

BIBAFAX

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Dedicated To Backgammon

Super-men



Jon Barnes: 2009 British Open & UK Finals Champion

John Hurst: Four-time Bright 'n' Breezy Winner

Cliff Connick: Celebrating his 90th birthday in Brighton



Luck be a Laddie Tonight

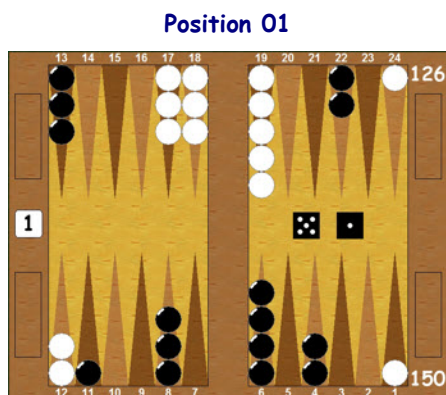
By Michael Crane

The Townharbour Trophy, sponsored by Arthur Wright, saw Mardi Ohannessian vs Stewart Pemberton fighting it out in the 6th Round with Mardi on 5/5 seeking 6/6 and taking home his 3rd TT trophy



Mardi Ohannessian is regarded by his peers as one of the top players. Primarily a money player, Mardi has won the Townharbour Trophy three times, '01, '03 and '09 when he bested Stewart Pemberton in the last round of the Swiss format. However, during his match against Stewart, Mardi made six checker-play blunders (some of them quite big ones) whereas Stewart made just one! So what happened? Despite Stewart being rated 58.77% favourite to win the match and being classed as 'expert' (two levels above Mardi's class of 'intermediate') he still managed to be beaten by Mardi. It was perhaps due to Mardi's huge luck factor of 12.876.

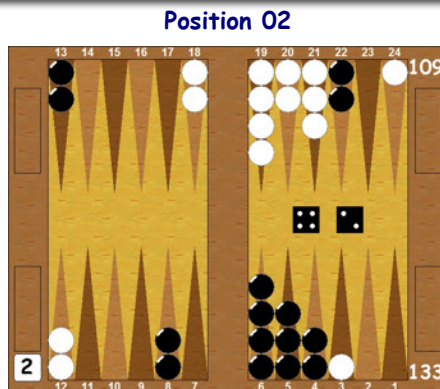
Let's take a look at the blunders and see what went on. Mardi is black and Stewart is white and the match is to 11 points.



Black 0 White 0
Black to play 51

When playing for money Mardi is quite aggressive and decisive - but in this position he wasn't. He dithered a bit before playing 13/8, 11/10 resulting in -0.158 equity. What let him down was the 11/10, too passive and of little use. Snowie advocates slotting the 5-point with 6/5. Provocative, but a better use of the 1. He might well get hit with this play but at the moment white's home board isn't that good and he should be able to enter without difficulty.

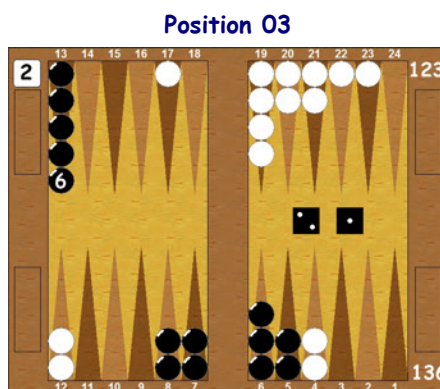
Had he played the 'correct' move, then Stewart's roll of 31 would undoubtedly have been used to hit him, 24/20*!



Black 0 White 0
Black to play 42

Holding a 2-cube this roll cries out for the bold play of 13/9, 5/3*, but Mardi plays 'safe' again and goes with 6/2, 6/4 @ -0.210. This play lets white escape with 6s and 4s, and when he's free he might never be back in Mardi's home board again. Hitting is very bold, but Mardi's timing is running out, and if he can cover the blot with 6s, 5s or 3s it would have been worth the risk that white might roll one of his 14 rolls that contain a 3; and, if Stewart failed to roll a 3 with a 6, 5 or another 3 he would be leaving a return shot off the bar with 1s.

Stewart rolls a 32, which would have been a nice hitting - but not covering - roll, and plays 6/1 instead of the hit!

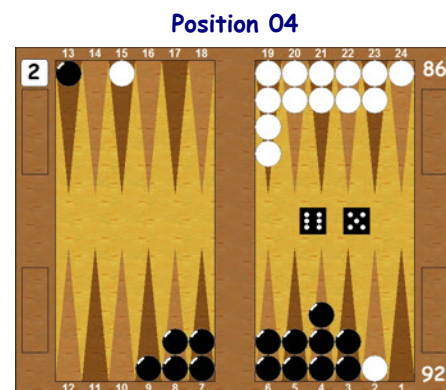


Black 0 White 5
Black to play 21

Now in Game 3, and despite all that Mardi has 'gotten away with' so far, Stewart

has a very healthy 5-0 lead! Rolling 21, Mardi keeps up the safety play and goes with 6/3 @ -0.132. Again bold play is called for here, it being 13/11, 6/5. The slot is a teaser: if Stewart hits with a 7 (a combination shot) he will leave a double hit off the bar with 2s and 3s, something he is unlikely to do.

This time Stewart doesn't roll a 7 and Mardi has now wasted a checker for no gain whatsoever.

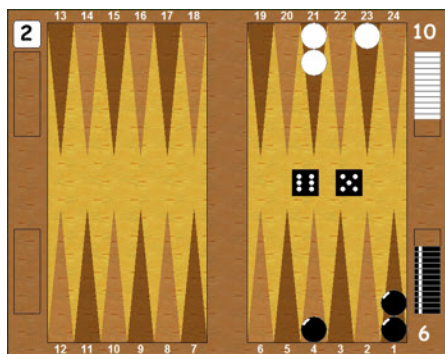


Black 0 White 5
Black to play 65

It's the same Game and Mardi is looking very good indeed and perhaps heading for his first win of the match. Stewart is facing a 6-prime and might have expected to be hit here with 13/2*, but Mardi decided instead to play 13/8, 9/3 @ -0.149. If he did hit with 13/2* he's not too worried about the return 1 off the bar, he's got enough checkers to weather a roll or two in which to re-enter and escape his checker. As long as his 6-prime remains intact he's OK.

Stewart rolled 44 and played 10/2, 5/1(2) instead of dancing, but then Mardi rolled 54 (a roll that had to leave a blot somewhere) and played 7/2*, 7/3.

The reply of 61: 25/18 was not good for Stewart, who would have preferred a hit, even though at this stage the race is even. Mardi rolled out to win the two points but it was very tight as you can see in the position on the following page. ➡



Position 05

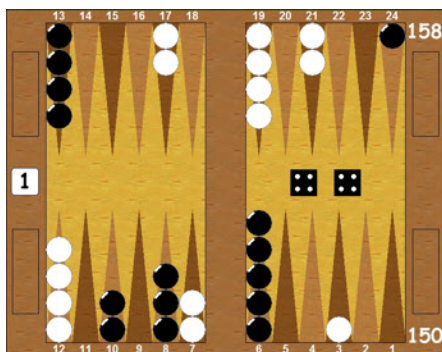
Black 2 White 5
Black to play 52

According to Snowie's analysis this is down as a blunder, but the equity for Mardi's move of 13/8, 6/4 is -0.094! Not strictly a blunder but certainly close to being one. I suspect it is using the 'live cube rollout' of -0.136 to classify it a blunder. Certainly Mardi's play looks good placing a couple of builders in front of the white checker, but it isn't bold enough, especially when white is threatening to get out of black's home board. Snowie goes for the hit, 10/3*, it robs white of half a roll and it offers little risk for a fair gain.

White's next roll was 63, which Stewart played 22/13, but had Mardi played the 'correct' roll he'd have played 25/22*, 22/16!

In the next position (#6), at the top of the middle column the match has moved on somewhat and Mardi now leads 7-6. Snowie rates all moves except 24/16, 13/9(2) as blunders! So, the bright ones among you will have figured that Mardi did not play 24/16, 13/9(2); and the even brighter ones will be wondering, what did he play, then? He played the standard 44 move: 13/5(2) @ -0.180. This does nothing to bother white, he's still away with 6s and this is key to Snowie's move, the 13/9(2) nicely blocks white's escape and

Position 06



Black 7 White 6
Black to play 44

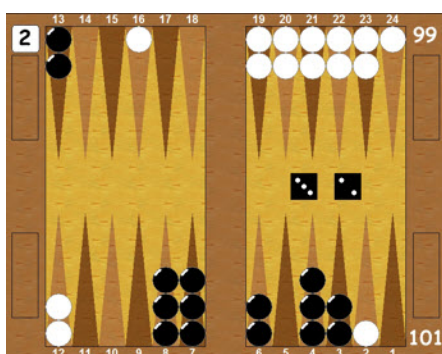
brings his own back checker into the open and just five pips away from being quite safe.

Stewart rolled 21 which wasn't much use to him nor any problem to Mardi.

From hereon the match continued to a finish after an 8-cube was shipped across the table, details of which are on page 26 of Bibafax #103.

How lucky was Mardi? Well let's take a look at some Jokers.

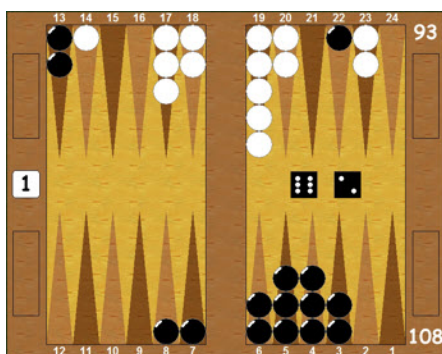
Position 07



Black 0 White 5
Black plays 8/5, 7/5

White rolls 53 and would have escaped.

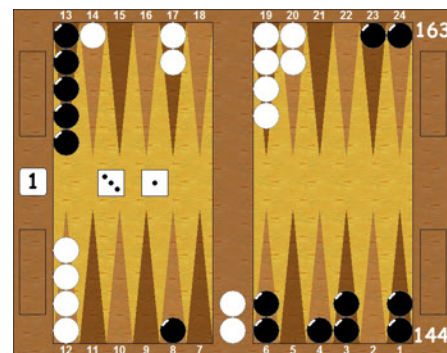
Position 08



Black 2 White 5
Black plays 22/14*

White rolls 55 and would have played 8/3*(2), 5/1(2)

Position 09



Black 5 White 5
White dances

Black rolls 43 and covers 13/10, 8/4

Match detailed statistics for Townharbour		
	Mardi	Stewart
Rating	intermediate	expert
Overall	9.263/17.347	5.640/8.576
Errors(blunders)	16(10)	9(3)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	6.442/12.666	2.697/4.715
Errors(blunders)	11(6)	5(1)
Double errors		
Overall	2.821/4.680	1.949/2.401
Missed double	2.327/4.106	0.528/0.647
Wrong double	0.494/0.574	1.421/1.754
Errors(blunders)	5(4)	3(1)
Take errors		
Overall	0.000/0.000	0.994/1.460
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.994/1.460
Wrong pass	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	0(0)	1(1)
Stewart Pemberton was 58.77% - 41.23% favorite.		

This match and others that feature in the Bibafax are all available in JellyFish or Snowie .mat format from Biba via email upon demand.

They are also on the CD-ROM and email versions of Bibafax along with html files that do not require either of the bots to open and enjoy.

Coventry Open Backgammon Tournament Report by Phil Tutchings

Peter Chan of Liverpool has succeeded Fak Laight as the Coventry Open Champion. The second Coventry Open was held on 29th November at Whitefriars Olde Alehouse. The venue dates back to 1335 so has probably seen many games of backgammon played there over the years - an apt home for the Coventry club!



Following two late withdrawals we had a turnout of 30 players from around the country - this meant byes for Andreas and Carl Dell. Carl's prolonged wait to play after the journey from Liverpool was unfortunate - but at least it gave him the opportunity to watch part of his team's victory in the Liverpool local derby football match in a neighbouring pub!

Peter defeated Rachel Rhodes 9-3 in the final of the main event after winning against a string of local players - Corrina Tutchings, Neil Everitt, Matthew Fisher and Eric Westbrook on the way. Rachel had some tough matches on the way to the final against Uldis Lapikens, Dorothy Lee, Robert Tutchings and Chris Evans. Andreas from the Birmingham club took the seven point consolation title beating fellow Brummie (and Coventry club regular) Neil Everitt in the final. Martin Barkwill's journey from Newcastle and long day's play (almost 10 hours!) was rewarded with the last chance five point title beating another Coventry regular Eric Westbrook in the final.

Thanks to everybody for coming especially those of you who travelled from beyond the Midlands. Also thanks to Michael Crane at Biba for the trophies (and to Peter Bennett for originally donating them to Biba), to Di for her help in administering the tournament and to the staff at Whitefriars for their support (especially Mary for producing the buffet - all were satisfied customers!).

Following Rosey Bensley's forced withdrawal she kindly asked that her entry fee be used to fund a "Rosey's Rollout" event as seen in the Gilbertson sponsored UK Finals. This prize was shared between Fak Laight (so a winner two years running) and Tim of the Birmingham club. Thanks also to Ron Havenhand and Daniel Tutchings for donating their entry fees back into the prize funds.

The general feeling was that it was a god enjoyable event - hopefully we'll see everybody again next year.



Clockwise:

Main 9pt KO: 1st Peter Chan, 2nd Rachel Rhodes

Consolation 7pt KO: 1st Andreas 2nd, Neil Everitt

Last Chance 5pt KO: 1st Martin Barkwill, 2nd Eric Westbrook

More pictures can be seen here:

www.flickr.com/photos/johntutchings/sets/72157622905573442/

Plus further details on the Coventry BG Club website:

<http://covbackgammon.co.uk/>



Goldiblots and the Three Bores

By R Umplestiltskin

Once upon a time there were three bores, Daddy Bore, Mummy Bore and Baby Bore. All day long they'd play backgammon on the webernet for peanuts, they liked peanuts - a lot.

Each week, after a hard week's tap tap tapping away on their loptaps they would have a lovely bowl of soup and then settle down for the arrival of Goldiblots, their friendly next-door neighbour who would pose them three problems and she would award the winner with a nice massage and a rub down with the Sporting Times. "Today," said Goldiblots, "we are using a theme for the quiz. I wonder who'll be the first to discover what it is?" She revealed the first position saying, "Baby Bore can go first seeing as he is the smallest."

make a good point by playing 8/6, 8/7." Mummy Bore interrupted, "What's safe about leaving the blot on the 15-point?" "It is 'safe' because white needs 3s to hit and 3s - or 1s - to cover." Smugly he sat down.

Mummy Bore got up. "You two are reading the wrong books, you should read *Paira Dice Lost* by John Bulton, it's all about those who lose - and you two are certainly losers!" She formed an L shape with her hand and slapped it to her forehead. She continued, "Daddy Bore was half right, which makes a a pleasant change from being a half-wit," she laughed, "but he should have made more of the duplication and gone the whole hog with 13/11, 6/5. White has 3s all round (and a 1 of course) but he'd have to decide which 3 to hit with and he's unlikely to move off his anchor, is he?" She sat down convinced of her female superiority. Goldiblots showed them the second position:



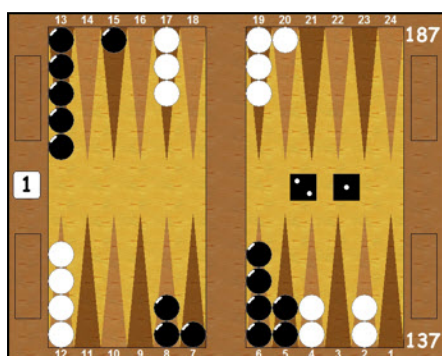
seen her choose the correct play.

Daddy Bore rose to his feet. "I too have read a classic, *Great Explanations* and I have come to expect a bit more from you than the old, 5-point battle. The best" he was interrupted by Mummy Bore. "What has *Great Explanations* got to do with backgammon?" she asked. "Plenty," replied Daddy Bore, "it is all about Pips!" he turned away and went on as if she hadn't interjected, "move is the double-hit, 8/5*, 5/1*. Two on the bar is better by far. You can't go wrong with **that** classic!"

"Well," said Baby Bore getting up, "I have been reading a children's classic, *The Harry Pointer* books and it is from these books that I see the duplication and mirroring for this position. Quite simply moving 24/20, 13/10 duplicates and mirrors all white's moves! He can't do everything at once, and what he doesn't do I might be able to." He began to sit when Daddy Bore asked, "What has *Harry Pointer* got to do with this?" "Have you never heard of the twins Fred and George Weasley?" came the reply!

Goldiblots giggled and was impressed by the somewhat arcane connection. She revealed the final position, asking if any of them had yet made the connection between this and the previous two. None had. "I will reveal it all later," she told them as she asked Daddy Bore to start the final one.

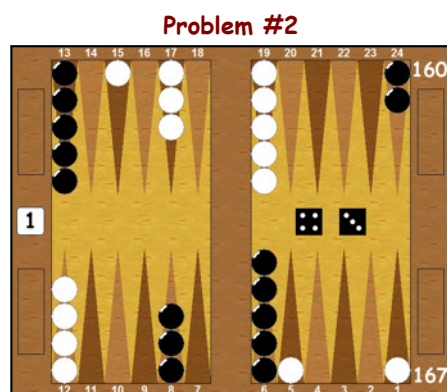
Problem #1



11 point match
Black 0 White 0
Black to play 21

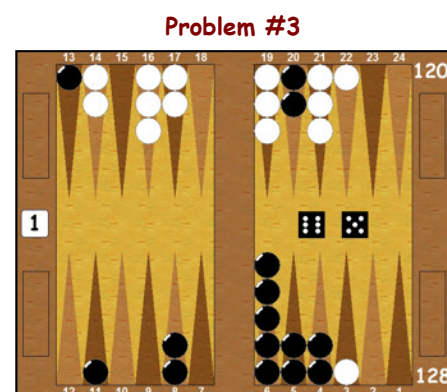
Baby Bore's turn to go first pleased him, the order being youngest to eldest, perhaps - although Baby Bore privately thought it was in descending order of wit and good-looks, an order that placed Daddy Bore last no matter what. "I have been reading a bit this week. I have read *Of Dice and Men* by John Stoneback and I have worked out that I am 50 pips ahead in the race. Therefore all I need to do to win this game is keep out of trouble and play safe with 15/13, 8/7. Often it is the obvious that is the correct play and this is obvious to me." He sat down pleased with his analysis, wit and good looks.

Daddy Bore got up. "I too have been reading," he said, "I have read *The Dice Man Cometh* and it is obvious that you've missed the best move by being far too cautious. You can still play safe and



11 point match
Black 0 White 2
Black to play 43

"Mummy Bore." said Goldiblots, "It's your turn to go first." Mummy Bore got up mischievously thinking to herself, "It must be in ascending order of bust size!" She giggled. "According to *Prime and Prep Your Dice*, a classic book, it is important to stop your opponent making either of the 5-points, so this roll is best played 24/20, 8/5*. The first move threatens to make the white 5-point and the second move stops white from making the black 5-point." She sat down satisfied that her knowledge of the classics had



11 point match
Black 5 White 5
Black to play 65

Daddy Bore got to his feet, puffed out his chest and began . . . but was put off immediately by Mummy Bore who called out, "I knew it! I knew it!" "Knew what?" asked Daddy Bore, somewhat puzzled. He didn't get a reply. He began: "I was going to hit with 8/3* as part of my move but after reading, *Lady Windermere Fans* I decided that the odds were against white staying on the bar so I have opted for the better play of 11/5, 6/1. White will be hard-pressed to get past my mid-point checker, and, because it'll take a combined dice roll to hit me he will be unable to cover his 3-point blot." He sat down as Baby Bore got up.

"Leaving the blot as Daddy Bore suggests is wrong, this is a fact and is obvious if you'd read *Far From the Madding Point*, by Thomas Hardly. By playing 13/8, 11/5, all but black's runners are bearing down upon white's lone checker. If he can't escape with a 4 or a 6 then he's gonna be toast!" He sat down very pleased with this put-down. Daddy Bore scowled.

Mummy Bore got up for the final time. "It seems to me that Daddy Bore has not fully understood the content of *Lady*

Windermere Fans, he should have read *To Mock a Killingbird* by Har Leaper. If he had he'd have gladly hit with 11/5, 8/3*! White's poor home board coupled with the black builders covering the blot make this the only move worth considering." As she sat down, Daddy Bore got in with, "You are clearly a *Woman of No Impointance*." Mummy Bore seethed, but kept it to herself, riposting with, "*Cometh the Dour, Cometh the Man!*"

"Now, now," said Goldiblots, "no need for bickering. Let's get down to who won what. I have checked through the answers and one person has got all three correct . . ."

"It'll be me," chimed Daddy Bore, "after all, I am a man of many letters." "Yes you are," thought Goldiblots, "French letters!"

"Don't be so big-headed," came in Baby Bore, "it is me, everyone knows that the bigger the ears the bigger the brain." He wiggled them for effect to prove his point.

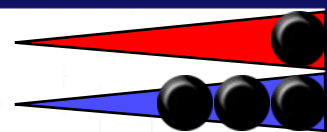


"My, my, how wrong can you two be?" asked Mummy Bore. "It is clearly me, it's obvious from reading *Women Are From Ma's and Men Have a Penis*." Everyone but she blushed.

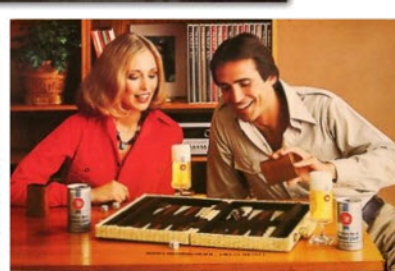
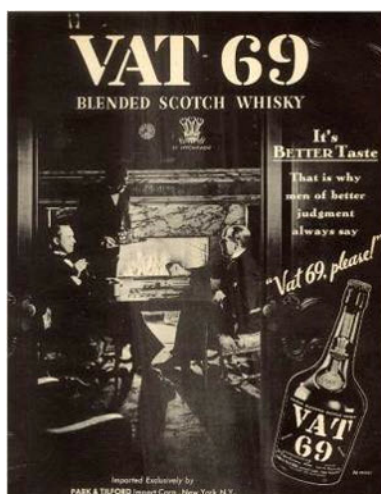
"As I was saying," continued Goldiblots, "there is one person with them all correct and none of you have spotted the theme. The answer to both is . . ."

Well, dear long-suffering reader, have you worked out who Goldiblots is talking about? Have you spotted the theme? Has Mummy Bore proven she's *No Man For All Reasons*? Has Daddy Bore shown that *One Fell Out of the Cuckoo's Nest*? Or has Baby Bore convinced you that he is *Little Lord Fauntlalo*? Turn to page 20 to find out.

HARDY'S BACKGAMMON PAGES



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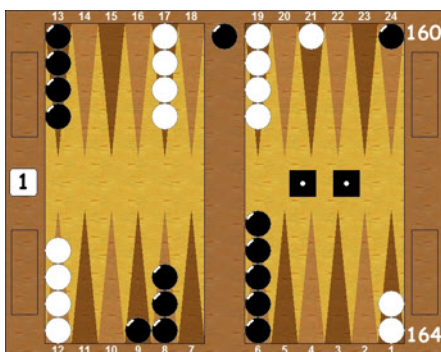


All the adverts within this article can be seen at www.hardyhuebener.de/engl/graphiken/werbung.html the web site of Hardy Hübener. This article acknowledges his hard work in collecting the adverts with special thanks to Brian Donahue and Chris Bray for supplying many of the images.

HARDY'S BACKGAMMON PAGES

Well, here we are, at the end of the 2009 competition and it's been a close one so far, especially the battle for #1 between Brian Lever, Peter Christmas and Richard Biddle. Who is the 2009 winner? You could just flip forward to the end of this article, or you could (nay, should) read thought and see what happened first.

102.01



11 point match
Black 0 White 2
Black to play 11

Competition 2009 No.3 Solutions 102.01 to 102.06 By Michael Crane

MC: Our first position almost splits the panel in half, going with the majority are:

Cedric Lytton: 25/21*

Knocks white back in the race with advantage, and builders still in place to attack or make home-board points. After 25/23, 6/5(2), white is 2-1 on to make his own 4-point and equalise.

MC: The race is quite a good argument, but Bob has spotted a mistake in the pips count!

Bob Young: 25/21*

This surely can only be between hit or make the 5-point as the two big choices, and for me making the 5-point, although usually routine play could well simply finish with both sides having a similar

game, two checkers well back, home board points in front of them, whereas hitting gives black advantage in race as well as half a roll to re-enter for white. So hit and see. PS: the pip counts are shown reversed, but after the hit, black will have a small but useful seventeen pip lead.

MC: Sorry about the pip-count. I did it deliberately to see if you're paying attention! 🌟

Paul Plumptre: 25/21*

This must be a choice between: (a) 25/21*, hitting the slot; or (b) 25/24, 6/5(2) plus something - something is pretty obviously 24/23 best (no need to wimp out 9/8). I know that in the opening when one has a choice with - say - a 53 between a remote hit, eg 24/16* or ►

building, eg 10/5, 8/5, then it is correct to remote hit. So I apply the same principle here, and opt for (a). Yes (b) does build the lasting asset of the 5-point; but it does nothing else, and leaves white easy equality with a counter-build of his 4-point. But (a) removes the power white builder, puts him on the bar, so that he cannot improve with a build without a doublet, gains in the race, and prepares me for an anchor or a run next. Because (a) does more than one good thing, it is the better move.

MC: Paul should have gone with the long term asset, it's a point that'll be there for a very long time.

Peter Christmas: 25/21*

It is early in the match trailing 11-away, 9-away and early in the game but it is not desperate as yet so we have three 1s to move after coming in. 6/5(2), 8/7 too aggressive and 9/7, 8/7 too passive so it has to be between 25/23, 6/5(2) and 25/21* the value of making the Golden Point is highlighted in most modern books but hitting can also turn games around. Here it stops white from making the valuable 4-point and it starts a forward anchor for black and leaves us 2 back verses 3 back so the positives just seem enough to forgo making our 5-point, so I vote for the hit.

MC: Peter should have stuck to his book learning! Let's see what the rest have to say. We'll start with Phil whose son, Dan, did not pass comment this time!

Phil Tutchings: 25/23, 6/5(2)

This is our second roll of the game. Two main aims during the opening are hitting and making points. 25/21* is the only possible hitting play. This hitting play is tempting as it gives a significant early lead and holds back white's home board development. However our own home board is not developed and the play of 25/23, 6/5(2) seems more balanced. This gives us our own 5-point (most important point on our side of the board) and retains builders for further developing our home board and priming. It also threatens white's blot and gives ample opportunities to either make an anchor or run a back checker next roll.

MC: Looks as if Phil is learning from this series of articles.

Richard Biddle: 25/23, 6/5(2)

The instant temptation here and the first move most players would see is to come in and hit. This pushes white further back

in the race with three men back. However, this would leave black with three blots and no home board to encourage a white dance; in fact, white has 25 return hitting rolls next time. If black hits, this plays exactly into white's hands; white will be looking for a blot hitting frenzy. More often now, I am learning to make the 5-point asset over hitting early in the game. It may not appear to be of immediate relevance at this stage of the game especially if we have not hit, but will become more relevant later.

If we choose to make the 5-point and split our back checkers, white is faced with the daunting prospect of having to make the under-attack blot on the 4-point safe rather than aiming for the black blot on the 9-point. This position is a classic example of looking for and considering the second and third choice move before picking up your dice.

MC: Well argued. As is Brian's first offering.

Brian Lever: 25/23, 6/5(2)

Realistically, there are only two choices here; either 25/21* or 25/23, 6/5(2). Both plays have merit. The hitting play gains ground in the race and white may enter awkwardly. The passive play makes the best inner point – and that is the play I prefer, because it gives a clear and permanent advantage. You are guaranteed the 5-point. The hitting play gives you a racing lead but the most likely immediate scenario thereafter is a blot hitting contest (white hitting back on his 4-point) leaving the outcome uncertain; black might develop a good advantage, but then again he might not. With the 5-point his advantage is certain.

Snowie: 25/23, 6/5(2)

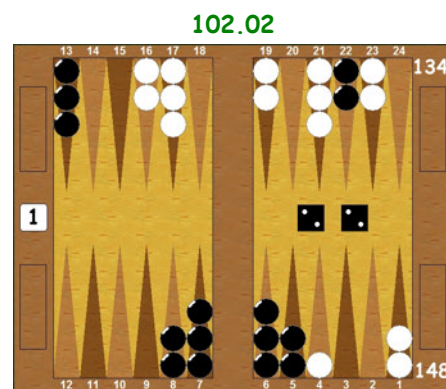
The first move to consider is 25/21* hitting the blot. This gains in the race but does nothing else to improve black's position. However, gaining in the race is very positive.

Can he do better by making the 5-point? In this case three of the 1s are played 25/24, 6/5(2). The remaining one can be used to split the back men 24/23, slot the bar 8/7 or put another man on the 5-point, 6/5.

In such positions it is normally correct to take the long-term asset of the 5-point (although hitting is not as bad as some people would think) and this one is no exception. Playing the final 1 by moving 6/5 can be rejected – moves that do nothing

in the opening should normally be ignored.

So slot or split? The split is correct, but only narrowly. The split works very well when white fails to cover his blot on the 4-point and it also gives black a better chance to make an advanced anchor. The slot is an aggressive play that could pay high dividends and hitting the slot could be risky for white unless he covers the blot on his 4-point at the same time. Both game plans are viable but my rollouts have the split as winning by a short head.



11 point match
Black 2 White 0
Black to play 22

MC: Well, at least the panel is split on this position too – but in this instance, only one panellist is on his own.

Peter Christmas: 8/4*(2)

Black is in a good position with an advanced anchor, outboard control and start of a prime and a good roll but needs to make the best of it. If you led 10-0, you may well slide the back men up to the bar-point for control of the outer boards looking for a low risk route to victory. But it is early in the match so gammons are welcome and you should look to build on the advantages you have and white's disadvantages here. With two men already past the anchor he can't block any more points without springing some back men and his only asset is a small racing lead. So white needs to make an advanced anchor and then spring one or better still all three checkers with a big double.

So it is imperative we do our up most to prevent this happening and maintain our advantage and ideally cube next roll and try to win a gammon. The first part being 6/4* and 8/4 cover, now do we play safe with 8/6 or go for extending the prime with 13/11. This was my first choice, a prime should seal our dominance and the best time to slot at the back is while

white is on the bar. But it does give away four shots, (1/9 chance) 53 and 62 (the dreaded cockshot) which would really hurt if we danced as we have another blot. The only other rolls white has that would leave him happy to take the cube would be 22 or 32 so he can anchor in front of the prime. But if he dances or worse comes in with 51 or 52 and exposes another checker it may even be too good to cube.

So playing safe 8/6 still leaves us in good shape to go for a gammon but with no jokers for white it makes it the better move overall. Using the last 2, to split the back men would be a bad mistake, white would be happy to bang away at them as he has an anchor he could fall back into a backgame or get lucky and close us out so I go for the safe move 8/4*(2).

MC: Mmm, Peter is being true to form and taking the safe option. He needs to take the occasional risk, and the very passive making of the 4-point with all the 2s misses out on a great potential 5-prime.

Bob Young: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

Longest answer ever, but it deserves it, I will make up for it with brevity elsewhere!!!!.....

I find it very significant that you should show the Obituary of Walter Trice on the very same page as this competition. I also feel that it is one of the best reads that a backgammon player can have, and feel that this second puzzle is extensively discussed in similar disguises on pages 245 to 254, where double-2 is made example of many times. Not blaming anyone but my own inability to see the wood for the trees, it seems that whatever black does, it can't be bad. It is a case of maximising the good roll. In the book *Backgammon Boot Camp* that I refer to above, Walter refers to soldiers and prisoners, here black holds three prisoners with thirteen soldiers, while white has two prisoners trapped, trying to hold them with ten soldiers in front of them. A double advantage to black. More reading showed one situation that surprised me (but that's not too difficult to do) where black has already reached the point where he should play on for the gammon, and white should be trying to mentally convince black that he should cube, so that he could drop as fast as possible, and after some deliberation, I think this could well fit into that category.

Forget the back men for the moment, white will crumble its blockade in front

of the semi-advanced anchor shortly, and therefore go for the throat at home. Putting together a five-point prime is good 13/11, 11/9(2), but white is still free to play a full roll with one checker already on the edge of the prime, giving a 3 from white to upset black a bit, so a hit is certain for me.

Shifting the prime forward, 8/6, 6/4(2) (*) looks strong, but it's still only a prime of four, although white is now off the front and in the air. I think it's worth that extra risk and aggression, to 8/6, 6/4*(2), which puts white in the air, and creates a prime of four but the rear slotted while white is on the bar, and then 13/11 to almost ensure that next roll it will be a five piece prime. Would have missed this over the board, but sleep easy with my choice given time to lie each of the options out. This is what I like about these competitions, I may not get it right, but I can at least feel happy that everyone else is different to me!!! (But you knew that anyway).

MC: Bloody hell, Bob, that was a long 'un! But you got it spot on: go for a 5-prime! Brian sees that as his aim . . .

Brian Lever: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

A number of good possibilities here; black might make white's 5-point or bar-point, or he might make his own 9-point, but the standout play for me is the making of his own 4-point, at the same time putting white on the bar. So to start with, 8/4, 6/4* and then look around for another 2. The goal must be to make a 5-prime and possibly gammon white, whose home board position is very awkward. 13/11 is best for this purpose, so play the last 2 there. The cube is still centred, which, gives black the option of doubling white out if things get sticky.

Cedric Lytton: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

Knocks white firmly away from the edge of our prime, advances it by one vital pip and prepares to extend it to a 5-prime with 13/8 or 11/8(odd numbers), leaving 2s and 4s to extricate the runners. Indeed, if white misses the indirect shots black has a powerful double – which he wouldn't have after 22/18(2) even though that probably escapes his back runners, or 22/20(2), 13/11(2) making the golden anchor but leaving white 3s to make his own major anchor or 9s to hit.

Phil Tutchings: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

The key element in this position is the fight for our 4-point. Although we could establish a 5-prime with 13/9(2), this

would be devalued if white were to anchor on our 4-point. This is the next point that we should be aiming to make and 8/4*, 6/4 establishes it. This seems more important than escaping our back checkers with 22/18(2) as white has no immediate prospect of priming us. Bringing a checker down 13/11 gives us more possibilities of covering our new 8-point blot and establishing a 5-prime next roll. Leaving the 8-point blot seems justified considering white's relatively weak home board.

MC: See what happens when Dan doesn't interfere? Go, Phil!

Richard Biddle: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

We have to hit and cover here, I believe many novices would play 8/4*(2). But it means that you now have two wasted builders on the mid-point and less flexibility than my first choice move. Before we come onto my final move, let's discuss why we have chosen not to try and escape the back men. Following Mochy's great seminar on Blitzing and Priming positions, I can see I am up against a Blitzing position so I am in no great hurry to escape as I have a clear escape route. In fact, my strategy should be to contain the back three white checkers and let the white home board disintegrate. The best way to achieve this is to hit and cover on the 4-point, leaving the blot on the 8-point and bring another loose checker down from the mid-point. This focuses our attention on making the 8-point or 3-point.

MC: Hey, calling Peter Christmas a novice is a bit strong!

Paul Plumptre: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

One starts out with 22/18(2), preparing to run. One also sees 22/20(2), advancing the anchor and preparing to run out with a 65 or higher. With this, one might play safeish with 13/11, 7/5, or aggressive with 7/5, 6/4*, 24/22. However, one also sees the attack 8/4*, 6/4 ('advancing the prime'). With this, one might play the last 2 safeish, 13/11 to give two covers for the 8-point to make a 5-prime, or one might venture 22/20 if one is scared that the back men will get stuck. (There is no need to wimp out 8/6.) So I see five options: (a)22/18(2); (b)22/20(2), 13/11, 7/5; (c)22/20(2), 7/5, 6/4*; (d)13/11, 8/4*, 6/4; (e)22/20, 8/4*, 6/4.

The deciding factor for me is the cube; on poor return rolls by white, I am going to get a powerful cube across. From the point-of-view of the cube, (c) looks ►

too big; if white misses my slot, he has too easy a drop, whereas if he hits it I am far from a double. The attacks (d) and (e) look preferable to (b) and (a); after (b) and (a) white can escape the cube with any 3 to anchor on my 4-point. White will have a difficult decision whether to take or drop after (d) and some average entering roll for white such as 41 or 63. Compared to this (d), (e) looks too risky; I will not be as happy to double if white has slotted on one of my back men with lots of his return rolls. So I rank the plays (d), (e), (a), (b), (c), and I opt for (d).

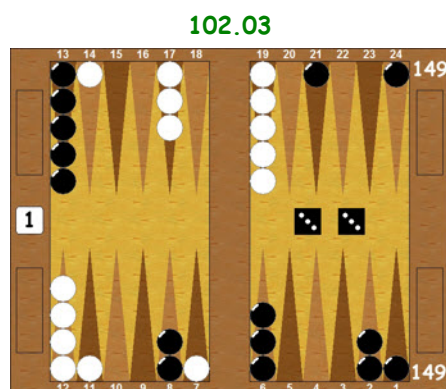
MC: I am pleased Paul didn't go for any of his choices that moved a back checker - he's a bit too to go back to school! I am also grateful he only spotted five choices!

Snowie: 13/11, 8/4*, 6/4

The first question here is why hasn't black doubled? This is a powerhouse double and a monster pass. White gives up nearly 0.3 points of equity by taking. Superficially white's position may look OK but his army is split in two and he will lose a lot of gammons. Only a fool (or an optimist) would accept a double here.

Now black has thrown one of his best numbers, 22. Three of them are clear – 8/4*, 6/4. The other one can be played aggressively, 13/11 or quietly, 7/5. Given that black will now quite often play on for a gammon then distributing his men as well as possible should be his overriding thought. 13/11 is better than 7/5 - black wants that five-point prime as soon as possible.

If you used any of this 22 to move the back men with something that included 22/20(2) then I'm afraid it's back to school. The key point is black's 4-point and that's where he should concentrate his forces.



11 point match
Black 0 White 1
Black to play 33

MC: Only one panellist got this badly wrong, Cedric has blundered his way into making his bar-point.

Cedric Lytton: 13/7*(2)

The 3-point prime converts black's gappy position into a useful block. With white having no board, black need not fear for his ace-point blot, indeed it could be well worth recirculating. Alternatives: 24/21, 8/5(2), 6/3 would leave black as underdog if white safeties his blots; 24/18, 21/18, 6/3 would result in an about equal holding game; 13/7*, 8/5(2) would not be so good a block and would leave white 7s as well as 1s to hit back; 13/7* 7/1 would just put four men out of play.

MC: Cedric just dismissed the best play as putting "four men out of play"! Our next two are also short of the mark - although not as short as some.

Paul Plumptre: 13/7*, 8/5(2)

With this good roll, and white's three blots, I have an incipient blitz here. The focus of action is my home board, and so making an anchor with 24/21 is not a priority. So the options for me come down to three attacks, all of which start with 13/7*: (a)13/7*(2), making a good 8-7-6 block, but only leaving a 2½-board; (b)13/7*, 8/5(2), making a stronger 3½-board but slotting the 7-point; (c)13/7*, 7/1 making a 3-board. If White fans after any of these, he is going to have to drop my cube - this argues against (a), which sees only four not nine fans. After (c) and most of white's 27 entering rolls, I do not think I quite have a double. After (b) and white's 13 rolls (excluding 33) that enter without hitting, I think I have a fair double; also white's hits on entry with a 1 leave my attack with plenty of chances of re-starting. So I rank my options (b), (c), (a), and I play (b).

MC: Paul came close but relegated the correct play into 2nd place.

Bob Young: 13/7 *, 8/5(2)

Brevity as promised. Hit and utilise the home board superiority while white has no improvement in its own board and a blot or two elsewhere to worry about. I could go on about a quarter of white's rolls dance, and black has half of his rolls which hit one of the blots around the board after that, but I won't as I promised to be brief. Also I won't mention that to hit and cover on the ace-point is committing two checkers to a life of looking at the bear-off barrier, instead of being used to trouble white in his trip round the board, so brevity it is then!

MC: I won't mention that according to Snowie Bob and Paul are stuck in the 1970s with their choice of play, instead I'll let their flairs and flowered shirts do it for me! The remainder are all men of the times.

Richard Biddle: 13/7*, 7/1

I think that this is quite similar to the first position in so much that the first move most people would see is the pure 13/7*(2). But this leaves 27 return shots, 8 of which are double hits (I count 55 as a double hit, rightly or wrongly). Sometimes it makes sense to put aside the rules of backgammon purity that we have for ourselves and actually count out the opponent's good next rolls.

Do we need to have three blots, one of which is in our home board with our opponent on the bar? We want to hit to put ourselves ahead in the race. But the best way to do this is the pick and pass, covering the ace-point. This reduces the return hits to just 15 and there are 9 rolls where white actually dances. Black needs to choose short-term safety rather than long term positional advantage. However, black must now choose to play a blitzing strategy as in most cases white's next roll will leave two or three blots for black to attack.

MC: How close was Richard to his flairs? I think he might be too young to actually ever have owned a pair . . . but I'll bet he's got a flowery shirt tucked away somewhere!

Phil Tutchings: 13/7*, 7/1

This play gains us 19 pips in the race, establishes a home board point and takes away half of white's next roll. Early on we should be looking at hitting and making points - this does both. Although this move leaves our mid-point stacked and does little on white's side of the board white has little in the way of immediate threats. Making the our 5-point would normally be a high priority, but playing 8/5(2) would leave two blots and take away from future flexibility.

MC: Normally Phil would have been a '70's man, but this time he's leaving that to Dan, perhaps!

Peter Christmas: 13/7*, 7/1

Another good roll and a multitude of good moves to look at starting with the back men, you may make the bar-point, put another blot in your home board and hope to bring home this small race lead having thrown men down to the 1- ►

and 2-points. Similar idea anchor on the 21-point and bring three men down from the mid-point but again lets white get on with making his blots safe and getting a solid position. Hitting 13/7* and making the 5-point with 8/5(2) is good if white dances but does leave a direct shot as well as as some double hits. 13/7*(2) is more solid but does not really achieve to much with our 2-point board with a blot, we have little hope of making a prime this game.

White has made no points and has three blots but would like to consolidate his back men into some outside points, so we would like to exploit his weakness now. With 13/7*, 7/1 it covers our blot and gives us a 3-point home board and only leaves a double-4 joker as a safe return shot. Making the low points this early can come back to haunt you but we have all the factors to go for it, stronger board, race lead and some blots to go after so again if white dances we could cube and go for the gammon if white takes.

MC: Peter almost slips into his flairs, "... making the 5-point with 8/5(2) is good ..." but he can't open the wardrobe.

Brian Lever: 13/7*, 7/1

One of those positions where a hit is necessary. The race is even (before the roll) and white is about to escape his last checker. Playing passively - eg making the 21- and 10-points - will allow white to tidy up blots, leaving black probably reliant on a late hit. Better for black to take the initiative with 13/7* to start with, and then move to cover the blot on his 1-point, 7/1.

Not very pure but it's what the situation demands. Black has already put three checkers effectively out of play on his -1 and 2-points and it's usually best to make the 1-point once started. The resulting position isn't beautiful but it certainly is functional and has the merit of white on the bar against a 3-point board and facing a possible blitz if he fails to enter, particularly with the two loose blots in close range. And again Black has access to the cube in case of need.

MC: Brian is spot on with his reason for making the 1-point as Snowie will now confirm.

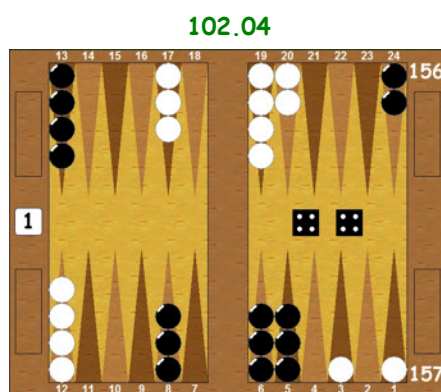
Snowie: 13/7*, 7/1

Black will certainly be hitting with 13/7*. The question then is does he make his 5-point with 8/5(2), make his bar with 13/7 or cover the blot on his 1-point with

7/1?

13/7 would be a mega-blunder. If black is going to make a point it should be the 5-point. The question is does that pure play outweigh the tactical benefits of covering the blot on the 1-point?

The answer is no. If this was the 1970s everyone would make the 5-point but I and my bot colleagues have taught you that once you have started the 1-point it's often correct to make it. Here black gets a three-point board and no blots as opposed to a two-point board with one blot. That's too high a price to pay for purity.



11 point match
Black 3 White 4
Black to play 44

MC: Three of our panellists have erred quite a bit with this one.

Brian Lever: 13/9(2), 8/4(2)

And it could be right to make the 1-point here too; it can be done without blots and again could lead to a successful blitz, with an awkward entry or entry failure. But here (in contrast to the last position) white has no other loose blots bar that in his board and has made his own 5-point. So I would instead aim for the 3-point blot by making the 4 and 9-points. True, it does leave a blot on the 8-point but white has to hit it or anchor and the resultant position looks very efficient.

MC: Brian was right and then he went wrong. He really should take his own advice, "... it's usually best to make the 1-point once started."

Cedric Lytton: 13/9(2), 8/4(2)

All rolls except the silly 13/9(4) and 13/5(2) leave shots, so black may as well grab his 4-point and make the 9-point too. 13/9, 8/4(3) would leave fewer shots, but if white pops a 2 for 24/22, she would get an excellent game with only a 3-prime facing her and three black men stacked out of play.

MC: Have you noticed, Cedric is the only one playing against a woman? I wonder if his wife Dorothy knows about her? ★

Paul Plumptre: 13/9(2), 8/4(2)

Because I have already made my 5-point, this 44 does not play as well as usual. The attack 13/1*, 13/9 is not without merit, but leaves White 19 re-hits. I don't like the look of 13/9, 8/4(3) - again it is too easy for white to hit with a 6 and equalise. So I play the slightly off-beat 13/9(2), 8/4(2); if white does not hit me with a 5 or a 7, I have a chance of getting well ahead with a broken 5-prime, even if white has anchored with 24/22.

MC: Both Paul and Cedric fail to even contemplate the correct play - at least Brian thought it could be right. The rest of the bunch see it as the correct play.

Phil Tutchings: 13/1*, 5/1

Ideally in this position we would be looking at prime building to contain white's back checkers and at moving our own back checkers towards safety. Unfortunately this roll doesn't allow us to do either. However this play does hit and establish a three-point board whilst retaining builders to strengthen that home board and possibly make the bar-point. This play seems to give us the initiative early in the game.

MC: Phil is certainly on a roll, this is his 4th consecutive correct answer! Eat your heart out, Dan.

Bob Young: 13/1*, 5/1

Really undecided here, 13/9(4) plays neat, but leaves white a free hand next roll, 8/4(3), 5/1* looks compact and gives white a quarter of his rolls dancing, but leaves a blot for black, but hitting and pointing, although far too deep really does leave everything neat and white on the bar, and possibly struggling to anchor. Black may well be able to play on next roll, or cube, giving white some problem decisions. Hitting shifts the momentum towards black, not hitting leaves a neutral position.

MC: Bob keeps it neat and tidy - and that's always a good way to leave it.

Richard Biddle: 13/1* 5/1

There really is only one move here; it is more of a struggle to find the second move. Again we have a battle between purity and actually counting out the opponent's next rolls and the ensuing consequences. The pure move is to bring all three checkers into the 4-point ►

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and then hitting on the ace-point. This has the advantage of making another home board point and taking half a roll away from white.

This is at a cost though – a home board blot and the chance of having three black men back. When white re-enters, it may be on a three-point anchor; having cleared the 8-point, black's priming position is now not so strong. If on the other hand we keep our 8-point but use the spare builder on the mid-point to hit and cover on the ace-point, we are not leaving any blots as we maintain maximum flexibility apart from doing the unthinkable and making our ace-point whilst holding the opponent's ace-point.

MC: Unthinkable as it might seem, he played it nonetheless! Peter, on the other hand is more decisive - or is he?

Peter Christmas: 13/1*, 5/1

As the back men can't move there are a lot less options for this roll than the last couple, there is the obvious 13/9(4) which blocks 6s on white's back man but I am reluctant to leave our back men so isolated on the 1-point giving white so much control over the outfield. Whereas 13/9(2), 8/4(2) leaves a blot as does 8/4(3) and any other 4 without improving our position too much.

Finally I had to look at 13/1*, 5/1 and apart from making the 1-point early again it does have some positives, robs white of half a roll, keeps our mid-point intact and may give us time to get the back men moving. A quarter of white's rolls dance and most don't anchor leaving some opportunities to get a blitz going if we have some luck. As none of the alternatives really appeal I would have to go for the hitting move again.

MC: Peter seems almost reluctant to play the correct move, and only does so because he didn't like the alternatives. Really, Peter!

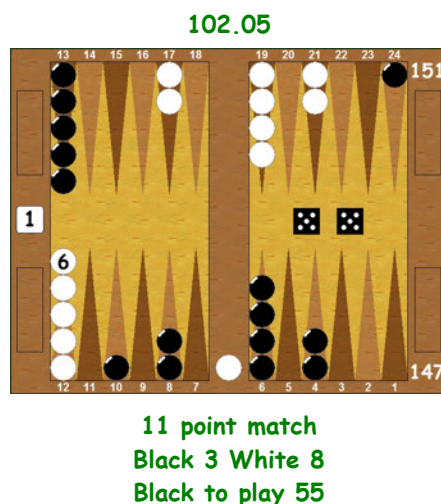
Snowie: 13/1*, 5/1

Another position where tactics outweigh purity. 13/9(4) is pretty but does nothing to address the needs of the position. Similarly 13/9(2), 8/4(2) looks nice but doesn't give white any real problems.

White's only weakness is his two blots in black's home board and as this 44 gives the chance to attack them then that chance should be taken. That leaves us with: 13/9, 8/4(2), 5/1*; 8/4(3), 5/1* and 13/1*, 5/1.

Given the answer to the previous problem it will come as no surprise to you that the right play is 13/1*, 5/1. The pure plays are good for long-term positioning but when white rolls a 1 hitting the blot then the attack stalls and the fact that white has his own 5-point becomes a relevant factor.

Remember what I said – once you have started the 1-point it is often correct to make it. This is another demonstration of the accuracy of that principle.



Phil Tutchings: 8/3(2), 6/1(2)

The question is whether to make a 4-point board now (giving white an easier escape after entry) or to make a 2-point board and retain the 8-point making escape more awkward.

The match score seems to be crucial here - white only needs three points to win the match but the equity is such that black may double early on (needing 48% for a 25% gammon rate). After making the 4-point board black will have a take from white (looking for 30% for a 25% gammon rate) if white enters. If white fails to enter we could wait and see if gammon chances develop rather than cubing immediately.

MC: Oh dear, Phil's reign has come to an abrupt end, I'm afraid. The play and a lot of the analysis is contrary to what Snowie and the others think.

Brain Lever: 13/3(2)

There's a lot of "make the 1-point" positions in this quiz - well, potentially make the 1-point. But it doesn't look or feel right to make the 1-point here and leave five checkers on the mid-point; they're crying out to be moved to where the action is - so 2 must go to the 8-point and then it's a choice of 3-point or 1-point. No contest – must be the 3-point. Thus 13/3(2). Incidentally, I have noticed that

none of the positions in this quiz have been doubled – it must have been a close decision here, and being well down in the match I might have doubled this as black before the roll. Clear take too I believe.

MC: I really hadn't noticed the number of 1-point making moves, honestly. According to Snowie, Brian's pre-roll cube action is slightly off.

Cedric Lytton: 13/3(2)

Making another useful home-board point, and if white does enter with a 1 she still has a long way to go. The alternative 8/5(2), 6/1(2) would leave black with a lot less ammunition should white enter with a 5, whereas with my play black has three sets of men to attack thereon.

MC: Good thinking.

Bob Young: 13/3(2)

Surely only two options, make two more home board points, but committing two checkers to a lonely life at the ace-point, and not much ammunition after that aiming at the high re entry point; or, for me, the better option of making a reasonable home board point, leaving lots of ammunition this time for when white re-enters. Not for me the heady play of slotting the 5-point, not this side of sanity anyway, nor 13/3, 8/3(2), again placing checkers too far forward, a builder on the 3-point is not what is needed here.

MC: Bob is always on the right side of sanity . . . well, almost always!

Peter Christmas: 13/3 (2)

Again the back man can't move and there is no point slotting the 5-point, at 3-8 down we need to win some match points by keeping it tight rather than going all out just yet. So 8/3(2) is a given and we have a choice of taking the one point again or bringing down some builders from the mid point. Making the 4th home point will bring the dancing numbers up from 9 to 16 but with so little back up it could take two or three rolls before we have enough builders in place to offer up the cube at this score as white has a solid position with no other blots around. White would still be favourite to come in and where he does we have little left to attack with.

Unstacking the mid-point and leaving some builders aimed at the open 5-point gives us chances to build the prime still and attack white with some pick-and-pass moves if he comes in there and we can't point on his head. So 13/3(2) gives

us more ways to win, aiming at forming a prime or jumping into the outfield and avoid getting hit would be enough to think about the double in a roll or two, all being well.

MC: Prime and attack from Peter.

Paul Plumptre: 13/3(2)

Upon examination, this is obviously a choice between: (a) 13/3(2) making the 3-board, and keeping the 8-point; or (b) 8/3(2), 6/1(2), making the 4-board. At this match score, white has to drop my cube after either (a) or (b) if he fans. After (a) and most of white's entering rolls, his back man will still be facing nine men in the zone to attack, and he may have left a second remote blot; I can't see if he should Take or Drop at this match score, but I clearly have an efficient double almost always. After (b) and white's entering rolls onto either the 2-point or 5-point, I do not have an efficient double, because I still have too much firepower stacked up on my 13-point.

So (b) is too big. Whereas I assess my cubeful equity at +0.9 after (a), because of the efficiency of my double, I put my cubeful equity after (b) at $\frac{1}{2} \times 1.0$ (white fans) + $\frac{1}{2} \times 0.6$ (white enters, and I can barely double at best) = +0.8. So I play (a) 13/3(2), and look forward to giving white a tough cube decision at this match position.

MC: Paul is looking at his next roll and the double.

Richard Biddle: 13/3(2)

I see two key possibilities here: the out and out blitz or the more conventional prime building move. First the blitz: 8/3(2), 6/1(2). It makes a four-point home board however this position lacks flexibility and if white re-enters on the 5-point black offers little in the way of attack in the outfield with a heavily stacked mid-point. I don't think it would be a great error to play this move but I prefer the priming strategy.

This option is to create more of a priming position by making the 3-point from the heavy mid-point offering more flexibility next roll to make the 5-point. In both cases, black needs to fear a white double five. Other than 55, only 65 and 11 works well for white next time. But the latter strategy should yield more wins, even though black would dearly love to get a gammon here at this match score. Pure wins the day.

MC: Mmm, is Richard going for the 'pussy' moves a bit more nowadays? There was a time when he'd be blitzing away both barrels blazing.

Snowie : 13/3(2)

Given the match score should black have doubled before he rolled? It is close but my neural nets say no – black doesn't have quite enough even at this lop-sided match score.

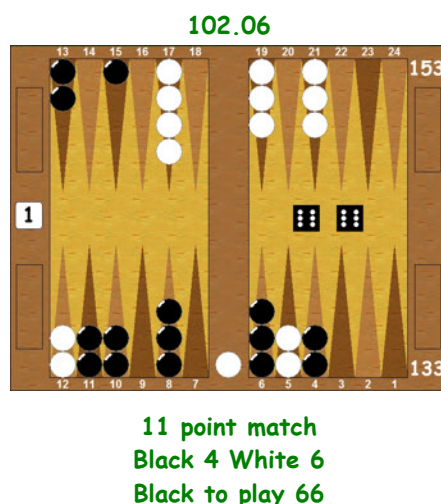
What about the play of the 55? Instinctively you might play 8/3(2), 6/1(2). If white fans he will certainly drop your double but you will have lost your market by a long way (however, you should cash rather than play on for a gammon). If he enters you will have a reasonable double but your position will slightly overextended and it will be a little bit difficult to bring your men into play.

What about the alternative 13/3(2)? This makes effective use of the big stack of men on the mid-point, gives you the same 24-pip lead and a position that is easier to develop. You are also likely to have a good double next turn.

Does the better structure outweigh the additional home board point?

Surprisingly the answer is yes and by quite some way. In fact 8/3(2), 6/1(2) is nearly a blunder. Partly this is because of how effectively the cube can be used next turn and partly because of the future development of the position.

Interestingly if black had doubled before the roll then the two plays become much closer in equity.



MC: Our final position splits the panel into three camps. Two of those three were quite close and just missed out by a gnat's; however, the first two panellists

missed by a bigger margin than that.

Phil Tutchings: 15/3, 13/7(2)

Our racing lead means that we should be looking to break contact. Although this play actually leaves a direct shot from the bar, unless the blot is hit we have broken contact with the white mid-point (which was three pips away from our original blot - so we may have been hit by a 3 anyway). If white fails to hit and stays behind our 3-point we are favourite to cover and have a solid double / take which should see us levelling the match.

MC: Phil's early attack on this competition has now fizzled out - I wonder what Dan would have done?

Cedric Lytton: 15/3, 13/7(2)

Clears the mid-point, gives a broken 5-prime with 3s and 5s to cover the 3-point blot if missed, and makes it much easier to clear from the back. If the blot is hit . . . well, which has more holes, a colander, Emmmental or white's board? If white has to enter on his anchor black has a powerful racing cube.

MC: Phil and Cedric have missed the chance here to make another home board point, and it is this strategy that leads us to the correct play; however, we don't get to it just yet.

Bob Young: 13/7(2), 8/2(2)

There is the "clever" duplication play of 3s by either leaving the rear checker where it is for the moment, coupled with 13/7(2) and 8/3(2), or a poor looking 15/9, 8/2(3), poor because of the gaps that have formed in the prime, and an extra checker too far forward. I think the bar-point needs to be made, and then look for the remaining two checkers to move.

The 13/7, 7/1(2) is too deep; the 15/9, 9/3 leaves a nice looking outer black board, but lots of shots at the blot from the bar, so go for the "clever" play, but not really sure on this one. The strong outer board looks a thing of beauty giving white a huge job of extricating three checkers, but it may not last if the blot is hit, and doesn't run easily round the board.

MC: Bob spotted the duplication and went for it - and it isn't a bad choice. What he didn't seem to contemplate was making the 1-point (not again?!)

Richard Biddle: 13/7(2), 8/2(2)

One should welcome doubles sixes when they come but I would have preferred double fours here. Candidate moves ►

include 13/1(2), or 13/7(2), 10/4(2). The former just doesn't float my boat. I feel that the bar-point may be too valuable as we try to bear in later. The latter is right to make the bar-point and I can see why one would want to avoid going too deep, so stacking the 4-point makes sense even if it is ugly. Additionally it only leaves one blot on the 15-point. But I can duplicate 3s by making the 2-point from the 8-point. White needs a 3 to enter, to hit on the 8-point and 15-point. That more or less swings it for me. My final choice also prevents giving white a tasty double five.

MC: Duplication, that's the name of the game.

Paul Plumptre: 13/7(2), 8/2(2)

Although I am more-or-less clear and 20 pips up against white's 5-point hold, my home board was too weak to double before rolling this 66. My first two 6s are going to solidify my block with 13/7(2), and white is going to have to drop my cube unless I let him counter-attack. So my options for the other two 6s must minimise white's re-hits. Of various candidates, 13/7(2), 15/3 gives 14 re-hits; 13/7(2), 15/9, 10/4 gives 16 re-hits; and 13/7(2), 8/2(2) gives only 7 re-hits, thanks to massive duplication of 3s. Since white drops or nearly drops after non-hits, consideration of the re-hits dominates, and 13/7(2), 8/2(2) is best by some way.

MC: Paul, did you not notice that 13/1(2) also duplicates 3s? If you had, would you have chosen it?

Peter Christmas: 13/1(2)

I wondered if black should have cubed before this roll with a handy race lead, trailing in the match and I assumed most rolls were good but actually there were 10 rolls like this 66 that could not be played safely. Nevertheless if we can avoid being hit next roll I should think white will be too far behind in the race to take the cube.

If you bring the three rear checkers down it is not nice to find the last 6, playing 15/3 leaving the direct shot gives 14 hitting numbers. Leaving it on the 9-point

and bringing on the 10/4 hoping at least white may have to break his anchor to hit is worse as over half white's rolls can hit something. So looking for something better, there is 8/2(3), 15/9 which leaves 8 shots, as does 13/7(2), 10/4(2). There is 13/7(2), 8/2(2) making the 2-point and fairly compact position but does leave six shots with 33 hitting twice which would really turn the game around.

Finally had to look at making the 1-point again with 13/1(2) which only leaves the one blot, blocks double-1 so only leaves five shots for white to hit. It doesn't look so easy to bring home but with so few shots it is the safest move and if not hit I am sure black can cube next roll and white is so far behind in the race with a match lead to protect it should be enough to win this game. The five hitting numbers would stop us cubing for now but don't leave white good enough to cube us either until he can form a better blocking board or get a second checker back. Safest move has to be the best move here.

MC: Peter saw it and discovered that making the 1-point is the right thing to do, albeit by a narrow margin this time. Brian, also went the same route.

Brian Lever: 13/1(2)

And finally. Another position where it's sensible to break the roll into two (or more) parts. First two 6s should be played 13/7(2); I don't think there can be any doubt about that. Then do we play the same 6s on to the 1-point or perhaps reinforce the 4-point? Or even do something "clever" like 8/2(2) duplicating 3s - too clever if you ask me, certainly if the joker 33 pops out.

Again I feel that the cube is important here. White's advanced anchor signals that he's very unlikely to be gammoned so the cube should be used next turn (and perhaps it should already have been turned last roll) to double out, unless there's been a joker white roll from the bar. What's the best play to achieve this? Probably one which leaves plenty of land-

ing spots for the loose checker on the 15-point, forces white forward if he enters and maintains a gammon threat just in case there's another white flunk/bad entry/lucky follow up roll - though I think white will drop anyway if he doesn't hit back on entry. That means 7/1(2) - so the whole roll is 13/1(2).

MC: Logical and to the point . . . the 1-point, in fact! Snowie has the final say.

Snowie : 13/1(2)

This one is really close and I'm not sure of the right answer! Black should probably have doubled before he rolled although again it is close but white can't make the mistake of passing unless black gives him the opportunity to do so!

Given that he hasn't doubled black should certainly be making another home board point with either 13/1(2) or 13/7(2), 8/2(2). 15/9, 8/2(3) also makes another point but the resultant structure just looks completely wrong and it is! Any play that doesn't make another home board point is much weaker than the ones that do. 13/7(2), 8/2(2) leaves two blots but duplicates the 3 white needs to hit and gives slightly better distribution.

My nets have 13/1(2) and 13/7(2), 8/2(2) virtually dead-heating but there has to be a winner and that winner is 13/1(2).

Well, here we are, at the end, and following some of the answers herein there has been an upset for Peter. He looked like he might have just elbowed Richard out of the £75 prize money - but, where beer money's concerned, Richard buckles down and delivers! So, it's congratulations to Richard, the 2009 Champ, and hard luck to the rest of you.

Continued on the next page ►

Competition . . .	98	100	102	Total
Richard Biddle	58.19	59.86	59.95	178.00
Peter Christmas	58.89	60.00	58.97	177.86
Bob Young	58.35	59.14	59.21	176.70
Brian Lever	59.71	56.15	58.98	174.84
Cedric Lytton	57.07	57.78	54.68	169.53
Paul Plumptre	57.99	51.73	58.19	167.91
Phil Tutchings	57.23	46.00	58.09	161.32

Name	100.01	100.02	100.03	100.04	100.05	100.06	Score
Richard Biddle	25/23 6/5(2)	13/11 8/4* 6/4	13/7* 7/1	13/1* 5/1	13/3(2)	13/7(2) 8/2(2)	59.95
Bob Young	25/21*	13/11 8/4* 6/4	13/7* 8/5(2)	13/1* 5/1	13/3(2)	13/7(2) 8/2(2)	59.21
Brian Lever	25/23 6/5(2)	13/11 8/4* 6/4	13/7* 7/1	13/9(2) 8/4(2)	13/3(2)	13/1(2)	58.98
Peter Christmas	25/21*	8/4*(2)	13/7* 7/1	13/1* 5/1	13/3(2)	13/1(2)	58.97
Paul Plumptre	25/21*	13/11 8/4* 6/4	13/7* 8/5(2)	13/9(2) 8/4(2)	13/3(2)	13/7(2) 8/2(2)	58.19
Phil Tutchings	25/23 6/5(2)	13/11 8/4* 6/4	13/7* 7/1	13/1* 5/1	8/3(2) 6/1(2)	15/3 13/7(2)	58.09
Cedric Lytton	25/21*	13/11 8/4* 6/4	13/7*(2)	13/9(2) 8/4(2)	13/3(2)	15/3 13/7(2)	54.68

	Action	Score
100.01	25/23 6/5(2)	10.00
	25/21*	9.63
100.02	13/11 8/4* 6/4	10.00
	8/4*(2)	9.34
100.03	13/7* 7/1	10.00
	13/7* 8/5(2)	9.63
	13/7*(2)	6.93
100.04	13/1* 5/1	10.00
	13/9(2) 8/4(2)	8.98
100.05	13/3(2)	10.00
	8/3(2) 6/1(2)	8.95
100.06	13/1(2)	10.00
	13/7(2) 8/2(2)	9.65
	15/3 13/7(2)	9.14

I would like to thank all the panellists for their contributions to this year's competition. Without your input it'd be a very slim addition to the Bibafax. Also, I'd like to thank Biba's very own *Stig* - Chris Bray (Snowie) - for giving his expert commentary on the bots thought processes. His final analysis is invaluable in assisting the panellists and me to make sense of everything.

If you would like some more of Chris and can't wait until May, then you can read his weekly column in the *Independent* newspaper every Saturday, or read one of his many books, all available from Amazon. His, *Backgammon for Dummies* is one that every serious player should have on their bookshelf.



Competition 2010, #1 104.01-06 Positions By Michael Crane

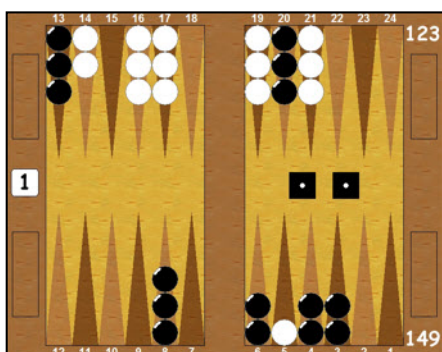
Welcome to the first of the three 2010 season Competitions

- The winner will win £30 off their accommodation at any Biba tournament of their choice.
- The member with the highest points total at the end of the year will win a cheque for £75.

Entries in by 1 April at the very latest - Answers in Bibafax 106, May 2010

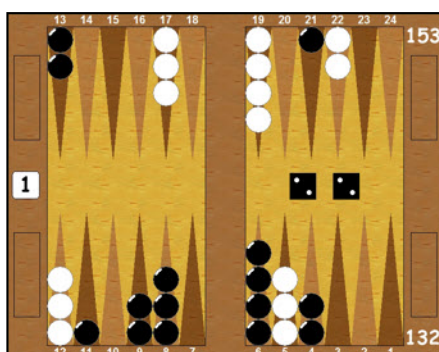
Email: info@backgammon-biba.co.uk and all 'hard copy' to Biba HQ

104.01



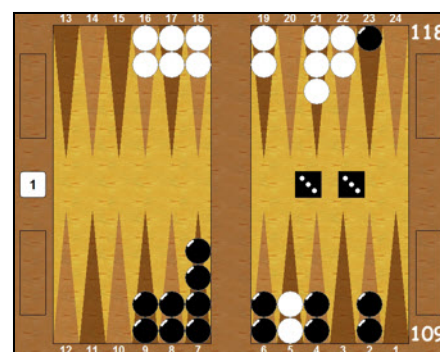
11 point match
Black 10 White 1 Crawford
Black to play 11

104.02



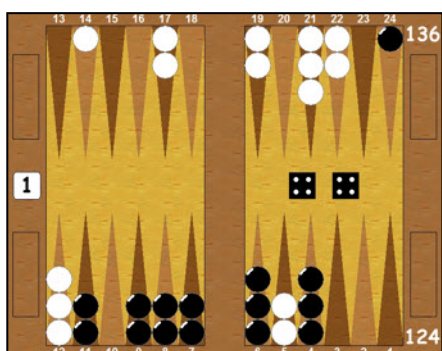
11 point match
Black 1 White 10 Crawford
Black to play 22

104.03



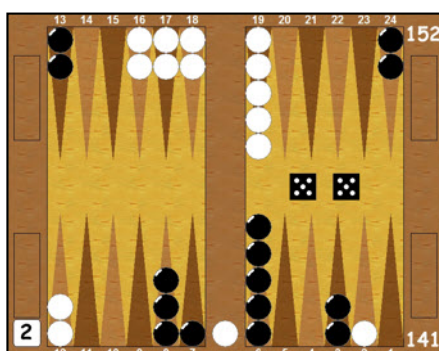
11 point match
Black 1 White 10 Crawford
Black to play 33

104.04



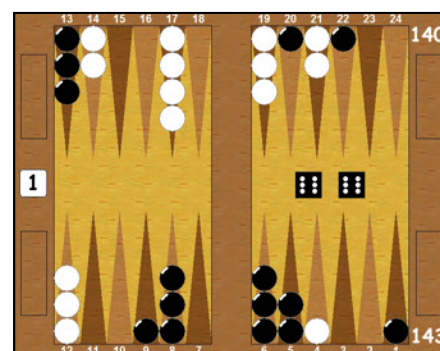
11 point match
Black 1 White 10 Crawford
Black to play 44

104.05



11 point match
Black 6 White 1
Black to play 55

104.06



11 point match
Black 4 White 3
Black to play 66

Advice on Booking Accommodation for all 2010 events

The Biba calendar on this page lists all the Biba events for the year. The wise member books every tournament they want to enter in one block booking. If, nearer the date they are unable to attend, they simply cancel the room (at least one weeks' notice is required) and they are not charged a penny. This guarantees that you'll never have to worry about accommodation ever again and you can relax in the full knowledge that no matter what, you'll always have a room. Book it now - you know you want to!

If you would like to sponsor a tournament, those marked X are unavailable. Ask for details

2010 Backgammon Calendar

Venue change

Feb 5,6,7	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss	
Mar 5,6,7	Biba International Championships	GP	-	Hinckley	Knockout	
X Mar 19,20,21	Scottish Open	casino rip.com	GP	-	Edinburgh	Knockout
X Apl 9,10,11	British Open	casino rip.com	GP	UK	Hinckley	Knockout
Apl ??	Manchester 1-Day	GP	-	Manchester	Combination	
May 7,8,9	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss	
Jun 4,5,6	The English Open	GP	-	Hinckley	Knockout	
X Jul 2,3,4	Biba World Championship	casino rip.com	GP	UK	Hinckley	Knockout
Jul 24,25	15th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination	
Aug 6,7,8	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss	
Aug ??	14th Mind Sports Olympiad	-	-	tba	Swiss	
X Sep 3,4,5	Backgammon in London @ Biba Trophy	GP		Hinckley	Knockout	
Oct 1,2,3	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP		Hinckley	Knockout	
Oct ??	18th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Knockout	
Nov 5,6,7	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss	
X Dec 3,4,5	The UK Finals Christmas Party	GP	-	Hinckley	Double KO	
* Sponsored by Peter & Paul Christmas *						

* Sponsored by Peter & Paul Christmas *

What does sponsoring an event entail?

At the very least you are required to supply the trophies for the event - the costs vary, but are usually in the region of £100 to £150. If you wish to attract a good turnout then extras should be considered to boost attendance. You can rename some of the above events to suit your sponsorship - details upon request. Once sponsorship has been agreed you are obliged to supply/fund the trophies in order to exclusively reserve your event.

OBITUARY: Hercules Robinson, the Baron of Culcreuch. 1919 - 21 December 2009

With great sadness, we report the death, on 21 December 2009, of Hercules Robinson, known to many of us as the Baron of Culcreuch. Herky, as he was affectionately known, had for many years organised backgammon tournaments, together with his wife Bridget. Initially, his tournaments were held on the Isle of Man, where they lived, and he subsequently ventured forth to a variety of European locations. It was Herky who asked Michael Crane to co-direct the European Championships many years ago when Biba was just starting out.

He was born in 1919, and had had a good innings, passing away in hospital at the age of 90. He lived in Southern Rhodesia for some years, returning in 1961 to England, via a two year stint in Monaco. Perhaps this is where he acquired his main desire for backgammon! He had built up his own businesses in Africa and, following an early retirement, inherited from an Aunt an estate in Scotland. He was a first class bridge player, as well as retaining his passion for backgammon. An active man to the end, despite being severely afflicted by jaundice, he was still able to beat his daughter Rose in August of last year!

During World War Two he served with the City of London yeomanry, an armoured regiment, and obtained the rank of Captain, serving in North Africa.

Herky was cremated at Douglas on Thursday 7 January 2010. Herky had acquired many backgammon friends over the years and the world of backgammon was represented at the service by John Broomfield.

2010 Details, Deals and Dates



Registration: Saturday 1030 to 1230

Play Starts (prompt): Friday 2100, Saturday 1300, Sunday 1030

Auctions: Group, Saturday 1245. Individual, Sunday 1015

Pools: Private, members only, prize pools available at £tba

All tournaments feature a free entry Friday 500 **

Formats: Knockouts - 11, 7, 5, & 3 point matches, Swiss - 6 x 11 point matches

Saturday night backgammon, Poker Grand Prix and Jackpots subject to demand

Registration Fees: Members only: £20 - you can join on the day.
Entrants not residing at the hotel, £10 extra to cover facilities
(all fees and surcharges to be paid on the day - prepayment not required)

FRIDAY

2100: Friday 500 **
+ Jackpots (on demand)

SATURDAY

Registration 1030 / 1230
Play starts 1300 prompt

SUNDAY

Registration 1030
(penalty points apply @ 1035)

Backgammon tournament weekends cannot be booked through any other special offer or promotional rate. Players not on the Biba special rate or not staying in the hotel shall pay a surcharge of £10 per night to cover facilities provided. ** Friday 500 entrants who are not on the Biba rate or staying in the hotel will have to pay a £20 entry fee.

Dinner, bed and breakfast @ Barceló Hotels for 2010

The Barceló Carlton Hotel - Edinburgh

Reservations: 0131 4723 000 option #2 and quote 'backgammon'

Rates per person : 1 night £79.50, two nights £118

The Barceló Hinckley Island and Daventry Hotel

Reservations: 01455 631 122 option #2 and quote 'backgammon'

Single room: 1 night £66, two nights £110.50

Double or twin room: 1 night £103.00, two nights £193.00

There are a limited number of rooms made available to Biba at these rates for each of the hotels above and they will be allocated on a first come - first served basis. You are strongly advised to book your accommodation requirements as instructed on page 18 to avoid disappointment.

5, 6, 7 February - Jarvis Trophy ** Moved to Daventry **

The first of the year's four Swiss Format events. Not only do entrants get to play 6 x 11 point matches, but the winner qualifies for the Christmas UK Finals in December with entry into the Last 16 plus one night's free accommodation. Also, this is a great opportunity to rack up a good few Grand Prix points. In addition to the Main & Consolation there will also be a 3-point Blitz between rounds for those that fancy something extra! Not forgetting the Poker Grand Prix and backgammon Saturday night.

5, 6, 7 March - Biba International Tournament

A knockout featuring the usual four elements, Main, Consolation, Last Chance and 3-pointer as well as the Friday 500 and Poker Grand Prix - and the Blitz!. Also, the Main winner gets one night's free accommodation for the Biba - World Championship in July and a chance to walk away with £1000 guaranteed prize money!





"Well," said Goldblots, "I see this is yet again a blow for mankind as womankind take first place with all correct answers. This lady left no *Blot on the Landscape* in her determined effort to get the better of her male opponents: Mummy Bore."

Position 1
13/11, 6/5
8/6, 8/7 -0.049
15/13, 8/7 -0.057

Position 2
24/20, 8/5*
8/5*, 5/1* -0.037
24/20, 13/10 -0.144

Position 3
11/5, 8/3*
11/5, 6/1 -0.220
13/8, 11/5 -0.281

"The theme? 1 2 3 4 5 6 of course. Did you not spot it?" and she reached across for the *Sporting Times* and began to rub Mummy Bore down, very, very, slowly!

Gilbertson UK Finals 2009

Report by Michael Crane

Well, the move to Oxford certainly made a difference – we went from an entry of 34 last year to 49 this year; which was fitting for the last UK Finals sponsored by Paul Gilbertson and sister, Rosey Bensley. After a good few years they are stepping down in 2010 and the mantle is being taken up by another pair of siblings, Peter and Paul Christmas – an apt surname that gives The Christmas UK Finals a double meaning!

As usual too many of you didn't understand the format for qualifying on the Saturday, but I find it hard to see how this is difficult to fathom!: You play 2 x 7 point matches:- if you win 2/2 you go into a playoff for four qualifiers; if you win 1/2 you go into a playoff for four qualifiers; and if you don't win any you go into a separate event (The Snowball)!

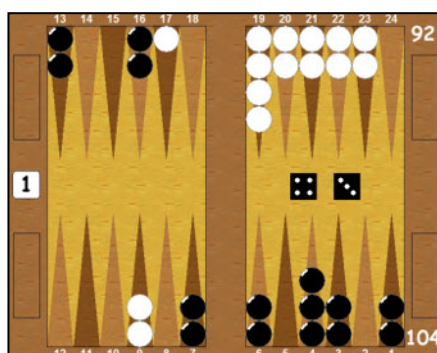
Anyhow, despite the 'difficulty', eight players managed (God knows how!) to get through to the Sunday Main; an element in which each met a pre-qualifier from throughout the year. The draw was thus with the pre-qualifier being the first drawn:

Chris Ternel vs Mick Vacarey
Tony Fawcett vs Nigel Merrigan
Felix Vink vs Raj Jansari
Jon Barnes vs David Wallbank
Rachel Rhodes vs David Startin
Mardi Ohannessian vs Lawrence Powell
Gerry Enslin vs Peter Bennet
Michael Bennet vs Marcus Wrinch

From these fixtures the draw went:

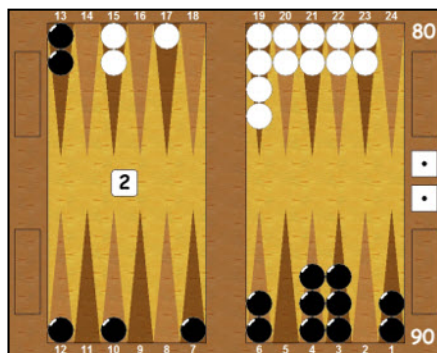
Chris Ternel vs Tony Fawcett; Raj Jansari vs Jon Barnes; Mardi Ohannessian vs David Startin; Gerry Enslin vs Marcus Wrinch. In each match the latter went through leaving Tony vs Jon and David vs Marcus, encounters from which Jon and Marcus emerged to face each other in the 7 point final.

In a match, played with a clock, that saw just two blunders – one each – it was Jon's that precipitated Marcus's first (and unfortunately, only) point in the match. To 7 points, Jon is playing as black.



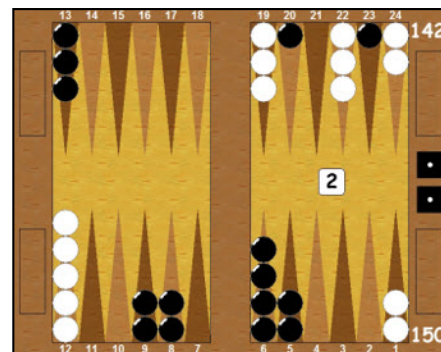
Black 0 White 0
Black to play 43

With Marcus in a holding position and having a five-prime home board Jon decides to be provocative with 16/13, 7/3 leaving Marcus with 7s to hit and a great chance to rack up the first points. It would have been far better for Jon to have played safe this roll and moved 7/3, 7/4 – or most other checker plays behind white's anchoring back-checkers. Fortunately for Jon, Marcus rolls 33: 16/10(2), the reply is 61: 16/10, 3/2; and then Marcus cubes:



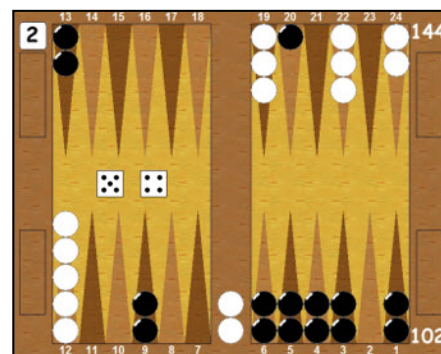
Marcus ships across a 2-cube

Jon correctly passes. The score then moves 1-1 and then 2-1 to Jon when we come to this cube action:



Black 2 White 1
Black cube action

This is a double/take position. Black trails by just eight pips and the game has a long way to go. Marcus spends a little time over his decision to take but he is confident it's the correct play – which it was. However; a series of good rolls from Jon saw him take the initiative where Marcus has two in the air facing one single open point:



White starts dancing

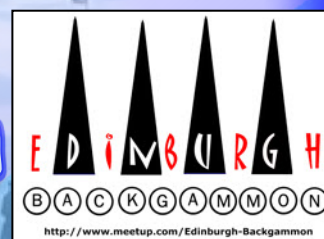
Marcus then dances for ten rolls before bringing in one checker, and the second follows on his next roll, by which time Jon had borne off two checkers and Jon gets a gammon and four points to lead 6-1 Crawford. In the Crawford game Marcus makes his lone blunder (the position is shown on the following page):

This is not a good roll for Marcus and he deliberates over moving off his 7-point or his 21-point and eventually goes with the runner, 21/11, leaving multiple shots!! His chances with this play dropped from 33.7% with 7/1, 7/3 to 25.9%. Jon rolled 62: 20/14*, 13/11. Marcus never

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The XI Scottish Open

19, 20, 21 March 2010

Barceló Carlton Hotel, Edinburgh

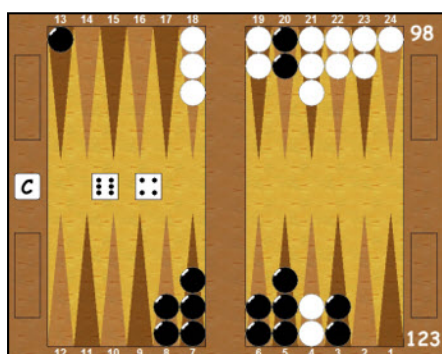
Registration Fee: £20 Entry Fee £20

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White to play 64

fully recovered after the hit and Jon bore off against opposition without leaving a shot to win the match and the UK title.

Meantime, in the **Consolation (41)**, David Nathan vs Arthur Wright, and Paul Christmas vs Michael Horne were battling it out in the non-prog side for a place in the semi; draws from which Paul and David prevailed, and it was Paul that went into the final to face Lawrence Powell who had just beaten Felix Vink in his semi-final. Paul came out on top against

Lawrence and half of next year's sponsors had a trophy to take home!

In the **Last Chance (32)**, Paul's brother, Peter just failed in his attempt to take home a winner's trophy when he was beaten in the final by David Startin (who is hopefully making a comeback after a dearth of wins), but at least both Christmases took home a Gilbertson trophy!

Brian Metcalf overcame the opposition when he triumphed over David Motley in the final of the **Snowball (10)** to win his first ever Biba element.

Over the weekend we also ran a **Blitz (32)** element: 5 point matches on the clock with 12 seconds per move and just two minutes in reserve! Very stressful I can tell you after I tried in vain to get the better of Paul Learmount! Others more successful than I were Peter Bennet, Raj Jansari, Jon Barnes and Julian Fetterlein. These four played off in the semis from which Peter came 1st with Jon 2nd.

We had a **Team (9)** match on the Saturday night from which Simon Morecroft triumphed over Martin Blindell (returning to Biba after a seven year lapse!); and in the **Poker (19)** three players shared 1st place: Raj Jansari, Edie Barker, Lawrence Powell. **Rosey's Roll-out** for a bottle of champagne was won by Steve Wiltsher who matched Rosey's roll of 13 in the play-off. Richard Biddle and Rachel Rhodes each won a **Jackpot (8)** with Jean Wade and Raj Jansari coming second respectively. Jon Barnes beat Michael Bennett in the final of the **Champion of Champions (8)**.

The grand finale of the **Friday 500 (16)** took place this weekend and it looked as if our sponsor, Paul Gilbertson, might kick off his weekend with a £500 starter. He beat Jeff Barber in the semi and then he faced Tom Duggan who had seen off Myke Wignall; however, Tom triumphed and it was he that took home the hefty wad!

Finally, we had a great weekend and Paul and Rosey's sponsorship ended on a high and I'd like to thank them both very much for all they've done over the years in their support of the UK Finals. Also, as usual, thanks to Deana and Tony Fawcett for their continued help in assisting me in the running of this and the other twelve tournaments this year.



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UK FINALS 2010

Biba Grand Prix Event



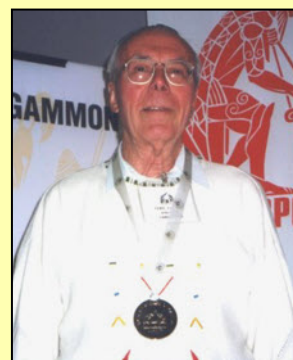
SUPER-MAN
Cliff Connick

Cliff is the longest-serving Biba member outside of Lincoln (the home of Biba). Cliff joined us 14 December, 1989 and now, over twenty years later he has sponsored the Bright 'n' Breezy tournament to celebrate his 90th birthday which will be in February.

Over the years Cliff has made many new friends and he has endeared himself to everyone with his quiet charm and gentlemanly behaviour - he is a pleasure to play against and has never been heard to say a bad word about anyone - and he must have been tempted more than once!

Cliff has only won one Biba trophy, in the 1995 Hilton Trophy when he beat me in the final of the Suicide. One of his most memorable victories was over John Slattery (2003 European Champion) in the 2002 Consolation of the Sandy Osborne when he took £1 off John! Another that will stick with him is his 1999 Mind Sports Olympiad, Beginner's silver medal, a proud day for Cliff.

Cliff is a man whom I have the utmost respect for and there's not a backgammon player that's met him would deny that Cliff Connick is indeed a super man!



Bikes, Backgammon and Ben Nevis

Going to the Scottish Open just for the Backgammon? Why not travel by motorbike and do some sight-seeing as well? I am planning to travel up the wiggly roads on the West Coast of Scotland to Ben Nevis on the bike and then down to Edinburgh.

Proposed itinerary:

Morning of 17th March - Depart from down South joining others on the way.

Evening of 17th March - Stay at Travel Lodge near Gretna Green (£22 per person per night)

18th March - Gretna to Fort William via Arran - Choices of places to stay from Hostel to Local Inns.

Very scenic and picturesque.

19th March - Travel across Scotland to Edinburgh in time for dinner and the Friday 500.

Please contact me if you are interested, chelseamuffin@aol.com. I can also point you in the right direction if you want to hire a Harley and do it in style.

I look forward to hearing from all the wannabe easy riders.

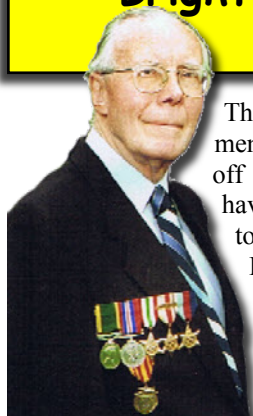
Richard Biddle

This is the bike I will be riding



Bright 'n' Breezy, January 2010

Report by Michael Crane



This year the tournament's title was well off target. It would have been more apt to have called it The Bright 'n' Snowy! The country has been in the grip of The Big Freeze (an annoying sobriquet) that started 18 December and is still going on. Global warming my arse! The weather had a huge affect on entries and with 54 brave souls bearing arctic conditions the turnout was very low for what is usually the biggest event of the year. Mind you, the weather wasn't as bad as predicted and overall it was relatively snow-free. Happily the sponsor, Cliff Connick made it - which I was relieved to see; I had brought along a special birthday cake to help him celebrate his 90th birthday (it's in February) and the thought of eating it all on my own was daunting.

Main (54): What can be done about John Hurst? Winner of this tournament in

2006, 2007, 2009 and now 2010? Mark Heidenfeld, the 2008 winner was snowed in in Germany and couldn't get to Brighton to wrest the trophy from John's grasp. Chas Perry (new member), Stuart Mann, Peter Chan, Jeff Barber and Paul Gilbertson all tried to stop him but to no avail.

Eventually it was down to Nicky Check to do it. He'd made it to the final via Carl Dell, Ian Tarr, John Wright, Angela Dell (three Liverpool club players, the Dells and John Wright!) and Sean Williams. He got off to an early lead but John soon got into his stride and then became unstoppable - and thus he retained the title and racked up his fourth win in five years! What can be done with John Hurst?

Time constraints mean that I am unable to copy the match into Snowie in time to comment, but I will do so soon and make it available to those that want a copy.

Consolation (50): Those of you that follow these things will have noticed that despite the fact that Nicky was Runner-up he was awarded fewer Grand Prix

points than Peter Bennet. Why was this? It was because Peter had to fight his way through seven rounds of 7-point matches to



win the Consolation final; something he achieved by beating new member, Mark Calderbank, who had finished on top of the progressive side. Well done, Mark, for doing so well first time out.

Last Chance (32): We have new member, Mark, taking home a trophy in the Consolation and now in the Last Chance another new member, Peter Finnimore, taking home the winner's trophy in this element. It wasn't an easy draw for him and he had to beat Jon Barnes (a superman!) in the semis and then Ray Kershaw in the final. Well done, Peter.

Tidal Wave (16): With the weather threatening to get worse many players headed home early so we were left with fewer to draw upon thus we had a 16 player knockout instead of the planned 32. This worked out well for Andy Darby and Martin Barkwill - Andy came out the winner over Martin in the final. ►

Other elements over the weekend were:-
Friday 500 (32): Peter Bennet and John Wright fought off Ann Pocknell and Myke Wignall respectively in the semi-final to meet in the final - a match from which Peter emerged the winner and the recipient of free accommodation and registration for the Scottish Open.

Poker (19): Due to the poor weather the entry for the first poker event of the year was fewer than expected, however, one brave soul (and her husband and dog!) did brave the weather and it was she that came out chip-leader over the weekend - Vicki Pemberton. Simon K Jones came in 2nd with Lawrence Powell 3rd. The

'usual suspects' didn't show until Myke Wignall made an appearance in 8th place!

Team (9): Usually, Richard Biddle or me end up winning, but this time we went out together when we were beaten by joint-winners, Tim Mooring and Ed Turner.

1-Point Knockout (54): Cliff donated £50 to be fought over throughout the weekend in a 1-point knockout. As an experiment it was decided to make the Main 1st Round and the 1-pointer 1st Round the same draw! That meant that you first opponent in the Main was your first opponent in the 1-pointer - a format that many said would end up with the

same person winning both! They were wrong. The two finalists, Tony Fawcett and Arthur Wright both lost in the Main 1st round. In the 1-point final, Tony won . . . by one point! ★

Finally. I'd like to thank Cliff for sponsoring the tournament, it was a shame the weather was against us getting a good turnout, but at least those that did attend had a good time. Also thanks to Sharen, Deana and Tony for their help and to Paul Barwick for two pints of excellent beer in *The Cricketers*!



Cliff at dinner with the cake specially made for him. The cake image was rather spoiled by the sparkles sprinkled upon it which meant that the image wasn't as clear as I'd hoped. Happily the tee shirt image was a lot clearer and Cliff wore it all day Saturday . . . as did the Directing staff, who had one each!

Bottom Left: Main. Nicky Check and John Hurst

Bottom Right: Consolation. Peter Bennet and Mark Calderbank



**John Hurst
Winner
2010**



Top Left: Last Chance. Ray Kershaw and Peter Finnimore

Top Right: Tidal Wave. Andy Darby and Martin Barkwill

Middle Left: Amanda & Eve, Adam & Steve, Adam & Eve - All bases covered in a Brighton shop window!

Middle Right: Liverpool Crowd, Steve, John, Carl, Angie and Simon

Bottom: Arthur Wright and Tony Fawcett in the 1-point Final, with a close-up of the little critter that went with the £50 first prize

The Gilbertson UK Finals, 4, 5, 6 December 2009

Main (16/49)

- 1 Jon Barnes
- 2 Marcus Wrinch
- 3&4 Tony Fawcett
- 3&4 David Startin
- 5to8 Chris Ternel
- 5to8 Raj Jansari
- 5to8 Mardi Ohannessian
- 5to8 Gerry Enslin

Consolation (41)

- 1 Paul Christmas
- 2 Lawrence Powell
- 3&4 David Nathan
- 3&4 Felix Vink
- 5to8 Arthur Wright
- 5to8 Michael Horne
- 5to8 Mick Vacarey
- 5to8 Michael Bennet

Last Chance (32)

- 1 David Startin
- 2 Peter Christmas
- 3&4 Rachel Rhodes
- 3&4 Paul Gilbertson
- 5to8 Larry Bennett
- 5to8 Andy Darby
- 5to8 Linda Taylor
- 5to8 Gerry Enslin

Snowball (10)

- 1 Brian Metcalf
- 2 David Motley
- 3&4 Chris Purchase
- 3&4 Mick Harris

Team (9)

- 1 Simon Morecroft
- 2 Martin Blindell

Friday 500 Finals (16)

- 1 Tom Duggan
- 2 Paul Gilbertson
- 3&4 Jeff Barber
- 3&4 Myke Wignall

Champion of Champions (8)

- 1 Jon Barnes

Rosey's Rollout (56)

- 1 Steve Wiltsher

Jackpot #1 (8)

- 1 Rachel Rhodes
- 2 Raj Jansari

Jackpot #2 (8)

- 1 Richard Biddle
- 2 Jean Wade

UK Blitz (32)

- 1 Peter Bennet
- 2 Jon Barnes
- 3&4 Raj Jansari
- 3&4 Julian Fetterlein

Poker (19)

Raj Jansari, Edie Barker, Lawrence Powell



Paul Gilbertson

The Bright 'n' Breezy, 8, 9, 10 January 2010

Main (54)

- 1 John Hurst
- 2 Nicky Check
- 3&4 Paul Gilbertson
- 3&4 Sean Williams
- 5to8 Marcus Wrinch
- 5to8 Jeff Barber
- 5to8 Angela Dell
- 5to8 Paul Barwick

Grand Prix @ Brighton

- 24.77 John Hurst
- 24.76 Peter Bennet
- 18.58 Nicky Check
- 13.42 Paul Gilbertson
- 9.29 Jeff Barber
- 9.29 Angie Dell
- 9.29 Sean Williams
- 9.29 Marcus Wrinch
- 9.28 Monica Beckerson
- 9.28 Mark Calderbank
- 9.27 Peter Finnimore
- 6.19 Paul Barwick
- 6.19 Mike Heard
- 6.19 Peter Chan
- 6.19 Martin Barkwill

Consolation (50)

- 1 Peter Bennet
- 2 Mark Calderbank
- 3&4 Monica Beckerson
- 3&4 Jeff Barber
- 5to8 Ann Pocknell
- 5to8 Chris Ternel
- 5to8 Peter Chan
- 5to8 Paul Barwick

Last Chance (32)

- 1 Peter Finnimore
- 2 Ray Kershaw
- 3&4 Jon Barnes
- 3&4 Alan Beckerson
- 5to8 Mike Williams
- 5to8 Philip Tutchings
- 5to8 Tony Fawcett
- 5to8 Ian Tarr

- 6.19 Ray Kershaw
- 6.18 Chris Ternel
- 6.18 Ann Pocknell
- 4.13 Cliff Connick
- 4.13 Ian Tarr
- 4.13 Steve Taylor
- 4.13 John Wright
- 4.13 Simon K Jones
- 4.13 Rachel Rhodes
- 4.13 Lawrence Powell
- 4.13 Richard Biddle

Tidal Wave (16)

- 1 Andy Darby
- 2 Martin Barkwill
- 3&4 Simon K Jones
- 3&4 Mick Vacarey

Team (9)

- 1 Tim Mooring & Ed Turner

Friday 500 (32)

- 1 Peter Bennet
- 2 John Wright
- 3&4 Ann Pocknell
- 3&4 Myke Wignall
- 5to8 Marcus Wrinch
- 5to8 Nicky Check
- 5to8 Ray Kershaw
- 5to8 Tony Walters

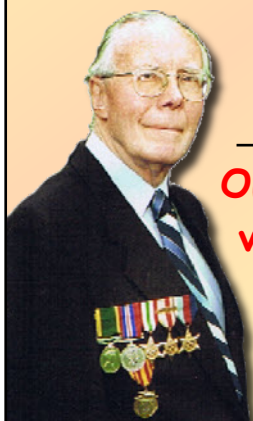
- 4.13 Stuart Mann
- 4.13 Ed Turner
- 4.13 Myke Wignall
- 4.13 John Hedge
- 4.13 Alan Beckerson
- 4.12 Roy Hollands
- 4.12 Peter Christmas
- 4.12 Chris Bray
- 4.12 Malcolm Robertson
- 4.12 Mick Vacarey
- 4.11 Jon Barnes

Poker (19)

- 1 Vicki Pemberton
- 2 Simon K Jones
- 3 Lawrence Powell
- 4 Mark Calderbank
- 5 John Wright
- 6 Carl Dell
- 7 Philip Tutchings
- 8 Myke Wignall

1-Point Knockout (54)

- 1 Tony Fawcett
- 2 Arthur Wright
- 3&4 Chas Perry
- 3&4 Mick Vacarey
- 5to8 Peter Bennet
- 5to8 Simon Heath
- 5to8 Angela Dell
- 5to8 John Hedge
- 4.10 Andy Darby
- 2.58 Tony Fawcett
- 2.58 Stewart Pemberton
- 2.58 Vicki Pemberton
- 2.57 Phil Tutchings
- 2.57 Mike Williams
- 2.06 Zoe Cunningham
- 2.06 Simon Heath
- 2.06 Eddie Barker
- 1.55 Arthur Wright



On behalf of all Biba members I would like to wish Cliff a very happy 90th birthday in February. Although celebrations will be confined to family there are many of us that won't be attending all of whom will raise a glass or two to your continued good health. Cheers!

Ranking Changes @ Brighton

New Old Name

1957	1952	Chris Ternel	1692	1709	Stewart Pemberton	1503	1527	Chas Perry
1950	1878	John Hurst	1688	1697	John Hedge	1495	1513	Phil Tutchings
1948	1905	Peter Bennet	1660	1635	Peter Chan	1479	1494	Mike Williams
1900	1905	Stuart Mann	1654	1677	Tim Mooring	1472	1456	Monica Beckerson
1879	1853	Paul Gilbertson	1627	1632	Roy Hollands	1465	1482	Zoe Cunningham
1865	1875	Lawrence Powell	1627	1630	Chris Bray	1463	1484	Chris Purchase
1865	1851	Marcus Wrinch	1609	1620	Tony Fawcett	1460	1458	Cliff Connick
1813	1819	Martin Barkwill	1584	1548	Mark Calderbank	1450	1416	Paul Barwick
1810	1768	Nicky Check	1583	1520	Jeff Barber	1443	1461	John Batty
1808	1823	Rachel Rhodes	1569	1543	Raymond Kershaw	1437	1435	Myke Wignall
1802	1792	Simon K Jones	1558	1563	Ed Turner	1435	1463	Anne Ryder
1782	1794	Peter Christmas	1547	1532	Alan Beckerson	1390	1413	Arthur Wright
1776	1765	Mike Heard	1544	1580	Andrew Darby	1388	1351	Angela Dell
1756	1724	Sean Williams	1544	1527	Peter Finnimore	1387	1409	Tony Walters
1750	1750	Ann Pocknell	1539	1547	John Wright	1377	1388	Steve Taylor
1714	1712	Jon Barnes	1539	1565	Eddie Barker	1374	1384	Mick Vacarey
1704	1711	Ian Tarr	1518	1519	Malcolm Robertson	1346	1367	Carl Dell
			1514	1514	Richard Biddle	1263	1275	Vicki Pemberton
			1512	1531	Simon Heath			

Friday 500 January 2010

20	Peter Bennet	7	Eddie Barker	4	Paul Barwick
16	John Wright	7	Ed Turner	4	Paul Gilbertson
12	Ann Pocknell	7	Ian Tarr	4	Mark Calderbank
12	Myke Wignall	7	Jeff Barber	4	Peter Chan
9	Marcus Wrinch	7	Simon K Jones	4	Rachel Rhodes
9	Nicky Check	7	Andy Darby	4	Chas Perry
9	Ray Kershaw	4	Angie Dell	4	Richard Biddle
9	Tony Walters	4	Anne Ryder	4	Roy Hollands
7	Carl Dell	4	Arthur Wright	4	Steve Taylor
7	Chris Ternel	4	Malcolm Robertson	4	Tony Fawcett
			Martin Barkwill		

Due to the weather the turnout for the Friday 500 was fewer than expected; however, this didn't bother 32 entrants. From these, Peter Bennet and John Wright fought off Ann Pocknell and Myke Wignall respectively in the semi-final to meet in the final - a match from which Peter emerged the winner and the recipient of free accommodation and registration for the Scottish Open.

Poker Grand Prix January 2010

<u>Pts</u>	<u>Player</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>Player</u>
29	Vicki Pemberton	19	Carl Dell
27	Simon K Jones	17	Philip Tutchings
25	Lawrence Powell	15	Myke Wignall
23	Mark Calderbank	11	Tony Fawcett
21	John Wright	10	Eddie Barker
		9	Martin Barkwill
		8	Ann Pocknell
		7	Angie Dell
		6	Paul Gilbertson
		5	Andy Darby
		4	Mick Vacarey
		3	Roy Hollands
		2	John Batty
		1	John Hedge

Due to the poor weather the entry for the first of the year was fewer than expected, however, one brave soul (and her husband and dog!) did brave the weather and it was she that came out chip-leader over the weekend - Vicki Pemberton. Simon K Jones came in 2nd with Lawrence Powell 3rd. The 'usual suspects' didn't show until Myke Wignall made an appearance in 8th place!

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Grand Prix Championship January 2010

24.77	John Hurst	6.19	Mike Heard	4.13	Lawrence Powell	4.11	Jon Barnes
24.76	Peter Bennet	6.19	Peter Chan	4.13	Richard Biddle	4.10	Andy Darby
18.58	Nicky Check	6.19	Martin Barkwill	4.13	Stuart Mann	2.58	Tony Fawcett
13.42	Paul Gilbertson	6.19	Ray Kershaw	4.13	Ed Turner	2.58	Stewart Pemberton
9.29	Jeff Barber	6.18	Chris Ternel	4.13	Myke Wignall	2.58	Vicki Pemberton
9.29	Angie Dell	6.18	Ann Pocknell	4.13	John Hedge	2.57	Phil Tutchings
9.29	Sean Williams	4.13	Cliff Connick	4.13	Alan Beckerson	2.57	Mike Williams
9.29	Marcus Wrinch	4.13	Ian Tarr	4.12	Roy Hollands	2.06	Zoe Cunningham
9.28	Monica Beckerson	4.13	Steve Taylor	4.12	Peter Christmas	2.06	Simon Heath
9.28	Mark Calderbank	4.13	John Wright	4.12	Chris Bray	2.06	Eddie Barker
9.27	Peter Finnimore	4.13	Simon K Jones	4.12	Malcolm Robertson	1.55	Arthur Wright
6.19	Paul Barwick	4.13	Rachel Rhodes	4.12	Mick Vacarey		

Ranking Championship January 2010 (11 point matches played - Score - Player)

6	2201.33	John Hurst	2	1625.50	John Hedge	1	1274.00	Mike Williams
6	1929.67	Nicky Check	2	1612.00	Ian Tarr	1	1268.00	Carl Dell
5	1924.00	Paul Gilbertson	2	1576.50	Myke Wignall	1	1211.00	Monica Beckerson
4	2070.25	Jeff Barber	2	1576.00	John Wright	1	1197.00	Peter Finnimore
4	1973.00	Marcus Wrinch	2	1550.00	Chris Ternel	1	1135.00	Chris Purchase
4	1900.50	Angie Dell	2	1528.00	Richard Biddle	1	1063.00	Jon Barnes
4	1843.75	Sean Williams	2	1518.00	Cliff Connick	1	1048.00	Tony Walters
3	1895.67	Mike Heard	2	1514.00	Rachel Rhodes	1	1047.00	Mick Vacarey
3	1858.67	Ray Kershaw	2	1468.00	Steve Taylor	1	1043.00	Stewart Pemberton
3	1825.33	Paul Barwick	1	1452.00	Andy Darby	1	1032.00	Ann Pocknell
3	1811.33	Peter Chan	1	1405.00	Malcolm Robertson	1	1020.00	Roy Hollands
3	1694.33	Martin Barkwill	1	1378.00	Chas Perry	1	1014.00	Phil Tutchings
3	1549.33	Mark Calderbank	1	1375.00	Chris Bray	1	958.00	Tony Fawcett
2	1878.00	Simon K Jones	1	1353.00	Arthur Wright	1	935.00	Vicky Pemberton
2	1784.50	Alan Beckerson	1	1351.00	Zoe Cunningham	1	916.00	Peter Christmas
2	1698.50	Stuart Mann	1	1323.00	Tim Mooring	1	888.00	John Batty
2	1697.50	Lawrence Powell	1	1319.00	Simon Heath	1	888.00	Eddie Barker
2	1673.50	Ed Turner	1	1292.00	Peter Bennet	1	851.00	Anne Ryder

Active Players Rankings January 2010

1965	Julian Fetterlein	1713	Steve Rimmer	1540	Gerry Enslin	1434	Simonetta Barone
1957	Chris Ternel	1710	Mick Butterfield	1539	John Wright	1423	Larry Bennet
1950	John Hurst	1704	Ian Tarr	1539	Eddie Barker	1414	Neil Everitt
1948	Peter Bennet	1693	Tom Duggan	1537	Simon Morecroft	1414	Jean Wade
1932	Brian Lever	1692	Stewart Pemberton	1527	Talan Evans	1407	Neil Young
1899	Adrian Jones	1688	John Hedge	1514	Richard Biddle	1390	Arthur Wright
1879	Paul Gilbertson	1660	Peter Chan	1495	Phil Tutchings	1388	Angela Dell
1867	Tony Lee	1660	David Phillips	1479	Mahmoud Jahanbani	1377	Steve Taylor
1865	Lawrence Powell	1654	Tim Mooring	1479	Mike Williams	1374	Mick Vacarey
1865	Marcus Wrinch	1645	Stefan Paliwoda	1478	Irving Czechowicz	1374	Richard Holness
1858	Kevin Stebbing	1643	David Motley	1476	David McNamara	1366	Rowena Paliwoda
1841	David Nathan	1639	Paul Plumtre	1474	Brian Metcalf	1346	Carl Dell
1813	Martin Barkwill	1627	Roy Hollands	1472	Monica Beckerson	1297	Bob Bruce
1810	Nicky Check	1627	Chris Bray	1471	Mike Ireland	1263	Vicki Pemberton
1808	Rachel Rhodes	1610	Roland Herrera	1467	Eric Westbrook	1236	Linda Taylor
1802	Simon K Jones	1609	Tony Fawcett	1466	Rosey Bensley	1212	Fanika Petkovska
1782	Peter Christmas	1594	Wayne Felton	1463	Chris Purchase		
1781	David Startin	1593	George Miltiadou	1463	Mike Barrett		
1776	Mike Heard	1589	Gheorghe Filipas	1460	Cliff Connick		
1756	Sean Williams	1583	Jeff Barber	1457	Tim Vasiljevic		
1755	Mardi Ohannessian	1569	Ray Kershaw	1451	Chris Evans		
1750	Ann Pocknell	1558	Edwin Turner	1450	Paul Barwick		
1746	Steve Hallet	1547	Alan Beckerson	1446	Mick Harris		
1733	Uldis Lapikens	1544	Andrew Darby	1437	Myke Wignall		
1714	Jon Barnes	1542	John Gilbertson	1435	Anne Ryder		

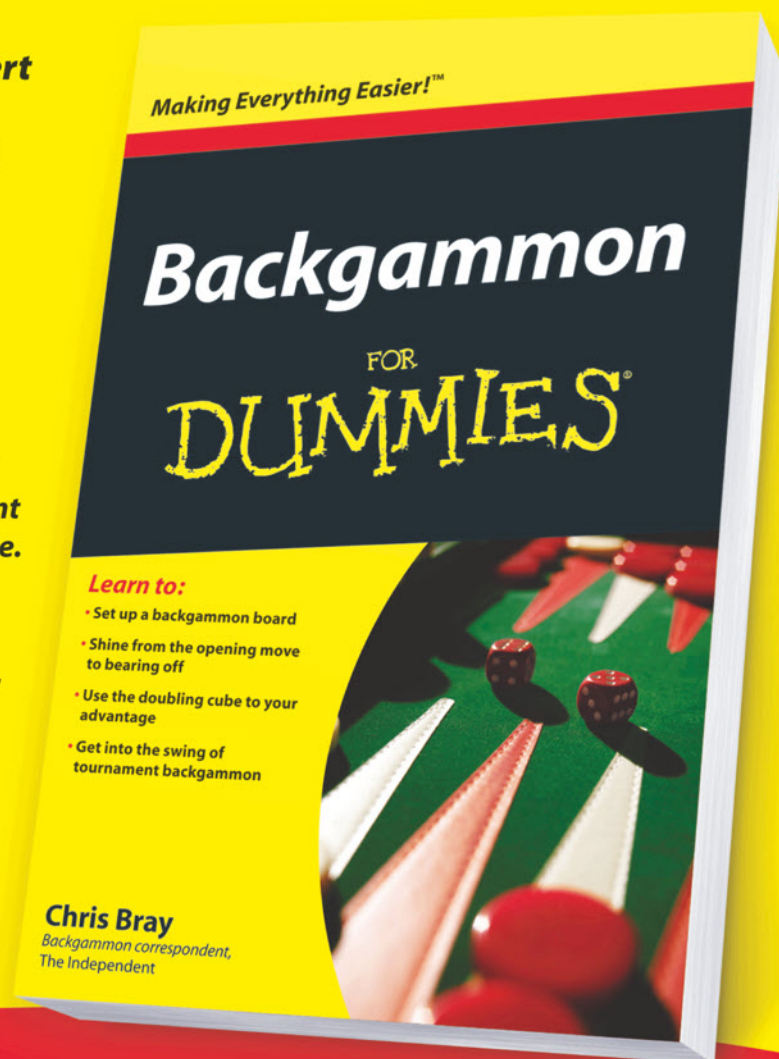
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What is? How Does? What are?

What are Grand Prix Points?

Our Biba Grand Prix Championship is comprised of two sections - Swiss format and Knockouts - being decided over a series of Grand Prix tournaments (all formats) in which players gain points towards an annual total based upon match wins. Grand Prix points are points awarded to round winners of all 11-, 7-, 5- and 3-point matches in Biba events or non-Biba events recognized as GP events. Your six best positions are used to decide your eventual score; so, if you are in the points more than six times the better scores will replace the poorer ones. At the end of the Grand Prix season all points are reset to zero. I shan't go into the points structure here but if you want to see them look on the Biba web site here: www.backgammon-biba.co.ukFormatProposal.htm

There is no minimum tournament entry required but obviously the more tournaments you enter the greater your points total will be. At the end of the year the Biba Championship winners will be the players with the greatest points total. Should two or more players share this total then it shall be decided using 2, 3 or 4 decimal places.

What is the Ranking Championship?

All members start with a ranking based upon the average ranking (approx 1535) and this is adjusted according to wins/losses during tournaments. All matches in the tournaments are ranked except 3-pointers. To qualify for the Ranking Championship a player has to play a minimum of 14, 11-point matches in a year (if you play more than 14, lower scores will be replaced by higher ones) and an average is worked out, the champion being the player with the best average. Scores are decided by adding 500 points to an opponents' Ranking Score if you win or by deducting 500 points if you lose. This system allows everyone to have a chance at becoming the champion. It is slightly biased towards the lower ranked players for their wins will often be against higher ranked players. This means that the higher ranked players have to win far more games against their high-ranked peers than against the lower-ranked players.

What are the UK Finals?

In eight designated tournaments throughout the year (see the calendar) the winner is entered into the last 16 of the UK Main, and gets one night's free accommodation to the UK Finals held in December of that year. In the event of the 1st player being unable to attend then the place will be given to the 2nd player. If that 2nd player has qualified in their own right or is unable to take up the position, then no one will replace the missing player and the position will be taken up by an extra qualifier from the Saturday Main Qualifier tournament. Any player being 1st more than once will be given one bye in the Main Finals and any subsequent positions taken up by a Saturday qualifier. Players that have not pre-qualified by winning one of the eight events can enter a qualifying tournament on the first day (Saturday) of the Finals weekend. From this qualifying event a minimum of eight players will join the pre-qualifiers to make a Main entry of 16 players.

What is the Friday 500?

It is a 5-point Knockout based over 12 tournaments for 2010, the final winner of which will take home from the December, Christmas Party UK Finals the princely sum of £500. All players get 4 points for entering. This is increased to 7 for last 16 losers, 9 for last 8, 12 for semi-final losers, and finally 16 and 20 for 2nd and 1st respectively. This method of awarding points means that it could be possible to gain enough points to qualify by attending on a regular basis ($11 \times 4 = 44$ points). At the same time it means that winning just one event won't guarantee a place. This system also means that should the turnout be fewer than 16 (but greater than 8), the 1st Round losers will in fact get 7 points, and for fields of 8 and fewer, the 1st Round losers will get 9 points. Just how many entrants each event will attract is unknown - so it might well be worthwhile entering just in case the number of entrants is fewer than 16! Can you afford not to enter?

The top placed player after the November event (the last event of the year before the December Finals) will receive £100 for being the Top Player. The December draw will be 1st vs 16th, 2nd vs 15th, etc, etc. If fewer than 16 entrants turn up in December players from 17th upwards will be allowed to enter should they be present. A failure to get a 16-draw will mean byes will be applied, and these will be allocated from 1st position downwards until filled.

How does the Poker Grand Prix work?

The Poker Grand Prix functions as the backgammon grand prix inasmuch as the leader after the December event will be the Poker Grand Prix Champion and the prize money accrued over the year will be paid out according to the listing to the Top Five placed players thus: 1st 40%, 2nd 25%, 3rd 20%, 4th 10% and 5th 5%. To encourage (and reward) regular entry the qualifying minimum number of events needed to qualify for a Top Five place is five (out of a possible 12). Once a player reaches five entries they can replace lower scores with higher ones. Players making the final 8 at each event will get bonus points of 3 to 10 for position 8th to 1st. Thus in a 16-player tourney the last-placed person scores 1 point, second to last 2 points, third to last 3 points and so on until we reach 8th place where the bonus kicks in and 8th place gets 12 points and 9th 8 points. It is recognized that making the final table is an achievement and is therefore rewarded by the points allocation.



Masters (39): 1-Fuat Erdag (Turkey), 2-Jürgen Orlowski (Germany), 3-Shahab Ghodsi (Iran/Norway) / Mario Sequeira (Portugal); 1C-Sven Rümcker (Germany), 2C-Hilmi Göchan (Turkey); 1LC-Simonetta Barone-Herrera (England).

Intermediate (25): 1-Peter Michael Valeur Bosse (Denmark), 2-Dimitris Dimitriadis (Greece), 3/4-Murat Kapikiran (Turkey) / Hulusi Tümer (Turkey); 1C-Marios Kiriakou (Cyprus), 2C-Hakki Yilmaz (Turkey); 1LC-Arzu Akincioglu (Turkey).

Beginners (20): 1-Nurhan Gidutyan (Turkey), 2-Umut Sari (Turkey), 3/4-Özlem Gamze (Turkey) / Ugur Taskan (Turkey); 1C-Hisar Uyar (Turkey), 2C-Seyfi Uslubas (Turkey); 1LC-Amir Afsai (Israel).

Pro/Am Doubles (16 teams): 1-Oguz User (Turkey) & Ali Vahabi (Iran).

President's Tournament #1 (64): 1-Cemalettin Yüksel (Turkey).

President's Tournament #2 (64): 1-Hilmi Göchan (Turkey).

Sassangammon Freeroll (84): 1-Haluk Oral (Turkey).

Long Distance Award: Michihito Kageyama (Japan).

European Doubles (28 teams+4 rebuys): 1-Ray Fogerlund (USA) & Sasan Taherzadeh (IRAN/USA), 2-Claude Lambert (France) & José Rodriguez (France), 3/4-Jürgen Orlowski (Germany) & Christian Plenz (Germany) / Alan Grunwald (USA) & Bob Wachtel (USA).

French Open Masters (78): 1-Giorgio Castellano (Italy), 2-Michihito Kageyama (Japan), 3/4-Olivier Croisille (France) / Philip Vischjager (Netherlands); 1C-Volker Sonnabend (Germany), 2C-Jürgen Orlowski (Germany), 3C/4C-Matvey "Falafel" Natanzon (Israel) / Alexis Vincent (France); 1LC-Eli Roymi (Israel), 2LC-Sami Sallak (Germany).

Advanced (24): 1-Thomas Löw (Germany), 2-Guy van Middelen (Belgium), 3/4-Mads Peter Andersen (Denmark) / Pedro Machado (Portugal); 1C-Charles Lecomte (France), 2C-Sam Ahmed (Egypt/USA); 1LC-Peter-Michael Valeur Bosse (Denmark), 2-Scarlett Serrero (France).

Intermediate (8): 1-Hans Werner Ketteler (Germany), 2-Gilles Deshayes (France), 3/4-Christelle Laurent (France) / Roger Mouquin (France).

Pro/Am Doubles (16 teams): 1-Artur Muradian & Self (Armenia), 2-Damjan Plesec (Slovenia) & Vincenzo Riceputi (Italy).

Super Jackpot (8): 1-Thierry Manouck (France), 2-Steen Grønbech (Denmark).

DMP-Knockout (64): 1-Piergiorgio D'Ancona (Italy), 2-Thierry Manouck (France).

Cyprus Qualifier: Mads Peter Andersen (Denmark).

Special Player Awards: Frank Simon (Germany) & Jacob "Stick" Rice (USA).

Elegance Trophy: Lynn Ehrlich (USA).

