

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

Answered by Danny Kleinman

Dear Danny: What rights do I have when I am playing a tournament match against a particular opponent who many strong players suspect of being a dice mechanic? Do I have the right to say, "Dice check" after he shakes and before he rolls to ascertain that both of his dice are actually in his cup?

I am suspicious of this player because of what I've heard from reliable sources: About six years ago, a well-known dice mechanic visited his home town for a few weeks and the two apparently became friendly. I believe that during this time, Mr. Suspect was trained by the experienced mechanic and that he probably uses a technique of holding one die outside the cup in his hand or fingers prior to rolling the dice.

More suspicions: Mr. Suspect's Snowie™ error rate in his recent matches places his skill level well below the average Championship player. In spite of his lack of checker play and cube skills, he enters the Open and Masters divisions of major tournaments and does quite well.

I realize that my case against Mr. Suspect is entirely circumstantial, and would not hold up in a court of law; however, the feelings I have are still distracting. What should I do the next time I face him over the board?—*Very Suspicious*

DEAR VERY: If you are truly suspicious, don't face Mr. Suspect over the board.

That was the solution found by many backgammon players at the Cavendish West Club in 1978, when I directed backgammon tournaments. Some would approach me to enter a tournament on condition that Gaby Horowitz not play, and receive my money-back guarantee that he would not. Others, fearing that Gaby would play, simply never approached me to enter.

However, that was a poor solution. Those who employed it protected themselves against cheating, but left unsuspecting players to the mercy of Gaby and any of his trainees who might enter. The right solution would have been to take their suspicions to the director—or in my case, since I had witnessed Gaby cheating and needed no convincing—to the owners and managers of the club; and then, when the owner insisted over my objections

that Gaby be allowed to play, to cease patronizing the club. Once you realize the problem isn't yours alone, put the problem in the hands of those with the power to solve it—if they are willing to solve it—and shun them if they are not.

In a way, I have dodged your question. The real question is one for the director: "What should I do when a patron voices a suspicion that another patron has cheated?" The answer is simply, "Investigate until you have confirmed or refuted the suspicion."

Crying "Dice check!" in the brief moment between shake and roll would be futile. A competent dice mechanic would drop the die crooked in his pinky back into his cup in the blink of an eye. Few could match the quickness of a certain Cavendish West player who was able to clasp hand, pinky and die before Gaby could say "Marcia Clark!"

No, the director would have to appoint witnesses whose observations he trusted to watch Mr. Suspect unobtrusively, without arousing any suspicion that he was being investigated, then accept their testimony as conclusive. And by the way, to be conclusive the evidence of cheating at backgammon needn't be sufficient to ensure a conviction in a court of law, which is haphazard at best. We all remember the outcome of the O.J. Simpson trial, don't we?—*Yours, Danny Δ*



CHICAGO BAR POINT CLUB 2010 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

COMPILED
THRU 27 JULY

Rory Pascar	20.32	Christopher Shanava	7.12	Lucky Nelson	2.72	Mihai Pop	0.80
Phil Simborg	19.32	Mike Wolock	7.00	Ken Tibbs	2.32	Joann Feinstein	0.72
Bill Bartholomay	12.36	Mike Peters	6.80	Amy Trudeau	2.24	Rolf Boettger	0.72
Howard Markowitz	11.92	Julius High	6.80	Alex Aliyev	2.16	Stefan Pop	0.72
Bill Davis	11.76	Wayne Wiest	6.80	Jerry Brooks	2.16	Joe Rafson	0.64
Bob Steen	10.72	Carter Mattig	6.48	Mitch Pomper	2.00	Dean Livas	0.64
David Rockwell	9.76	Dujuan Meekins	6.40	John Gaski	1.92	Richard Pearlman	0.64
Mike Sutton	9.72	Nora Luna Righter	6.40	Royal Robinson	1.68	Alex Owen	0.56
Larry Goldstein	9.32	Georgina Flanagan	5.36	Adrian Rios	1.60	Linda Rockwell	0.48
Tim Mabee	9.28	Steve Klesker	4.48	Ralf Boettger	1.56	Beth Whitney	0.48
Bill Keefe	8.72	Scott Casty	3.60	Jolie Rubin	1.44	Kwong Chan	0.48
Herb Roman	8.32	Ken Bond	3.36	Mark Murray	1.28	Paul Lombardo	0.48
Michael Ginat	8.04	J. A. Miller	3.24	Shaw Dogan	1.28	Mike Pufpaf	0.48
Eric Johnson	7.72	Serge Bondar	3.20	Wendy Kaplan	1.28	Roger Hickman	0.32
Tak Morioka	7.68	Peter Kalba	3.16	Mark Ostrovsky	1.16	Les Moshinsky	0.32
Reginald Porter	7.48	Dan Weymouth	2.88	John Spatafora	0.96	Leslie Lockett	0.32
Dave Settles	7.36	Gary Kay	2.84	Greg King	0.88	Oleg Raygorodsky	0.24
Mike Minkovski	7.36	Alice Kay	2.76	Paul Baraz	0.88		

DAVID ROCKWELL edged out two others to take July Player of the Month honors with 3.76 points. Runners-up were Phil Simborg (3.48) and Howard Markowitz (3.20).

If you finish in the Top 20 for 2010, you'll be entered in a drawing for over \$300 worth of valuable merchandise. The higher you finish, the better your winning chances. Individual awards: 1st: Trophy + \$80, 2nd: \$50, 3rd: \$20. 1st through 20th—one ounce silver eagle dollar coin. 1st through 6th—\$30 paid invitation to represent the Chicago Bar Point Club team in the 2010 Illinois State Challenge Cup. Paid invitations go to those actually playing in the event.



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).

MIDSTATE BG 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. Wash-
bash Ave., Springfield. Randy Armstrong (217/528-0117).

WINNETKA BG 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).

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