

GAMMON

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT **BACKGAMMON** & THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY

\$5.00

WINTER 1980

**THE ITT
CHALLENGE MATCH**
USA VS EUROPE

MONTE CARLO
THE WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP SCENE

**EZRA
TISSONA**
THE WORLD'S BEST???

LAS VEGAS
THE AMATEURS



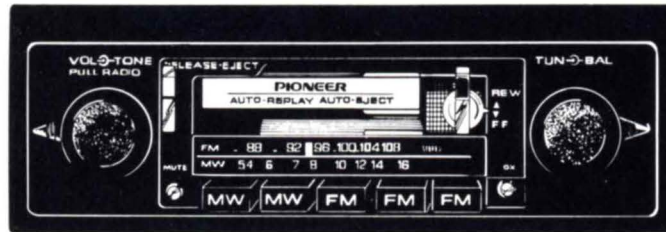
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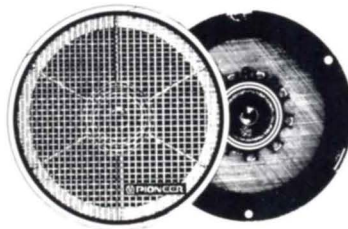
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We are doing a survey on how other clubs conduct tournaments and other backgammon events — fees, time limits, calcutta techniques, Swiss movement, victory-point scoring, duplicate games, etc. Perhaps GAMMON would be interested in a "how-to" story based on the results of this study.

We'd like to see interviews by Jackson and others on "Do's and Don'ts" of organized backgammon events.

*R. B. Roberts, President
Hoosier Backgammon Club*

(Ed: Interested? Ralph, we've already reserved the space!)

Congratulations on your preview issue. GAMMON is the long overdue, quality publication we've been waiting for. My special, personal thanks for publishing Barbara Houston's "America's Secret Weapon." As a tournament organizer and teacher, it has been a continuing source of concern to find women backing away from tournaments. This sort of coverage will do much to encourage their participation. Thank you.

*Rush Kolemaine, Director
Pipmasters Backgammon Club*

(Ed: They're backing out with the winnings. See tournament results on page 37.)

As far as the History of the Game is concerned, just because artifacts were found in Egyptian tombs resembling backgammon tables and equipment, does not attribute them with its' origin. If you check the "History of Backgammon" in Chapter One of John Crawford and Oswald Jacoby's book (which is considered the "Bible" on Backgammon), you will get a truer and precise idea of the origin of the game.

We appreciate the ABPA listing our schedule of events and for printing it in your magazine. However, Milwaukee has had a shake-up in its schedule of tournament nights and the other tournament directors and myself will be grateful if you would print the changes which have been made.

*Merrill Schrager, President
Dueling Oaks Backgammon Club*

(Ed: That's odd. Selrachc's references to the many possible ancestors supports the "true and precise" origin as discussed intensively in the "Bible.")

Upon reflection, the following may be of interest to B. Selrahc and your readers.

The early origins of Backgammon intrigued me such that on a recent trip Outside, I visited the Department of Egyptology of a California university to find out if they had any information on the subject.

Professor Namon was very helpful. He explained that the early Egyptians had numerous gods and goddesses for all sorts of events and things including a god for their version of Backgammon. He told me that while he had not been able to ascertain the name of the god, he had been able to translate what was apparently a chant spoken by players during the game.

While I can't vouch for the efficacy of the chant, it does aid relieving anger or disgust upon one's having a very bad throw (or one's opponent having a very good throw).

The chant is *Ti-Hs-Wa*. Try it!

*Errol R. Simmons, President
Backgammon Assoc. of Alaska*

(Ed: Try and chant those long nights away! The Bilikin is well, and sends his regards. Thanks!)

GAMMON defines an aggressive player as someone who is — "Hot to Slot."

In your opening issue you reviewed several tournaments. I'm sure there are others like myself who travel, or who would travel, if they knew in advance of tournaments. I suggest a listing of future tournaments be included in each issue.

*David Brody
Des Moines, Iowa*

I read GAMMON from cover to cover and enjoyed it immensely. I was at the Turnberry Isle Tournament and reading about it brought back all the excitement of that week. I know the tournament is scheduled again for January. Could you let me know the date.

Also, I would like more information on the "double-elimination system that permitted a player to lose a match and still have a chance to win."

*Renee Rosenbloom
Rochester, NY*

(Ed: Turnberry is January 22-27, 1979. Information is in the mail. So is a copy of the LVBC December 1979 magazine with a review of the "Swiss System.")

How about an article on "How to start, improve, increase and promote individual (city) backgammon clubs?"

Much needed in Hawaii!

*L. D. Lufkin
Honolulu, HI*

(Ed: See page 53. Greg, are you there?)

Jacoby and Crawford's "The Backgammon Book" has one chapter on "How to Run a Backgammon Tournament." Can you recommend any book in running tournaments? Or one that has at least more coverage of the subject than one chapter?

*Thanks
Wayne Cofer*

(Continued on page 56)

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At backgammon tournaments in both Europe and the United States I have asked several experts the following question: Who, in your opinion, are the three best players in the world, excluding yourself? The name mentioned more than any other was . . .

EZRA TISSONA

Is He The World's Best?



When Ezra Tissona speaks, the earth lays back its ears and roars. Tissona is a 34-year-old Israeli whose reputation in backgammon is formidable. His supporters consider him a genius, one of the game's great natural players. His detractors call him a magician, even a dice manipulator. He is respected, feared, loved and hated — but never ignored.

Ignoring Tissona would be impossible. His coal black eyes seem to project laser beams. The intensity of his expression weighs on his shoulders and hunches them. His face still bears the scars of a childhood disease. Not until a smile washes across his semetic features does one sense the warmth and puckish humor that is also part of Tissona. He speaks five languages: Hebrew, Arabic, English, Spanish and Grunt. His voice is either menacing or luxurious. He grandstands his entrances, always surrounded by an entourage consisting of at least one brother (he

Candace Nyles Mayeron

His voice is guttural deep, and when he scowles he looks like a Child of the Night.

"Usually they come three, five, six, ten players against me."

"Maybe Magriel is better than me in mathematics, but for backgammon you don't need that."

has four) and an odd henchman or two. They almost always dress in black.

Although he now mingles with the glittery, international backgammon set as though he were born to it, Tissona learned his game in the streets and marketplaces of Israel, and refined his skills in the Israeli army, where "So long as we weren't fighting, we were playing day and night, night and day.

"Listen," says Tissona, "I'm a good backgammon player because I have a *feeling* for the game. I was *born* with this game. Sometimes in the middle of a game you have to gamble. You have to have a feeling. If you feel the game, the mistakes will be nothing."

Tissona plays instinctively — by the seat-of-his-pants. Were he a tennis player, he'd be Ilie Nastase. His natural talent has no liking for the droll world of probabilities. "I never count," he grumbles. (Some players claim Tissona doesn't even know *how* to take a pip count.) "I can see the situation straightaway, running game or things like this. I don't compute like Paul Magriel does, for example. I was the *worst* in high school in mathematics. Maybe Magriel is better than me in mathematics, but for backgammon you don't need that. Is big mistake if somebody think he have to know. Sometimes, is not good to know all these things." Instead Tissona uses psychology. "Each game I play different," he says. "I tell you, I never play the same. You cannot just play the game, you have to play against your opponent."

Tissona's rough-and-tumble Israeli style was honed to its current sleekness in the gambling parlors of London. He arrived there on holiday at the age of 27, an ex-bus driver with \$500 in his pocket. "I wasn't such a good player when I came to London. I think Israelis are the worst players in the world. Average Europeans are better than the best Israelis. Only the Israelis that live some time in Europe or U.S. become good. After I start to play in London, I saw different moves, and it was the first time in my life I saw these moves. They are putting so much pressure on me. It never happened to me before. So I start putting my moves with the other moves, mixing them together, and that is what happened. They couldn't mix the Israeli move with the European move, but I

could, because I can *see* things . . ."

Tissona met Tony Mancini, the former owner of the White Elephant nightery and himself a very competent player. "After I beat him he brought all the best players in the world over to play against me — Joe Dwek, Philip Martyn, Lewis De-yong, Barclay Cooke, Paul Magriel, Gino Scalamandre and Stanley Tomchin. I beat all of them. Nobody won from me one penny. We played up to \$2,000 a point. Took three weeks. Day and night. One time I played three days nonstop. In all I made almost a half-million dollars.

"So then they start to say I am a magician, or I know how to control the dice, and this and that," chortles Tissona, "but I tell you I always played with the other guy's dice, board, everything. So they brought a special machine which rolled the dice. I beat them with the machine too!"

Tissona relishes the memory of the country Israeli boy trouncing the city slickers. "This was the first time I played good players and the first time for big stakes. I didn't play for big stakes in Israel, because I didn't know I was so good. But people told me Mancini was one of the best. So after I beat him, I had no fear of playing Joe Dwek because they were saying the same things about Dwek. I think, 'If this is Tony, so what Joe has to be?' Of course Joe is much better than Tony, but I didn't know that. Is good thing too, or I might never have played Joe and the others!"

The lobby of the Britannia Beach Hotel in Nassau, site of the 1978 World Championships, is swarming with backgammon players. Boards are set on lobby tables for impromptu chouettes. Dice rattle in trip cups, ice cubes clink in glasses, checkers click across felt and leather fields. On the side a crowd gathers around a dark pocket. It's Tissona and his black-shirted gophers. The game is Tissona-style, not exactly heads-up. He is playing a team consisting of Roger Low, Jason Lester and their friend from New York. They are permitted to consult. Tissona is alone.

"I cannot find a player to play against me alone," laments Tissona. "Always it is this way now. I play alone and they are in teams. Usually they come three, five, six, ten players against me." At \$300 per,

Tissona wins seven points.

Actually, \$300 is small stakes these days for Tissona. That he will play them for that amount is a tribute to the skills of Low and Lester. "I don't like to play for less than \$300 a point. I prefer at least a thousand." One might doubt there *are* any so foolhardy as to plunk upwards of \$1,000 a point to play against him — he says he never gives an edge — but says there is no shortage of opponents. "I have enough people. They are not from the backgammon group, certainly. But I have people all over the world. A lot of Arabs, South Americans, Germans. Very rich people. They like the challenge to play against me.

"The most I ever played for was \$50,000 a point. It happened years ago, in Germany. I was winning about a million dollars, but I knew he was not going to pay me so much. So I purposely lost back \$750,000 and then he paid me the \$250,000!" Tissona lets out a roar and slaps his knee at the joke. "Was very rich German industrialist. Everybody knows him. Good guy."

An accomplished poker player also (he considers his poker just slightly inferior to his backgammon), Tissona is the quintessential gambler. "Big money sessions I never lose, only win. One time I lost 15 points to Paul Magriel, but that was after I beat him for 57 points. Somebody might win some points from me one day, but over the week, I will be the winner."

Lest the reader think his only forte is the money side of backgammon, consider his tournament record: he won the Consolation of the first tournament he ever entered (Plaza Hotel, New York, 1973); has won the World Championships (Nassau, 1975); Clermont (London); and Miami. He loves playing in tournaments but isn't as confident of his potential success. "In tournament you need patience. I have no patience. When you play tournament it's like . . . I don't know how to say in English . . . like being handcuffed. You cannot play the same game. You cannot take chances, you cannot take risks, you cannot double the same you double for money. Don't get me wrong, I don't think I'm a bad tournament player — I've won a lot — but I know the chances to win are

"... I like to watch beginners ... It's the only place I can learn something."

"... I don't believe anybody in the world in a hundred years can learn what I know about backgammon."

very small."

Unlike many name players, Tissona does not get involved in lengthy money sessions during a tournament week. "Tournaments are the worst places for me to catch people," he says. "Everybody knows me. So famous you know. And always they buy me for the big price in the calcutta, so everybody's afraid of me."

If not money games, how does this superstar of players occupy his time while waiting for his next match?

Ezra Tissona, arguably the best backgammon player in the world, spends his idle tournament time... watching the *beginners*! "Is true! I swear to God I like to watch beginners. Beginners do moves nobody else can think about. Sometimes I see situation with beginners it couldn't happen to me, and I see moves I couldn't think about. Take for example a number that all good players would play the same. But beginners, they don't know. They play different, move after move. Then, maybe you can catch one move you didn't think about even. Good player cannot think of it. It's the only place I can learn something!"



He is friendly, but not buddy-buddy with the other backgammon champions. "I tell you something, everyone when he is losing to me ... all the time they are complaining I know how to roll the dice, I know this and that." He sighs. "It is very hard to find someone honest enough to say, 'Good luck to you, you are a good player.' As for himself, he has the most respect for the game of Kiumars Motak-hasses, an Iranian champion.

Tissona has maintained his roots in Tel Aviv, where he operates a furniture store

and a Wimpy's hamburger outlet he purchased with his backgammon earnings. His wife seldom leaves to accompany him to tournaments, preferring, he says, to remain at home with their three children, a 9-year-old daughter and two sons, 6 and 2½. None yet play backgammon.

"In the U.S. so early they are playing backgammon? I didn't know. Well, they are too small to play, but I am sure my son, he is going to be better than me. This I can promise. I know because I am going to teach him good, from the beginning.

"Listen, when you teach somebody from the beginning good, he must be good. There is no way he going to be bad. Even if he doesn't have the mind for backgammon he must be good. Listen, if I wanted to I would never again have to gamble at backgammon. I could make the same money just teaching. I have people from Western hemisphere to Israel lining up to take lessons. And for big money, too. But I don't like to teach. For friends only I do it, as favor. But teaching for money is boring. It is not that I'm worried they could then beat me. No way that! Because what I know about backgammon, I don't believe anybody in the world in a hundred years can learn what I know about backgammon. Because my *instincts* are so good for backgammon. That means that every time I can make the best move, and nobody else can make the best move. Listen, anything you can show me in backgammon I can deal with it in one second, even if I didn't see it before. I can give a hundred situations to any other champion — who is the best you think — and I going to give him the choice to pick any side he wants. Well, I tell you he's going to lose *both* sides. I promise you. And if he gives me situation, I will win both sides!"

If Tissona sounds arrogant, consider that his assessment has been tried and tested, and he has not been found wanting. And still, his assessment is tempered with reason: "Of course I make mistakes, what you think?! Everybody make mistakes. Sometimes people come to me and say, 'You did this and this,' and I see the position, and I don't know how I did that but I did. But I tell you, I am ready to play against anybody in the world right now, and for *any* money."

Get The Record Straight !!

Sterling Publishing Company represents the Guinness Book of World Records. When contacted in April by Christopher Skwarko, age 20, and Benjamin Ascone, 19 — both students at St. Peter's College in New Jersey — a Sterling representative detailed the requirements necessary when submitting a record for consideration.

The students then logged 100 hours and 5 minutes, playing 1,524 games of duly witnessed and recorded backgammon, attempting to set a respectable record, worthy of consideration as the first backgammon entry in the famed book.

You see, they had been told there was not currently a backgammon category. They were not told of a similar inquiry made in 1978 by Dick Newcomb and Greg Peterson of Rockford, Illinois, who had been directed to submit an entry comparable to the current world chess record. Dick and Greg complied by submitting proof of an epic 151 backgammon hours, conducted over the 1978 4th of July holiday.

There is no backgammon category in the 1980 edition. Neither of these, nor any other backgammon records submitted are being considered currently by Guinness.

GAMMON, of course, is interested in hearing about any such frivolity — whether done as exhibitions for charity, or as attempts to better another's record.

"A fool and his cube are soon parted."

BACKGAMMON IS NOT

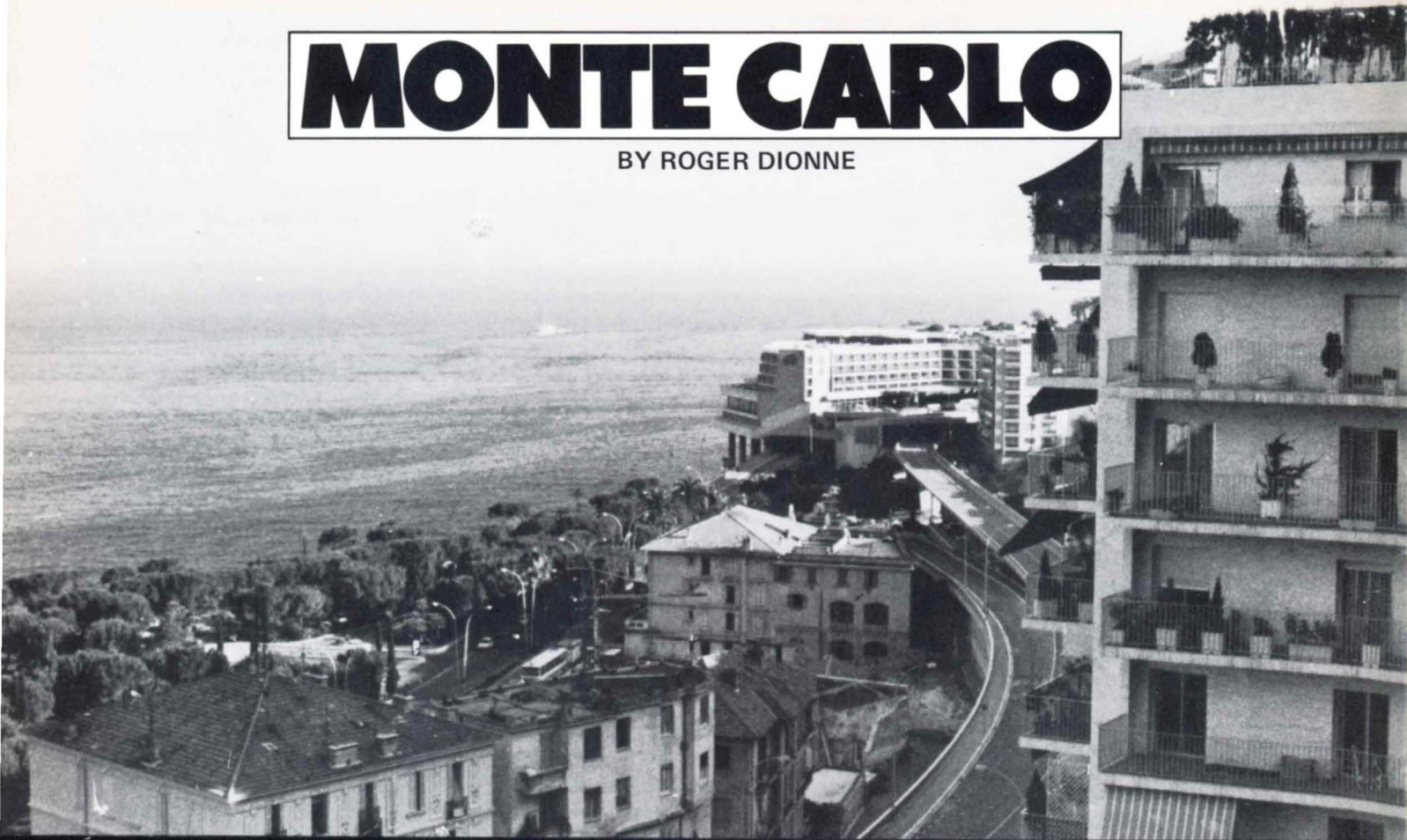
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MONTE CARLO

BY ROGER DIONNE



July 8, 1979

After 20 sleepless hours of chattering burghers, dowdy women in five-and-dime frocks, crying children, all the noisy Babbitts, Baedekers in claw, gearing up for their grand tour of Europe on \$20 a day, now, at Heathrow Airport in London, I was no longer quite so anxious to break both legs of the unholy masochist who booked me on this circuitous series of flights.

"It could be worse," Sid Jackson yawned. Sid would be Assistant Director at the Merit World Backgammon Championships to be held in Monte Carlo, and he too had gotten no sleep since we left Los Angeles for Boston, the first leg of our trip, early the previous morning. "We could," Jackson said, "be flying to Nice via Manila."

Instead, in the crowded waiting area outside Gate 16 at Heathrow, we were suddenly plugged into the backgammon circuit. It had hummed for a fortnight around Wimbledon, stopped at Crockford's for the big backgammon tournament there, and was now crack-



"The moment of truth."

ling toward the Cote d'Azur for the biggest backgammon tournament of them all, the World Championships. Milling around were Jason Lester and Roger Low, the brilliant young players out of the Mayfair Club in New York. There were Chuck Papazian, Gino Scalamandre and Manny Delis out of the Bay Area, Howard Perlman out of Detroit, Bill Robertie out of Boston. And there, surveying the crowd like a sleek, fierce-eyed hawk wondering

what to eat for dinner, was Joe Dwek, the man who'd fetch \$6,000, the top price in the black-tie Calcutta dinner and auction at the Sporting d'Ete in Monte Carlo the following night.

Defending World Champion Paul Magriel came rushing through the security check at Heathrow, coat tails flapping, looking as though he might have dressed in the hack on his way to the airport. He looked out the window at the bird that would carry us to Nice.

"It's a DC-10," he giggled.

The right carrier, certainly, for a planeload of gamblers.

Lynn Madliner, from Berkeley, California, came over, and we talked about the computer games — chess, backgammon, bridge — he and his partner Chuck Papazian were programming. Then we talked about dice.

"Think of dice rolls as an infinite grid," Madliner said, "and when you play a game, you're intersecting that grid at a particular time and in a particular space. You hope to synchronize..." Headly material after two days without sleep. Madliner's grid warped and bulged in my mind like a Vassarely print. "Listen, after we take off, why don't we play a few friendly games," Madliner suggested, "say at a quarter a point?" He recognized a pigeon when he saw one.

"I'll look for you," I agreed. But somehow, notwithstanding Madliner's bald head that stood out like a cue ball in a tar pit, I never did manage to find him.

Instead I sat next to Nicole Taboury, an attractive, dark-eyed Algerian, formerly of Mexico City, now of Paris, who had just been visiting her parents in Corsica, and Maurice Shawzin, a regular in the weekly chouettes at Pips in Beverly Hills, who has the rugged, woodgrain look of a lifelong outdoorsman. Shawzin used to hunt big game in South Africa, in fact, and he told me about his creation of the popular Lion Country Safari, a 500-acre wildlife preserve in southern California. After selling his interests there several years ago, Shawzin developed another preserve, just as successful, in Japan.

I drifted to the back of the DC-10 where Paul Magriel was playing Hollywood gin with his seat mate. I had hoped to find him and Roger Low engaged in one of their famous plane-ride backgammon sessions, in which they use no board, no checkers, no doubling cube and no dice. The game itself they play blindfolded, as it were ("Roger is better at it than I am," Magriel allows), and they use their fingers in a clever system that replaces the rolling of dice.

"We do each die individually," Magriel explained. "We both put out any number of fingers from 0 to 5." A two-hand total of one through six fingers equals their face value; while zero fingers equals 6, 7 equals 1, 8 equals 2, 9 equals 3 and 10 equals 4. Do it yourself, and you'll discover there are precisely 36 possible finger combinations and precisely six ways to pro-

duce each of the six numbers on an individual die. Do it twice, and you've got a complete roll.

"It is really, truly, totally random," Magriel points out.

"Not so," Low maintains. "I apparently put out a pattern, and Paul can pick up on the pattern," he says. "Like I throw 3-1-4-2, something like that. Now if I throw a 5, Paul knows I'm going to throw a 3 next. I think when we first started playing this way, he always got the best of the rolling for that reason. So I got scared. I didn't want him clocking my rolls."

Consequently, Low and Magriel don't play their invisible backgammon game much any more, and on his trip to Nice Magriel had to be satisfied with gin rummy. He even used real cards.

When I returned to my seat, Shawzin handed me his business card. It read: "Maurice A. Shawzin — Director of Companies." I could imagine the scene:

"What do you want to be when you grow up, Maury?"

"I think I want to be a Director of Companies, Ma."

Ah yes. I was definitely on the backgammon circuit.

July 9, 1979

The sparkling Salle des Etoiles overlooking the Mediterranean at Monte Carlo's Sporting d'Ete is exactly that — a great pie-slice of a room open to the stars, and in Monte Carlo *sporting* means gambling. Several hundred tuxedoed sportsmen gathered in the Salle des Etoiles on July 9 to pick through pate' and Cornish hens and then make their picks in the Calcutta auction. Director Lewis Deyong had hoped the Calcutta would push the total purse in this year's World Championships above the half-million mark, but with 347 entries in the Championship Division, he was able to coax only a somewhat disappointing \$196,000 out of the gathering's pockets; \$15,000 less than the record \$211,000 raised in the Calcutta at last year's Monte Carlo event, then titled the European Championships.

The total purse for the 1979 World Championships reached \$361,000, which broke down as follows in the Championship Division:



Player
Pool

Auction
Pool

CHAMPIONSHIP

Winner	\$42,336	\$69,732
Finalist	\$14,112	\$23,244
Semi-finalists	\$ 7,056	\$11,622

CONSOLATIONS (1ST & 2ND)

Winner	\$12,584	\$17,433
Finalist	\$ 3,528	\$ 5,811
Semi-finalists	\$ 1,764	\$ 2,905

LAST CHANCE

Winner	\$ 8,232	\$13,559
Runner-up	\$ 3,528	\$ 5,811

In addition, there would be a \$10,000 winner-take-all Club Tournament on Sunday, July 15, and later that same day the new World Champion would have the opportunity to win another \$5,000 by defeating in a 7-point match Aristotle, alias the Gammonoid, alias Merit I, a sophisticated backgammon computer programmed by Paul Magriel and artificial intelligence expert Dr. Hans Berliner of the Carnegie-Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh. Intelligence Systems, Ltd. of Indianapolis is marketing the computer with a price tag in the neighborhood of \$2,500 — pretty expensive for a toy — but then the computer did defeat Luigi Villa of Italy, the new World Champion, 7-1, in their \$5,000 match. Capable of much more than simply playing a game — it can, for example, evaluate alternate strategies for any position — Aristotle like its namesake among philosophers is indeed the Master of backgammon computers.

During the Calcutta, David Leibowitz introduced me to 19-year-old Eric Seidel, the youngest player in the Championship Division. Leibowitz is himself a ripe old man of 22 who blazed onto the backgammon scene last fall when in less than a month he won the Lucille Ball Charity Tournament at Pips and the Amateur Backgammon Championships in Las Vegas. After his Las Vegas triumph, an interviewer asked him, "Do you consider yourself the best backgammon player under 23?"

"How old is Jason Lester?" he responded.

At the World Championships, Leibowitz joined Lester among the seeded players, and both reached the round of 32 before being knocked out. (A name

with an L seems to give you an edge in backgammon: there's Leibowitz, Lester, Laubmeier — a semi-finalist in the World Championships — Lorenz, Lorenzin, Low and Larson. Women should make sure their first name begins with an L and their surname with a G, following the example of Lee Genud, Lynn Goldsmith and Lili Gross.)

Tall and gangly, Seidel looked too young yet to have developed a backgammon ego. He had the sallow complexion of people who live by night and sleep (sometimes) by day. Hours after the Calcutta, in the early hours of the morning, after I had turned down Lynn Madliner's suggestion to join a chouette back at the Hotel Mirabeau where he was staying, I ran into Eric Seidel sitting with Roger Low and others over platefuls of spaghetti at the Tip-Top, an all-night cafe not far from the Monte Carlo, Casino. Seidel had drawn Berge Abadjian, a fellow Mayfair player, in the first round of the World Championships, and Low, knowing how both played, offered \$1,000 to \$500 he wouldn't win the 19-point match. Low then spent the next hour trying to psyche Seidel out: Seidel couldn't beat King Kong playing blindfolded, Low would have had him believe.

"I couldn't be a 2:1 dog against anyone," Seidel insisted, "— not even you."

July 10, 1979

Roger Low was obviously not the only person with money on it, for Seidel's match with Abadjian drew more attention than any other in the first round. The crowd was rewarded with a real cliffhanger: it went to double match

point before underdog Seidel pulled out an upset victory, 19-18.

Backgammon is a game of upsets. Defeated in their first round of play at Monte Carlo were 1977 European Champion Jean-Noel Grinda and such experts as Nihad Erdeniz of Switzerland, Raoul Rosenzweig of Germany, Marcel Baquiche of France, Stephen Raphael of Great Britain, Gino Scalamandre of the United States, etcetra, etcetra, etcetra. Defending World Champion Paul Magriel's upset was the most dramatic: leading 13-2, he scored only one more point in the match and was defeated 19-14. The most lopsided victory by a seeded player was scored by Ezra Tissona, who overwhelmed his opponent 24-2. (At 18-2 Tissona won a triple game with the cube at 2.)

Tissona, a rough-and-tumble Middle Easterner whose face looks like a twinkling miniature of the cratered surface of the moon, is the perfect opposite of young American technicians like Magriel, Low and others who begin from a sound mathematical knowledge of the game. Tissona couldn't tell you the basic odds of being hit in a particular position, yet he is universally acknowledged as being one of the top backgammon players in the world. Many thought this might be his year at the World Championships, but Serge Lorenzin knocked him out in the round of 32.

July 11, 1979

An interesting albeit desperate tournament play occurred in Magriel's second-round match in the First Consolation. Leading his opponent J. Alvarez 11-8 in the 13-point match,



Opening roll for the renowned Paul Magriel: "Take that!"



Kiumars Motakhashes voted "the most threatening opponent of the year."

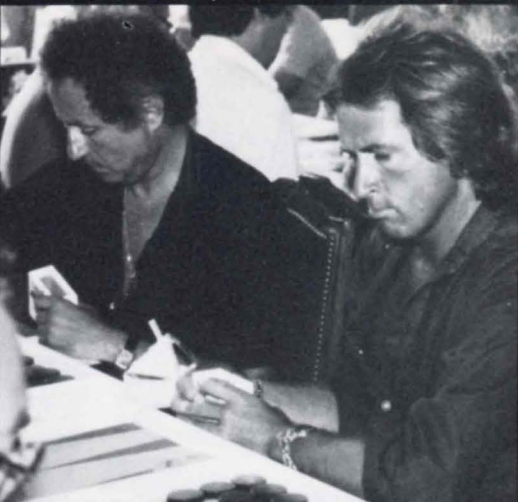


Europe's most constant tournament winner, Joe Dwek.



Cocktails before the awards ceremony at the Hotel de Paris.

Tony Goble during Championship play: "Now what did the book say about this?"



Trig Carrie and Bill Arkin (with the hand) watching the televised final match. Along with Wayne McClintock they won the team event.



Luigi Villa (foreground) on his way to the Championship with New York's "whiz kid" Roger Low playing to his right.



Then a happy bachelor, Chuck Papapazian (left) has recently married.



World Champion, Bill Eisen-
ending to business.



Lewis Deyong announced Intermediate Champion, Hilda Lee, accompanied by her husband, Simi.



Semi-finalist, El-Zanatay of Egypt.



Alan Martin, First Consolation winner and Vicki wait for their California neighbor Aram Kouleyan to make his play.



Livia Weintraub considers her game while Carmen Rojas waits for her opponent.

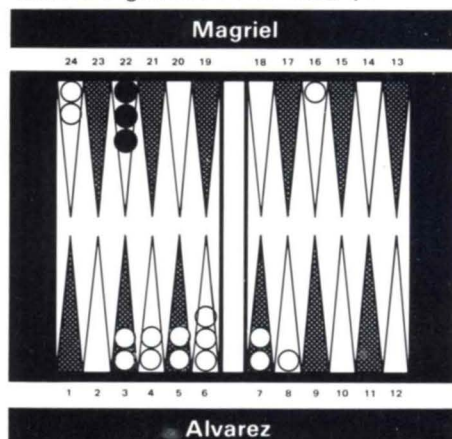


Spain's backgammon queen, Maika Perez de Cobas.



Chuck Sammons (right) with his date Merit L. at

Magriel (Black) looked to be marching toward a gammon and victory.

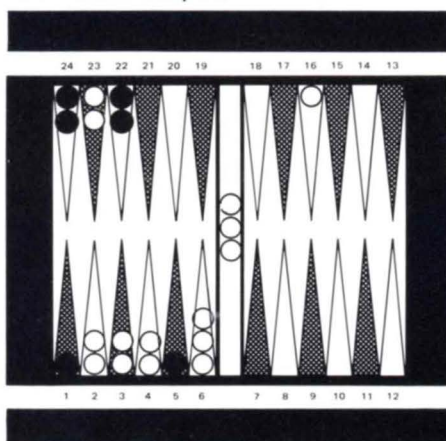


Alvarez took so long before rolling in the above position, some spectators wondered if he had forgotten where he was. But he was doing some complicated thinking. He figured: a) if he hit none of Magriel's three remaining men, he'd be gammoned and lose the match; b) if he hit one man, he'd no doubt save the gammon, but would be barely alive in the match since he'd need to win three games in a row against a superior player; c) if he hit two men, he'd not only save the gammon but probably win the game. With all this in mind, Alvarez doubled! He would probably lose a double game anyway, but now if he happened to win, he'd be right back in the match.

Magriel took, of course, and Alvarez rolled a 6-5, moving one man from 24 to 19 and another from 8 to 2, hoping to get a shot on his next roll. Unfortunately for him, Magriel rolled an excellent 2-1, hitting Alvarez's blot on the 24-point and bearing off. Alvarez came in with a high number, and it was all over. However, his last-stand double showed a good deal of tournament savvy. He made the best play possible to keep him in the match — a play which, of course, would be unthinkable in a money game.



Later in the evening, after turning down Lynn Madliner's offer to join a chouette in a back room at the Sporting d'Hivers, I watched Eric Seidel and Trenton, New Jersey expert, Jim Pasko repeatedly playing out another doubling situation which had occurred in a match they had witnessed earlier.



In the above position, White doubled, and Black quickly passed. Seidel agreed it was a pass, while Pasko thought it might be a take. The two established a stake and sat down for 10 or 15 games with Pasko (Black) owning the cube at 2 and Seidel on roll. Seidel won all but two of the games. However, in one of his losses the cube went crazy, and he ended up paying Pasko a few hundred dollars. Pocketing the money, Pasko agreed it was not a take after all.

July 12, 1979

Lynn Madliner rushed up to the bar at the Sporting d'Hiver to tell me about "the great chouette, a lot of weak players" back at the Hotel Mirabeau. I went instead to Loew's Casino to lose my money.

The presence of the huge, new Loew's hotel and Casino complex has radically changed the old-world complexion of Monte Carlo. Loew's modern hexagonal shapes jut out over the sea, literally undermining the baroque facade of the old Monte Carlo Casino; its rooftop pool swarms with topless sunbathers; and the dress inside its casino is nearly as casual. The Monte Carlo Casino attempted to preserve the tradition of formal dress within its elegant gaming rooms, but it was a losing battle. Decked in their sport shirts and shorts, everyone flocked to Loew's and eventually the old casino capitulated. Now the gamblers shouting at the American crap tables under the magnificent murals and arches of the old Casino look something like a band of Jacobins

cavorting in the drawing room of Marie Antoinette.

Inside Loew's Casino, I noticed backgammon experts Hugh Sconyers, Howard Perlman, Manny Delis and Nick Maffeo intently casing the four-deck shoe at the 500-franc blackjack table. Jason Lester and a group of friends were studying the wheel at a roulette table. Miami expert Tony Goble was playing blackjack at another table. He was attired in a stylish white suit, but he hadn't bothered about wearing a tie — nor a shirt.

Apart from matters of dress, Loew's attracts players because its blackjack rules are considerably more favorable to the player than those at either the Monte Carlo Casino or the Sporting d'Ete. In particular, the latter casinos allow doubling down only on 10 and 11 (as in Reno and Lake Tahoe) and no doubling after splitting pairs. At Loew's, on the other hand, you can double down on anything, including a split pair, which is a tremendous advantage to a good player.

Las Vegas backgammon pro Max Maxakuli wandered by the blackjack table with a fistful of 500-franc notes.

"How much is 10,000 francs?" he asked.

"About \$2,500," I said.

"Damn, I didn't know I'd lost that much."

I had no doubt he'd make up his losses in a chouette later that night.

July 13, 1979

"A great chouette back at the hotel," Madliner said, but I escaped this time to the Men's Room at the Sporting d'Hiver, where I overheard two Englishmen talking about the tournament.

"How you doing?" one asked.

"I just took a dive."

"From who?"

"From this chick."

"You got beat by a chick! What'd you do, relax?"

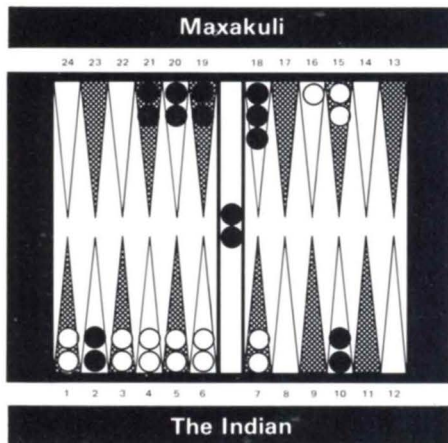
"I dunno. I thought I was all tuned in."

This sort of chauvinism exists everywhere in gambling — in poker circles, at the track, on the backgammon circuit. Regardless of the usual arguments about male stamina, tolerance of pressure, competitiveness, etc., the fact is there were only a small number of women players in the Championship Division at Monte Carlo; yet one woman, Flossie Busson of France, reached the quarter-finals in the Championship Flight while

another, Lee Genud of New York, was a semi-finalist in the Second Consolation, and Hilda Lee of California won the Intermediate Main Event.

"The thing is," the Englishman in the Men's Room concluded, "the chick was a damn good player."

Toward dawn I found myself in Maxakuli's room at Loew's watching him and Swami Nivedano (formerly Dennis Waterman) win a pile of money in a \$25 chouette from an Indian player who would have been better off back in his hotel room in bed. Presently Jason Lester arrived. Now the Indian player definitely should have quit. However, the chouette continued, and as Captain, the Indian (White) developed a powerful position against Maxakuli, who was in the box.



However, his partner, Jason Lester, was pacing around impatiently. The Indian rolled a 2-1 and started to move a checker from 16 to 13.

"This is driving me crazy!" Lester blurted out. "Break that 15 point. He's got two men on the bar. So what are you worried about? What if you'd rolled double 5's just now?"

Playing double 5's from the above position, White is forced to leave a blot on his 6 point. After moving a checker from 16 to 13, double 5's would force White to abandon the 6 point altogether. Lester saw this instantly, instinctively. It's no wonder he left the chouette two hours later up 52 points. I would have liked to send him to Lynn Madliner.

July 14, 1979

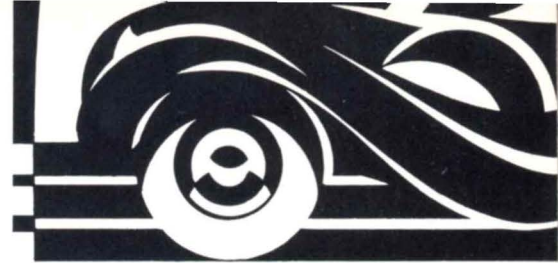
The Bastille Day World Championship final between Luigi Villa of Italy and Geoffrey Westheimer of the United States was one of the fastest ever. When Villa, who had been down 15-5 and 21-13, battled back to a 25-22 victory, many observers felt 5-4 favorite Westheimer had choked. However, it must be said that 34-year-

old Villa, a doctor of Political Science, is after all a world-class player who quit his lucrative position with an insurance company in Milan a year ago to play backgammon full-time. Currently the Italian Champion, he also won the prestigious St. Tropez Championship two years ago as well as the St. Moritz Championship and the Last Chance at Divonne earlier this year — all this after having learned backgammon only four years ago at his bridge club in Milan. In the two years preceding his 1979 triumph, Villa had reached the rounds of 32 and 16 in the European Championships. "So I was prepared," he said, "to go all the way this time." (Ed: *On page 24, Bill Robertie presents an analysis of this Villa-Westheimer match.*)

Perhaps more exciting than the Championship final was the 19-point Second Consolation final between tough tournament competitor Hugh Sconyers, co-owner of the Cavendish West Bridge and Backgammon Club in Los Angeles (the First Consolation was won by one of his club members, Alan Martin) and unknown David Winn, the *wunderkind* of the World Championships, an affable young medical student at Baylor University in Houston, who cut classes for a week to play Monte Carlo. To get to the Second Consolation final, Winn had already defeated the fine San Francisco player Bill Boyd, then the great Kiumar Motakhasses in the quarter-finals and then Lee Genud in the semi-finals. Genud threatened to play in the nude if that would distract Winn, but it would have no doubt been to no avail. Winn seemed to be distracted by nothing, nor did he appear affected by the pressure of high-level competition. While playing his match against Sconyers for what amounted to approximately \$10,000, he laughed and joked as though back at school playing in a \$5 chouette.

"To many of these players, this is a livelihood," Winn said, "but to me it's only a game. Medicine is much more important."

\$10,000 wasn't so important to Sconyers either, but winning most definitely was. Trailing Winn most of the way, Sconyers won several late games to make the score Winn-18, Sconyers-17 when they reached the Crawford Rule game. And now Sconyers' toughness and expertise came through. He pushed Winn into a difficult backgame, where the less experienced player stood either to win 1 point and the match or get



gammoned, losing 2 points and thus the match. Sconyers developed a beautiful textbook priming defense against Winn's backgame, and got the gammon he was aiming for to win the match. But it had been close. Sconyers looked as though he'd just gone 15 rounds with Muhammed Ali, while Winn looked like he'd just showered and shaved and was on his way to do the voice-over for Mr. Clean.

July 15, 1979

The fast-paced, one day, \$10,000 winner-take-all Club Tournament was an added event at this year's World Championships, and was eventually won by the West Coast team of Trig Carrie, Bill Arkin and Wayne McClintock. Players of three-member teams competed in 5-point matches, and whichever team won 2 out of 3 matches moved on to the next round. The names of the teams give as good a sense of the international flavor of a backgammon world championship as any — the Fox Trot Club of Lisbon, the Grand Cercle of Paris, the Athens Tennis Club, the Circoletto of Palermo, the Brera Club of Milan, Pimm's Club of Munich, Pips of Beverly Hills, the Vinkenveen of Amsterdam, Tops of Johannesburg, the Caracas Bridge Club, the Clermont, Crockford's and the Curzon House of London, the Mayfair of New York, the Cavendish West of Los Angeles, and so on.

Some of the teams were formed on the spot. Andre Rolfo-Fontana of Monte Carlo's Societe des Baines de Mer thought the Monte Carlo Casino team of Joe Dwek, Kiumar Motakhasses and Jean-Noel Grinda an unbeatable combination. While in deference to tradition the Societe des Baines de Mer team was composed of Prince Arenberg, Prince Gayad and Monsieur Bensimon.

"We couldn't find a third prince," Rolfo-Fontana explained.

It's getting harder and harder to find a prince in Monte Carlo these days. Unlike that planeload of gamblers who a week ago left Heathrow Airport for Nice, many of today's princes just can't afford it. Not many of us can.

Expert needlework and innovative design are the hallmark of the stunning yet inexpensive creations featured in Francesca Parkinson's *Knit and Crochet Your Own Designs*, from Arco Publishing.

The book introduces the Visual Pattern Method, a revolutionary device for making creations fit perfectly to one's proportions, thus achieving a professional finish. The key to the method's success is accurate measurements, and Francesca simplifies instructions for measuring, so that even the more complicated procedures are made easy to follow.

Her designs are classic and timeless, yet versatile enough for further creative variations.

Francesca Parkinson, a self-taught needlepoint artist, landscape architect and interior designer, lives in a charming home with her husband Bobby, which they remodeled from a tumbledown wreck in Cape Cod. And, of course, Francesca founded and is president of the New England Backgammon Club.

Leather Backgammon Scroll designed for portability, strength & utility. Ideal for bikes, hikes, the beach and travelers. A doubling cube, 4 dice, 32 leather chips and an authentic indian head or buffalo nickle concho are included in each order. Dimensions are 10" x 20" unrolled, 1 1/4" diameter x 10" rolled into a scroll. By Moonshine Leather, P.O. Box 9, Mokelumne Hill, Calif 95245.

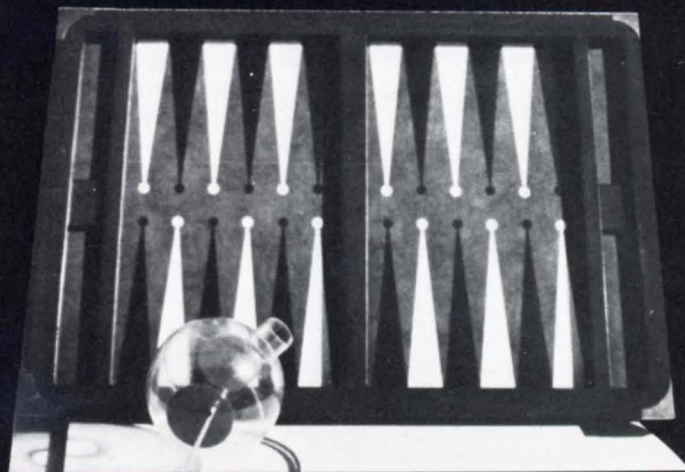
19" x 15" surface rolls up to a trim 3" diameter, 15 oz. naturally finished leather and suede. Stones are belt leather and "cling" to surface. The set can be dry cleaned.

Leather carrying bag for *bag-gammon* set zippered for easy access. Strap can be adjusted for carrying by hand or over the shoulder. Mail inquiries to: bag-gammon, inc., box 931, nederland, co 80466.

Crossword Puzzle Constructors, a newsletter with a catholic range of topics sufficient to have included a review of GAMMON in their last issue. Subscribers get news of puzzles and contests. \$12 for 10 issues from: CWP, P.O. Box 6366, San Rafael, CA 94903.

To get your hooks on gambling books — *Gambler's Book Club* will send you their catalog: 630 S. 11th Street, Box 4115, Las Vegas, NV 89106.

DIFFERENT



Backgammon by Feather Hill — the new Feather Hill padded and treated leather texture uniroyal Naugahyde surface; virtually indestructible. It will not stain. The only maintenance required is to wipe the playing surface, when dirty, with a mild detergent (Lux), rinse and apply a new coating of wax.

The tournament size frame is hand crafted from select hardwoods, hand sanded, and finished with durable satin varnishes. The brass plated corners are decorative as well as protective. The board has flush mounted hangers and, when not in use, may be hung on a wall.

1-3/4" checkers, cube, dice and hand crafted horsehide dice cups are organized in a steel framed jewelry box for easy storage . . . plus . . .

"PEOPLE FEEDERS" — The sanitary way to dispense snacks! Easy to fill — Easy to use! **"PEOPLE FODDER"** — A Nut & Snack mixture of Sesame sticks, Sesame buds, Peanuts, Cashews and Peanuts.

For Feeder, Fodder & Fun informa-

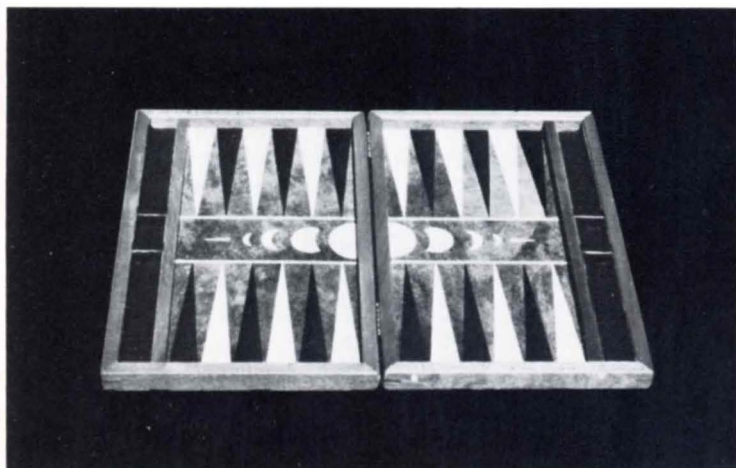
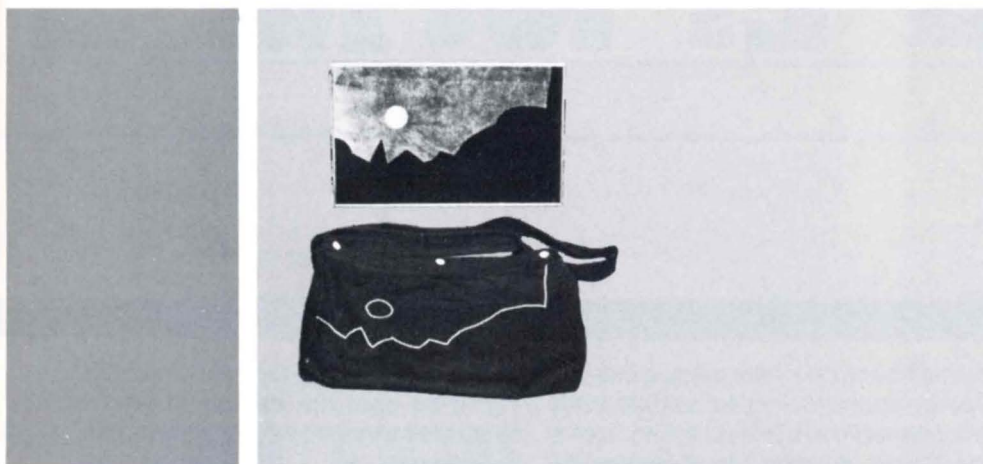
tion, as well as backgammon club and individual inquiries: Feather Hill Industries, P.O. Box 41, Zenda, WI 53195, phone (414) 275-6770.

In five years of production, no two boards have been alike. Frames are made from mahogany or walnut and sizes range from small folding models to boards built into coffee tables.

Ten colors of suede and 20 wood veneers are available for the playing surface. A protective cloth carrying case can be made for the folding boards.

Prices from \$200. Let your imagination loose. They build to suit. Send a description of your dream set (club inquiries welcome) to: Irving Kellman, Boards Unlimited, P.O. Box 6179, Mpls., MN 55406.

DRUMMER



Gambling Times' editor, Len Miller, has backgammon fever. Last seen wandering, dazed at the \$30,000 added in Puerto Rico: "Does this go on all the time?" For \$24 a year: *Gambling Times*, 1018 North Cole, Los Angeles, CA 90038. Regular backgammon column by Ted Barr, who recently syndicated his weekly gammon column in the *Seattle Times*.

Speaking of *Games* . . . it covers the full spectrum of competitive games (including backgammon columns by Prince Joli Kansil), puzzles and endless word frustrations. For subscription information write: Games Magazine, 515 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022.

Hardy egotists who do their Sunday crossword puzzles with a pen should visit the giant size puzzles and games at *The Maze*. Write to Barbara Rusk, The Maze, P.O. Box 111, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Twelve monthly 16-page poop sheets for \$6. Called *Freebies Magazine* (P.O. box 5605, Santa Monica, CA 90405), they list all types of *free stuff*, including government gas lottery pamphlets, instructions on reading flood insurance rate maps, etc.

When each airline gives you a different story about FAA regulations . . . send for the free *Air Traveler's Fly Rights*, available through the Civil Aeronautics Board's Consumer Information Center, Dept 69-IG, Sec. WD, Pueblo, CO 81009.

An endless inventory of unique badges, or the equipment to make your own. Get an entertaining catalog from: *Badge-A-Mint, Ltd.*, Box 618, Civic Industrial Park, LaSalle, Illinois 61301.

A "How To" booklet — playing backgammon by mail. It will come to you by mail, if . . . you send \$1 to: Hexagon Fun Co., Inc., Box 544, Grand Blanc, MI 48439.

Games Magazine reviewed a "must" for all you avid games players, and backgammon tournament travelers with time to fill. *Super-Colossal Book of Puzzles, Tricks & Games*, by Sheila Anne Barry (Sterling Publishing Co., 1978, 640 pages, hard-cover, \$14.95).

Unattached tournament travelers may be interested in the entries at the annual *Ugly Dog Competition*. Event details from P.O. Box 631, Petaluma, CA 94952.

MATTEL ELECTRONICS INTELLIVISION is a computer-based system for games, entertainment, education and personal information processing!

A 16-bit microprocessor delivers simulated sound effects, three-part musical harmony and high level resolution. Master component (115 volts, 60 cycles AC, 20 watt) with two hand-held controllers, NFL Football cartridge, general instructions and two playbooks also included.

American Backgammon Players Association Backgammon — Computer's your opponent! Different levels of play depending on skill. Move pieces as in board backgammon, dice fall at random. Computer counts the pips!

Roulette & Slots!

Baseball

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The Electric Company Math Fun

Gammonmaster II, is the grandfather of **OMAR**. **OMAR** is the latest development in computerized backgammon introduced by Tryom, Inc.

OMAR automatically adjusts its style of play from offense to defense while it "learns" the playing style of its opponent.

OMAR has been programmed to recognize and defend itself against all the strategies of the game: it understands the new backgammon concepts. The electronic doubling cube adds another dimension.

OMAR I teaches the novice the technique of the game, **OMAR II** competes evenly with advanced players, **OMAR III** "will beat you in style or lose with incredible grace!"



THE INTERME

CUBE BY TED BARR

This section is specifically designed to provide the early players with a strong base capable of supporting understanding and use of the less obvious concepts.

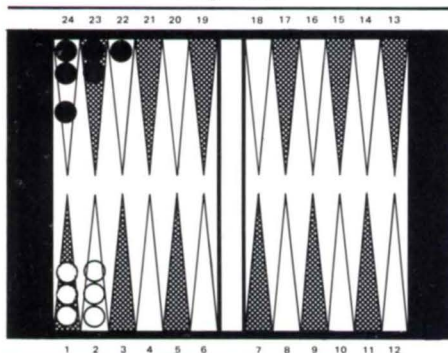
So many new players have questions regarding the cube I am devoting this column to the considerations essential to cube strategy.

In my opinion the cube must always be used when playing backgammon. Whether you play for money, points or "who does the dishes," the cube maximizes the excitement, eliminates the cat-and-mouse aspects and heightens the skill level for effective strategies. If your mistakes are costly, it is not likely you will repeat those same mistakes often.

Knowing when to accept or decline a double is the essential measure of skill among backgammon players. Some players' theory of doubling is to accept the cube only when you are the favorite, and to offer it only when you are winning the game. Anyone who believes this theory is naive, and must consider a number of factors when determining how to handle the doubling cube.

Generally, in the early to middle stage of the game, you should have a three-roll lead before considering a double. Your opponent, by the same token, should also have a three-roll lead before offering the cube to you. If he does not, you probably should accept.

Diagram #1



Should White Double?

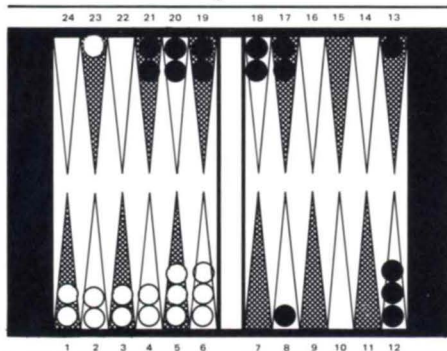
At a late stage of the game a one-roll lead can be sufficient to double. With few rolls left there is less likelihood of a reverse in position. In Diagram #1 White has a half-roll lead, and it is his turn to roll. Should he double? Absolutely!

It is late in the game. A half-roll lead is commanding since Black must roll doubles on one of his next two rolls to win. If White fails to double here, he gives Black the *free* opportunity to roll doubles. Furthermore, Black may only have one more roll if White rolls doubles.

White should use the cube to force Black out of the game and eliminate the possibility of his getting lucky. Black should decline, since to double the stakes in the hope of a long shot (rolling doubles) would be ridiculous.

Another factor which bears consideration in doubling is your position on the board, which is just as significant as your lead in the race. A substantial lead in the race will not win if, as a result of your board position, your lead dissipates.

Diagram #2



Should White Double?

Diagram #2 illustrates the importance of analyzing your position on the board. Here White holds a commanding five-roll lead, but should he double?

Although White has an adequate

lead, his concern at this point is escaping. If he does not escape within the next three turns he will most likely lose the game.

As Black brings more of his men around, he will have the additional builders to put White on the bar and close his home board. Even if Black fails to hit, failure to escape will result in the dissipation of White's own home board, with three negative effects.

First, until his runner escapes, any large numbers rolled by White will be wasted. This is like taking away a portion of his turns.

Second, if White should hit Black later in the game, White will not be able to contain him long enough to escape, since his home board will be virtually wide open.

Third, if White *does* hit Black, it may result in White's having a man hit when Black re-enters from the bar.

Remember, when determining whether or not to give your opponent the cube, it is critical that you be aware of your position on the board as well as your lead in the race.

Another factor to consider is the position of the cube. By position I do not mean whether the cube is on 2 or 8 or whatever. I mean who owns it. Possession of the cube is most significant because whoever owns it controls the stakes or points for which the game is being played.

When the game begins, either player may double his opponent. Since you may double *or* be doubled, you are not giving up exclusive access to the doubling cube.

However, when the cube is in your possession (by virtue of an earlier double by your opponent) you must be more conservative about doubling as you are also giving up the *exclusive* control of the cube.

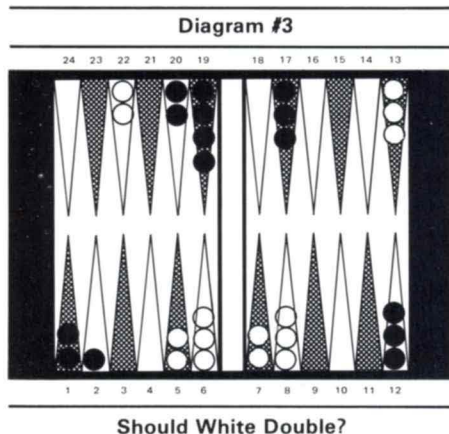
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EVERYTHING IS A TAKE

By "Jersey" Jim Pasko

I recently read an article that stated, contrary to common belief, 25% is not the minimum necessary chance to win that justifies taking a double (in no-gammon positions). The article demonstrated that, in at least one case, a 20% chance of winning was sufficient to justify accepting the double.

The following example shows the minimum acceptable chance of winning (and to justify a take), is actually 18.75%! Suppose a particular game has developed into a race and Black doubles. Furthermore, suppose White has some way of determining that he can reach the following position 25% of the time, and lose 75%.



An example of this distinction can be seen in Diagram #3. White has an advantage in the game. Should he double?

Yes, if the cube is neutral (in the middle). He does not own it, and therefore, by doubling is not giving up exclusive control of it. But, if White does own it (it is on his side of the board) he should *not* double. He has only a slight advantage and giving up exclusive control of the cube is not yet justified.

Exclusive control of the cube is valuable. Guard it zealously by not making a loose double. If you possess the cube and the game goes well, you can increase your wealth or point position in the match by doubling. If the game turns sour, you can play it out, at no additional premium, and hope your opponent makes a mistake or that the dice turn your way. To have these options you must own the cube.

Finally, when dealing with the cube, consider your opponent's attitude. If he is leery of the cube and tends to turn down your doubles when you have only a slight advantage, by all means double him, force him out when your advantage is very slight.

If on the other hand, your opponent is stubborn and finds it difficult to

decline your doubles, you can afford to wait until you have a commanding lead before doubling. He will still accept. So make sure you want him to accept before offering the cube.

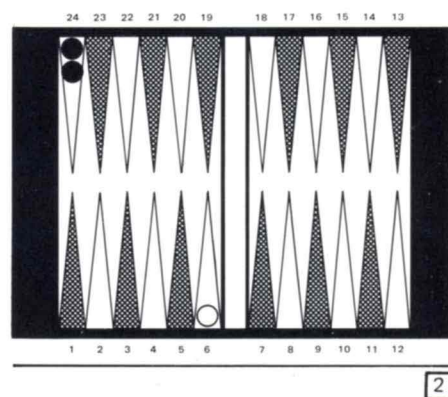
Observing certain characteristics in your opponent's game can give you a tremendous edge. Nearly all games of skill reward the player who observes his opponent's behavior. In poker you analyze your opponent's betting habits. In bridge, you should consider your opponent's bidding ability. In golf, you look for the weakness in your opponent's game, be it putting, stamina or whatever. In backgammon, the player who observes his opponent's doubling habits or even his game turns sour, you can play it out, at no additional premium, and hope your routine strategy moves has a marked advantage over the player who just plays his own game, oblivious to the playing patterns of his opponents.

Until you have taken all of these factors into consideration, you are not totally prepared to accept or decline, offer or withhold the doubling cube. If, however, you weigh these factors carefully, your doubling cube play will most likely be more effective than your opponent's.

Remember, the experts use the doubling cube so effectively that even if they forfeit three games out of four, they make it all back — and then some — in the few games they win.

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"To slot is human, to cover is divine; but to point on his blot is a real winner."



Now, since there is no equity gained or lost by Black in either accepting or declining the recube, then let us assume he takes. It should be easy to see that after the original acceptance, White will win 25% of the games. Multiply this 25% by his chance of winning after Black accepts the redouble, or 25% x 75%. Therefore, in this original position, White has a legitimate take, even though his winning chance is only 18.75%.

It is fairly simple to prove that (in no-gammon positions) this is the minimum winning chance to justify a take (steaming is not a justifiable reason).

There are certain, one-way gammon positions in which a smaller winning percentage allows an acceptance of the cube. In fact, if every win were to lead to a backgammon for the person accepting the cube and all his losses were single games, then a 12.5% chance of winning would be the minimum. My God, is everything a take?!

No, of course not. The gammon chances on either side influence the drop/take decisions a great deal. However, there are many positions that appear to be very bad, which in fact are actually good takes.

THE MAN IN THE BOX

by Dennis Stone



We rejoin the chouette,
as the man in the box
is playing his forced 6-5.

And now, Part II

Feeding Time

Arthur the Expert, the Mathematician, Superstitious Paul, Baby Mason and Compulsive Kal were sharks to the point that one half expected, at any moment, fins to rip through the backs of their shirts. These five saw that the man in the box was treading water and they were ready to go for the throat, by way of the toes.

Compulsive Kal attacked first. "Let's turn it back on the bastard." It was no time to be polite. Only moments before, Kal had beavered to the 128 level. He had his own cube now, and he was itching to turn it.

"Jesus! Will you wait a minute! Will you wait a minute, Kal! It's up to Arthur!" Baby Mason, whose nervous system had been swinging wildly back and forth over the course of the last six cube turns and whose eyes only seconds ago had been filled with tears from the pressure, was trying to get hold of himself. He was not having much success.

The kibitzers were flapping like diseased pelicans, making dull wet sounds down deep in their throats. They had little sympathy for the man in the box's predicament. For that matter, they would have had little sympathy for the other five had the situation been reversed. They never rooted *for*, only *against*. Black hearts all.

The Mathematician sat computing, numbers surging between the neatly arranged cells in his antiseptic brain. He was trying to arrive at a settlement before anybody did anything drastic. He didn't need his degree in math to tell him that his bank balance was not equal to or greater than the amount they might all soon be wagering on this game. He was relieved to find that the man in the box didn't have a take. A clear pass! Thank God! As he filed this information in his memory bank, the Mathematician calmly announced: "Kal's right. Let's double."

"Jesus! Can't we talk! Can't we talk a settlement?" Baby Mason was still on edge.

The man in the box made his presence felt. "You forget, gentlemen, I've said it before, and I'll say it again, I never settle." He did not, however, say it with the same confidence of a few moments ago when his game was infinitely better.

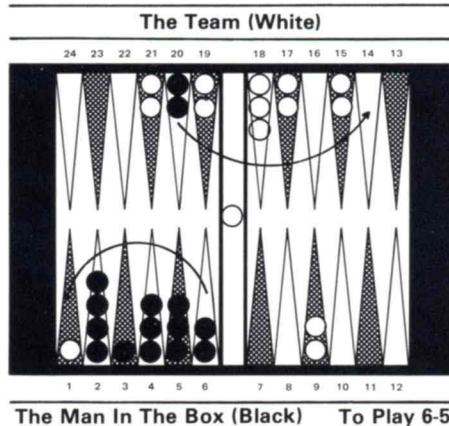
Superstitious Paul, who had wanted a dice change earlier and hadn't gotten it, still couldn't believe their recent good luck. It all seemed too good. Like a trap. Superstitious Paul knew one thing above all, that when you get up to stakes you can't afford, terrible things usually happen. He looked at the man in the box, who was not looming quite as large as before but who was still puffing on his cigar. Of course, it didn't look so much like a weapon now as it did a security blanket. Superstitious Paul felt better. He turned to Arthur and nodded his approval of the double.

Baby Mason saw this. "Aw, come on!"

Arthur the Expert hadn't been doing anything for some time. He had been taking everything in. He didn't need to compute settlements or analyze positions. He knew them by heart. Years of experience. He had known the moment the man in the box's dice had spilled out of his cup and lay there limp that they had a double. He even knew the man in the box had a clear pass. And he knew one more thing, the most

important of all, the man in the box was *not* going to pass.

"Somehow," Arthur thought, "this twenty-five dollar a point chouette had gotten out of hand."



One of the pelicans whispered, "I'd never double in a position where the cube can come right back the next shake and I won't be able to take."

Kal heard him. He shot the kibitzer a look that had stuffed pelican written all over it. The kibitzer immediately fell silent, trying to combine a look of innocence and apology. It made him appear ridiculous. Just the same, this was no time to get barred.

Still fuming, Kal returned to the fray. "Well, are we going to double or not?" His question was directed at Arthur. It was almost a demand.

Arthur, ever the psychologist and more from habit, it seemed, than anything else, returned, "I think we should wait."

This was usually a ploy to lure the sucker into a false sense of security and then a take after the other members of the chouette "convinced" Arthur that he was being slightly conservative and should double in spite of himself. However, in this instance, the comment did nothing more than relax three very nervous partners, one very nervous opponent...and infuriate Kal.

Kal seemed to leap from his seat without moving, "Damn you, Arthur." It was becoming apparent that Kal didn't like playing games at the 128 level.

Arthur's eyes twinkled. He seemed amused. He liked to keep a sense of the ironical. He replied, "I'm not sure we have a double."

Kal hated Arthur's little psychological tricks. He wanted to take his 128 cube and grind it into Arthur's head. But it wasn't in the rules. Backgammon was, after all, a

gentleman's game. There was only one thing left for Kal to do.

He looked at Arthur and said, "I'll buy you out. I'll give you half the cube to take over your game."

Arthur said simply, "No."

Kal erupted, "If you don't want to double and you don't want half the cube, what *do* you want? You certainly don't want to go for the gammon."

Arthur answered, "I think it's worth more than half the cube."

It didn't make sense to Kal. He knew it was a clear double *and* a clear pass. What stupid game was Arthur playing at? Why didn't he just double and get it over with?

Of course, the man in the box was enjoying this quibbling among his adversaries. He was even regaining some of his composure. "Are you going to double or not, gentlemen? Make up your minds. We haven't got all evening."

Kal didn't like the patronizing way the man in the box had said it. He wasn't liking many things at the moment. He shot back fiercely, "We're going to double."

Arthur stopped him. "I don't think so."

Kal couldn't take it any more. Something snapped. There was only one thing left for him to do, and it seemed to him completely logical. And perhaps it was. He would buy out Arthur's game at the price of the cube. Then Kal would be captain and be able to double. If the man in the box rejected, fine; Kal would break even on his deal with Arthur. But, if the man in the box took...well, he wouldn't...but if he did, Kal's equity would be even higher than the 64 he had paid. Of course, equity wasn't the same as pocketing the cash.

Kal turned to Arthur and said, "All right, you idiot, I'll buy you out for the price of the cube."

Arthur smiled that smile of his, stood up, handed Kal the dice and said, "I accept."

All of a sudden it became clear to everyone what Arthur had been up to. And it made sense. Arthur always made sense. Arthur found that if you can't play your opponent, you can play your partner. It had been time to get out of the market with a profit.

"What about us?" Baby Mason whined at Kal. "What if we don't go along? What if we don't want you playing the pieces for us?"

THE HUSTLE

"THE GREAT PRIME PROBLEMS"

BY BILL DAVIS

Kal's entire body percolated. He could play circles around Arthur and Baby Mason knew it.

"And what's more important," added Superstitious Paul, "what if we don't want you rolling for us?" Superstitious Paul knew that Kal was the only player in the world whose board would crash because he couldn't leap a one-prime in three shakes.

The Mathematician piled on the final straw. "He's right, Kal, if we don't want to go along..."

"Then I'll buy you all out!" Kal had stopped acting rationally. He only had contempt for such cowards — *let 'em run if they want.*

The three cowards leapt at the opportunity.

The transactions were made after Kal had convinced the man in the box that he could cover should he lose. Some people thought Kal must have a backer. They wondered whether the backer would approve of Kal's action. They thought not. In either event, everyone was aware that Kal was about to risk his last cent in the world on this game. Even the pelicans became quiet.

Kal eased his way down into the chair opposite the man in the box. *Already* he felt more comfortable.

Kal wasted no time. He took hold of the 64 cube with his right hand and the 128 cube with his left, and without ceremony turned them upside down and slid them across the table toward the man in the box. Nineteen, maybe thirty-eight thousand dollars worth of cube.

There was no reaction from the man in the box. None that anyone could see. Just the same, his lips cut into his cigar. This was getting to be money. Even for him.

He weighed his choices. He could get out now for ninety-six hundred dollars, and lose face — or give up a few thousand in equity, risk a great deal more, and go for the power and the glory. It wasn't close. He reached for the two cubes...tempted for one frenzied moment to make the grand gesture by beaver-ing the one at the 256 level...resisted, took hold of them...and pulled them in. "Take! It's your roll."

Deep down Kal knew all along that the man in the box was going to take. Deep down he had hoped for it. It was part of Kal's nature. It was down to just the two of them now, the man in the box and Compulsive Kal. Kal liked where he

was. Center arena.

Kal reached for his dice cup. How many times in his life had he put every last cent he had in the world on a gamble such as this — he didn't want to remember. He had always gone in with the best of it and always...always...come out with the worst. He thought maybe, maybe just once, just once the gods would be on his side. Just once.

Aces, threes, sixes. Just once. Aces, threes, and sixes. One would be great. Two would be perfect. Just once.

Kal rattled the dice around in his cup. Parts of his life flashed before his eyes. All the times he had been here before and come away empty. Just once.

He spilled the dice out onto the table...just once...they rolled...just once...and stopped...just once...flat on the table...once...

Kal stared down at the dice. Stared hard. Blinkered. And stared again. He couldn't believe what he saw. Double 3's. *Double 3's! Perfection.* The first time in his life. The very first time. There was justice after all. There was a God. He reached for his checkers...at which point the man in the box stopped him.

"I'm sorry," said the man in the box, pointing to another pair of dice on the board, "but as you can see, I haven't as yet picked up my dice. You'll have to roll again."



The climax of each Friday evening Coastal Backgammon Club meeting is the late night money match between The Man and The Kid. There are always three principle character elements in this high stakes contest.

The Man is a dapper gentleman of nearly sixty years, possessing a methodical yet creative style of play. Outwardly he appears unconcerned with whether he wins or loses. To him, the game is a mental exercise used to benefit his problem-solving capabilities.

The Kid is a smart, young newcomer to the game with a rocket-like manner of play. His success stems from an intense desire to defeat his opponent; however, there are times when this strong desire gets in his way.

The spectators make up the third element of the match, adding electricity to the air. To them, the confrontation is more than just a money game — it's a battle of wits.

On this particular Friday night the net match score remained very close. After two hours of intense play, The Man had his young rival by only eight points. The next game made the contest a monetary stalemate as The Kid bagged a redoubled gammon.

Five minutes later the crowd of onlookers had doubled, while strangely enough, neither player had thrown his dice. One of the regular spectators wandered over to the front table, where the Club Director was seated.

"I'm not sure, but I think The Old Man is hustling The Kid again."

"What's happening this time?" questioned the Director.

"Just as they had completed the setup for a new game, The Man made an unusually challenging statement. He said that from the opening position, given four legal moves in a row, he could trap the Kid's back men behind a six point prime."

The Director looked puzzled. "Let me see if I've got this straight. From the normal opening position, The Man will have any four legal moves of his choice — doubles included — with which to build a six point prime. I assume the Kid's pieces don't move."

"Correct," replied the spectator.

The Director walked over to a board and set up the starting position. Within a minute he had built the required

prime. (Ed: Try it yourself before reading the following description.)

"Here's a very simple sequence that does the trick." The Director began moving the pieces: "Make the bar and the five point with double 1's; grab the four point with a 4-2; bring two men down to the eight and the nine point with a 5-4; and complete the prime with another 5-4 to cover both blots. It's simple! I'm sure there are other ways to do it. Don't tell me The Kid missed this!"

"No, he found that line all right," responded the spectator, "but then The Man brought money into the picture; he bet The Kid that he could build a prime—a 'great prime'—he called it in only *three* moves...and that it would overlay his two point through bar point."

Again, the Director set up the board and began sliding the pieces into a variety of positions. After five minutes of fruitless effort, he sat back.

"The prime is just too deep into my home board to be built with only three moves. I say it's impossible."

Suddenly from across the floor, The Kid pounded his fist on the table, stood up, threw a couple of large bills toward The Man and steamed out of the room.

"I guess The Kid said the same thing," smirked the spectator.

The problem is to construct the previously defined "great prime" in only three moves.

(Ed: No one in the office could construct the "great prime" within 30 minutes. For the solution, see page 51.)

When one of the Real Estate trade papers listed his new GAMMON SHOP location, Ray Terkowsky decided to give free dice away with every purchase as a promotional gimmick. He told his staff to give the first customer one die plus one eleventh of the remainder of his dice supply; the second was to get two, plus one eleventh of the remainder; the third, three plus one eleventh; and so on.

Eventually, a guy looking for a wheat germ soda wandered into the store. He was the tenth body to benefit from the Great Dice Giveaway. They gave him ten dice, plus one eleventh of the remainder, at which point, they were out of dice.

If you can't figure out how many dice were on hand when the promotion started, drop by the new GAMMON SHOP at 541 Lexington Avenue in New York City and see if Ray has figured it out yet. (Or see page 51.)



"Someone get Barclay! I want a ruling."

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by Bill Robertie

Three nightmare numbers in a row, and now Villa is playing for the gammon. Right now he has about a 40% chance of getting it.

17. (6-4) 23/17 18/14
18. (2-1) 14/11
19. (3-3) 16/10 11/8 17/14
20. (3-3) 10/4 14/5 !

Black played *five* 3's.

21. (5-4) 8/4 5/off
22. (3-3) 6/off(2) -0-
23. (5-3) 5/off 5/2 -0-
24. (4-2) 4/off 4/2 (5-1) Bar/5
25. (6-5) 4/off(2) (6-3) Bar/9
26. (6-5) 3/off(2) (5-4) 5/14
27. (4-3) 2/off(2) (6-2) 9/15 14/16
28. (4-1) 2/off 1/off (2-1)

Villa wins a gammon

Villa thus surged back into contention, trailing now only 21-17. With another gammon in the 23rd game, Villa finally took the lead at 22-21, only to have Westheimer tie the match at 22-all, reducing the World Championship to a best-of-three series.

Game Number 25

1. ... (4-3) 12/16 12/15
2. (5-2) 13/8 13/11 (6-1) 12/18 17/18
3. (4-3) 13/9 8/5 (6-1) 1/7 15/16
4. (5-2) 9/7x 6/1x

A poor throw. This way of playing gives Black the best chance to make the 5 point.

4. ... (3-2) Bar/2 Bar/3
5. (6-5) 11/5 7/2x

White Doubles — Black Accepts

In a three-point match, a player with a slight advantage should double quickly. The player being doubled should also be quick to drop. Owning the 5 point, I think Villa is correct to take.

5. ... (5-2) Bar/2x/7
6. (5-3) Bar/20 6/3x (3-3) Bar/3x
17/20(2)x
12/15 !

12/15 is better than 7/10. With two men on the bar, White should throw all his efforts into creating builders.

7. (4-2) Bar/21 (3-1) 12/15 3/4 ?
Bar/23

The play 3/4 is strange. 19/20 is much more natural.

8. (4-1) 8/7x 8/4x !

Unable to make an anchor, Black correctly tries to go forward.

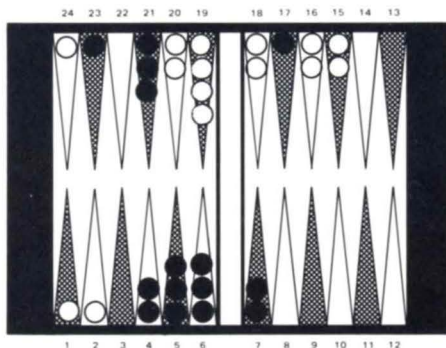
8. ... -0-
9. (3-1) 7/4 23/22

This play of the 1 doesn't accomplish much. I prefer 8/7, slotting the bar to make a 4-point prime as soon as possible.

9. ... (6-1) Bar/1x
10. (4-1) Bar/21
13/12 !

Good. Black splits in the outfield to try to make the bar or the 8 point.

10. ... (5-2) Bar/7
11. (4-1) 12/7x -0-
12. (3-3) 13/7 8/5 (5-2) Bar/2 19/24x
24/21
13. (5-2) Bar/23
22/17



(4-3) 19/23x
19/22 ?

White's position has become very fragile, and trying to hold all five points in front of Black is a vain hope. He should play 15/8 15/19. This leaves him with four spare checkers, and the ability to hold his remaining position for several turns.

14. (3-2) Bar/23x 17/14

Hitting two men was also reasonable, but I prefer this play. Black keeps the builder on the 5 point for making the 3 point.

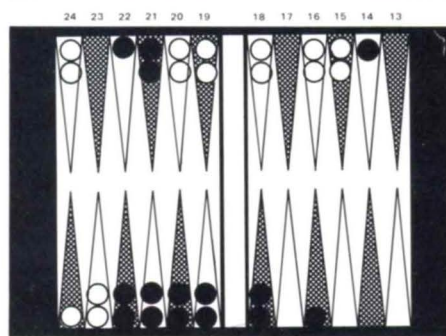
14. ... (6-1) Bar/1 2/8
15. (5-2) 14/9 6/4

There was nothing wrong with simply 14/7.

15. ... (4-3) 8/15
16. (4-3) 21/14 (4-1) 15/19 1/2 !

White is correct to give up the anchor. He desperately needs escape numbers for his back checkers, or his front position will start to crumble.

17. (1-1) 23/22x (5-2) Bar/23 6/1
5/3 4/3



Final position

Black Redoubles — White Passes (?)

White's position is about to fall apart. Black has no bad rolls this turn and should take a roll to try for the gammon that could decide the match.

The final game proved anticlimactic. Villa quickly built an overwhelming advantage and cruised home to win the title 25-22.

MONTE CARLO, JULY 9 - 15, 1979

RESULTS

Championship —

- 1st: Luigi Villa (Italy)
2nd: Geoffrey Westheimer (New York)
Semis: Karl Laubmeier (Germany)
F. El-Zanaty (Egypt)

First Consolation —

- 1st: Alan Martin (Los Angeles)
2nd: H. Michaelides (Greece)
Semis: J. Maas
Aram Kouleyan (Los Angeles)

Second Consolation —

- 1st: Hugh Sconyers (Los Angeles)
2nd: David Winn (Houston)
Semis: Lee Genud (New York)
F. Gorgone

Last Chance —

- 1st: J. Daglas
2nd: Nouri Pakzad (Iran)

Intermediate —

- 1st: Hilda Lee (Los Angeles)
2nd: T. Hey
Semis: N. Coral (London)

First Consolation —

- 1st: Philippe Narboni (Switzerland)
2nd: Roger Dionne (Los Angeles)
Semis: Lutfu Basaran (Turkey)
A. Azaria

Second Consolation —

- 1st: J. Los Arcos
2nd: Wolfgang Passman (Germany)
Semis: Simi Lee (Los Angeles)
Joel Rettew, Jr. (Los Angeles)

Beginner —

- 1st: C. E. Dime
2nd: J. Ruscher
Semis: S. Yefet / E. Sosin

First Consolation —

- 1st: R. Bushman
2nd: C. Peroni
Semis: S. Bernstein / De Pedraza

Second Consolation —

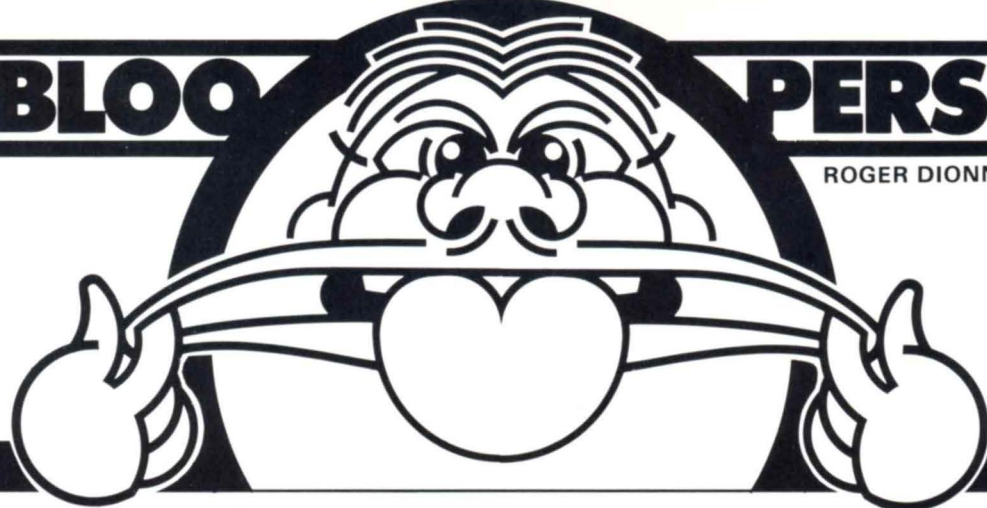
- 1st: Dr. Coplans
2nd: N. Achkar
Semis: D. Semmig / Prosslinger

Last Chance —

- 1st: Max King (U.S.)
2nd: Sylvia Lapiere (France)

BLOO**PERS**

ROGER DIONNE



Remembering all those nights horrible dice betrayed you is bad enough. Even worse though, is remembering nights when however much you strained logic, you could find no way to blame the dice. Nights, when for example, leading 5-1 in a 7-point match, you took an untakable double and proceeded to get backgammoned. To the legions of us haunted by such memories it's heartening to know top world-class players have committed their share of bloopers too.

"I can remember lots of them," 76-year-old Oswald Jacoby assured me. "Which one do you want?" The play that came instantly to mind to the man who is legendary for his lightning-fast pip counts occurred in a money game at The Pawn Shop* in Dallas. Jacoby redoubled to 4 only to discover he had miscounted the board by 20 pips. Instead of being 10 ahead, he was 10 behind.

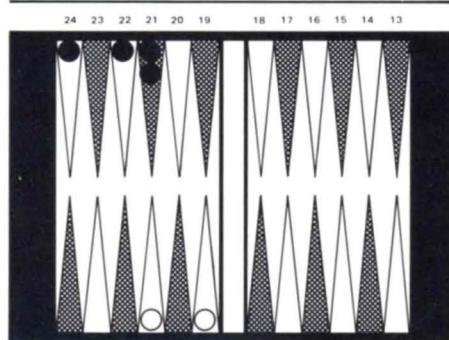
"My God, I'm nuts!" Jacoby cried as his opponent snapped up the cube.

But the dice gods were kind to the old warrior who had done battle with them for more than half a century. Jacoby tipped his cup, and bang — out came double 6's. He was now 14 pips ahead. A few rolls later he won the game.

The dice gods were not so kind to Kate Wright, one of the top women players on the circuit, when she made a critical error bearing off in a tournament game last spring in Florida.

Wright (White) rolled a 5-2. The correct play, of course, is to move 6-1 and 4-2, assuring a victory if Black fails to roll double 4's, 5's or 6's. In her haste to bear men off, she moved 6-4 and off! Black rolled a 4-3 and bore men off the 21 and 22 points. Kate was still a 17 to 1 favorite to win the game, but you guessed it — she rolled a 2-1, her only

bad roll. After she moved her lonely checker sadly to her 1 point, Black blithely doubled and she was forced to pass.

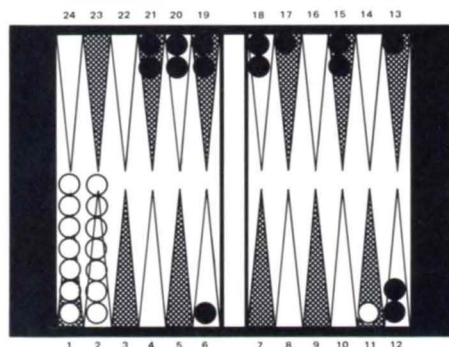


Kate Wright

"It's psychologically very difficult to remember your bad plays," says Norman Zadeh of Marina del Rey. "Strangely enough I can't remember any play I've made that was a total butcher — though I'm sure I've made some."

Zadeh does remember watching the late Walter Cooke, one of the great modern players, make a costly mistake against Paul Magriel at the Mayfair Club in New York back in 1971.

Paul Magriel



Walter Cooke

Cooke (White) rolled a 5-1. Instead of moving 11-10-5, after which only something close to a miracle would

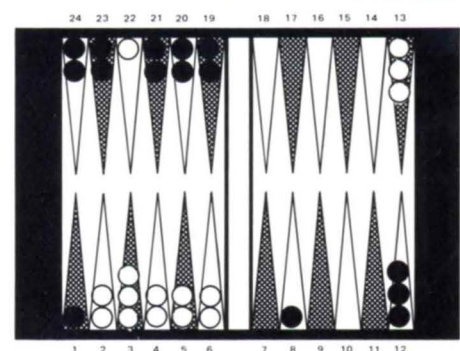
prevent him from winning the \$100-a-point game, Cooke inexplicably hit Magriel's blot on the 6-point and continued to the 5-point. Magriel conspired with the dice to roll double 5's, hitting Cooke's blot and winning the game handily.

Barclay Cooke, Walter's father, agrees it is psychologically hard to remember your bad plays. Yet he recalls one that he says, "is brilliant it's so terrible." It occurred in the first game of the well-known 40-game duplicate match Barclay and his son played in England in 1973 against Joe Dwek and Philip Martyn.

"It was the most pressure-filled match I've ever been in," Barclay says. "It just shows what pressure will do to anybody."

Barclay had just rolled a 6-3 to clear one of his back men from Dwek's 3-point to his own midpoint. Dwek made his move and as Cooke (White) was about to roll, here was the position:

Dwek & Martyn



Barclay Cooke

"My psychology was this," Cooke explains. "I'm thinking, 'Just give me a 9 because I want to get the other guy cleared'."

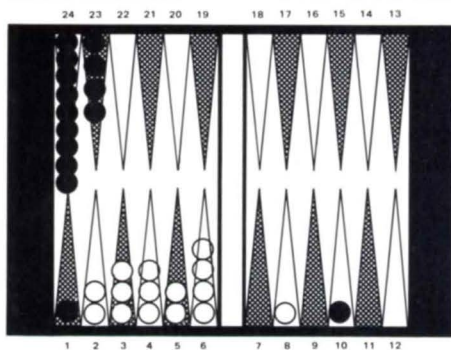
(*Ed: Although it was the gathering spot for big names and big games, the Pawn Shop has recently been converted into a Country Western Disco.)

He got his nine: 5-4.

"I didn't even hit Dwek on the 8 point!" Cooke exclaims. "I just cleared the second man. I mean it's the most incredible thing in the world because if I hit him, the game's over no matter what he rolls. Even if he comes in and establishes, he can't take a double from me."

Happily for the Cookes, Barclay still won that first game, and he and his son eventually won the long match against the best Great Britain had to offer, with a net score of plus 9.

New Yorker Lili Gross was not so fortunate, when she too refused to hit in the 1978 European Championships in Monte Carlo. Both she and her opponent were at match point, and Lili (White) looked to be in very fine shape when she rolled a 6-1 in the following position.



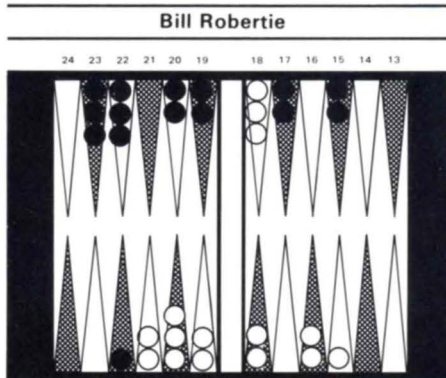
Lili Gross to Play 6-1

Instead of making the killer move from her 8 point to hit Black's blot on the 1 point, Lili played "safe" by moving 8-2, 6-5.

"Of course, my opponent proceeded to roll double 6's and made me look very silly for not hitting. He won the race and the match."

1978 World Champion, Paul Magriel, offers as one of his worst plays a some-

what more complicated position in his Super Sixteen match against Boston expert Bill Robertie when, like Lili Gross, he didn't hit when he should have.



Paul Magriel

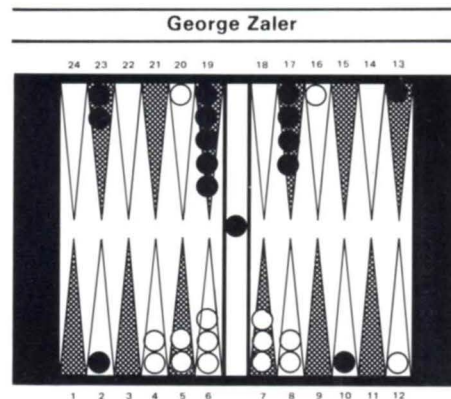
Magriel (White) rolled 6-4. Instead of making the correct play, 9-3 and 7-3, putting Robertie on the bar, Magriel untypically made the timid play of 18-14, 10-4, reducing Robertie's odds of hitting from 8 to 1 against, to 17 to 1.

"I simply blundered," Magriel says. "I allowed him potentially to escape big trouble. I'd have to go in after him anyway. I should have done it then."

Magriel nevertheless won the game, which put him ahead 6-1 in the first of five 7-point matches. But perhaps by some form of dicephelous justice, Robertie came back to win the match, 7-6, and went on to beat Magriel, 3 matches out of 4.

Another former World Champion, Billy Eisenberg, recalls his worst play as occurring in a match when he didn't make a play. On the bar against a 5-point board with the 4-point open, Eisenberg rolled a 6-4. Steaming and playing quickly, he picked up his dice, not realizing he could come in. His opponent jubilantly closed his board, gammoned Eisenberg and won the match.

The most dramatic blooper anyone has had the temerity to report occurred in the finals of the 1978 California Open when Hugh Sconyers instinctively hit all over the board when the correct play, in this instance, was not to hit. Sconyers was ahead 23-11 in the 25-point final. He owned the cube at 2 and reached this position:



Hugh Sconyers

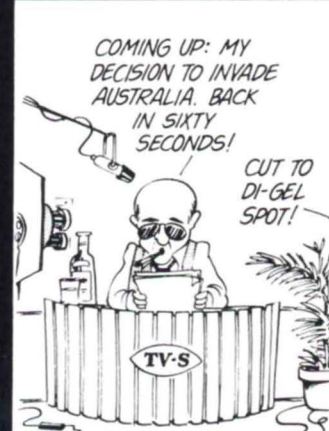
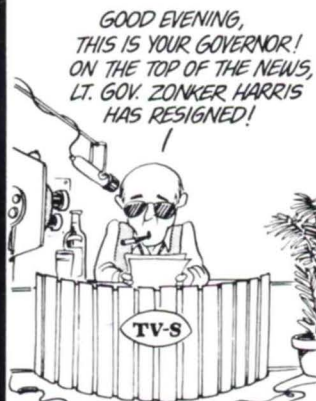
Sconyers (White) rolled double 3's. Since a gammon was irrelevant, Sconyers' correct play was 12-3, 6-3 to trap his opponent George Zaler's two back men behind a six point prime.

"That would have been gin," Sconyers exclaimed at the 1979 California Open a year later, still marveling at his error. "Instead I took out the vacuum cleaner and in less than a second hit everything in sight."

Sconyers moved from 16 to 13 to hit, then to 10 to hit again and finally came to rest on his 4 point. He appeared in little danger when he picked up his dice, but he paid long and painfully for his mistake. George Zaler also rolled double 3's, bringing his three men off the bar and using his fourth 3 to hit on the 20 point. Sconyers fanned twice, Zaler built up his board and eventually won a gammon. Sconyers remained ahead in the match, of course, 23-15, but, incredibly, from that mistake the match

DOONESBURY

by Gary Trudeau



Backgammon seems to bring together many of the warm and caring people. Having been among friends has marked me, for I am more now than I was before. Then this, the sharing and nothing less, is my regard.

Sidney D. Jackson

IN MEMORIAM

Cheryl Sonne

Fred Block

Susan R. Conrad

IN MEMORIAM

Susan R. Conrad

November 13, 1940 - April 14, 1979



NOW YOU ARE GONE

*With silent and quivered bravery
you left us.*

Take with you these things

Take with you your smile

Take with you our love

*But most of all take with you the joy
of the memories you leave behind...*

Now you are gone.

You will always be with us.

Christopher Conrad

ARE BIORHYTHMS THE COMPETITIVE EDGE?

By Patrick Gibson

We all have days when we can't win a match or survive in the box, no matter what moves we make. It could be because we're in a down or critical period of our biorhythmic cycles. *Biorhythmic cycles?*

Who wouldn't like to know their best days to take on that hopeless player who keeps beating them, or when your opponent is most likely to be at his worst? Biorhythms may be the answer.

Since first postulated in the early 20th Century, the theory of biorhythms has been gaining acceptance, most recently in the area of transportation safety. The high correlation between performance in sports and biorhythms has made newspaper headlines e.g., Super Bowls, the '76 Olympics, championship boxing and World Series games.

The theory states that, like many things in our universe, the human organism runs in cycles. From the moment of birth, we move in predictable undulations involving three separate cycles: a 23-day *physical* cycle that governs such factors as endurance, energy, coordination, and physiology; a 28-day *emotional* cycle that governs creativity, general mood, sensitivity, perceptions of the world and of ourselves; and a 33-day *intellectual* cycle that governs logic, memory, reasoning ability, alertness, and receptivity to knowledge. The first half of each cycle is an "up" period, the second half a "down" period. The up phases are peak performance periods when your system delivers maximum energy and functions optimally. The down phases are rest periods when your system operates at minimal levels while energy is being restored. The transition (critical) days, when an up period gives way to a down period or vice-versa, are variable and unpredictable, increasing your susceptibility to making poor judgments and mistakes. There can be from 3 to 7 critical days in any given month.

Since backgammon is suppose to be an intellectual game devoid of emotions, we might conclude that only the intellectual cycle of our biorhythms would influence our game. However, we all know individuals (excluding ourselves, of course) whose emotions get in the way of proper plays and decisions. In addition, many tournaments and chouettes turn into contests of endurance and stamina, thereby involving our physical cycles. Ergo, our backgammon performances should have components influenced by all three biorhythmic cycles.

So far the data shows no predictable effect on the big-name players — that is, they have done well on up, down and critical days in the same proportion as those days occur in any given period. Local players seem even less "predictable" — one does well when he's down physically and up emotionally and intellectually, while another does well when she's down or critical in all three. Some suggest that low points in cycles prove settling and beneficial.

To prove or disprove the theory, we need more data. You can help. Send us the following information on at least 3 events. In return we'll send you a personal 3-month computer-generated biorhythm chart with our compliments.

Name, Birthdate

(Year, Month, Day, Time, City, Country)

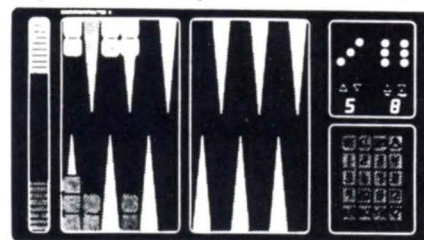
Event, Your Final Position and Size of Field

(Year, Month, Days, Name, City, Country)

Send a Self-Addressed, Stamped Envelope to:

Biorhythm Study
GAMMON Magazine
8126 Beverly Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90048

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Use your game board against this handheld version of The Doubler GM 202 featured above. Omar has the electronic doubling cube, score keeping, position and sound verification, AC/DC operation, 110V AC adapter, a 90 day limited warranty, and factory service. It also has LCD (liquid crystal display) for easier visibility in all lighting. In addition, it can operate on 4 AA batteries (not included) for traveling. Box 6 1/2" x 2 1/4" x 1 1/4". Approx. 2 lbs. \$69 plus \$3 for handling = \$72



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S K I L L L E V E L S

B Y G A B Y H O R O W I T Z
A N D D R. B R U C E R O M A N

LEVEL	CLASSIFICATION	PREDOMINANT CUBE BEHAVIOR
I	BEGINNER	TAKES ALMOST ALL CUBES
II	ADV. BEGINNER	PASSES ALMOST ALL CUBES
III (Low)	WEAK INTERMEDIATE	GUESSES ON MOST CUBE DECISIONS
III (Medium)	INTERMEDIATE	GUESSES ON MOST CUBE DECISIONS
III (High)	ADV. INTERMEDIATE	GUESSES ON MANY CUBE DECISIONS
IV	TOP PLAYER (WEAK CHAMPIONSHIP)	IN GENERAL MATHEMATICALLY CORRECT CUBE DECISIONS
V	EXPERT (CHAMPIONSHIP)	MATHEMATICALLY CORRECT CUBE DECISIONS
VI	MASTER	SUPERLATIVE CUBE HANDLING

The terms *top player*, *expert* and *master* are often loosely assigned to backgammon players with little regard to their true meaning.

It would be valuable and educational to have a classification system for the various skill levels of backgammon players. As no system has yet evolved, this article is intended to fill that void.

The doubling cube is a most difficult and most important aspect to master. We have used the cube as the principal determinant for classification, but have also described the emotional characteristics and checker movement inherent at each level.

LEVEL I — BEGINNER Takes Almost All Cubes

The Level I player neither fears nor respects the cube. His attitude when doubled is not unlike that of the naive child about to touch the hot stove, thinking, "Why not?" He regards the cube as a gambling toy.

Most beginners belong in this category, especially following a short explanation on "how to use the doubling cube."

The other large segment of Level I players is the Old School Runner. The Runner is so named because his one and only game plan is running. Here we find the immigrant from Eastern Europe or the Middle East, where the game has been played for generations *sans* cube.

This type of player is unshakably convinced that he knows *everything* there is to know about the game. He will seldom be bashful about informing one and all concerning the extent of his knowledge; "Of course, I play the game very well, it's a (*name-of-his-country*) game," or "In my country you are born with the game in

your mouth." Quite frankly, we have yet to hear a plausible explanation as to how the game can start at one end of the digestive system and migrate.

The Old School Runner looks with disdain upon the relatively relaxed pace at which the game is played in the West. In the "old country" backgammon is played very fast with maximal slamming of the checkers against a greasy wooden board. The speed at which the checkers are moved, rather than their final destination, seems to be the yardstick for determining superiority.

When first shown the cube, the Old School Runner will look at it wide-eyed. Nevertheless, following a brief explanation, he is confident that he has successfully assimilated this "trivia" and he is most anxious to prove how very simple this all is.

Since he is not accustomed to the cube, but is conditioned to playing each game to completion, he will simply accept *all* cubes proffered. Regardless of how lucky he is, he can't win since he either forgets to double or does so too late and frequently gets gammoned owning the cube.

He can be spotted by the following tactical indiscretions, which include, but by no means are limited to:

- 1) Making his 2 point with an early 6-4.
- 2) Running with an opening 4-5.
- 3) Establishing his 1 point early in the game.
- 4) Indiscriminately piling up men on his 6 point with 4-3's and 5-2's.
- 5) Rarely splitting his back men.
- 6) Never slotting in his inner board.

This segment of Level I players can "go for a telephone number" (lose a considerable amount of money). It is wise to substantiate his cash-on-hand and to establish a policy of paying up after each

game to avoid being stiffed.

When a Level I player is more than a few points behind in the score, he starts to double very early (hoping to get lucky). It is best to establish a set period of time to play (the longer the better) and elicit the agreement that the winner cannot quit before the designated time. This will protect you against the "hit-and-run" in which the player who is ahead quits after a couple of games.

For the professional hustler, the nurturing of an "onmiscient" Level I player can provide a regular source of income. Two very successful actions in accomplishing this are:

1) Consistently compliment him on his "fine plays." (It's much easier to control your laughter when you are talking than when you are silent.) This is especially effective when his friends or relatives are present.

2) When he looks around in bewilderment as if to say, "Why are the dice doing this to me?", lend him your shoulder to cry on.

Be very wary of the Level I player in tournament play. Extra caution with the cube is mandatory. He will *not* drop games that should be dropped, and if you have played more than two games of backgammon, you already know that *no* game is completely over until the last checker is removed. Therefore, he can take a bad cube, get lucky, and turn the game around. Most tournament matches are relatively short and an accident at a high cube can be very costly.

A Level I player can be very superstitious. It is not uncommon for him to ask you to change directions on the board, switch seats, dice cups and/or dice. Many times he will extend his hand in a congratulatory manner after you have gam-

moned him. He believes that by shaking hands, his bad luck will be passed to you and your good fortune to him.

This player has a tendency not to shake the dice correctly. He moves the cup in a horizontal direction, side by side, very slowly, rather than vertically.

Lastly, you will often find the all-knowing type of Level I player in the championship division in tournaments. It can be very disconcerting to fall victim to him, but remember, you can always play him for money later!

After a period of time, usually highlighted by substantial monetary outflow, the Level I player realizes something is wrong. He decides to change his handling of the cube.

Reasoning that taking all these doubles was the cause of his consistent losses, he begins to exhibit the classic symptoms of chronic "cube fear." He now passes whenever he is presented the cube. He has progressed to Level II.

LEVEL II — ADVANCED BEGINNER Passes Almost All Cubes

At Level II we find a slight improvement in the timing of his doubles, still late, but not as inaccurately. Most of the doubles he offers will be in racing positions since these are the easiest to understand. The propriety of the double will be determined visually, rather than a pip count, as he has little or no information on the mathematics of backgammon.

While capable of executing only simple gammons, he will be able to detect obvious positions in which he will be the one to get gammoned.

There is no improvement in the checker movement at this level. His play is overly defensive resulting in very inflexible positions. He can be observed killing checkers with utter abandon.

When a Level II player gets considerably behind in the score, he will drop down to Level I and begin doubling very early and taking all cubes.

Matched against a Level I or Level II player in a tournament, be prepared for a longer match in which high cubes (4 or more) rarely occur. You may congratulate him on his "fine pass" (or a clear take). This will encourage him to pass even more and increase the predictability of his mishandling the cube.

The Level II player will be successful against the Level I player because he will cash in on his good games, winning the maximum number of points (through use of the cube) which will more than compensate for the takes that he declines. *It is much less costly to pass takes than to take passes!*

Eventually the Level II player realizes that passing most doubles is not the panacea he had hoped for. He may be losing at a slower rate, but the basic direction of money flow has not been reversed.

A combination of Level I and Level II is subsequently attempted, i.e., taking and passing, with guessing being the common denominator.

LEVEL III (Low) — WEAK INTERMEDIATE Guesses On Most Cube Decisions

One of the first steps in learning is to realize that there is something that you don't know about the particular subject.

This is the level at which you see a dramatic improvement in checker movement and an earnest attempt to become more knowledgeable about the game. The Level III player reads books, magazine articles and attends seminars. Observing the games of the better player, he transforms into a "brain picker," asking questions whenever possible.

Encompassing a broad span Level III includes most players who participate in tournaments or play for several dollars per point.

The Level III player can detect a gammon possibility several rolls earlier. Working with builders and bearing off reasonably well, he is less fearful of leaving blots.

In his desire for information, the Level III player is less discriminating than prudent in accepting information. Players will volunteer information with little or no regard to the veracity of their statements. It can be said that many backgammon players are "often in error, but seldom in doubt."

Due to the meteoric rise in the popularity of backgammon in recent years, many self-styled backgammon "instructors" have appeared like mushrooms in a forest after the rain. They offer lessons at very low rates, but you get what you pay for. There are very few *qualified backgammon* instructors in the world and not one of them is inexpensive — "usually \$50 - \$200 per hour for a private lesson."

Since a player at this level does not have a set pattern of cube action, it can be very difficult to predict his reaction to a double. This makes the Level III the most treacherous of the six types.

It is at this level that the player will begin to achieve results — sometimes even winning a major tournament. One Level III, who won a prestigious event, proceeded to lose over \$100,000 in the year following his victory. Winning that event was the most destructive thing that could have happened to him as a backgammon player.

Most Level III players acquire sufficient knowledge of the game to enable them to lose more! Note that the person lacking the skill to swim is rarely found drowning in deep water.

When the roll of the dice is with the Level III player, he does reasonably well, but when losing for a short period of time, he will drop down to Level I.

Level III is also the level at which you will find the "dilettante-turned-pro," who forsakes his occupation for backgammon at his local club. Since he is inadequately prepared to win consistently, he soon finds himself in a financially inoperable situation. Having learned little from this experience, he saves his paycheck awaiting the day he can return. This is the cause of the curious phenomenon of players appearing, disappearing and reappearing at regular intervals.

If one is successful, and enters the ranks of Level IV, he then can be looked upon as a professional. If he fails he will persist for the period of time dictated by his opulence, roller-coastering in the "back to work — back to action" syndrome.

The Low to Medium Level III player soon realizes the need for some "angle" or "edge" when playing someone more skilled. This is expressed in two forms:

1) The request for a handicap, such as an opening 6-1, 3-1, possession of the cube, 6 to 5 odds, etc.

2) Learning several "can't lose" propositions and challenging the better players with them. It is very difficult to overcome a 6-1 spot against any Level III. Regardless of your desire to play, it's to the disadvantage of the skilled player to encourage this type of arrangement.

Due to the broad scope of Level III, it is divided into three sections: Low, Medium and High. Following are some of the characteristics and capabilities of each division.

Low Level III

1) First "daring" steps into taking again. He vividly remembers the many lost battles he suffered at Level I and therefore his "cube fear" is still quite strong.

2) Slow to double — slower to take.

3) Gross errors of judgment in determining priorities in contact positions.

4) Inadequate knowledge of holding and backgame strategy.

5) Plays most of the opening rolls correctly but poor in replying to the opening rolls.

6) Total inability to blend checker movement with cube action.

7) Timid attempt at duplication, usually incorrect.

Medium Level III

1) Exhibits mild "cube fear" — hesi-

tates more on taking than doubling.

2) Still guesses in most positions regarding the cube.

3) Consistently redoubles when his game is too good.

4) Makes numerous errors of judgment in determining priorities in contact positions and in replying to the opening rolls.

5) Has a rudimentary knowledge of the holding game.

6) Totally unable to blend checker movement with cube action.

7) Uses duplication frequently; often incorrectly.

High Level III

1) More stabilized cube action — mild hesitation on doubling or taking.

2) Doubles/redoubles earlier or later than ideal by one to three rolls.

3) Still redoubles when his game is too good, but with some reserve. Aware of the possibility of the gammon. Still guessing in regard to the degree of gammon possibility.

4) Beginning awareness of blending checker movement with cube action.

5) Increased knowledge of the holding game.

6) Majority of replies to the opening moves incorrect.

7) Duplication is the main defensive tactic. Too often tries to create duplication when unnecessary.

The Level III player will be successful against Level II players and *very* successful against Level I opponents.

LEVEL IV — TOP PLAYER

(Weak Championship)

In General, Mathematically Correct
Cube Decisions

At Level IV we find the skilled player who can determine his equity in most positions. He has a conceptual understanding of the replies to the opening rolls and responds correctly to the majority of them.

A Level IV player is very knowledgeable in holding and backgames, and in general, accurately determines priorities throughout a game. There is little guessing on cube decisions or checker movement. The trademark of this level is the technically correct move based wholly on mathematical analysis of the position at hand.

Cube fear has finally been overcome and the player at this level occasionally succumbs to "cube fever," i.e., he becomes overenthusiastic with the cube because of the confidence he has in his game. We find a somewhat improved ability to blend checker movement with cube action at Level IV.

It is at this level that we find the "equity chaser." He always attempts — and usually succeeds — in determining the

equity in a given position and proceeds with total disregard for the Opponent Factor. The Opponent Factor means considering the skill and emotional level of an opponent in conjunction with the technical considerations of the position you are analyzing. He reasons that if a position "requires" a double or a take, that by doing so one hundred percent of the time the law of averages will enable him eventually to come out ahead. A competent technician, the Level IV is able to win or break even when he is not rolling well by using his knowledge of the game to transform his poor rolls into good rolls.

A meaningful differentiation between money game strategy and tournament strategy occurs at this level.

The player at Level IV has "staying power." He has a comprehensive arsenal of backgammon arcana which enables him to survive the lucky streaks of his weaker opponents and subsequently to "grind them out."

However, should his opponent's luck persist to the point that it extends beyond his own tolerance level, he can go down to Level II or even Level I, trying to regain all he's lost by creating big swings.

A Level IV will collect top dollar for his "hot streaks" but will also pay top dollar for his opponent's "hot streaks." *This is the reason that most Level IV players do not prosper financially at backgammon.* As backgammon professionals they lead a Macawberish existence. Most of their large losses occur when they face Level III incompetents running on a hot streak.

The Level IV player fails to differentiate between "head up" strategy and chouette strategy. He lumps both of them together as money games.

A strong player (Level IV), experiences difficulty in obtaining opponents. Anxious for "action," he becomes the victim of the less skilled but shrewd Medium-to-High Level III player who requests handicaps or offers propositions in which the Level IV gets the worst of it. In effect, Level IV becomes Level III's pigeon. Many people use the term "pigeon" to signify a weak player. This is an incomplete definition. A pigeon is a player who, when things go poorly, will pay the maximum price for each lucky roll or game of his opponent.

The world of backgammon can be divided into two categories: donators and collectors. The donators are the pigeons regardless of their skill level. The history of backgammon is replete with stories of Level IV players losing substantially to players of lower caliber.

One of the most popular *private lessons* for the Level III player is "How to Prosper From the Encounter with a Level IV."

The results from this series of lessons show conclusively that an emotionally well-balanced Level III with several "gaps" in his game can be guided into consistently winning against the average Level IV player.

LEVEL V — Expert (Championship) Mathematically Correct Cube Decisions

It is at Level V that we find the backgammon expert. He does everything well and can be counted on to give a consistently solid performance at the table.

At this level we see an "awareness of the opponent" factor.

Although the expert rarely makes a technical error in checker movement, he does not ordinarily exhibit any significant amount of creative ability. He has a higher tolerance level, but under duress will still steam or dwell on previous unfortunate games.

There is still present an "only one" philosophy in which there is no desire to teach or educate others but rather an attempt to keep information to himself.

There are perhaps forty experts in the world at present.

LEVEL VI — MASTER Superlative Cube Handling

It is at Level VI that we finally arrive at the rarefied stratum of the master.

Most people tend to lump all the top players, experts and masters into one homogeneous grouping. This is grossly unfair.

Technically, there are two very important abilities that serve to separate the master from the expert. While the expert is able to determine his equity in any given position and act upon a strict mathematical computation thereof, the master has the ability to determine in which equity it is wisest to invest his money dependent upon the Opponent Factor. Therefore the master will double certain opponents earlier than would be considered technically correct and refrain from doubling other opponents in a position which technically "demands" a double. He will take a double that is a pass against one opponent and pass a double that is a perfect mathematical take against a different opponent. Constantly considering the potential gain versus the potential loss in each game, he continually observes the Opponent Factor.

While playing at the board, the maximum return on his investment is his primary consideration, not ego aggrandizement. The master does not expect to win each game because he is aware of the nature of backgammon and thus he can accept defeat without adverse emotional effects. The Level VI player *never* steams.

He is capable of paying the minimum for his opponent's good rolls and hot streaks; the master is very creative in extracting the maximum price from his opponent.

The second technical factor that distinguishes the master from the expert is the ability to employ different strategies for heads-up play and chouette play. When playing in a chouette, if the session goes poorly for the master, he will break even or at most lose a few points. The Level IV and V can lose quite substantially in a chouette when they are running "salty."

As L. Ron Hubbard stated, "A being is only as valuable as he can serve others." The master feels the duty to share his knowledge with the backgammon community and seeks to create an ever-expanding base of information which can be drawn upon by the lesser skilled player. Writing books, articles, giving seminars and lessons, he often volunteers information to his fellow club members and friends. He shares in the successes of his students and suffers with them in their defeats.

The masters are a unique and special breed with only a handful of members comprising their ranks.

Barclay Cooke

"Paradoxes and Probabilities"

Typographical Errors

Courtesy of Lee Silverstein, Director—Minneapolis/St. Paul Backgammon Club

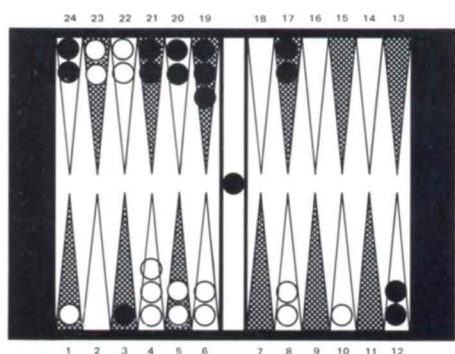
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59	10	he	Red
70	7	R1	W1
	8	R7	W7
	13	R1	W1
75	24	R12	W12
79	19	bidder	Builder
90	9	W12	R12
	11	12	R12
94	11	or R8	(omit)

Page	Line	Reads	Correction
94	11	either of these	this
97	16	R1	W1
128	2	W5	W6
	3	W5	W6
148	8	R2	W2
		R7	W7
156	17	W3	W4
164	10	W3	W4
174	15	twenty-one	twenty-three
	17	7-5	9-5
180	8	a 2-1	an 8-5
	9	twelve	fourteen
183	5	R10	W10

How Little We Know

by "Jersey Jim" Pasko

This interesting position developed in a game I was recently involved in.



White to play 5-4

After discussing the problem with many of the top players, I collected a number of different solutions which were basically as follows:

- a) 23-14
- b) 22-13
- c) 23-18, 22-18
- d) 10-6, 8-3
- e) 10-1

The interesting thing about this position is that each play leads to a completely *different* game plan. Furthermore, after doing lengthy statistics on the problem and becoming quite confident on the order of solutions from best to worst, I noticed some startling facts. The first choice of the great majority of the top players was most likely the *worst* solution and the two choices selected least often were in fact almost certainly the two *best* choices.

I think this points out very vividly what the top players *do* know, and that is how much we really don't know about the game. This is what makes backgammon the great game that it is.

Think about the above position, and if possible, play out the various alternatives as many times as possible. Try the solution chosen by most of the best players — 8-3, 10-6. This is the poorest option available. After examining the alternatives, there is little question that making Black's bar is the best play.

"Two is company, three's a chouette."

"He's not heavy, he's my builder."

How many words common to backgammon can you construct from the letters listed below? One of our editors listed 18 words with no letters left over.

A C C E C C B B B
C D D E E G E H C C D
E I L L N N G I L H C E
L N N O R T O R T O R T
O R T U U U U U U U U
P T T U U U U U U U U
T U U U U U U U U U U

We'll make this a "contest" and give away GAMMON T-shirts to the 25 readers submitting the best* lists of words. Entries must be postmarked by February 15, 1980.

*Those lists using all the letters and received the earliest.

MASTER POINTS

This is our preview roster. These players represent a cross-section of the competition award records submitted by both clubs and individuals. We use the American Backgammon Players Association award formulation (details on page 42) so that players everywhere can enjoy the universal reference.

1	Dan Goornell	Marvin Elliot	Nona Radin	Scott Prephan	Sharon Sather
Larry Kalski	Sue Anzalone	Betty Sue Anzalone	Eric Kirbach	Sandy Benezra	Ken Hoppe
Dennis Decker	John Emery	Clark Betcke	Chuck Breckenridge	Dick Poppy	Steve Shrader
Ruth Rock	Russ Martin	Fred Collins	Dick Eital	Jay Wilson	Ed Schau
Ron Sargent	Virgin Stetz	Bob Hilt	Rick Erickson	Bob Murphy	Mustaf Demiroz
Linda Benedict	Steve Tannehill	Rollow Mickle	Bob Fogel	Bernie Pygon	Lenore Steelman
Andre Guede	Pete Woodworth	David Miller	Charlie Foster	Harry Cohn	Stan Green
Fred Whitaker		Nelson Smith	Maggie Korvin	Fred Grand	Dick Bennett
John Gibson	2	Jean Sonoda	Judy McCoy	Debbie Seidner	Mick Anzalone
David Kane	Dorothy Duchamp	Jim Sorenson	Marilyn O'Rourke	Fred Leinweber	
Hal Hodgins	Dan Hare	Mildred Cuebas	Charles Pasco	Kent Maynard	9
Doug Domeshek	Fouad Nassim		Emil Sepasy	Jeff Ward	Glenn Weyand
Bob Joiner	Wyatt Turner	3	Roy Fredrickson	Bruno Lutz	Bill Andorn
Rick Schwamb	Rich Ziegler	Bob Rambo	Don Failla		Bill Blaha
Craig Campbell	Harry Hoffman	Shimon Peretz	Harry Leroy	6	Neil Simon
Ted Eckerson	Jim Grissom	Fred Williams	B. J. Ritter	Don Borzilleri	Frank Treiber
Brian Johnson	Lou Bluhm	Gerry Daniel	Judy King	J. C. Casper	Richard Greenberg
Todd Johnson	Paul Aman	Rich Rogers	Ken Uyehara	Ray Rutherford	John Leach
Don Johnson	John Aho	Suzie Anzalone	Roger King	Jim Sorensen	Don Beyer
Parvis Kamgar	Clark Betcke	Emily Blaha	Terry Lunny	Richard Vail	Gordon Stubbett
Mark Laughlin	John Emery	Nelson Smith	Vito DeSantis	Brooks Welker	Jan Thurber
Dave Miller	Mike Hoy	Jill Sedluk	Winnie Spithill	Bob Lyman	Paul Mullen
Darrell Rogers	Nick Mustrie	Doug Swift	Steve Lenores	Ryan Devries	Bobbie Shifrin
Roger Schumaker	Steve Neubauer	Walt Barnes	Nancy Brown	Connie Sischo	Dennis Keipt
Ron Sears	Carl Hudecek	Steve Skutch	Don Due	Rich Pressly	Bill Andorn
Stu Sloan	Brian Grebow	Fred Chamanara	Sue Eidal	George Soules	Neil Simon
Rip Waldron	Kay Miller	Marcia Hovey	Larry Guite	Steve Hollingsworth	10
Jacquelin Brzozka	Wayne Schuman	Dean Muench	Phillip Van Eynde	Dale Payne	Dave Schroeder
Stan Herman	Barbara Karp	Peggy Stotland	Steve Koessler	Mike Eldon	Tim Putnam
Steve Cole	Art Vaughn	Diane Blumenfeld	Suzanna Parazanin	Terry Fonder	Blythe Linvog
Johathan Clement	Tim Serges	Ida Weil	Keith Pleas	Ron Herzon	Bob Nelson
Les Barr	Jay Bleiman	George Cihak	Paul Skrede	Harry Rogers	Dori Monson
Brenda Van Duyn	Peter Kalba	Gary Keyes	Leni Wilder	Elliott Winslow	Gary Oliver
Jim Blackmar	Marilyn Schmidt	Lars Shirey	Chuck Walanka	Merrill Schrager	Jeff Fishcer
Kim Ormsby	Jerry Kessler	Charles Cole	George Jewell	Roman Mankus	11
Mitch McKie	Fred Mercaldo	Steve McComb	Emile Khoury	Charles Hesser	Mick Anzalone
Bill Oyster	Jeff Mills	Peter Wagner	Margaret Francis		Pat Kerr
Kathryn Jones	Gail Newman	Allen Speigel	Terry Weiss	7	Bill Darrow
Peter Barabasz	Gary Wondrak	J. C. Casper	Stan Hall	Emory Clark	Vivian Kahn
Harry Barlos	Steve Horn	Tim Putnam	John Greenwald	Ken Duchamp	Gary Silverstein
Sandi Schick	Mitch Polk		Sami Katrib	Dave Poneman	John Aprahamian
Dave Carr	Nabil Faltas	4	Steve Chesney	Mel Goetting	Barry Epstein
Brian Nadell	Gary Silver	Dave Weiland	David Manchel	Dave Roberts	Lucky Nelson
Richard Armbruster	John Orr	Bob Aho	Gerald Carrel	Alan Steffen	Aydin Gedik
Penny Perlmutter	Jim Dahlgren	Raymond Brown	Bruce Dickinson	Tom Jamieson	
Dick Cattaneo	Debbie Ingram	Debbie Ingram	Steve Slatkow	Larry Leach	12
Peter Sanders	Bob Going	Bob Going	Frank Smith	Dick Scofield	Steve Moffitt
Joseph Shamir	Jerry Sharp	Jerry Sharp	Emery Lobl	Les Ungerleider	Joe Losacco
Stan Lovelady	Gary Gams	Virgil Stetz	Tom Smith	Rob Garrett	Roger Conway
Meyer Myara	Phil Beuth	Mile Yudelson	Chris Cleoni, Sr.	David Marona	Dave Morrison
Stan Bromberg	Eric Smith	Tim Meehan	Jim Hazelton	Steve Gutman	Chris Stanford
Charles Higuera	Beth Kinney	Mike Gladfelder	Robert Howayek	Michelle Marcus	Marilyn Raine
Liz Price	Ben Caswell	Jim Pigulski	Jerry Sharp	Bedei Khoury	John Goulart
Lyle Muehzenberger	Bill Bates	Costas Christou	Ben Christ	Charles Snow	
Walter Thorpe	John Joyce	Alan Tarschis	Lou Gedeon	Charles Irvin	13
Ron Coble	Bonnie Slater	Jack Spithill	Kathy Wilson		George Manset
Ellen Brownstein	Norma Black	Dennis Lewis	Mike Yudelson	8	Carl Head
Leslie Simon	Preston Bell	Glenora Pigott		Marty Fischer	Larry Goldstein
Nadar Agha	Kevin Jamalpoor	John Kennedy	5	Miles Thoroman	Tom Reese
John Moriarty	Steve Smith	Fred Becker	Ken Sykes	Mike Bacon	Jan Rudas
	Larry Saltzman	Bert Hoff	Ed Jones	Steve Brazier	Michael Harvey
				Al Harrison	

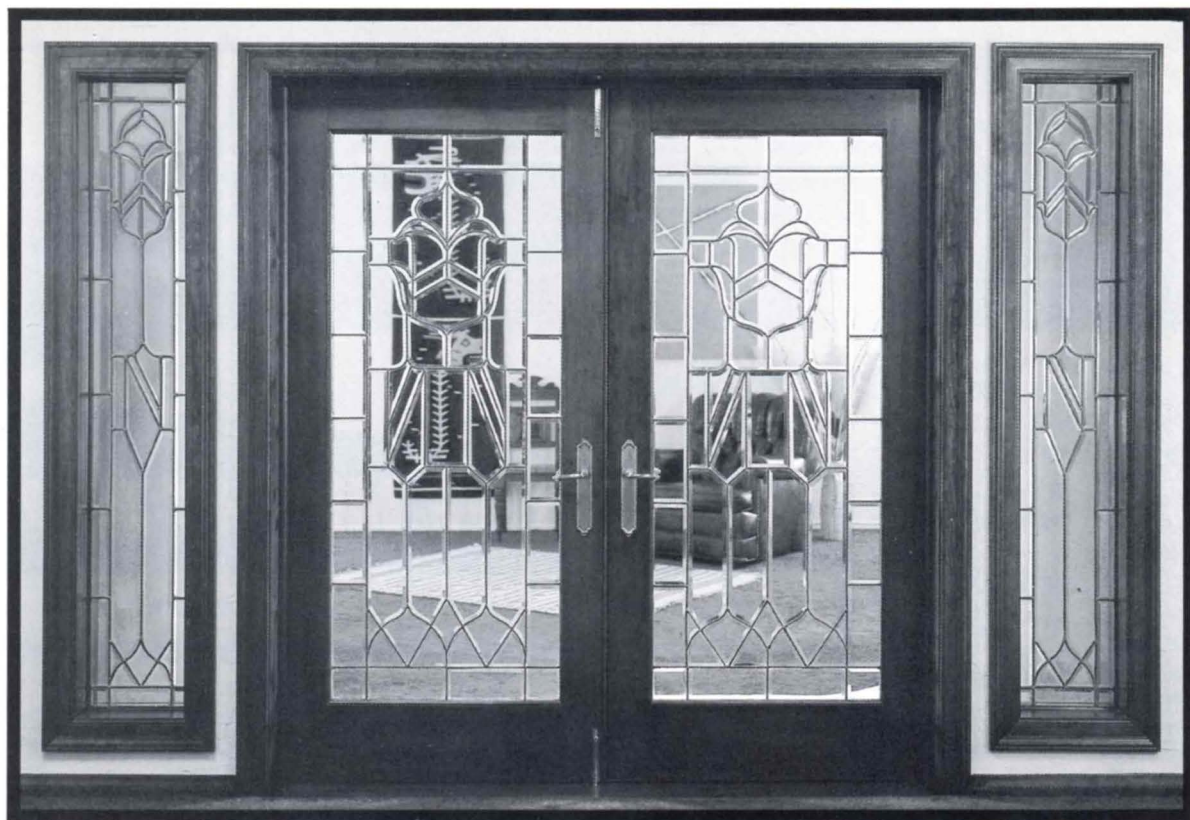
Don Jayhan
14
Larry Gould
Dianne Brendel
Bob Wilensky
Richard Cooke
Stuart Domeshek
Al Shoats
Tom Sebeny
Henry Schwartz
Carl Schwarzott
15
Tom Neubauer
Kathleen Marcy
Gene Chait
Bruce Campbell
Ron Roberts
Meg Clesen
16
Guy Thurber
Bob Holyon
Cliff Pappas
17
Larry Arnold
David Brown
Dale Barker
Michael Cain
Dianne Grossman
18
Andy Coe
Ron Garber
Dean Morehouse
Maury Frishman
Richard Osborne
19
Peter Stoner
Bill McClarty
Charles Brewton
20
Terry Petersen
Steve Cramer
Leonard Gordon
Phil Kamena
21
Mike Julius
Richard Cross
Garó Tchalapian
Wayne Taggart
23
Ron Coe
Jerry Clayter
Linda Wyman
Joe Wozniak
24
Abe Kaplan
Kathy Posner
Russell Samuel
25
Tom Daniel
26
Don Desmond
John Gamalielson
Bill Tallmadge
Hal Wyman
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Chris Christianson

Carla Gibson
Phil Martorelli
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Ed Goebel
Doc Hyde
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Armen Avedisian
Charlie DeCoster
Howard Markowitz
54
Randy Cone
Mehmet Gurel
69
Larry Craig
84
Patrick Gibson
95
Peter Brawer
100
George Fawcett
Mahmut Iris
115
Molly Roessler
132
Dave Sather
156
Gary Carter

by Craig Tyndall

DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY

LOCATION	GARB	CONSENSUS
BOSTON Boston-Boston	If it's covered it's cool	Raunchy children until midnight. After 1 a.m. they bring their own beer
CHICAGO Dugan's Bistrottheque Zorine's Ramada Inn	80% gay and fancy A jacket crown 1200 people, and no Levis	Friendly folks, nightly dance attraction, "Bobby, the Bearded Lady" Plastic piano and dance floor, game room and flashing lights. Watch out for the red neon lightning bolts & extra girls
LOS ANGELES Dillons Osco's Dirty Sally's	No surprises More jewelry on weekends Calm	Westwood & Downtown Both provide multi-level confusion All ages and varieties. Three floors with back- gammon somewhere Backgammon tournaments on Sundays. Boat tilts, cheap drinks
NEW YORK CITY The Electric Circus	Bawdy chic	Remember the neighbor- hood amusement park, with rides and lights? Got it!
SAN FRANCISCO Harry's Oz Mom's	Rhinestone casual Same here Similarly	Easy to relax — moderate volume Semi private, hot view, cold floor (no chairs), nice customers. Private — food and back- gammon room for R & R



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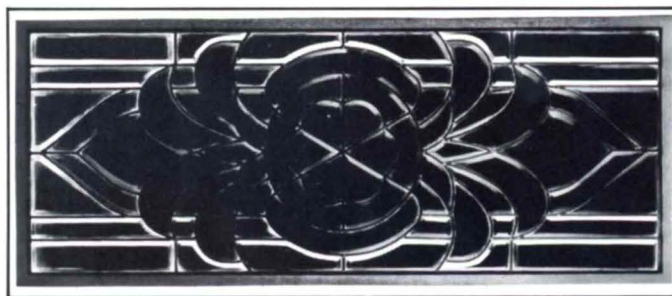
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TOURNAMENT RESULTS

CONNECTICUT BACKGAMMON SOCIETY TOURNAMENT #12 (July 3-4, 1979) — 1st Knoll Street Quadrangular:

1st	Rob Roy	x	7	9	10	1043
2nd	Mike Guerrera	6	x	2	8	992
3rd	Jim Comerford	4	8	x	2	996
4th	Mark Denihan	4	3	7	x	1021

VIRGINIA CUP 1979 BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT: Championship — 1st: Bill Haboush; 2nd: Don Carew; Semis: Rasim Kasim and John Klein (D.C.).

Championship Consolation — 1st: Gary Fries (D.C.); 2nd: Buz Wainman. **Championship Last Chance** — 1st: Bill Belcher; 2nd: Barbara Lustig. **Intermediate** — 1st: Brad Garner; 2nd: L. E. Phillips (D.C.).

Intermediate Consolation — 1st: John Hiratsuka (D.C.); 2nd: Bruce Kirk. **Early Bird** — 1st: John Klein (D.C.); 2nd: Erik Gerlach. **Beginner** — 1st: Douglas Waller; 2nd: Alicia Navon; Semis: Scott Lawrence and Gail Waller. **Doubles** — 1st: Gary Fries/Brad Garner (D.C.); 2nd: Pierre Harik/Larry Fishback; Semis: Bill Harris/Tom Arthur and Ricky Bowles/Mike Harris (Va. Beach).

FIRST OWEN TRAYNER JR. MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT (May 18-20) — Club International: Championship — 1st: Ralph Chafetz; 2nd: Joe Orlandi; Semis: Bill Claus and George Burburan.

Championship Consolation — 1st: Arthur Dickman; 2nd: Cricket Matthews; Semis: Al Fogal and Ed Steinberg. **Intermediate** — 1st: Sharyn Crockett Peet; 2nd: Joan Tannen; Semis: Evangeline Percha and Roni Kingsley. **Intermediate Consolation** — 1st: Shirley Errico; 2nd: Jack Errico; Semis: Margo Finn and Eleanor Hoffman. **RAM'S INN ROUND ROBIN (July 19, 1979) Shelter Island, N.Y.:** 1st: Granny Carrel; 2nd: Grace Lantz. **LONG ISLAND SUMMER REGIONAL (August 5, 1979):** Main — 1st: Moshe Horowitz; 2nd: Don Drott. **Consolation** — 1st: Lee Genuid. **LOUISVILLE BRIDGE CENTER (July 22):** Open — 1st: Sylvia Strasberg; 2nd: Katie Overstreet. **Big Eight** — 1st: Bill Phillips; 2nd: Mike Kattus; 3rd: Harold Branch.

FIRST ANNUAL HAMILTON BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS (June 24-25) — Hamilton Squash Club: 1st: Albert Ertsinian; 2nd: Gordon Isserstedt; Semis: George Duncan and Jerry Nathan. **Intermediate** — 1st: Joyce Mongeon; 2nd: Denise Ertsinian. **CYPRESS SUMMER BACKGAMMON CLASSIC (Cypress, CA):** 1st: Jerry Farley; 2nd: Mike Campanella.

GEORGIA BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION — October Winners — (Oct. 1) Bobby Warr, (Oct. 8) Frank Blaydes, (Oct. 15) Ron Sanders, (Oct. 22) Debbie Waddell, (Oct. 29) Debbie Waddell. (Ed: Come on Debbie, lighten up.) **NORTH FLORIDA BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIP — Jacksonville Backgammon Club, Linda George, Director** — 1st: Les Boyd; 2nd: Wally Redman;

Finalists: Gary Kay/Clive Trumble. **Consolation** — 1st: Toby Norris; 2nd: Dave Schroeder. **NEW ENGLAND BACKGAMMON CLUB — September 24, 1979 Awards Tournament: Championship** — 1st: Kermit Kimball; 2nd: Sidney Golub; Semis: Dan Harrington/Sam Hanna. **Consolation** — 1st: George Fernandez; 2nd: Connie Machakos. **Last Chance** — Nancy Laiderman.

Advanced — 1st: Fred Millman; 2nd: Roger Noiseux; Semis: Bill Karalekas/Peter Liu. **Consolation** — 1st: Marc Melekian; 2nd: Eric Packer. **Last Chance** — Jim Frangules. **Intermediate** — 1st: Farokh Talaifar; 2nd: Walter Fontaine; Semis: David Adamson/Wendell Henry. **Consolation** — 1st: Michael Woodworth; 2nd: Haig Kooshoian. **Last Chance** — Randy Zimmerman.

Beginner — 1st: Frances Talcone; 2nd: Lauren Shuman. **3RD MARYLAND STATE BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIPS, October 19-21: Championship** — 1st: Mike Senkowitz; 2nd: Les Bart; Semis: Earl Schara/Tom Jarvis. **Consolation** — 1st: Roger Williamson; 2nd: Mel Leifer. **Last Chance** — 1st: Lou Berge; 2nd: Sy Bayden. **WASHINGTON BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT (August 29, 1979):** Main Event — 1st: Walter Kerns; 2nd: Jack Diskin; Semis: John Klein/Mark Schwab. **Consolation** — 1st: Chuck Mason; 2nd: Alan Gotter; Semis: Fred Berman/Rick Shirley. (October 3, 1979): Main Event — 1st: John Klein; 2nd: Roger Hilton; Semis: John Strauss/Roger Williamson. **Consolation** — 1st: Tom Harrison; 2nd: Bob Eberline. **NEW YORK BACKGAMMON CO-OP REGIONAL, New Jersey Club (Oct. 7, 1979):** Advanced Main Flite — 1st: Moshe Horowitz; 2nd: Mark Kaplan; Semis: Elliot Dunner/Andy Palumbo. **1st Consolation** — 1st: Doug Huch; 2nd: Lee Fine. **2nd Consolation** — 1st: Gary "Pops" Karali. **Intermediate Main Flite** — 1st: Mary Litrel; 2nd: Denise Aubin. **Consolation** — 1st: John Hunter.

AVENTURA — TURNBERRY DOUBLES (May 6-7, 1979): Championship — 1st: Dr. Bob Hill/Hugh Gantner; 2nd: George Burburan/Fred Berliner; Semis: Joe Suzyn/Larry Feder and Carol Ellis/Mike Corbett. **Consolation** — 1st: Ed Koreen/Arlene Channing; 2nd: David Kleiman/Les Boyd. **ARUBA CHAMPIONSHIPS (April 1979):** Championship — 1st: Francois Desmornes; 2nd: Steve Zolotow; Semis: Billy Eisenberg and Ellen Jacoby Lee. **Championship Consolation** — 1st: Uli Kock; 2nd: Michael Carson; Semis: Lyn Goldsmith and Katie Wright. **Last Chance** — 1st: Arthur Dickman; 2nd: Joe Mirzoeff. **Intermediate** — 1st: Ruth Blasko; 2nd: Angelica Algava; Semis: Antoinette Williams and Franco Scalamandre. **Intermediate Consolation** — 1st: Rubin Benchimol; 2nd: George Garami; Semis: Marion Mutchnik and Hylda Lee. **Intermediate Last Chance** — 1st: Samir Gemayel; 2nd: Ralph Mutchnik. **Beginner** — 1st: Paul Zane Pilzer; 2nd: Sharon Cohen; Semis: Marion Benchimol

and Rhoda Bigman. **Beginner Consolation** — 1st: Bridgette Gille; 2nd: Rhoda Bigman; Semis: Sybil Appel and Pamela Witz. On August 3-5 The Thousand Islands Club, Alexandria Bay, held its 2nd annual Backgammon tournament — 1st: Lonny Eggelston, California; 2nd: Typhoon Durak; 3rd: Alec Forrester. **1st Consolation** — Bob Cimino; **2nd Consolation** — Lowell Weitkamp. All winners with the exception of Lonny were from Rochester, and are regular players at Greenstreets. Siebert Griffin, Club Manager is already planning next year's event.

NEW JERSEY BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION. The July 1st Regional Tournament held in Saddle Brook was a smash success. Close to 100 players were in attendance, making this the largest regional in almost three years. It was a day full of pleasant surprises with our own statistician, Laura Ferrante, going into the first all-female advanced finals against Long Island's Wendy Heine. Wendy was the winner in a close, exciting match. New Jersey's other advanced money winner was Mr. Consistent himself, Perry Gartner, who took second place in the consolation. The intermediate banner was carried by '00' Blumberg, Pam Miller, Rosemary Assante and Nancy Lapidus. Congratulations to all of the following money winners! **Advanced Main Event** — 1st: Wendy Heine (L.I.); 2nd: Laura Ferrante (N.J.); Semis: Howie Sloan (L.I.) and Ray Gimble (L.I.). **1st Consolation** — 1st: Chris Nicholas (N.J.); 2nd: Perry Gartner (N.J.). **2nd Consolation** — 1st: Alphonse (L.I.). **Intermediate Main Event** — 1st: Mike Harris (L.I.); 2nd: "00" Blumberg (N.J.); Semis: Pam Miller (N.J.) and Nancy Lapidus (N.J.). **1st Consolation** — 1st: Dave Tanz; 2nd: Bob Trawinski (N.J.). **2nd Consolation** — 1st: Rosemary Assante (N.J.).

PIPS FIRST JUNIOR BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT (July 1979): Advanced — 1st: Kevin Brown; 2nd: Jody Gilbert; Semis: Deyon Dobson and David Grandy. **Beginner** — 1st: Babak Shokrian; 2nd: Jason Shokrian; Semis: Sheri Milroy and Michael Foonberg. **Beginner Consolation** — 1st: Rick Calamaro; 2nd: Sumiya Swoboda; Semis: Mark Milroy and Carole Myers. **THE SECOND PIPS CUP (May 1979):** Championship — 1st: Stan Heller; 2nd: Ron Nissenon; Semis: Candace Mayeron and Teresa Sohn. **Championship Consolation** — 1st: Barry Green; 2nd: Hylda Lee; Semis: Phyllis Davidson and Daniel Ryan. **Intermediate** — 1st: Walter Lykosh; 2nd: Don Knoblock; Semis: Fred Droesch and Bob Perla. **Intermediate Consolation** — 1st: Tom Wass; 2nd: Jafer Ansari; Semis: Jay Grandy and John Moody. **Beginner** — 1st: Kyle Gilbert; 2nd: Richard Annotico; Semis: Jody Gilbert and Karen Loeb. **Beginner Consolation** — 1st: Karry Kaiser; 2nd: Sonja Kissik; Semis: Judith Keppler and Mark Silverman.

CAVDENISH WEST CONSULTING DOUBLES TOURNAMENT: Main Event — 1st: Harry Arjad; 2nd: Bill Granoff/Dr. Paul Skolnick; Semis: Bill Eisenberg/Patti Medford and Jerry Becker/Mary Kempner. **Consolation** — 1st: Alan Martin/Bentley Fender; 2nd: Greg Abrams/Remi. **TINGLES DOUBLES TOURNAMENT (June 1979):** Championship — 1st: Charlie Willman/Ted Kim; 2nd: Wayne McClintock/Wayman Robertson; Semis: Nick Maffeo/Toni Delacorte and George Matthews/Leisca Sansom. **Consolation** — 1st: John Beaudry/Scott McKenzie; 2nd: Bill Kennedy/Robert Caradien. **Intermediate** — 1st and 2nd: Daniel Sears and Steve Ries (split); Semis: Rawlin Pullen and Lee Epstein. **Intermediate Consolation** — 1st: Bruce McClintic; 2nd: Terry Twardzik. **Beginner** — 1st: Vicky Magana; 2nd: Larry Getz; Semis: Suhail Jubran, Connie Hartman and Ivan Root. (Continued on page 56.)

GAMMON/37

THE BLACK & WHITE

CHICAGO CLASSIC

by Howard Perlman



Tournament organizer Valerie Valentine with Heublein Promotion Director Mickey Wiernasz and Vice President of Marketing Joseph Corr.



Joe Corr presents the Championship trophy to a very happy Barbara Glazer.



Buddy and Peggy regroup between matches.



Tournament veteran's Armen Avedisian, Janie Deyong and Anthony Hall.

The Black & White Chicago Classic has been won by Barbara Glazer, a self-proclaimed housewife from Kansas City, Mo.

In gaining first place money and honors, during the October 5-7 weekend at Chicago's Marriott Hotel, Mrs. Glazer beat Roger Low, of New York, by the score of 21-13. Earlier in the afternoon, Glazer played an intense game with the 1978-79 World Backgammon Champion, Paul Magriel, also of New York, besting him in a duel that caught the rapt attention of hundreds of players, many of whom halted their own matches to witness her stunning achievement.

Main Flight — Winner: Barbara Glazer; Finalist: Roger Low; Semi-Finalists: Paul

Magriel and Charles Witz.

Consolation Flight — Winner: Robert Holyon; Finalist: Joe Suzyn; Semi-Finalists: Stanley Steele and Bill Davis.

Last Chance Flight — Winner: Kit Woolsey; Finalist: Tom Jarvis.

Intermediate Main Flight — Winner: Marilyn Turner; Finalist: JoAnne Goulding; Semi-Finalists: Bernie Pygon and Paul Larson.

Consolation Flight — Winner: Gary Edwards; Finalist: Gerard Unger; Semi-Finalists: Nick Joubbran and Alan Gold.

Last Chance Flight — Winner: Chris Carr; Finalist: Carol Ellis.

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WORLD AMATEUR BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIP

L A S V E G A S N O V E M B E R 2 8 — D E C E M B E R 2, 1 9 7 9

B Y C A N D A C E N Y L E S M A Y E R O N

When Wayne Araki and two friends piled into their 1966 pickup and drove to Las Vegas they had no inkling that the 24-year-old truck driver would win the top prize of \$159,400 in the third annual World Amateur Backgammon Championships.

"We came on a lark," says a now jubilant Araki, who became the second Canadian (although Japanese in origin) to win the title. Araki is an amateur in the classic sense, the archetype little old lady in tennis shoes. He has never seen the inside of a backgammon club or, for that matter, of a backgammon book. When he plays, which is not often, he plays in the corner of a pool hall with other truck drivers. He'd only competed in two small pool hall tournaments before trying his luck against almost 600 devotees from all over the Western Hemisphere. This sweet Innocent arrived at the finals in the same old chinos and flannel shirt he'd been wearing all week, because he didn't have cash to buy a new suit and because he didn't know you could charge such things to your hotel room. Watching him on the closed circuit television during the finals, and listening to expert Paul Magriel's commentary, the wonderment was not at how little he knew, but — considering his lack of exposure — how *much* he knew.

The Amateurs is open to those who have not previously won more than \$1000 in a tournament or do not make their living in backgammon. By definition this standard tends to let in a lot of very fine players who just haven't competed in big money events. (It also keeps out a lot of Beginners and Intermediates who have won big money, and the standard will be changed next year to a \$1500 threshold won in a Championship or Open event.)

Last year's winner, David Leibowitz, was just such a skilled player. But Araki, like Chico Felberbaum in 1977, showed the crowd that a little bit of knowledge, a lot of pluck and great gobs of luck can go a long way. All the way.

Those who didn't go all the way, but did make the round of 16, ranged in age from 23 (semifinalist John Klein) to 43 (semifinalist James Ax.) There were no women, two Texans, one Turk, one Egyptian, one Canadian of Japanese ancestry, 13 Americans. On the average they'd played backgammon three years. Some are outstanding in other numbers games, like John Dixie the poker player, Jeff Langbert the professional horse handicapper, and a professional blackjack player who thinks he must remain unidentified. Two dentists played each other in the round of eight. Benny ("Benny the Best") Raheb of Houston was the unluckiest. At 6:30 in the morning he successfully ended a 17½ hour struggle through Second Chance. Seven hours later he faced Harvardish Andy Goodman in a 13-point match for the start of the big money. Raheb was leading 12-3. There was a drop, a take/loss, a gammon. At 12-10 Goodman had to roll three doubles to win the bear-off. Then it was 12-12. After the next game Goodman stood up the victor and perhaps the best of the remaining eight players. But his next opponent was Araki. Goodbye Goodman.

Tournament promoters Henry Watson, Kate (his wife) and Louise Goldsmith kept the best innovations from the previous year, and added yet more good ones. As before, you won \$1,000 if you won your first four matches — and there were 36 people who did. There were Early

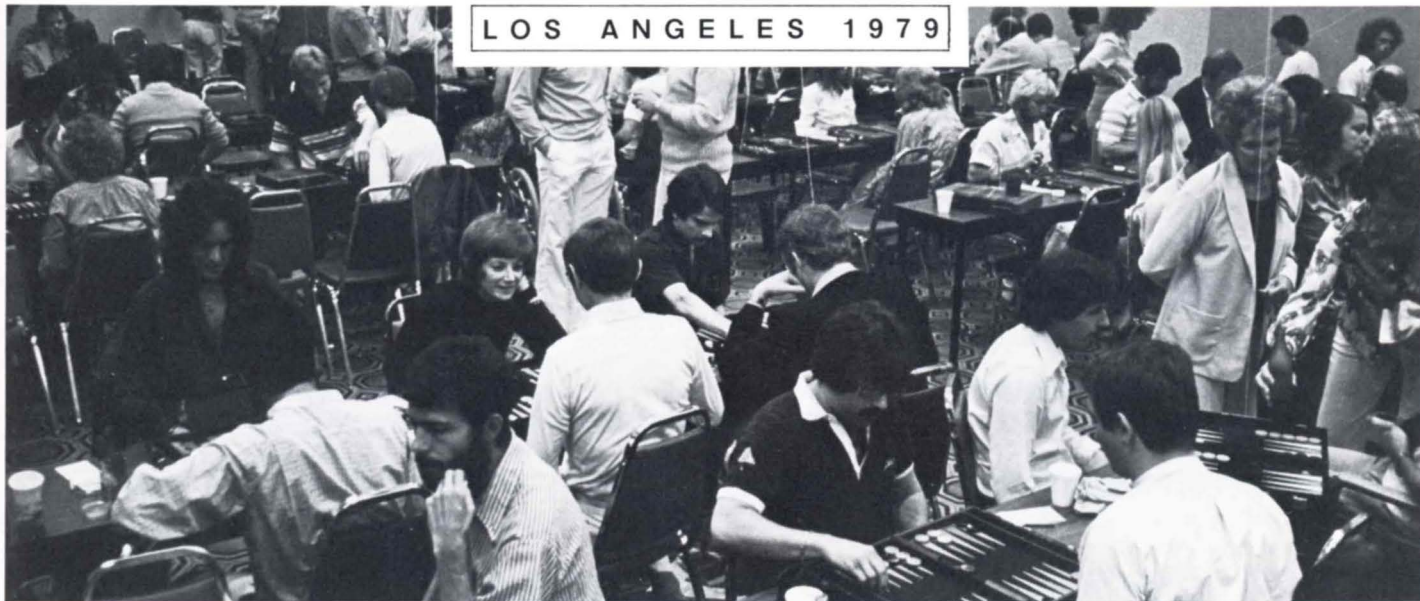
Bird, Ladies and Hotel Guest prizes. This year the final eight contestants were ineligible for those special prizes — a welcome change since it spread the wealth around. There was an Open for the champions ineligible for the Amateurs; and a Doubles competition. The Doubles is quickly becoming the most popular division of the tournament. This year it drew 288 pairs and paid top prize of \$11,520.

A terrific new addition was the Beginner's division, open to anyone who had never won more than \$500 in a tournament. Buy-backs were limitless and prizes were — in merchandise. A lot of experienced tournament players entered, but none of them did particularly well. "I think," says John Mayeron, the Beginner's tournament director, "it was because the better players aren't used to 5-point matches and because they didn't take their opponents seriously." Whatever the reason, 23-year old Larry Arnold of Seattle — competing in his first tournament ever — drove off in the shiny white Monte Carlo that was first prize. A record of sorts was set in the Beginner's — one 5-point match lasted 3 hours and 38 minutes!

Fifty-five players entered the Open division, in which about one in every four was an internationally recognizable name player. Alan Martin of Los Angeles took the top prize of about \$22,000, and for him the victory was particularly sweet. Although he had been seeded this year in Monte Carlo and won the Consolation of that event, he was still not considered one of the game's superstars. This victory has finally catapulted him into the ranks of backgammon's elite.

CALIFORNIA OPEN BACKGAMMON CHAMPIONSHIP

LOS ANGELES 1979



He said, "It's an odds-against position," as he leaned back measuring his options. A sudden crack as chair and floor sounded their mutual surprise, "I'll chance the few horror rolls. Take."

Normal, except that when his opponent rolled doubles to win game match and event — it was the Aries Youth Competitions — Winner, 8-year-old Mike Fisher, Junior Division. Senior Division was secured by high school student Nilou Farahmand.

Novice competitors played round robin matches, relaxing as they soon became part of the competition. The strong future of backgammon is assured if these novices are any sample.

A few low-rent hustlers entered, trying to "steal" a prize. Their obvious greed drew some outrage, but mostly sympathy.

Novice Main Event — 1st: Adam Fields; 2nd: Arthur Caplan; Finalists: Chen Fu Yu and Craig Rogers

Consolation — 1st & 2nd (split): Ronald Berger and Richard Magnuson.

Intermediate Main Event — 1st: Mike Leibow; 2nd: Alan Levit; Finalists: Mark Emrich and Robert Adem.

Consolation — 1st: Barbara Hamman; 2nd: Tom Ringman; Finalists: Aydin Gedik and Jennifer Flower

Last Chance — 1st: Stan Brombert; 2nd: Joao Bettencourt

The Open hosted an Exhibition Tournament for 45 Directors, sending winner Andre Hoffman to play in the \$30,000 Added in Puerto Rico. He has moved from San Francisco to Hong Kong, although there is no confirmation that the competition is really easier there.

Then there were the Championship events. Hugh Sconyers, last year's winner, watched the closed circuit TV as Aram Kouleyan came from a seemingly hopeless score (15-6) to win the 23 point final match.

Earlier in the tournament Aram had patiently waited 90 minutes for a match. His opponent had been seen wistfully watching a carload of charred furniture pull away from the hotel.

Ida Weil, the Chicago cutie, made history of some of the event's favorites. First David Leibowitz. He spent the entire weekend with that same stunned look on his face. Tom Gilbert tried to get her drunk. She finished him like an empty chair — 15-1.

The Championship Winners —

1st: Aram Kouleyan; 2nd: S. Noorvash; Finalists: Charles Willman and David Ashley

Consolation — 1st: Chuck Papazian; 2nd: Jeff Mervis; Finalists: David Leibowitz and William Boyd

Last Chance — 1st: Roy Springer; 2nd: Todd Vander Pluym

by Michael Teilmann



Chicago's best trade war stories.



Youth competition finalists wait for opponents.



"You see, if he slots..."

AMERICAN BACKGAMMON PLAYERS ASSOCIATION — UNIVERSAL MASTER POINT PROGRAM

The Universal Master Point Program has been formulated to provide an accurate and equitably consistent measure of backgammon ability through achievement in competition. The number of rounds won determine the points earned. An additional point accrues to the winner in an event of 5 rounds or more.

In An Event Of	POINT SCHEDULE			
	Winner	2nd Place	3rd & 4th Place	5th-8th Place
3 rounds (5 - 8 players)	1	-0-	-0-	-0-
4 rounds (9 - 16 players)	2	1	-0-	-0-
5 rounds (17 - 32 players)	4(3+1)	2	1 each	-0-
6 rounds (33 - 64 players)	5(4+1)	3	2 each	1 each
7 rounds (65 - 128 players)	6(5+1)	4	3 each	2 each
8 rounds (129 - 256 players)	7(6+1)	5	4 each	3 each

For complete Universal Master Point details, including totals necessary for award of the Master recognitions and retroactive credit procedures, please consult your Tournament Director or write directly to:

American Backgammon Players Association
12333 W. Washington Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90066

THE TOURNAMENT SCENE IN NEW YORK

Tournament backgammon is alive and well in the metropolitan New York City area. The recent 5th Big Apple Backgammon Championships drew 208 players, which is believed to be a record for a one-night event.

The Big Apple series is sponsored by the Metropolitan Backgammon Association which was founded in early 1978 for the purpose of bringing large scale tournaments with reasonable entry fees to the New York area. The founders of the Metropolitan Backgammon Association were Dan and Rena Caverly of New Jersey, Steve Kurzban of Long Island and Steve Carr of New York City, who were each running regularly scheduled weekly events in their areas. The 1st Big Apple Championship was held in May of 1978 and was an immediate success, drawing 168 players.

Players can choose to enter either the Intermediate (\$25 entry) or Advanced (\$40 entry) category. The minimum guaranteed 1st place prizes of \$1,000 in Advanced and \$200 in Intermediate are usually exceeded. There is also an optional \$10 pool in Advanced which is awarded in full to the player going the furthest in the Main Flite.

The New Jersey Backgammon Association and the Long Island Backgammon Club each hold weekly tournaments every Tuesday and Friday evening. Attendance at these events averages about 60 players per night. The two clubs also combine to hold monthly Cooperative Regional tournaments. These are one-day events which feature reasonable entry fees and a cut-throat auction for the Advanced players. Players from the entire metropolitan area participate and attendance is usually between 80 and 100 players. Twice a year

the two clubs sponsor one of these region-tournaments over a weekend at a dude ranch resort in New York state. Players from as far away as Boston have become regular participants in these events.

5th Big Apple winners were:

Advanced — Main Flite	
1st	Fran Goldfarb
2nd	Tad Willey
3rd/4th	Sammi Gemayel / Don Kandel
5th-8th	Ed Raad / Ami Tennenbaum / Steve Norden / Chadvar Stefanov
Advanced — Consolation Flite	
1st	Brian Glubak
2nd	Ray Gimbel
3rd/4th	Mike Senkiewicz / Alphonse Mekalainas
Intermediate — Main Flite	
1st	Mike Nelson
2nd	Dave Tanz
3rd/4th	Bill Jackson / Dr. Bader
Intermediate — Consolation Flite	
1st	Joe Goldstein
2nd	Joan Lang

6th Big Apple winners were:

Advanced — Main Flite	
1st	Nick Kleszczewski
2nd	Sammy Gemayel
3rd/4th	Ed "Dish" Raad / Greg Lilley
Advanced — Consolation Flite	
1st	Mike Senkiewicz
2nd	Jim Ax
Intermediate — Main Flite	
1st	Rhoda Bigman / Sid Kahn (TIE)
3rd/4th	Norm Watson / George Francis
Intermediate — Consolation Flite	
1st	David Goldman
2nd	Patti Cott

For information about any of the above events, or to be placed on the mailing list for a free monthly newsletter, call me at (201) 785-1574.

Dan Caverly

The Tops Backgammon Club Landdrost Hotel Tournament Johannesburg, South Africa

Fanatic backgammon player George Karvelas owns Tops, the only Backgammon Club in South Africa. Maybe proprietors aren't allowed to win their own tournaments. Is that it, George?

Main Event — 1st: Jeffrey Rubenstein; 2nd: Benny Schreiber; 3rd: Leon Seligson.

1st Consolation — 1st: Len Chimes; 2nd: Carol Hess.

2nd Consolation — 1st: Stauros Aganostan; 2nd: Cedric Fuchs.



Valerie Valentine and Chang Chien Kuo play backgammon on the Great Wall, Peking, China.

"When your opponent's luck begins to wear off — that's the time to grin and bear off."

"Of course I love you, but I still double."

1st International Backgammon Championships of Puerto Rico

by Larry Schiller

Standing Staff (from left to right) Craig Tyndall, Jim Schuster, Larry Schiller, Janet Shaughnessy, Sid Jackson, Bill Robertie, Dan Caverly, Bill Granoff. In

front, between the lovelies — Steve Carr, Chaim Neumann, Mike Geisinger. AWOL (counting the cash) Howard Markowitz.



Carol Cohen

First International Backgammon Championships of Puerto Rico

Winners in the \$30,000 added, First International Backgammon Championships of Puerto Rico, August 20-26, 1979, directed by Sidney Jackson.

Championship — 1st: Kal Robinson; 2nd: Peter Gold; Finalists: Tony Goble and Joel Rettew

1st Consolation — 1st: Eric Seidel; 2nd: Swami Nivedano; Finalists: Joey Mirzoeff and Dean Muench

2nd Consolation — 1st: Charles Hesser; 2nd: Aram Kouleyan; Finalists: Mike Senkiewicz and Nick Ballard

Last Chance — 1st: Jay Whitehead; 2nd: John Eichenlaub

Intermediate — 1st: Dennis Borgono; 2nd: Linda Schembre; Finalists: Andre Hoffman and Denise Berkowitz

1st Consolation — 1st: Rena Caverly; 2nd: David Osina; Finalists: Jean Sonoda and John Mayeron.

2nd Consolation — 1st: Pat Eichenlaub; 2nd: Carol Cole; Finalists: Jo Fletcher and Linda Alexander



Scene of the Crime.

Gloria Donahue watches as Mr. & Mrs. Peter Gold beat Tony Goble in the semis.



Last Chance — 1st: Joao Bettencourt; 2nd: Bob Jonhson

Beginner — 1st: Alice Reahard; 2nd: Mark Haboush; Finalists: Debbie Seidner and Vilar Kelly

1st Consolation — 1st: Karen Maki; 2nd: Betty Rae Young; Finalists: Ellen Douglas and Lucinda Liddy

2nd Consolation — 1st: Bunny Kay; 2nd: Linda Barrett; Finalists: Noel Aube and Dorothy Bates

Last Chance — 1st: Victoria Berger; 2nd: Jo Sherman

Side by Side — Winner: Jay Whitehead

Duo-Gammon

by Bill Davis

Another form of doubles backgammon play became history this summer when the first-ever Duo-Gammon tournament was conducted in the Chicago suburb of Northbrook by the National Backgammon League.

Unlike full consultation doubles, a skilled Duo-Gammon team is made up of two quality players. Team members play the same game, alternating moves, but are not permitted to consult with one another. Consultation on doubling decisions (offering, accepting and rejecting) is allowed; however it is limited to an exchange of positive, negative and neutral statements about the situation (e.g., "I want to accept the double."). No reasons for any doubling opinions may be given.

After a short explanation about the play of the game followed by the first round team pairing announcements, tournament directors Bill Davis and Randy Cone were kept very busy answering questions and settling penalty disputes. As the

of the finest (and fastest) bridge, chess and backgammon players in the Midwest are Greg DeFotis and Bobbie Anderson. Even these two dynamos were decelerated by the Duo-Gammon format. And this was true for everyone. The simplest moves were played carefully in the fear of facing an ungodly partner's wrath after the game.

Although the following rounds progressed at a somewhat quicker pace, the overall tournament length necessitated a split for first place in the Open division. The final results were not entirely unexpected. Players with the greatest success in previous doubles tournaments continued to win. Chicagoans Sarge Serfes and Bernie Pygon shared first place in the Open Main Flight with Diane Blumenfeld and House of Backgammon director Ida Weil. Serfes was a semi-finalist in two major 1978 doubles events — the World Championship and the U.S. Open. Blumenfeld (with Sue Boyd) won the doubles tournament at the 1978 Women's World Championships.

In the Open Consolation event, Tom Walthes and Peter Kalba (semi-finalists, 1979 Indiana State Doubles Championships) split the top honors with Howard Markowitz and Darrell Marcus. Lucky Nelson and Dean Morehouse captured first prize in the Intermediate bracket.

In a survey of entrants conducted at the conclusion of the tournament, 53% said that they liked Duo-Gammon less than the other current forms of doubles play. Some participants said that Duo-Gammon was extremely taxing — as tough as singles. Many players complained about the slow playing time. Diane Blumenfeld thought that it was difficult to develop a solid

I couldn't argue with my partner!"

Other survey questions indicated that general support for backgammon doubles is solid. Although 50% of the players like doubles play less than singles, 72% agree that some form of doubles should be included in every major tournament.

Is Duo-Gammon a suitable form of backgammon doubles for general tourney play? Probably not. However, for head-to-head team challenge matches or paramount doubles tournaments with suitable running time, Duo-Gammon provides a fine test of a team's ability to channel individual player skills into a combined partnership effort.

OPEN DIVISION

Main Flight

1st/2nd Sarge Serfes / Bernie Pygon
1st/2nd Diane Blumenfeld / Ida Weil

Consolation

1st/2nd Tom Walthes / Peter Kalba
1st/2nd Howard Markowitz / Darrell Marcus

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION

Main Flight

1st Lucky Nelson / Dean Morehouse
2nd Dick Bennett / Mitch Polk

Consolation

1st Chuck Bower / W. Gheen
2nd Bobbie Shifrin / Irv Zeman

Caption Contest Winner

In a close decision, the NBL voted Chicagoan Sam Farruggia's entry the winner in our *Belvedere* Caption Contest. Sam's 'current events' humor (see caption under cartoon) earns him an Aries travel backgammon set.

BELVEDERE



"Watch out, he's from the Ayatollah School of Backgammon!"

(To obtain a copy of Duo-Gammon and/or Tag Team Doubles "Rules & Procedures" write to GAMMON.)



Marcia Hovey (left), with NBL directors Bill Davis (center) and Randy Cone (right).



Seated from left to right are: Sarge Serfes, Bernie Pygon, Dave Cramer and Michelle Marcus.

game plan when you could only play every other move.

On the positive side, nearly everyone agreed that the Duo-Gammon format was a true test of actual doubles skill. Sarge Serfes commented that it was an extremely quiet tournament, and Ida Weil came up with another hidden benefit, "At least

evening progressed, the rate of questions decreased to a normal level.

Opening round matches were set at nine points. A funny thing happened at the score-reporting table during the first two hours — nothing! It was initially assumed that because the non-consultation format eliminated partnership arguments, moves would be played quicker. Not true. Two

**ITT Worldcom sponsors
First Backgammon Tourney via Facsimile
Between Switzerland and United States**

"ITT World Communications, Inc. will host the first . . ." What seemed like a "snooze-thru" turned into a genuinely exciting week of backgammon, with a ending as good as any movie.

An all-star team had gathered in Geneva. What was the point of showing up, if you had to play Beverly Philips, Serge Lorenzin, Kiumars Motakhasses and current world champion Luigi Villa.

But then, there was also a player or four at the UN Plaza Hotel. New York to Geneva in 35 seconds. Each day, one-on-one matches played entirely via high speed facsimile.

In Geneva, each match would be played from ITT's exhibit booth during Telecom '79, the third telecommunications exposition sponsored by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

The world press quoted George F. Knapp, President of ITT World Communications, as he introduced Rapifax 100 and the five-day tournament. "Playing this intricate game of skill, with each move transmitted between Switzerland and the U.S. via satellite, will dramatically demonstrate the flexibility of modern facsimile and the dependability of our worldwide telecommunications network."



Barclay smiles, and the U.S. team wins, 3 to 2.

DAY	NEW YORK	vs	GENEVA
One	Paul Magriel		Luigi Villa
	0		1
Two	Lee Genuid		Beverly Philips
	0		1
Three	Oswald Jacoby		Serge Lorenzin
	2		0
Four	Barclay Cooke		Kiumars Motakhasses
	1		0

Thus, with the panache that has made him so dear to the backgammon world, Barclay cleaned their collective clocks.

There was nothing quiet about the New York crowd. Ed Frisbie (ITT's Manager, Sales Promotion) yelled as loud as Ted Barr, who had come to cover the action for *The Seattle Times* and his syndicated backgammon column.

Rena Caverly



Ed Frisbie introduces the U.S. team to the press. From the left: Oswald Jacoby, Lee Genuid, Barclay Cooke and Paul Magriel.

**The AMERICAN BACKGAMMON
ASSOCIATION**

Over 200 entrants battled it out to qualify for the 24 final spots in the major tourney. An additional 8 were allowed to "buy" into the finals for an entry fee of \$160.00 giving a championship draw of 32. Approximately 40 played in the intermediate division, and another 80 in the Satellite tournaments (which included doubles, knock outs, last chance, and the last "last" chance). The tourney was held at the Don CeSar Resort Hotel in St. Petersburg Beach.

The A.B.A. holds tournaments in Tallahassee, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Winter Haven, Lakeland and new tournaments in Miami and Anna Maria Island.

A.B.A. National Championships 1979

Winner	Robert Carpenter
2nd	Calin-Aliman Estianu
Semi	Richard Patterson
Semi	Dennis Stearns

Consolation —

1st	Lois Blithe
2nd	Terri Jane Suymatsu
Semi	Sue Giroux
Semi	Louise Smith

Doubles —

1st	Garnett Rowley / Les Burton
2nd	Will Atkinson / Bob Carpenter

**St. Petersburg Amateur Backgammon
Championship for the Mayor's Cup**

A total of 12 flights of 32 players each, with the top four in each flight qualifying for finals — **TOTAL PLAYERS 384** — playing for the benefit of the city's Juvenile Services program, and for prizes totaling \$3,000.

The turnout, while not as high as Juvenile Services had hoped, showed the growing popularity of backgammon. And it will provide about \$1,000 to Juvenile Services.

Flight Winners;: Les Burton, Dianna Day, Dennis Stearns, Bob Carpenter, Harvey Hertz, Dan Clague, Lori Launonen, Linda Talbot, Sue Giroux, Adam Riggs, Sophia Doss, Rose Wolfenbarger.

Winner	Lily Khalil
2nd	Les Burton
3rd	Linda Talbot
4th	Dan Clague

Special Consolation — 64 players —
\$100.00 winner Mary Salib

CROCKFORD'S BY CAMERALIGHT

by Joel Rettew



James Hunt and Jane Birkin



Berry Gordy



Two of the 'tennis' costumes, French Maid and Jockey, specially made by Yellow Dot Sportswear, to be auctioned for the charity, SPARKS.



Applause from the audience and congratulations from George Sulimirski to Alan Simonin, winner of the Championship.



Victor Sharabany and Roger Low in the tense final of the second consolation. Sharabany was leading 16-6 in a 17 point game and was defeated by Low.

Even the vicarious circuit riders know it's hard work trying to get the *exact* tournament dates much in advance, but for sure it will be "... the week before Monte Carlo, and simultaneous with the Coral Classic Tennis Pro/Am ... Crockford's Summer Backgammon Tournament."

July 2 - 7, 1979. The winners:

Winner: Alan Simonin
Finalist: George Sulimirski

Semi-finalists:

Winner:
Finalist:
Semi-finalists:

Winner:

First Consolation

H. Perlman
A. Rosenthal

J. Hassidoff
K. Kourdoulou
R. Fricker
H. Michaelides

Second Consolation

Roger Low

Finalist:
Semi-finalists:

Winner:
Finalist:
Semi-finalists:

Victor Sharabany
D. Leibowitz
J. Rettew

Last Chance

C. Jeans
J. Broomfield
Margaret Tracey
Martin King

Pacific Northwest Backgammon Association

Ted Barr and Associates and the Pacific Northwest Backgammon Association have recently announced the appointment of Dick Scofield as Regional Director for all backgammon activities in the State of Oregon.

Scofield, who originally did his playing in St. Louis and later in the San Francisco Bay area, now makes his home in Portland. In addition to participation in weekly tournaments at many local clubs throughout the U.S., Dick has also played in several major tournaments.

Dick will initiate his Oregon backgammon activities by conducting a weekly tournament at the Park Place Restaurant in Portland on Monday evenings.

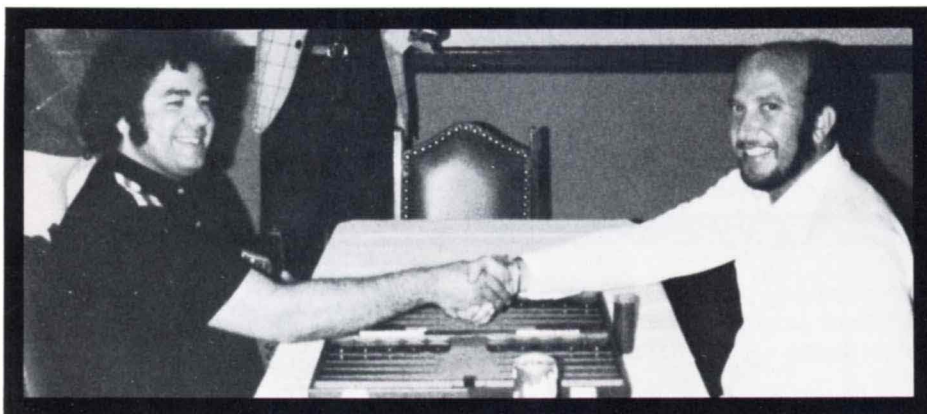
Weekly tournaments will also be starting soon in Salem and Eugene. Scofield is also organizing a Challenge Cup Tournament between a Portland team and a team from Seattle.

Ted Barr

The Nebraska Challenge Cup October 13, 1979

Electricity and sparks celebrated the first major event of the Great Plains Backgammon Club. There were plenty of out-of-town players competing with the tough and enthusiastic OBC'ers.

How often does Bernie Pygon go home to Chicago without some piece of the purse? Rumor has it that OBC "old-timers" (Peterson, Yudelson, etc.) are losing ground to their former students. Over 250 members and still growing! Watch out — here they come.



Chaim Neumann (right) being congratulated by Shahbaz Noorvash.

1st: Steve Nelson, Omaha; 2nd: John Valenti, Kansas City; 3rd: P. J. Morgan; 4th: Rich Chess.

Mexican Backgammon Federation's 1st National Circuit, Mexico City November 19-22, El-Presidente Chapultepec

The tournament was professionally administered, mostly by the lovely *wives* of the Federation Directors, Senoras' Mendoza and Snieder.

Their equitable double elimination format will be repeated at another Copa Old Parr Tournament — the Frontier Hotel in Las Vegas, March 30 — April 30, 1980.

Winner: Paulette Aburto; Second: Jaimi Chaljan; Third: Alberto Lichi

Rancho Bernardo Backgammon Classic San Diego, Calif. — July 3 - 4, 1979

The caliber of play was extremely high as top players came from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Mexico and the San Diego area to play in the Rancho Bernardo Backgammon Classic. Moments after the fireworks, Chaim Neumann of Newport Beach emerged victoriously over Shahbaz Noorvash of Los Angeles. Neumann was able to score a come-from-behind victory in the final match to defeat Shahbaz 19-17. In a quarter-final match, Neumann overcame a 9-14 deficit to defeat San Wilson, 15-14. Sam recovered, to win the consolation over Halden Evecan.

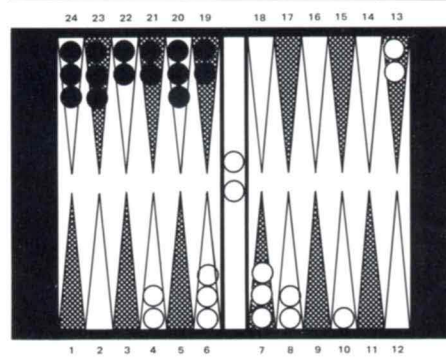
Play was exciting and competitive in all divisions. Other Championship players who did very well include semi-finalists Ricky Sax of Los Angeles and Jeff Ward

of San Diego. Also placing in the money were Ezzat Yomtob and Dave Ashley. In the Intermediate division it was Bruno Lotz over Mike Clancy. The Beginner division was won by Jimmy Lakdawla and Barry Gittleman won the Youth competition.

The tournament was held at the Rancho Bernardo Inn, located 15 miles northeast of San Diego. Pleasantly warm weather and sunshine prevailed over the two-day tourney. Many players chose to play their matches at poolside. Tennis, golf and leisure added to the relaxing atmosphere. The tournament was hosted by the Southern California Backgammon Club.

In the final match, Shahbaz Noorvash was leading 17-14, and seemed certain to win a gammon *and* the 19-point match from the following position:

NOORVASH



NEUMANN

At this point, Chaim Neumann, realizing that his position was desperate, turned the cube. Shahbaz, of course, accepted, and then rolled double 5's. Chaim hit, and proceeded to win the game *and* the match.

Next on the schedule for the Southern California Backgammon Club was the October 5-7th Annual San Diego Open. Drew Tanzman directed this 160 player event as Roy Springer from La Mesa beat Jay Whitehead in the finals. Shahbaz and Aram Kouleyan were the semi-finalists. Ron Nissensen lost the Championship Consolation finals to Bryan Day, as Marie Azen won the last chance.

Washington Classic Washington, DC — November 5, 1979

Jamie Gore, of Georgetown, edged-out local socialite Margaret Hodges by the score of 5-3, to win first place in the Black & White Washington Classic Backgammon Championship. Semi-finalists were Dr. Carl MacCartee, Jr., and John Wagley.

ST. PAUL-MINNEAPOLIS BACKGAMMON CLUB

The growth of interest in backgammon across the country over the past five years is evidenced in part by the success of the St. Paul/Minneapolis Backgammon Club, especially in the last two years where membership, tournaments and club playing times have doubled. All of the credit for the enviable growth our club has experienced goes to the Club President, Lee Silverstein, who organizes weekly tournaments, hosts sessions of informal head-to-head play and chouettes, promotes special



From left to right: Barclay Cooke, Josie Minehan and Jeff Siegel.

backgammon events and directs three major seasonal tournaments.

Our expanding membership and the growing competence of our young players has loosened the grip of dominance the more experienced players once enjoyed in the club. Credit for this should go to players such as George Brandt who has given generously of his time and skill in teaching the finer points of the game to our members, and to Club Adviser, Barclay Cooke, whose visits are a pleasure and inspiration. No other spokesman for the game so articulately conveys a sense of its powerful uncertainty, and certainly no other player plays with such lethal delight!

The Club's major tournaments correspond closely with local celebrations. The Minneapolis Aquatennial, a 10-day Festival of beauty queens, milk-carton boat races and other watersport events, provides an exuberant background for our Club's Aquacube Tournament. On the calendar's flip-side is St. Paul's break from the grip of winter, the Winter Carnival, the scene for the Winter Carnival Tournament. (The only problem is how to keep the ice off the dice!)

In the fall, the Minnesota Renaissance Festival provides a romantic and authen-

tic historical setting for the ancient game of backgammon, and besides, it's safer to joust over the tables than over a black charger! While playing on hay bales you will never be distracted by the belly dancers, jugglers, minstrels, pantomimists, madrigals, magicians, royalty or the town crier. Lee ate as we hosted a backgammon booth at the Renaissance Fair (weekends August 18 — September 23) to introduce the intricacies to any tyros. The Tournament was held September 8 & 9.

On an occasional basis \$100.00 Entry-fee tournaments are conducted for champions only, complete with calcutta.

Weekly Thursday night tournaments offer both advanced and intermediate divi-



Judy Herberg (left), Lee Silverstein (center) and Barclay Cooke (right).

sions, and alternate between Minneapolis and St. Paul. In St. Paul, the University Club of historic Summit Avenue is the site of action and our host in Minneapolis is the restaurant D. B. Kaplan's in Butler Square. Every Sunday evening members gather at Martini and Bagels for informal chouettes and one-on-one's.

Out-of-towners are welcome at all club events and we look forward to meeting you. For more information, write The Backgammon Club, c/o Lee Silverstein, 1658 Watson Ave., St. Paul, MN 55116. Or call Lee at (612) 698-4436.

David Hanold
and Shuman Lee

The U.S. Open — January 6-9, 1980 MGM Grand, Reno Les Boyd, Director

Championship — 1st: Badia Khaury; 2nd: Joe Monro. **Intermediate** — 1st: Dave DeKoker. **Beginner** — 1st: Kathy O'Hallin.

The Georgia Open — Oct 5-7, 1979 Riviera Hyatt Hotel, Atlanta Craig Tyndall, Director

Southern hospitality is what Georgia Backgammon is all about. Celebrating the reality of their own (overdue) circuit event, the Atlanta players joined the tournament carpetbaggers as they arrived from both coasts, and commenced to have a ball.

From the opening Tag-Team Doubles Friday, through the finals Sunday (alongside the Aries Youth competitions) Craig eased the players into the consolation events. He provided much appreciated re-entry for late round losers from the earlier events.

Kathy Posner kept mumbling (Now, have you ever heard her *mumble*?) "What is this, some kind of Director's Tournament? Start the chouette, will you." There were a few:

Lee Genud (Card & Cube, New Hyde Park), Linda George (Jacksonville Backgammon Club), Martha Ghio (La Boucherie, New Orleans), Dave Harris (Chattanooga Backgammon Club), Gary Kay (Mississippi Backgammon Association), David Cohen (Bayou Backgammon Club, Dallas) and of course, Sid Jackson.

Rums of Puerto Rico, represented by affable Gerry Hernandez, hosted the Friday evening cocktail party. Gerry couldn't spend the entire weekend with us, and Craig agreed with Martin Cohen that this was the only disappointing part of the tournament.

Tag-Team Doubles — Winners: David & DeAne Schroeder

Championship —
1st: Don Feigenbaum
2nd: Steve Moffet
Semis: Paul Foster / George Morse

Consolation —
1st: David Schroeder
2nd: Dick Dunne
Semis: Kathy Posner / Phyllis Davidson

Last Chance —
1st: David Kane
2nd: Stuart Domeshek

"God bless my home-board."

The Texas Backgammon Association

The Texas Backgammon Association's reputation for tournament excellence scored another rave review as 87 seasoned competitors survived the Woodlands Inn in Houston.

Friday, November 17, seasoned Tournament Dictator, Frank Lichtenstein, stealthfully entered the club and stumbled onto the 16 pairs playing the Tag-Team Doubles event.

When only a few players were smiling, Frank knew that it was his signal to call Jim Howe. "It's too bad we never get photogenic winners," thought Frank as he recognized the nefarious Dick Cather and Tom Wheeler. It was clear that Cather was "confused" about the outcome of his team's match. As the *Winning-Team* Trophy was brought out, he mumbled to Howe, "If my partner had only carried his end, we woulda beat this chump. I never beat Wheeler. Next time, so help me!" With a look of disgust he stalked out looking to vent his rage on the unsuspecting opponent in the main event.

In violation of all laws of nature and physics, in spite of endless miracle rolls and defaulting opponents, Cather managed to dump matches even Steve Thayer would win.

Winner — Les Fukuya; 2nd: Richard Par-rack; 3rd: Sandy Lubetkin; 4th: Gus Michalopoulos.



Eventual winner George Morris (right) battles it out with Bill Michaels in the Finals of the Bayou Backgammon Tournament.

Joy Candace
Phyllis Davidson

Houston

The character of Houston Backgammon runs the gamut from spontaneous games at posh nighteries to professionally run tournaments.

There are no backgammon clubs *per se*, as in New York or Los Angeles, but the social games proliferate at the disco's and bars. At such places as Todd's, Friday's, Jason's and Elan's, the bar areas are ringed by countertops set with open boards. The more serious (and quiet) backgammon is played either privately or at tournaments.

Weekly its Tuesday at the Woodway Clubhouse with a monthly (alternating with Dallas) weekend event run by Frank Lichtenstein and Jim Howe, complete with auction.

Houston, Texas

D.C.

RECIPES in Dallas, Texas

Yes, the rumors are true. The Pawn Shop is no longer. Our home of so many years is now going to be a country disco and we have located at Recipes.

We shall try them out while they try us out. They have kindly consented to allow us the use of the attractive club and the dining facilities while we play. We are invited both for casual play and for our tournaments. Realizing of course that it is new and different to us, please come and give it a fair try. Recipes invites us to start our tournaments and will have a free drink for each of us to say hello and welcome.

Since Recipes is not open on Mondays, we will have the Championship tournaments on Tuesday with a \$20 entry fee. The Intermediate tournament will also be on Tuesday with an entry fee of \$12 and registration will begin at 7:00 p.m. and the tournament will begin at 7:30 p.m. Please call ahead if you would like to pre-register or if you are going to be later than 7:30.

Our Beginner tournament will be on Wednesday, as usual, with an entry fee of \$5. Registration at 7:00 p.m. and play to start at 7:30 p.m. as normal. There will be a one hour time limit per match that will be enforced.

Maggie is the manager of the Recipes and when you get here, let her know who you are. We all are appreciative that we are able to continue our playing as a rather large group at such a nice place, and we thank Maggie for her cooperating and assistance in getting us relocated.

You can call me at my home and the number is 348-6980. I hope that you will all plan to join us in the reunion of our players and join us for a drink.

Taffie Norris



House of Backgammon
Summer Kick-Off
Chicago, Illinois

Championship — Main Event

Winner: Herb Roman; Finalist: Walter Rhodes; Semi-finalists: Darrel Marcus and Elliot Winslow; Quarter-finalists: Bill Davis, Greg DeFotis, Fredrick Grand and Gail Newman.

Championship — Consolation

Winner: Bruce Shin; Finalist: Dennis McKown; Semi-finalists: Gene Chait and Greg DeFotis.

Intermediate — Main Event

Winner: Jay Bleiman; Finalist: Jeremy Silman; Semi-finalists: Dean Morehouse and Lucky Nelson.

Intermediate — Consolation

Winner: Bob Francis; Finalist: John Martin; Semi-finalists: Esther Quirol and Debbie Seidner.



Left to right: Ida Weil, Director; Herb Roman, Winner, M.F.; Phelicia Krakow, Director.



Left to right: Ida Weil, Tournament Director; Jay Bleiman, Intermediate winner; and Phelicia Krakow, Director.

Chicago House of Backgammon's
Backgammon Winter Carnival
November 4, 1979

A new record for House of Backgammon events. A packed house perfectly orchestrated by the noted Weil/Krakow/Markowitz trio.

Although *Time Magazine* thinks he's Wayne McClintock, we're sure the 64 players know a John Demian when they see one win their event.

2nd: Howard Markowitz; Finalists: Bill Davis, Elliott Winslow.

Championship Consolation — Winner: Bobby Anderson.

Intermediate — Jill Ferdinand.



Left to right: Herb Roman (winner) playing Walter Rhodes (finalist).



Left to right: Darrel Marcus and Bill Davis.



Left to right: Gene Chait, Jim Gibbs and Dennis McKown during the quarter-finals of the Consolation.

COLUMBIANA BUICK OLDS BACKGAMMON CLASSIC

Benefiting the Multiple Sclerosis Society

The tournament will consist of four weekly qualifying rounds beginning January 7, 1980, to be held at four different locations on consecutive nights. The finals will be held at Southern Park Mall in Boardman, Ohio.

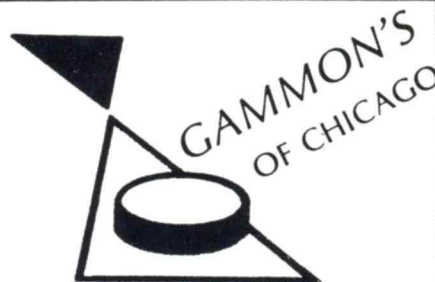
The weekly locations are as follows:

Monday — The Side Door
Broadway Ave., Salem
Tuesday — The Ranch
47769 Route 14
New Waterford
(east of Columbiana)

Wednesday — The Ground Round
Route 422, Warren

Thursday — Open

The tournament will be conducted so that there is one qualifier each week from each location. Concluding with 16 finalists meeting at Southern Park Mall on the first Saturday following the weekly eliminations. For information call: (216) 457-7134.



You are welcomed into the new wave of Chicagoland backgammon for the 1980's. We are the combined forces of the National Backgammon League and the House of Backgammon. We are GAMMON'S OF CHICAGO.

We offer you:

- A multi-faceted backgammon club with a permanent location
- Lesson availability at all levels of play from qualified instructors
- A vast selection of backgammon sets and equipment
- Tri-leveled tournament competition for cash prizes and master points
- A congenial atmosphere for casual play and chouettes.

The membership fee for 1980 is \$25. You are invited to utilize our facilities and enter tournaments from December 9 thru December 31 at member's rates. After January 1, GAMMON'S OF CHICAGO members will receive substantial savings on such particulars as tournament fees, admission charges and backgammon equipment.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday, December 9

Grand Opening Tournament
Guaranteed cash prizes

Sunday, December 23

Yuletide Festival
Added gifts

Monday, December 31

New Year's Eve Gala
Tournaments, chouettes

Our club, open 365 days of the year at 12:00 noon, is located in Chicago at 2715 West Peterson Avenue. Our telephone number is (312) 271-8877. Randy Cone, Bill Davis, Jeff Henry and Phelicia Krakow comprise our staff. We are GAMMON'S OF CHICAGO. We welcome you.

Ida Weil
Howard Markowitz

BACK OF THE BOOK

We hope you'll write in with questions regarding our columnist's answers and conclusions. We'll forward them appropriately and gloat with you when they err. The best "goof-up" letters will receive GAMMON T-shirts and our thanks.

THE HUSTLE (page 22) SOLVED

A correct sequence of moves is: 6-6 (13 to 7 three times and 8 to 2), 4-4 (13 to 5, 8 to 4 and 6 to 2) and 3-3 (8 to 5, 7 to 4 and 6 to 3 twice).

Other solutions are possible, but they all involve the play of 6-6, 4-4 and 3-3.

One hundred is the starting number in "Ray Terkowsky's Dice Giveaway on page



Merry Christmas

DENNIS BORGOGNO

GET GAMMON

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT BACKGAMMON & THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY

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**BACKGAMMON: the second best
game you can play in bed.®**

Delaware County Chess Club is conducting weekly backgammon tournaments Wednesdays in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. For information, call Louis Gnepp, 328-7917 ★ New Backgammon Players Club meets Fridays at 8:00 p.m. at the United Single's Center in Plantation, Fla. For information call (305) 581-4559 ★ Bi-monthly backgammon tournaments Wednesdays at Another Roadside Attraction, in Gary, Indiana. For information call 759-5197 ★ In Hartford, Connecticut, Gerry Spaulding of Paul's Game Store gives free backgammon demonstrations at the Blue Hills Branch Library ★ Gumbu U offers two backgammon courses through the University of Southern Louisiana Union. Subjects include wagering and tournament procedure ★ A million dollar transformation has turned the restaurant in the Chicago Marriott O'Hare into *Gambits* — featuring two dance floors and three backgammon areas ★ The sophisticated Le Jacquet in Sao Paulo has thirty-two backgammon tables set in a 19th century motif. Yummy, let's go ★ The ultimate backgammon set was commissioned by Prince Moulay Abdullah, brother of King Hassan II of Morocco. Naef Orfaley, noted sculptor, made this set of gemstones and precious metals. How much? About \$50,000.00 ★ Juanita College students in Pennsylvania built a record-breaking backgammon board as part of a course entitled "Small Group Decision Making." The game board measured 60 yards by 40 yards, with dice the size of washing machines. The checkers were students clad in tractor-tire inner tubes ★ At the Red River Street Fair in Fargo, North Dakota . . . they rolled giant dice on a backgammon board spray-painted on an open field, as part of the Trollwood Mid-Summer Arts Festival ★ Student Stuart Calle, 19, builds 6' by 4' backgammon games to order. Calle sells these for about \$95, with the profits going to the American Cancer Society. Calle attends Bowdoin College in Maine and does business as The Pop Art Stable, 132 Round Hill Road, Greenwich, Conn., 06830, (203) 661-4889 ★ A backgammon board cake with edible everything, in flavors such as applesauce-raisin, rum-

butter and fillings of strawberry, fudge and mint . . . One (or more) from Jewell Catering Services, 1110 West Belmont, Chicago, Ill., (312) 935-6316 ★ Invecta Plastics has released a new series called "The Passport Games." Various games, including Go, dominoes and of course backgammon ★ A recent Gallup poll found that 41% of teens from homes where both parents attended college play backgammon. Overall, 22% of the nation's teens are warming up for future tournaments ★ Laurence Dawson made the AP wire service with 314 unpaid parking tickets, accumulated while playing chess and backgammon on the Northside of Chicago. Dawson, a self-employed electrician, said that he was prepared to pay the \$62,800 fines, "preferably on the installment plan." ★ The 2nd Annual Intercollegiate Backgammon Competition began at over 400 colleges in November. Some of last year's winners are showing up at regular circuit events ★ In case you haven't heard, the day after he became the new Merit World Champion (succeeding Paul Magriel and Joe Dwek), Luigi Villa of Milan, Italy lost a \$5,000 challenge match to Kim Brand's "Aristotle," now marketed by Steve Chafitz (of *Boris* fame). It retails for \$2,500 ★ Joffre de la Fontaine hosts a weekly TV talk show in Mexico City. The one hour program, *Fabulismo*, has the same celebrity guests generally seen on U.S. television ★ Just announced . . . the First International Room 3 Backgammon Contest in Renton, WA, was won by Jeff Thompson, age 8 ★ Michael Nuss, age 12, won the Skiles Middle School Backgammon Tournament in Skokie, Ill ★ Tom Chiszar, defeated his *6th Grade Reading Teacher*, to win the Jefferson Jr. High Backgammon Tournament in Naperville, Ill ★ In North Syracuse, New York, ele-

mentary school student Tom Spier, won the All-County Play Day Backgammon Tournament ★ In Prospect Park, Penna, Tom Deane, age 11, finished first in the Summer Recreation Backgammon Program ★ Jan Lister (Georgia Backgammon Association official) directed the 1st Annual DeKalb Backgammon Tournament for the Recreation Departments, as well as the Georgia Open Youth Competition ★ Kahiki Restaurant in Columbus, Ohio, raised \$1,300 for the Childrens' Mental Health Centers with a backgammon benefit. First place winner was Emelio J. Ricevuto ★ The invitation read "outrageous dress — like a star — or your uniform for work." Hundreds mobbed the first Bartender and Cocktail Waitress Ball held by their club, the *Star's Disco and Backgammon Club* in Baltimore, Maryland ★ Student Chal LeTourneau couldn't find players in Longview, Washington, so he organized a backgammon club. Sound familiar? Call Ron's Emporium for further details ★ Backgammon has devotees in strange places — the Soviets have named their new ground-to-air missile . . . you guessed it . . . *Gammon*. φψξ ★ After paying for a blunder he made in a customer's account, a gold broker on the hectic trading floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange told his needling colleagues, "Not to worry . . . I'll get it back from each of you backgammon pigeons after the market closes" ★ Bernard Bergstein is setting up an exclusive club location for backgammon enthusiasts in Honolulu ★ The ubiquitous Ted Barr, this time as advisor to Bonni Patton, and her new Gammon Gallery in Salishan (on the Oregon coast) where the local craftsmen have found a home for their handmade tables and inlaid boards ★ Backgammon lessons, Wednesday, 8:00 p.m. — One hour lessons for beginners. Louisville Bridge Center, 190 Colony Way. Free. Register by calling Larry Strasburg, 451-3950 ★ Hagop Ispanian was the winner of the seventh annual Gary Adjemian Memorial Backgammon Tournament in Niagara Falls, August 12. Competitors in this tournament are all members of the Armenian community in western New York and Canada ★

NEWS WIRE

by Diana Berman

DIRECTORS' GRAPEVINE

Psst! Look here for ideas to improve your events — Pass it along.

The unprecedented popularity of backgammon as a leisure activity and the contagious excitement of backgammon event competition is obvious. Consider as evidence the plethora of criminally inept event "organizers" who survive in spite of gouging weekly tournament fees and directing from a chouette.

Even competent event directors are vulnerable to creeping complacency. And reduced player attendance should warn *them* it's time to measure the tournament "value" from the other side of the registration desk.

Directors of equitable events, who enjoy the inherent responsibility, are growing in number. Innovative and responsive, they are able to create attractions and added event prizes, without excessively depleting the entry fee prize purse. Consider using some of the following, modified to the circumstances of your events.

Contact local auto leasing agencies and offer the Sales Manager a 4 or 6 week exposure using your special series of events, complete with poster, calendar listings and/or extensive mailings (costs covered by the leasing agency, of course). In return

for this unique extensive exposure to a prime market, they will provide the top series prize, a 90-day Cadillac lease. Their cost is the postage and insurance for the 90 days. Small cost, when you explain the traffic that will pass by their name, prominently displayed during the "poster life" of the tournament series.

Oh, by the way, Francesca . . . we received the xeroxes and have posted those NSF checks and their respective "authors" to the tournament report file. As more and more clubs submit these reports, the offenders list is becoming comprehensive and valuable; a deterrent, protecting us all from the short-shot artists that lurk around the edges of backgammon. Players also report on organizers lack of responsibility, misrepresentation, gross ignorance, etc.

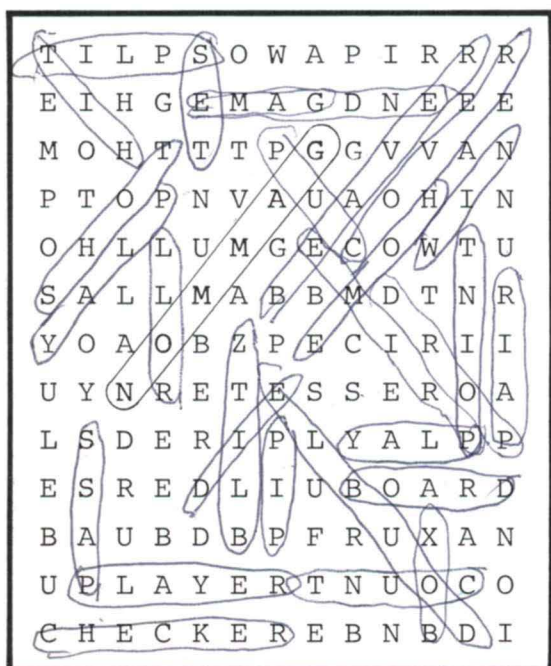
The yellow pages and the entertainment directory in the paper will give you an idea of the epic number of entertainment centers that will be responsive to your club request for promotional passes, free lessons, tickets, etc. In return your event flyers, and other tournament exposure vehicles will advertise their attrac-

tions. Everybody benefits — the tennis club or amusement park gets exposure by contributing their tickets, and the players enjoy these tournaments' attractions. The atmosphere improves and you get to see larger crowds at your events.

If you need 32 or 64 player wall charts, don't spend any of the massive profits you obviously collect as tournament director. GAMMON will send you some on request. Speaking of requests, you can ask the ABPA to reserve up to 300 sets for use at your next event. Aries of Beverly Hills will ship sets from their tournament support pool, the only requirement is that the club pay the round-trip freight charges. No more piggy bank raids to finance tournament equipment costs. Award ABPA (local) Master Point credits to the winners each week. Buy a drink for the regular player who brings in a fresh face. Buy one for someone who gets gammoned.

Many manufacturers of backgammon equipment offer their products to tournament directors through the ABPA as added tournament prizes in exchange for promotional exposure benefits. Write the ABPA for details.

Sid Jackson



Search out the backgammon words (up, down, across and diagonally, backwards and forwards).

Gammon T-shirts to the 25 readers finding the most words.

Submissions must be postmarked no later than February 15, 1980.

New from **Z & Co.** *the 250Z*



Dice - doubling cube and checkers are included
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FORUM PROPOSALS & PERSPECTIVES

By golly, now *there* was a tough-sounding lead piece: "Why We Should Organize," by the world-famous Alfred Sheinwold. And hidden back on page 62 (where this will be lucky to appear, if at all) was his answer: a boxed description of the best organization in "The Game," the ABPA.

It's unlikely, but possible, that the celebrated Mr. Sheinwold could be unaware of the American Backgammon Players Association . . . he must otherwise be involved, or he would know of their various player services and event support programs. Just as Mr. Sheinwold described — master points, rules, etc. — with glitches here and there since they're new and innovative, but otherwise just what the doctor prescribed.

In the three years of its existence, or at least for the past two with which I am familiar, the Players Association has been demonstrating their responsibility in order to gain the local organizer's cooperation and strength. As a Tournament Director in the remoter reaches of backgammon activity, I have accepted the ABPA, warts and all, as the best connection with the rest of the country and I am certain other club organizers have found, it is nearly impossible to achieve local recognition and/or respectability for our tournaments when you operate on a one-shot or once-a-year-and-isn't-that-interesting-dearie basis.

There are all manner of people trying, all the time and everywhere, to promote tournament backgammon for all manner of reasons. There are the well-intentioned players who just want an opportunity to get everybody in the neighborhood together once in a while for the fun of it, and there are the not-so-well intentioned bandwagon jumpers out to make a bunch of bucks off of the latest "in" thing. It's a toss-up as to which does tournament backgammon the greater disservice.

One shouldn't be too surprised either, to find legitimate tournament organizers and clubs reluctant to give up a part of their big fish/small pond status.

So, how to get organized?

How do we achieve Mr. Sheinwold's "strong organization?" Looking at it from this corner of America, it would seem that the place to start is with what we already have available and give it enough support to make it stronger. Players who resent greedy tournament organizers should give ABPA their support through their numbers: ABPA in turn, must use this mandate to weed out tournaments and tournament promoters who can't or won't play fair

with tournament participants. A system of ranking tournaments and tournament directors that makes sense to players is badly needed by everyone associated with The Game: players, sponsors, manufacturers . . . and tournament organizers. Legitimate organizers and clubs (especially those with property and promotional investments) no matter how large or small should not only welcome such classification, but we owe it to our local constituencies to insist on it.

There is a tendency, on the part of all of us, to hang our hats on the jet-set-megabuck-chouette-players involved with backgammon, but whether the celebrities at Pips and Crockfords like the reality or not, there are more CPA's, computer programmers, hairdressers and Oregon lumberjacks playing backgammon these days . . . and playing it very well, indeed . . . than would have been imaginable to the mysterious Mr. Doubling, who invented the cube back in the 20's.

These players are by and large willing to support an organization on a national basis, I'm sure: but the numbers willing to join *and give it strength* will be determined partially by how much it costs them.

This might sound like a cheap shot from an avowed tightwad, but I'm sure the readers of *GAMMON* and the present members of the Players Association might wish to offer some input on this; and that their letters will be appreciated and given consideration. As Mr. Sheinwold says, "The more, the merrier."

*Rush Kolemaine
PIPmasters
Portland, OR*

I am not generally a nervous person, but my palms begin to perspire whenever I register at a tournament where the "Conditions of Entry" conclude with:

"To preserve the good name of Backgammon throughout the world, none of the players shall commence any litigation . . . nor publish any allegation or claim . . ."

A similar "hold harmless" disclaimer is printed on the back of most parking lot claim checks. It seems that once we've paid our fees, neither of these operators wants to be responsible for anything, even under egregious circumstances.

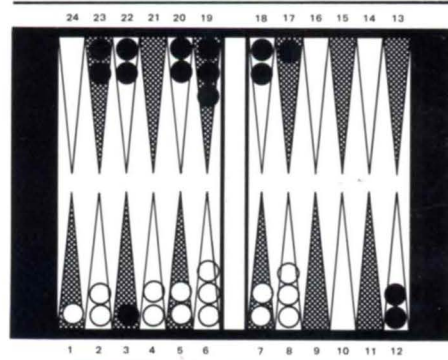
These same tournaments seem to be where I hear the poor and inequitable official's decisions. We should at least, demand that rulings conform to the printed

tournament rules, or ask for a committee ruling. Your entry fee has *some* rights.

If you and I and all the other tournament players remain silent about blatant favoritism, we deserve the common response we get to our meek protests: "If you don't like it, don't come to my tournaments!"

*Gary Kay
Mississippi Backgammon Association*

At the recent California Open, an irate player insisted that his opponent was trying to cheat him and demanded that I race over and rule in his favor. When I reached his table, the position was:



On his previous roll, Black had thrown 2-1 while on the bar. Perfect. He could hit on the 1 point and advance to the open 3 point where a subsequent 6 would let him escape his opponent's prime. Black's actual play, though, was a little faulty in that he landed on the 3 point and picked up his dice without putting White's blot on the bar.

White then rolled 3-2 and began moving a checker from the 6 point. At this moment (as Black described to me), he reached over while yelling, "You can't do that! You're on the bar," and took White's blot from the 1 point and put it on the bar.

As they argued over the correct position, White removed her dice from the board. When they couldn't agree on the status of her checker, I was summoned.

Although they agreed on the details leading up to the dispute, Black was visibly upset that I was only the Assistant Director. He decided that I would have to do, and explained at length that the only legal way for him to play the 2-1 from the bar was for him to hit White's

FORUM

blot. It was, he said, "so simple, that any idiot should be able to understand." Eventually, I was allowed to make a ruling.

I agreed that hitting the blot was his only legal play. But as he did not *pick up* the blot, he had made an *illegal* play. The Rules specifically covered his illegal play; the opponent of the player making the illegal play is, exclusively, entitled to the option of letting the illegal play stand or insisting that the player move legally. Since White rolled without commenting on the misplay, she was exercising her option to let the illegal play stand. Either she didn't notice the illegal play, or chose to let it go because it was to her benefit. Backgammon rules do not presume intent, but attempt to direct redress when violated.

The almost universal result of a tournament ruling is that at least one of the players is upset with the final decision. And so, predictably, Black ranted at length, read the rule at least three times, and cursed the world before he finally accepted the ruling.

Sid agreed with my earlier "illegal play" ruling, considered the subsequent contention and ruled (correctly, I believe) that since White's picking up her dice was attributable to Black's improper intervention, she shouldn't be penalized and the 3-2 should still be played. When Black cried, Sid asked him how many times earlier in the match White had lifted her dice before completing her moves. "None," snarled Black. "Who cares?"

Sid contended that if confusion results because of one player's improper actions, the opponent of the offending player should not be penalized. Directors would be well served by applying similar perspective in rulings to protect their players' equity.

Bill Granoff
Los Angeles, CA

I'm reading with interest and benefit *Playboy's Book of Backgammon* by Lewis Deyong, but two of his stories bother me. First, the game between Ed Drummer and Paulo Muller-Viscosa on page 221:

Having been told Ed was a deadbeat, why would Paulo turn the cube for any reason? Granted one lapse of sanity, why would he accept the redouble to 256?

All in all, it sounds like pretty strange behavior for an experienced gambler.

Second, Deyong offers his loss in the U.S.-England match (p. 268) as a prize hard-luck story; yet it seems to me he blew the key (diagram 7-7, p. 267) move.

The correct 5-4 is played two men from the five point.

This move leaves Deyong still vulnerable to losing the game, but not the match — not even the lead in the match.

Although his opponent has the same 11 shots for potential winners on the next roll, he also has a certain loser, 5-5.

The correct 5-4 gives 30 rolls to cover all blots, rather than 27. Combined with the losing 5-5, this means the blot on the 1 point is 62 percent safer from a possible second shot.

Looie gets only a ts-ks from this reader.

Alan Rohlstoen
Tacoma, WA

The books say the *Jacoby Rule* (an invention of the famous author and backgammon expert) isn't used in tournament backgammon, and it isn't . . . elsewhere. After several suggestions, we thought we'd give it a try at our Friday night torturement at the Wooden Horse, and the reaction from the majority of the 50 players on hand was *almost* unanimously favorable. Generally, it makes slow games extinct (almost) and with our normal time problem there, it appears to take some of the onus off of our necessary match time.

R.S.K.
PIPmasters
Tournament Backgammon

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 4.)

I have enjoyed reading GAMMON; however, the very first problem is at least a misprint, or an example of indisputable poor logic.

In diagram #1, Black's pip count of 69 is really 63, 69 probably is a misprint. If the 3 men on the 1-point were moved back to the 3-point, the pip count indeed would be 69. This leaves two positions, I have decided both are doubles (with certain exceptions in tournament play). I decided to play both positions (100 times each).

Position #1 with 3 men on the 1-point:

Results: Black wins 80%

Solution: Black should double,
White should refuse.

Position #2 (3 men from the 1-point shifted back to the 3-point:

Results: Black wins 71%

Solution: Black should double,
White should take.

I look forward to future issues, and expect either better proof-reading or better conclusions.

Best Luck!

Myron S. Rosenberg
Jacksonville, FL

(Ed: Wanna play him for money?)

BLOOPERS

(Continued from page 27.)

went to 24-24 before he got, quite literally, a last-second reprieve in the final game to win 25-24.

I'd have a much better ending to this collection of bloopers if Sconyers' error had cost him the match, the California Open title, several thousand dollars and numerous ego points. But that's the nature of backgammon. It's elusive, recalcitrant, like a child genius who's run away from home. It never grants the perfect order we seek so painstakingly to attain.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

(Continued from page 37.)

THE 4TH ANNUAL LUCILLE BALL TOURNAMENT FOR THE COCORIBE TROPHIES (December, 1979): **Championship** — 1st: John Rockwell; 2nd: Bijan Tagavi; Finalists: Roy Springer/Scott Rooth. **Championship Consolation** — 1st: Jean Pierre Deleurne; 2nd: Marty Abrams; Finalists: S. Charles Lee/Candace Mayeron. **Intermediate** — 1st: Peter Schlesinger; 2nd: Bruce Goldstein; Finalists: Don Snyder/Jay Grandy. **Intermediate Consolation** — 1st: Gail Margolis; 2nd: June Zimmelman; Finalists: Daniel Bryant/Peter Neuhaus. **Beginner** — 1st: Mark Milroy; 2nd: Carol Jackson; Finalists: John Hennessy/Ruth Page. **Beginner Consolation** — 1st: Kyle Gilbert; 2nd: Dan Cohen; Finalists: Larry York/Jeanette Corkery.

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- ✓ WIN at Poker—with Sklansky's Bluffing System—Issue #5
- ✓ WIN at Roulette—with the Kryptos System—Issue #4
- ✓ WIN at Greyhound Racing—with Johnson's Breaker/Closer System—Issue #16
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CITY STATE ZIP

Gaucus

by Hugo



Michael Block and WKRP's Lonnie Anderson have not been rescued after three weeks alone on a raft. Mike's backgammon company (Loui Michel Cie) donated \$10,000 worth of sets to Toys for Tots, the annual Christmas telethon on KTLA, Channel 5 in Los Angeles.

UPCOMING MAJOR EVENTS

JANUARY

- 22-27 2nd Turnberry Isle Gold Cup
Miami, FL
- 25-27 Gem City Open
Dayton, OH
- 27-29 Copa Old Parr
Mexico City

FEBRUARY

- 2-3 Winter Carnival
Minneapolis, MN
- 8-10 French Championship
Paris
- 23-24 Texas Backgammon
Houston, TX

MARCH

- 7-9 Spanish Championship
Madrid
- 22-23 Texas Backgammon
Dallas, TX
- 28-30 New York Classic
New York, NY

APRIL

- 11-13 Dutch Championship
Amsterdam
- 17-20 Aruba Championship
Curacao
- 18-20 BSO Benefit
Cambridge, MA
- 19-20 Texas Backgammon
Houston, TX

MAY

- 14 Massachusetts Open
Cambridge, MA
- 23-25 San Francisco Classic
San Francisco, CA
- 24-25 Texas Backgammon
Dallas, TX

JUNE

- 6-8 California Open
Los Angeles, CA
- 10-15 World Amateur Championship
Las Vegas, NV

Multi-faceted players — Californian Richard Armbruster stars in production of *The Music Man* — Computer weirdo, Pat Gibson, dives for Spanish gold and lesser relics — Todd Vander Pluym creates epic sand castles seen regularly on national television — Former owner of the Cavenish West, George Bassman, hosts a syndicated radio program, *Cream of the Alley*, combining his first-hand knowledge of the music greats with modern renditions of their classics ■ Option trader, Kent Goulding, makes backgammon success seem easy in the wire service feature describing his tournament talent and his trading expertise on the Chicago Board of Options Exchange ■ There is no better bargain. . . The Las Vegas Backgammon Club (Mike Maxakuli, Linda Kruegel and Mike Van Dusen) holds well-run weekly tournaments, provides dynamite seasonal parties for members and produces a club magazine that is the envy of all other local backgammon club promoters ■ Congratulations to Steve Thayer! The star of the Lone Star Chouette is now Vice President — International at Rauscher, Pierce, Refsnes, Inc., Dallas, Texas ■ The disco may be crowded upstairs, but downstairs JoAnne Ippolito choreographs the backgammon at Vamp's, in New Orleans ■ Bill Robertie won't take his Swiss Army Knife to Monte Carlo again. The airport security police in Nice discovered his concealed weapon. Hardened criminal that he is, Bill was relieved of his knife ■ MARRAKESH — "a blend of backgammon and poker" — Joli Kansil's new game ■ Congratulations to Tom and Janet Jarvis — a brand new baby girl named Jessica Marie ■ Vision Laughs at Counting" — a new book on backgammon theory by Danny Kleinman ■ George Plimpton, the peripatetic sportsman, will have a new gambling magazine out soon ■ How's this for a proposition? A 100-point match with the player giving his opponent a 60-point spot, getting 100 to 1 for his \$10,000 bet ■ The youngest money winner in Monte Carlo was 15-year-old Joel Rettew, Jr. ■ Peter Gold's son, Don, made a respectable showing in Puerto Rico. It's clear the youth are taking over commerce and politics, but this is getting serious! ■ The Coach holds a strong tournament at the Cavendish North in Detroit, the 2nd Sunday of each month ■ "Z" tables keep showing up in Championship matches everywhere. Puerto Rico, Cal. Open, etc. Plus that side-by-side set that's not so weird once you use

it ■ For a little girl, Carol Cole does big backgammon things in Flint, Michigan; including continuous backgammon games sponsored by her Flint Backgammon Club during the recent International Festival '79, as well as weekly tournaments. Club members Jaynie Cunningham and Gary Gangnath both teach backgammon in area high schools ■ Top point winners in NEBC Club Cup Race — Kermit Kimball (141) and Sid Golub (100) ■ Come on Jim — what's the date? ■ The National Backgammon League and the House of Backgammon have both disbanded (as of 12/1/79) and support GAMMON'S OF CHICAGO — a new, permanent club at 2715 W. Peterson Ave. It opened on December 9, 1979 ■ The new Ohio Backgammon Club comes out of the gate fast, as Dr. Don, the club Prez has lots of backgammon action to tend to . . . There's Jerico's in Columbus, where he had 1,000 entries in the *City Classic*, as well as directing the Lazarus in-store tournaments. There's also the new Kila Backgammon Lounge in Columbus, and his weekly backgammon course at Kent State University. Wonder what his spare time looks like! ■ More Ohio backgammon — Amanda's, in Cincinnati, where owner Mary Sue Morris has fashioned the second floor of her private club after backgammon heaven. If it looks similar to Todd's or elan's . . . it should. The owners of those popular places are friends of hers, and helped her set up the "hot spot" in Cincinnati ■ It doesn't hurt when the owner values backgammon in his establishment. Take the Sunday night event at the Fresno Holiday Inn, where Mr. Steele, the innkeeper, has supported the club by purchasing the sets, the scorecards, and advertises the tournaments as well ■ A discrete doff of the hat to Nick Maffeo and his Pacific Backgammon Association for assuming Rascal's responsibility ■ Valerie Valentine took backgammon to China . . . During her recent trip to China, Valerie Valentine (Backgammon Club of Chicago) played backgammon on the Great Wall, and has pictures to prove it . . . and, gave a series of backgammon lessons to eager-to-learn Chinese, including a session at the Children's Palace in Shanghai ■ Best wishes to printer and publisher Walter Coratella. His magazine, *El Mundo del Backgammon* is almost 2 years old. The consistent quality and interesting articles make it worth taking Spanish lessons ■ Starting a backgammon club in Sacramento, running weekly tournaments as well as city-wide backgammon exhibitions and lessons isn't

enough for Jim Stern. His latest brainstorm is a backgammon league . . . Teams (sponsored) playing matches on a weekly schedule no less!! ■ Twice a week, Dave Harris puts up a \$100 purse and his disco becomes the Chattanooga Backgammon Club. He is backgammon in the city, and plans to spread backgammon enthusiasm through the state ■ Peggy Ann Lloyd runs non-elimination tournaments in Boulder — victory point style. Winners are determined by the accumulation of points from all matches in one evening ■ Q-Gammon had "Jersey Jim" Pasko's byline when it first described the game variation in *Backgammon Guide*. Inadvertently, we made the reprint anonymous in the last *GAMMON*; and so it remains in the Omaha Backgammon Club's newsletter this month. Sorry Jim! ■ Not that it's doubtful, but at least once a week some game show contestant reveals that they play backgammon professionally. The most recent poseur can be seen in *Playboy's* photofeature, "Women of the Ivy League." At least this one is better looking than Steve Carr ■ The infant Connecticut Backgammon Society published its regulations and procedures Where? In the *Waterbury Republican* "Chess Column" of course. Rob Roy writes the chess column and wins his share of the weekly backgammon tournaments as well ■ The *New York Times* is not influenced by lethargy. If you value the weekly Magriel column (now in Sunday's edition) write: Hobby Editor, New York Times ■

PIP COUNTS

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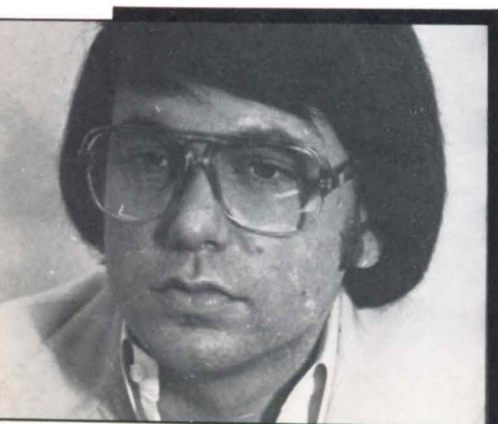
ROGER DIONNE, GAMMON'S EXECUTIVE EDITOR, REACHED THE FINALS OF THE

First Consolation in the Intermediate Division at the Monte Carlo World Championships. His articles on games and gaming appear in **Sports Illustrated**, **Sport**, **Games**, the **Los Angeles Times**, **Gambling Times**, **Off-Duty** and numerous other publications. His fiction has appeared in **Playboy**, **North American Review**, **Northwest Review**, etc., and he writes a monthly column on new fiction for the **Los Angeles Times Book Review**.



GABY HOROWITZ HAS BEEN A TOP MONEY PLAYER AND TEACHING PROFESSIONAL

for 16 years. He has won numerous tournaments and is a technical consultant for **GAMMON**. His co-author, **Bruce Roman**, D.D.S. graduated **magna cum laude** and has been a Minister of the Church of Scientology for 7 years. Gaby and Bruce write a weekly backgammon column for **Beverly Hills People** and have collaborated on a book, **Backgammon for Winners**.



TED BARR, A FORMER LAWYER, IS SENIOR MEMBER OF TED BARR AND ASSOCIATES—

Backgammon Professionals. They conduct weekly tournaments and provide instructors for the Princess Cruise Ship Co. Ted writes a syndicated backgammon column and monthly backgammon feature for **Gambling Times**, who will publish his first book later this year. He is co-owner of the Northwest's largest game store, **The Game Gallery** (located in Seattle), and is Director of the Pacific Northwest Backgammon Association.

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