

GAMMON

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT BACKGAMMON AND THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY

PREVIEW ISSUE • \$4.50

HEFNER—
Celebrity of the
Month

\$128,500
Amateur Win

The Mathematics
of Gambling
END POSITION
in Backgammon

PARADOXES &
PROBABILITIES—
Barclay Cooke's
Book Preview

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TOURNAMENTS**





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The mystique of Monte Alban Mezcal.

For years, there's been a rumor going around that in Mexico you can buy a certain kind of liquor that comes with a worm in every bottle.

That rumor is not only true, it's delicious. The liquor is called Monte Alban Mezcal con Gusano. And the story behind it is fascinating.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, the Spanish *conquistadores* had done what they had come to Mexico to do: conquer the New World. And because the Spaniards were running out of their traditional rum, they celebrated with the distilled juice of the *agave* cactus. This they called Mezcal.



Today's Mezcal is an intriguing liquor, being both potent and smooth. Not to mention mellow and downright delicious.

Now comes the best part. Inside every *agave* cactus live tasty little *agave* worms. *Agave* worms are so particular, they're only found in that one species. It

is for this reason that genuine Mezcal, made from the *agave* cactus in Oaxaca province, is bottled with a genuine *agave* worm.

As with other traditions that are hundreds of years old, a certain mystique has been built up around the ritual of consuming Mezcal and its *agave* worm. Most knowledgeable people drink it like tequila; that is, with a lick of salt and a bite of lime. For true tradition, use the mixture of sea-salt and spices in the bag attached to the bottle. The worm is said by some to be the key to wondrous experiences. Others claim it sets free a spirit of celebration.

Whatever the truth, we know that *agave* worms are a very popular delicacy in Mexico.

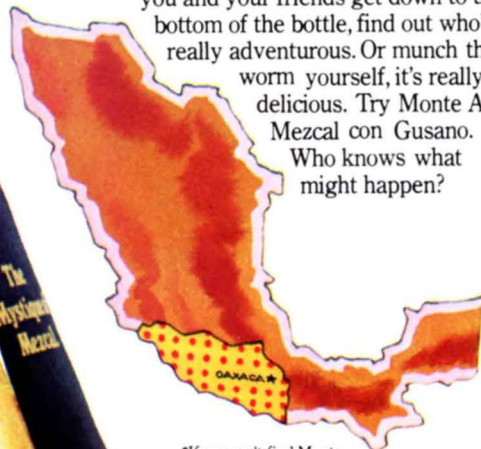
And why should the Mexicans have Mezcal all to themselves? Now, for the first



time, you can buy Mexico's leading brand of Mezcal—Monte Alban Mezcal con Gusano—in the United States. Each bottle is genuine Mezcal

from the region of Oaxaca. For proof, just look inside the bottle.

Monte Alban Mezcal opens up whole new worlds to conquer. Bring it along to your next party. Enlighten people on its heritage. Demonstrate how to drink it. Make mixed drinks with it, too. And when you and your friends get down to the bottom of the bottle, find out who's really adventurous. Or munch the worm yourself, it's really delicious. Try Monte Alban Mezcal con Gusano. Who knows what might happen?



*If you can't find Monte Alban at your favorite liquor store please drop a card to Bill Rogers, P.O. Box 1240, Chicago, IL 60601. He'll be glad to help.



Monte Alban. Authentic Mexican Mezcal. The proof is in every bottle.

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Available in the United States in 750 ml. (25.4 oz.) bottles.

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GAMMON PREVIEW ISSUE

THE OPENING ROLL

Here it is, the first national backgammon publication! This is not a local, hasty newsletter; but a complete guide catering to interests in all areas of the game, printed with full publication values. This project has been two years in the making, and we hope you are as excited about its culmination as are we.

In future issues we will cover the major tournaments and bring you news of who played and how well, who won and who lost. GAMMON will have calendars of events upcoming throughout the world, with information on where to write for entries. GAMMON will inform you where the local clubs are and on what nights they have tournaments. GAMMON will provide expert answers to your rules and procedure questions. There will be news and gossip from the nation's clubs, in-depth interviews with the world's best players, shopping and mail order guides for hard-to-find items, book reports, travel information dealing with where to stay and what to wear to the major tournaments, instruction articles and positional problems. There will be club reports, editorials, featured celebrities and articles by the world's most renown players dealing with minute details of play. In short, GAMMON will bring you backgammon past, present and future.

It is obvious that backgammon needs this unique forum and showcase. As a confirmed backgammon enthusiast I *know* the pleasure that GAMMON brings you. I share your anticipation and look forward to the exciting potential of each coming issue. It is also clear that in order for us to publish this magazine, this festival of backgammon, we must have your active support—and we must have it now. We'll gladly receive your gift instructions along with your own subscription. Without your backing, GAMMON has no future.

Now the cube is yours. It's too good to pass. Take!

Buddy Berke

Buddy Berke,
Publisher

GAMMON

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT BACKGAMMON AND THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY

Why We Should Organize

— Alfred Sheinwold

If you read the fine print of the Constitution, you'll discover that you're allowed to enjoy backgammon without playing in tournaments. However, you'll enjoy the game more if you play matches often and in tournaments occasionally.

A friend of mine plays backgammon with his college-student son whenever the young man comes home to load up on groceries or have his laundry ironed. Playing for money is out of the question; the father might be unlucky enough to win. But they can afford to play all out in short matches and blow off steam at the same time.

Another friend plays backgammon matches with his girlfriend. The winner decides which movie they see, where and what they eat, or who is boss for the night.

Once you've played a few matches, you'll want to try a tournament now and then. It's a way to get some variety in your game, find out how good you really are, hear some new hard-luck stories, and get away from the daily grind.

If you do play in tournaments, join some meaningful organization to control players, tournament directors and promoters. We all know that some promoters are greedy. A strong organization would let the players know which tournaments do most for the players. Some tournament directors give "home town rulings" to domineering players. A strong organization would stiffen the spine of directors; it might even

rank them as the American Contract Bridge League ranks its tournament directors.

Players too. Have you ever seen a player throw a temper tantrum in the middle of the tournament room? A strong organization would suspend or bar obnoxious players. Another kind of player forgets to buy part of himself back unless he gets to the quarter finals. Then he remembers to make a deal with his purchaser; and most purchasers yield because nobody will back them up if they complain. A strong organization would hear the evidence and would suspend a guilty player for a year or two.

It wouldn't take more than two or three suspensions to get the word to the bad actors. Nor do we need a tin-horn dictator. We all know several backgammon players with character, firmness and enough time to serve for a year or two as Commissioner of Backgammon. (I'm not applying for the job. I'm two years late with a bridge book.)

The right kind of organization would serve as a clearing house for tournaments, players, directors, promoters; would issue master points for all tournaments; would support a magazine with news, instruction, chitchat.

One last point. No need to charge high annual membership fees. Perhaps we can't get by with so low a fee as the \$7 per year of the ACBL. However, we don't have to freeze anybody out with unrealistically high fees. When it comes to members, the more the merrier.

*Alfred Sheinwold, the dean of tournament directors conducted most of the major backgammon events from 1965 to 1975. He currently writes weekly backgammon and bridge columns. His book **Five Weeks to Winning Bridge** has sold five million copies.*





CELEBRITY OF THE MONTH HEFNER

by Tom Gilbert

I don't have to tell you who Hugh Hefner is. You've read about him for years. His philosophy. His enterprises. His romances. His humanitarian causes. His films, magazines, houses and playthings. If it's true what Mae West once said — that you can tell the size of a man by the size of his toys — then Hugh Hefner is the biggest man in the world.

Certainly that's true as far as I'm concerned. Hef's been one of my closest friends for the past half-dozen years. Our friendship started as a result of his voracious appetite for backgammon. He had just started playing the game and wanted to surround himself with the best available players. That was just fine with me because I sure didn't mind being surrounded by the lovely things that surround him!

Over the years our friendship has deepened so that backgammon is no longer the only tie that binds us. But it didn't start that way. . . .

I'm driving along Sunset Boulevard, west toward the Pacific Ocean, through the rich section of Beverly Hills, into the even richer section of Holmby Hills. At the top of one of Holmby's hills is a five-and-one-half-acre mansion. The main building is British in effect, with slate roof and leaded glass windows. The grounds are magnificently land-



scaped with rolling hills, trees, flowers and what is reputed to be the largest redwood forest in Southern California. I believe it.

There is a swimming pool with connecting ponds, grotto and even a waterfall. This is Playboy Mansion West, but to Hugh Marston Hefner, it's just a place called home.

It's now six o'clock in the morning, and while the city is sleeping, the library of the Mansion is alive with activity. The center of attention is a low-slung oak coffee table inset with two backgammon boards. Brown and beige checkers glide gracefully over a caramel-colored felt field. There is a chouette in play — and it began over 20 hours ago. The chouette is consultation; the players are veterans of hundreds of similar battles.

The players are all men — with the exception of one fair-haired little darling, Valerie Deeds, who somehow always seems to outlast all but Hef himself in these never-ending marathons. Sleepy but hanging on are the rest of us diehards: myself and world bridge and backgammon champ Billy Eisenberg, actors James Caan and Jim Brown, Motown Records president Berry Gordy, agent and producer Lee Wolfberg, agent Kurt Fringes, realtor Stan Herman and restaurant entrepreneur John Dante.

Periodically one or the other of us wanders into the dining room to stretch our legs and sample some of the food from a generously laden dining table. Butlers bring the players orange juice and wake-me-up coffee. We are all, even Valerie, finally exhausted after the non-stop play — but not Hef. He's still daisy-fresh.

We are all damned if we'll show fatigue before he does!

I first met Hefner five or six years ago at — where else? — a backgammon tournament. It was Beverly Hills or New York, I don't remember, but I do vividly remember the chouette he was in. Al-

though still a novice, he had jumped right in with the cream of the crop: Tim Holland, Gino Scalamanire, Stan Tomchin, John Crawford and Stan Herman. What a group to start with!

But that's the only way Hef ever does things. Whatever the game — backgammon, Mastermind, Captain Fantastic, Monopoly — he just has to test himself with the best. It's because Hef likes to be pushed. Most guys can't keep up with him. He works around the clock, and when Playboy executives finally stumble bleary-eyed out of the Mansion after a 60-hour work session, Hef will whip into the library for eight hours of furious backgammon. I swear he is bionic — seems to have no bodily functions. Never eats or sleeps. I think I knew him for at least two years before I



even actually saw him consume food. I never met anyone with such playing power.

One might think that running an empire that includes nightclubs, motion pictures, and a \$26,000,000-monthly magazine would leave Hefner little time for such "frivolities" as backgammon. Not so. "The ability to enjoy such frivolous pastimes is part of what life is all about," he says. "After endless meetings, dictation and editing I'm ready to relax and play."

Art Buchwald, the political humorist, once wrote a very funny column about his first trip to the Chicago mansion. "He had all these wild expectations of orgies," laughs Hefner, "and he described how he ended up spending all night playing gin rummy and backgammon with me and some of the guys!"

"When I'm finished with my work," says Hef, "I like to lose myself in games of various kinds with my friends, especially backgammon. I consider it the king of the board games. I played bridge

early in my career but didn't like it very much. Haven't the patience. In backgammon you are always *doing* something. It's a great game — relatively simple in concept and easy to learn, but once you begin to really get involved it's quite sophisticated in its strategy."

You have to understand Hefner is a *consummate* games-player. Any game, all games. But especially backgammon, Monopoly and now pinball. The special rhythms of his world are the clicks of the backgammon dice and the pings of pinball pellets. The game room at Mansion West is a *separate building* of its own! In it is a scoreboard where he keeps track of all the high pinball scores — and most of the record scores are his. He's been playing Monopoly for 15-20 years, and he's kept track of *every single game* — who won and with which holdings.

I was never much of a pinball player until I met Hef. Well, for one thing, the machines were illegal in California until just recently. But it seemed to me kind of simple — just a thing where you pull the pin and the ball bounces around and if you shake it too much it tilts. But I



now know that at its highest level it's far from simple. Hef and his pals — they really know how to shake that thing. Hef handles that machine like a beautiful woman: he knows just when and what to squeeze and how hard.

"Where backgammon is concerned, I have no real interest in playing for money," says Hefner, a millionaire several times over. "For me, it's just a method of keeping score. I'm a games player, not a gambler who plays games. If you told me tomorrow we can keep track with buttons that would be fine with me."

One reason I think Hef doesn't like to play for money is that he usually



plays only with his friends and they aren't as rich as he is. Hell, *no* one is as rich as he is! Of course, that's not true, but it is true that he's a very sensitive guy and knows that some of his show biz buddies might not be able to keep up. Frequently we are playing eight, nine, ten-handed. Billy Eisenberg once lost a 32-game in the box against 11 players! That's a big game no matter how many buttons a point!

"No, I don't like to win money from my friends," affirms Hef. "But I don't think that means I don't mind losing," he smiles. "I *hate* losing. Can't stand it. It's just that it's the winning that is important to me, not the money."



All sorts of people play with us at Hef's. An invitation to the Mansion West is like a summons to Buckingham or Grimaldi Palace. No one would think of refusing. He's the most gracious of hosts and he's passionately interested in the thing we most love. The regulars besides myself and Billy and Valerie are his best games-playing friends, like Jim Brown, the former football player. Now *there's* a competitor! He'd rip out your throat. He's the closest thing to Super-

man alive. And Berry Gordy, the guy who built Motown Record Corporation from scratch with only \$700 scratch. He's the most aggressive of the bunch — a lively, action player. John Dante, a fine games player, is one of the few men who can keep up with Hef in any kind of game. And Lee Wolfberg — a very clever guy, very quick. He started playing backgammon because Hef played it so much. That's the way with Hef's friends. If he gets interested in something, so do they. There are others — Victor Lowmes, Stan Herman, John Rockwell. Several of the bunnies play very decent games, and sometimes they join the chouette for a few rounds. Hef taught them, as he taught David and Christy, his son and daughter. (Christy Hefner. Now *there's* one for you, a real chip off the old block. A dynamite lady — she's cute, brilliant, beautiful, well-read and if anything,



tougher than her old man. She's not happy just being ahead in the score; she'd really like to win every game.)

It's amazing how patient Hef is with beginners. I could never be that way.

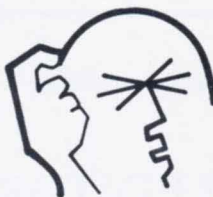
Hefner's powers of concentration are unbelievable. He's the intensest of men. To me, Hef would have been a great defensive back in football. Those are the guys that are the most hard-nosed, tenacious, aggressive personalities. Hef plays his games like a defensive back plays football. He never steps lightly into them. He takes a huge bite and never lets go. Because of his previous experience with games, he was low championship caliber ten minutes after he learned backgammon. But he's now high championship caliber, and it is just as a result of his intensive practice. For four to five years we played an average of 100-150 hours a week, and sometimes 48 hours in one sitting.

If Hef has any weakness in backgammon, it is that he just can't bring himself to drop the cube at anything short of a near-lock. That comes from his inability ever to give up on anything—a strength of character but a weakness in backgammon.

"The only thing I don't like about backgammon," says Hefner, "is that right in the middle, it can be stopped! I want to play it out to the end. Like pin-ball. I have five balls to shoot, and no matter how much down I am, as long as there is another ball I have a chance. In backgammon I want to fight it out too."

If Hefner has gotten a lot of enjoyment out of backgammon, he's repaid his debt. The game owes a lot to him. In the middle of all his intense work and even intenser play, he found time four years ago — with Stan Herman — to open a private backgammon club in Beverly Hills called "Pips." It contains an excellent restaurant, bar, disco and of course the backgammon room. And in the city where "in" places are a dime a dozen, Pips has remained the most popular celebrity hangout in town.

I'll tell you something. The very fact that a superintelligent, superbusy guy like Hefner can find the time to play as much backgammon as he does and NOT be doing it for the money says a lot about the lure and appeal of the game. I like the way he plays and I like the games he plays. I guess I just like the guy.



Brain Stickler

PROBABILITY QUESTION: What is the probability of a pair or better (two or more of a kind, two pair, etc.) when you roll *four* dice?

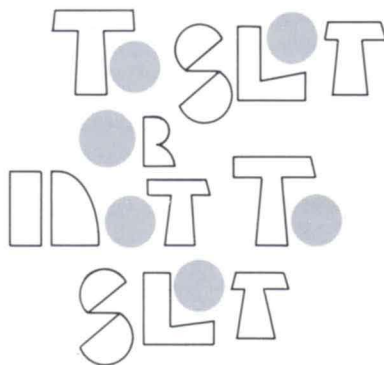
This calculation is most easily performed if we calculate the probability that there are *no* pairs in the four dice, i.e. each of the four dice must show a different number. The probability that the first die shows a number of spots consistent with having no pair in all 4 dice is one. (Any of the 6 faces can show.)

Now the probability that the second die shows a number of spots consistent with no pair occurring is simply the probability that its number of spots does not agree with the first. This probability is 5/6.

The probability that the third die is consistent with no pair (given that the first two dice show no pair) is simply the probability that its number of spots not match either of the numbers shown by the first two. This probability is 4/6. (There are 4 faces that are consistent with not matching either of the first two dice).

Finally, the fourth die does not match either of the first three (conditioned on the fact that the first three are all different) with probability 3/6. Multiplying these conditional probabilities together, we find the probability of no matches is equal to $(6/6) (5/6) (4/6) (3/6) = 5/18$.

Thus, the probability of a pair or better is equal to $1 - 5/18 = 13/18$.



by Alan Martin

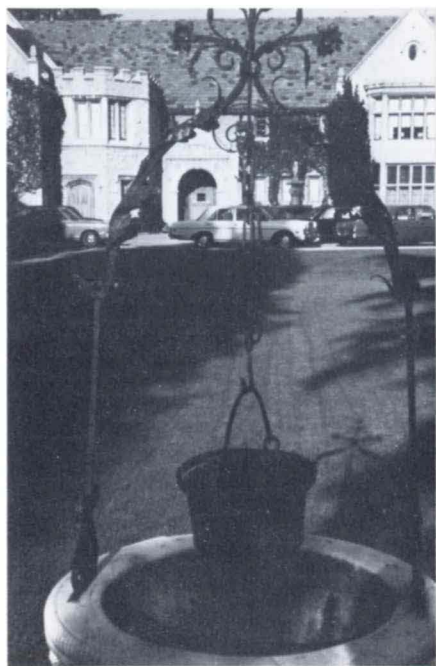
It's about time someone explained one of the most fundamental and intriguing arguments in backgammon today. Is it better to split your back men or slot your five point on an opening roll of 2-1, 4-1 or 5-1? While years ago it was almost unheard of to slot today most experts do.

Both moves are sound. Slotting on your five makes you the favorite to secure this valuable point. Your opponent is a 15/36 underdog to roll a 4 (actually 14/36 since he won't hit with double aces). You then are a heavy favorite to make the point with aces, threes, and eights working for you.

The alternative to slotting is splitting your back men. Essentially, this accomplishes three things. First, splitting gives you a double shot (probably indirect) on all of your opponent's non-pointing opening rolls. Second, having your men split gives you a better chance to make his four, five, or bar point on your next roll. Third, by not slotting, you avoid getting hit and having a third man back.

If it seems more reasonable to split than slot, there is one dramatic aspect to splitting that must be pointed out. Should you split your back men and your opponent rolls double 4's or 5's, hitting and making two inside points, your situation could become untenable. If you don't enter on your next roll, your opponent should probably double you out of the game. It is ever more of a risk to split your back men in a tournament since one does not have to turn the cube to win a gammon.

To slot or not to slot has really a very simple solution, but only good rollers will be able to appreciate its answer. If you know your opponent will not roll a 4, slot. If you know he will roll a 4, split. If you're not sure, flip a coin—it's that close.





Over two decades of club and tournament play around the world has me convinced that despite the chances of fortune brought on by the dice, there is still a group of players much more skillful than the average. I believe this should be compensated for by a system of handicaps. You wouldn't ask a weekend golfer to play Arnold Palmer even up, why should I have to play Magriel, Dwek, Deyong or Jacoby even up?

There are two possible methods of handicapping players.

1) It is generally agreed that skill is 20 percent, dice 80 percent. Ratings would therefore range from a 0 for top players to a 20 for brand-new beginners. If a 0 player is playing a 20, the 20 player would get a 20 percent edge. Example: in a money game the 0 pays \$1.00, but collects only 80¢ at settlement time.

In a chouette the players would collect according to their handicaps. The nearest round figure could be selected. If Player A is a 6 and Player B a 4, the compromise would be 5 percent against a 0 handicap player.

A separate schedule would be worked out to regulate points in tournament matches. Example: a 0 handicap would give one point to a 10 handicap in an 11-point tournament match. There would have to be a maximum number ceiling established, of course; otherwise, a 0 playing a 20 in an 11-point match would have to give away the match and then some. That ceiling would be set according to the number of points to be played, the size of the entries, the round of the flight.

2) Another possible method of handicapping is to simply designate players as A, B, C or D, with a percentage spread among them for adjustment purposes. Then when the draw is determined for a tournament match, the A rated player (professionals) must give points to a B player and more points to a C player.

Once it is determined which of the two above-mentioned methods would be most

viable, the actual handicaps would be established in the following manner:

a) Established backgammon clubs would have their members cast *secret* handicap ratings for all other members. These ballots would be cast once a month or once every two months.

b) Ballots would be sent to a central organization, which would collate the results by computer.

c) The resulting list, or ranking, would be published nationally in GAMMON magazine. Individual lists per club would be returned to that club to permit weekly tournament handicapping.

Lastly, any person who thinks he is better than he is classified, can raise his own handicap rating. But he may not lower it.

S. CHARLES LEE

Los Angeles, California

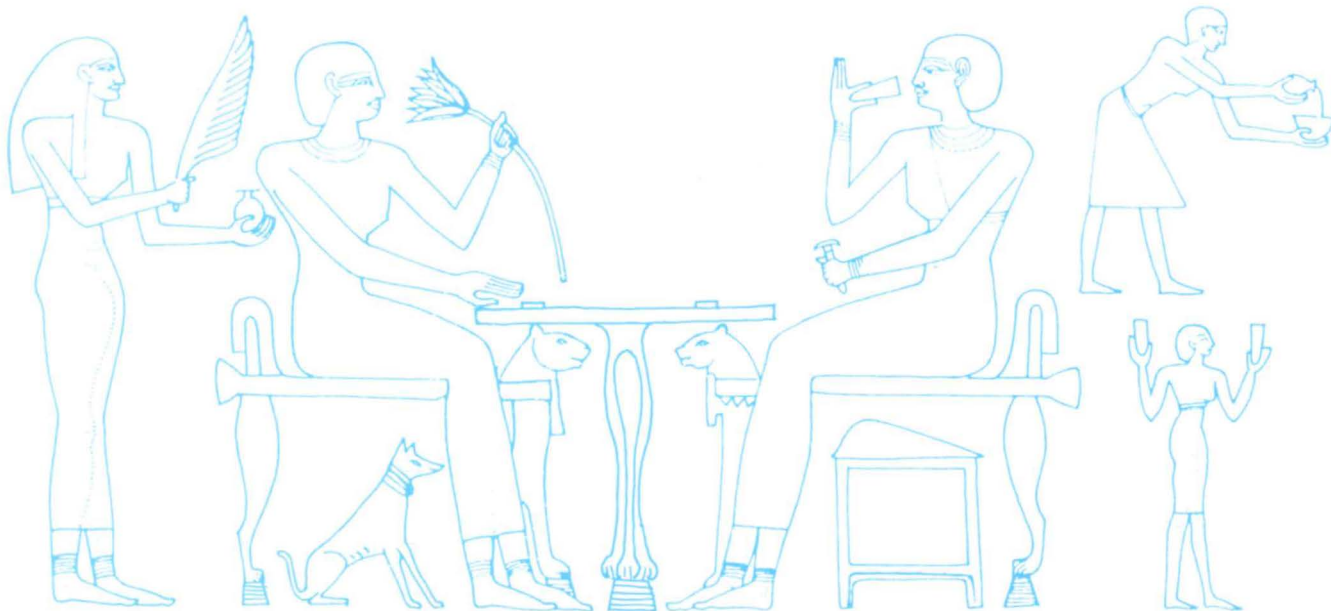
Gentlemen

As a sales rep, I get to travel and play backgammon everywhere. The game is finding its way into every part of the country. Unfortunately it's taking longer to get all these places to take advantage of the growing backgammon community.

It must be hard to believe that an idea can be good even if it's not your own. It's natural for players to want to know how they rate against players elsewhere. And yet, even though the American Backgammon Players Association has provided such a point system, many of the tournament operators pretend there is no interest. The pity is that their players miss out. The system is equitable and will soon provide a national roster of winners. The players should make their feelings heard.

Nelson Dennis
Petoskey, Michigan





THE HISTORY OF BACKGAMMON

By B. SELRAHC

It is fitting that the precise origin of backgammon is unknown. No other game has proved as fascinating or has become as enduring a leisure activity. The constant historical references to backgammon demonstrate its universal excitement and enduring popularity.

Shortly after World War I, British archaeologists excavated various biblical sites in Asia Minor and extracted board games decorated by a variety of delicate designs. These game boards have the earliest (but vague) resemblance to our contemporary game. Nonetheless, the subsequent game artifacts, discovered in the same region, came complete with playing pieces and dice.

During the period dominated by the Egyptian culture there is extensive evidence of related gaming boards, many personalized (and identifying the player as a specific Pharaoh or Queen). The royalty of Egypt, as well as their subjects, are portrayed regularly playing these boards. Their tombs were stocked with supplies of these games, perhaps in anticipation of an endless chouette with their accompanying retainers.

The Egyptians played their game with a dice box, presumably to reduce cheating opportunities as they gambled. Records show that this prudent equipment accessory was copied by both the Romans and the Greeks as they later developed their respective versions of the game.

The ruling class in Greece began their adaptation about a thousand years after the Egyptians. Even as recently as this point in history, there is

still confusion in isolating the basic site of the game's origin. It seems that during this same period there were similar basic formats entertaining players in both India and China.

Here again we find reminders of backgammon's universal attraction. This period records almost as many regional variations as opinions during an all-night chouette. The Indian game Pachisi, although starting each match with the men off the game board, in its format of play seems an obvious cousin to our contemporary form. Yet, if this Indian game is cited as the specific ancestor of backgammon, how do we refer to the others, played during the same period with comparable styles; SSANG-RYOUK (Southern China and Korea), SHWAN-LIU (Northern China), SAKA (Indo-China), etc.?

European backgammon exposure was a clear fringe benefit of the Roman occupation program. From the early wall paintings there are continuous references to often excessive preoccupation with the game called "Tables". As Europe emerged from the dark ages, its literature and official recordings note endless references to the variations of backgammon.

This is when backgammon became subject to public condemnation. At various times, every section of the establishment got into the act. Even Jefferson joined military leaders, royalty and clergy in forbidding or limiting play. It seems backgammon was so popular that it often caused negligence, dereliction of duty and/or the society drop-out equivalents to our "beatniks".

Today we find that backgammon is ubiquitous throughout the Mediterranean countries, and the same consistent excitement is undoubtedly taking hold in America. In 1931 the New York Racquet Club, acknowledging popular pressure, formulated a responsible codification of rules of play. This occurred about ten years after someone introduced the "doubling" innovation to backgammon. The excitement and attraction of the game accelerated almost as phenomenally as the option to double the stakes.

Then in 1964, Oby destroyed the last vestiges of backgammon sanity or moderation. Prince Alexis Obolensky held the first international backgammon competition. That event (won by Charlie Wacker) and the similar events that followed gave the news media a valuable novelty to report with its jet-set players in exotic venues. With this publicity, the United States found and embraced the other side of the checker board. The resurgence of backgammon participation has become an unparalleled, ongoing growth phenomenon. And yet, today's backgammon population bears little resemblance to that enviable media image.

The attraction of backgammon has become so pervasive that the players represent every possible variation of age, income and occupation. No other leisure activity can offer the endless variety or flexibility of format. The inherent pleasure which is unique to backgammon presides whenever the dice are picked up. **The unique thrill of competition in the final match at the world championships begins everytime two people open their backgammon set at the beach.**

BACKGAMMON IS EVERYWHERE

ALASKA Anchorage Municipal Rec. Bldg.*		HAWAII Honolulu The Trattoria	Mon., Fri.	Omaha Reuben's Plankhouse The Park	Sunday Wednesday	Houston Bonaparte's Retreat Texas Backgammon Association*	Monday Monthly
ARIZONA Scottsdale Scottsdale Bridge & Backgammon Club	Wednesday	Waikiki Kaiser Wilhelm Rex's	Wednesday 2nd Sunday	NEVADA Las Vegas Rumor's	Sunday	VIRGINIA Petersburg Old Town Tavern	Alt. Sundays
CALIFORNIA Campbell Rascal's Campbell Bridge & Backgammon Club GameTable	Wednesday Friday 4th Sunday	ILLINOIS Aurora St. Charles Med. Ctr.	1st Thurs.	Reno Hardy House	Thursday	Richmond Jewish Community Center	Monday
Carmel/Monterey Backgammon Central* Game Gallery*	Monthly Monthly	Carbondale Quatro's	Alt. Saturdays	NEW JERSEY Hasbrouck Heights Quality Inn	Tues., Fri.	Virginia Beach The Paradox	Tuesday
Long Beach Bogarts	Thursday	Chicago Beef Steak Inn Maxim's* Banana's	Wednesday Sunday	Livingston Essex County Backgammon Center	Thursday	WASHINGTON Seattle Sundays Thirteen Coins Benjamins	Monday Wednesday Sunday
Los Angeles Whiskey Creek Cavendish West Monty's Chippendales Speakeasy Montebello Dirty Sally's No. Hollywood Bridge & Backgammon*	Alt. Mondays Tues., Wed. Wednesday Thursday Thursday Friday Sunday Monthly	Downers Grove Ground Round	Tuesday	No. Brunswick Holiday Inn	Wednesday	Tacoma Butcher, Baker	Monday
Newport Pierce Street Annex Picasso's	Wednesday Thursday	Morton Grove Val's	Mon., Thurs.	NEW YORK Buffalo Butcher Shop Deli Place Statler Hilton	Tuesday Thursday Sunday	WICONSIN Kenosha Spaghetti Station	1st & 3rd Monday
San Diego Tavern Restaurant	Sunday	Northbrook Victoria Station Sheraton Inn	Thursday Friday	Carle Place North Shore Backgammon Club	Mon., Wed., Thurs., & Fri.	Milwaukee First Street Wharf Dueling Oaks	Tuesday Sunday
San Francisco Tingle's Chris' Club Dance Your Ass Off Day's Little Shamrock San Remo's	Tuesday Wednesday Wednesday Wed., Sat. Sunday 3rd Sunday	Skokie Cas & Lou Restaurant Ho Jo's	Monday Tuesday	Garden City Park Copperfield's Pub	Tuesday	WYOMING Jackson Hole Steak Pub	Tuesday
Walnut Creek Brittann Inn	Monday	INDIANA Evansville Petroleum Club*	Monthly	Manhattan Bar Point	Wed., Sat., Sun.	BAHAMAS Nassau Pink Pussycat Club	Monday
COLORADO Boulder Hilton Harvest House	Sunday	Indianapolis Indiana Athletic Club	Monday	Niagara Falls J.P. Morgan's Speakeasy	Monday Tuesday	CANADA Hamilton Hamilton Squash Club	Tues., Fri.
Denver Fleury's Bogart's The Loft	Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	KANSAS Kansas City Bridge Club Unicorn Club	Tuesday Tues., Thurs.	Rochester Burgundy Basin Inn Greenstreet's	Tuesday Sunday	Toronto Club 44	Tuesday
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Your Move	Sunday & Thursday	KENTUCKY Louisville Louisville Bridge Center	Sun., Wed.	Westchester Ho Jo's (Yonkers)	Tuesday	ENGLAND London Crockford's* Man in the Moon Pub	Thursday
FLORIDA Boca Raton After Dark	Monday	LOUISIANA New Orleans Vamps	Wednesday	OHIO Toledo Steak & Ale Alfie's Madison Lounge	Monday Tuesday Friday	JAPAN Tokyo English Master's Salon	Monday
Ft. Lauderdale Backgammon Emporium* Mr. Pips Howard Johnson's	Tues., Thurs., Fri. Wednesday	MARYLAND Baltimore After Deck Lounge Les Amis Lounge	Thursday Saturday	OREGON Portland Royal Exchange Black Bull Tavern Horse Brass Pub Hindquarter Schmoe's II	Monday Wednesday Saturday Sunday Alt. Sundays	MEXICO Mexico City Club Social Polanco, A.C.	Monday Wednesday
Jacksonville Zachary's	Tues., & 2nd Thurs.	MASSACHUSETTS Boston Cavendish Club* New England Backgammon Club*	Monthly Monthly	PENNSYLVANIA Philadelphia Cavendish	Sunday	*Contact Locally for Tournament Schedule: Alaska Backgammon Players Assoc. (907) 279-1431 Boston Cavendish Club (617) 734-2230 New England Backgammon Club (617) 563-5787 Pittsburgh Backgammon Association (412) 373-2356 Texas Backgammon Association (713) 780-3671 American Backgammon Players Assoc. (213) 396-4551	
Miami Aventura Country Club Cricket Club	Tuesday Thursday	Cape Cod Cape Cod Backgammon Association*	Monthly	Pittsburgh Omar's Tent Holiday House Pittsburgh Backgammon Association*	Monday Thursday Monthly		
Pompano Beach The Native Sun	Sunday	MICHIGAN Detroit Cavendish North Dunn Inn	Wednesday Saturday	RHODE ISLAND Centerdale Adrian's Pub	Sunday		
Sarasota Holiday Inn	Monday	FLINT Studio 416	Thursday	E. Greenwich Westminster Church	Alt. Wednesdays		
Tampa Rough Riders	Sunday	MINNESOTA Bloomington Maximillian's	Monday	Providence Spat's Pub Starr Bridge Club	Tuesday Thursday		
GEORGIA Atlanta Gammons Jeryl's	Monday Monday	Minneapolis/St. Paul Kaplan's University Club	Alt. Thursdays Alt. Thursdays	TENNESSEE Memphis Bombay Bicycle Club	Sunday	TO KEEP THIS DIRECTORY CURRENT AND ACCURATE, NO LISTING WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY REPEATED. EACH TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR MUST CON- FIRM AND/OR UPDATE THEIR EVENT DETAILS EACH QUARTER.	
Augusta D.W. Fry's	Monday	MISSISSIPPI Jackson Scrooges	Monday	Nashville Sperry's Shenanigan's	Tuesday Sunday		
		MISSOURI Springfield The Wicker Works P.J. Brennan's	Wednesday Sunday	TEXAS Dallas Pawn Shop	Mon., Tues., Wed.		
		NEBRASKA Lincoln Morocco Lounge	Wednesday			This listing is provided as an information service and implies neither sanction nor endorsement by the Association.	

These listings of ongoing regional backgammon events are compiled quarterly and distributed nationwide by the American Backgammon Players Association as a player information service. Listing implies neither sanction nor endorsement by the Players Association.

We encourage news of new events and schedule changes. Send details directly to GAMMON MAGAZINE or the American Backgammon Players Association, 12333 West Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90066.

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- ☐ Please send details regarding the _____
Tournament.
- ☐ Please enter me in the drawing that celebrates the AERO-MEXICO Backgammon Connection. I am over 21 years old. AEROMEXICO will fly two players to the Mexican Tournament of their choice.

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- ☐ 1 year membership (US, Canada, Mexico) \$25
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BACKGAMMON CLUB**



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OCEAN DRIVE/ NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND 02840 (401) VIP-7777

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19):

There will be a tendency for you to want to shy away from this world. An organized group may pressure you for a long-term commitment, which you must resist, at least until you have adequate time to think it over. You prefer to break away from current commitments as you look upon them as mistakes that are now costing you your personal freedom. Lucky days 4, 5, 14, 25, 28. Lucky #s Frequent byes, easy pairings in tournaments.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 – Feb. 18):

Partnerships may be working against your financial interests while your attention is diverted away from the action. Straighten out any loose ends in business agreements. Otherwise you'll lose control over important money matters. If you play in chouettes, avoid a partner who may provoke ill-fated decisions. Likewise don't wander far from a game in progress, lest a steaming chouette take or give a bad double for you vs. the box. Lucky days 7, 11, 26, 30. Lucky #s 5-4, 6-3.

PISCES

(Feb. 19 - Mar. 20)

An abundance of energy is indicated for career matters this month. Direct your ambition and physical workloads in a cooperative way. There will be a tendency for friction to develop from another's sensitivity to your drives. Gambling matters are especially vulnerable now. Lucky days 5, 9, 10, 18, 28. Lucky #s 6-6, 4-4.

ARIES (Mar 21 – Apr. 19):

You feel rambunctious this month and want to experience life with renewed vitality. After the 3rd, Mercury's transit of Sagittarius has you daydreaming of far away places. Satisfy that wanderlust and travel to a new city. You will find it educational and releasing even if it's only for a short period. Lucky days 3, 7, 11, 16, 21, 30. Lucky #s All 3's.

TAURUS

(Apr. 20 – May 20):

Personal relationships will be a challenge to you and may become uneasy if you fail to understand the test they will put you through. After the 26th, Mercury and Jupiter turn retrograde. This may make you insecure. Avoid any hasty commitments and don't take any action based on rumors. They will more than likely be false. Any private gambling dealings are fraught with the usual perils if you fail to judge your opponent's character accurately. Lucky days 5, 9, 13, 14, 18. Lucky #s 5-3, 6-1.

GEMINI

(May 21 – June 20):

Others view you as an active socializer, but you convey your emotions sincerely and readily. After the 26th, you'll tighten up and become more discriminating among those you allow into your confidence. Legal matters are not favored at this time and should be postponed until you have a clearer perspective of them. Lucky days 7, 11, 16, 21. Lucky #s 2-2, 3-2.

CANCER

(June 21 - July 22):

Social concerns that you have diminish while career relationships increase in importance. There is a tendency for you to assert your authority and behave in a presumptuous and indignant manner when things don't go your way. During this period avoid chouetting as your temperament is not very tolerant. You may disappoint those you feel close to if you don't make a special effort to consider their feelings. Lucky days 1, 9, 24, 28, 29, 23. Lucky #s 6-4.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 – Dec. 21):

Mars enters your solar house after the first and promises excitement and changes in your life. You aspire to achieve your personal ambitions and now would be a favorable time to play in tournaments. Point your arrow of ambition sky high without faltering or compromising. Lucky days 3, 7, 11, 30. Lucky #s All aces.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 – Nov. 21)

Discipline in money management is called for this month. Personal goals are given emphasis now that Mars enters Sagittarius. Mars also provides initiative for you to capitalize on your personal resources throughout the month. Lucky days 1, 9, 18, 23, 29. Lucky #s 4-2.

LIBRA

(Sept. 23 – Oct. 23):

Money that you expected from friends or by mail will not be forthcoming. Frequent tests of your equanimity can be expected. Break-downs develop or other hassles may infuriate you, but new career skills or improved capabilities will be the benefit of transits this month. Lucky days 7, 10, 21, 25, 26. Lucky #s 4-3.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 – Sept. 22):

You tend to withdraw from situations that may force your feelings out in the open. A natural reserve is your innate tendency but usually you can laugh off troubles with your excellent sarcastic wit. A renewed interest in backgammon is likely around the Full Moon when you contract another's contagious enthusiasm.

Lucky days 5, 13, 14, 19, 23, 24, 28. Lucky #s 2, 1.

LEO

(July 23 – Aug. 23):

Family matters may become a hassle, but they are likely to improve after the 29th when Venus turns direct and affectionate relations can resume. You may "hide out" to avoid problems at home, but this is better than facing a confrontation that will leave long-lasting emotional scars. Instead, utilize this time by implementing some creative notions you've been planning while away from home. Backgammon action provides comfortable recreation throughout the month. Lucky days 3, 11, 16, 21, 30. Lucky #s 5-5, 4-1.



Backgammon

by
Sonne

A BOARD PENDANT:
Distinctive,
balanced design
reflected in this
miniature 14kt
backgammon
board. On a 24"
gold chain.

CUBE PENDANTS:

B Solid 14kt doubler
on an 18" chain.
A 5/16" cube.

C Solid 14kt doubler
on an 18" chain.
A 3/8" cube.

D One half inch 14kt
cube on a 24"
chain.
(Shown with
diamond inset.)

All chains 14kt gold.
Items shown actual
size.



E TIE PIN: Be doubly
sure your tie is in
place with our
solid 14kt cube
pin.

F STICK PIN:
Solid 14kt cube
and pin.

G A LUCKY CHARM
for wrist or neck
adornment. Solid
14kt gold.

**H HEXAGONAL
DOUBLING RING:**
Contemplate your
next double with
our 14kt
backgammon
ring. In half sizes
from 3½ to 13.

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metals and precious
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Each piece represents the finest quality materials,
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Excellence in Backgammon.

Sonne



The second layer of one-half inch thick glass displays the Player's Board when not in use, freeing the table for a candlelight dinner for two.

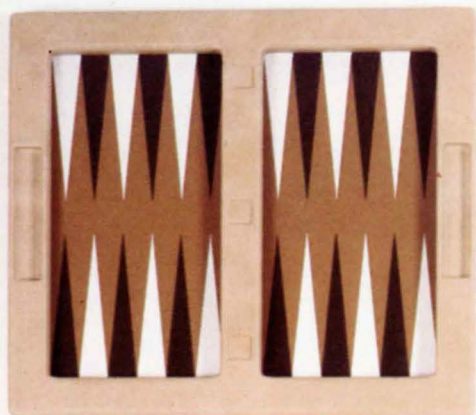
J THE GLASS TABLE

The design of the glass table is elegant and functional. The table top measures 30" x 44" with room to accommodate a chouette.

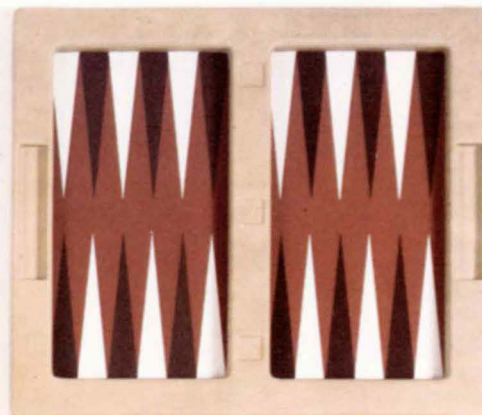
The glass is supported by triple plated chrome tubular legs. Ideal playing height of 29" is standard. Custom heights are available.

The table is easily assembled with accompanying wrench and instructions.

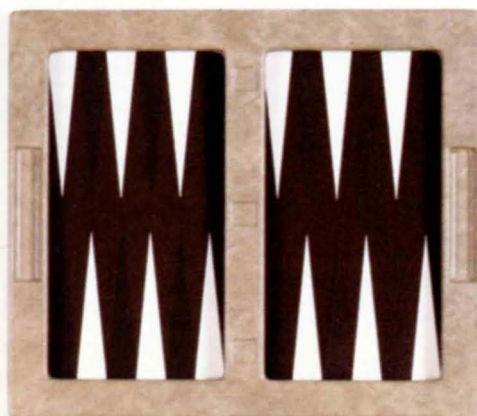
Solid brass legs, bronze or smoked glass, available by custom order.



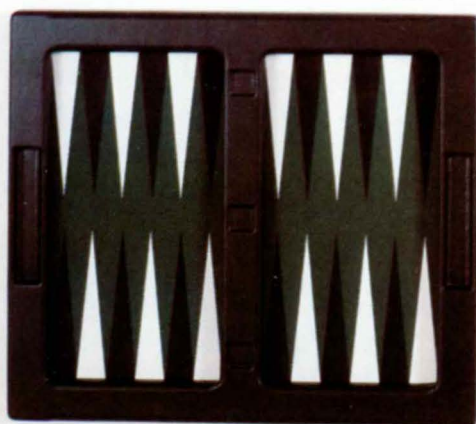
Caramel and gold.



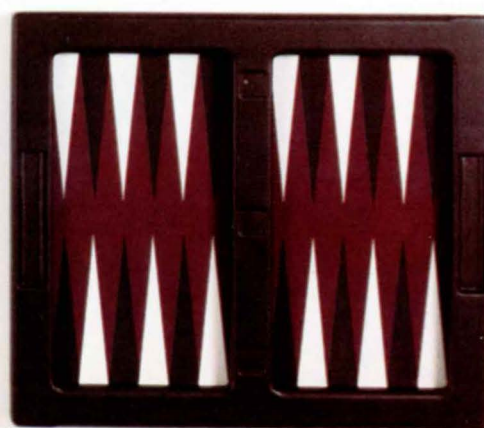
Caramel and copper.



Buckskin and brown.



Black and dark green.



Black and mahogany.

K THE PLAYER'S BOARD

Designed for excellence in play and appearance, the playing surface is cushioned gaming table cloth. This fast, quiet playing surface is extremely wear resistant. A special process colors the pips through the material for an enduring contrast. The surface is Scotchgard® for stain protection.

The perimeter, in soft seamless vinyl, is attractive and long wearing.

Three perimeter and five playing surface colors allow you to select a combination to compliment your interior. Pips are brown and white or black and white.

Included with each set are leather cups, dice, playing pieces, cube, and care instructions.

Color samples available upon request.

L, M, N

SOLID BRASS DOUBLING CUBE:

Specify up to 3 initials or 64 on top facet. Perfect for playing, posing, or musing. Three sizes — L, 3/4"; M, 1"; N, 1 1/4".

O LEATHER DICE CUP

with cushioned bottom and sewn trip. Measures 3 1/2" high with 3" diameter.

P THE DELIBERATE DOUBLER:

New and ingenious. Arrow points direction of the next important double. Deeply engraved numbers on 1 1/4" cube.

Q, R

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for the connoisseur of fine pipes and backgammon. Top quality Grecian briar. Faceted and hand inlaid with 14kt gold. Hexagonal Large Bowl (Q) or rounded Prince (R) style.

S KEEP YOUR

WINNINGS in style with our sterling silver money clip.

T ACCURATE DICE:

All probabilities are equal using dice accurate to 1/1000ths of an inch. Rounded corners. Specify red, green, or white. 5/8" size.

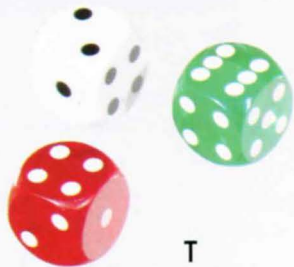
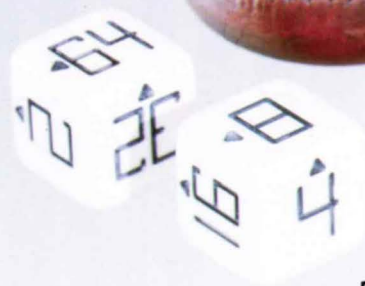
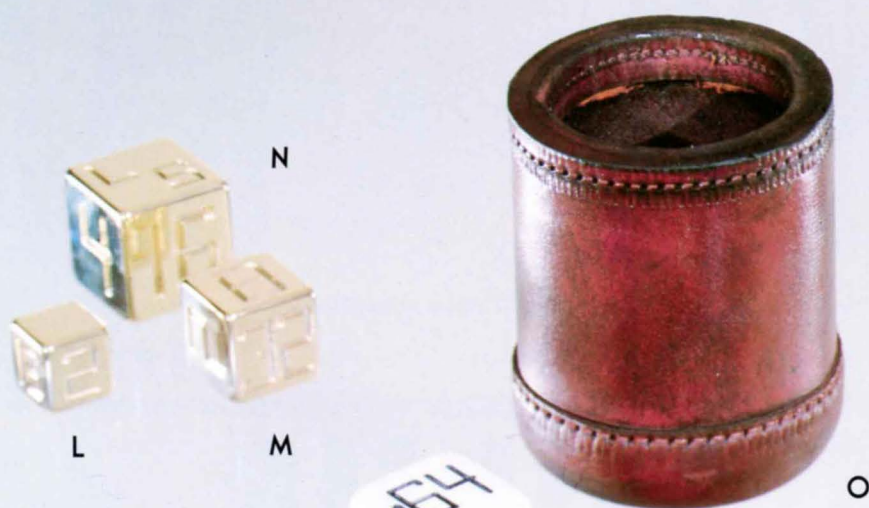
U KEY CHAIN:

An added dimension for your keys. Sturdy and dependable.

W THE WALKING

STICK: This ash and brass walking stick is uniquely faceted and engraved with the numbers of the doubling cube.

Personalize with up to 3 initials on top of brass head.



FOR ORDER FORM TURN TO PAGE 51

W

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serious competitors are getting richer with tournament tested Z & Co. backgammon tables. And you don't have to be an oil sheik to afford one.

Z Table is handcrafted to custom club specifications in solid hardwoods with ivory inlay. Special bearing off trays are built in. Dice, doubling cubes, and checkers are included and there's even an ash tray holder for your Gauloise.

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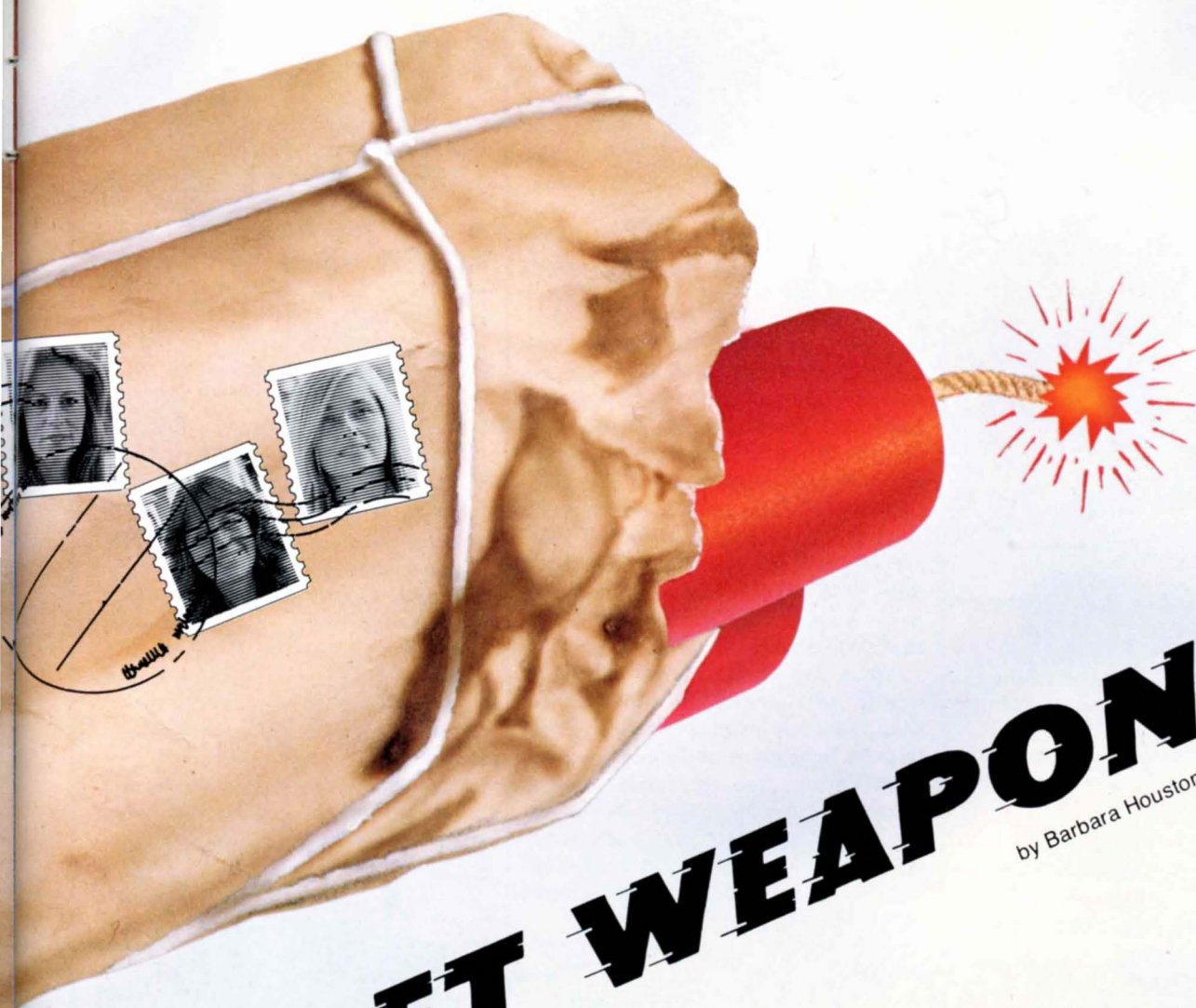
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AMERICA'S



SECRET WEAPON

by Barbara Houston

**BEWARE:
LONDON,
NASSAU,
MONTE CARLO,
ST. MORITZ,
GSTAAD,
HELSINKI,
ITALY,**

American men are proud of it. European men refuse to admit it. American men encourage it. European men snicker at the very thought of it.

"It" is the burgeoning strength of women backgammon players in the United States—and European men had better beware of the potent force about to invade foreign shores. America's secret weapon is its women!

The American woman backgammon player has, in the late seventies, become a tough contender in any major tournament—national or international. She no longer fears those big, bad moustachioed boys with the charming, seductive accents. She now knows that behind that tough macho exterior is a little boy frightened to death of being outplayed by a mere female. *(continued next page)*

Typical compulsiveness in playing is not restricted to men. For example, as this writer was playing in a chouette in Los Angeles the other day, a call came in from Marie Reynolds in North Carolina to proof check some copy. The conversation was "Glad you called. We were just doubled to 128. Do you take?" Marie replied, "Of course. How does one refuse a double at 128?"



VALERIE DEEDS

Born: Scotland

Lives: Los Angeles

Plays: Cavendish West, Pips

Taught: By Edwin Kantar, one of the foremost bridge players and writers in the world.

Influence: Stan Tomchin and Tom Gilbert

How Long: 5-6 years

Tournaments: Three Pips tournaments in a row. Placed in San Martin, Las Vegas, Chicago, Aruba

Hobbies: Bridge, tennis, table tennis, Monopoly

Quote: "Never look back."



MARY ZITA JACOBY

Married to Oswald Jacoby, internationally known author of books on backgammon as well as one of the better backgammon players.

Quote: "After rolling your dice, ask yourself two questions. One, can you hit a man or make a point? And two, which is more important?"

Our men are not intimidated by us. Unlike their brothers across the Atlantic, American men treat us as equals. The women mentioned in this article are but a handful of the damsels whose mettle has been tested and who have proven themselves to be winners. I would venture our men would back any one of us against a stiff upper-lipper (Lewis Deyong?) or a suave Frenchman (Jean Noel Grinda?) or even an exotic Persian (are you listening, Maurice?).

We certainly don't mean to imply that European men aren't charming, intelligent and often quite nice. You are all that and more. But we do feel that you are a bit archaic in your attitudes about women's place in the hallowed halls of gaming rooms. On any given night at Crockford's or Clermont's there will be only one woman for every 20 men playing. But at the Mayfair (New York) or Cavendish (Los Angeles), easily *50 percent* of the players are women. There is a depressing lack of any really outstanding European women players. And the fault, dear Brutus, lies with *you!*

While you European men shun your women who attempt to improve their skills, your less insecure American counterparts have given us support and encouragement and yes, even lessons! Every woman mentioned in this article has had a husband or boyfriend mentor who was willing to spend as much time with her in the library, playing backgammon, as in the bedroom playing.



LEE GENUD

Born: Woodberry, N.Y.

Lives: New York

Taught: By Stan Tomchin

How Long: 6 years

Influence: Manny Wong, Stan Tomchin, Tom Gilbert, Billy Eisenberg

Tournaments: Won, Pips (Los Angeles) Tournament, twice. Came into the money in St. Maarten Tourney.

Hobbies: Music. Great bridge player.

Quote: "Rolling prime gathers no loss."



MARIE REYNOLDS

Born: Daytona Beach, Florida

Lives: Southern Pines, No. Carolina

Plays: Home, Mayfair House of Bridge, New York.

Taught: By Josh Reynolds, and Kibitzing a chouette consisting of Tim Holland, Johnny Crawford, Walter Cooke, Ted Bassett, Oswald Jacoby, Porter Ijams and Hunter Goodrich. She watched hundreds of hours and this is how she really learned to play.

Influence: Tim Holland

How Long: 8 Years.

Tournaments: 2 New York Finals, Runner up Palm Beach; Winner, Cruise Tournament, Fort Lauderdale; 1st Consolation, Palm Springs; Placed, in Las Vegas

Hobbies: Horses-riding and exhibiting hunters, tennis, gin, poker and cooking.

Quote: When the cube gets to 128, of course we take."



FAYE SCHWIMMER

Born: Chicago, Illinois

Lives: Chicago with her husband Walter, who is a great player of all games.

How Long: 15 years

Plays: Maxim's, Chicago

Taught: By Prince Alex Obolensky.

Influence: Joe Dwek and Lewis Deyong.

Tournaments: Consolation in Nassau; Las Vegas, Tourney, Women's Prize

Quote: "Play, play, play and more play!" Plays running backgammon game on the telephone with Carol Crawford.

Why are American men so much more supportive of competitive women than are European men? Well, the easy answer, of course, is that the women's liberation movement in America has created a society where men and women compete in all economic, sociological and recreational fields. If a man spends his day with women at a boardroom conference table, it just seems natural for him to spend his evening with a woman at a backgammon table.

The advanced state of American technology has helped too. We women have so much extra time that some of it we devote to backgammon. One can play just so many sets of tennis.

But the biggest aid is that our men lack that centuries-old tradition of "machismo" so deeply instilled in even the most modern Europeans. For example, the only public place to play backgammon in Paris (Le Gran Circle) is closed to women!



CAROL CRAWFORD

Born: Buffalo, New York

Lives: New York City

How Long: 10 years

Taught: Self-taught but very much influenced by her late husband Johnny Crawford.

Tournaments: Won, Womens World Championship, International Championship at Biarritz, 2nd to Oswald Jacoby in the American Championship Tournament, Champion at St. Regis in New York City. Came into the money in many other tournaments.

Hobbies: Plays tennis, golf and very good at bridge.

She feels that the best backgammon book is by Crawford and Jacoby, which came out at Christmas, 1970. She considers it the Bible of backgammon. She prefers tournament play to clubs because clubs start too late for her.



BARBARA HOUSTON

Born: Chicago, Illinois

Lives: Chicago, Illinois

Taught: By Bob Viner of New York City.

Plays: Aries, Washington, D.C.; Pips, Los Angeles; Palm Bay Club, Miami

Influence: Billy Eisenberg, Stan Tomchin, Mike Carson, Chuck Papazian.

How Long: 5 years

Tournaments: Consolation prize in Palm Springs, Consolation in Palm Bay Club, Quarter finals in Women's 1st World Championship.

Hobbies: Games she plays, voracious reader and practices law.

Quote: "To be a winner." One word quote from Barbara, "PASS."



LILI GROSS

Born: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Lives: New York City

Plays: Mayfair House of Bridge, Cavendish West

Taught: Billy Eisenberg and Stan Tomchin

Influence: Paul Magriel

How Long: 4½ years

Tournaments: Won a few New York tournaments, Doubles Finalist, Metropolitan Opera N.Y., Consolation Finalist, Monte Carlo, Won Consolation, El Morrocco, N.Y., Placed: Crockfords, London; Plaza, N.Y.; Dallas, Texas; Palm Beach, Florida

Hobbies: Art, Travel, Gin.

Fluent in French, Spanish, Italian

Quote: "You only live once, and if you live right, once is enough."



LYNN GOLDSMITH

Born: New York City

Lives: New York City

Plays: Mayfair

Tournaments: Chicago Tournament, Hippopotamus, 1st Consolation at Paradise Island, 1st Consolation at St. Maarten, 2nd Consolation at St. Moritz, Last Chance, Puerto Rico

Taught: By Paul Magriel

Influence: Mainly Paul Magriel



NANCY WEICHSEL

Born: New York

Lives: Berkeley, California

How Long: 5 years

Plays: Mayfair

Taught: By watching Kyle Larsen and being helped by Peter Weichsel, Paul Magriel and Stan Tomchin.

Hobbies: All games, bridge, riding horses.

Tournaments: Mayfair Club, Semi-Junior - consolation prize. San Francisco, Semi-Junior - consolation prize. Quarter finalist in last 6 Obolensky tournaments. Semi-finalist in last 8 World Backgammon tournaments.

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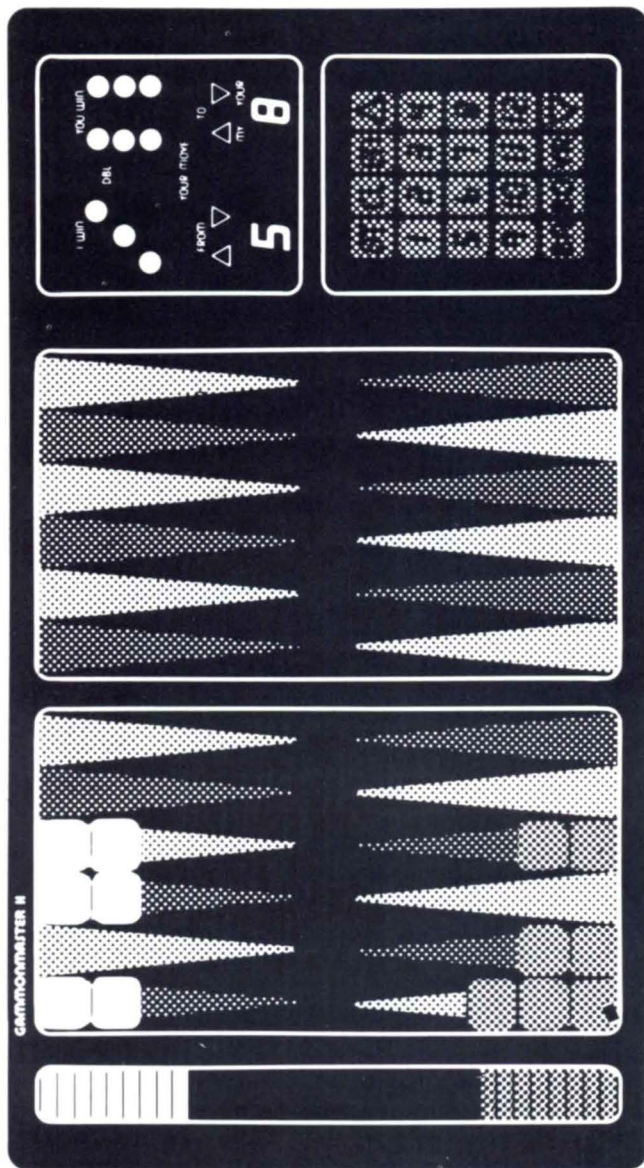
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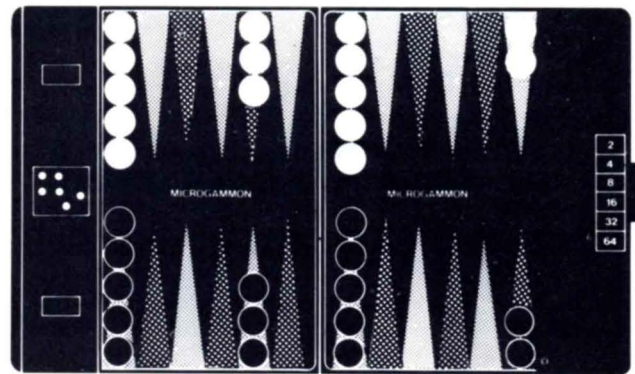
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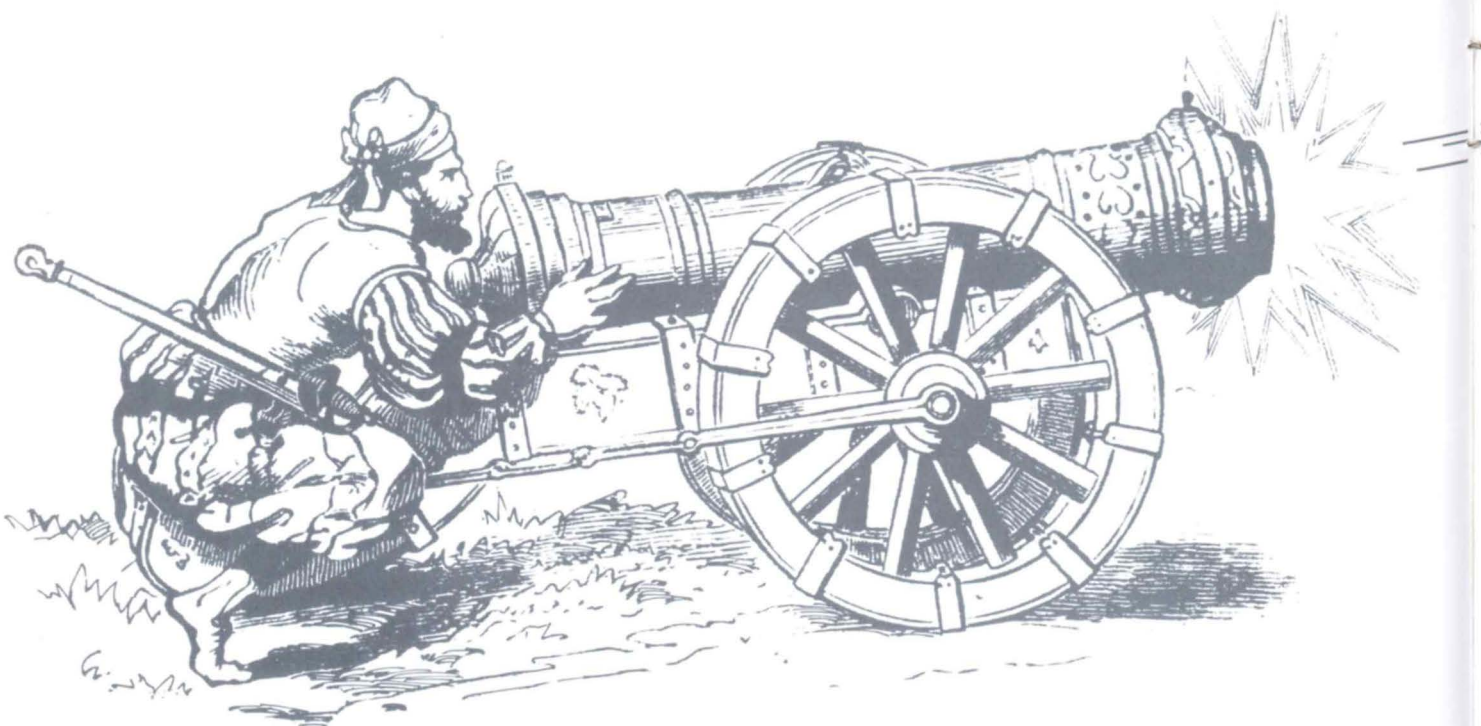
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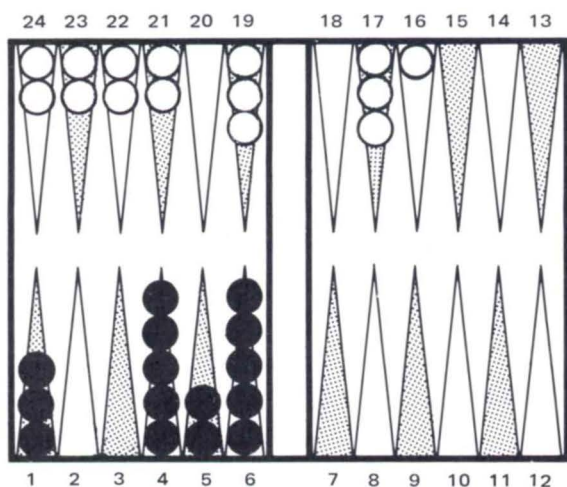
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G2

Use the cube as a



Many times you will hear someone say "It was a happy take." One of the least desirable actions is to take a "bad" double. The worst possible action is to give a bad double. Occasionally you may take a questionable cube if you wish to attempt to demoralize your opponent by accepting the double and subsequently turning the game around. This may be forgivable, but it is never forgivable to give a bad cube. In the following six positions, we are going to examine some "gifty" doubles and some sound doubles.



- A) Should Black double?
B) Should Black redouble?

DIAGRAM #1

Black doubles in Diagram #1. He has all of his men in his inner board while White still has to bring in four men before he can begin to bear off. Black figures he will be able to bear off several men before White bears off any men. Before we can determine whether Black has given a sound double we must evaluate two factors: distribution and pip count. White has a more even distribution of his men in his inner board and thus will tend to miss less once he starts to bear off. The pip count shows that Black is barely ahead in the race (Black - 69, White - 71). Black is a favorite but not enough of a favorite to double at this point. If White gets several good shakes, he may wind up redoubling. Even experienced players at times get lured into giving a bad cube by the illusion of having all their men in their inner board while their opponent has several men to bear in.

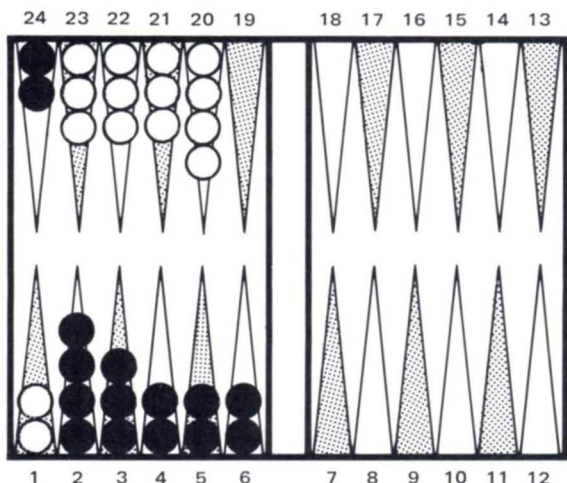
How much of a favorite do you have to be to double? Tables have been constructed which relate the disparity in pip count to the length of the race. As a more general rule of thumb, you should have enough of a lead so that if your opponent throws a big double, he can't double you out on his next few throws. This rule works until you get down to within the last four or five rolls of the game. You do not want to put yourself in the position where a couple 6-5's by your opponent and a miss by you will allow your opponent to double you out. By doubling in Position 1 Black makes White the favorite in the game because White now owns the cube. Obviously Black should not redouble in this position.

weapon



...not as a gift

by Gaby Horowitz and Dr. Bruce Roman



A) Should Black redouble?
B) Should White take? **DIAGRAM #2**

Diagram #2 occurred in a chouette with Black, one of the top women backgammon players, in the box. In this position she redoubled to 4. Should White take? Absolutely. If Black does not roll an immediate 5 or 6, Black's board will start to crash. Black is a 5 to 4 favorite to throw either a 5 or a 6 but 5 to 4 odds hardly justifies a redouble! This is a gifty redouble. If the cube were in the middle, Black could double this position because White can get gammoned and Black would be giving up less equity than if he already owned the cube.

Black could have redoubled this position if the two men on his 2 pt, were on his 6 pt. (Diagram 2A). Then if Black failed to roll a 5 or a 6, he could maintain his board with any roll except 3-3 or 4-4. When you double, you want your opponent to feel the pressure, not give the cube away and hope for the best.

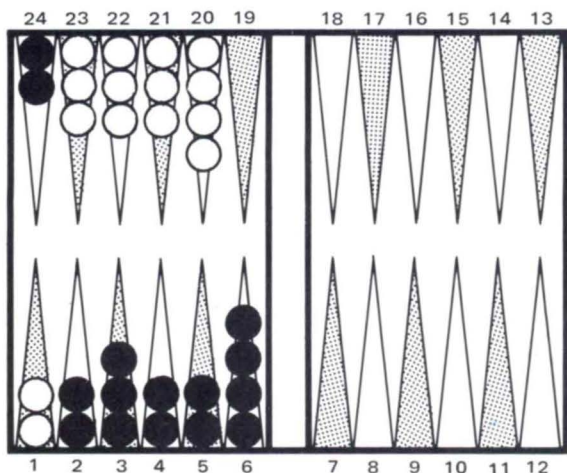
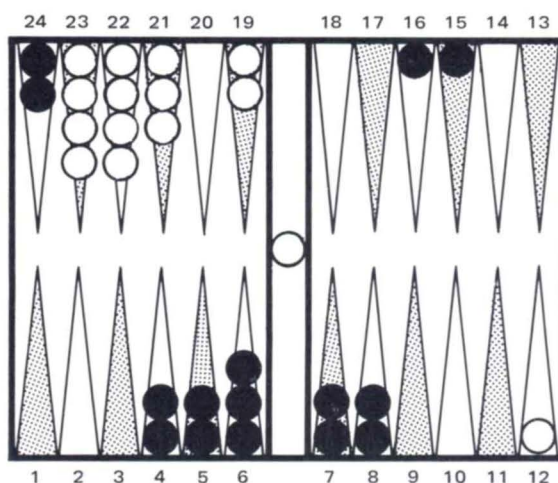
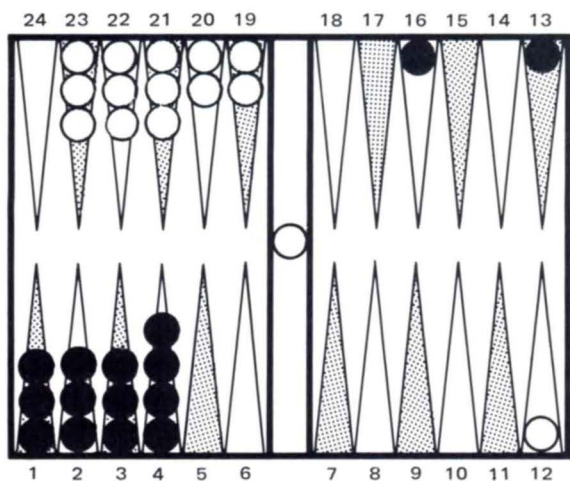


DIAGRAM #2A



Should Black redouble? **DIAGRAM #3**

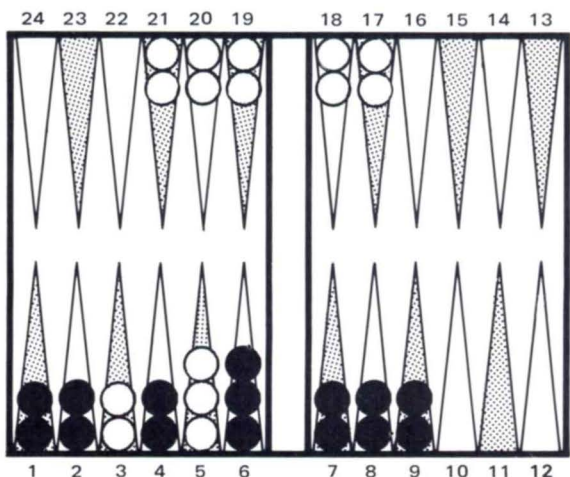
In Diagram #3 would Black's redoubling be a pressure redouble or a gifty redouble? This is a gifty redouble because Black's game is "too good to redouble." Black has definite gammon possibilities. He has 25 numbers with which to hit White's blot on the 12 pt. White will then have two men on the bar and Black will have enough artillery to close White out before he can establish an anchor. White is stripped on his 6 point (#19) and may be forced to leave an additional blot, which Black may hit, thus increasing his chances to gammon White. This could occur after Black hits White's blot and White then re-enters his men behind Black's prime and throws a 1-3 or 1-4 on his next roll. The fact that Black has two men behind White's broken four-point prime should not concern Black. He has 4's and 6's to come out at his convenience. A reasonable player will be able to diversify his men in such a way as to use 4's and 6's to come out and the rest of the numbers (i.e., 1's, 2's, 3's, and 5's) to extend or advance his prime.



Should Black redouble? **DIAGRAM #4**

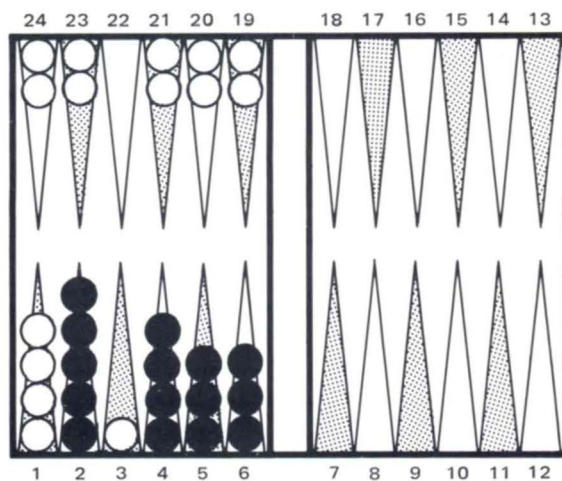
In Diagram #4 Black must determine what his chances are to gammon White before he can make an intelligent decision in regards to redoubling or not redoubling. Black's position here is not as strong as it was in Diagram #3. Even if Black were to succeed in putting both of White's men on the bar against a five-point board he would not be a favorite to gammon White. Note that Black has only a four-point board and therefore much less chance of gammoning White. Black must redouble White out now. He should not give him the opportunity to hit him with a "fly shot" from the bar as he brings his last two men in. By the way, if your opponent takes this redouble, you should be happy to provide him limousine service to wherever he wants to play you, and pay for his dinner and all other expenses to boot. You will still wind up plenty ahead.

"Fly shot": an indirect shot from the bar that hits one of the opponent's blots.



A) Should Black double?
B) Should Black redouble? **DIAGRAM #5**

In Position 5 Black is on roll and is considering doubling. White has a 3-5 backgame, which is not the best backgame to have, but it can be very effective against an outside prime. If Black should double this position, he would not be using the cube as a weapon but as a gift and White should happily take. White has excellent timing, and he should get at least two double shots for a win or perhaps even a gammon. You should never double your opponent when he has a well-timed backgame. However, some special tournament situations may dictate an exception to this rule.



A) Should Black double?
B) Should Black redouble? **DIAGRAM #6**

Black should double White out immediately. He gains nothing by waiting. White can get gammoned in this position. Black should not be intimidated by White's 5 point board. White needs to make the 3 point immediately and/or come out with a man from Black's home board to have much of a chance. Even if White is successful in establishing the 3 point, he is faced with a timeless backgame in which he can get gammoned and Black cannot. Black should not redouble this position. He should wait a roll and should he get one of the nine good numbers (1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 2-2, 2-3, 3-3) which eliminate the gap on the 3 point he can continue to play on for the gammon. Black can always redouble later if his position becomes inflexible or stripped.

Did you know . . .

Q-Gammon

A new offshoot of backgammon has become popular in the last year. In this game one of the players is allowed to call his own roll on every turn, but is never allowed doubles. His opponent is allowed two consecutive rolls in each turn, and plays each of these rolls completely. All of the rules remain basically the same, except that the player calling his roll always plays first and his opponent is allowed to double before either his first or second roll of each turn.

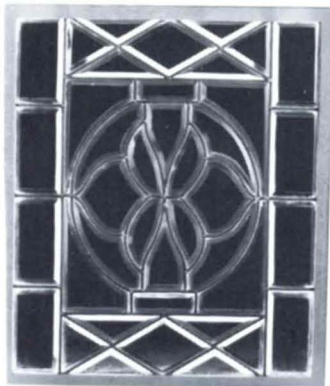
This variation of backgammon is said to have developed in the Middle East. Its strategy is very complex and seems to have a much greater skill factor than the regular game.

A word of warning if you decide to play it a few times; If you feel that one side is clearly the better of the two, or that the strategies for either side are relatively simple, you are probably on the wrong track. The latest theory among the top players has the two roll side as slightly the best, but it is not clear at all.

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International Backgammon Association

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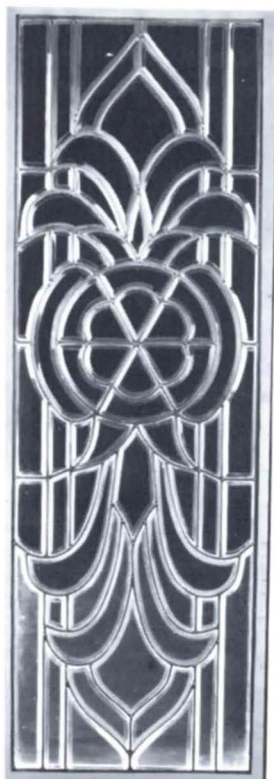
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Barclay Cooke
Author of *The Cruellest Game*



RANDOM HOUSE



About the Author

BARCLAY COOKE graduated from Yale in 1934, is married, and lives in Englewood, New Jersey. Though he is devoted to classical music, including Bach, Beethoven and Brahms, he insists that for him the three B's are baseball, backgammon and bridge.

The section we have chosen is one of Barclay's favorites. Joe Dwek the renowned European player finished reading this book and said, "Until now no one has covered middle-game tactics so thoroughly. There are graphic lessons here for everyone, including experts."

120

This position is a treasure trove that runs the gamut of backgammon. There is something for everyone from beginner to expert, and even beyond. I say "beyond" because I believe that under pressure nobody in the world would make the correct play here for the right reason! All of us would misplay it at the table, whether in a tournament or money game. Oddly enough, the rawest beginner might well be the only one to handle it correctly, but for entirely the wrong reason!

Lest the reader feel that I am being too emphatic, let me admit that the first person who played it wrong was this writer in a critical tournament not long ago. Later, analyzing the position at leisure, I became aware that I had made the wrong move.

To cover W1 from W4 with three of the ones is surely correct; no one would argue here. For the fourth one there are three choices: (A) move to R3; (B) move to W5; (C) add a man to W6. Earlier it was stated that there was something in this position for the beginner, and here it is: (A) should be rejected immediately because if you move to R3, only eleven shots free you, whereas if you remain where you are, thirteen allow you to escape. All experts know this reflexively, and comparative newcomers should strive to learn it quickly because it is a common situation.

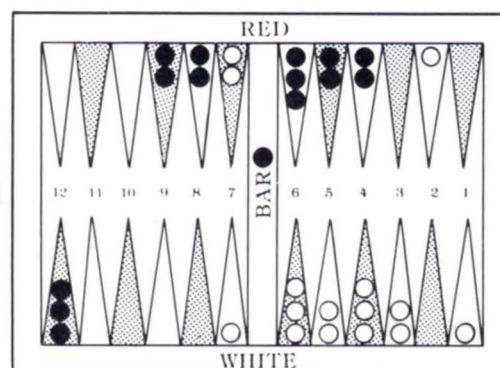
Hence we are down to two choices: moving to W5, or adding to W6. In all honesty, who would choose (C) between these two? Yet it is far and away the better play! First of all, assuming that Red stays on the bar, there are just as many chances to close W2 next time with two men from R6 as with one each from W7 and W5: double 2's and double 4's versus five and three. In addition, double 2's would play awkwardly if (B) had been chosen, whereas any five can be used to advantage to release White's man on R2 if (C) is played. Furthermore—and this is important and far from obvious—if White rolls double 6's, 6-1 or 6-2, look how much better off he is as a result of having played (C)! He cannot move the six and therefore keeps his builders in play. With (B), in each case the six would have had to move to W1 and be out of play forever.

It is true that by having builders on W7 and W5, White would be in a better position to start W2, but since he is not going to do so in this posi-

tion, the only occasion when (B) might be slightly better would be if Red came in immediately. But he is 25-11 not to do so, and on the next roll White may be able to split those two men on W6 if he so chooses.

To return to the theory that a beginner might make the correct play for the wrong reason, it would not be surprising for a novice to move to W6 merely for safety's sake. But the safety factor here is irrelevant, because if Red does roll a 5-2, he will have turned the game around regardless of White's play, and unless White rolls an immediate five, he will be hard pressed to accept a double.

This position is one of my favorites because there are so many variables. It demonstrates how complicated the game can be when subjected to analysis, and it is frightening to realize the enormous number of subtle (and not so subtle) errors that continue to be made by players of every caliber.

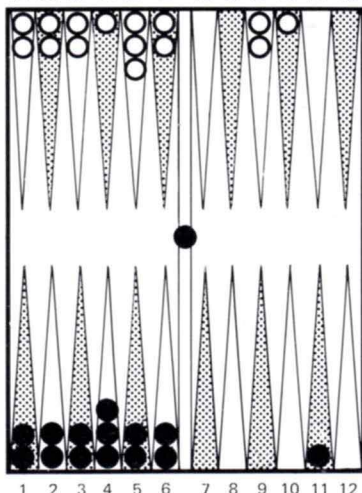


White to play 1-1. Red is on the bar.

EVEN THE EXPERTS DISAGREE

This situation occurred during the Open division of the Las Vegas Amateurs. Arthur Dickman was playing Sandy Carlston. Both are top professionals. At this position Dickman (●), who was behind 13-12 in the 15 point match considered doubling. **Would you double if you were ●?**

24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13



P.S.: Dickman didn't double, but he didn't roll a 4 either. And Sandy eventually won the match.

HERE'S WHAT THE EXPERTS SAID:

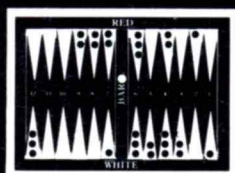
BILLY EISENBERG: Yes! But only because of the score. It's tough, but ●'s chance to win the match will never be better. ● has gammon possibilities if he rolls a 4. If he doesn't double and doesn't hit, he's 12-14 in a 15 point match, and only about 2-5 to win. And of course, ○ takes.

CHUCK PAPAZIAN: No! 12-14 isn't so bad. Only a 2½-1 underdog. And if hits but doesn't get the gammon ● is still only 14-13. It's insanity to double.

BARCLAY COOKE: No. I wouldn't want to put the match on a 25-11 shot against me. Even at 12-14 it's not over.

ROGER LOW: It depends on whether or not ● is going to roll a 4.

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by BARCLAY COOKE

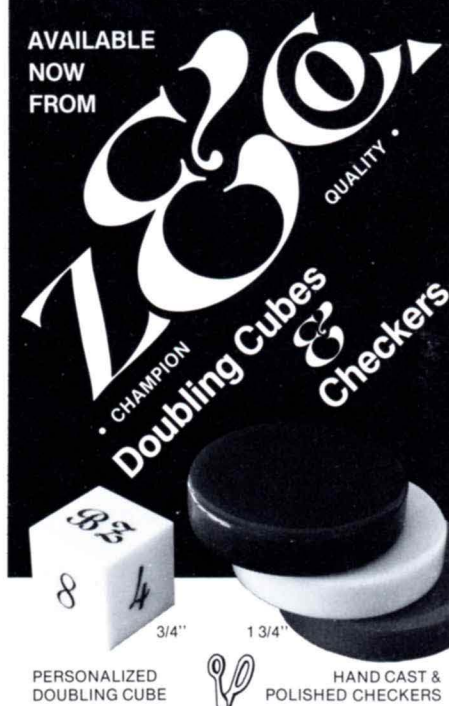
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Acapulco MEXICO

July 21 to July 24

By Nick Maffeo

Although it was a Mexican event, two Americans ended up playing the finals of the 1978 Miss Universe Open, held at the Plaza International Hyatt Regency in Acapulco. Maintaining an early-established lead, Tom Gilbert of Los Angeles defeated Chuck Papazian of San Francisco to take first place and his portion of the auction and players' pool.

Glamorous Maika Perez de Cobas of Madrid was the only non-American to reach the final four. Gilbert was the gentleman who ungallantly dispatched the lady with ease in the semis. In the other semi-finals, Papazian had a somewhat more difficult time before beating Tony Gobel, the Los Angeles Texan. Gobel was the Calcutta auctioneer and also brought its highest price. However, the tournament was not a complete loss for Gobel; he stormed back to capture the Last Chance event. The Mexicans were represented in the Consolation event by young and talented winner Roberto Schroeder of Mexico City.

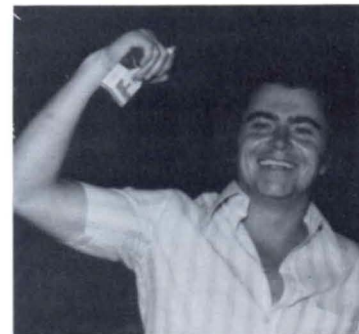
Turnout was less than hoped for. So the promoters had to complete the \$25,000 guaranteed prize fund, according to Jaime Crofton, one of the tournament organizers. (The others were Dr. Joffre DeLanFontanine, Jorge O'Farrill,



Alejandro Lopez-Franco and Rafael Correa.)

"We anticipated a small turnout early on as a result of the difficulties in obtaining confirmed reservations from Mexico City," DeLaFontaine explained. "And what we thought would be a decisive advantage or attraction — the Miss Universo Torneo — actually hurt us because prospective players could not attend."

There was also the problem that plagues all tournament events — the



Billy Braniff

Jacoby and Braniff final

lack of adequate publicity. In addition, the Acapulco tournament came at the tail end of the Philip Morris European Championships in Monte Carlo, and many Americans who might otherwise have attended were unable to make the Odyssey from the French to the Mexican Riviera.

With DeLaFontaine helping Sid Jackson (of the American Backgammon Players Association) run the show, those who were in attendance thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



(from left to right)

Mike and June Winkler

Lili Gross and Carman Rojas

Hermaine Serbonne, Larry Skipsey, Sam Wilson



Pebble Beach Backgammon Championships

Michael R. Teilmann



PEBBLE BEACH, California—Aram Kouleyan, of Los Angeles, handily won top place in the Black and White Classic Backgammon Championship held here February 16th through 18th. The Southern California backgammon entrepreneur successfully bested San Jose's Hassan Ehsan by the score of 21 to 12, thereby earning the first place prize money of \$5,000. Runner-up Ehsan, an engineering manager for General Electric, received \$2,500.

Some 130 backgammon players from throughout the United States, the Middle East and Europe participated in the three-day invitational tournament which saw \$17,500 in prize money distributed to some of the best players in the world.

A number of upsets in both the championship and intermediate flights kept the excitement level at a high pitch throughout the weekend. World Backgammon Champion Paul Magriel, of New York, was among the early casualties in the competition. Magriel made a remarkable recovery in subsequent play, but in his own words "... simply did not have the roll of the dice" with him. Other international favorites that did not fare well in the seventh anniversary of California's premier backgammon event were Lord Rennell of Rodd, one of Britain's foremost competitors, and the Marquis d'Arcangues, president of the French Backgammon Federation.



FINAL RESULTS

Championship Division:	1st Pl	Aram Kouleyan	Los Angeles	(\$5,000)
	2nd Pl	Hassan Ehsan	San Jose	(\$2,500)
Championship Division Consolation:	1st Pl	Bill Boyd	San Francisco	(\$2,000)
	2nd Pl	Lord Rennell	London, UK	(\$1,000)
Championship Division Last Chance Flight:	1st Pl	Roger Lapham	Pebble Beach	(\$1,000)
	2nd Pl	Dennis Carlston	Orinda	(\$750)
Intermediate Division:	1st Pl	Karen Barney	San Jose	(\$1,000)
	2nd Pl	Tom Redmond	San Mateo	(\$400)
Intermediate Division Consolation:	1st Pl	John Love	Pebble Beach	(\$250)
	2nd Pl	David Heaslett	Monterey	(\$150)
Intermediate Division Last Chance Flight:	1st Pl	R.C. Caughron	San Carlos	(\$125)
	2nd Pl	Candance Mayeron	Los Angeles	(\$75)

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The 3rd Annual

by Shawn Randall

Lucille Ball Tournament for the CocoRibe Trophies

Pips' annual Lucille Ball Backgammon Tournament was highlighted by the presence of numerous international backgammon luminaries. The keynote of the tournament was that the local Pips players, in winning form, were responsible for several upsets of the visiting champs. Joey Forman had a 13-3 victory over Paul Magriel (Joey says he'll never forget it!); Tony Goble was bested in the early rounds by Marvin Elliot; and Prince Alexis "Oby" Obolensky was foiled by Jim Rose in both the main and consolation flights. The final championship match pitted Maurice Shawzin against David Leibowitz, who emerged the winner (and then went on to win again in the enormous Las Vegas Tournament for the George Plimpton Cup!). David's a young up-and-coming player to watch on the backgammon scene.

Roger Dionne (of Sports Illustrated) preparing a feature on Paul Magriel, interviewed Oswald Jacoby, Chuck Papazian, Tony Goble and Lewis Deyong, between his own tournament matches (as befalls most writers covering backgammon—he's now hooked on the game!)

Lucy was thrilled when her buddy, Price Alexis "Oby" Obolensky (the man who popularized backgammon with international tournaments), flew in from Aspen. Oby's now Chairman of Aspen's much-awaited new private club, Andre's (set for January gala opening); Lucy is on Andre's Board of Governors (wherever backgammon is - so's Lucy).

Lucy's raffle was an enormous success! Thanks to her tireless efforts, over three thousand dollars was raised by the raffle alone! All totaled (including tournament proceeds) a whopping fourteen thousand dollars was raised for her chosen charity, Children's Orthopedic Hospital. This amount far exceeded any prior Pips tournament proceeds, making this year's Lucy Tournament the most successful Pips tournament yet. The highpoint for Lucy was when she personally presented the proceeds check to Doctor Wilson of the Orthopedic Ward of Children's Hospital which had aided Lucy when she was a child. Congratulations to Tournament Director Tom Gilbert, Program Director Lauren Ferguson and ever-gracious Lucille Ball for a tournament well done!

Shawn Randall PIPSNEWS



Barry Jardine happily received a hug from Lucy. He won the two previous Lucille Ball tournaments, but this year was toppled when he reached the semi finals.

Lucille Ball and Ed Lefebvre, of National Distillers, present the CocoRibe Championship trophy to David Leibowitz (ctr), winner of the 3rd Annual Lucille Ball Backgammon Tournament.

CHAMPIONSHIP

Winner: David Leibowitz
Finalist: Maurice Shawzin
Semi-finalists: Andre Hakim
Barry Jardine

INTERMEDIATE

Winner: Gene Meyers
Finalist: June Jacobs
Semi-finalists: Christine Perla
Don Snyder

BEGINNER

Winner: Michelle Holland
Finalist: M.J. Snyder
Semi-finalists: Don Ferris
Sue Winski

CHAMPIONSHIP CONSOLATION

Winner: Gaby Horowitz
Finalist: Ron Nissenson
Semi-finalists: S. Charles Lee
Jim Rose

INTERMEDIATE CONSOLATION

Winner: Ann Rooth
Finalist: Art Schaffer
Semi-finalists: Walter Lykosh
Lee Poll

BEGINNER CONSOLATION

Winner: Jay Grandy
Finalist: Jody Gilbert
Semi-finalists: Janice Baker
Ruth Hanak



Lucille Ball, Prince Alexis Obolensky, Paul Magriel, and Chuck Papazian congratulate winner Oswald Jacoby following a "match of champions" exhibition he played with Papazian during the tournament cocktail party.

5th TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS CHICAGO

By Elliott Winslow

The 5th Chicago Cup, held at the Playboy Towers, reaffirmed its position as the most impressive tournament in the Midwest, attracting world-class competitors from both coasts. Certainly anyone's top 10 list was heavily represented, with '78 World Champion Paul Magriel heading a list that included Roger Low, Chuck Papazian, Tony Goble, Tom Gilbert, Jason Lester and Gino Scalamanadre.

The Thursday night Tag-Team Doubles drew 27 teams. This increasingly popular Sid Jackson innovation is deceptively complex and simultaneously a great informal introduction to tournament play, and it seems to get better every time. Finalist pairs were renowned Chicago bear-off theoretician Gordon Dunham with John Demian and tournament co-chairpersons Valerie Valentine and Bill Bartholomay. In the finals on Friday, "Labor" beat "Management" in a close but jovial match.

The auction dinner was Friday night; I showed up in time for dessert. The peaches were frozen, but it didn't matter when the bidding began, with veteran Gino Scalamanadre presiding. Tony Goble went first, for a neat \$1000. Some invisible fellow named X-22 was last for the top \$1300. Altogether, \$14,000 for 63 players was drawn in. I heard not a complaint about it at all, but I have one — for the bidders: How can you let Roger Low get away with ANY three-man field for only \$200? A scandal.

The entire tournament was directed by Sid Jackson (one of the Players Association fanatics) who employed a double-elimination system that permitted a player to lose a match and still have a chance to win. This did in fact happen. Vladimir Dobrich of Toronto, after losing to Magriel, defeated me (boo) in the semis to face Magriel again in the finals.



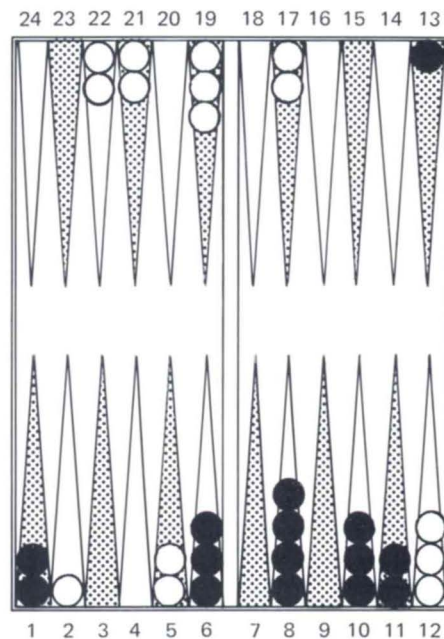
In deference to his "no loss" equity, the event format gave Magriel a 5-point spot in the 25-point final match. More important was keeping the dice hot: Dobrich took every 4-point game, winning the match 25-18. Paul Magriel was thus second, I took third, and Harold Seif fourth. (Seif fooled his local critics by buying himself in the auction.) Alan Martin finished fifth, Alber Naijar sixth, and Fred Chamanara seventh. In the Consolation Tournament, Tom Gilbert defeated Vaughn Derderian in the finals. In the Intermediate Division (also a double elimination) Jeff Marvis won every match, defeating Steve Aronson in the finals.

There are various advantages to losing in a tournament. You can get into a chouette, see the town, catch up on your sleep—or you can watch the winners. When I lost to Vladimir Dobrich in the semi-finals, I decided, as a games student, to record the moves in his match with Paul Magriel. Here are the most interesting moments.

Dobrich played very aggressively to overcome the 5-point spot. He would double with even the slightest blitz potential. Magriel dropped a few of

these, then at 7 - 5 took and won two in a row, making it 11 - 5.

After a long series of small games, with the score now tied at 16 all, Magriel (black) doubled.



Dobrich took, and Magriel rolled 5-1, hitting on the 2-point. After the match he and Roger Low felt starting the bar was better — it's 22 shots vs. 18 with the move played, but one blot vs. two. Need I add that Dobrich rolled the two, Magriel fanned, Dobrich hit the other blot and went on to win a gammon, and the tournament.

It was good to be there writing down the moves, but next time I hope to have someone else writing down my moves. If they aren't off chouetting or sleeping! Super Event!! Thanks to Valerie Valentine and her Backgammon Club of Chicago.





Conviviality is the word for Pacific Backgammon Association tournaments. The Fifth Annual PBA Championships (aka The San Francisco Open), held over Columbus Day weekend, was no exception.

Considering they gave themselves a mere 4 weeks to get it together, tournament organizers Celeste Duran, Gary Grady and Nick Maffeo (newly appointed PBA Director) are to be congratulated for the great job they did.

The winner was undisputed Bay Area champion Chuck Papazian, who in the semi-finals had to overcome an 11-1 lead by Alan Van Gelder, another fine local player. Papazian then went on to defeat Mason Grigsby in the finals.

Primarily organized through word of mouth, the auction was an unexpected, smashing success. The Little Old Ladies dressed in white will probably never forget the night at the San Remo restaurant when the partition opened between them and a raucous group of gamblers. Chief auctioneer Maffeo,

San Francisco

By Toni Delacorte

standing on a table shouting the praises of field players, broke his patter to announce: "OK everybody, now we're gonna take off our clothes." EEK. Exit stage left, LOL's.

The recipient of some of the evening's profits was Media Alliance, a non-profit organization of progressive media people concerned about legal rights for journalists, a fair shake for free-lance writers and responsible media coverage of important events. Fortunately, MA had the good taste not to send in a battalion of reporters to cover aspects of the tournament some might find more interesting than just the shake, rattle and roll of the dice.

Not having the good sense to call it a night after the auction, a rather large contingent of people who had participated invaded Mumm's, a private, exclusive disco with a back room for BG. Our credentials? "We're some of the best backgammon players in the world; you

gotta let us in!" This writer was not the only one who blamed her first-round loss on a hangover.

The tournament could be best described as "no frills." The small downtown Bellvue Hotel was certainly less pretentious than the Fairmont, site of last year's event. None the less the all-night preparation (Celeste & elves) delivered a notably smooth event as evidenced by the endless jokes and smiles. Dress and manners were much more casual and friendly this year. There were even on-the-spot backrubs during long and difficult matches.

Of the 115 players, most were regulars at Day's in San Francisco, the best-attended and longest-running weekly local tournament in the United States. A few notable out-of-towners included Buddy Berke, Tom Gilbert, Tony Goble, Sid Jackson, & Hugh Sconyers, new co-owner of the Cavendish West in Los Angeles. Results:

Championship		Intermediate	
1st:	Chuck Papazian	1st:	Bob Shaw
2nd:	Mason Grigsby	2nd:	Mike Kimbal
Semis:	Bill Boyd	Cons:	Paul McEntire
	Alan Van Gelder		
		Novice	
1st Cons.:	Hugh Sconyers	1st:	Bill Perry
2nd Cons.:	Paula Phillips	2nd:	Mir Jamal
Last Chance:	Bill Arkin	Cons:	Don Rents

CUBE EXPERTISE LEADS YOUNGSTER TO \$128,500 AMATEUR WIN

by Candace Nyles Mayeron

Youth triumphed at the second annual World Amateur Backgammon Championships when 22-year-old David Leibowitz of Los Angeles won the Plimpton Cup and first prize—\$128,500—in the Amateur division, and 20-year-old Jason Lester of New York took the Open title along with \$24,840. The scales were somewhat restored to balance when the Super 16 was won by Oswald Jacoby, Granddaddy of American games.

The five day marathon, held at the Dunes hotel in Las Vegas attracted 118 players to the Open and 600 to the Amateurs. The Amateurs is for the largest prize in backgammon. Any player who had never won more than \$1,000 in any tournament (minus entry fees) was eligible. Everyone had two shots at the title. The final sixteen contestants began playing Saturday afternoon. Eleven had not yet lost a match. Five came from Second Chance. The countdown had begun, and the tension cracked through the room. Engaged in a positional slugfest against burly Fritz Desmornes, Boston's Alphonse Makalainas literally took a bite out of his plastic drinking glass.

First to fall from the round of 16 was Ron Klipp, victim of the eventual winner. A backgammon with the cube at two eliminated New York Mayfair player Alan Grunwald, against Bob Rambo of the Atlanta Backgammon Society. Tournament newcomer Mike Campbell took out bridge player Matt Granovetter. Hank Byzinski called upon the Backgammon God for doubles against Ed Hattori, and got them. Jeff Mervis called upon Ron Nissenson, his personal backgammon god, for a 17-1 shot to beat Ijaz Malik. Second Chancer Ken Haas was having notso much luck against Jack Barney; while Sam Hanna, the most polite and gracious of the contestants fell prey to some blessed rolling by Jim Gibbs during Gibbs' Crawford. And then there were eight.

The average age of the final eight was 36. All were men. Three (Leibowitz, Campbell, Mervis) were from Los Angeles' Cavendish West. No other club had more than one. The other clubs represented were: Mayfair (New York), Calgary (Alberta), Pacific Backgammon Association (San Francisco), House of Backgammon (Chicago) Atlanta Backgammon Society.

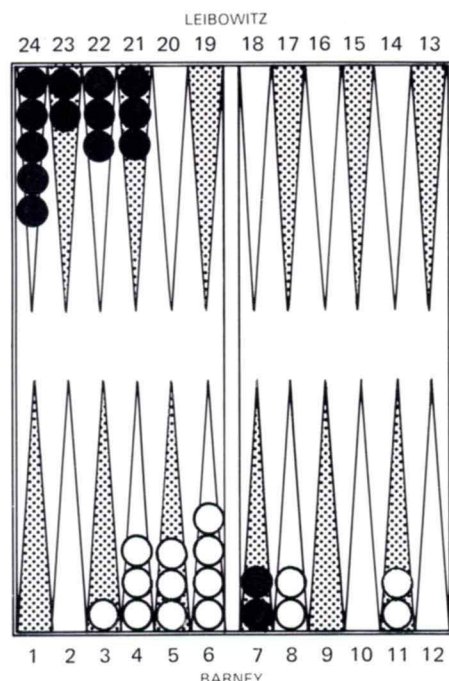
Desmornes was defeated in the quarters by eventual finalist Jack Barney of San Francisco, who also ended Mike Campbell's run in the semis. Campbell had come back from 16-6 down in a 17-point quarter-final against Jim Gibbs. "I've never lost so incredible a match," moaned Gibbs, "and it had to be this one!" Leibowitz mowed over fellow Cavendish West player Jeff Mervis in the quarters and Hank Byzinski in the semis. Byzinski is from Calgary, home of last year's winner Chico Felberbaum, and had hoped lightning would strike twice.

It had begun with 600 players; reduced to 16, eight, four and finally just two — Barney and Leibowitz. By 2:00 p.m. Sunday there would be only Leibowitz. And he did it with a little bit of luck and a whole lot of cube savvy.

The luck came in his third match when he needed to roll double twos or better to stay alive. Double sixes came out of his cup. The cube savvy came in all ten of his matches, and gave him the edge in the 21-point final.

It began Sunday at 11:30 a.m. Leibowitz ran up an early lead over Barney. Finally, at 10-2 down, Barney started applying some pressure. At 12-7 he took a risky double, toughed it out, and was able to redouble to four while it was still a take.

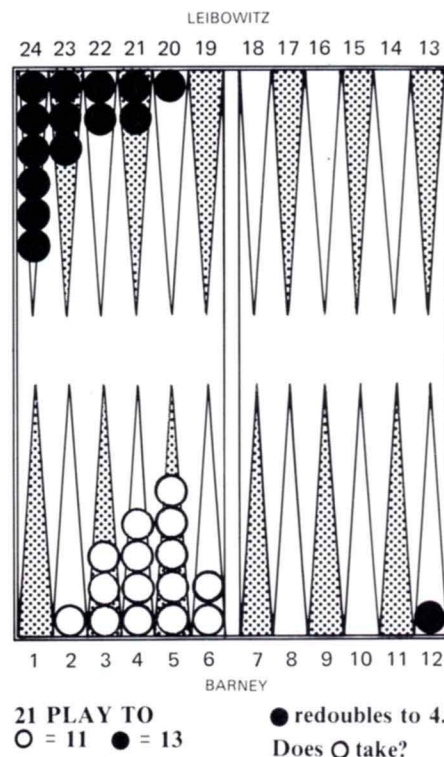
The match-breaking game came at 13-11 Leibowitz. He'd been forced into a holding position on Barney's bar, his inner board crashing, when his position became:



Barney rolled 1-1, played too fast and misplayed it 11-9(2); instead of making points in his inner board. "I guess I was

mentally committed to the race, and didn't think," Barney later remarked. (The correct play is to leave the men on the 11-point simply making points in the home board. Leibowitz will be forced to blot with any 4 or 5 accompanied by a small number.) Two rolls later, with the 9-point cleared, two on the 8-point and Leibowitz out to the 11 and 12, Barney doubled. Leibowitz pounced on the cube.

It was neither the best nor the worst of cubes, but it was gamey considering the score. Barney was not that far ahead in the race on roll counts (*pip count means little in such positions*) and there were several rolls to go. To his misfortune he rolled ones a couple times, until the position became:



Leibowitz redoubled to four. Barney took, hoping for one big double within eight attempts. He very nearly pulled it out. With two men on Leibowitz's 1-point he needed double fours or better to win the game. His final roll was ... double threes. With the score now 17-11 the match was virtually over. Leibowitz's cube action garnered him applause from the spectators watching on the closed circuit TV.

The tournament was something of an endurance contest, with matches frequently lasting until dawn and players scheduled to begin again at 11:00 a.m. The crunch of matches was partially due to excruciatingly slow play by some—officials are considering penalizing slow players next year—and partially to officials

not starting the round of 64 until late Friday night.

But by and large the tournament ran considerably smoother than last year. "Last year we learned a lot in the doing," says Henry Wattson, tournament promoter. "The main thing about last year is that we got the tournament established. This year there were positive things to be said about the tournament."

Indeed. Glaring mis-procedures in the registration system were corrected, thanks primarily to Louise Goldsmith, tournament director. The ridiculous situation which occurred last year, whereby some people got two or even three byes in the original groups of 16 was totally eradicated, and no byes were permitted. (Appallingly, Wattson misunderstands the concept "bye." He lumped in defaults!) The earlier matches were lengthened to allow for a greater skill factor; but kept short enough (11 points) to keep the lucky player in. Prize money was distributed quickly. Early Bird entries were transferable for the first time.

There were lots of planned activities—enough backgammon to keep even the most insatiable happy. There were doubles tournaments, mini-tournaments, an Open, and a Super 16 for super professionals.

There was a rollicking sideshow of exhibitors selling backgammon computers, tables, dice, jewelry, stones, books (Barclay Cooke's *Paradoxes and Probabilities* the hottest item,) and every imaginable type of board: floating, rolling, traveling, packing and even playing. Finally, anyone tired of playing backgammon could relax

in the darkened closed circuit television room and watch the finals and listen to the expert (and witty) commentaries of Paul Magriel and Barclay Cooke.

These were just trimmings of course. The biggest pluses of the tournament were the added prize money (\$75,000 for the Amateurs, \$25,000 for the Open); and Wattson's startling innovation of giving \$1,000 to each winner of the first group of 16. That made the prize money go deeper than at any other tournament. The way it worked was: if you won just four matches, you automatically won \$1,000. The 5th,

6th and 7th rounds were played for no extra prize money, but those losers still had their \$1,000. Thus, there were 38 people (of 600) who won at least \$1,000 and eight of them won at least \$5,000 more. It is one of the best changes in tournament prize money distribution to come about in years.

This is not to suggest that there were no problems. Contestants were disappointed at the relatively low turnout, which was probably due to a total lack of pre-tournament publicity to all but club or hardcore players.

(continued on page 62)



You Can Participate In The Nationwide Backgammon Players Survey

You know our Backgammon Community has grown too fast to identify. We are each helping, by mailing this with a CIRCLE around your choices and ANSWERS in each space. Thank you for helping.

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Occupation: _____ # of Persons in Household _____

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City and State of Residence _____

Last School Year Completed: Grade School High School College Post Graduate

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I travel out of town _____ times a year I also enjoy: Chess Bridge Monopoly Scrabble

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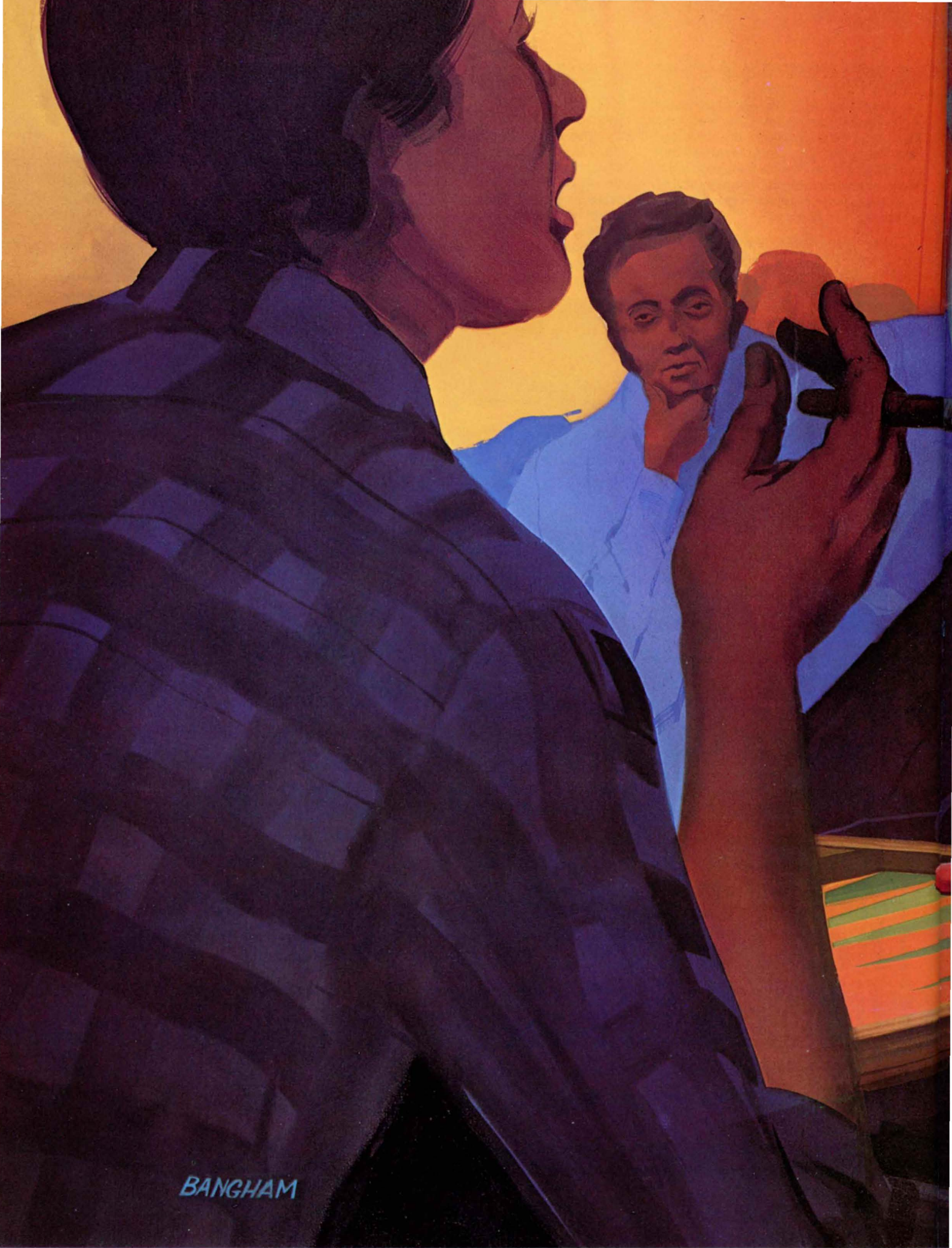
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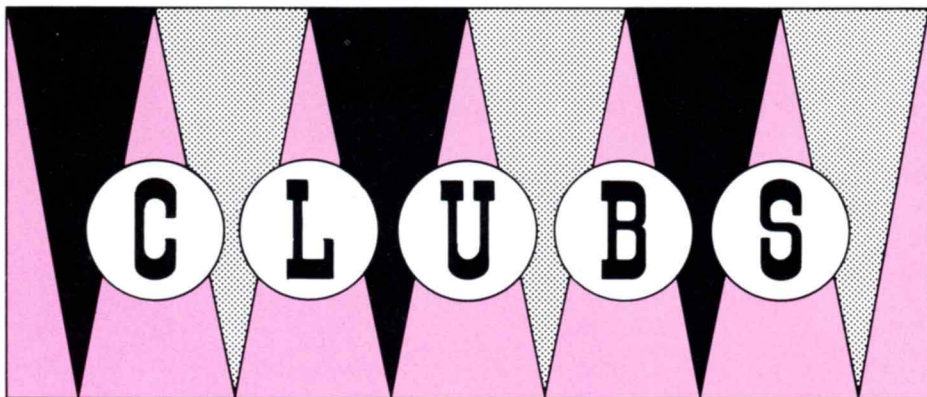


THE MAN IN THE BOX

by Dennis Stone

everyone was screaming "Settlement." What was unusual was the man in the box. He was not a member of this regular chouette and was acting in a way that was making the other players nervous. He wasn't listening.

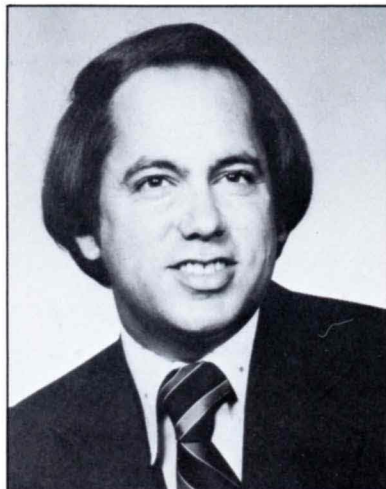
(continued on page 56)



Pacific Northwest Backgammon Association

Backgammon is alive and well in the Pacific Northwest. At the hub of backgammon activity is the Pacific Northwest Backgammon Association. With a membership of over five hundred the P.N.B.A. sponsors six weekly tournaments throughout the Northwest, from the Canadian border to Oregon, and hosts four invitational tournaments per year. These tournaments are open only to the Northwest's top-seeded players. The P.N.B.A. is an affiliate of the American Backgammon Players Association.

The Pacific Northwest Backgammon Association is managed by Ted Barr and Associates, a firm of backgammon professionals. While many cities throughout the United States are home for individual backgammon professionals, Seattle has the only group of professionals who function collectively. In addition to managing the P.N.B.A., Ted Barr and Associates provides clinics at many of the Northwest's private clubs and schools.



Ted Barr, a former lawyer turned backgammon professional, is the firm's senior member. Ted writes the backgammon column for the Seattle Times and is currently filming a twelve-week series of backgammon lessons for Public Television to be aired in January, 1979, and is co-owner of the Game Galley, one of the largest, sophisticated game stores in the United States, located in Seattle.



The *Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine* is one of the most important reasons to belong to the club.

In addition to the magazine, members play at a reduced rate in all LVBC tournaments, are invited to all club parties free of charge, may buy equipment at wholesale costs from the club, get free use of the club facilities at RUMORS (unique in the world), enjoy full access to all the information Las Vegas has on tournaments and players throughout the world.

There is no other single better bargain in backgammon than the Las Vegas Backgammon Club.

BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT NEWS

Feb. 24-26 Golden Gate Classic
at the Bellevue Hotel San Francisco
For Info: Call (415) 543-3537

March 2-4 3rd Bluegrass Tournament
For Info: Larry Strassbery
Louisville Backgammon Club

March 6-11 1979 US Open
For Info: Les Boyd (305) 527-4033

FESTIVAL Backgammon CLUB

The Festival Backgammon Club is offering instruction series for Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced levels. Each series consists of three lessons. Each lesson consists of 2 hours of Lecture, Demonstration Games, and Supervised Play. Classes are held at the Festival Backgammon Club and other locations. Each course of instruction has been prepared by Jerry Nathan, President of Festival East Concerts and Festival Backgammon Club. Mr. Nathan has had more than 30 years of playing, teaching and tournament experience in contract bridge and



Federación Mexicana de Backgammon, A. C.

backgammon. He is also teaching Backgammon Courses at SUNY at Buffalo.

While teaching and writing a weekly backgammon column for the Buffalo Evening News, Jerry still had time last summer to book the following concerts—Ted Nugent/YES/The Eagles/Alice Cooper/Crosby, Stills, Nash and more.

The Festival Backgammon Club's rooms in the Statler Hilton Hotel are open to EVERYONE. No Membership Required—Sets Are Available at the Club—Feel Free to bring Your Own Set.

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CHAMPIONSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS

As the year draws to a close we here at the Georgia Backgammon Association and Atlanta Backgammon Society would like to wish you and yours a very happy holiday season. We hope that this year has been enjoyable and profitable both financially and educationally. We would like to take this opportunity also to congratulate various individuals who have benefited from the events that we have sponsored or conducted. The following persons have gained the experience necessary to compete in the beginners and intermediate classes and have now advanced into the championship classification. True, there is a good deal of luck involved in this game and that along with the ability to learn is what we wish for all for the coming year.

Beginners Advancing To Championship

JOEL ROSENBAUM

GEORGE CASTEBERRY

Intermediate Advancing to Championship

DAVID LOCKER DAVID WEILAND LARRY KALSKI JEFF RAXLIN RICH ZIEGLER
RALPH PERDOMO TOMMY JACOBS

Multiple Championship Winners

TOM DANIEL(9)	JOHN AHO(3)	RICH ATLAS(2)	MILES THOROMAN(3)
LARRY GOULD(8)	LOU BLUHM(3)	SHIMON PERETZ(2)	RICH ZIEGLER(2)
BOB RAMBO(5)	BOB WILENSKY(3)	MIKE BABER(2)	STEVE MOFFIT(2)
KATHY POSNER(5)	ROY COHEN(3)	NORM KOTLER(2)	BOB SEIFERT(2)
DAVID KANE(4)	DAVID SCHROEDER(2)	CRAIG TYNDALL(2)	JACK WARD(2)

Who says club operators don't listen? Steve Kurzban, director of the Long Island Backgammon Club does. Look at these items from his recent issue of the club's newsletter.

INTERMEDIATE CONTEST

We are perplexed that our intermediate players, who come out in full force on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, have been staying away from mid-week tourneys. We suspect that the prospect of a combined section with advanced players thrown in strikes fear into the hearts of intermediates. In an effort to make our mid-week tournaments more competitive and low key, we are limiting entries on Wednesday and Thursday tournaments to players whose master point indices are below .50 and/or do not play in our highest level chouettes. There will of course be no advanced players in the Tuesday intermediate section because of the separate advanced tourney. We will go with a \$3 prize pool for intermediates in an effort to keep the cost to a minimum.

Any intermediate who wins 6 matches, including play-offs, in a given week (Friday thru Thursday) will win a free pass on admission to any regular weekly tournament except Friday. Special contest cards will be distributed

every Friday and are available at the scoring table.

Advanced players who are excluded from tournament play on Wednesday and Thursday are invited to join in our lively and colorful chouettes or partake in our club championship event.

LESSONS

Lee Genud, author of Lee Genud's Backgammon Book, will be teaching a 1½ hour class focusing on basic play at 2 p.m. at the club. The lesson is free. Please call the club any afternoon to reserve a place.

STUDENT DISCOUNT EVERY WED. NIGHT

For June, July, and August we will be offering a special discount to high school students and college undergraduates with valid ID's for our regular Wednesday evening tournament. Students will receive a \$1 discount on their board fees.

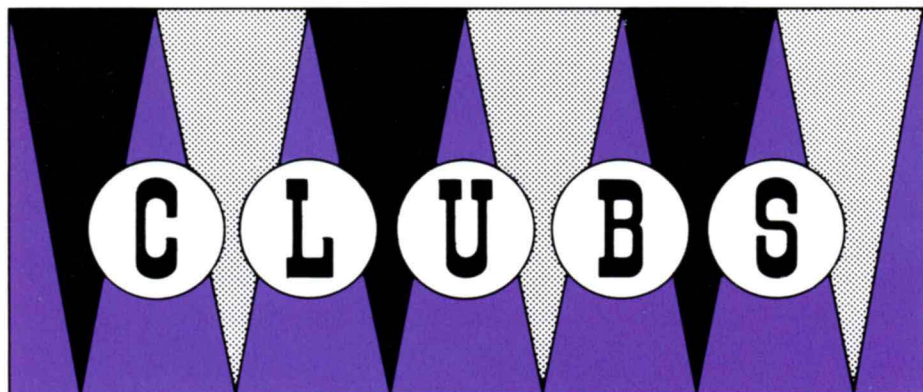


National Backgammon League

TUESDAY: Howard Johnson's
9333 Skokie Blvd.; Skokie, Illinois
(8:15 PM) 679-4200

FRIDAY: Sheraton Inn
933 N. Skokie Blvd.; Northbrook, Ill.
(8:30 PM) 498-6500

For backgammon info during non-tournament hours, phone Pat Rottman at 831-5037.



The First Annual Turnberry Isle Gold Cup

Joe Suzyn, Director of Sales for the elegant Turnberry Isle Yacht and Racquet Club, has created a backgammon event as attractive as the Yacht Club it is meant to showcase. Joe said, "It's easy. All you need are Lewis Deyong and an experienced staff, the cheerful personnel at the tournament site in the Country Club Aventura, and the volunteer girls from the Miami Ballet Society."

The black tie calcutta dinner somewhat startled four hundred entrants and guests as it was the first quality meal in backgammon tournament history. Jimmy the Greek announced himself as the assistant actioneer, and declared: "They're at the Gate." Then as usual, Lewis charmed and joked the crowd into building a \$100,000 calcutta for the two hundred Championship players.

On the fourth day the finals began to produce an international list of winners to share

the awards and the added \$7,500. A gallery silently watched the 25 point Championship playoff; local favorite, 19 year-old Eddie Green matched against Jim Pasko, a New Jersey math teacher.

As the crowd watched, Jim developed an early nine point lead and carefully took advantage of it, accepting only seven of eighteen doubles and forcing Eddie into six back-games. Eddie closed the gap exploiting everything the dice offered, but ran out of time and dice as Jim took a double and then the two points to win 25-20.

In addition of the winner's purse, Jim Pasko becomes the first name on the Turnberry Gold Cup and goes, with all expenses paid, to play in the Merit World Championships in Monte Carlo in July. Good luck, we'll see you all there.

The Turnberry Isle Gold Cup winners are:

		Championship	Intermediate	Beginner
Main Flight	<i>Winner</i>	Jim Pasko	Ronald Glantz	Dale Kelleher
	<i>Runner-up</i>	Eddie Green	Hugh Ganter	Jane Wotocek
	<i>Semi-Finalist</i>	Katie Wright	Harry Newman	Norma Gartner
	<i>Semi-Finalist</i>	Mike Corbett	Grace Kahn	Melissa Roche
First Consolation	<i>Winner</i>	Jason Lester	Steve Reinhold	Jim Beckford
	<i>Runner-up</i>	Giño Scalamandre	Jean King	Lois Walts
	<i>Semi-Finalist</i>	Lee Munzer	R. Mutchnik	Evelyn Hilton
	<i>Semi-Finalist</i>	Stephen Raphael	Marsha Lynn	Nancy Bailey
Second Consolation	<i>Winner</i>	Steve Zolotow	Suzy Portz	Diane Sneider
	<i>Runner-up</i>	Lee Genud	Elaine Drapkin	Ralph Weintraub
	<i>Semi-Finalist</i>	Carol Crawford	Kitty Lewis	Gary Steinberg
	<i>Semi-Finalist</i>	Dr. Jim Yezbick	Ruth Corbett	Carol Lorenz
Last Chance	<i>Winner</i>	Mike Carson	Grace Kahn	Phyllis Talenfield
	<i>Runner-up</i>	Rennold Wacht	Dan Heisman	Colin Gray
Ladies Prize		Katie Wright	Grace Kahn	Dale Kelleher

The Mayfair Club, in New York, is a major center of backgammon action. Many players, especially from out of town, consider the club a learning center.

On Friday nights, there is an established chouette, starting at midnight. A buffet is served at two a.m. and the game goes on as long as the players can. This chouette has gotten so large (31 is then record, but the average is 20) that the room cannot accommodate all the kibitzers.

For diversification, The Mayfair Club has many unusual chouteres . . . The most recent, for those affiliated with the New York Stock Exchange . . . The invitations were sent out on ticker tape . . .

Where else in the world can you watch Paul Magriel and many top players consulting and arguing in the same chouette? Paul's book is in its 2nd printing now, and he has become the Backgammon Editor for the New York Times. Every Thursday a lengthy and detailed article about a diagrammed play is published.

Finally, where else but the Mayfair can you come in at midnight and see players by candlelight, a radio playing softly in the background . . . That is the way it was July 13th, 1977, the night of the N.Y. blackout...The action never stops with Louise Goldsmith in charge!



FREE TO CLUBS

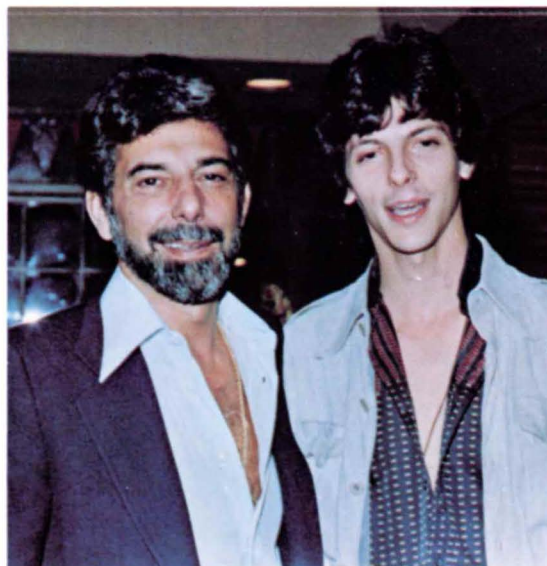
We will print your tournament announcements and results, club news and photos, articles and problems of interest—send this information to Joanna York c/o GAMMON Magazine.



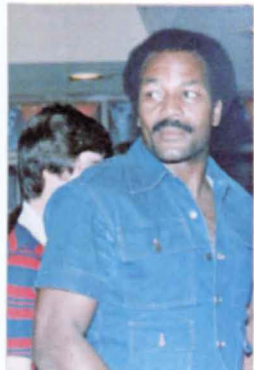
Candace Nyles Mayeron



Hugh Sconyers, Lucille Ball, Paul Magriel



Buddy Berke and son Jeff



Jim Brown



Tony Goble, Chris Perla



Paul Gedigian and Dennis Carlson



Lucille Ball, Paul Magriel



Barry Jardine, Chuck Papazian

cavendish west



Tom Gilbert and Paul Magriel



Nancy Weichsel

The Cavendish West in Beverly Hills has new owners. Hugh Sconyers and George Farquhar purchased the club in February, 1978, and have added plenty to the already famous club.

The Cavendish West is home to serious devotees of backgammon and contract bridge, distinguished out-of-town members who stop off at the club during their travels, and to the regular members who come to relax and enjoy their favorite games.

From noon until 2 a.m. every day of the year, members and their guests gather to play their games in plush comfort: backgammon, bridge, gin rummy and double-deck pinochle. While they play, waitresses bring food from the kitchen directly to their tables in the spacious

card and backgammon rooms. The kitchen serves anything from breakfast, lunch and snacks, to a full course dinners.

At regular intervals, the Cavendish West conducts special events which are open to the public as well as to members. One Sunday each month is devoted to a gin rummy tournament. Weekly backgammon tournaments draw large crowds . . . on Tuesday nights for Beginners and Intermediates, on Wednesday nights for Advanced players and any others wanting to joust with the very best. Many of the club's members tour the backgammon circuit from Acapulco to the Bahamas and Monte Carlo, and four of the six members of the current World's Champion Bridge Team are members of the Cavendish.



PIPS

Buddy Berke

In a recent movie Woody Allen joked that "he'd never belong to a club that would accept him as a member." I suggest that in the case of Pips, the posh restaurant, discotheque, and back-

gammon club in Beverly Hills, Woody might make an exception...that is, if he likes beautiful women, great athletes, world famous personalities, fabulous food, sensuous dancing and the most



fun backgammon played anywhere in the country, whether he's a genius at the game or a complete novice.

As a matter of fact Los Angeles has never seen anything quite like this exclu-

sive and unique private club. It's crowded, successful, and definitely "in" among the city's most elite population. The backgammon room itself gives one the feeling of a quiet English countryside

tavern, with its plaid floor covering, its green felt walls, and natural wood mixed with mirrors. There are 16 elegant, custom-made backgammon tables which are available for Pips' members



and their guests...and backgammon fever runs higher than ever.

Adding to the very social nature of these intimate surroundings is the fact that Pips sponsors periodic backgammon tournaments for the benefit of a number of specific charities. Actually, profits from this fabulous club go to charity with little fanfare. The list of beneficiaries includes The Thaliens, Share, Concern, CEDU, Hemophilia Foundation, Eddie Cantor Foundation, Elizabeth Fry Center, UNICEF, American Cancer Society, Boy Scouts of America, Teach Foundation, Golden Key Foundation, ACLU, and many



more. So whether you're a member or a guest at Pips, let your enjoyment of the evening be heightened by the knowledge that Pips' policy of charitable commitment is helping ill and disadvantaged people everywhere. The Pips tournaments are like a Hollywood movie premiere: all that glitters is gold, silver or platinum.



Still, its intriguing aspect is that you just don't know what exciting personality is going to walk through the door next...and they all do! In a recent article in Newsweek the magazine reported that "the most elegant disco is still 5½-year-old Pips." Catering mostly to prosperous professional and business people and show biz stars, Pips has a mystique that is almost unexplainable and certainly mysterious.

"We weren't interested in the money," says Stan Herman, who cofounded the nonprofit Pips with Hugh Hefner in 1972. "We did it for our own comfort, for our pleasure. Nobody in town could open a place like Pips today," he opines, "and expect to make money from it. But," he admits, "the town is finally getting to a point where it can support anything. L.A. is cooking—developing into something that it wasn't."

It continues to be a microcosm of the entire social and backgammon Jet Set. Members and their guests visit Pips for any of numerous reasons. As for me, I go there because I enjoy playing backgammon with some of the most attractive people in the world.

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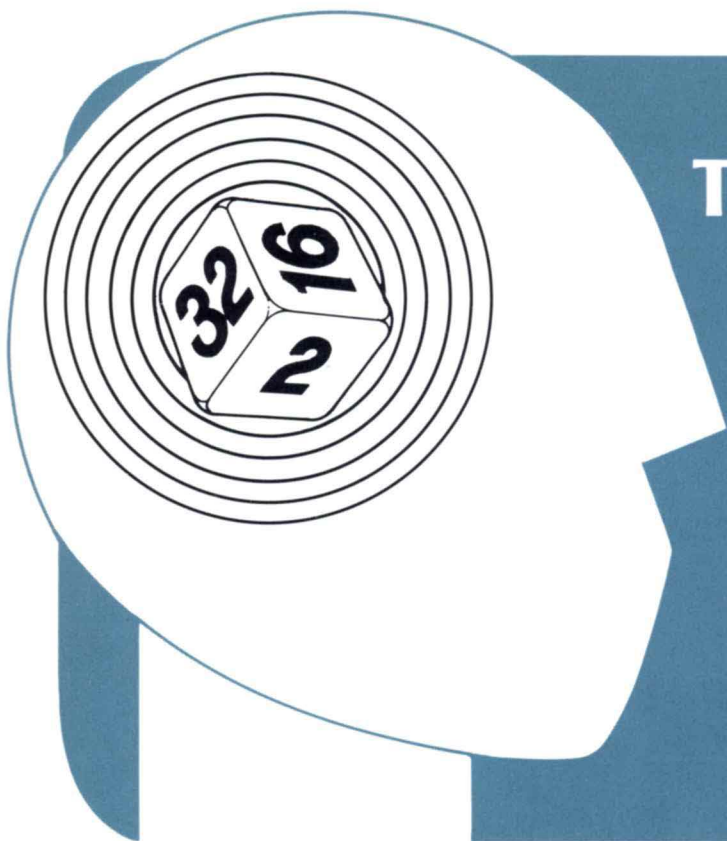
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The Mathematics of Gambling END POSITIONS in Backgammon

by: Edward Thorp

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In this article (which is the first in a series about gambling and games) I deal with the simple but useful odds for bearing off with only two men left. As an introduction to end positions, suppose you are white and it is your turn to roll in the position in Diagram 1. The doubling cube is in the middle.

Questions:

1. What is your chance to win?
2. Should you double?
3. How much do you gain or lose by doubling?
4. If you double, should Black accept?
5. How much does Black gain or lose by accepting your double?

TABLE 1

Chances out of 36 to bear off in one roll with one or two men left.

a man on the	0 pt	1 pt	2 pt	3 pt	4 pt	5 pt	6 pt
0 pt	off	36	36	36	34	31	27
1 pt	36	36	36	34	29	23	15
2 pt	36	36	26	25	23	19	13
3 pt	36	34	25	17	17	14	10
4 pt	34	29	23	17	11	10	8
5 pt	31	23	19	14	10	6	6
6 pt	27	15	13	10	8	6	4

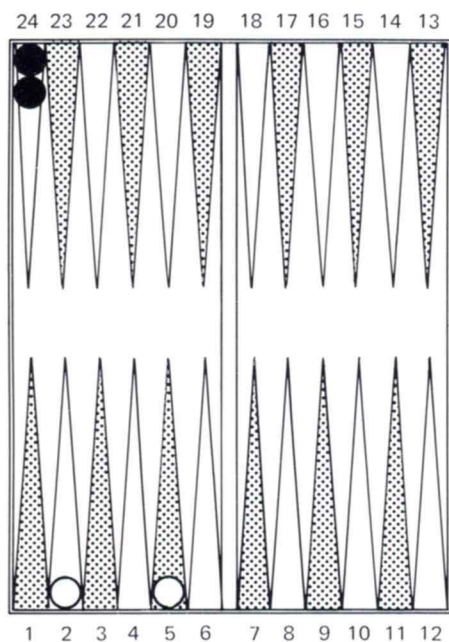


DIAGRAM #1

(Edward Thorp is the author of "Beat the Dealer," a 1962 book dealing with blackjack systems. Its impact was so great that Las Vegas casinos were forced to change their rules. Currently a professor of mathematics at University of California Irvine, Thorp is an acknowledged expert on the mathematical approach to games through computer analysis.)

White wins only if he bears off on his next roll. So to help us solve end positions of this type, we calculate a table of chances to take off two men in one roll. The exact result is given in Table 1, and the chances to the nearest percent are given by Table 2.

To illustrate the use of Table 1, suppose you have a man on the five point and a man on the two point. Table 1 gives 19 chances in 36 to take both men off on the next roll.

In Diagram 1, this means the exact chance you win is $19/36 = 0.5277$. . . Table 2 gives this to the nearest percent as 53%. This answers question 1.

To see how Table 1 is calculated,

recall that there are 36 **equally likely** outcomes for the roll of two dice. These are listed in Table 3.

Think of two dice as labelled "first" and "second". It might help to use a red die for the "first" die and a white one for the "second" die. Then if the red (first) die shows 5 and the white (second) die shows 2, we call the outcome 5-2. If instead the first die shows 2 and the second die shows

TABLE 3

The 36 equally likely outcomes of the roll of two dice.

second die shows → first die shows ↓	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1-1	1-2	1-3	1-4	1-5	1-6
2	2-1	2-2	2-3	2-4	2-5	2-6
3	3-1	3-2	3-3	3-4	3-5	3-6
4	4-1	4-2	4-3	4-4	4-5	4-6
5	5-1	5-2	5-3	5-4	5-5	5-6
6	6-1	6-2	6-3	6-4	6-5	6-6

TABLE 2

Percentage chances to bear off in one roll with one or two men left.

a man on the	0 pt	1 pt	2 pt	3 pt	4 pt	5 pt	6 pt
0 pt	off	100%	100%	100%	94%	86%	75%
1 pt	100%	100%	100%	94%	81%	64%	42%
2 pt	100%	100%	72%	69%	64%	53%	36%
3 pt	100%	94%	69%	47%	39%	28%	22%
4 pt	94%	81%	64%	47%	31%	28%	22%
5 pt	86%	64%	53%	39%	28%	17%	17%
6 pt	75%	42%	36%	28%	22%	17%	11%

5, this is a different one of the 36 rolls and we call it 2-5. Outcomes are named x-y where x is the number the first die shows and y is the number the second die shows.

To see that White has 19 chances in 36 to win, we simply count winning rolls in Table 3. If either die shows at least 2 and the other shows at least 5, White wins. He also wins with 2-2, 3-3, and 4-4. This gives the 19 (shaded) winning outcomes in Table 3.

As another example, suppose the two men to bear off are both on the six point. Then if the two dice are different, White can't come off in one turn. Of the six doubles, only 3-3 or higher works. This gives 4 ways in 36 or 11%, in agreement with Table 2 and 3. This simple counting method produces all the numbers in Table 1.

Now we are ready to answer

The Mathematics of Gambling END POSITIONS in Backgammon

(continued from page 53)

question 2: Should White double, in Diagram 1? The answer is Yes, and here's why. We have seen that White wins on average 19 times in 36. If we call the stake 1 unit, then if he does not double, in 36 times he wins 1 unit 19 times and loses 1 unit 17 times for a gain of 2 units/36 times = $1/18 = 0.055 \dots$. If White does double, Black can either accept or fold. Suppose Black accepts. Then the stakes are 2 units and a calculation like the previous one shows White gains an average of 4 units/36 times = $1/9 = 0.111 \dots$ unit per time. White gains twice as much as if he did not double. If instead Black folds, then White wins 1 unit at once, which is even better.

This also answers the rest of the questions. Answer to question 3: White gains an extra 5.55% of a unit, on average, by doubling. Answer to question 4: Black should accept. He

loses $1/9$ unit on average by accepting and 1 unit for sure by folding. This answers question 5: if he makes the error of folding, he loses an extra $8/9$ unit or 89%.

The usefulness of Table 2 is generally limited to situations where you have just one or two rolls left before the game ends. But it is surprising how often the table is valuable. Here are some more examples to help alert you to these situations. In Diagram 2, Black has the doubling cube. White has just rolled 2-1. How does he play it?

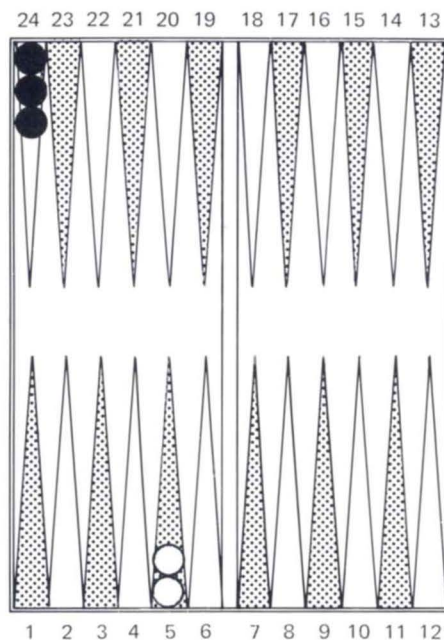


DIAGRAM #2

If Black rolls doubles on the next turn, he wins at once and it won't matter what White did. So White only needs to consider the case where Black does not roll doubles. Then White will have one more turn and he wants to leave himself with the greatest chance to bear off on that turn. White can move one man from his 5 point to his 4 point and one man from the 5 point to the 3 point. By Table 2, this gives him a 47% chance to win if Black does not roll doubles. Or, White can move one man from the 5 point to the 2 point, leaving the other man on the 5 point. This gives him a 53% chance to win if Black does not roll doubles, so this is the best way to play the 2-1.

In Diagram 3, White's problem is to avoid a backgammon. White has just rolled 4-1. What is the best move?

If Black wins before the White men escape from Black's home

board, Black will win 3 units. Otherwise he will only gammon White for two units.

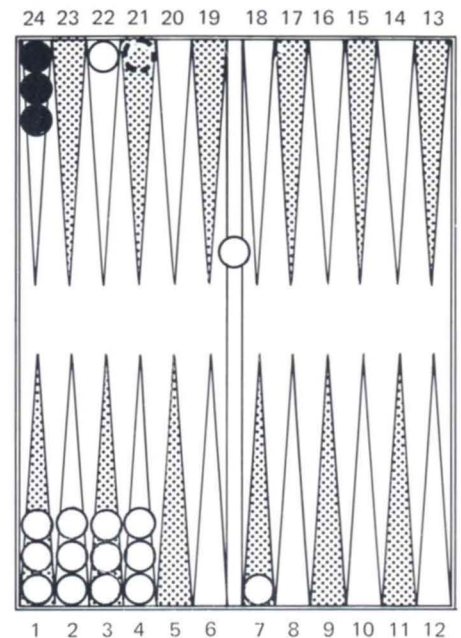


DIAGRAM #3

White must use the 4 to move the man on the bar to the Black 4 point (on #21) White can move this man on to the Black 5 point (#20) in which case, if Black does not roll doubles, White's situation on his last turn is shown in Diagram 3a.

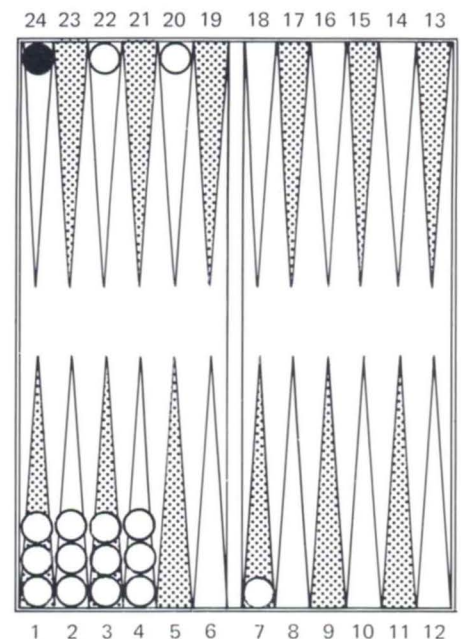


DIAGRAM #3a

The chance for White to remove both men from Black's home board on the next roll is the same as the chance to bear off both men when one is on the 4 point and the other

"Did you know..."

The first regularly scheduled television program entirely devoted to backgammon is on the air! "Backgammon on Ten" is a weekly television event on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. in Calgary, Alberta.

The show is hosted by Wayne Roberts, director of the Calgary Backgammon Club, an LVBC associate.

Celebrity guests from the world of backgammon are featured on the program along with instructions and play analysis. Viewers are encouraged to phone in questions and observations.

We hope this series prompts similar spin offs in other cities. We congratulate the Calgary Club in this innovative PR approach to backgammon. We are proud of this breakthrough.

Courtesy: Mike Maxakuli
Las Vegas Backgammon Club

is on the 2 point. By Table 2 this is 64%.

Suppose instead White plays both men to the Black 4 point (#21). Then Diagram 3b shows the board if he survives Black's next roll.

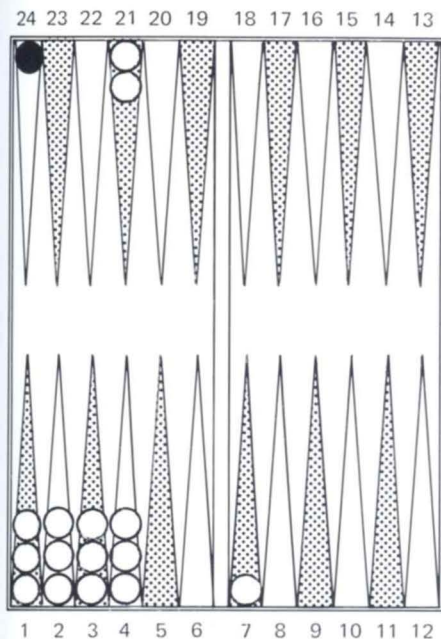


DIAGRAM #3b

White's chance to save himself from being backgammoned is the same as bearing off two men from his own 3

point in one roll. Table 2 gives this chance as 47%. Therefore the play in Diagram 3a is best.

If instead White rolled 4-2 in Diagram 3, he could play to leave his two back men on the Black 2 and 7 points (#s 23 & 18), giving an 86% chance (Table 2, man on 5 point and man on 0 point) to escape Black's home board on the next roll. Or he could play to leave his two back men on the Black 5 and 4 points (#s 20 & 21). This gives only a 69% chance so is inferior.

Here are some questions to measure your understanding of these concepts. Refer to Diagram 2.

1. Should Black double, after White makes the best move?
2. How much would Black gain or lose by so doubling?
3. Should White accept a Black double? If he does, instead of of folding, how much does he gain or lose?
4. What is the best way for White to play 3-2 in Diagram 2?

...

SOUTH FLORIDA BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIP PALM BEACH AUGUST 1-3, 1978

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Semi-Finalist: Art Dickman
Semi-Finalist: Ralph Chafetz
Quarter-Finalist: Marsha Lynn
Quarter-Finalist: Amy Mendelson
Quarter-Finalist: Joan Vegotsky
Quarter-Finalist: Mike Corbett

CHAMPIONSHIP CONSOLATION

Winner: Ellen Jacoby
Finalist: Kent Goulding
Semi-Finalist: Chuck Robertson
Semi-Finalist: George Guregian

INTERMEDIATE

Winner: Dave Salai
Finalist: Belle Bauman
Semi-Finalist: Lisbeth Barron
Semi-Finalist: E. J. O'Malley
Quarter-Finalist: David Hendel
Quarter-Finalist: Norma Miele
Quarter-Finalist: Debbie Flitcroft
Quarter-Finalist: Ray Suto

INTERMEDIATE CONSOLATION

Winner: George Burburan
Finalist: Phyllis Whisnant
Semi-Finalist: Herb Mendelson
Semi-Finalist: Joanne Goulding

BEGINNERS

Winner: Lucille Blinco
Finalist: Ronald Rice
Third: Therese Cobey

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THE MAN IN THE BOX

by Dennis Stone

(continued from page 43)

Eyes were beginning to widen and the perspiration was beginning to flow freely. The man in the box was clearly one of three things: rich, stubborn, or crazy. The regular cast of characters knew this when the man in the box sat down to play, and it was all for the good . . . then. What was different now was only one small thing: The man in the box had the best of it.

Arthur the Expert, who was playing for the other side, and who was certainly the coolest of the lot, looked up at the man in the box, who was looming ever larger on his side of the board. He smiled and said in a voice that showed not the slightest trace of deceit, "I'll let you out for even."

Either the man in the box had not heard, or he didn't trust Arthur. He made one of the most threatening gestures in backgammon. He reached with his huge, flabby arms toward that little black square on his side of the board, which had been placed there so happily and so inadvisedly only a few moments before, grasped it ever so gently between two pudgy fingers, and with the elegance and nicety of manner of an aristocrat, placed it softly on the other side of the board. Evidently he had thought Arthur's offer a little out of line. He looked up, showed teeth, and said, "I double."

He had said it softly, but he may as well have yelled it for the reaction he received. The four standing members of the chouette immediately fell silent in the middle of plea bargaining. And as though synchronized, their respective Adam's apples fell abruptly.

The first person to break the silence was Baby Mason, who began to whine that his offer of twelve points was more than fair and how could the man in the box reject what was fair. The man in the box's reply was not precisely what Baby Mason wanted to hear, but was direct and to the point: "I never settle."

"How can you call yourself a backgammon player?" Baby Mason continued to whine.

"I don't," returned the man in the box. "I play for enjoyment and relaxation."

His five opponents shuddered at a man. And to think that only a few hours ago, Arthur the Expert, Baby Mason, Compulsive Kal, Superstitious Paul, and the Mathematician were sitting around dreaming of just such an individual knocking into their chouette. A dream pigeon. And now these five superstars were being turned into bread crumbs.

The Mathematician now spoke, "The correct settlement is exactly $10\frac{3}{4}$. I'll give $10\frac{1}{2}$. The Mathematician always sliced off the $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point in his favor. It was his due.

The man in the box pulled out a cigar, lit it, took a few puffs, folded his arms, leaned back in his chair, smiled, "Gentleman, it's a simple proposition. Take or drop."

Arthur finally shrugged and tucked the cube into his corner of the board, "Take."

Superstitious Paul: "I'll take, but I want a change of dice."

The Mathematician tried to stop thinking that he couldn't afford this game and made his clearly mathematical response: "Take."

Baby Mason: "Fifteen is my last offer."

The man in the box remained adamant, "Take or drop."

"But fifteen is fair. Fifteen is fair."

"Take or drop."

"Take."

Everyone now turned to look at Compulsive Kal, who had a glazed expression on his face. He was getting angrier and angrier at the man in the box's recalcitrance. In addition, he kept imagining all sorts of combinations of numbers where the rich bastard's game would fall to shreds. Arthur prodded Kal: "Kal, what do you do?"

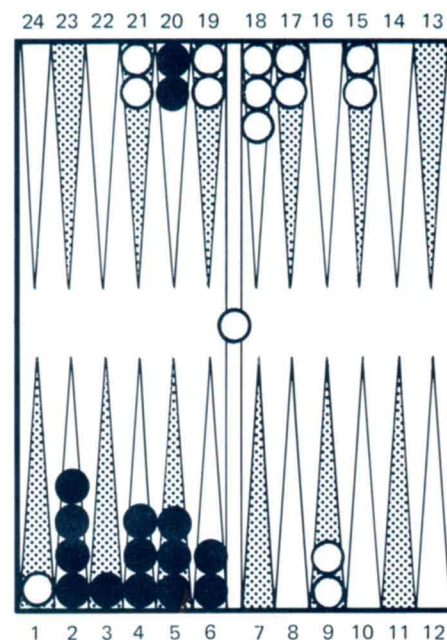
Kal knew what to do. Knew what he had to do. He would not be intimidated by any man, let alone the man in the box. Out it came, "BEAVER." There! He had said it and he was glad. It had been the only way to handle the situation properly. Someone called for the cube with "128" on it. Kibitzers started scurrying toward the table. Kal grabbed the now arrived cube and put it next to the one that was merely at the 64 level.

The man in the box was enjoying watching these bright lights squirm under the power and pressure of his money. After all, what was five or six thousand dollars to him. He put his cigar in the ashtray. He picked up his dice cup, making a few preliminary shakes. Arthur had not asked for a change of dice and Superstitious Paul knew that would be the end of them all. He didn't want to watch. Nonetheless, his eyes were riveted to the board. All eyes were riveted to the board. In fact, everyone in the room was now gathered around the table, standing on tiptoes, standing on chairs, standing on the backs of chairs. All eyes were riveted to the board.

The man in the box spoke with

relish. "Are you ready gentlemen?"

This was the position:



"Please God," prayed Baby Mason under his breath, "no small numbers. I don't want to be gammoned at the 64 level."

Compulsive Kal was expecting double aces followed by double sixes, but he didn't regret his beaver for a second.

The Mathematician was expecting some combination of 8-1/6.

Superstitious Paul was busy trying not to think of double aces followed by double sixes, but wasn't sure he was succeeding.

Arthur the Expert was thinking, "Whatever happens it will all balance out in the long run. But it would be better to win and have it all balance out in the short run."

What did happen was probably caused by the kibitzers, who were, as they always are, thinking perverse thoughts. There is no more malicious a group of people in the world. A bunch of ghouls feasting on disasters. They must have been thinking the number.

No one screamed. No one shouted. The pressure was too intense for that. What resulted after the man in the box's dice spilled out of his cup could only be called quiet pandemonium.

Perhaps the last one to realize what had happened was the man in the box. He played his six, and then looked for the five. It was at that point that his smile disappeared.

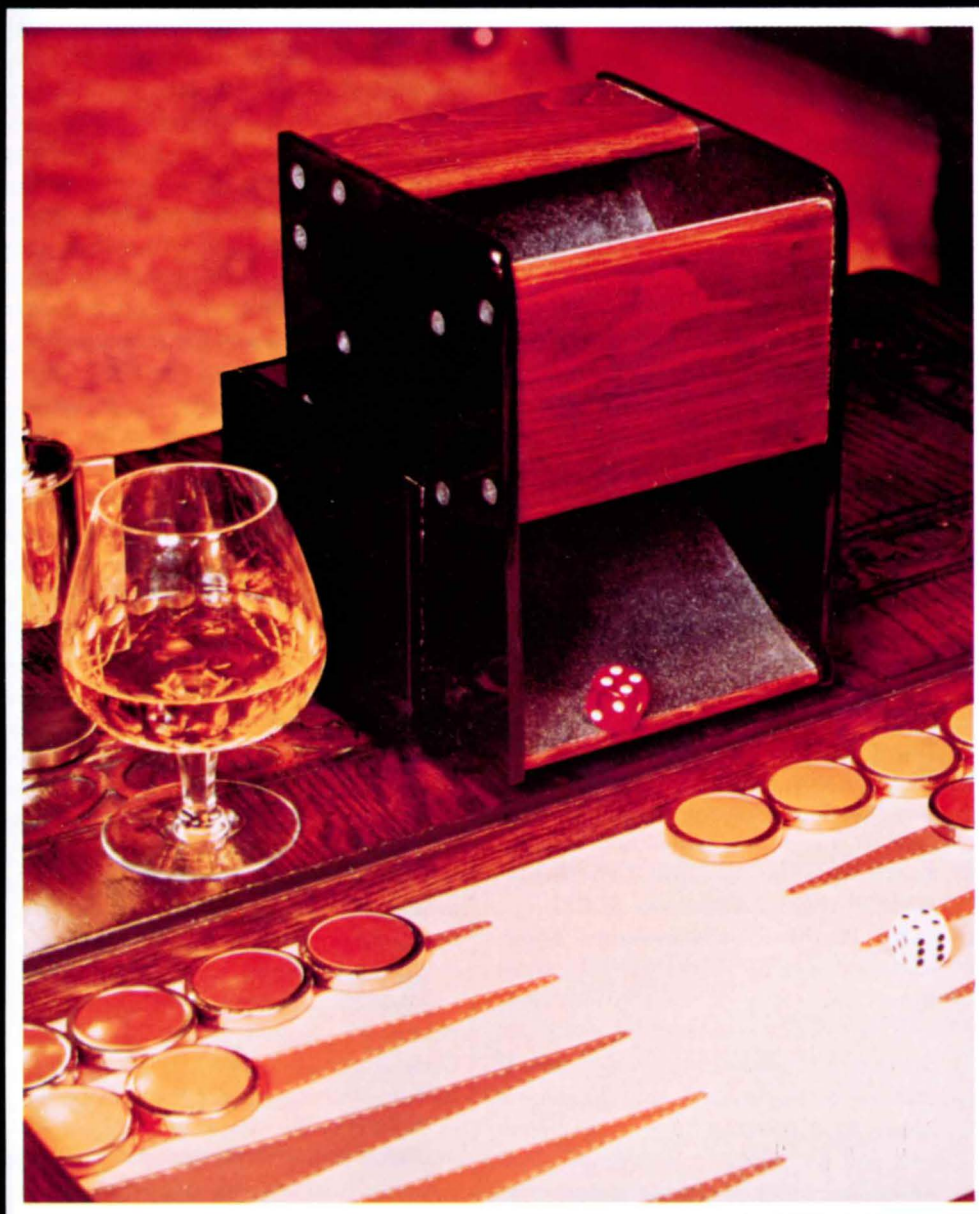
It is not coincidental, that concurrently five other smiles reappeared.

(To be continued next issue in The Case of the Premature Smiles.)

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PIP COUNT

by Barbara Carlson

Backgammon Board of Rochester is really cooking, **Gary Jay** has them up to 150 regular members... **Tom Jarvis** wants to play rather than direct, so who better to run the *Backgammon Club of Baltimore* but **Patti Heyman**... Everybody wants **Valerie Valentine's** secret—she no sooner finishes her *5th Annual Chicago Cup Invitational* to rave reviews without a wrinkle in her dress and she's gone to China for four weeks... We understand from his sister that when **Lee Silverstein** left his *Mpls/St. Paul Backgammon Club* to go on one of **Oby's** nine port backgammon cruises, by the third stop word of his behavior had preceded him and he had to stay on the boat for the rest of the cruise... the new *Backgammon Club of Omaha* sent rookies to the *Chicago Cup* (they took home money) and **Jay Wallin** is the club Director... Everybody says **Paul Perry's** new *Backgammon Emporium Club* in Ft. Lauderdale is the place to see all the faces, it's next door to his store, the *Backgammon Emporium*... *Bar Point House of Backgammon*, aka **Steve and George**, is giving new members backgammon sets and signed copies of **Magriel's** book, and washing it down with Sunday Brunch from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.... With all the action in Memphis (you've got to be kidding), **Ruth Hendrix** makes it look easy. The *Bombay Bicycle Club*, not just on Sunday Tournament nites, is as busy as *The Pawn Shop* in Dallas—and that's busy... If backgammon had a fan club, the *Boston Chess Studio* would be it's headquarters... Two gold stars for **Alexandra Kindler** at *Magnin Travel* in San Francisco—not only patient, and service with a smile, but invariably all the details on all the events... Big

city backgammon competition now in Campbell, California—**Marty Miller** is cake, but his regulars eat nails... The *Boston Cavendish Club* took a 7-day backgammon cruise aboard the *Oceanic*—I wish they would have left a few of their good players down there, playing at that club is a hazardous event... *Black & White Scotch* is sponsoring *Pebble Beach*—two class acts together... **The Coach** keeps sending his ruffians out to win money at all the nationals. His annual *Northern Michigan Summer Tournament* was at Boyne Mt. again, and as mellow as ever... Where do all those players come from? Every Tuesday and Wednesday the *L.A. Cavendish Club* packs 'em in—the food isn't bad either... D.C. even has a store that holds tournaments on Thursdays; if you can't make the tournament, you can still play at *Your Move* on M Street any other nite of the week... Colorado has a Liquor Commission with two feet and one arm still in the middle ages—any information supporting backgammon as a game of skill would help **Ed Zuschlag**; send it to 2826 East Geddes Place, Littleton, Colorado 80123... **Jerry Nathan** delivers more entertainment events in the Buffalo area than almost any of the top five cities and he still has time to crank out 3 or 4 attractive tournaments every week. If you run a tournament, and it's got the blahs, take a lesson here... or better yet, call **Ted Barr** in Seattle at (206) 285-6767—he has got the system—he runs six, count 'em six successful weekly events and he'll share his methods. He has time to do a syndicated backgammon column and still enjoy regular vacations. Ted insists it's because of the businesslike approach and preparation. If you're jealous, give him a call

... **Rita Thornberg** says she has exactly 100 rooms available for the \$7,500 added *Turnberry Isle Gold Cup* in Miami this coming January. Since there is no *Nassau* this year, call her at (305) 966-7690 or sleep on the beach with the rest of us... Congratulations to **Bob Gage**, first President of the new *Fresno Backgammon Club*—they just held their first tournament with 158 entires. **Fred Holt** paid **Jon Endara** \$1,000 for the Expert Championship... **Bentley Fender** is getting "rave reviews" as a director... It seems **Craig** starts tournaments at G.J.'s in Atlanta and wins all the money the first week. **Kathy Osborne** says he had three critical days simultaneously—truth is he was too drunk to play his moves wrong!... **Phelica** and **Ida**, the stalwarts of Chicago; their *House of Backgammon* can't decide whether to sell sets, do three tournaments a week or regionals—so they're doing them all... One of backgammon's outstanding students, **Bill Davis**, has devised a form of play called *duo-backgammon*. He also heads the *National Backgammon League's* money winners for the year, including the quarter finals at the *Chicago Cup*... Every time we walk into a tournament, there's **Peter Gregory**. When he played in the *California Open* it made it tough to believe that he runs tournaments at the *Native Sun* in Pompano Beach every week... It's not until next April, but people are already starting to ask about the *Boston Symphony Orchestra Benefit*. Thanks to **Francesca Parkinson** all the events of the *NEBC* are exciting and competitive in a friendly way... Whatever the name was before, it's now the *Newport Backgammon Club* and **Bob Howayeck** lists free back-

gammon lessons to club members and throws a *Challenge Tournament* every Sunday afternoon . . . Here's a first year club, the *Northern Nevada Backgammon Association*, and they're already planning a *Statewide Championship*. Watch out for **Bill O'Brien** and **Jim Roderick**. The club may be state chartered, non profit, but don't sit across the table from them . . . A little to the west, **Nick Maffeo** is the new Director of the *PBA* and the Editor of the *Prime*. The *PBA* runs the longest running weekly in the country at *Day's*, 24 Ellis Street, San Francisco. **Chuck Papazian** won their *5th Annual Invitational*, maybe the backgammon computer he programmed for Mattel will be fun to play against . . .

Look for the *1979 Virginia Cup Championships* hosted by the *Richmond Backgammon Club*—pretty ambitious for **Richard Murad** in his first year . . . Contrary to the rumors *Scottsdale Bridge and Backgammon* is alive and well. Also in Phoenix free backgammon lessons again at the *Jockey Club* . . . They may be at the bottom of the state, but with indigents such as **Don Smalian**, when the *San Diego Backgammon Club* gets together, there's always a spare laugh . . . **Dick Holsinger** took over the club from **Hugh Nutter** and hops from his game store *Your Move* to the club tournaments with nary a stumble.

**R. I. P.
R. I. B. P. A.
M. R. P. Jr.**

Books in Brief

by Larry Gerst

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The following books if read in the recommended sequence properly compliment one another and will dramatically aid the backgammon learning process. If one understands basic rules and strategy he may choose to begin with book number "2".

- 1). **BACKGAMMON "The Action Game" by Prince Alexis Obolensky**
The best beginner's book. Unsurpassed in its simplified illustrative presentation. Recommended for those who would not normally have patience to read a book on the rules of a game.
- 2). **THE BACKGAMMON BOOK by Oswald Jacoby/Crawford**
Truly the "Bible of Backgammon". Recommended for any player who has not read a book on backgammon. This treatise is the foundation for all good play in the game. Although conservative in its approach to game strategy, one should digest this material before reading about aggressive play.
- 3). **GOREN'S MODERN BACKGAMMON COMPLETE by Charles H. Goren**
Just what the name implies—this book conveys the important essentials of aggressive technique in today's sophisticated game play. By far the most explicitly annotated book.
- 4). **HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT BACKGAMMON? by Nicolaos/Vassilios Tzannes**
This book of 75 test problem situations should be noted for its illustrations of common mistakes made in play and rules of thumb to help eliminate them. The book simultaneously rates how well you play the game.
- 5). **BACKGAMMON FOR PROFIT by Joes Dwek**
121 challenging problem situations. Dwek delicately and comprehensively discusses subtle positions that incessantly reoccur. Recommended for an experienced player.
- 6). **BACKGAMMON by Paul Magriel**
By far the most advanced and complete book on the game. A must for the serious minded backgammon enthusiasts.
- 7). **PLAYBOY'S BOOK OF BACKGAMMON by Lewis Deyong**
A compliment to Magriel's book. Special emphasis has been placed on the backgame, cube strategy and money management chapters.

*OTHER BOOKS CONTAINING BENEFICIAL READING MATERIAL

BACKGAMMON THE CRUELEST GAME by Barclay Cooke/Jon Bradshaw

Amongst other assets this book contains good chapters on the doubling cube and psychology.

BACKGAMMON FOR BLOOD by Bruce Becker

This book is advantageous to the overly conservative backgammon player who needs a shocking insight to the logic and reasoning of aggressive play, which in turn will help him to become a more balanced player.

BACKGAMMON FOR PEOPLE WHO HATE TO LOSE by Tim Holland

Helpful hints in dealing with psychological tactics that should be continuously employed for winning backgammon.

Other books (not mentioned) have material to offer which would enhance ones play. Buyer should use their own descretion in the choice of these books.

Editor's Note

In this and subsequent issues we will focus on specific books and review them in depth.

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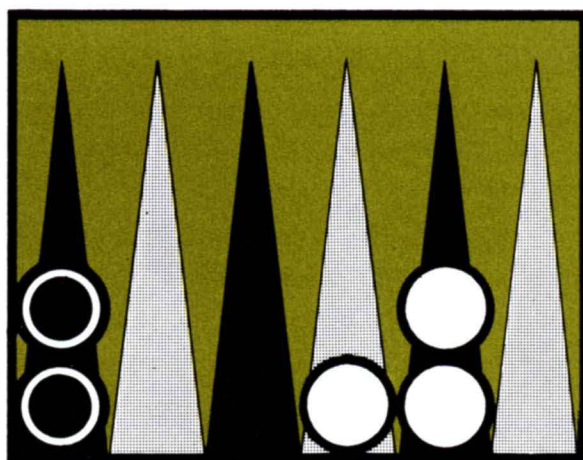
In this, our preview issue, we talk with Hugh Hefner, backgammon maven and Playboy publisher.

Future issues will have us talking with Cher, Jimmy Caan, Johnny Carson, Buddy Hackett, Alan King, Frank Sinatra, Steve McQueen, Joe Namath, Jill St. John, Burt Reynolds and Paul Newman.

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HAVE YOU HEARD?

To the Cassandras of backgammon bemoaning the lack of new players, the stagnation of the clubs and the absence of direction — we direct your attention to the west coast. Now in its third year, the growing American Backgammon Players Association shows all the signs of bringing together the grass roots strength of backgammon as a leisure activity and the excitement of the game's big events.

The Players Association is sponsoring the first Intercollegiate Backgammon Program. Bernard Pitts, National Director for the Association of College Unions-International reports that an unprecedented number of colleges are participating in this program. Winners from more than 300 schools will play off in fifteen regional competitions.

Sid Jackson is Senior Director of the Players Association. He's also the hottest event director in the country. He and his tournament crews work most of the big events and do so faultlessly.

The Association is responsible for the collection and quarterly publication of Backgammon is Everywhere, the first information reference on backgammon activity listing both local and national events. Their club service staff has also been getting support from Aries of Beverly Hills. Every month Aries sends complimentary backgammon sets to a number of clubs for use as bonus prizes.

Aries has become the largest distributor of backgammon sets in the country, so it is not surprising that when the Players Association guarantees a local club's responsibility, that club can have large events without having to worry about prohibitive equipment costs. They just pay the round trip freight and Aries ships them sets to use.

In conjunction with clubs around the world, the ABPA is organizing the first International Backgammon Olympics for next year. They are responsible for major charity benefit events such as the upcoming City of Hope special and a host of other club and player service programs.

\$128,500 AMATEUR WIN

(continued from page 41)

Early Bird savings were not made up by the tournament, so they materialized as penalties to the winners. Non-precision dice were used even in late rounds. And—but for the closed circuit finals—spectators seemed, at times, to receive the least amount of consideration. (One monitor imposed a “no standing” rule for the round of 16 which meant only four could watch each match! The monitor may have felt his first duty was to the players; but in the long run that sort of tunnel vision is detrimental to the game.)

This tournament is unlike any other, and therefore has problems unlike any other. The draw (until the round of sixteen) was not as random as might be wished, or even possible. Registrants were grouped by sixteens as they arrived to sign in. Most inexcusable perhaps, was the fact that the two finalists were not guarded during their breaks and were permitted to talk to friends—who, of course, had been listening to the Magriel and Cooke commentary on their play.

These, however, are but minor flaws in what has to be regarded as a stupendous undertaking. No other prize in backgammon (or most endeavors, for that matter) even approaches the Amateurs' top prize. It might even be a million dollars by the 1980's. This year the tournament attracted large numbers of Europeans — there was even a non-American prize — giving it an international flavor. Even the quality of the Open was enhanced. The field was absolutely one of the strongest ever seen — at least 20% were seedable names. And that, in turn, made the kibitzing richer than at any other national or international tournament.

Perhaps best of all, was the attitude of these backgammon legends. In the informal atmosphere of the Wattson/Goldsmith tournament they were, well, *approachable*. Intense young boys could frequently be seen in fervent discussions of probabilities and positions with the likes of Oswald Jacoby, Barclay Cooke, Paul Magriel, Tom Gilbert, Tony Gobel, Mike Carson, Nancy Weischel, Lee Genuid, Jason Lester, Chuck Papa-zian, Malcolm Davis, Mike Corbett, Kyle Larsen, Roger Low, Fran Goldfarb, Lili Gross, Nick Maffeo, Arthur Dickman, Claude Beer, Marie Reynolds, Dennis Carlston, Sandy Carlston, Baron Vernon Ball, Billy Eisenberg, Hugh Sconyers, etc., etc., etc. And if we've inadvertently left anyone out, it's only because there were so many shining stars that our vision was blinded.

Cavendish North

Robert Ciaffone

BRIDGE & BACKGAMMON CLUB

The following people won honors in the Second Annual Northern Michigan Summer Backgammon Championships, held at Boyne Mountain Lodge, July 7-10.

Championship Flight

1st Place — Peter Grossinger, Oak Park, Mi.

2nd Place — Sanford Kaplan, W. Bloomfield, Mi.

Consolation flight — Bob Ciaffone, Royal Oak, Mi.

Consolation flight 2nd Place — Sidney Jackson, Los Angeles, CA.

Intermediate Flight

1st Place — Shane O'Neill, Lansing, Mi.

2nd Place — Neil Ison, St. Clair Shores, Mi.

Consolation flight — Sandy Bingen, Chicago, Ill.

The event was directed by Bob Ciaffone with proceeds going to the Detroit Association for the Performing Arts.

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One backgammon mystery can be solved—the existence of **Bruce Becker**, alleged author of that appalling fraud or the public “**BACKGAMMON FOR BLOOD**”, hereby challenge him come into the open and play me a 25 point match for \$5000. I will lay \$6000 to \$5000, provided Becker play the opening moves he recommended in his “Backgammon” book. -Lewis Deyong

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