

BIBAFAX

No. 122
Jan/Feb
2013

Magazine of the British Isles Backgammon Association

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New Backgammon Tour Sponsor/Partner
New Online Tour



Geoff Conn
Bright 'n' Breezy Champion

Biba Backgammon Tour 2013

sponsored by

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Bright 'n' Breezy. Manchester One-Day. UK Giant. Liverpool Open.
British Doubles. Coventry Open. Irish Open.

Some of the organisers of the above events are not directly involved with the UK Tour, but if they want to assist they are welcome to do so. All that is required of them is to make available the names of the Last 8/16 players in the Main and Consolation. This is purely a Biba project and any funding is via Biba and the event sponsor, Betfair/wsob - entrants pay nothing towards it, it is a totally free-entry element of each event.

Main	Pos	Cons
19.95	1st	13.93
16.94	2nd	11.92
13.93	3rd & 4th	9.97
8.92	5th to 8th	5.98
4.91	9th to 16th	2.97

For the Last 8/16 of the Main and Consolation in each of the tour events, points are awarded as shown to the left. Event entrants gaining more than one award will only be awarded the higher score, they are not accrued.

A running points total and leader board will be published on the Biba web site following each event, and in the Bibafax upon publication. After the final event, currently the Irish Open, the top 8 scorers will become the qualifiers. These 8 qualifiers will be invited to take part in the Grand Final to be held on the Saturday morning at 11:00 at the 2014 Bright & Breezy tournament, in January. The Finals will be a 7-point Knockout with a winner-takes-all prize of at least £200 plus extras from our sponsors, Betfair.com/wsob.

Qualifiers must confirm their attendance for the Final by 12 November, 2013. If any of the qualifiers cannot attend the Final then the 9th scorer will be invited, and thereafter, 10th, 11th etc. until such time as we have an 8 draw. Any vacant places that occur on the day of the Final will be decided in the same way. Entrants not present at the 11am start time will forfeit their place.

Remember. There are no fees to pay to enter the BBT - the only fees you incur are those to enter each event. The BBT is not an official part of the above events (excepting those organised and run by Biba) but it is hoped that its involvement will result in more entrants for each event.

January 11-13 : Bright 'n' Breezy (Biba event)

April 21: Manchester One-Day - www.manchesterbridge.org.uk/backg.htm

July 5-7: UK's Giant of Backgammon (Biba sponsored event)

July 20-21: Liverpool Open - www.liverpoolbackgammon.co.uk

October 4-6: British Doubles (Biba event)

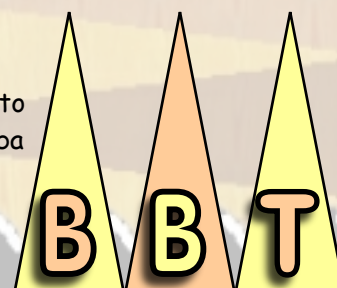
October tba: Coventry Open

October tba: Irish Open - eperry@iol.ie

If your club is staging a local tournament that is open to all and you would like to be part of the BBT, please email and let us know. It is also very likely that Biba Grand Prix Points can also be applied to your event.

See the next page for the full details of the first 2013 event, and the results of the 2012 BBT Final, both from Brighton.

To see the leader board and latest updates go to www.backgammon-biba.co.uk/bbt2010



Bright 'n' Breezy, January:

A good turnout for the first BBT of 2013, and a very good start for Geoff Conn and Peter Ozanne. The listing below shows all entrants including those that didn't get any points but were awarded Attendance Points that might well prove crucial towards the end of the year.

Don't forget, during 2013 anyone, member or non-member can have a shot at the money next January in the Finals ... and talking of Finals ...

2012 Grand Finals @ the Bright 'n' Breezy:

Not all those who qualified took part, their places were taken up by qualifiers below them. The seeded draw got off on time (11am) with Alastair Woods vs Paul Barwick, Jon Barnes vs Tony Fawcett, Peter Bennet vs Marcus Wrinch and Peter Christmas vs Mark Calderbank.

The semi-finals saw Paul Barwick vs Jon Barnes and Peter Bennet vs Mark Calderbank, two fixtures from which Jon and Mark emerged the winners.

In the last match it was Mark who came out on top to be the 2012 Biba Backgammon Tour Champion.



The next event will be the Manchester One-Day tournament, 21 April.
For details of entry etc, go to www.manchesterbridge.org.uk/backg.htm

19.95 Geoff Conn	A	Andrew Gibson	A	Myke Wignall
16.94 Peter Ozanne	A	Arthur Wright	A	Neil Smith
13.93 Malcolm Robertson	A	Bob Bruce	A	Neil Webb
13.93 Paul Gilbertson	A	Bob Young	A	Nicky Check
13.93 Peter Christmas	A	Chris Purchase	A	Paul Plumptre
11.92 Ray Kershaw	A	Chris Ternel	A	Peter Bennet
9.97 Antonio Sgambato	A	Clive Martin-Ross	A	Peter Finnimore
9.97 Jerry Limb	A	Crispin Duke	A	Rachael Garrett
8.92 Barry McAdam	A	Cynthia Roberts	A	Raj Jansari
8.92 Jysen Qwt	A	David Nathan	A	Richard Biddle
8.92 Ray Fard	A	Donna Sherred	A	Rosey Bensley
8.92 Stuart Mann	A	Emmanuel Di Bona	A	Roy Hollands
5.98 Andy Darby	A	Engin Ongel	A	Sean Williams
5.98 Colin Owen	A	Eric McAlpine	A	Sidi Shatku
5.98 Marcus Wrinch	A	Fanika Petkovska	A	Simon Barget
4.91 Ann Pocknell	A	Gary Brooker	A	Simon Morecroft
4.91 Mardi Ohannessian	A	George Miltiadou	A	Tony Fawcett
4.91 Mark Calderbank	A	John Hurst	A	Tony Walters
4.91 Matt Black	A	John Ingamells	A	Wayne Joseph
4.91 Paul Barwick	A	Jon Barnes	A	YanKit Chan
4.91 Paul Christmas	A	Lawrence Powell		
2.97 Alastair Woods	A	Ling		
2.97 David Horner	A	Martin Barkwill		
2.97 Geoff Oliver	A	Mick Vacarey		
2.97 Ian North	A	Mike Heard		
2.97 Tim Mooring	A	Mike Williams		



The Christmas UK Finals - December 2012

Report by Michael Crane



Well the last event of the year went very well for some players. Out of ten elements throughout the weekend two players took home trophies in seven of them!

It began on the Friday night with the Friday 500. It looked for a while that I was going to make a second consecutive title win after I beat some very fierce opposition from Colin Owen and then Mardi Ohannessian (whom I won a backgammon against - much to Mardi's dismay!) but my run was soon stopped when I faced Paul Christmas in the Semi-Final. Paul then faced his brother, Peter in the Final, an encounter in which Paul came out on top. One!



Friday 500: Paul and Peter

On the Saturday, because we had a smaller entry than anticipated it was decided to keep the Sunday Main to an 8-entry; so with that concluded and our 8 ready for Sunday we played The Snowball. Peter C and Paul (this time, Plumptre) met in the Final and it was Peter who won the 5-pointer. Two!



Snowball: Paul and Peter

And while the Qualifiers were underway Marcus Wrinch came out on top of the Round Robin, Champion-of Champions, a feat he managed to achieve without facing a single Christmas brother!



Champion of Champions: Marcus Wrinch

Saturday evening, after a good dinner and plenty of drink we had the Poker. It was a toss-up between Paul C and Marcus . . . and Paul C came out the top dog. Three!



Poker: Paul and Marcus

Also, on Saturday evening we held the Doubles and the victors were *Cot-tagewebs* - Peter C and me. Four!

Sunday saw the Main 8-draw get underway (more on this later) at the same time as the Consolation; and it is here we see Paul C play into the Final from the non-progressive draw to meet Gerry Enslin from the Progressive draw. As you might have guessed, Paul won. Five!



Consolation: Paul and Gerry



Con 3/4: Crispin Duke & Colin Owen

Following the end of the Consolation the Last Chance got underway. Peter C made it to the Final, but he was beaten by Marcus. Six!



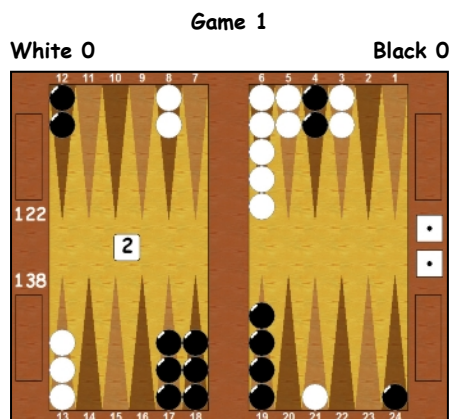
Last Chance: Marcus and Peter

To round off the weekend Peter C went on to win a bottle of champagne in Rosey's Rollout. Seven! Rosey wasn't able to make it this year but her champagne and dice roll did!



Finally, Peter C won the Design a Christmas Card competition and won a year's Biba Membership. Eight!

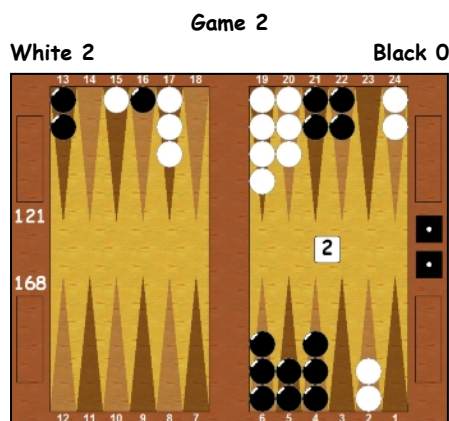
Back to the Main. It didn't take us long to get to a Final between Myke Wignall and Jysen Qwt . . . and the 7-point Final itself was a fairly brief affair. Myke (white) took an early lead after winning an un-gammoned double game after shipping over this early cube:



White cube action

Cubing here is an error. Although he is 16 pips ahead in the race he still has a runner to get safely past black and the two black checkers on his 4-point are going to be troublesome. He would have been better off to have waited a while. Jysen took. XG: No Double/Take.

Myke's roll of 64: 21/11 gets his runner out, and a move later it's safe. From here-on Myke bears in and off to win two points.

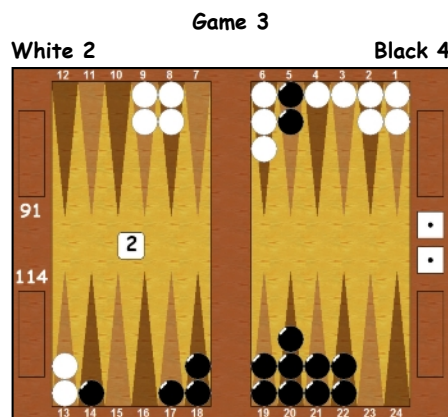


Black cube action

Being 47 pips down in a race (which this isn't) is perhaps reason enough not to cube here. Add to that his two advanced anchors will soon have to break and it looks like this double is far too soon. It is an error, but not a big one. White is going to find it difficult to get his checkers safe, and currently having a blot under attack from 6s, 1s and 43, black certainly has the threat. Myke takes without hesitation. XG: No Double/Take.

Jysen rolls 33: 21/15*(2) and Myke's on the bar. He's soon in but he is let down by

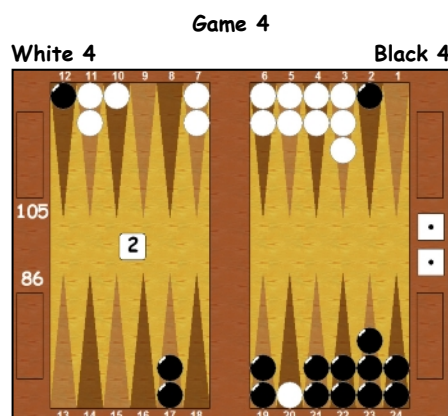
his inability to get his 23-point checkers out and his home board crumbles until he eventually springs a runner. From hereon Jysen takes full advantage of Myke's poor home board eventually closing Myke's last two checkers out as he begins the bearoff. Myke gets a shot at a 4 but fails to hit it and he is in real danger of being backgammon until saved by his last roll, double-five, and he loses a gammoned 2-cube.



White cube action

Twenty-three pips ahead in the race might be a good time to cube. But; black's advanced anchor is going nowhere and could well prove a difficult obstacle to get over. Although there's no immediate danger of leaving a blot there might be one soon. Jysen takes. XG: No double/Take (by a narrow margin).

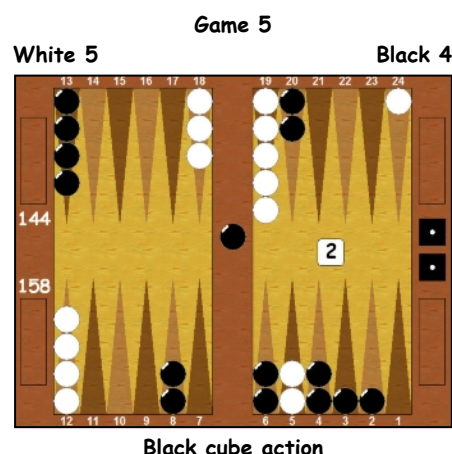
Myke manages to get all his checkers in safely and then he proceeds to win the bearoff and the two points.



White cube action

This was a bit of a messy game with checker-play blunders from both sides. The only 'proper' thing they both did well was the Double/Drop. Although black leads in the race by 19 pips, that's about the only thing going for him. His 23-point blot is his weakness and for this reason alone, perhaps, he drops. White has a few threats and they're enough for XG to

exclaim, Double/Drop.

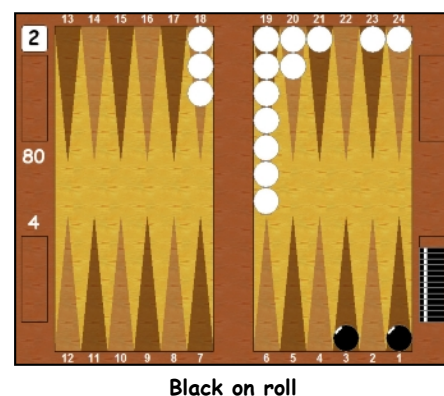


Just six moves in and there's a cube on the table. Jysen makes a blunder here. He's on the bar, he trails in the race and his only advantage appears to be one point more than white - his 4-point, which is offset by the two home board blots. Myke takes. XG: No Double/Take.

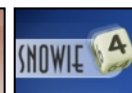
A while later hitting from the 23-point with a 1, black begins to turn the game his way - helped along by some dancing rolls from Myke. Before long Jysen has a 5-prime (6 to 2) in his home board and all Myke has is his 6-point and a blot a 6 away which is hit with 51.

Although Myke re-enters immediately soon a second checker is hit back. Soon both are on the bar and Jysen starts to bring his remaining checkers around unheeded.

Myke never gets a shot and in this position:



If black manages to roll 21 Myke has a very slim chance to save the gammon. He needs any double except double-three to save the gammon and the match . . . and Jysen rolls 43 to win the match and the UK title. NB:





Main: Jysen and Myke



Main 3/4: Eric McAlpine
and Marcus Wrinch

Finally. I'd like to thank Peter and Paul for their kind sponsorship and I hope they are delighted with their many trophies. Well done, both of you. Also, thanks to Myke Wignall for running the Poker and to Rosey for her Rollout (it wouldn't be a UK Final without her Rollout). Thank you to Sharen for standing in for an absent Deana Fawcett who was celebrating a big birthday over the weekend in Huddersfield (I missed her). Lastly, thanks to everyone who turned out to make it a great weekend.

THE GROSVENOR £2000 EVENT 15 DECEMBER, 2012



UK Series™
WSOB/BIBA



In September Arthur Wright performed a feat of magic and turned £15 into £500; and now, three months later Mark Calderbank turned £70 into £700. Mark did this after winning the December Grosvenor backgammon tournament in which a field of 12 saw the Casino put in £160 to make the prize up to a grand total of . . . a grand!

Mark fought his way into the Final after losing in the 1st Round to September's losing-finalist, Brian Lever. Dropping into KO#2. Mark then went on to beat Dorothy Lee (September's Consolation Runner-up), then Stewart Wilson to secure his place in the Final.

Mark's opponent, Jon Barnes went through September's 1st, Arthur Wright, then John Wright (no relation) then Rachel Rhodes (September's Consolation Winner) to meet Mark in the Final.

Coming from KO#1, Jon began the 11-point match 3-0 up . . . which, unfortunately, were all the points he had as Mark out-rolled and out-played him to take the pot, 11-3. I watched most of the Final and no matter what Jon did Mark had an answer to it. He never stood a chance!

The Semi-Progressive Consolation saw Dorothy once again into the Final, but alas, as last time she had to settle for Runner-up as Kevin Jones made it after a good, strong game.

So, two little events and I have been asked, "are there any more?" and my answer is - I don't know. It's up to the Casino to decide. I am willing to direct them but only if Grosvenor Huddersfield ask me to.

I'd like to thank all the entrants from both events for making each one a success and, Grosvenor-willing, we might all see each other again over the gaming tables in 2014.

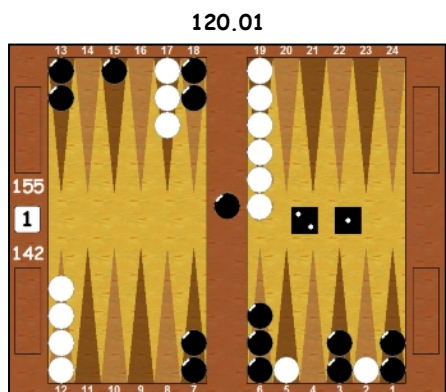


Main: Michael Crane hands over the prize money to Mark Calderbank.
Consolation: Kevin Jones and Dorothy Lee

Competition 2012 No.3 - Solutions 120.01 to 120.06

Michael Crane . . . Aided by eXtreme Gammon 2

MC: We finally reach the last of the 2012 Competition. Three of the original panelists have dropped out so we only have five entrants this issue. Let's start with The Lone Ranger, shall we?



White 1

Black 0

Paul Plumptre: 25/24, 7/5*

Any non-hitting move goes to the bottom of my class. White has two men loose back vs nine men in the zone; if she fans after my hit, I will have a fair double; and anyway, I do not want to give her the chance to anchor on my 5-point. So the only question is whether I keep my 7-point with (a) 25/23, 6/5*; or whether I go all-out with (b) 25/24, 7/5*, giving myself both 1 and 2 to cover next time if she misses the slot. The losses on (b) come with the double hit on 52 and 55, and the extra single hits on 43 and 45. I don't think the extra single hits matter much, with white's board still being fully open. So I think the gains on (b) outweigh the losses.

MC: Unfortunately for Paul he gets off on the wrong foot. XG tells us it's a big mistake to hit here. It's time for a game-plan switch . . . and everyone else switches!

Julia Hayward: 25/24, 15/13

You have a decent racing lead, white has no threats, and will probably be leaving shots next go. You have a three-point board but it's a pretty shaky one and few men in the zone for growing it. All of which suggests it's time to sit back, tidy up and let white foul up in his own time.

Cedric Lytton: 25/24, 15/13

We have run out of ammunition for the attack 25/23, 6/5* (our bar- and mid-points are stripped, leaving only 10s played 15/5), besides which white would have 3s with which she could not enter,

and if white doesn't make her Golden Anchor we may be able to hit later.

Richard Biddle: 25/24, 15/13

My first thought was to hit on the 5-point by moving 6/5* which would mean coming in 25/23. This would leave three ugly blots around the board, an unnecessary risk considering we are ahead in the race. As they say, *when ahead, race*. So 25/24, 15/13 looks obvious . . . too obvious . . . there must be a catch. There is one more hitting move that gives us more builders to make the 5-point – 25/24, 7/5*.

Perhaps this is why Michael has put this problem in. It loses us more gammons, but also wins us more gammons. I still think over the board, I would play safe – we can afford a wait and see approach.

MC: Well, well, well, Richard goes for the 'pussy move' and not his usual, hit-and-be-damned.

Peter Christmas: 25/24, 15/13

To hit or not to hit, that is the question as it looks like an early double-five blitz is stalling so should we continue to press it or stick with our better board and small race lead? We can use the 1 or 2 to hit on the 5-point, after 6/5* there are 17/36 return shots. There are no more from 7/5* but there is the double hit or even the triple hit with 55 which could prove fatal.

Still maybe it is just our lack of back-up that should guide us as our chances of completing a close-out must be rather small. Also white's lack of any development and his need to anchor means he may well have to expose more checkers while he tries to build more safe landing points. So the quiet but very solid 25/24, 15/13 may actually bring us more dividends in the coming rolls and leaves us controlling each section of the board.

MC: I expected this play from Peter, he too is quiet but solid . . . and he is a great doubles partner (as is Richard, but he tends to enter fewer tournaments). Let's here what the expert has to say.

XG: 25/24, 15/13

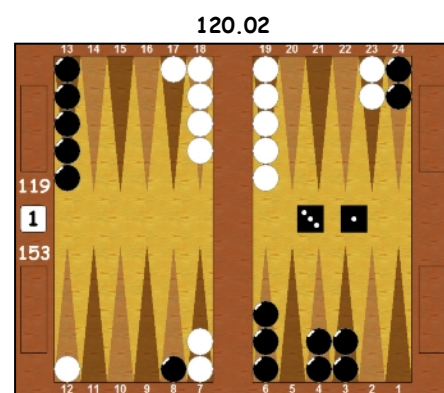
When is a blitz not a blitz? When it's a failed blitz.

This is what has happened here. Black has run out of ammunition and should abandon the attack. It would be a big

mistake to try to continue the blitz with 25/24, 7/5* or 25/23, 6/5*.

Black is ahead in the race and should switch to the game plan of trying to win the race. It might seem that 25/22 is the right move but there is no need to leave the blot on the 15-point and simply 25/24, 15/13 is best – the rearmost is out of harm's way and the extra checker on the mid-point gives black some flexibility.

Knowing when to change your game plan is the mark of an expert player and here black does well to abandon the blitz and switch to racing.



White 0

Black 0

MC: Well, we met The Lone Ranger earlier . . . now meet Tonto!

Cedric Lytton: 13/12*, 12/9

We're behind in the race with an ace-point anchor, so we hit – particularly as carrying on duplicates white's 1s and 2s. Also if white does roll 21, 51 or 52, return hits from our bar-point would leave us lots of return shots of our own. 8/5, 6/5 instead is tempting (and was obviously the prelude to 120.05), but then white would have a virtually free hand in the outer board while waiting for a double to clear her bar-point.

MC: Generally, rolling two dice is best played moving two checkers. Cedric got half of it correct but then carried on with the same checker. Our next two also got half correct but missed out by not playing the second half as well as they could . . . but only by a gnat's.

Peter Christmas: 24/21, 13/12*

Again early in the match and looks like a reverse of 120.05 having played 8/5, 6/5 but that doesn't mean that is the correct play. Trailing by 30 pips after our

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FREE £300

The Biba, Free £300, is a series of 8-player pools held in conjunction with existing Biba tournaments. Entry is just £5, and if you top your pool (or win your jackpot) you get your fiver back and a place in the 8-player finals of the Free £300 and the chance to take home £300! In other words . . .

FREE MONEY!

All entrants are randomly drawn into 8-player pools or jackpots, the winner of which gets back their stake and a place in the Final. If the top 8 place is drawn then a head-to-head will decide (2 players) else a Round Robin. There are no limits to the number of entries in the Final. If you win two, you get a 1st Round bye, win three, 1st Round bye plus a 1st Round draw etc which could see you into the final in double-quick time!

1st Qualifier: Paul Christmas

move we can't really turn our nose up at any hit, and as we have the stronger board this has to mean 13/12* is our best 1 at least. Candidate 3s would be 12/9 or 13/10 or 24/21 or 6/3.

The latter looks a bit too safe and doesn't help make our 5-point next roll. 12/9 duplicates the 1 & 2 needed to come in but still a few indirect returns of the bar. 13/10 looks loose but depends if white is keen to break the bar-point to hit back as he is not in great shape to start a blot hitting contest. Nevertheless I like 24/21 as it gives us a direct shot at the blot on the 8-point and gets our back men moving while white is on the bar.

Paul Plumptre: 24/21, 13/12*

First I reject the plain build 8/5, 6/5. Yes this is strong, if I get a hit soon; but it puts little pressure on white, and leaves her free to build with many rolls, eg 21, 31, 32, 42, 43, 53, 51. I should take advantage of my stronger board, and hit with 13/12*. With the 3, the second-best option is to shift the blot 8/5, which further duplicates her 5s.

But the normal principle is to split the back men while hitting, and so I play 24/21. Yes she may exchange hits with

rolls such as 12, 13, 14; but she won't enjoy the exchange out-boarded. She will have an ugly choice whether to play a 6 8/2 or 7/1*. Only rolls of 11, 22 and 55 will be seriously good for her.

MC: Magriel's fundamental principle of hitting and splitting is just a bit out of the top points. Our final two keep it on the same side of the board and get 10/10.

Julia Hayward: 13/10, 13/12*

The hit's easy. Keeping the ace-point anchor also seems easy - things could go dreadfully gammonish with four blots, no anchor and so many men in the outfield. 8/5 is premature, with just the one number to cover we're an underdog to make the 5-point that way. Better are 13/10 and 12/9, making white give up his anchor to hit and both have a fair degree of duplication.

I think I prefer 13/10, 13/12* going flat out to contain the hit man - if white does pick up a fly-shot then we have lots of return hits on the bar, and our board ensures we'll come out best in a hitting contest.

MC: It looked as if Julia was toying with Tonto's move for a while.

Richard Biddle: 13/10, 13/12*

Making the 5-point, 8/5, 6/5, is wrong here as it leaves all our builders sitting on the mid-point in a very inflexible position despite our strong home board. So the hit is on to remove a half a roll for white next turn. However, because of our stacked mid-point we are still quite inflexible so should play down from the mid-point with the three as well rather than advance to the 21-point.

We don't want to give white the chance of blitzing us after re-entry and would rather be hit in the outfield where we are likely to get return shots. Keeping the ace-point intact gives us a little security. We will still be able to escape later due to white's ineffective prime. Our immediate goal after the hit is to make or blitz our 5-point. Unstacking the mid-point best serves this.

*MC: Yes, the 5-point is very attractive - after playing 13/10, 13/12**

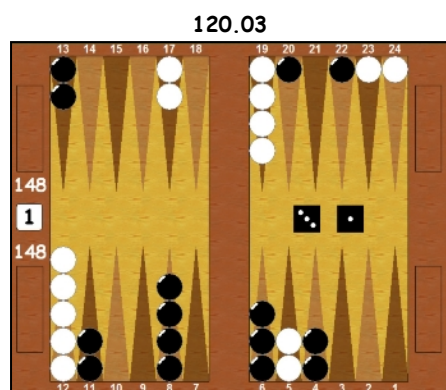
XG: 13/10, 13/12*

The important things here is not to get seduced by the 5-point. There are times when making a strong board is correct but this position cries out for an action play. Black is 34 pips behind in the race ►

before the roll and white's checkers are poised to make new points. Black also has the stronger home board. All this points in only one direction.

The 1 must be played 13/12*. The question then is whether to bring down an additional builder with 13/10, play the hitting checker into a position where it is a builder for the 5-point by moving 12/9, make the very big play of slotting the 5-point with 8/5 or apply Magriel's fundamental principle of hitting and splitting by moving 13/12*, 24/21.

The choice is a difficult one and it needs a rollout to separate the two top plays of 13/10, 13/12* and 24/21, 13/12* as both game plans are viable. In the end concentrating on only one area of the board comes out ahead by a whisker.



White 8

Black 9

MC: Well, after we saw The Lone Ranger and then Tonto out on their own it's only fitting that we now see Silver grazing alone.

Peter Christmas: 8/7, 6/3

At this score white shouldn't need too much advantage to turn the cube and try to get to Crawford or we go to 9-9 and dmp if someone turns the cube early again. With the two white blots we can afford to keep our runners back as it makes more of white's next rolls quite hard to play safe. So looking at our side we have 8/7 6/3 or 8/4 which is the safest play and gives us three builders to make a point next time.

The advantages of making our bar-point are largely negated as long as white holds our 5-point but I am not sure he would hit our slot even, a good double-two or 21 would leave good return shots. I quite like slotting the 3-point as it is the best point we can make next and 8/7 gives us a 4 and 5 to make it next roll. So I will play 8/7, 6/3 as white can't hit and cover everything next roll.

MC: Silver should have kept quiet and not left himself open to attack, especially when The Lone Ranger and Tonto aren't with him. Here's two more that left themselves open.

Paul Plumptre: 22/18

I do not like to dump men behind the anchor, so I reject 8/4 or 6/3 with either 22/21 or 8/7. Instead, I merely play 22/18, which makes some nominal progress. I am a bit worried by white 61, 64 or 65, but on the other hand 22/18 takes away the fair 'tip & cover' rolls 32, 51, 52 from her. My equity will improve if I can get one of the back men to my mid-points.

Cedric Lytton: 22/18

We won't mind a blot-fight with the better home board and two white blots in hers, and there are more possibilities next time (run to mid-point, make opponent's bar-point, etc.) than with the waiting play 8/4.

MC: Both reject the 8/4 play and that's a shame for it was the best of a bad roll.

Richard Biddle: 8/4

White has a very weak home board with the added Achilles' heel of having two wasted deep blots. Even though we are even in the race and with a small number of pips available on this roll we can still afford a wait-and-see approach. However, I'm not keen on playing 22/18, as the one point white would like to hit us from is the mid-point and this puts one of our blots in direct range of the mid-point.

We don't wish to create any further blots so that leaves us the ugly 8/4. We don't actually lose any builders from this move and it does unstack the heavy 8-point and might allow us to make a further home point if we get into a blot hitting contest.

MC: 8/4 ugly? Yes, but in an ugly-duckling way.

Julia Hayward: 8/4

Another position where it seems best to play passively and let white be the first to find a bad number. While the race is equal, white's position is compromised by awkward distribution and two men wasted deep. We should simply prepare for containing anything we hit.

MC: Yes. let white leave the first blot.

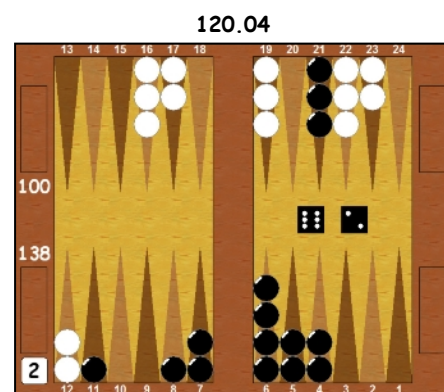
XG: 8/4

This 31 is a pretty useless roll. Black had many objectives prior to this roll such as

anchoring in white's home board but this roll achieves precisely none of them.

The race is level and the position is also equal so it is important not give your opponent a chance to improve his position significantly by slotting with 8/7, 6/3 or run out to white's bar-point with 22/18, inviting an attack. He should keep the spare on his 6-point where it is so we can also reject 22/21, 6/3.

With this do-nothing roll black should do just that, move 8/4 and hope for better luck next time. Any other move is a clear error.



White 9

Black 9

MC: Watch out, The Lone Ranger is back, and he's lost his way a bit here.

Paul Plumptre: 11/5, 6/4

At 38 pips behind, all my eggs are in the hitting basket at this DMP. The natural move is 11/5, 6/4, preparing to make the 3-point next. Going as deep as 8/2, 6/4 I put marginally inferior. The only question is whether to part-run with 21/13. This will put pressure on white if she rolls 62, 64 or 65, and will gain some flexibility to hold the block if white misses.

But I think the losses if white hits with a 1 are greater; the loss of pips is irrelevant, but a 1 will usually enable white to clear her 13-point without leaving even a remote shot. Yes I am likely to have to wait for four to six turns for a direct shot; but 11/5, 6/4 leaves me unlikely to crack before then.

MC: Well, this incorrect answer at least makes Paul human according to XG.

Richard Biddle: 21/15, 6/4

I suspect we may be dropping the cube after this turn so it probably doesn't matter what we move but if there was one thing we could do, to perhaps stop the cube coming over, is to come out with the 6, 21/15, just to try and create some

contact. The choice for the 2 then comes down to 11/9 or 6/4. I prefer the latter as it brings in another builder into play despite the fact we may need 1s or 3s on the other side of the board.

MC: Mmm, the latter was truly that. The former would have been marginally better.

Julia Hayward: 21/15, 11/9

DMP, no worry about gammons. Our racing position is hopeless so we need to get a shot to win. Next move, white will either improve his position in front of us or play off his mid and we've got to roll a 9 or bust. So we have to put a spanner in that plan with 21/15 - if white misses, he has to play more awkwardly; if he hits, we may come in on the ace and get double shots later.

For the deuce, 6/4 and 11/9 both get another man into prime-building room - 11/9 is slightly better as we won't want to play a 6 from the far side of the board.

MC: Well reasoned, similar to XG's.

Cedric Lytton: 21/15, 11/9

Puts pressure on white's mid-point which (on 11/5, 6/4 for instance) he would be able to come off leaving at most an indirect shot. Being so far behind in the race, we must get a shot to win. 6/4 instead with the 2 is OK also concentrating four builders on the 3-point and unstacking our 6-point, but I slightly prefer 11/9 bringing that man to a useful position at once.

MC: Cedric wants to get a shot at white, and rightly so; and so does Peter

Peter Christmas: 21/15, 11/9

We are at DMP and 30 pips behind after our move so our best chance to win the game now is if we can hit a checker and putting the mid-point under pressure is going to help this cause a lot. 21/15 does this and even if white gets a pick and pass we may get back on the 1-point which gives us more hitting chances and we don't have to worry about gammons.

11/9 with the 2 is another builder for the 3-point which we hope to make next in line to contain any checker we manage to hit. Just slotting the 3-point would be too passive in this DMP situation so I would have to advocate 21/15, 11/9.

XG: 21/15, 11/9

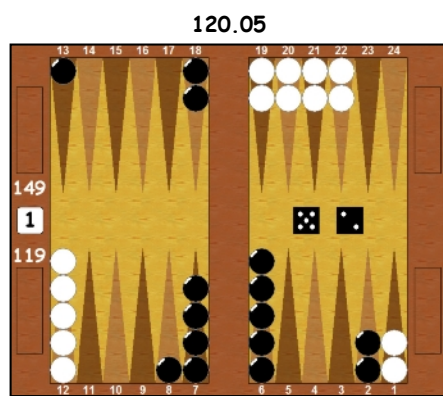
This is a type of position which you humans consistently misplay. Any play that

doesn't release the spare checker from the 21-point is a bad error. The purposes of the play are many: to create the opportunity for a hit from the bar after a hit by white; to ensure black's board doesn't get crashed because he has three checkers stuck behind white's growing prime and to make it more difficult for white to clear his mid-point.

Finally if the escaping blot is hit it may be able to re-enter on white's 1-point and become a nuisance from there.

Hopefully this explains why 21/15 is mandatory with the 6. For the 2 either 11/9 or 6/4 is acceptable but not 15/13 which removes the return hit option from the list above.

There is virtually no difference between the two plays but 11/9, slotting the back of the prime just wins.



MC: Tonto has found a mate, but it isn't kemo sabe, it's a gunslinger, shooting from the hip at anything that moves; but first, let's see what Tonto has to say.

Cedric Lytton: 18/16, 18/13

Well, what else? 13/6 does nothing to improve our position, leaves our back men stranded and really needing a set quickly, and still leaves with indirect shots, as would 13/11, 7/2. 13/8, 6/4 would make a 3-prime and a reasonable chance of covering next time, but we'd look rather silly if we rolled our clearing double and still had to cover!

If hit, we have fair escaping chances as white would only have one or two men in her attack zone, if not hit, we look forward to flooding our outfield with builders and points made. In short, pay now rather than later. And we are ahead in the race, so we race.

MC: Oh dear, XG doesn't like this . . . but he does like the gunslinger's answer.

Richard Biddle: 13/8, 6/4

We have to try and improve our home board if we are to bring our checkers home safely. At the moment we have an inflexible position and we also need to be wary of white's home board when considering how many blots we are going to leave. 13/6 leaves the least number of shots (4) but little to improve our position as well as isolating our two back checkers. Incidentally, we should keep those there just to cause trouble for white should he roll two small numbers.

We should wait for doubles before moving off white's bar-point. Bearing this in mind 7/2, 13/11 only leaves six shots but two blots which could prove difficult to enter if they were both on the bar. We need to avoid leaving more than one blot which on its own would be recyclable. A shame because having the checker on the 11-point bearing in on the 5-point would be useful. That leaves 13/8, 6/4. This safety's the two blots in the outfield but creates a new one in our home board which if not hit becomes really useful.

Our three-point prime and improved priming position, I think, outweighs the issue of back checker isolation.

MC: For once we start at the top, and sharp-shooting his way to the top is Richard.

XG: 13/8, 6/4

So what are the chances of bringing this position home safely after the apparently 'safe' plays of 13/6 or 13/11, 7/2? The answer is a very low percentage indeed. Black needs to take a risk now to avoid multiple problems later. If you chose one of those plays you need to get a better understanding of risk and reward in backgammon - this is not a time for timidity.

The 5 should be played 13/8 and then the 2 should be used to slot an inner board point. There may not seem to be much difference between 6/4 and 7/5 but surprisingly the latter is nearly a blunder! Leaving minimum shots (thirteen) turns out to be best by a long way and the right play is 13/18, 6/4.

By the way I hope nobody decided to make a run for it with 18/13, 18/16? That one is a double blunder!

MC: See what I meant, Tonto?

Peter Christmas: 13/6

We have a race lead but now isn't the time for 18/13 as it leaves a direct shot ►

and makes it easier for white to play his spares off the stacked mid-point. We are going to have to leave at least an indirect shot somewhere but if we are missed I want to have the best chance next roll of playing safe and ideally making another inboard point.

13/11, 7/2 leaves two indirect blots which is only six shots. 13/6 leaves just the four shots so is the safest option as white's board is a lot stronger than ours but doesn't have a lot of spares to back it up as yet.

Dropping a man into our board with 13/8, 6/4 gives us more chance to build another point next time but 13 shots is a lot given white's stronger board. He would like to get his back men moving very soon anyhow, doing it with a hit could leave us facing a very tough cube decision very soon. I would have to go with the safest option here 13/6 and hope to roll better next time if we aren't hit.

MC: Safe but boring. It doesn't do anything, Peter. NB: This is one of those positions when we play Doubles that I have to bully him into a better play. ★

Paul Plumptre: 13/6

I have far too often fallen for 0.2 errors by essaying 18/13, 18/16 in this sort of position; the losses on white's 14 hits are disastrous.

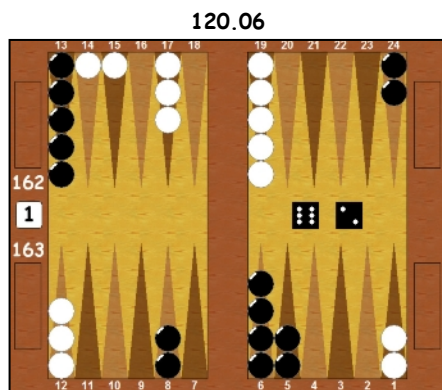
I think 13/8, 6/4 is less of an error, but the hits still cost too much. I simply minimise white hits to four with 13/6. I hope for a doublet to advance the anchor, or at least another build next turn. If white never hits me, I win the race.

MC: You were correct, 13/8, 6/4 was not only less of an error, it was #1.

Julia Hayward: 13/6

Being hit here probably gets us cubed out. If we can hang on to the next roll, we have plenty of scope to build points in front of white's back men. So breaking from white's bar is right out; slotting in our board is out. What's left is a selection of pretty ugly moves, of which the simple 13/6 is both safest and keeps most men in play.

MC: Pity you didn't go for slotting, you would have been spot on. One play that no one mentioned was 13/8, 7/5. It was #2 and wasn't a blunder - it was just nearly a blunder! The final three failed a bit better than all but the gunslinger, they just got a single blunder!



White 2

Black 3

MC: The Lone Ranger and Tonto strike out in different directions, leaving Silver with the Good, the Bad and the Ugly!

Paul Plumptre: 13/5

We are clearly at the third roll of the game, and we face a position one has faced some 1 game in 500. Not that that helps – I still don't know the correct answer. The standard 24/18, 13/11 must be wrong here; a blot on the 11-point is not worth much once one has one's 5-point; and 6, 4, 3, 1 all hit well on white's 7-point.

I have a nasty suspicion that 24/16 may turn out correct – the bots do not seem to mind these outer hits as much as I do; but outer hits with 4, 2, 1 seem too much for me to give away. 13/7, 6/4 is far too aggressive, given that I am ahead in equity. As is 24/22, 13/7 – a needless slot when ahead. The simple 13/5 adds a good builder, and unstacks the heavy 13-point – what more can one want?

MC: According to XG, The Lone Ranger is stuck in the 1970s. I wonder if Paul has a pair of platform soles and flared jeans in the wardrobe? Tonto, head down to the ground listening for hooves that never arrive, has a different tale to tell.

Cedric Lytton: 13/11, 13/7

Leaves white 6s to hit, but all her 6s (except 62) play well on her side anyway. White is certainly favourite to make some key points, but we have a good chance of making our own bar-point and equalising.

Alternatives: 13/5 waits and brings down a builder, but looks too passive; 24/16, 13/11 is daring – white has 32 hitting numbers of which 17 leave black return shots with 6s, but the other 15 pointing numbers seem a high price to pay.

MC: So, Cedric, have you read Becker's 'Backgammon for Blood'? XG thinks you

might have. Perhaps the next three have read Dwek's 'Backgammon for Profit'.

Julia Hayward: 24/18, 13/11

We have the edge in board strength; white threatens to make his 5-point and equalise the game if we play passively here. We can disrupt his intentions with 24/18 – if he hits, he can't make the 5-point yet and we could get into a hitting contest where we're a good favourite. If he ignores our distraction and makes his 5-point, we can either grab his bar or move the man on to safety next time. 18/16 with the deuce is clearly wrong, we want to keep our men in contact. 6/4 opens up too many double-hits. So I'm going with 24/18, 13/11.

MC: Reduce the options and you end up with the correct play.

Richard Biddle: 24/18, 13/11

Unstack the heavy mid-point with the 2. I'm not keen on continuing to the 5-point because although safe, this move is too passive. It allows white uncontested to make a valuable point next turn. We need to decide between coming down to the bar-point to try and make it next turn or advance to the opponent's bar-point to encourage a blot hitting contest. We have a two-point home board so should come out of it better. I think it's time to take the battle to white and force a play.

MC: "... this move is too passive ..." I see you're back to normal, Richard.

Peter Christmas: 24/18, 13/11

Early in the match and this game, the standard opening move would be 24/18, 13/11, having made the 5-point we do have a safe 13/5 to consider. It gives us a little more chance of making a home board point without any risk but it also leaves white a free hand to build his own defences.

Attacking the blots carries some risk with four attackers aimed at the bar-point but it is also making best use of the advantage we have taken from our opening 31 by keeping the pressure on white and not allowing him to make a good home point without rolling very well.

It is said if you have a small advantage you should use it to keep trying to increase your advantage rather than allowing your opponent an easy route to equalise. So with that in mind I will go for the more adventurous 24/18, 13/11 here.

MC: I thought for a while Peter was a dedicated follower of fashion with his comments on the 13/5 play. Happily, wife Helen has thrown out his 70s gear.

XG: 24/18, 13/11

Back in the 1970s a lot of players would have chosen 13/5 with this 62 but that is in blunder country. A few readers of Bruce Becker's 'Backgammon for Blood' might try 13/11, 13/7 but that is also a big mistake.

Most modern day players would know that there is a need to deflect white's

checkers from his 5-point and therefore 24/18 is the mandatory 6. You might think about reducing shots by playing 18/16 with the 2 but that is the wrong idea.

The right idea is to play for possession of the white's bar-point and at the same time unstack the pile of checkers on the mid-point by playing 24/18 with the 6 and 13/11 with the 2.

White can't both hit on his bar-point and make a new home board point unless he rolls a double. Note also that black has

the stronger home board so an exchange of hits is likely to favour him. I first came across this concept in Joe Dwek's 'Backgammon for Profit' and have been applying it ever since.

Any play other than 24/18, 13/11 is a big error.

MC: Well, here we are at the end of the 2012 season. Let's have a look and see what's what.

OK, it's all over and again (for the umpteenth time) Richard Biddle is Top Man. And, as last year, Julia Hayward is Runner-up. Julia keeps digging away at Richard but she just can't quite get past him.

So, Richard gets £30 off his next event for coming 1st in the final competition and a cheque for £75 for winning the 2012 series.

The 2013 series kicks off in the next issue, mid-March

Comp >>	116	118	120	Tot
Richard Biddle	59.16	59.65	59.98	178.79
Julia Hayward	59.80	58.63	59.05	177.48
Peter Christmas	59.96	57.44	58.49	175.89
Paul Plumptre	59.99	53.55	56.57	170.11
Cedric Lytton	57.53	53.53	56.34	167.40
Nicky Check	57.49	56.14	n/a	113.63
Phil Tutchings	59.80	n/a	n/a	59.80
Chris Humphries	55.85	n/a	n/a	55.85

	Action	Score
120.01	25/24, 15/13	10.00
	25/24, 7/5*	9.68
120.02	13/10, 13/12*	10.00
	24/21, 13/12*	9.81
	13/12*, 12/9	9.29
120.03	8/4	10.00
	8/7, 6/3	9.63
	22/18	9.35
120.04	21/15, 11/9	10.00
	21/15, 6/4	9.98
	11/5, 6/4	9.50
120.05	13/8, 6/4	10.00
	13/8, 7/5	n/a
	13/6	9.05
	18/16, 18/13	8.31
120.06	24/18, 13/11	10.00
	13/11, 13/7	9.39
	13/5	9.18

Entrant	120.01	120.02	120.03	120.04	120.05	120.06	Tot
Richard Biddle	25/24, 15/13	13/10, 13/12*	8/4	21/15, 6/4	13/8, 6/4	24/18, 13/11	59.98
Julia Hayward	25/24, 15/13	13/10, 13/12*	8/4	21/15, 11/9	13/6	24/18, 13/11	59.05
Peter Christmas	25/24, 15/13	24/21, 13/12*	8/7, 6/3	21/15, 11/9	13/6	24/18, 13/11	58.49
Paul Plumptre	25/24, 7/5*	24/21, 13/12*	22/18	11/5, 6/4	13/6	13/5	56.57
Cedric Lytton	25/24, 15/13	13/12*, 12/9	22/18	21/15, 11/9	18/16, 18/13	13/11, 13/7	56.34

1-3 February, 2013. The Jarvis Trophy @ Puma Daventry Hotel

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 two night's accommodation for the price of one.

Also, in addition to the Main & Consolation there will also be a new element, a Last Chance for those not in the Main or Consolation. Not forgetting the Poker Grand Prix and backgammon Doubles Saturday night.

This is a UK Finals and Grand Prix Event

Double Winner-Takes-All Rollover!
£525 expected to reach £800+





Paul Magriel vs Ed O'Laughlin (Las Vegas Open, September 1991)

Introduction by Rick Janowski

This 11 point match was played in the second round of the Bonanza event at the Las Vegas Open in 1991, between two of the strongest players of that time, Paul Magriel (<) and Ed O'Laughlin (>), and subsequently annotated by one of the foremost backgammon analysts and authors, Kit Woolsey, and originally printed in the highly regarded MatchQiz series of

software and books. Kit has kindly given his permission for annotation of this match to be reprinted in the Bibafax.

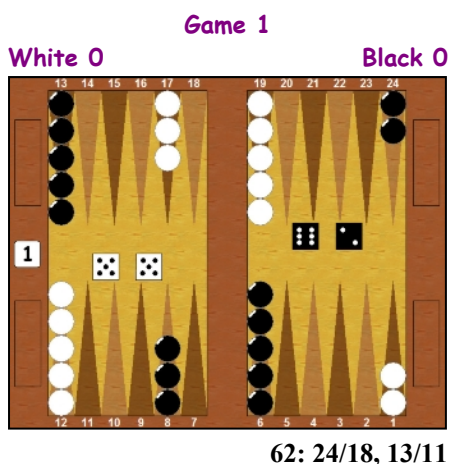
Paul Magriel is regarded as the father of modern backgammon. He won the World Championship in 1978, and is the author of the classic book *Backgammon*, and subsequently had many other major successes in backgammon and poker. Paul almost single-handedly raised the level of backgammon from what in the late 60s and early 70s we would now consider an intermediate/advanced level, to an expert/world class level by the mid to late 70s.

More importantly, by his teaching and communication skills, he was the major influence on the next generation of backgammon stars that came on the scene in the 1980s (Lester, Low, Senkiewicz, Woolsey, Horan, Sylvester, Ballard, Robertie, Goulding, etc), who raised the level to an astonishing height, before the introduction of neural network backgammon bots in the mid 1990s.

Ed O'Laughlin has been a top expert for many years, winning numerous tournaments both in USA and throughout the world. Since the early 90s he has and still is regarded as one of the top 32 players in the World, and still is.

In all the positions Magriel is playing as black, O'Laughlin, white. The higher dice are rolled/played first.

Black started, Kit Woolsey commented.



Kit Woolsey has been one of the foremost players and analysts in backgammon since the early 90s, and is also a major authority on Contract Bridge.

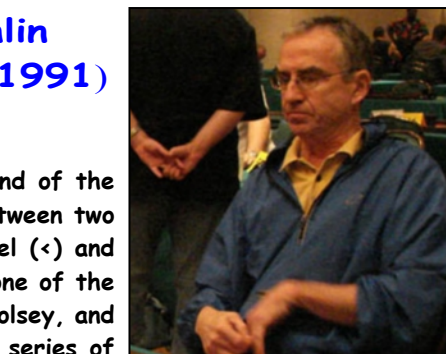
It is important to note that the match was played and annotated before bots were commonly available and some of the thinking and plays demonstrate contemporary rather than current thinking in key areas of the game. Before bots enabled analysts and players to develop a deeper understanding of the game, there were quite a few common thematic misconceptions, related to game strategy and tactics, e.g., reluctance to split back checkers in the face of potential attackers, over-valuing anchors, under-valuing race equity, over emphasis on purity, etc. The keen observer may notice such occasional misconceptions in this match.

MC: Rick Janowski was a very active and successful BIBA player in the 1990s, who also made some small mark in international tournaments. He made major contributions to the mathematical modelling of doubling cube theory which underpins all the major bots used today (BGBlitz, Gnu, Snowie and eXtremeGammon). He

This is currently the popular choice for an opening 62. It is a flexible play, attempting to make progress on both sides of the board. The alternative of 13/5 is a strong effort to make the five-point, but somewhat cramps the position.

55: 8/3(2), 6/1*(2)

Definitely best, despite the commitment to the ace-point. If Magriel fails to enter, O'Laughlin will have a game winning double.

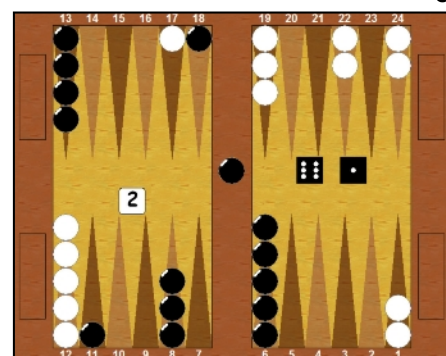


has also had some significant success recently in online backgammon, reaching an Elo rating of over 2100 on the prestigious BG server, Gridgammon – one of only a handful of players ever to do so. Moreover, he is listed in the top 32 of Iancho's PR database (a database recording those players with the lowest recorded long-term error rates), the only British player currently to do so.



Kit Woolsey

Photos copyright by GammonLife.com and Carol Joy Cole (Woolsey)



White cube action?

Double - No Double?

Magriel did flunk, and O'Laughlin properly turns the cube. With 24 numbers which hit the blot on the bar-point, simultaneously bringing builders into position to complete his board, this is a very strong double. ▶

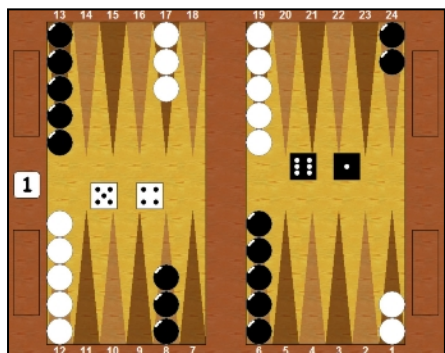
Take-Pass?

Magriel is correct to pass the double. The chance of getting gammoned by the blitz is just too great.

Game 2

White 1

Black 0

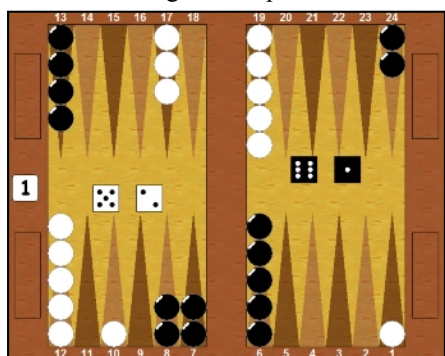


61: 13/7, 8/7

54: 24/15

While this is not considered the best way to play 54 on the opening roll, once the opponent has made his bar-point it is more important to get the runners on the ace-point in motion, since they are in danger of being primed.

Splitting up to the 20-point with 24/20, 13/8 is too risky, since Magriel has three builders bearing on that point.



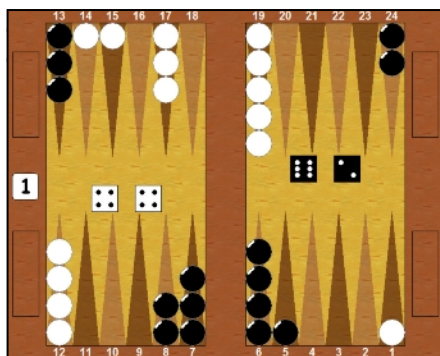
61: 13/7, 6/5

Magriel uses his ace to unstack the heap on the six-point and start the important five-point. Also reasonable, and perhaps better, is to play 13/7, 24/23.

Splitting the runners is recommended when the opponent has only one man back, to make it more difficult for him to bring his builders into position to make points.

52: 15/10, 13/11

O'Laughlin correctly brings his builders into position. It would be very poor to play 15/10, 24/22. Putting the back man on the 22-point is just asking to be attacked. O'Laughlin's plan should be to build up his board and keep the back man



62: 24/18, 7/5

This is an expert play which many players would not find. If Magriel quietly plays 13/5, O'Laughlin will be free to make any point that his dice dictate, and Magriel will be poorly placed in the upcoming prime vs. prime battle since he will have two men back while O'Laughlin will have only one man back. Magriel's play forces O'Laughlin to attack on the bar-point whether he wants to or not, thus preventing him from making optimal use of such point making numbers as 42 or 51. It is thematic when you have the better board and your opponent has one man back to split your runners to make it difficult for your opponent to catch up in the board building battle.

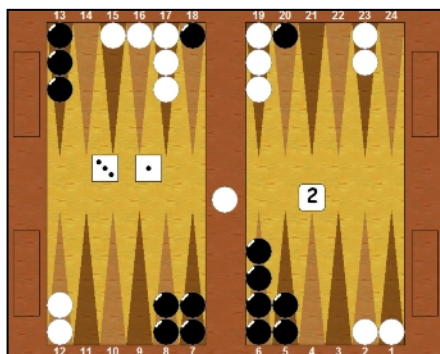
44: 13/9, 11/7*, 6/2(2)

This is a difficult play with several possibilities. O'Laughlin has to hit with one four. Making the two-point is better than making the four-point, since it unstacks the top-heavy six-point and holds the eight-point. For the last four, O'Laughlin brings the builder down. This leaves several blots, but excellent potential to continue the attack if these blots aren't hit. 10/6 for the last four is safer, but with Magriel on the bar and only having a two point board of his own, the risk is worth it.

65: 25/20, 13/7*

62: 25/23, 13/7*

61: 25/18*



31: 25/22, 8/7*

O'Laughlin is correct to keep slugging away, despite the many blots. 25/22, 10/9 leaves Magriel the possibility of blitzing

away, while 25/22, 23/22 gives Magriel too much to shoot at. O'Laughlin's inner board is as strong as Magriel's, and Magriel will have to roll doubles to hit more than one man since he is on the bar.

Double

Double - No Double?

Magriel has the stronger position and O'Laughlin has several blots, but the double is a bit speculative. Even if Magriel comes in and hits, O'Laughlin figures to anchor up and stay in the game. On the other hand, if Magriel happens to flunk or if O'Laughlin wins the hitting contest, O'Laughlin will be in reasonable position to carry out a blitz.

Take - Pass?

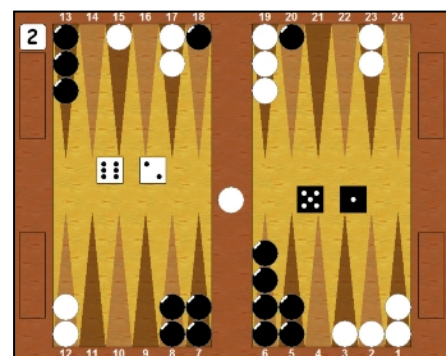
This is a fairly easy take, although it could blow up in O'Laughlin's face. Magriel is on the bar, and O'Laughlin's position has too much potential to give this one up.

Take

21: 25/24*, 9/7*

21: 25/24, 20/18*

65: 25/20, 24/18*



62: 25/23, 13/7*

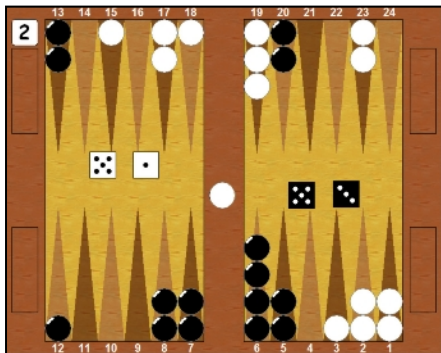
O'Laughlin has established his defense, so he makes another attempt to get something going. This is correct, but with five men behind a four point prime it will be difficult to carry out a full attack. O'Laughlin is facing some serious timing problems.

51: 25/20, 13/12*

Magriel makes the 20-point, preventing O'Laughlin from making any more progress. He is quite right to hit with the ace. While it is often correct to avoid hitting when your opponent is playing a back game, so as to hurt his timing, this is not true here.

By hitting on the 12-point Magriel cuts O'Laughlin's forces in two, putting him in danger of getting several men behind a prime and being forced to crunch. ▶

Magriel now has complete control of the outfield -- If O'Laughlin cannot get men over the prime and out he will soon be forced to crunch.

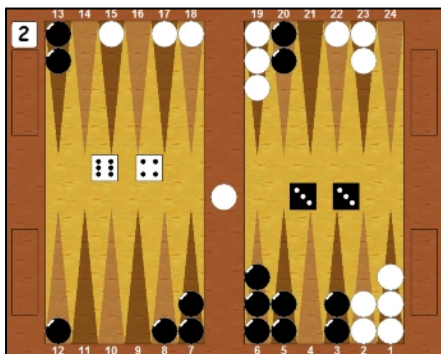


51: 25/24, 8/3

Terrible roll, but O'Laughlin does the best he can. He must avoid putting men on the ace point at all costs. He is not trying to leave blots and get hit -- if he could reasonably keep the eight-point he would. However, playing 6/1 with the five would make it impossible to form the prime that he must eventually make to salvage the position.

53: 8/3*, 6/3

Definitely better than any play which involves hitting two men. Magriel locks up the three-point, which is crucial since if O'Laughlin could make that point his back game would have much better chances. Temporarily abandoning the eight-point is not that serious, since Magriel figures to win any blot hitting contest.

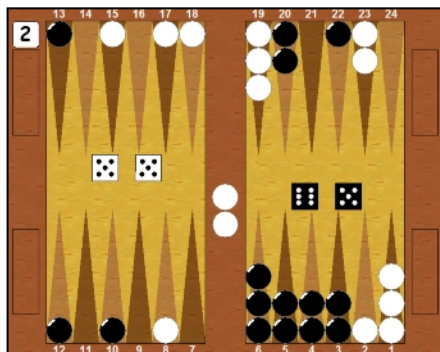


64: 25/21, 23/17*

O'Laughlin doesn't like leaving the 23 point, but he really doesn't have much choice. If he doesn't hit here Magriel will just close in, and O'Laughlin will wind up with a very badly timed 1-2 back game, which has little winning chances and can easily get gammoned. O'Laughlin hopes that his feeble two point board will be sufficient to allow him time to regroup and make the 21 point or get some men into the outfield. Losing the timing battle and having his board crunch is O'Laughlin's greatest fear.

33: 25/22*, 13/10, 7/4*(2)

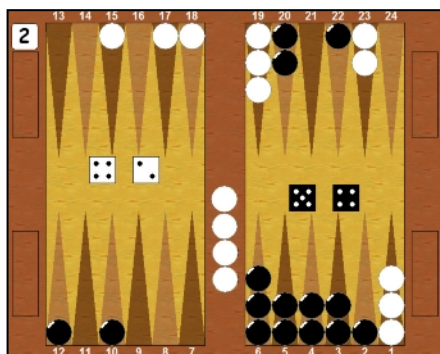
Magriel doesn't need to hit the third man. He has made the crucial four-point, and now his goal is to remake the bar-point. Once he achieves this, O'Laughlin's position will be hopeless even if he gets the 1-2 back game.



55: Dances

65: 13/8*, 8/5*

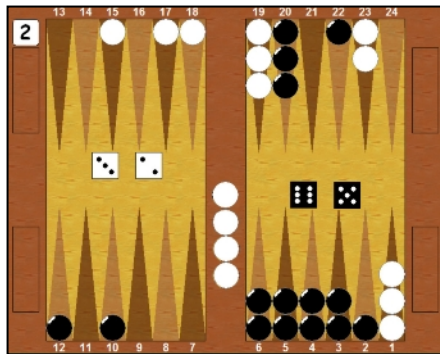
Magriel goes for the throat. He could pretty much lock up the position by making the bar-point, but he has a chance to put as many as seven of O'Laughlin's men on the bar against a five point board if his plan works. O'Laughlin will keep all his men in play, but Magriel will have an excellent chance of winning a backgammon. It is worth it.



42: 25/23*

54: 25/20, 6/2*

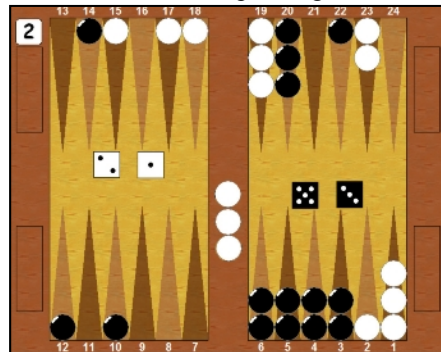
Magriel continues fighting for his two-point, although he is running short of builders. Even if O'Laughlin wins the fight for the two-point, Magriel should have no problem scooping up a bunch of blots, making his bar-point, and eventually forcing O'Laughlin to crunch his board.



32: 25/23*

65: 25/14

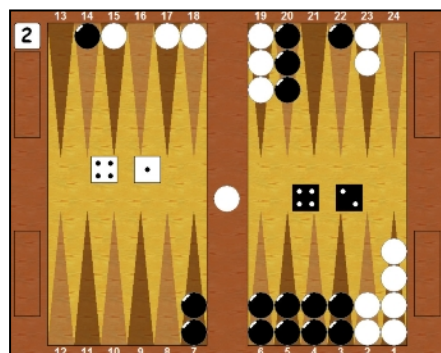
Magriel brings a man into the outfield in order to make his prime. It might have been better to play 12/6 with the six and prepare to continue the fight for the two point. If O'Laughlin rolls the two Magriel will have plenty of time to hit a couple of blots and complete his prime; otherwise, he can hit on the two point again.



21: 25/24, 25/23

53: 12/7, 10/7

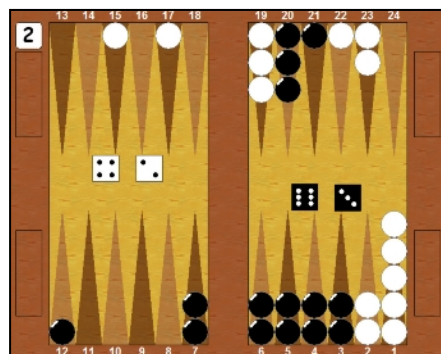
Definitely correct. Now that O'Laughlin has won the battle for the two-point, Magriel falls back on plan B of making the prime and forcing O'Laughlin's board to crunch. Hitting extra men is no longer necessary, but the bar-point is vital.



41: 25/24, 7/3*

O'Laughlin might as well hit, if only to restrict his opponent's options. Safety is not a consideration, but flexibility is.

42: 25/21, 14/12



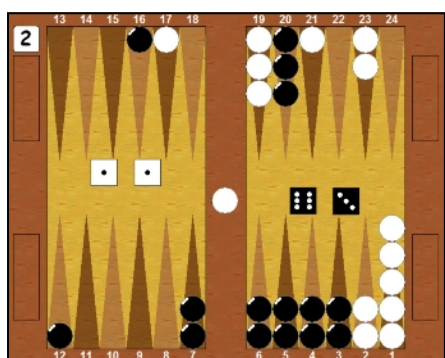
42: 10/4*

O'Laughlin should simply make the four-point. He has no realistic chance of retaining timing by being hit -- Magriel just has too many men in the 

outfield, so O'Laughlin would have to fail to enter for about ten consecutive rolls. If he can keep Magriel on the bar for a roll or two O'Laughlin will have a chance to free a man or two, giving him some maneuvering room. In addition, he takes greater gammon and backgammon risks by allowing more men to be hit.

63: 25/22*, 22/16

Magriel runs from the 22-point to prevent O'Laughlin from hitting loose again. I think he is better off playing 20/14, bringing a builder to bear on the eight-point. If O'Laughlin should happen to spring a man with a 62, Magriel wants to have maximum firepower on the eight-point. That is where the next battle takes place.

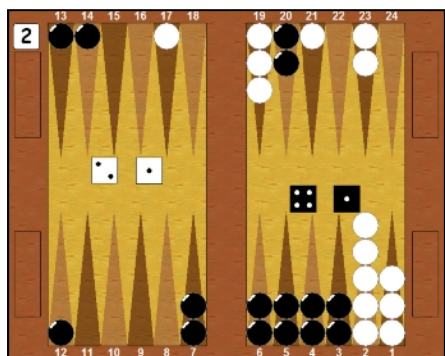


11: 25/23, 24/23(2)

A great roll. O'Laughlin gets as many men as possible in position to leap.

63: 20/14, 16/13

Magriel's plan is to make O'Laughlin start to crunch if he doesn't roll a six, while if he does roll a six, Magriel will have several men ready to pounce. However, if O'Laughlin rolls 66, he will suddenly have real counterplay. I think Magriel should hit with 20/17*/11. He should plan to lock up the eight-point and force O'Laughlin to crunch his remaining front men before releasing the prime. Magriel has plenty of time to carry out this plan, so he shouldn't take any risks of letting O'Laughlin escape now.

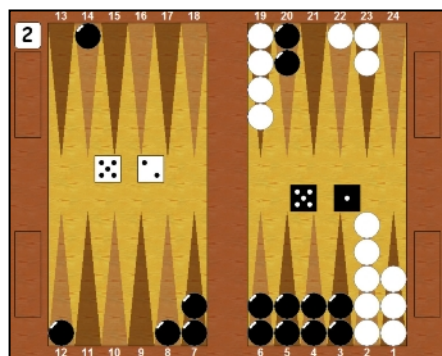


21: 8/6, 4/3

This is not best. O'Laughlin safeties his blot, but this is not important -- as we have seen, Magriel was not anxious to hit the blot anyway. After O'Laughlin's play, his fours and fives move to the ace or two-point, which is exactly what he doesn't want. Better is 6/4, 24/23, making a good point, bringing another man to the launching pad, and keeping reasonable fours and fives.

41: 13/8

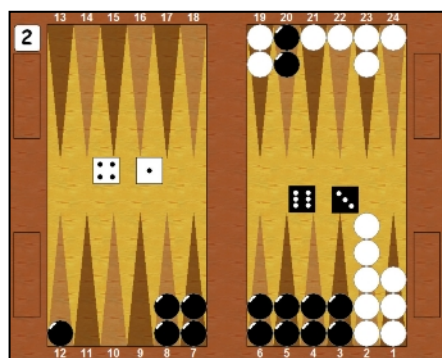
Slotting the eight-point is correct technique. If O'Laughlin fails to roll a six, Magriel is in position to make the point and complete the crunch, while if O'Laughlin rolls a six, Magriel recirculates the hit blot, thus assuring his timing to hold the five point prime.



52: 6/4, 6/1

O'Laughlin correctly refuses to make his ace point. Once he makes that point he has no chance of making a prime and trapping hit blots behind it.

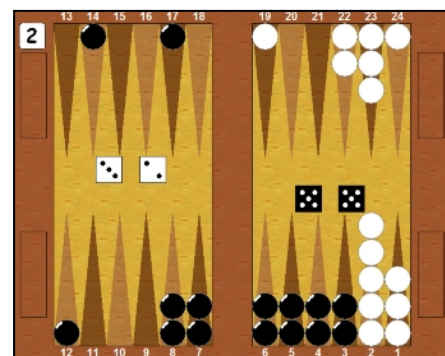
51: 14/8



41: 6/2, 4/3

Again O'Laughlin hopes to hold out. He will have to be very lucky to do so, but if he can roll a three or four next roll and then avoid rolling a two he won't be forced to make the ace-point. If he can keep that point open, then when he later hits a blot he has a chance that Magriel will be forced to enter with an ace and get the man back into play -- if this scenario occurs, O'Laughlin will have a chance to build a prime. It is a long shot, but it is his best chance.

63: 20/17, 20/14



32: 6/1

55: 17/7, 14/9, 12/7

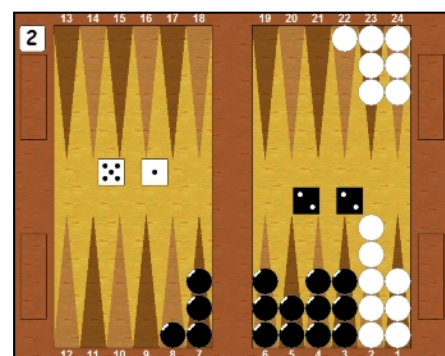
Magriel correctly brings two men to the bar-point, hoping to stall. Every man he can force O'Laughlin to bury will make it more difficult for O'Laughlin to win or get off the gammon if he hits a shot.

62: 3/1

51: 9/4, 7/6

63: Dances

65: 8/3

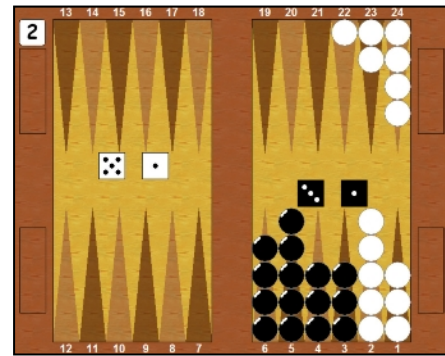


51: 2/1

This is correct. O'Laughlin doesn't need another man on the 23-point -- he has plenty of men in position to escape. It is important to keep the third man on the 24-point -- if O'Laughlin gets an early shot from that point he will want to hit without abandoning that point, since it is his main defense and he can't expect to contain the hit checker.

22: 8/6, 7/5(3)

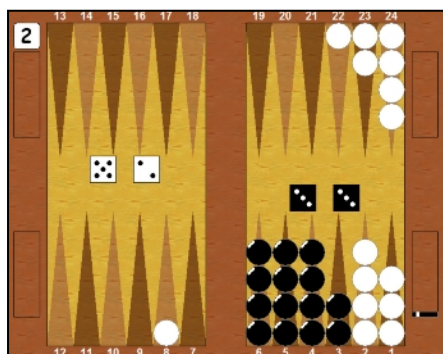
Magriel has done as much damage to O'Laughlin's position as he can hope for, so he takes this opportunity to bring all his men in with a smooth position.



51: 23/17

31: 5/4, 3/0 ▶

I think Magriel should play 6/3, 5/4. It is important for him to have extra men on the three-point, since once he clears the six-point his only legal threes will be from the three-point. The extra man he takes off with his play doesn't compensate for this weakness.

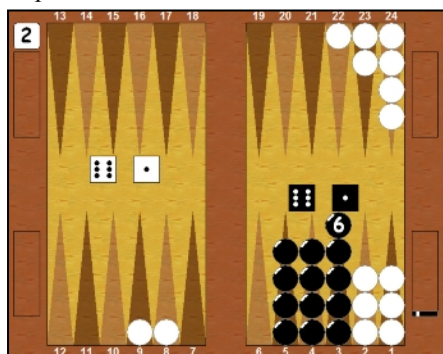


52: 23/16

It is important for O'Laughlin to spring the second man. Bringing the builder in for the board can wait, but if he doesn't jump now he may not roll the necessary five or six for several rolls.

33: 6/3(4)

Definitely correct. Magriel clears the six-point and brings several spares onto the three-point, exactly what he wants. Holding the blockade is no longer important.



61: 24/18, 16/15

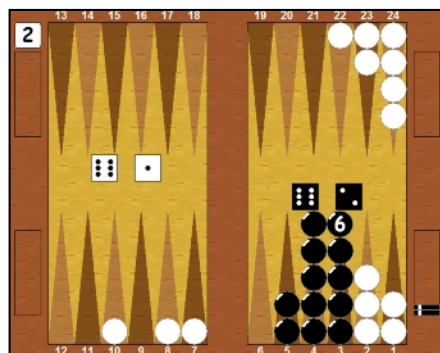
I don't agree with this. If O'Laughlin gets his shot while Magriel is clearing the five-point, he will want to hit from either point without giving up either anchor.

In addition, O'Laughlin should get moving building his board. He is no longer in serious danger of being stuck, with two men in the outfield and anything higher than a three to escape. He should play 16/9, attempting to make the three-point.

61: 5/4, 5/0

Correct, although it leaves more shot numbers next roll. If Magriel is forced to strip the four point before clearing the five point, he risks leaving two blots.

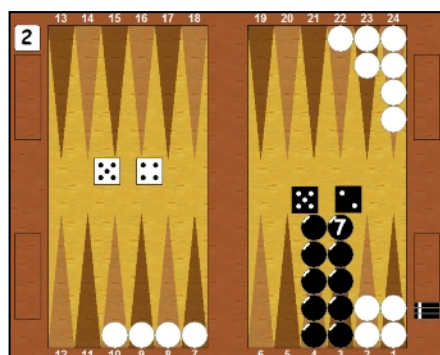
Clearing from the back is usually correct against the 1-2 back game.



61: 23/16

This time it is correct to move the spare from the 23-point. The reason is that if Magriel clears his five-point on the next roll, O'Laughlin will want to be in position to come down to one man on the 23-point, thus forcing Magriel to play twos. If O'Laughlin still owns the 23-point when Magriel has cleared the five-point, Magriel will not be forced to play twos and will not have to leave a shot with 62, 52, 42, and 32.

62: 5/3, 5/0



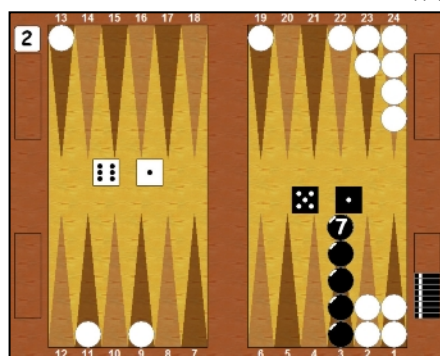
54: 17/12, 15/11

Strangely enough, O'Laughlin doesn't follow up by moving one man from the 23-point. He should. Although his board isn't ready, he should want to get his shot as soon as possible, which will help him get off the gammon and even give him some winning chances.

52: 4/0

54: 18/14, 18/16

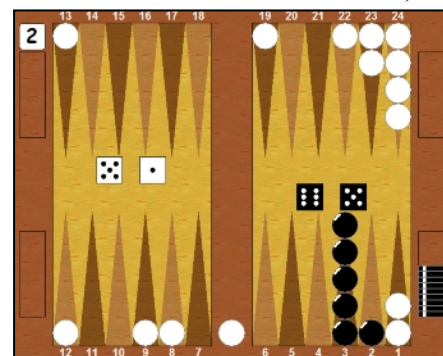
44: 4/0((4)



61: 23/17, 14/13

Now it is essential to run, so as to force Magriel to play an ace. In addition, there is now serious danger of a backgammon.

51: 3/2*, 3/0



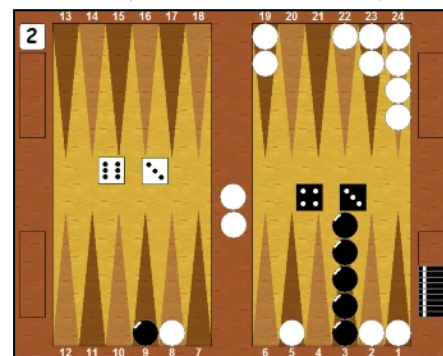
51: 25/20, 24/23*

65: 25/14

Magriel should hit here. He doesn't want O'Laughlin to build the board. In addition, if Magriel hits and O'Laughlin rolls a three, he can't hit back. This looks like a simple oversight.

52: 13/11*, 11/16

44: 25/13*, 13/9*



63: 25/19

43: 9/5*, 3/0

Correct. Hitting the second man on the two-point would make it more difficult to clear next roll. In addition, every man off counts.

65: 25/19, 25/20*

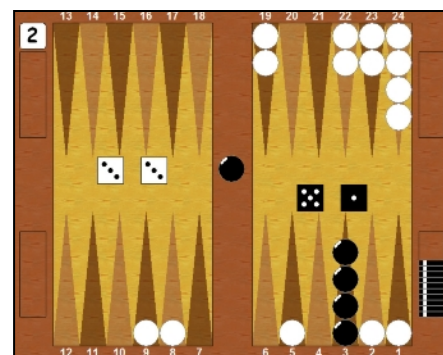
44: 25/9

53: 19/14, 19/16*

54: 25/16

65: 14/9*, 9/3

32: Dances

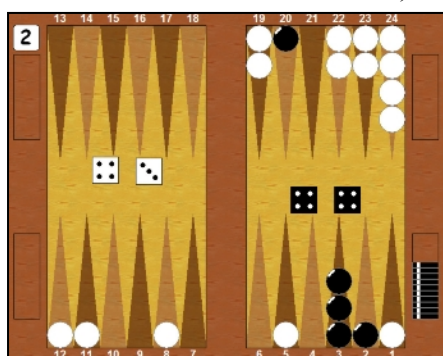


33: 23/14, 16/13

O'Laughlin should stay back on the 23-point. If Magriel happens to roll 51, O'Laughlin will want maximum

return shots. He should play 17/11, 16/10, bringing two builders into position to make the five-point and keeping good control of the outfield.

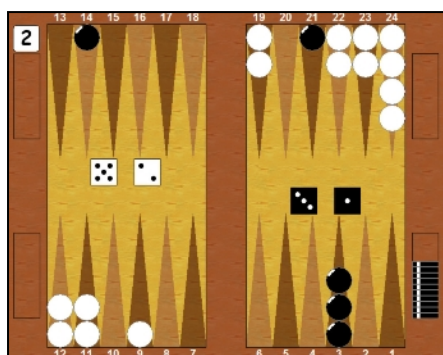
51: 25/20, 3/2



43: 20/13

Looks best. O'Laughlin keeps good outfield coverage, and the 13-point could be an added bonus if Magriel rolls 62, since he will be forced to leave yet another blot.

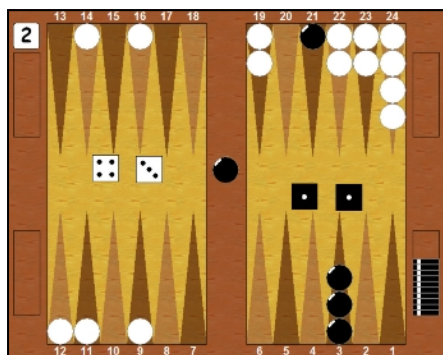
31: 24/23*, 17/14
61: 23/16*
63: 25/16*
44: 20/16
44: 25/9
44: 25/9*
42: 25/21, 16/14



52: 14/9, 13/11*

O'Laughlin correctly diversifies and brings in all firepower. He now has a real chance to win.

31: Dances



43: 1/4*

O'Laughlin is correct to continue to attack. He now has very real winning chances if he can close his board or even make a five point board with both of Magriel's men on the bar. The gammon

risk has gone way down -- O'Laughlin is playing for the win.

32: 9/4
65: 16/11, 14/8
21: 8/5*
41: 13/8
32: 25/23, 8/5*

11: Dances

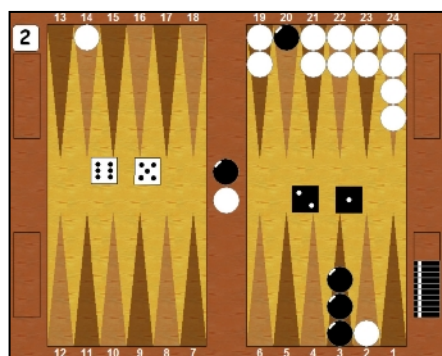
42: Dances

51: 25/20

64: Dances

54: 25/20*

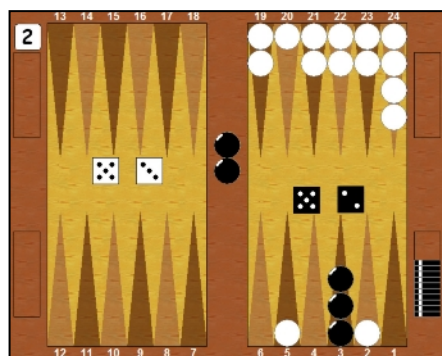
51: 25/20*



65: 25/20, 11/5*

Even with no builders in position, it is 100% correct to hit. O'Laughlin still has quite reasonable winning chances.

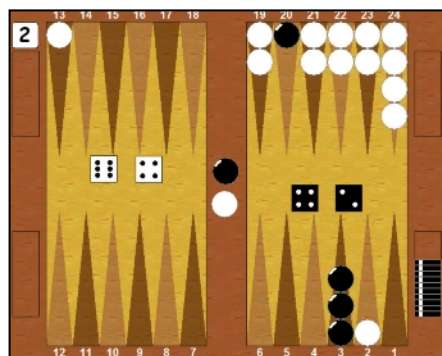
21: Dances



53: 20/12

O'Laughlin is correct to leave the five-point slotted. If he can make the point he will have a very strong redouble, but if he lifts the blot, he can't use the cube for some time. Even if he is hit, he can still get back into the game since Magriel has two men on the bar.

52: 25/20*



64: 25/15

O'Laughlin chooses to bring a man into range to cover the outfield rather than

bringing the front man into direct range. While 25/19, 12/8 leaves a few more hitters, I think his play is correct. If Magriel enters, O'Laughlin will be glad to have both men in range.

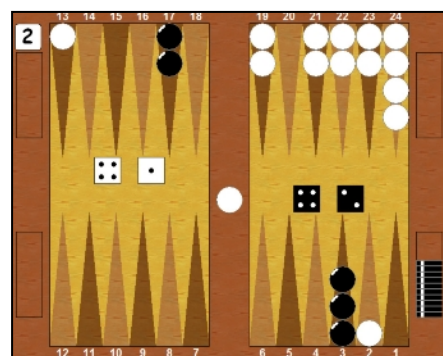
42: Dances

53: 25/17

31: 15/11

51: 11/5*

53: 25/20*, 20/17



41: 25/24, 23/19

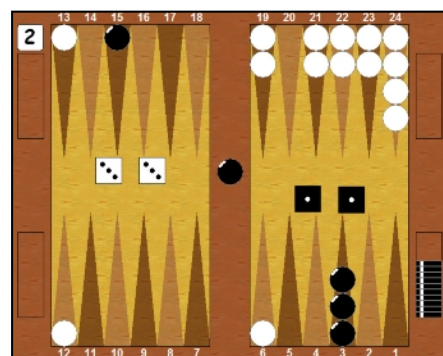
Magriel has rolled well, but O'Laughlin still has reasonable chances, with good outfield coverage.

42: 17/15, 17/13*

66: 25/13, 24/12*

42: Dances

MC: The 33 illegal move below by Ed isn't actually shown in the XG file. I have included it here to illustrate Ed's play.



33: 19/10*, 12/6 (played five 3s)

This only shows that even the best of players can make illegal moves, and they may go unnoticed by his expert opponent.

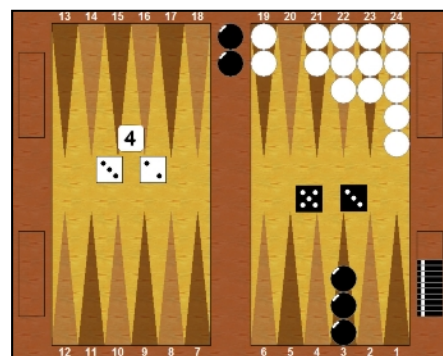
11: Dances

22: Dances

43: 13/9, 10/7

44: 9/1, 7/3, 6/2

62: Dances



Double

Double - No Double?

O'Laughlin's hard work has paid off. He has all his men in and is ready to start bearing off, while Magriel still has two men on the bar. At this point, O'Laughlin has a strong redouble. It is debatable if Magriel has a take, and even if he does it is a slim one. If O'Laughlin clears the six-point or takes two men off and Magriel again flunks, Magriel would now have a trivial pass.

It is very important to double before this happens, to get the most points out of the position and to make Magriel pay to see the results of the next roll. Failing to double positions like this is the biggest single fault of players of all levels. The fact that O'Laughlin owns the cube is not relevant. There is too much at stake on the next roll, and he must raise the stakes before Magriel can see the results of that roll.

Take-Pass?

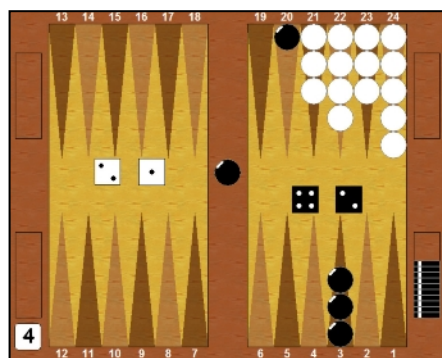
I don't think Magriel quite has a take. O'Laughlin figures to get off in eight or nine rolls, and Magriel would have to roll quite well to match that. True O'Laughlin might leave a shot, but Magriel would still have to hit it and even that wouldn't be conclusive.

Take

32: 6/4, 6/3

O'Laughlin should take two men off. The race is far from gin, and after his play he still has all fifteen men on the board, which means he will need eight rolls to

get off without doubles -- if Magriel rolls well, he could beat that. In addition, taking two men off holds the six-point, which could be very important if Magriel rolls anything with a six, particularly 66 or 65. As an added feature, O'Laughlin's play is actually riskier -- it leaves shots on 65, 64, and 54 next roll, while taking two men off leaves shots on only 61 and 51. Granted after taking two men off there is a greater chance of repeating shots, but the other considerations make it clearly correct.



21: 2/0, 1/0

Now O'Laughlin goes the other way, taking the extra man off but leaving a possible shot on the next roll. I don't agree. If he plays 4/2, 1/0 he will have an even number of men left, and does not figure to miss in the race, so it won't matter which play he makes if Magriel enters. If Magriel flunks, he risks leaving a shot, which is now the most likely way to lose.

43: 4/0, 3/0

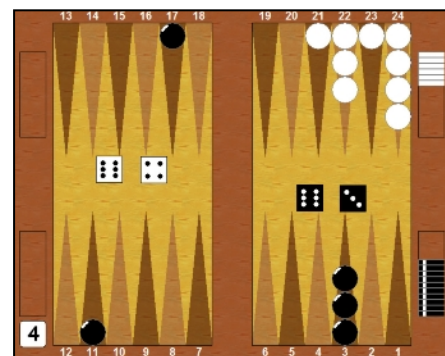
53: 25/20

42: Dances

62: 25/17

62: 4/0, 2/0

63: 20/11



64: 4/0, 3/0

63: 17/14, 11/5

Interesting technical question -- which is better, Magriel's play or 17/8. Magriel's play is better after 55, leaving three men left vs. four men left, while 17/8 is better after 44, leaving four men left as opposed to five men left -- with any other roll, it probably won't matter much. Since with 55 you are a favorite after Magriel's play, while after 44 you are still a good sized underdog after playing 17/8, Magriel's choice is probably superior.

41: 3/0, 1/0

42: 14/8

32: 3/0, 2/0

65: 8/3, 5/0

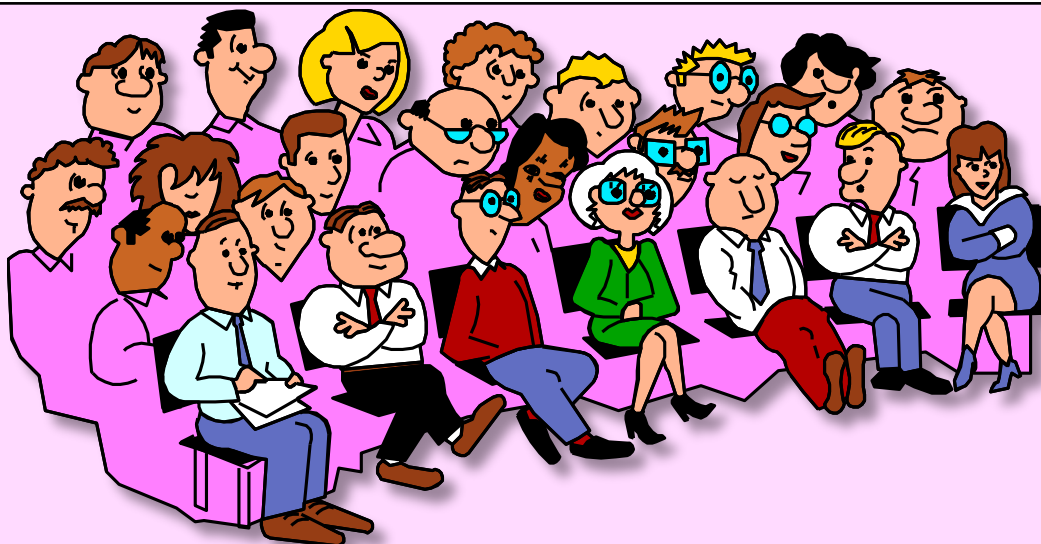
31: 1/0(2)

61: Resigns 4 points!

MC: This article has been reformatted to fit the Bibafax and it will continue in future issues. The original XG match file (XG only) is available via email from sept1991@backgammon-biba.co.uk



✕ Denotes sponsored event		2013 Calendar				Reg
Feb 1-3	The Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss + Last Chance	£15/£25
Mar 1-3	Multi-Play Challenge	GP		Hinckley	All-Play-All Knockout	£15/£25
Apr 12-15	British Open	GP	UK	Hinckley	Knockout	£20/£35
Apr 21	Manchester One-Day	GP	BBT	Manchester	Combination	n/k
May 3-5	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss Last + Chance	£15/£25
May 31-2 Jun	Biba World Championship	GP	UK	Daventry	Double Knockout	£15/£25
Jul 5-7	UK Giant (best of three format)	GP	BBT	Hinckley	Double Knockout	£20/£30
Jul tba	18 th Liverpool Open	GP	BBT	Liverpool	Combination	n/k
Aug 2-4	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss + Last Chance	£15/£25
Sep 6-8	English Open	GP	UK	Hinckley	Knockout	£15/£25
Oct 4-6	British Doubles Championships	GP	BBT	Hinckley	Knockout	£15/£25
Oct tba	Coventry Open	GP	BBT	Coventry	Knockout	n/k
Oct tba	21 st Irish Open	GP	BBT	Dublin	Knockout	n/k
Nov 8-10	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss + Last Chance	£15/£25
Nov 29-1 Dec	UK Finals			Hinckley	Double Knockout	£20
All Biba events are open to non-Biba members subject to extended Registration Fees (see above)						



Multi-Point, Round Robin Backgammon Tournament

1-3 March, 2013 @ Hinckley Island Hotel

Registration: Member £15, Non-Member £25. Free Entry
(featuring optional pools, winner-takes-all and jackpots)

Format Saturday. Preliminary Rounds. 13:00: Entrants will be split into teams of four within which there will be a 7-point Knockout followed by a 5-point Knockout, each knockout to determine 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th for which scores of 4, 3, 2 and 1 will be awarded. Finally a 3-point Round-Robin, again to determine scores - any ties to be decided by prior Round-Robin head-to-heads else a 1-point play-off. In each element there will be a new four-player draw to ensure each player is pitched against three new opponents.



Format Sunday 10:30: All entrants split into two groups, Main and Consolation based upon the sum of points awarded during the Saturday preliminary rounds. Should two or more entrants share a score equal to one group a play-off will decide final groupings which will start at 10:00 prompt. Late-comers will incur penalty points starting at 10:05. All entrants in the play-off shall be notified early Saturday evening.

The Main will be a straight 9-point Knockout (byes where applicable) with all 1st match losers going into the semi-progressive 7-point Consolation. Finally, entrants not in the Main or Consolation will go into a 5- (or 3-) point Last Chance, subject to time and draw space.

This is a Biba Grand Prix Event

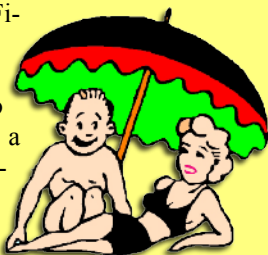
Bright 'n' Breezy - Report by Michael Crane

The Bright & Breezy tournament is a fickle event, if the weather turns a bit snowy (as it did a couple of years back) the turnout drops dramatically; so imagine my relief when this weekend turned out to be bright and breezy and snow-free. Mind you, as I write this report the weather has changed and the country is slowly grinding to a halt as snow falls. I am pleased we aren't holding the tournament this coming weekend!



The turnout was slightly down on last year but an entry of 72 is fine by me. But, it wasn't a fine start for defending champion, Marcus Wrinch who went out in his first match to Malcolm Robertson. Bob Young, 2011 winner also went out in the 1st Round to Mike Williams. This left John Hurst (multi-winner). He fared a little better, he went out in the 2nd Round to Richard Biddle. This left it wide open for the remainder of the field, and one player in particular took it all the way to the Final.

Geoff Conn, who has never won a Biba trophy before went through Wayne Joseph (Brighton club player), Neil Webb (Scottish Open, 1998/2011), Antonio Sgambato (a very good Italian player living in London - one to watch), Barry McAdam (B'n'B Consolation, 2002), Paul Gilbertson (County Cups and Hilton Trophy 2006) before going head-to-head against Dublin's Peter Ozanne (Irish Open 1998) in the Final



via Geoff Oliver (SAC 1996), Paul Plumptre (Consolation, Biba World Championship 2010), Matt Black (unknown to me, but a decent player), Stuart Mann (Jarvis 2004), and finally Malcolm Robertson (2012 Semi-finalist . . . and the same in 2013!).

I recorded the match but have been unable to transcribe it due to severe time restraints in order to get the Bibafax out by this coming weekend. However, I salvaged the score card. Geoff took the lead 2-0, Peter pulled it back to 2-1, 2-2 and then he went ahead 2-4. Geoff made it 3-4 and then 5-4 at which point Peter made it 5-5, and it was here that Peter stayed as Geoff pulled away, 6-5 and then straight into the Crawford, 10-5 and out as the latest Bright & Breezy Champion. Not bad for your first Biba trophy, Geoff!

The match will appear sometime next week in the usual formats (fully analysed in XG) and will be available via email from Thursday 24 January.

Meanwhile, in the Progressive Consolation, non-prog side, Peter Christmas beat Colin Owen and Jerry Limb beat Marcus Wrinch in the semi-final. In the non-prog final Peter came out the winner and he went into the Final to wait for his opponent from the prog-side. Here, in their semi-final, Antonio Sgambato beat Andy Darby and Ray Kershaw (author of the brilliant, Backgammon Funfair) beat Stuart Mann. In their final, Ray got the better of Antonio to face Peter in the Final, an encounter in which Peter was victorious.

In the Last Chance, Mike Heard got the better of Eric McAlpine and in the Tidal

Wave, Ann Pocknel overcame Paul Plumptre.

Prior to the Main starting on Saturday, the Final of the Biba Backgammon Tour (sponsored by www.betfair.com/wsob) got off on time at 1100. The semi-finals saw Paul Barwick vs Jon Barnes and Peter Bennet vs Mark Calderbank, two fixtures from which Jon and Mark emerged the winners. In the last match it was Mark who came out on top to be the 2012 Biba Backgammon Tour Champion.

On Friday night an entry of 47 battled it out. Current Champion, Paul Christmas didn't get past the Last 16 but the Runner-up to him in 2012, his brother, Peter, did - after he beat Paul in the Last 16! Peter then went on into the Final where he (eventually, during Sunday afternoon) lost to Lawrence Powell.

The Doubles was won by Cottagewebs after they beat the same team who beat them last year in Brighton. Ah, revenge at last! And in the Poker Grand Prix, Clive Martin-Ross came 1st with Marcus Wrinch 2nd and Trevor Lott 3rd. Clive isn't a regular Biba Poker Grand Prix entrant so unless he enters three more his 27 points won't count for much; on the other hand, Marcus Wrinch is a regular entrant and his points will stand him in good stead for the Championship.

Finally. I'd like to thank Andy Bell of Playwsob for the sponsorship of the B'n'B and the BBT; Deana Fawcett and Sharen Crane for assisting and a special thank you to Matt Black who was kind enough to organise a replacement projector when mine died.

More pictures ►



Main: Peter and Geoff



Semi: Paul and Malcolm

2013 Tournament Details & Accommodation



Registration: Saturday 1030 to 1230

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

Group Auction, Saturday 1245.

100% Return Pools: 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 Doubles, Poker Grand Prix and Jackpots subject to demand

Registration Fees vary according to event (see page 23).

Members will always pay £10 less than non-members (see page 23).

Entrants not residing at the hotel on the Biba rate, £15/£10 extra to cover facilities

FRIDAY

2100: Friday 500 **

+ Jackpots (on demand)

SATURDAY

Registration 1030 / 1230

Play starts 1300 prompt

SUNDAY

Registration 1030

(penalty points apply @ 1035)

** Friday 500 entrants who are not on the Biba rate or are not staying in the hotel will have to pay a £10 entry fee, this fee will go towards the £500 prize money for December's Finals.

Puma Hinckley & Daventry Hotels

Reservations: 0800 652 8413 and quote 'backgammon'

Dinner, Bed & Breakfast per room

Single room: 1 night £66, two nights £111

Double or twin room: 1 night £121, two nights £220



Consolation: Peter and Ray

Last Chance: Mike and Mardi



Tidal Wave: Ann and Paul

Changes for 2013

With no Biba membership required to enter Biba events for 2013 there will be a few changes made to various aspects of Biba. As already stated all players in Biba tournaments, full members and non-members, will be eligible for all Biba championships (subject to conditions relating to qualifying events/matches): Friday 500, Grand Prix, Ranking, Poker and Winner-Takes-All (including rollovers). The changes are:

Friday 500: This is an event to encourage Friday night hotel attendance; so to this end any scores of equal value will be sorted in an Attendance Point order (as already is used in the BBT listing).

Non-Biba Event Grand Prix Points Award: Primarily for Biba events a few non-Biba events (4 scheduled for 2013) also award GP points. In order to qualify for points

awarded at non-Biba events players must have played in a minimum of two Biba events prior to their first non-Biba event. To illustrate: For points to be awarded at the first non-Biba event, April's, Manchester One-Day, a player must have played in at least two of the four prior Biba events; for the July, Liverpool Open, at least two of the seven prior Biba events, etc, etc.

Active Players: All players deemed active at the end of 2012 will be deemed active in January 2013. Thereafter all new players will only be deemed active after their second attendance and then for a period of five months being reduced by one month for each month not-attending until it reaches zero, after which it all restarts. *NB: Non-active players can still win any championships they have qualified for; Active Status is merely a marker for Ranking and Win% listings.*

Championship Qualifying Requirements: There are no qualifying requirements as such for the Grand Prix

championship - it being based on the best top six scores; however, please read Non-Biba events above. For the Ranking championship the number of 11-point qualifying matches will be reduced to 10 in order to allow more players who don't enter Swiss format events to take a more active part. The Poker Grand Prix qualifying requirement is to be reduced to 4 entries to increase the number of those vying for the annual prize money.

The BBT Grand Final: Due to the changes coming in for 2013 income is expected to be somewhat lower than in previous years, for this reason the prize for the BBT 2013 championship Final will be reduced to £200 (with the option to increase should income be better than expected).

Championship Annual Payout: Instead of being incremented on a month-by-month basis a sum of money will initially be allocated to the fund and topped-up as and when income allows. It is anticipated that the total fund will not be less than £1000.



12-14 April
Puma Hinckley Island Hotel

British Open 2013

UK FINALS 2013

Registration
Members £20
Non-Members £35
£15 Entry

£500 First Prize minimum

The usual four elements, Main, Consolation, Last Chance & The Blitz, plus Doubles (backgammon) and Poker, Saturday evening.

This event is seeking a sponsor.

Biba Grand Prix Event

Poker Grand Prix 2013 PlacingsPoints Player

27 Clive Martin-Ross
 25 Marcus Wrinch
 23 Trevor Lott
 21 Janet Tan
 19 Rosey Bensley

Points Player

17 Roy Hollands
 15 Ling
 13 Myke Wignall
 11 Mick Vacarey
 10 Mark Calderbank
 9 Andy Darby
 8 Jerry Limb

Points Player

7 Lawrence Powell
 6 Luke Christmas
 5 David Horner
 4 Tony Walters
 3 Tony Fawcett
 2 Martin Barkwill
 1 Paul Christmas

It's always good to get the first one under your belt, and for Clive Martin-Ross it was a good start too. The listing above is also the result from the weekend at Brighton. But, Clive isn't a regular Biba Poker Grand Prix entrant so unless he enters three more his 27 points won't count for much; on the other hand, Marcus Wrinch is a regular entrant and his points will stand him in good stead for the Championship. Myke Wignall (reigning Champion) is a good bit behind, and Rosey Bensley a fair bit in front of Myke. It's early days yet and I am sure we will have a good battle for the top position throughout the coming months.

Friday 500 Qualifiers 2013

20 Lawrence Powell
 16 Peter Christmas
 12 Peter Ozanne
 12 Myke Wignall
 9 Chris Ternel
 9 Jysen Qwt
 9 Eric McAlpine
 7 Crispin Duke
 7 Jerry Limb
 7 Mardi Ohannessian
 7 Mark Calderbank
 7 Paul Christmas
 7 Cynthia Roberts
 7 Tony Read
 7 Geoff Oliver

7 Ros Nathan
 4 Ann Pocknell
 4 Arthur Wright
 4 Barry McAdam
 4 Colin Owen
 4 David Nathan
 4 Deana Fawcett
 4 Fanika Petkovska
 4 Geoff Conn
 4 Ian Anderson
 4 John Ingamells
 4 Martin Barkwill
 4 Mick Vacarey
 4 Nicky Check
 4 Paul Barwick
 4 Peter Bennet

4 Tony Walters
 4 Wayne Joseph
 4 YanKit Chan
 4 Paul Gilbertson
 4 Ray Kershaw
 4 Jon Barnes
 4 Matt Black
 4 Chris Purchase
 4 Emmanuel Di Bona
 4 Will Mobberly
 4 Engin Ongel
 4 Luke Christmas
 4 Lara Solomon
 4 Ling
 4 Rachel Garrett
 4 Maria

It was a good turnout in Brighton with 47 players sitting down to fight out the first Friday 500 of the 2013. Current Champion, Paul Christmas didn't get past the Last 16 but the Runner-up to him, his brother, Peter, did - after he beat Paul in the Last 16! Peter then went on into the Final where he (eventually, during Sunday afternoon) lost to Lawrence Powell.

This year, because non-members are eligible for the UK Finals in December, Appearance Points (AP) similar to those in the BBT are in use; this is to encourage a regular attendance and will mean that entrants sharing the same score shall be sorted on AP to decide their position. Although not shown above each Brighton entrant has 1 AP. See page 23 for more details.

ROLLOVER **Jarvis Trophy**
БОГГОЛЕВ **£525 up to £800+**

The Christmas UK Finals, December 2012

Main

- 1 Jysen Qwt
- 2 Myke Wignall
- 3&4 Eric McAlpine
- 3&4 Marcus Wrinch

Consolation

- 1 Paul Christmas
- 2 Gerry Enslin
- 3&4 Crispin Duke
- 3&4 Colin Owen

Last Chance

- 1 Marcus Wrinch
- 2 Peter Christmas
- 3&4 Richard Biddle
- 3&4 Crispin Duke

The Snowball

- 1 Peter Christmas
- 2 Paul Plumptre
- 3&4 Crispin Duke
- 3&4 Arthur Wright

Friday 500

- 1 Paul Christmas
- 2 Peter Christmas
- 3&4 Michael Crane
- 3&4 Mick Vacarey

Champion of Champions

- 1 Marcus Wrinch

Doubles

- 1 Cottagewebs

Poker

- 1 Paul Christmas
- 2 Marcus Wrinch
- 3 Crispin Duke

Rosey's Rollout

- Peter Christmas

Design a Christmas Card

- Peter Christmas



The Bright 'n' Breezy, 11-13 January, 2013

Main (72)

- 1 Geoff Conn
- 2 Peter Ozzanne
- 3&4 Malcolm Robertson
- 3&4 Paul Gilbertson
- 5to8 Stuart Mann
- 5to8 Jysen Qwt
- 5to8 Barry McAdam
- 5to8 Ray Fard

Consolation (68)

- 1 Peter Christmas
- 2 Ray Kershaw
- 3&4 Jerry Limb
- 3&4 Antonio Sgambato
- 5to8 Colin Owen
- 5to8 Marcus Wrinch
- 5to8 Stuart Mann
- 5to8 Andy Darby

Last Chance (64)

- 1 Mardi Ohannessian
- 2 Mike Heard
- 3&4 Eric McAlpine
- 3&4 Martin Barkwill
- 5to8 Wayne Joseph
- 5to8 Tony Fawcett
- 5to8 Simon Morecroft
- 5to8 Engin Ongel

Tidal Wave (32)

- 1 Ann Pocknell
- 2 Paul Plumptre
- 3&4 Sean Williams
- 3&4 Ray Fard
- 5to8 Bob Young
- 5to8 Mick Vacarey
- 5to8 Richard Biddle
- 5to8 Crispin Duke

Friday 500 (47)

- 1 Lawrence Powell
- 2 Peter Christmas
- 3&4 Peter Ozzanne
- 3&4 Myke Wignall
- 5to8 Chris Ternel
- 5to8 Jysen Qwt
- 5to8 Eric McAlpine
- 5to8 Crispin Duke

Poker (19)

- 1 Clive Martin-Ross
- 2 Marcus Wrinch
- 3 Trevor Lott
- 4 Janet Tan
- 5 Rosey Bensley
- 6 Roy Hollands
- 7 Ling
- 8 Myke Wignall

New Ranking after Brighton

- 1631 Alastair Woods
- 1501 Andrew Gibson
- 1682 Andy Darby
- 1675 Ann Pocknell
- 1665 Antonio Sgambato
- 1484 Arthur Wright
- 1683 Barry McAdam
- 1270 Bob Bruce
- 1609 Bob Young
- 1466 Chris Purchase
- 1735 Chris Ternel
- 1476 Clive Martin-Ross
- 1669 Colin Owen
- 1459 Crispin Duke
- 1447 Cynthia Roberts
- 1475 David Horner
- 1797 David Nathan
- 1448 Donna Sherred
- 1653 Emmanuel Di Bona
- 1552 Engin Ongel
- 1664 Eric McAlpine

- 1186 Fanika Petkovska
- 1528 Gary Broker
- 1660 Geoff Conn
- 1730 Geoff Oliver
- 1589 George Miltiadou
- 1523 Ian North
- 1518 Janet Tan
- 1473 Jerry Limb
- 1925 John Hurst
- 1490 John Ingamells
- 1652 Jon Barnes
- 1581 Jysen Qwt
- 1843 Lawrence Powell
- 1494 Ling
- 1620 Malcolm Robertson
- 1850 Marcus Wrinch
- 1759 Mardi Ohannessian
- 1677 Mark Calderbank
- 1886 Martin Barkwill
- 1544 Matt Black
- 1393 Mick Vacarey
- 1865 Mike Heard

- 1489 Mike Williams
- 1613 Myke Wignall
- 1526 Neil Smith
- 1678 Neil Webb
- 1741 Nicky Check
- 1449 Paul Barwick
- 1593 Paul Christmas
- 1833 Paul Gilbertson
- 1728 Paul Plumptre
- 1932 Peter Bennet
- 1834 Peter Christmas
- 1515 Peter Finnimore
- 1721 Peter Ozzanne
- 1441 Racheal Garrett
- 1879 Raj Jansari
- 1480 Ray Fard
- 1576 Raymond Kershaw
- 1571 Richard Biddle
- 1412 Rosey Bensley
- 1570 Roy Hollands
- 1703 Sean Williams
- 1498 Sidi Shatku

BBT Finals (8)

- 1 Mark Calderbank
- 2 Jon Barnes

Team (12)

- 1 Cottagewebs

- 1700 Simon Barget
- 1612 Simon Morecroft
- 1917 Stuart Mann
- 1701 Tim Mooring
- 1605 Tony Fawcett
- 1370 Tony Walters
- 1501 Wayne Joseph
- 1470 YanKit Chan

**Grand Prix @ Brighton
on the next page**

<u>Grand Prix @ Brighton</u>		28.51	Marcus Wrinch	17.55	David Nathan	16.51	Paul Plumptre
62.00	Geoff Conn	25.23	Mardi Ohannessian	17.55	John Ingamells	16.51	Raj Jansari
50.50	Peter Ozanne	23.52	Matt Black	17.55	Myke Wignall	16.51	Simon Barget
40.45	Paul Gilbertson	23.52	Ann Pocknell	17.55	Richard Biddle	16.51	Tony Fawcett
40.45	Malcolm Robertson	23.52	Mark Calderbank	17.55	Simon Morecroft	15.25	Eric McAlpine
40.45	Peter Christmas	23.52	Paul Barwick	17.55	Tony Walters	15.25	Martin Barkwill
38.61	Ray Kershaw	23.52	Paul Christmas	17.55	YanKit Chan	10.50	Emmanuel Di Bona
34.55	Antonio Sgambato	22.48	Geoff Oliver	16.51	Engin Ongel	10.50	Sidi Shatku
34.55	Jerry Limb	22.48	Alastair Woods	16.51	Neil Smith	10.50	Andrew Gibson
31.54	Barry McAdam	22.48	David Horner	16.51	Rachael Garrett	10.50	Bob Bruce
31.54	Jyesn Qwt	22.48	Ian North	16.51	Arthur Wright	10.50	Chris Ternel
31.54	Ray Fard	22.48	Tim Mooring	16.51	Crispin Duke	10.50	Clive Martin-Ross
31.54	Stuart Mann	20.21	Mike Heard	16.51	George Miltiadou	10.50	Donna Sherred
28.51	Andy Darby	17.55	Ling	16.51	Mike Williams	10.50	Fanika Petkovska
28.51	Colin Owen	17.55	Chris Purchase	16.51	Neil Webb	10.50	John Hurst

The listing above is also the listing for the Grand Prix Championship 2013. It can include in the future, entrants from non-Biba events if they comply with the Non-member Biba Event details as described on page 23.

Ranking Championship, January 2013 (Played - Points - Player)

6	2158.50	Geoff Conn	2	1641.00	Rachael Garrett	1	1165.00	Geoff Oliver
6	2004.50	Peter Ozanne	2	1625.00	Alastair Woods	1	1143.00	Gary Broker
5	1924.40	Malcolm Robertson	2	1621.50	John Ingamells	1	1117.00	Tony Walters
5	1888.00	Stuart Mann	2	1592.00	Crispin Duke	1	1113.00	Emmanuel Di Bona
5	1865.80	Paul Gilbertson	2	1573.00	Neil Smith	1	1108.00	Peter Bennet
4	1869.75	Ray Fard	2	1548.00	Raj Jansari	1	1101.00	David Nathan
4	1866.00	Andy Darby	2	1542.50	Neil Webb	1	1089.00	Fanika Petkovska
4	1834.00	Jysen Qwt	2	1532.00	John Hurst	1	1086.00	Jon Barnes
4	1822.75	Barry McAdam	2	1518.00	Engin Ingel	1	1073.00	Marcus Wrinch
3	1960.00	Richard Biddle	2	1485.50	Tony Fawcett	1	1067.00	Wayne Joseph
3	1913.00	Matt Black	2	1471.00	Jerry Limb	1	1060.00	Sidi Shatku
3	1910.00	Mark Calderbank	2	1364.50	Ray Kershaw	1	1042.00	David Horner
3	1876.67	Antonio Sgambato	1	1457.00	Peter Finnimore	1	1042.00	Mike Heard
3	1824.33	Mike Williams	1	1399.00	Rosey Bensley	1	1037.00	Peter Christmas
3	1754.00	Mardi Ohannessian	1	1387.00	Mick Vacarey	1	1035.00	Bob Bruce
3	1684.67	Paul Barwick	1	1303.00	Tim Mooring	1	1030.00	Chris Purchase
3	1684.00	Ann Pocknell	1	1252.00	Cynthia Roberts	1	991.00	Nicky Check
3	1625.67	Paul Christmas	1	1236.00	Donna Sherred	1	988.00	Roy Hollands
2	1837.50	George Miltiadou	1	1227.00	Lawrence Powell	1	966.00	Bob Young
2	1766.50	Paul Plumptre	1	1209.00	Martin Barkwill	1	959.00	Sean Williams
2	1755.00	Arthur Wright	1	1195.00	Ian North	1	955.00	YanKit Chan
2	1719.50	Simon Barget	1	1172.00	Eric McAlpine	1	945.00	Simon Morecroft
2	1711.50	Myke Wignall	1	1168.00	Colin Owen	1	943.00	Clive Martin-Ross
2	1677.00	Chris Ternel	1	1165.00	Andrew Gibson	1	933.00	Ling

Ranking championship: The number of 11-point qualifying matches is reduced to 10 in order to allow more players who don't enter Swiss format events to take a more active part.

New Biba Rules 2013: Early last year I got in touch with backgammon expert, tutor and author, Phil Simborg after I heard he was forming a set of rules that he hoped would be used internationally in most tournaments. I told him I was interested in his venture and that I would look carefully at his efforts and adapt/adopt his new rules for Biba tournaments. Phil and colleagues, Jeb Horton and Chuck Bower finally produced their new rules and I have decided to use selected sections for Biba.

On the following page I have reproduced the main changes to the previous Biba Rules. The full set of the Biba rules can be seen online via www.backgammon-biba.co.uk/rules2013.htm, and Phil's complete set can be downloaded from www.bgonline.org/TournamentRules.docx NB it is in docx format.

The new rules will be in use from February 2013 and will be posted at each tournament. If anyone would like a copy of the Biba Rules 2013 please let me know, it is available as a pdf via email newrules@backgammon-biba.co.uk

Biba Rules & Tournament Procedures 2013 (Important Changes)

2.2 Time:

Matches shall start promptly at the appointed time. Two 10-minute recesses only are allowed per 11-point match. Players must use their breaks at the same time and the time the break started is to be written down, (if clocks are in use, the remaining time on each player's clock must be recorded and agreed to prior to the players leaving the table) signed by both players and left with the Director. Any player absent for longer than 10 minutes is liable to be penalised at the request of the opponent or at the Director's discretion.

4.3 Moving:

Players should move clearly, using only one hand to play the checkers. Players shall re-enter any checker on the bar before moving any other checker. Should it be necessary to reposition the dice to facilitate a play the player must announce their intention to do so and to clearly state the dice roll before carrying out the action. No player shall move any checkers during an opponent's turn. Deviations from proper moving procedure may result in an adverse ruling in cases of dispute.

4.5 Lifting Dice:

Players conclude their turn by lifting either or both dice; or when a clock is in use a player's turn ends only when he presses the clock plunger. After the player has lifted both of the dice or pressed the clock plunger the move can only be changed upon an opponent's demand to replay an illegal move.

4.6 Premature Action: An opponent may not roll until the other player on roll has completed his turn. All completed premature actions shall stand or be re-rolled at the player's discretion. A player who has yet to complete his turn or act upon the cube, may then do so with the foreknowledge of the premature roller's dice throw or cube action. If an opponent premature rolls, the player has the option of allowing the roll to stand, but may still revise or complete his move, knowing what the opponent's roll is, or, he may require the roller to roll over once he has completed his move (whether he decides to change the move he has made or not). NB: If you allow your opponent to premature roll during the match and not make any comment or warning about it, you have given up your right to impose the premature roll rule on your opponent later in the match. The premature action rule applies even if the initial roller's play is forced, or even if he is on the bar and cannot move.

4.7 Error In Set-up:

If a game has begun and the checkers did not start out in their proper, initial position, a correction shall be made if the error was discovered before completion of the move corresponding to the second roll of the game. If the error is discovered after that, the game shall continue without adjustment. Players starting with less than fifteen checkers can still be gammoned or backgammoned.

4.8 Illegal Moves:

All moves in the game shall be Legal Moves only. After the conclusion of a turn and before the dice are next tossed, if either player notices that the just completed move is inconsistent with the dice (an "illegal move"), the dice shall be replaced on the surface with the actual roll showing, the checkers replaced to their position before the illegal move and the player must

replay his turn. If the illegal move isn't noticed until after the subsequent dice roll, the play stands as made. Illegal moves include leaving or placing checkers on the bar or off the board that should not have been left or moved there, not picking up a checker that had to have been hit in order to move legally, or moving checkers to the wrong points. Note that only the players or a tournament official may point out any illegal moves - spectators are required to remain silent unless asked by both players to assist. [see Clock Rules]

5.2 Cube Set-up:

It is the responsibility of both players to ensure that the cube is in the middle of the board and that the "64" face is showing at the start of every game. In the event of a dispute, current position and level of the cube will strongly affect the Director's ruling. If a spectator sees that the cube has not been centred they should inform the Tournament Director. The cube should be removed completely from the playing area during the Crawford game only (5.5 Crawford Rule).

5.4 Cube Handling:

Players may only double when it is their turn to roll and must do so before rolling, (cocked dice are deemed "rolling" dice). To offer a double or redouble move the cube towards the opponent at the higher level saying clearly, "double" or similar. To take, draw the cube towards oneself and say, "take" or similar, placing the cube on your side of the board. Both players should ensure that the correct level is displayed. To reject the cube one says, "pass" or "drop" and the game is concluded. If there is any ambiguity in the manner in which a player offers the cube or takes the cube, any ruling or dispute shall tend to go against the player who was ambiguous or misleading. If a player verbally says he doubles, or says he is going to double, he must double when it is his turn. If a player clearly reaches for the cube, or picks it up, or gives any indication that he is doubling, he must follow through and double. If the player says he will drop or take if doubled, he cannot change his mind. If a player wishes to move or reposition the cube without the intention of doubling, he must state that he is "repositioning" prior to handling the cube.

5.5 Crawford Rule: The Crawford Rule will apply to all matches. When a player reaches match point, the cube cannot be used by either player for that one game and should be removed from the board for this one game only. Use of the cube will not be recognised if any player doubles during the Crawford game. If a player forgets the Crawford rule and doubles, and the other player accepts, and the error is discovered before the next match begins, the score shall be corrected as if the cube had not been turned. The Tournament Director will determine if the match will be replayed from the beginning of the game or, if possible, from the position where the double occurred. If the match ends, and the turned cube was directly responsible for the trailer winning the match, and then the error is discovered, the correction shall be made and the match continued. If, however, the error is discovered after the next round of play has begun, the match will not be continued and the result will stand. Spectators must report any such use to the Director. In any subsequent games the cube should be replaced on the board and can be used prior to any legal throw, except the opening roll.



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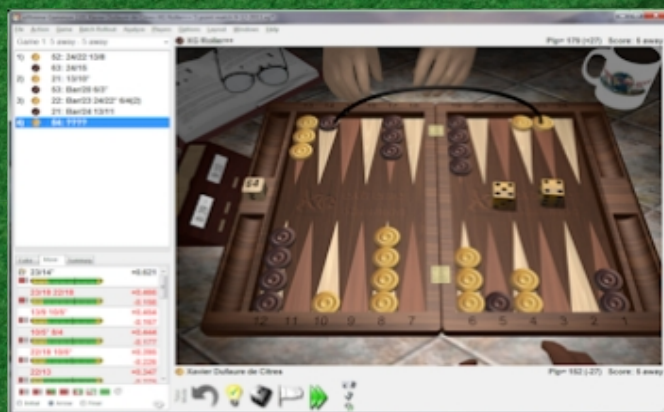
Hear what the Experts are Saying!



Chris Bray, Author, Backgammon Correspondent for *The Independent*

"eXtreme Gammon (XG) which is now in its second release (XG2) and is undoubtedly the strongest backgammon playing computer program of all time. Importantly for the backgammon community, it is also very affordable. XG is now the "de facto" standard for the game and it is used by all serious analysts."

Backgammon to Win, Chris Bray 2012



PLAY: You can pitch yourself against eXtreme Gammon, in match or money sessions. You can choose from many levels of play ranging from world-class to beginner. Enjoy a full customizable 3D interface with animation.

ANALYZE: Import your games from any of the major online sites. The analysis is performed in the background, which allows you to see your errors immediately. Store the results in your profile for a comprehensive analysis of your level of play.

LEARN: Improve your game with the tutor mode. eXtreme Gammon analyzes your decisions during your match and advises you if you made an error. Use the analyze tools to understand why the computer's choice is superior. Run a rollout if ever you disagree with it. eXtreme Gammon is the only program that acknowledge its error and will credit you with an outplay in case you move turns out