf	0.48
Bill Keefe	7.28	Serge Bondar	3.20	Lucky Nelson	1.28	Roger Hickman	0.32
Eric Johnson	7.16	Peter Kalba	3.16	Mark Ostrovsky	1.16	Les Moshinsky	0.32
Christopher Shanava	7.12	Dan Weymouth	2.88	Alex Aliyev	1.04	Leslie Lockett	0.32
Mike Wolock	7.00	Gary Kay	2.84	John Spatafora	0.96	Oleg Raygorodsky	0.24

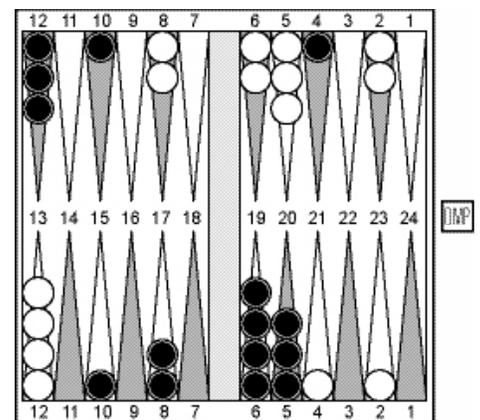
RORY PASCAR had a great June with 5.12 points. He most likely set a record for winning points ten Tuesdays in a row (April 20–June 22). Mike Wolock (4.12) and Bill Davis (3.52) were runner's-up.

your move

PROBLEM #356

to be analyzed by Kit Woolsey

9 point match tied at 8 to 8 (DMP).
BLACK TO PLAY 3-3.



THE UNAIDED EYE

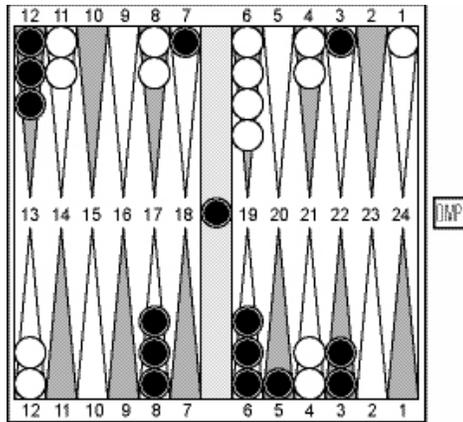


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THE 'LADIES' AID

Dear Danny: This challenging position occurred in the Last Chance of a 2010 ABT tournament. Facing some very serious trouble, I got lucky and rolled "the girls":

Match to 5 points tied at 4-4. **BLACK TO PLAY 5-5.**



How should I handle these lovely ladies? I thought about the overall situation and decided on a particular play. My strategy proved to be incorrect as my opponent

went on to win the game and match.

I recorded the position and when I got home, I rolled it out on Snowie. Turns out I made the third best choice. Please give me your insight before you see the rollout and then after. Perhaps I can learn something from my error after all.—*Lady Killer*

DEAR KILLER: In this position, the bar-anchor not only provides more safety but is also very strong, one point holding three stripped points of the opponent, so it is tempting to make it, B/10, 23/18. However, this play leaves two hittable blots in my own courts, and more significantly, fails to make my own 5-point. So I'll stick with the obvious B/5, which leaves the blots in my opponent's courts and strengthens my own board.

In general, when one of my plays makes the 5-point, I need truly compelling reasons to choose any other.—*Yours, Danny*

Snowie Rollout Data

6000 cubeless rollouts were run for each play. Parameters were full, 3-ply, precise.

	BLACK			WHITE		
	BGs	Gammons	Wins	Wins	Gammons	BGs
1. R bar/5				-0.027		
	0.6%	11.3%	48.6%	51.4%	19.6%	0.4%
2. R bar/10 23/18				-0.041 (-0.013)		
	0.6%	11.1%	48.0%	52.0%	16.1%	0.4%
3. R bar/15 23/18 13/8			8	-0.048 (-0.021)		
	0.5%	10.4%	47.6%	52.4%	17.1%	0.6%

Danny Kleinman Responds

No surprises here. Making the 5-point maximizes winning chances, while making the bar-anchor minimizes the risk of getting primed in or closed out and thus of losing gammons. Of the two plays that make the bar-anchor, the play that leaves the greater number of shots is worse. At double matchpoint, where gammons are irrelevant, making the 5-point is clear. In money play, or at match scores where gammons count normally, the safety of the bar-anchor would swing the decision the other way.—*DK*

Questions for Danny Kleinman should be addressed to: Ask Danny, c/o CHICAGO POINT, 3940 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue 504; Chicago, IL 60659-3155 or send e-mail to: bg@chicagopoint.com



Answers from the quiz on page 7.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 6. No Double | 3. No Double |
| 5. Double | 2. Double |
| 4. No Double | 1. Double |

New Orleans "Sweet 16" Backgammon Tournament

September 10-12, 2010

in the heart of the French Quarter.

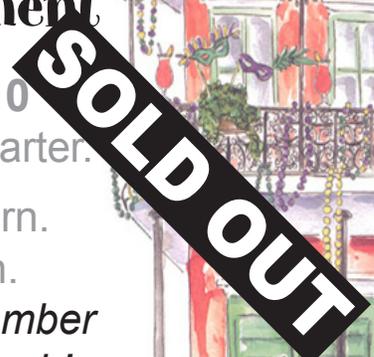
\$200 entry fee. 100% return.

16-player entry limitation.

You missed out on our September event. Don't miss out in March! We're holding another "Sweet 16" **March 18-20, 2011.**

Call Will Hunn at (504) 366-7498.

Brochures: NolaBackgammon.org



ILLINOIS ACTION



Bill Davis
773/583-6464

Peter Kalba
312/316-1432

Tuesday, 6:30 P.M. at Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago. 773/693-5800.

Sunday Bimonthly, 12:00 NOON at Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago. 773/693-5800.

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL CLUB: Tournaments Monday, 6:00 P.M. at Ride The Nine; 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Michael Flohr (309/662-7967).

MIDSTATEBG CLUB: Tourn. Tues., 6:00 P.M. at Ride The Nine; 503 N. Prospect, Bloomington. Ed Bauder (309/830-1632).

SANGAMON VALLEY BACKGAMMON ASSOC.: Tournaments Wednesday, 6:00 P.M. at Capitol Teletrack, 1766 W. Wabash Ave., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

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

PUB CLUB: Tournaments Thurs., 6:45 P.M. at Playoffs Bar, 720 E. North Ave., Carol Stream. Tim Mabee (630/606-2388).

CHICAGO BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION: Tournaments Thursday, 6:15 P.M. at The Parthenon; 314 S. Halsted, Chicago. Phil Simborg (312/543-0522) or Carter Mattig (312/493-2911).

PEORIABG CLUB: Tourn. Thursday, 6:30 P.M. at Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 Prospect, Peoria. Sue Will (309/699-6005).

MUNITZ WINS IN LA

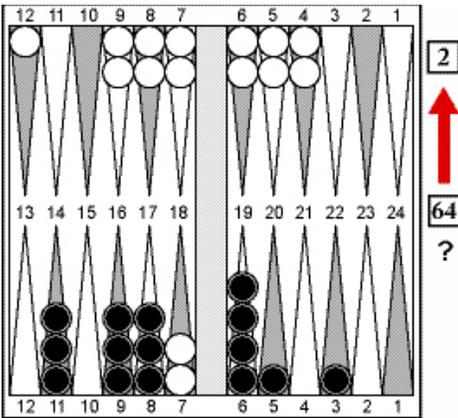
Defeats Nunez in modified double elimination event.



Richard Munitz

In this year's modified double elimination finals of Patrick Gibson's Los Angeles Open (11-13 June at the Airtel Hotel in Van Nuys, CA), Justin Nunez (CA), bested Richard Munitz (NY) to win the undefeated bracket. But Richard battled back defeating Dorn Bishop

LA Open finals. Richard Munitz (Black) leads Justin Nunez (White) 9-8 to 11. Black on roll **CUBE ACTION(S)?**



(CA) and then Joe Russell (CA) to earn a rematch against Nunez. Only one win was required to take the title. The 11-point match went right down to the wire.

Ahead 9-8 in the position at left, Richard doubled early with only a 10 pip lead (116 to 126). But the lead held up and Mr. Munitz won his seventh ABT title of all-time. A well-played match by both sides.

Special congrats to Super Jackpot winner Joe Russell (who was also third in the Open) and to all the other winners. Another fine event directed by our favorite MFIC. Δ

LOS ANGELES OPEN

OPEN (50): 1-Richard Munitz (NY), 2-Justin Nunez (CA), 3-Joe Russell (CA); 1C-George Haskour (CA), 2C-Jeremy Bagai (CA), 3C/4C-Dorn Bishop (CA) / Elli Nache (CA). ADVANCED (34): 1-Lynda Clay (CO), 2-Johnny Jigamian (NV); 1C-Josh Racko (CA), 2C-Peter Wisniewski (CA), 3C/4C-Ali Avcioglu (CA) / Jesse Eaton (MN). LIMITED (9): 1-Andy Plat (CA), 2-Carol McGannon (Canada); 1C-Austin O'Laughlin (CA). SUPER-32 (32): 1-Joe Russell (CA), 2-Malcolm Davis (TX), 3/4-Neil Kazaross (IL) / Sasan Taher (CA). PAUL DINGWELL AMATEUR JACKPOT (16): 1-Doug DeWitt (CA), 2-Cheryl Andersen (CA). OVERFLOW DINGWELL AMATEUR (13): 1-Ed Rosenblum (NM), 2-Alex Gerding (FL). 2-POINT QUICKIES (16): 1-Ted Chee (CA). BLITZ (64): 1-John Rockwell (CA), 2-Ted Chee (CA). DOUBLES (12 teams): 1-Harvey Gillis (WA) & Alfred Mamlet (MD), 2-J.P. Deleurme (CA) & Paul Gedigian (CA), 3-Candace Mayeron (CA) & John Rockwell (CA). USBGF HOWARD RING MEMORIAL QUIZ (34): Open Division: 1-John O'Hagan (IN), 2-Richard Munitz (NY). Advanced: 1-Alex Eshagian (CA), 2-Cheryl Andersen (CA).

LETTERS...

[Continued from page 3]

INTERESTING RULING QUESTION

Here's a ruling that came up at our Las Vegas Backgammon Club and we'd like your opinion.

Player rolls and completes a legal play. He then moves his dice on the board without lifting them and without advising his opponent. According to Rule 4.5, he has not concluded his play; however, by not notifying his opponent, he has left himself open to a possibly adverse ruling.

I ruled that the player had completed his roll under the logic of Rule 5.4 (last sentence). I interpreted the movement of the dice after a legal play has been made to be unnecessary and "capricious."

What's your take on this?—Tony Anton & Jason Lee, Las Vegas Backgammon Club

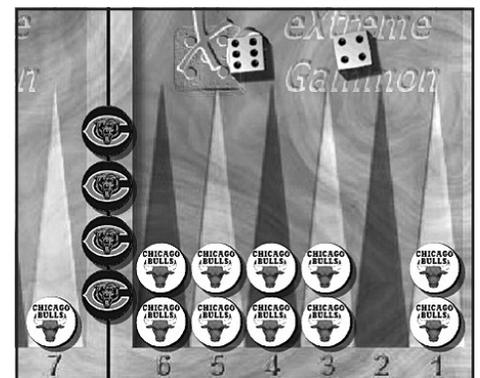
If a player rolls his dice and prior to making a legal move, slides them closer to himself to see them or to make room for a future checker play, then we rule that his dice are still down, whether he announces his intentions to reposition his dice or not.

But if a player makes a legal play and then moves or slides his dice and the opponent rolls, I evoke 4.5 and rule that in this case, if he did not announce that he was adjusting his dice, the dice are ruled "up." That's because in the second case, a player could be trying to draw a fast roll by purposely dragging his dice on the board and that is unethical.—Ed.

EXTREME GAMMON—MODIFIED

I modified some checkers in eXtreme Gammon. The ones shown below are for Chicago sports fans. I've done a number of other variations including soccer balls and Krugerrands in honor of the World Cup.

Just wanted to share with your readers what retired guys do in their spare time.—Duane Jensen, St. Paul, Minnesota Δ



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Wisconsin State Backgammon Championships

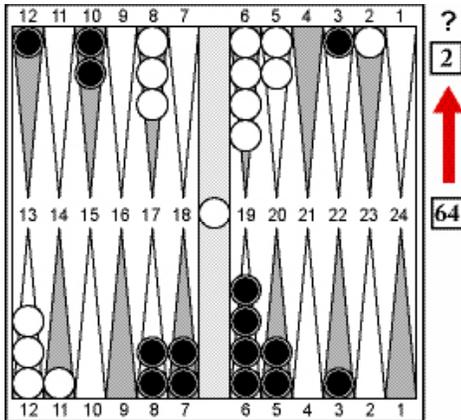
September 3-6, 2010

MICHIGAN...

[Continued from page 1]

this position arose:

Michigan Masters. John Jennings (Black) leads Kit Woolsey (White) 7-4 to 11. Black doubles. **SHOULD WHITE TAKE?**



Was the position too good to double? John didn't think so and correctly turned the cube. Perhaps tired from all the matches he had played, or maybe looking ahead to the impending Open finals, Kit accepted the dangerous cube. Snowie ranks it as a monster blunder of 0.500 magnitude. John rolled on to win a gammon and capture the \$7,000 first prize. In John Jennings' own words:

"The entire event was surreal. It was like a baseball player dreaming about facing an all-time great with the World Series title on the line.

"My toughest Masters match occurred in the semifinals against Al Hodis (NY) where I had to overcome a 0-7 deficit. I was a bit nervous starting the 11-pt. finals vs. Kit and then got real nervous when I doubled leading 7-4 in the last game and started to roll home a match-winning gammon.

"I remember Greg Tomlin and I in Puer to Rico studying a match between Kit and Neil Kazaross over an actual board. Never

would I have dreamt that I'd be playing against a legend in this big a match let alone winning! Kit was a gracious opponent and his greatness definitely made this my biggest win ever. Thanks to CJC for a great event!"

OTHER EVENTS

Congrats to the other other winners including Larry Yudin (Canada) in the 64-player Intermediate, Connie Wetzell (MN) in the Novice, and David & Linda Rockwell in the Doubles. And congratulations to Carol Joy Cole for another successful summer backgammon festival. Complete results Δ:

MICHIGAN SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIPS: OPEN (83): 1-Kit Woolsey (CA), 2-Steve Hast (PA), 3-Bill Davis (IL), 4/5-John Jennings (IL) / Steve Sax (CA); 1C-Dana Nazarian (CA), 2C-Dean Adamian (MI), 3C/4C-Rory Pascor (IL) / Stacy Turner (FL). INTERMEDIATE (64): 1-Larry Yudin (Canada), 2-Oleg Raygorodsky (IL), 3-Eden Windish (Canada); 1C-Dave Pink (MI), 2C-Jolie Rubin (IL), 3C/4C-John Baron (OH) / Marcy Kossar (CT). NOVICE (15): 1-Connie Wetzell (MN), 2-Samantha Shaffer (MI); 1C-Fran Miller (OH); 1LC-Greg Smith (NC). MICHIGAN MASTERS (32): 1-John Jennings (IL), 2-Kit Woolsey (CA), 3/4-Al Hodis (NY) / David Rockwell (IL). HOWARD RING MEMORIAL JACKPOT (32): 1-Steve Mellen (NJ), 2-Bill Bartholomay (IL), 3/4-Gary Fishman (FL) / Stacy Turner (FL). \$340 was raised for the Gastro-Intestinal Research Foundation in memory of Howard. SNOWIE FREEZE-OUT (32): 1-Jim Slomkoski (MI), 2-Brent Cohen (PA). OPEN DOUBLES (32 teams): 1-David & Linda Rockwell (IL), 2-Patrick Gibson (CA) & Herb Roman (IL), 3/4-Farhad Forudi (OH) & Kit Woolsey (CA) / Irv Gold (CA) & Emil Mortuk (MI). LTD. DOUBLES (8 teams): 1-Reggie Harvel (MI) & Jim Lawrence (MI). BLITZ (96): 1-John Klein (MD), 2-Bill Versaw (PA). FRANK TALBOT'S NEWCOMER FREE ROLL (18): 1-Sergiy Rybiy (NY), 2-Marcy Kossar (CT). \$200 FIRECRACKER JP #1 (16): 1-Claude Landry (Canada), 2-Brent Cohen (PA). #2 (8): 1/2-Bill Bartholomay (IL) / Steve Brown (MN). \$100 FIRECRACKER JP (16): 1-Larry Yudin (Canada), 2-Susan Randall (FL). \$20 DETROIT QUICKIE (64): 1-Michael Margosian (MI), 2-Bill Versaw (PA). \$10 DETROIT QUICKIE (32): 1-Susan Randall (FL). \$50 AFTER TOURNAMENT (16): 1-Steve Mellen (NJ), 2/3-Boris Golubov (NY) / Joe Miller (OH). \$20 AFTER TOURNAMENT (23): 1-Dmitriy Obukhov (MI), 2-Susan Randall (FL), 3/4-Zaven Dolik (MI) / Dan Grogan (MI). EARLYBIRD JACKPOT WINNERS: Bill Calton (MI), Todd Obadal (PA), Jim Kennis (NY), Prince Barlow (MI). WED. WARM-UP WINNERS: Karen Davis (OH), Rick Todd (MI), Zaven Dolik (MI). SIMBORG/O'HAGAN QUIZ: Open: Martin Veltmann (Canada); Intermediate: Judy Field (MI).

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5050 Doubling Quiz

By Bill Davis

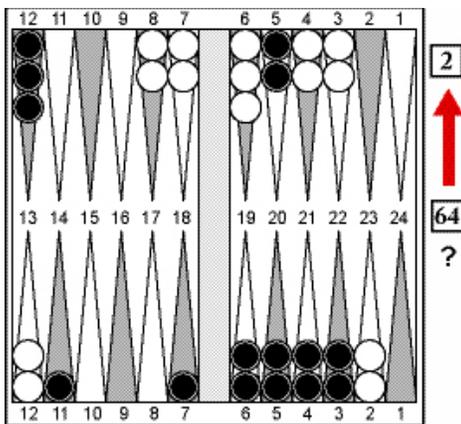
Shown here are six backgammon positions. In each one, Black is on roll and must decide whether or not to double. In 50% of the positions, Black should double and in the other 50%, he is not good enough and should simply roll the dice.

Circle the 64-cube in the three positions you think are proper doubles. To pass this quiz, you'll need to get all three right.

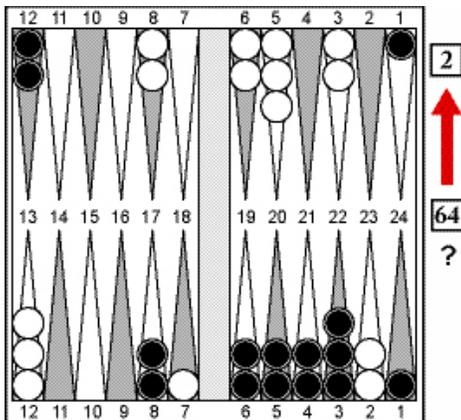
Answers are correct by a minimum differential of 0.020 and have been determined by 2000 Snowie rollouts (3-ply, precise, full) with the doubling cube in play when applicable. For money games, the Jacoby Rule is in effect.

Answers are on page 4. Δ

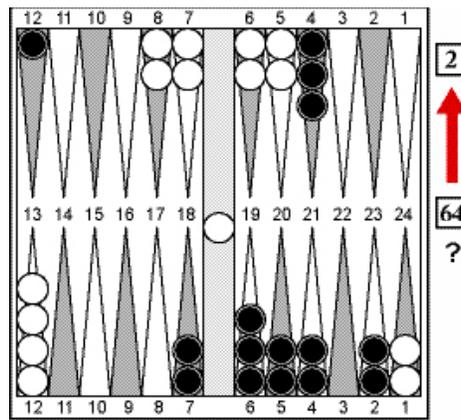
1. Money game.



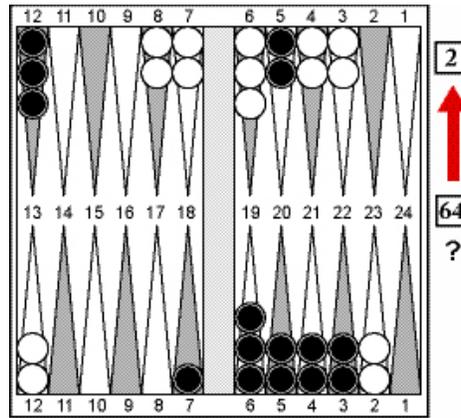
2. 5 point match tied at 0 to 0.



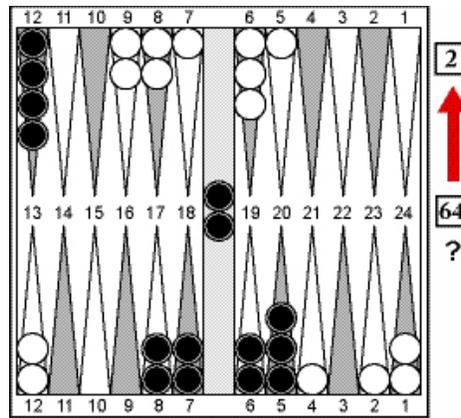
3. Money game.



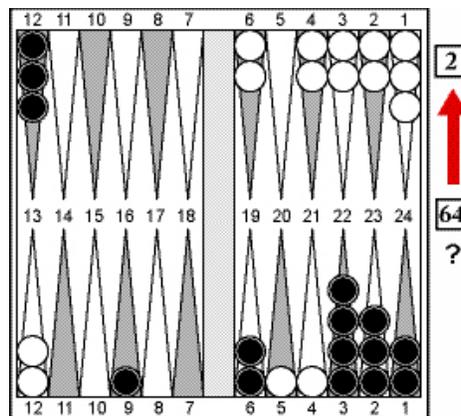
4. Money game.



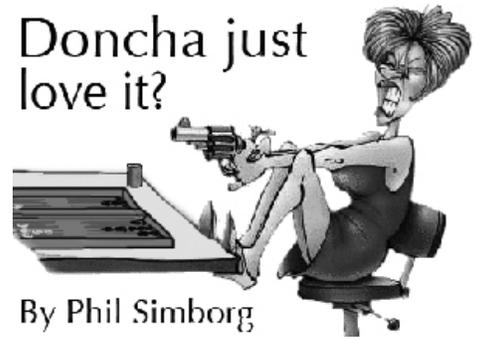
5. 5 point match. Black trails White 1-3.



6. Money game.



Doncha just love it?



By Phil Simborg

Doncha just love it when all you need is a 3 or 4 to hit and win, but instead you roll 5-5 or 6-6, missing, and costing you the game, and your opponent says: "Nice roll" or "Boy you sure get lots of doubles!"?

And doncha just love it when your opponent gets the perfect roll to hit, make the prime, and probably win the match, and just sits there for a long time, like he doesn't see the play, and then, finally, he makes the right play?

And doncha just love it when you play some really horrible player who makes a lot of terrible mistakes, and he turns to you and tells you about some play *you* should not have made?

And doncha just love it when they reach for the cube, stop, think about it, put the cube back, then reach for it again, hold it for a while, put it back again, and then, finally, double?

And doncha just love it when you have just danced on a two point board for the third time in a row and your opponent rolls some perfectly normal, reasonable number and gets all upset because it wasn't a perfect roll?

And doncha just love it when you hold the cube because you're pretty sure you can win a gammon, but it doesn't work out, and afterwards, your opponent says, "You know, you could have cubed me out at one time there"?

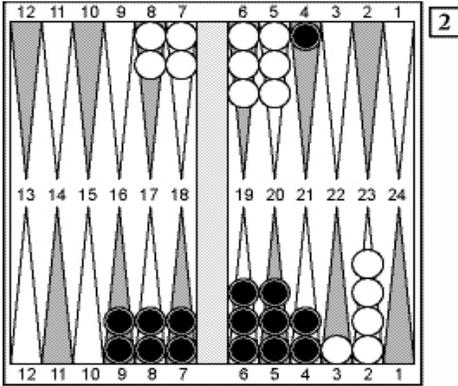
And doncha just love it when you get gammoned and your opponent tells you that you were lucky because you should have been backgammoned?

Doncha just love it? Doncha just love this game sometimes? Doncha just want to kill somebody sometimes? Doncha? Huh?—Phil Simborg Δ

**PROBLEM #355
ANALYZED**

by Jake Jacobs

Money game. **BLACK TO PLAY 6-4.**

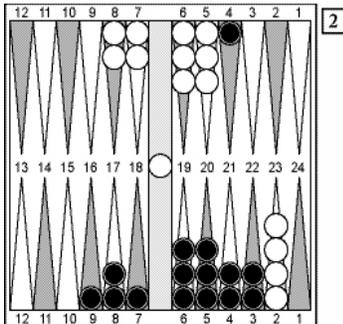


This problem arose in a money game. I don't know the details, but let's imagine it came up in a chouette. Depending upon who is the Captain it is easy to imagine a set of flying fingers grabbing the back man, lifting it over the prime, sliding it onto the 11-point so fast it skids halfway to Skokie; and before you can say: "Hey Carter, could we look at that?" the Box is rolling boxes and Carter is asking why you were trying to interrupt his flow.

Carter is a fine player, and running with the back man looks like a fine play. You have a six-prime, after all, with five of your opponent's men trapped behind it. Meanwhile, you have one man behind her less impressive prime, and 6-4 allows you to escape cleanly. But looking for a second play can't hurt, so let's see if there is a Plan B.

White's best chance of winning, indeed her only chance if you run, is to hit you as you bear in. Owing the deucepoint, she will always have an angle, but if she rolls an ace and makes the 3-point, her chances are much better. Her timing isn't guaranteed, but it isn't all that bad, especially if you roll a few large numbers and she escapes her fifth man quickly. You'd love to make the 3-point, and now that you take another look, you realize that you can.

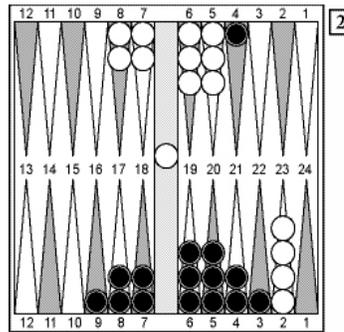
Pos. #1.
After Black has played 6-4 by making his 3-pt. (9/3*, 7/3).



This leaves White seven "jokers"—the six numbers that enter and hit on your barpoint, and double ones. But I placed "jokers" in quotes because after any of them, if the cube were still in the middle, you would have a solid double. When her best rolls leave you a big favorite, this play can't be too bad.

To give us time to consider that play I shifted Herb over to the Captain's chair. So we still have time, plenty of time, to look around for a Plan C. Is there anything else to consider? What about hitting lose on the 3-point? (With the 6, that is; running and then hitting with the 4 is not a candidate.) This keep a solid five-prime, with White having five men back, none on the edge.

Pos. #2.
After Black has played his 6 (9/3*). Black still must play a 4.



Black has played his 6, and still has to play a 4. It seems natural to pick up the rear blot, 9/5, but Mike Corbett, who is in town and in this imaginary chou chimes in: "What about 5/1?" Mike is renowned for his creative plays bearing in against back-games, but voluntarily creating a fourth blot seems extravagant. In any case there is no way the team will go for it. After some heated discussion 9/3*, 9/5 is played, which is the play I would make over the board.

I put the play into two bots, Snowie and eXtreme Gammon. Both bots evaluated all of the candidate plays, including 9/3*, 5/1 as too close to call. I set up Snowie to roll out the four plays on its highest setting, 3-ply precise, with a live cube, also at 3-ply precise, with 1296 trials for each of the four plays. Not so many years ago, using a fast desktop PC it took about three minutes to roll out a single game with those settings, so 5184 games would have taken nearly two weeks. Or not. Because unless you had Windows NT 4.0 all of the other Windows operating systems back then would have crashed long before the rollouts were completed. With my current laptop the two-week job took about sixteen hours, toiling overnight while I caught up on my sleep and dreamed of winning gammons.

Meanwhile, eXtreme is much faster, so I did 1296 on 3-ply, extended those to 2592, and extended again to 5184.

By then both bots had eliminated the same two plays, but the other two were neck and neck. And each bot favored a different play. Since eXtreme was faster I extended again to 10,368. At 5184 eXtreme was showing one candidate as almost 97% certain to be best, but lo and behold, after 10,368 the other play was a very slight favorite. With both bots now in agreement, I stopped.

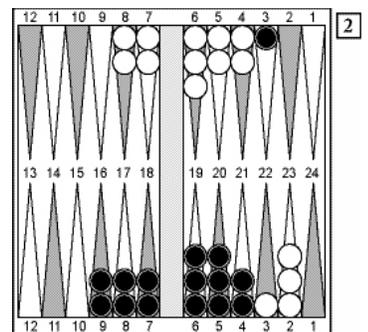
It turns out that you cannot blunder on this play, but you may err. The two weakest choices (at least, of the four candidates) are clear errors, but nowhere near blunders. The two top plays? Too close to call. I could continue rolling them out, and after 129,600 trials or so, could declare a winner, but that would say more about me than it would about the plays. What were the top plays? It turns out that you must hit with 9/3*, and then both bots very slightly prefer playing 5/1! Even the imaginary Mike Corbett is worth listening to.

Why slot the ace? What is the strength of that move as compared with 9/5? A clue may be that slotting is the best play at DMP; slotting wins the most games. Meanwhile, it loses a fraction of a percent more gammons, but it also wins fewer gammons. The logical assumption is that slotting helps to disrupt White's timing, sometimes at the cost of a gammon or two.

Results may vary! Of the four plays slotting the ace is the one most likely to create complications. If you aren't comfortable with tricky timing decisions you should opt for the straightforward 9/3*, 9/5.

What lessons can we draw from this? The most important one is to eschew passive plays when your opponent is threatening a second anchor. Second, keep in mind that there are a number of factors that dictate aggression.

Pos. #3.
A slightly different set-up. Black to play 6-4.



Here you must run; breaking the prime is a colossal blunder. However with 6-3, running and hitting lose is clear cut. Running is a whopper, and pointing is a double whopper. But when the opponent's prime is shorter and his inner board weaker, even extravagant plays should be considered.—
Jake Jacobs Δ

WINNER'S CIRCLE



MAY-JUN. 2010

•**New England Club Bonus** (Malden, MA; 8 May)... OPEN (10): 1-Alex Zamanian, 2-Greg Jukins; 1C-Anne Bidner... *Alex and Anne were one-two going into the annual playoffs.*

•**Backgammon by The Bay** (Cupertino, CA; 22 May)... OPEN (7): 1-Ted Chee, 2-Mark Antranikian; 1C-Ken Bame. BEG./INT. (4): 1-Tim Wong, 2-Marty Podesta.

•**Mediterranean Championship—WBF-TR (TBT)** (Antalya, Turkey; 28-30 May)... CHAMPIONSHIP (67): 1-Marco Fornasir (Italy), 2-Kazuhiro Shino (England), 3/4-Ricardo Malas (Lebanon) / Frank Simon (Germany); 1C-Soinguli Amirov (Georgia), 2C-John Broomfield (England), 3C/4C-Mehmet Ersoy (Turkey) / Costas Chiotinis (Greece); 1LC-Richard Lukas (Turkey), 2LC-Martin Barkwill (England), 3LC/4LC-Aleksander Krasov (Ukraine) / Erdal Gokdemir (Turkey). Ladies Prize: Dilek Dirice (Turkey). DOUBLES CONSULTATION (27 teams): 1-Dilek Dirice & Fatih Kütük (Turkey), 2-Aleksander Krasov & Jakob Garal (Ukraine), 3/4-Arda Findikoglu (Turkey) & Ricardo Malas (Lebanon) / Gürkan Güçer (Turkey) & Shimon Kagan (Israel). WARM-UP (62 players): 1-Levent Erim (Turkey), 2-Soinguli Amirov (Georgia), 3/4-Hakan Aksu (Turkey) / Onur Vunur (Turkey). 869BG CUP (63): 1-Frank Simon (Germany), 2-A. Ercan Güleş (Turkey), 3/4-Giorgos Klitsas (Greece) / Gültekin Uygur (Turkey). SWING (32): 1-Sedat Sorgüven (Turkey), 2-Ufuk Acar (Turkey), 3/4-Nil H. Ergin (Turkey) / Dilek Dirice (Turkey). 1-POINTER ACTION (128): 1-Kemal Aksu (Turkey), 2-Ahmet Çagatay Tan (Turkey), 3/4-Alpay Boyan (Turkey) / Martin Barkwill (England). BG4BG Winners: Shimon Kagan (Israel), Costas Chiotinis (Greece), Ilker Göçhan (Turkey), Kemal Erdem (Turkey), George Simpson (Turkey), Cengiz Ergin (Turkey). SPECIAL EVENT: International Stars vs. Turkey, 24-13.

•**English Open** (Hinckley, England; 4-6 Jun.)... OPEN (40): 1-Peter Chan, 2-Rai Jansari, 3/4-Tony Fawcett / Paul Lamford; 1C-Danny Cohen, 2C-Gheorghe Filipas; 1LC-George Hall, 2LC-Paul Plumtre. GRAMMY (32): 1-Paul Gilbertson, 2-Paul Lamford, 3/4-David Startin / Martin Barkwill. TEAM (12): 1-Kevin Jones, 2-Irving Czechowicz. FRIDAY 500 (18): 1-Kevin Stebbing, 2-Brian Lever, 3/4-Myke Wignall / Bob Brinig. POKER (17): 1-Rosey Bensley, 2-Simon Jones, 3-Paul Lamford, 4-Vicki Pemberton.

•**Backgammon by The Bay** (Berkeley,

CA; 5 Jun.)... OPEN (14): 1-David Levy, 2-Josh Racko; 1C/2C-Demetris Kourdoulos / Zafer Yasa. INTERMEDIATE (3): 1-Adam Bronstein.

•**Cincinnati Players Club Monthly** (Sharonville, OH; 6 Jun.)... OPEN (11): 1-Sean Garber (IN), 2-Jim Mieske, 3-Richard Sutherland.

•**Ohio State Club Monthly** (Akron, OH; 6 Jun.) ... OPEN (6): 1-Paul Berg, 2-Pete Zeigler.

•**Bar Point Sunday** (Chicago, IL; 6 Jun.)... OPEN (19): 1-Bill Davis, 2-Howard Markowitz, 3/4-Peter Kalba / Mike Wolock; 1C/2C-Tak Morioka / Larry Goldstein. INTERMEDIATE (8): 1-Christopher Shanava, 2-Les Moshinsky, 3/4-Leslie Lockett / Oleg Raygorodsky; 1C-Leslie Lockett, 2C-Oleg Raygorodsky.

•**South Florida Monthly** (Ft. Lauderdale, FL; 13 Jun.)... OPEN (6): 1-Gary Fishman, 2-Elayne Feinstein.

•**5th Portuguese Open & Davis Doubles—EBGT** (Estoril, Portugal; 23-27 Jun.)... MASTERS (31): 1-Clive Kay (England), 2-Ricardo Malas (Lebanon/Spain), 3/4-Claus Elken (Denmark) / Konrad Fröschl (Sweden), 1C-Jacob "Stick" Rice (USA), 2C-Matt Cohn-Geier (USA); 1LC-Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (Israel), 2LC-Eli Roymi (Israel). INTERMEDIATE (10): 1-Sara Utku (Sweden), 2-Ingrid Söderstjerna (Sweden), 3-Lykke Pia Rasmussen (Denmark), 4-Lee Wood (England). DAVIS DOUBLES (6 teams): 1-Jorge Figueiredo Sr. (Portugal) & Pedro Matos (Portugal). FTH-BOARDSPEEDGAMMON (8): 1-Konrad Fröschl (Sweden). FURTHEST TRAVEL PRIZE: Stick Rice (USA). MOST LOYAL PRIZE: Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (Israel). ENCOURAGEMENT PRIZE: Lev Rosenfeld (Israel). Δ

AMALGAMATION

Visiting the Bar Point Club this past month: **Stick Rice** (OH), **Greg King** (OH)... The Riviera Cup Tournament in Cannes, France was cancelled in late June, just a month before it was scheduled to occur. At the time of cancellation, organizer **Eric Guedj** states that not one room had been reserved at the tourney hotel. A bizarre poker-style format was given as one reason for the lack of support... **John O'Hagan** (IN) has joined **Phil Simborg** (IL) and **Perry Gartner** (FL) to form what may be the strongest backgammon teaching partnership in the world. For information on becoming a student, go to simborgbackgammonlessons.com... So tennis for **Ken Bond** for a while. He badly injured a hamstring and will need a few months to recuperate... What did World Cup teams do in the layoff periods between their matches. The Greeks, according to their striker **Angelos Charisteas**, relied on backgammon tournaments and card games... The iPhone Backgammon Scoreboard app has not been updated for the new OS 4.0. In the meantime, **Hiroyuki Kitago** suggests iPhone users go to the Internet and use the free scorer at: www.backgammonscoreboard.net/iphone/scoreboard.html... The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan is spotlighting a "Play" exhibit with larger-than-life interactive games including bowling, dominoes, billiards, and backgammon. The exhibit runs through 19 September... Miracles happen. In our March 2010 issue, **Mary Hickey** (OH) wrote a letter informing us that **Ed King** (OH) was under hospice care with just weeks to live. Ed had other ideas. He made an incredible recovery to the point where he played in the Michigan Summer Championships finishing just one spot out of the money. God bless him!... Good luck to **Tony Anton** who takes over from **Jason Lee** as the Las Vegas Backgammon Club contact person... **Tom & Karen Meyer** (IL) and family have taken a month off and are touring the wild west. You can read about their adventures here: followthezees.blogspot.com... **Joe Miller** informs us that his Ohio State Backgammon Club has changed its monthly tournament venue to Brubaker's Pub in Akron. For more info, go to: home.roadrunner.com/~osbclub... In order to partake in the Backgammon & Poker On Board cruise tourney (22-29 January 2011), **Sue Will** (309/699-6005) needs your final payment by 15 September. Remember that the US Backgammon Open will be held just a week before the cruise in our sailing port city of Fort Lauderdale; so double your fun in January! Δ

This January, enjoy two weeks of backgammon FUN IN THE SUN!

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(King birthday weekend)

Backgammon & Poker On Board X

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