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**Dedicated To
Backgammon**



Will They Never Learn?



**Both of these players made it into the
Finals of the British Open. Neither of them
walked away with the £1,020 Prize Fund!**



**This mystery man took £1,725 home
from the County Cups Trophy**

Archive - The Backgammon Handbook

Enno Heyken & Martin B Fischer

1989 ISBN 1 85223 402 4

I have chosen an entire section for this issue dealing with just one match. I have occasionally added a comment where the authors have made errors on the diagrams (pieces missing, extra pieces) in the original book. I have also altered the format in which the match was recorded to the format used by JellyFish. Also, where a point is referred to, the authors use the notation '14th' or '5th' point, etc., when counting from White's 1-point to his 24th point. This is done for both players. The 14th would normally be White's 14-point or Black's 11-point and the 5th White's 5-point and Black's 20-point. I found this confusing; but not as confusing as trying to convert it to the accepted format!

If anyone is interested I have the entire match on file as a JF match file. Copies via floppy disc from Biba HQ

The Match

We were undecided for a long time about which match to select for publication. What about Robertie-Magriel '86? Not interesting enough. Or Robertie-Grandel, Final, World Championship Match '87? Not instructive enough. A call to the World Champion in Boston greatly simplified matters: 'I've got just the one you need; my match against Nack Ballard in Reno '87, perhaps the most interesting one I've ever played in my life!' A brief glance through the games was enough to convince us that Robertie was not exaggerating. Backgames, blockading games and attacks; everything is to be found in this match except dullness.

The whole match was played at a high level, with relatively few errors pinpointed afterwards. For over ten years, Nack Ballard was in the top group of World Professionals. He has won countless tournaments, including the Las Vegas Holiday Tournament in 1980 and the California Open of the same year, but his greatest success was his win at Reno in 1986 against extremely strong opposition. Naturally, the World Champion of 1983 and 1987 in Monte Carlo, Bill Robertie, is even more well known and generally held to be the most successful and probably the strongest backgammon

player in the world. Robertie has written a number of books on the game, the most well known being Joe Dwek vs Lee Genud, World Championship 1981 and Advanced Backgammon. Yet, despite all his success, he still pursues his professional career as a systems analyst.

The following match was played at an Invitation Tournament in Reno. In general, all tournaments are played on a knockout basis and for each individual match, a specific winning total of points is laid down for the players to aim at. In the end-phase, if the leading player only needs one point to win, there is a special rule (Crawford) which stops the opponent doubling for one game. The match was played up to 21 points (the state of the match is given in brackets after the names of the players). We have used two basically different methods of annotation. For games 1, 11, 20 and 26 we have given a full commentary with diagrams. All other games are first given a general appreciation, then this is followed by the game itself without further commentary. Robertie has white throughout.

21 point match

Game 1

**Ballard : 0
Black**

**Robertie : 0
White**

01) 31: 8/5 6/5 64: 24/14
02) 52: 13/8 13/11*

Ballard plays very conservatively. A very good alternative was the double-hit by 13/11*, 6/1*, partly as a declaration of intent to attack, but above all to gain time to build up his positional advantage by closing his bar-point, for example. The move played has the advantage of placing no piece out of the game and giving his opponent no counter-shot. It is all a question of style.

31: 25/24 13/10

It would be a huge error to play to the 22nd point or to begin slotting! White is threatened and needs security to build up his front blockade.

03) 55: 13/3 8/3(2)

This is better than the barren 13/3, 8/3, 11/5, when Black has an excellent inner table but poor timing. An exchange of hits would then suit him, but Robertie, with a (6,1) throw for example, would refuse the hit and prefer to close his own bar-point.

32: 13/10 13/11

04) 65: 24/13

This move solves Black's main problem: his timing.

32: 13/10 13/11

A terrible throw, because Robertie must urgently set up a blockade against Black's remaining back piece. Grinding his teeth, he liquidates his vital middle-point! In view of Black's strong inner table and White's blots in his outer table, slotting with 10/5 would be almost suicidal.

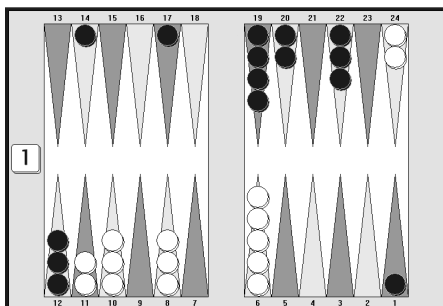


Fig. 328

Should Black double here? He has four advantages:

He has freed a back piece.

He has closed three inner table points.

He is ahead in the running stakes (125 to 154 pips).

He has the better outer table control.

He should double now, because (6,6) and (6,5) would give him a won game.

05) 55: 13/3 13/8(2)

By far Black's worst possible throw! It finally gives White the chance to set up an important blockading point and to ruin once again Black's timing. Everything now depends on whether Ballard can free his back piece before Robertie sets up a prime.

63: 11/5 8/5

06) 21: 24/22 6/5

Not however 24/21 which would exclude his 6 rolls and give White better attacking chances.

53: 8/3* 6/3

07) 61: 25/24 11/5

The alternative Bar/18 also came into consideration, retaining a little flexibility and winning at once in 7:36 cases; if White can neither hit a man nor roll (6,6), he will be unable to accept a double. The danger is that Black will stay on the bar after a hit and even runs a slight risk of losing a gammon in view of the blot on 14.

54: 10/1*

Not a good throw. Robertie would have liked to close his 4th or bar-point. The open-hit is of course risky. Ballard's 6 roll for freeing his back piece can just as unpleasantly become a 1 roll for hitting the newly created blot. The trouble is that there is no other possibility, since 10/6, 8/3 would be simply too inflexible!

08) 31: 25/24* 24/21

It is now correct to advance, since White stands on the bar, so Black can strengthen his pressure against the blot on 8.

53:

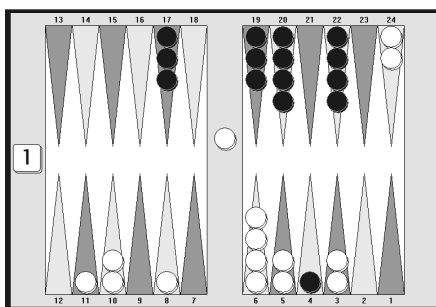


Fig. 329

09) 63: 8/2 5/2

He decides to play on for a gammon rather than double! This is not particularly risky here, since in most cases he will still have a very strong double on his next throw. After failing to hit, however, he should ensure the win by 21/12, when there would be no throw by White which would allow him to accept a double. Ballard instead

pushes on for a gammon, thereby offering his opponent 12:36 throws which would allow him to accept by an open hit on the blot on 4. The problem with playing for a gammon against the 1st (24th) point is that the opponent retains shooting chances until the end, and here his timing is in order. The final point is that Black has not yet occupied the 21st point, which will give him bearing-off problems and perhaps even allow White to play a true back-game by establishing a second anchor there.

21: 25/24 6/4*

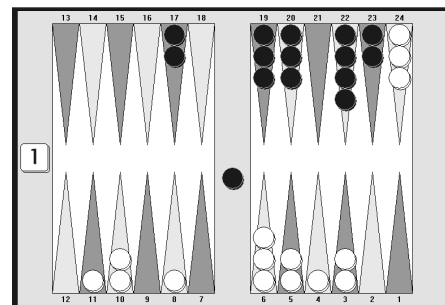


Fig.330

10) Doubles to 2 Takes Doubling from the bar against a three-point inner table belongs to the trickiest doubling decisions, because the possible consequences are so varied. We must consider three different possibilities:

Black hits at least one of the blots (16:36), with good gammon chances, but giving White a chance to fight for the 21st point. A clear pass.

Black re-enters on the 1st or 2nd point. White will then most probably close his inner table blot, but his three back men will clearly give him the worse chances. Nevertheless, his good timing and flight and attacking possibilities keep him in the take zone.

Black remains on the bar (9:36). White would then have time to build up a prime or free a back piece, giving him approximately equal chances.

In order to arrive at the correct doubling decision, it is essential to make an accurate assessment of gammon prospects in every variation, and even world class players often find this too demanding a task over the board. All in all, a clear double and correct take.

11) 64: 25/21* 8/2 51: 25/24 8/3
12) 21: 6/4 5/4 52: 11/4*

White does not risk much with this move. Since it is doubtful if he can avoid a gammon unless he has another hit, it is a calculated risk in such a hopeless position to fasten on to the slightest chance (Black stays on the bar for one or two throws, whilst White picks off the blot on 17).

13) 43: 25/21* 21/18 61: 25/18
As in the backgame, it is here a necessity to bring the back pieces into the game, even if this involves leaving shots on. White momentarily secures some outer table control and at the same time hurries to beat the gammon.

14) 43: 18/14 8/5 52: 18/11*
15) 42: 25/21 5/3 52: 11/4*

This time Robertie has another reason to make an open-hit: Black has a few catastrophic throws from the bar, (3-2) and (4-2), because his position has become completely inflexible.

16) 65:

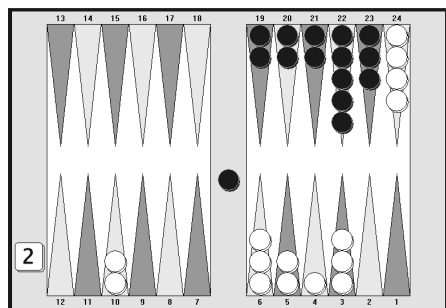


Fig.331

64: 10/4 10/6

A difficult decision, since White urgently needs 6 throws to free his back men. On the other hand, it

makes sense to play safe now: in the last throws Robertie has gained ground in the running stakes and has good chances of avoiding a gammon. However, in order to win, other things must happen. Firstly, Black must stay on the bar

17) 43:

Black stays on the bar . . . then Robertie must roll a 6.

64: 24/14

. . . Ballard must not move from the bar .

18) 54:

42: 14/10 6/4

19) 55:

and Robertie must roll another 6...

62: 24/18 10/8

. . . while Ballard still remains motionless .

20) 43: Dances

31: 8/5 18/17

and finally Black must throw a 'horror-shake' from the bar.

21) 41: 25/24 6/2

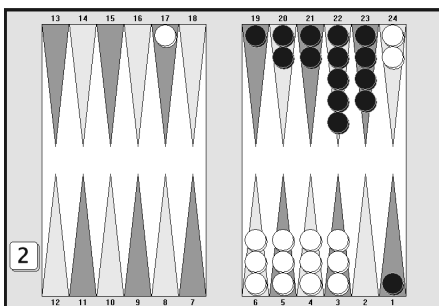


Fig.332

White has built up a tremendous helper distribution and Black's second blot even gives him good gammon chances. A clear case.

Doubles to 4

22) Drops

Wins 2 points

A game which shows how difficult backgammon is and how powerful the luck of the throw can prove.

Game 2

By means of an aggressive split on the first move and a (3,1) on the

second, Ballard rapidly succeeded in controlling the whole board. Robertie found himself forced into a risky counter-split, but Ballard missed the chance of starting an attack by 24/21, 13/4* or even 13/4* 4/1*. This gave Robertie time to free a back piece. Ballard still attacked but Robertie managed to escape to the outer table. Surprisingly, he did not secure his blot on the next move, choosing to build up his inner table instead. The reason for this was the equal pip-count and Black's blot on 21. 16/13 would have 'only' resulted in an even holding game, whereas after the game move most hits lead to unpleasant counter-shots. The calculated risk failed to pay off this time: Ballard hit the blot, closed point 21 then doubled. Faced with a four-point inner table, active helpers on three points and his own blot on 11, Robertie had no choice but to concede.

Ballard : 0

Robertie : 2

01) 32: 24/21 13/11 61: 13/7 8/7

02) 31: 8/5 6/5 63: 13/7 24/21

03) 33: 24/21 13/10(2)

11/8 65: 24/13

04) 65: 10/4* 10/5 63: 25/16

05) 63: 8/2 5/2 21: 7/5 6/5

06) 42: 13/9* 6/4

32: 25/22 13/11

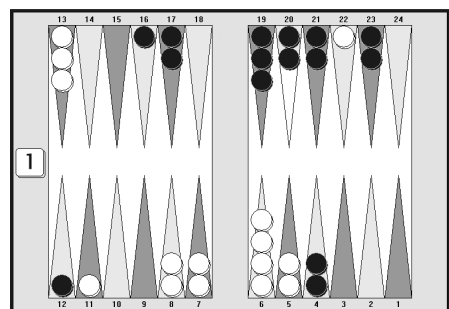


Fig.333

MC: The blot on white's 11-point is missing from the original. It shows White with just 14 checkers.

07) Doubles to 2

Wins 1 point

Drops

Game 3

Robertie quickly seizes both bar-points but must at the same time leave a shot on. Ballard hits the blot and gradually manages to improve his position by setting up an anchor on 3 and a four-point inner table. The subsequent exchange of hits leads to little and Ballard frees his back pieces. However, occupation of the bar-point, as is so often the case, allows Robertie to maintain the balance. He is ahead in the running but acquires timing problems because he rolls no suitable doubles. 6 throws put matters right in this respect. It is Ballard, however, who throws the freeing double 5 and his running position justifies the double, although he only has a 65 to 66 pipcount advantage. The five men on point 1 blur the picture, but the important factor is the number of outer table pips that Robertie still has to play. So the take is clear and, in the event, White manages to turn the tables with three double throws!

Ballard : 1 **Robertie : 2**

01) 21: 13/11 6/5 62: 13/5
 02) 21: 11/9 6/5 62: 13/5
 03) 53: 8/3 6/3
 66: 24/18(2) 13/7(2)
 04) 61: 13/12* 12/6 65:
 05) 11: 24/22(2) 51: 25/24 6/1
 06) 33: 8/2(2) 62: 24/16*
 07) 64: 25/15 43: 16/9
 08) 62: 22/16* 16/14
 41: 25/21 6/5
 09) 51: 22/16 52: 8/1
 10) 53: 15/10 13/10 31: 21/18 8/7
 11) 43: 14/10 16/13 43: 18/11
 12) 31: 13/10 6/5 42: 8/4 6/4
 13) 41: 10/6 5/4 52: 11/6 5/3
 14) 31: 4/1 6/5 64: 7/1 7/3
 15) 11: 5/1 51: 6/1 6/5
 16) 41: 10/5 61: 7/1 5/4
 17) 55: 13/8(2) 10/5(2)
 63: 18/12 18/15

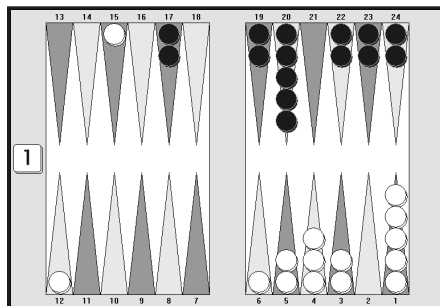


Fig.334

18) Doubles to 2 Takes
 19) 54: 8/3 8/4 22: 15/13 12/6
 20) 51: 5/0 1/0 55: 13/3 5/0(2)
 21) 21: 2/0 1/0 22: 4/0(2)
 22) 21: 2/0 5/4 Doubles to 4
 23) Drops **Wins 2 points**

Game 4

After an early exchange of hits, Robertie takes over the enemy bar-point. Relying on a tactical game, he builds up a three-point inner table instead of playing 2(13-5), the correct decision, especially in view of the blot on 20. Since he cannot secure this piece on his next throw, he prefers to attack himself rather than hand over the initiative to his opponent. He even mops up a further blot but does not risk a double on his 6th move. 12:36 throws would have covered the blot on 1, giving him good gammon chances, but he clearly felt he was short of helpers. The game continuation shows that he was right to hold back, because Ballard rapidly re-enters both pieces from the bar, hits White's blot in the outer table, builds up his inner table and suddenly threatens a devastating attack.

His double is very strong, although White could perhaps accept it, because his two bar-points and three-point inner table give him very good chances if he survives Black's attacks. However, Robertie, usually a 'taker', declines the double as being too 'hot', influenced perhaps by Black's six helpers on points 17 and 16.

Ballard : 1

Robertie : 4

01) 64: 24/14 62: 24/18 13/11*
 02) 65: 25/14* 65: 25/20 24/18
 03) 22: 13/11(2) 6/4(2)
 44: 8/4(2) 6/2(2)
 04) 22: 13/9 11/9 (2) 41: 6/1*
 05) 64: 63: 20/11*
 06) 22: 65: 13/7 11/6
 07) 31: 25/22 25/24*
 62: 25/23 13/7
 08) 65: 22/17* 17/11 64:
 09) 61: 11/5 6/5 65:

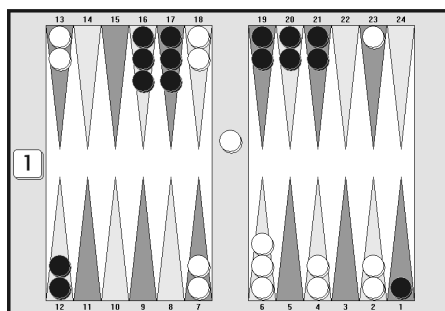


Fig.335

10) Doubles to 2 Drops
 Wins 1 point

Game 5

With an extremely unpleasant (5,4) throw, Robertie must slot at a time when his opponent has already set up point 20. Ballard hits the outer table blot and uses White's time-out as an opportunity for an early double. His position is sound, he is ahead in the running, has freed a back piece and is threatening the blot on 4. Faced with such positional disadvantages, Robertie has no choice but to call it a day.

Ballard : 2

Robertie : 4

01) 52: 13/8 13/11
 02) 31: 8/5 6/5 54: 13/4
 03) 64: 24/14* 65:

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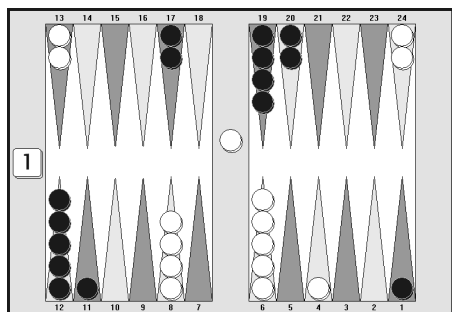


Fig.336

MC: Once again, the original shows a nam short for White, this time the checker on the bar!

04) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 6

The game is first of all a long exchange of hits, while both players try to keep the opponent 'busy' to prevent him setting up any important strategic points. Robertie's 'super split' is fairly risky (move 3) but Ballard cannot bring the game under control, despite his double 4 throw. Later, both players again start to mix it, but now that they have stronger inner tables each hit involves far more risk than in the early stages. Robertie has the bad luck of being forced to stay on the bar at a time when a further blot is threatened. The double is clearly too strong to be accepted (despite the 'golden' point), since White's position would be too inflexible if he played on

Ballard : 3 Robertie : 4

- 01) 63: 24/18 13/10 42: 13/7*
 02) 61: 25/18* 63: 25/22 13/7*
 03) 61: 25/18* 53: 25/20 24/21
 04) 44: 13/5* 8/4* 8/4
 52: 25/20* 25/23
 05) 64: 25/21 24/18
 64: 23/17* 8/4*
 06) 62: 25/23 63: 24/15*
 07) 52: 25/20 25/23
 64: 17/11 15/11
 08) 52: 20/15 23/21*
 54: 25/20 22/18
 09) 61: 13/7* 23/22
 21: 25/24 6/4*
 10) 63: 25/22 13/7 43: 8/4 13/10*

- 11) 52: 25/23 22/17* 31: 25/24 6/3*
 12) 52: 25/20 17/15* 31: 25/24 6/3
 13) 52: 20/15 13/11 51: 20/14*
 14) 64: 54: 14/9 24/20
 15) 21: 25/24 6/4 51: 9/4 24/23
 16) 51: 24/18 31: 24/20
 17) 31: 6/3 4/3 62: 23/15
 18) 55: 23/13 15/10(2)* 52: 25/20 4/2

- 19) 11: 10/8(2) 62: 20/12*
 20) 32: 25/23* 23/20 32: 25/20
 21) 53: 18/13* 20/17 11: 25/23 13/12(2)*
 22) 21: 25/23 18/17 66: 20/14(2) 11/5(2)
 23) 52: 23/18 6/4 61: 12/6 12/11
 24) 52: 7/2* 4/2 32:

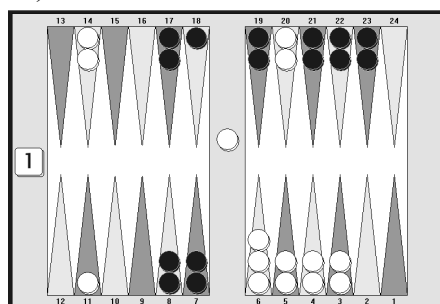


Fig.337

25) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 7

A typical 'double 5 game'! As soon as Ballard frees one of his back men on his first move, this double 5 roll by Robertie immediately gives him a four-point inner table. Although Black manages to secure his outer table blot on his next move, Robertie provokes an exchange of hits in classic fashion, then even scores a hit, leaving Ballard to 'dance' on the bar. Double and Pass are then mere formalities.

Ballard : 4 Robertie : 4

- 01) 31: 8/5 6/5
 02) 64: 24/14 55: 8/3(2) 6/1(2)*
 03) 21: 25/23 14/13 51: 24/18
 04) 62: 13/7* 13/11 63: 25/22 24/18*
 05) 53:

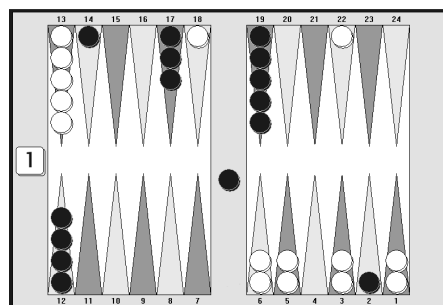


Fig.338

MC: in the original the blot on White's 14-point is shown as a White blot. What do these guys have against White? They are always showing him with 16 checkers!

Doubles to 2
06) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 8

Ballard makes a good start and is doubling after two moves, despite the fact that Robertie has freed aback piece. Black has splendid chances of building a prime and his better pipcount nullifies White's threat of freeing his remaining back man. White accepts the double, because for some time not every throw covers point 20. In the shelter of his bar-point anchor, Ballard builds up his inner table and creates a six-prime (move 4). In a desperate attempt to give his position some life, Robertie hits a blot, thus unnecessarily increasing his opponent's gammon chances. Ballard achieves a counter-hit, putting an end to White's winning chances. However, an amazing double 1 throw (move 8), followed by another good throw, suddenly and dramatically turns the tables, with Robertie creating a six-prime while Ballard must break up his own prime. Then an unfavourable throw forces White to open up his bar-point (move 10), luckily for Ballard whose double 6 throw would have otherwise been catastrophic, leading to an immediate redouble! Ballard's attack is successful, because two 5 throws allow him a speedy escape.

He manages to shut out his opponent completely (move 15) and wins a gammon.

A word about Ballard's 10th move which is 'illegal' because he plays as if it were two 2s instead of (2,1): the rules give his opponent the choice of taking the move back or allowing it to stand. Robertie chooses the latter.

Ballard : 4 **Robertie : 5**
 01) 41: 13/9 6/5 63: 24/15
 02) 66: 24/18(2) 13/7(2)
 65: 15/4

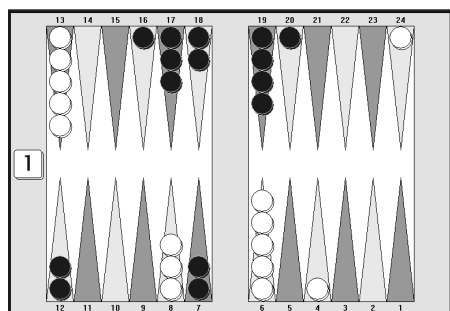


Fig.339

03) Doubles to 2 Takes
 04) 32: 8/5 6/4 52: 13/8 6/4
 05) 42: 13/9 6/4 51: 13/8 13/12*
 06) 51: 25/24 18/13*
 42: 25/23 8/4
 07) 53: 18/10 51: 13/8 13/12*
 08) 31: 25/22 24/23
 11: 8/7(2) 6/5(2)
 09) 53: 10/5 9/6 51: 8/3* 4/3
 10) 21: 25/23 9/7 64: 7/1 7/3
 11) 66: 8/2* 8/2 7/1* 7/1 65:
 12) 65: 23/12 42:
 13) 65: 12/6 23/18 64:
 14) 64: 18/8 55:
 15) 32: 6/3 5/3 66:
 16) 62: 8/2 7/5 66:
 17) 33: 6/3(3) 5/2 54:
 18) 65: 5/0(2) 52: 25/20
 19) 64: 4/0(2) 32:
 20) 32: 3/0 2/0 62: 25/19 8/6
 21) 41: 3/0 1/0 11: 20/17 19/18
 22) 53: 3/0(2) 21: 8/6 12/11
 23) 11: 3/0 1/0 65: 17/6
 24) 32: 2/0(2) 22: 18/10
 25) 21: 2/0

Wins 4 points

Game 9

An exchange of hits on the third move ends unfavourably for Robertie. He stays on the bar and his re-entry on the next throw is most unfortunate (move 5), allowing Black to hit a blot on 11 (move 6). A further sojourn on the bar allows a typical 'initiative double': a man on the bar, a blot on 9, no anchor, many helpers along with two points in Black's inner table would have made a 'take' extremely risky. Therefore, Robertie passes, a little ruefully perhaps; his position is organically sound and certainly on the verge of an acceptance.

Ballard : 8 **Robertie : 5**
 01) 53: 8/3 6/3
 02) 32: 13/10 13/11
 52: 13/8 13/11
 03) 42: 8/4 6/4 54: 24/15*
 04) 32: 25/23 13/10* 64:
 05) 41: 11/7 8/7 42: 25/23 13/9
 06) 64: 24/14* 44:

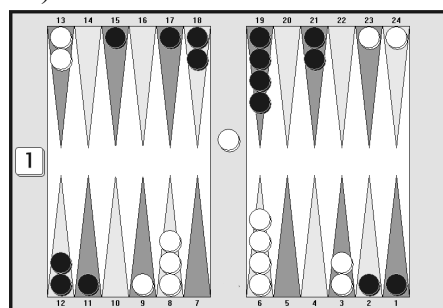


Fig.340

07) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 10

Despite Robertie's immediate escape with a back piece, Ballard opts for a slot rather than a split (move 2). Robertie hits the blot two moves later but Ballard's double 3 roll gives White no time to close an inner table point (move 4). With his 4th move, White is forced to leave another blot, but it is doubtful if Bar-21, 13-11 would have been an improvement, because all Black's helpers would've have been ready to seize point 21.

Ballard sets up an advanced anchor and after Robertie fails to close his 5th point Black's double 6 throw allows him to make a decisive hit. Although the running is about even (128 to 131 pips) and Robertie has only one back man, he is right to pass the double. He is on the bar, has only a blot in his inner table and is faced with a horde of point-hungry helpers. Robertie's outer table block is rather ineffective and, finally, the danger of a gammon must not be underestimated.

Ballard : 9 **Robertie : 5**
 01) 65: 24/13
 02) 41: 13/9 6/5 32: 13/10 13/11
 03) 65: 24/13 41: 24/20* 11/10
 04) 33: 25/22 13/10 8/5(2)*
 42: 25/23 13/9
 05) 52: 13/8 24/22
 44: 13/9(3) 6/2
 06) 66: 13/7(2) 8/2(2) 65:

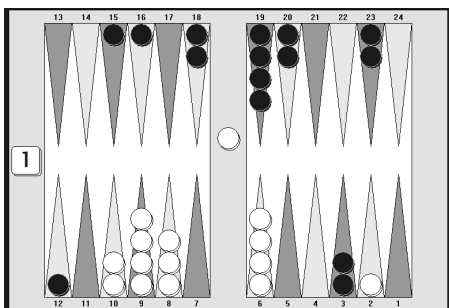


Fig.341

07) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 11

Ballard : 10 **Robertie : 5**
 01) 54: 13/8 24/20

This is the preference of most top players. In earlier times, Barclay Cooke, a pioneer of modern backgammon strategy, warned against giving up prematurely the anchor on point 1. We have moved a long way since his death but who knows what the 'experts' view will be in ten years' time?

 42: 8/4 6/4
 02) 53: 8/3 6/3
 Not a good throw. Of course, Bal-

lard would have liked a 4 to close his 5th point. As it is, he can't really escape with his man on point 5 or set up a high-value blockader.

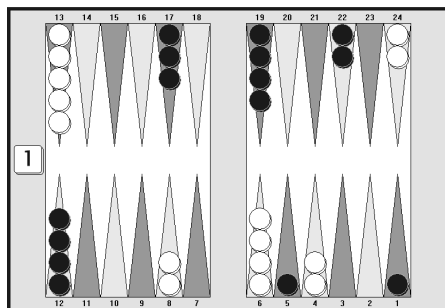


Fig.342

63: 24/18 8/5*

White is playing extremely aggressively. He scatters four blots over the whole board and liquidates his anchor. 7:36 of Black's throws could give him a double-hit which would be disastrous for White. However, 13/7, 8/5* would produce the same probability and the anchor would be little consolation. It is important that White does not play the passive 13/4 which would allow the opponent a positional build-up of his game. Nor does 24/15 exert much pressure on Black who could then use

3's, (2,1), (5,5) and (6,4) to hit, 4's for his 'golden' point and 6's to run from his 5th point. Robertie prefers to go for the initiative.

03) 32: 25/20* 52: 25/18
04) 42: 24/20 13/11

Both sides now have an advanced anchor. We can also refer to this type of position as a 'holding game' in which the players are holding up each other. Chances are about even.

41: 13/8

Not of course the mad 18/14* 14/13! Robertie is happy to have an anchor to safety and in no way wishes to expose his position to counter-shots from throws of 3, 1 or 6.

05) 51: 11/5

Ballard has no safe way of using his throw, so he slots into the point he desires most.

52: 13/8 6/4

06) 51: 13/8 6/5

Or he could also try 6/1*. Black has the better inner table and the 'golden' point as an anchor, so why

not risk an attack? Black would have no direct covering possibilities even if the blot on 24 is not hit and his chances of closing point 21 would be greatly reduced in view of his acute scarcity of helpers. The situation is by no means clear. There is even a third move with the 5 which represents a sort of compromise: 8/3. This leaves no shot on and could start an attack on the next throw. Moreover, it retains an extra piece on the middle-point which would give him greater flexibility (Robertie himself is the originator of the saying 'Never strip your mid-point!'). We are concerned with nuances here, but 8/3 seems a little more exact than the game move.

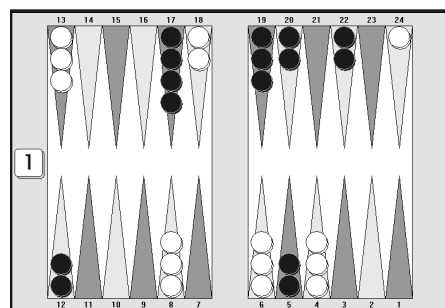


Fig.343



What Is JellyFish?

JellyFish is a neural net based backgammon program that plays at a very high level. On the highest playing level it matches the best humans in the world, and on the very fast level 5 a top human will hardly win more than 55% of the time. Also, its use of the doubling cube is outstanding. JellyFish is able to play matches of any length, or 'money games' where each point is equally valuable.



JellyFish 3.5 Prices

Analyzer 3.5	£136
Upgrade A 2.0/3.0 to A 3.5	£33
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Upgrade P 2.0/3.0 to A 3.5	£127

The program can be used for fun, for testing your game, for analyzing recorded matches [*Analyzer version only*], or most importantly: To improve your game.

JellyFish can give a running commentary on the moves and cube decisions you make or use the "2 Players" mode to have JellyFish keep track of the score and comment on both opponents play or just play against JellyFish on your own. It's almost like having your own private professional to comment on your game. [*Comments not available in Player version*]

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61: 24/18 4/3

A mark of an expert is that he rarely plays automatically. 99% of players would have closed their bar-point here and it looks at first sight as if White has squandered one of his best throws. However, Robertie knows precisely what he is doing. 13/7, 8/7 would not only result in an inflexible position with few active helpers but also expose his blot on 24 to unnecessary danger. Who knows when the next 6 will appear to free his back piece? Finally, the game move gives the back piece a head start to run from the enemy bar-point at the next double roll, to be carried along with his companions instead of being left defenceless against an enemy attack.

07) 53: 6/1 8/5

Another subtle point: Ballard would not like to be forced to open up his points on the next 6 roll, so refrains from playing 8/3, which would even lead to a shot after a subsequent (6,1).

62: 18/10

Robertie risks a 5 shot in order to obtain a better helper distribution and perhaps close the 10th point. At this stage of the game, blockading points are especially needed to block enemy double rolls. Moreover, it makes sense to use only two men to hold the 18th anchor point, when double 4's and 2's can be more effectively utilised for running purposes. Nevertheless, the risk would probably not be justified if there were a reasonable alternative use of the throw. White has only two inner table points and Ballard will probably use any 5 for a hit. The 1's against the blot on 24 and 5 would then be duplicated and if White remained on the bar, the doubling cube could be brought into action. As matters lie, the only alternative is 8/2, 6/4 and that looks horrible.

08) 31: 5/1

33: 13/10(3) 6/3
White has two other reasonable ways of using his double 3 roll:

2(18/15), 13/10, 6/3

13/7, 10/7, 6/3

The second of these is the weakest, for then Black could use any high double throws for running purposes, whilst White would only have a few active helpers left. The first alternative needs serious consideration, however. The hope is to liquidate securely his points in the outer table. Black's anchors would then be zugzwanged at some stage unless he rolled a suitable double. The game move is directed mainly at Black's middle-point, whilst retaining the bar-point-anchor as a holding point. Which is the correct method? The pip-count might help here: Black is ahead with 120 to 126. This means that White should exploit his timing advantage to the full and exert as much pressure as possible. In other words, the game move is best.

09) 62: 8/2 8/6

An extremely awkward 2. Does Black at the moment really need such a powerful inner table? And how vulnerable is the blot on 17 (*MC:8-point*); will White hit it with a 1? There are no simple answers to these questions. Black's inner table can be important, but only after very few rolling sequences, and White can hit the blot, but only a (1,1) throw achieves this comfortably. In the last analysis, over the board it is only that mysterious instinct that can guide us; we prefer 5/3.

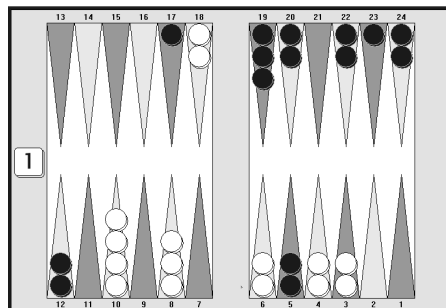


Fig.344

21: 18/16 18/17*

Robertie takes the bait! He has thrown one of the worst 1's. (1,1) would of course have been best, but (6,1) 18/17* 17/11 would have only allowed 7:36 counter-shots as against 12:36 in the game. However, one can only use the numbers thrown, so let us analyse the pros and cons of hitting the blot:

Any hit from the bar will be most unpleasant, because now a second White blot is under threat and, if White has to stay on the bar, a double will oblige him to concede.

If Black re-enters without a hit (15:36), White has problems with his two blots; he will probably secure -one, then, if Black fails to hit the one remaining, White's running lead will give him a clear advantage.

If Black remains on the bar (9:36), White can double in view of his increased chances of securing his blots, and Black would accept. All in all, pleasant prospects for White. Only the sequence 'Black hits; White stays on the bar' will cause real trouble. In almost all the other variations White is favourite!

What then is our evaluation if White refuses the hit and plays instead 8/6, 4/3?

Black is ahead in the running stakes (112 pips to 123).

White weakens his inner table with the 1, thus allowing Black to take greater risks next move. White has by far the better timing. Black will have great problems liquidating his anchor and middle-point without leaving on dangerous shots, even double ones.

There is no doubt that the third argument counts for a great deal,

and Robertie would have probably refused the hit but for the horrible 1 roll! However, White could quickly regenerate his 3rd point, whereas Black would require a series of specific double throws to advance all his pieces to his inner table.

We have taken the trouble to 'roll out' the above position i.e. Played a whole series of games to assess the situation from both sides of the board. In this particular case, we played the position 36 times after 18/16, 18/17* and 36 times after 8/6,4/3. The result was +10 for the hit variation and only + -0 for the timing strategy. Of course, such roll-outs are highly time-consuming and their results always have an error factor, especially when the number of trial games is relatively low. The bias of the position seems to be clear enough, however: it contains more running than timing elements.

10) 53: 25/20 6/3 54: 17/8
11) 44: 20/12 13/9* 9/5

Ballard had a hit probability of 16:36 and (4,4) is a good throw for him. In all other cases, White would have become the favourite to win. By playing 13/5 Black leaves himself enough throws to cover the blot on 23, whilst the pieces on 12 and 13 watch over his outer table in case of a sudden escape attempt from the bar.

31:

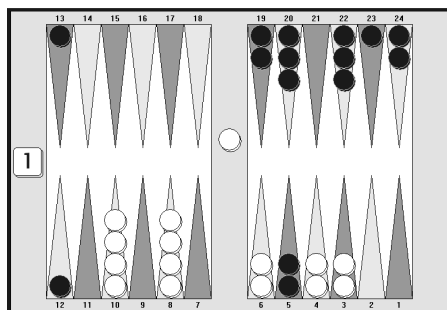


Fig.345

12) Doubles to 2 Drops

Wins 1 point

Black is already ahead in the running game, clear favourite to cover his inner table blot (25:36) and even has gammon prospects if he can close the 21st point before White can re-enter. A crystal-clear pass.

Game 12

In this short game, Robertie's throws are so good that a beginner could beat an expert with them, at least if the latter had such unlucky rolls as did Ballard. After the glorious double 4, Ballard places a blot on his bar-point with his next throw (Bar/23, 24/23 would have been safer but with fewer prospects). Robertie's next double throw allows him to set up a three-point inner table, whilst the 6 shot he leaves on is duplicated. Ballard's next throw again achieves nothing, so, no matter what the does, his position is in ruins. Double. Pass. Set the pieces up for the next game!

Ballard : 11 Robertie : 5

01) 51: 13/8 6/5 44: 24/20*(2) 13/9(2)
02) 21: 25/23 8/7 33: 8/5(2) 6/3(2)
03) 52: 13/8 23/21

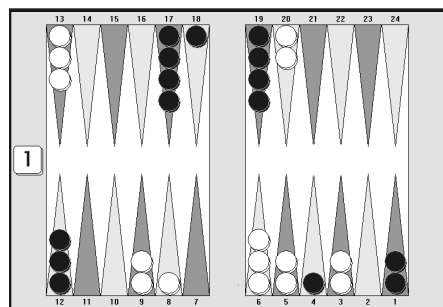


Fig.346

04) Drops Doubles to 2
Wins 1 point

Game 13

Ballard brings out a back piece quickly and on the third move misses the chance of a calculated risk with 24/23. If Robertie had

then neither made a hit nor rolled a high double, Ballard would have had a strong double. Ballard's concern to maintain flexibility and at the same time preserve his 'only-one-back-piece' advantage leads to the placing of a man on the dead-point 24 (move 5), when 11/6 was possible. By a hit and slotting in point 20, Robertie tries to gain ground. He manages to hit Black's outer table blot which must stay on the bar. It looks like a strong White attack but Ballard anchors in time and a splendid double 6 compels Robertie to hit in order to keep in the game (move 11). Ballard now plays to point 11 to ensure counter-shots. Robertie hits and both players escape to the outer table with their back pieces. An equal running game with minimal contact ensues and both players move carefully into their inner table to avoid leaving a shot on with 6's. Robertie's double 6 roll clinches matters and the final double cannot be accepted.

Ballard : 11 Robertie : 6

01) 65: 24/13 62: 24/18 13/11
02) 62: 13/7* 13/11 32: 25/22 24/22
03) 65: 13/7 13/8 21: 13/11 6/5
04) 42: 24/20* 20/18 41: 25/21 8/7*
05) 53: 25/22 6/1 31: 6/3* 21/20
06) 54: 25/21 6/1 64: 20/14* 7/3
07) 63: 52: 14/9 6/4*
08) 52: 25/20 25/23 55: 13/8 11/6(2) 9/4
09) 31: 23/20 8/7 33: 13/7(2)
10) 52: 13/8 13/11 11: 22/20(2)
11) 66: 20/14(2) 8/2(2)

61: 20/14* 8/7
12) 65: 25/14 61: 20/14 6/5
13) 31: 8/5 6/5 51: 7/2 6/5
14) 51: 14/9 7/6 51: 7/2 7/6
15) 32: 7/4 6/4 51: 6/1 8/7
16) 61: 9/3 4/3 51: 7/1
17) 63: 8/2 7/4 66: 14/2(2)
18) 53: 14/6

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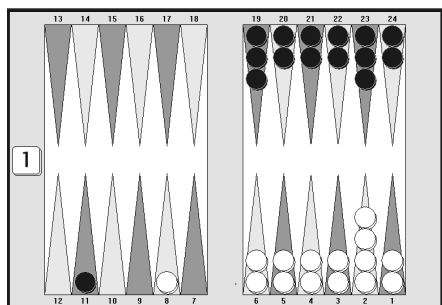


Fig.347

19) Drops
Doubles to 2
Wins 1 point

Game 14

Robertie rapidly frees a back piece but then has difficulties making other points and must at all events avoid leaving a shot on. Meanwhile Ballard closes the enemy bar-point and builds up a four-point inner table (move 6). When Robertie pushes a piece forward in the enemy inner table to prepare an escape (move 6), Ballard hits *enpassant*, instead of giving himself chances for an ideal five-point inner table by playing 6/4*, 24/23. A difficult decision; he may have feared the loss in running time of a counter-shot. White comes back into the game and this time manages to free his last back piece. Ballard is forced to clear the enemy bar-point and the play gradually takes on the aspect of a running game, apart from Ballard's remaining back piece on 2. This blot is under constant threat of being hit, which is why White doubles, even though the pipcount is about even (103:104). Ballard correctly accepts the challenge, if only to see whether his opponent will fire blanks. The running seems to be a sure thing, but with a series of high rolls Ballard swings the game his way and bears off first.

Ballard : 11
01)
02) 43: 13/9 13/10
03) 62: 25/23 24/18
04) 33: 8/5(2) 6/3(2)

Robertie : 7
42: 8/4 6/4
63: 24/15*
52: 15/8
52: 13/8 6/4

05) 54: 23/18 9/5
06) 63: 8/2 5/2
07) 21: 6/4* 4/3
08) 55: 18/8(2)
09) 54: 24/15
10) 42: 25/23 13/9
11) 41: 9/5 3/2

52: 13/6

43: 8/4 24/21

31: 25/21

64: 21/11

61: 11/10* 10/4

31: 6/3 4/3

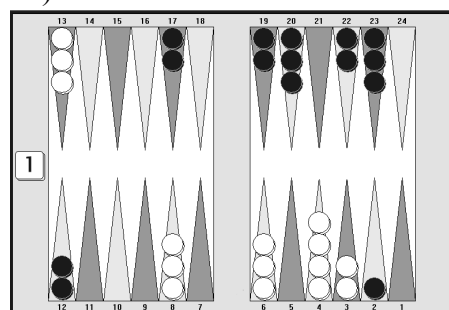


Fig.348

12) Takes
13) 64:
14) 52: 25/20 8/6
15) 31: 13/10 13/12
16) 22: 10/4 6/4
17) 53: 20/15 8/5
18) 62: 12/6 15/13
19) 41: 13/8
20) 55: 8/3 5/0(3)
21) 54: 5/0 4/0
22) 63: 6/0 3/0
23) 65: 6/0 6/1
24) 65: 4/0 3/0
25) 22: 3/1 2/0(3)
26) 21: 1/0(2)

Doubles to 2

64: 8/2* 6/2

53: 13/8 13/10

21: 13/10

42: 10/6 10/8

22: 8/6(4)

42: 4/0 2/0

63: 6/0 3/0

63: 6/0 3/0

31: 6/3 6/5

63: 6/0 3/0

31: 4/0

42: 4/0 2/0

65: 6/0 5/0

63: 6/0 4/1

Wins 2 points

Game 15

Robertie has an early double-hit (move 2) and then makes a typical opening double. The character of the game is still unclear, but with four back men and no advanced anchor Ballard will almost always be in trouble. His next move is unconstructive and very risky, as Robertie has a number of possible double-hits. Preference should have been given to 13/7 in the hope of capturing the 4th point. Robertie answers the game move with a 'joker' (move 5), but on the next move decides not to close the 2nd point with 2(6/5)*, 2(3/2)*. Ballard throws the life-saving 2, when he can begin a backgame

strategy and play to improve his timing. On the 9th move, he is not quite logical: the picturesque alternative 6/5, 6/4, 3/2 would have at least delighted the spectators, although it is unwise to accumulate superfluous timing in backgames. Robertie closes his six-prime (move 10) but an unfortunate double quickly forces him to disturb it (move 15), allowing Ballard time to free his back man. Later Robertie has to leave a double-shot on, but Ballard misses it (move 18). The next shot does not appear until the end-phase (move 25) and this time Ballard succeeds but needs to hit a second piece to win. He has two chances to do this and misses both times. Robertie finally frees his last back piece and wins.

Ballard : 13
01) 53: 8/3 6/3
02) 21: 13/11 6/5
03) 61: 25/24

Robertie : 7
53: 8/3 6/3
53: 8/3 6/3
64: 24/20* 20/14*

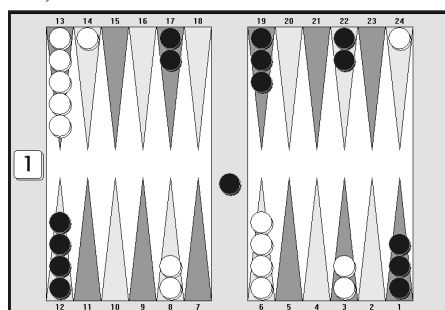


Fig.349

04) Takes
05) 64: 25/21 24/18
06) 52: 25/20 25/23
07) 62: 25/23 13/7
08) 21: 25/23 8/7*
09) 11: 7/4 6/5
10) 65:
11) 21: 25/24 13/11
12) 52: 11/4
13) 31: 8/5 24/23
14) 43: 13/9 13/10
15) 52: 9/4 10/8
16) 51: 23/18 8/7
17) 44: 18/2

Doubles to 2

32: 14/11 13/11

44: 13/9 11/7* 8/4(2)*

11: 9/7 6/5* 6/5

51: 24/18*

33:

54: 25/21* 13/8

65: 21/15 13/8

41: 15/10

63: 13/7 11/8

53: 10/5 7/4

42: 8/4 5/3

44: 8/4(2) 7/3(2)

52: 5/0 5/3

42: 6/0

18) 32: 23/20 7/5 52:
6/0
19) 43: 23/19 5/2 21: 4/2* 3/2
20) 43: 52: 4/0 4/2
21) 44: 53: 4/0 3/0
22) 31: 25/24 20/17 11: 4/2(2)
23) 43: 24/17 42: 3/0 2/0
24) 42: 19/13 52: 3/0 2/0
25) 44: 24/16 17/9 32: 3/0 3/1*
26) 21: 25/24* 9/7 42:
27) 65: 13/7 16/11 21: 25/24
28) 42: 11/5 43:
29) 33: 17/8 5/2 21: 2/1*
30) 54: 25/20 8/4 54:
31) 65: 20/9 62:
32) 52: 9/2 62:
33) 65: 7/1* 7/2 51: 25/24*
34) 32: 25/20 65: 24/13
35) 65: 20/9 61: 13/6
36) 64: 9/3 4/0 66: 6/0
2/0(2) 1/0

Wins 2 points

Game 16

Both sides diligently build up their blockade from the start and Ballard gains the advantage when he converts an indirect shot (move 5). Robertie's position worsens when he must expose further blots. Nevertheless, Ballard's double is risky in view of his own blots and inferior inner table. When Ballard fails to roll a 1 (move 7), the initiative passes to White whose splitting and hitting move (move 7) obliges Black to stay on the bar. A fantastic double 6 throw then gives Robertie a five-point inner table and his following double is unacceptable.

Ballard : 13	Robertie : 9
01)	41: 13/9 6/5
02) 61: 13/7 8/7	21: 13/11 6/5
03) 54: 13/8 13/9	54: 9/4 8/4
04) 42: 8/4 6/4	51: 13/8 11/10
05) 63: 24/15*	62: 25/23 8/2

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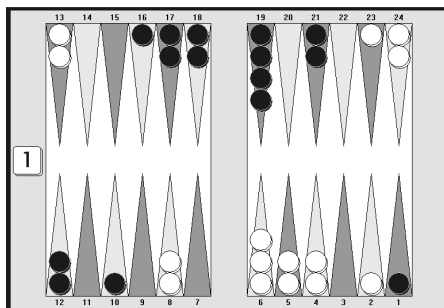


Fig.350

06) Doubles to 2 Takes
07) 43: 15/8 41: 24/20 2/1*
08) 65: 66: 13/1 8/2(2)
09) 21: Doubles to 4
10) Drops **Wins 2 points**

Game 17

Robertie achieves some positional advantages and is already threatening to set up a five-prime by his 5th move, so doubles early, correctly accepted by Black who has closed his bar-point and has no weaknesses. However, this rapidly changes for the worse as Ballard has to cope with two dreadful (6,1) throws, whereupon Robertie hits one of the blots and then builds up a six-prime. Ballard's position now seems hopeless, but a double roll (move 10) allows him to set up an advanced anchor. Later, Robertie is forced to leave a gap when playing into his inner table and, since he also has a blot on 1, Ballard can liquidate his anchor and maintain running chances. However, Robertie's double 6 roll smashes all his opponent's hopes, until Ballard obtains a shot which he unfortunately fails to convert. Robertie easily wins the running game.

Ballard : 13	Robertie : 11
01)	41: 13/9 6/5
02) 65: 24/13	61: 24/18 6/5
03) 51: 13/7*	42: 25/23 13/9
04) 64: 13/7 13/9	52: 23/16*
05) 51: 25/24 13/8	

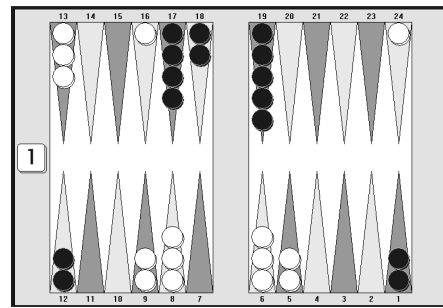


Fig.351

06) Takes Doubles to 2
07) 61: 8/2 24/23 61: 13/7 8/7
31: 16/13 24/23*
08) 61: 25/24 8/2* 33: 25/22 13/10(3)
09) 63: 13/7 13/10 42: 22/16
10) 33: 24/21(2) 8/5(2) 64: 16/6
11) 64: 10/4 6/2 31: 10/7 6/5
12) 65: 7/1 6/1 21: 5/2*
13) 11: 25/24 7/4 64: 7/1* 6/2
14) 64: 25/21 7/1 41: 10/6 10/9
15) 32: 6/3 5/3 55: 8/3(2) 7/2(2)
16) 65: 21/10 63: 9/3 6/3
17) 63: 21/12 66: 9/3(2) 6/0(2)
18) 52: 12/5 61: 5/0 1/0
19) 53: 21/13 63: 5/0 3/0
20) 33: 13/4 10/7 52: 3/0 2/0
21) 41: 7/3 1/0 51: 3/0 2/1
22) 65: 6/0 5/0 54: 3/0(2)
23) 21: 2/0 1/0 44: 3/0
2/0(2) 1/0

Wins 2 points

Game 18

Ballard closes his 'golden' point with a double 2 (move 3), then slots into point 20 in the usual way, after which a series of exchanges lands him this important point, resulting in rapid positional pressure on White. However, instead of playing 20/14, 13/12 (move 9) Ballard makes the mistake of allowing Robertie more shots than necessary. White then obtains good prospects of turning the game round with a double hit (move 9) only to find he has to stay on the bar after his opponent's counter-shot. Ballard's deadly double cannot be taken up in view of the blot on 11, White's bad timing and Black's chances of a prime

plus his advanced anchor.

Ballard : 13 **Robertie : 13**

01) 32: 13/10 13/11

02) 42: 8/4 6/4 21: 13/10

03) 22: 24/20(2) 53: 11/3

04) 51: 13/8 6/5 54: 8/3 24/20*

05) 53: 25/20 8/5*

43: 25/22 24/20*

06) 51: 25/20 6/5* 62: 25/23 22/16

07) 43: 13/9* 8/5

33: 25/22 13/10(2) 6/3

08) 31: 13/10 9/8

11: 23/22 10/9(2) 3/2

09) 61: 20/14 10/9

65: 22/16* 16/11*

10) 42: 25/21 25/23* 65:

11) 21: 20/18 13/12 64:

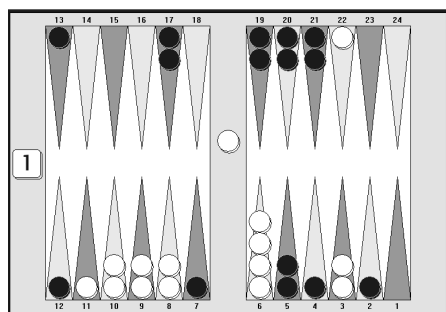


Fig.352

12) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 19

Ballard speedily builds up a three-point inner table, whilst Robertie, who has closed his 4th and bar-point, does not appear to stand badly either. However, an extremely unpleasant throw (move 3) forces him to slot or lose flexibility or place three blots in his outer table. He opts for the latter but has to stay on the bar after Ballard's hit which puts him in danger of losing a gammon. It is only after White manages to anchor on 22 that Ballard finally doubles. It is instructive to see how White's (4,3) roll wrecks his position!

Ballard : 14 **Robertie : 13**

01) 31: 8/5 6/5 61: 13/7 8/7

02) 54: 13/8 13/9 42: 8/4 6/4

03) 54: 9/4 8/4 43: 13/9 13/10

04) 61: 24/17*

65:

05) 43: 24/17 32: 25/22 24/22

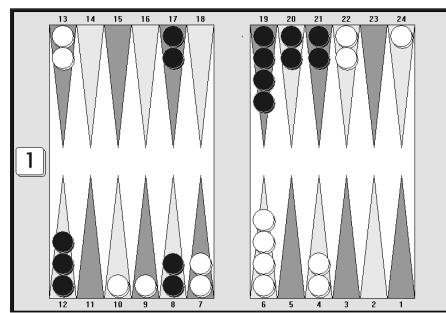


Fig.353

06) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 20

Ballard : 15 **Robertie : 13**

01) 43: 24/20 13/10

02) 42: 8/4 6/4 53: 10/5 8/5

03) 51: 13/8 6/5*

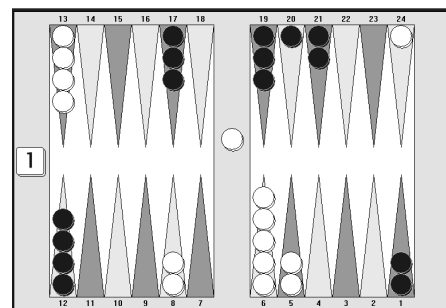


Fig.354

MC: Clearly White made his 5-point with his second move, yet in the original he is shown as owning the 4-point. I know I make mistakes - but this is far more than I ever do.

61: 25/24 13/7

One fairly often has to decide whether to slot into one's own bar-point or to split to the enemy bar-point. In this position, White is particularly afraid of the 'hit-and-cover' shot (which hits the blot and covers point 20) which has a probability of 13:36 after 24/18 as against 5:36 after the game move; no contest.

04) 51: 13/8 6/5

The hit by 24/18* would be a bad mistake; it is scarcely credible that 32:36 of White's moves would then be counter-shots, with numerous double-hits among them! An

excellent example of one of the marks of an expert: he only hits when there is a purpose to it.

31: 13/10 8/7

A routine move which is much riskier than it looks at first sight. When you watch beginners at work, it is common to see them playing for safety and trying to avoid indirect shots. At some point they are advised to take some risks in order to improve their helper distribution, with the result that they then leave indirect shots on, irrespective of the specific circumstances! In contrast, the experts consider the concrete factors of each situation to see whether a particular risk is justified or not.

Here, 8:36 throws would hit a blot and Black's inner table is strong. If White then has to stay on the bar, his other blot is in immediate danger, allowing Black a powerful double. For these reasons, the 'cowardly' 8/5, 8/7 came into consideration, renouncing a better helper distribution in favour of playing without any blots. A difficult decision, with both methods of play being about equal.

05) 66: 13/7(2) 8/2(2)

Ballard wants an additional inner table point, so decides against the more flexible 3 (13/7), 8/2 which has the following two advantages:

With two active helpers on two points, Black obtains much better chances of setting up a six-prime.

In order to make a hit, White will have to give up his anchor, thus risking a mighty attack at a time when he has not managed to build up a prime.

There are rarely conclusive proofs in backgammon about the soundness or otherwise of a certain line of play, since you can almost always think of arguments for or against. However, in this game it

is difficult to understand why Black needs an inner table point that does not belong to his prime.

64: 10/4 8/4

06) 33: 13/7 8/5(2)

Why does not Black play 13/4, 8/5, when he has (6,1), (6,2), (5,1), (5,2), (2,2) (2,1) and (1,1) as constructive throws (12:36)?

Of course, the game move gives 10:36 useful rolls to follow and the better he helper distribution of the alternative play has little effect here, because Black can escape with (5,2), thus duplicating the throw. Ballard therefore correctly avoids the minimal risk of a hit. One further aspect: by 2(8/5) Black has 'killed' any 6 rolls, thus helping his timing in the developing prime versus prime situation.

64: 13/7 13/9

07) 66:

63: 9/3 6/3

08) 51: 7/2 24/23

As is usual, Black splits here to create escape chances. On his own side of the board he is as good as bankrupt. 5/4 would only be cosmetic, since any 4 or 5 on the next

throw would be catastrophic for Black.

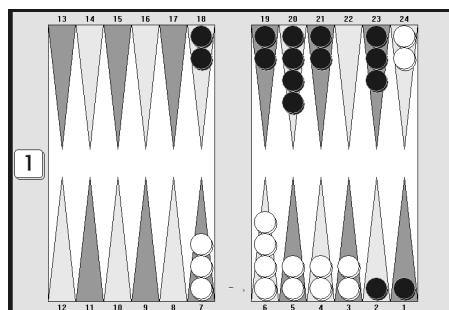


Fig.355

Doubles to 2

09) Takes

One of the most difficult doubling decisions of the whole match. At first, it seems as if the double is at least one move too soon. Black's five-prime is blocking just as effectively as White's; Black is ready to escape with his next 6 roll, and White to throw will have to move his front position towards the 'dead-point', unless he throws a 2. However, in reality Black's position is much worse than this superficial assessment would have us suppose. There are no really catastrophic throws for White except (6,6) and even this would not lead to an immediate redouble.

The decisive factor is that White can begin his attack and has still time to wait for the 'golden' 2, in view of his many pieces on points 6 and 7, without ruining his inner table. It is certainly a bold double, but a well-founded one. Black naturally accepts.

32: 6/3 24/22

This way of playing the 2 seems obvious, but the alternative 7/5 also comes into consideration, since in prime versus prime situations, it is only the player with the worse timing who needs to split. The game move gives Black the additional winning plan of attacking shutting out the opponent freeing his back men, and possibly playing for a gammon. On the other hand, any black 6 throw makes the split clearly preferable. Black is simply too strong for White to escape without splitting.

10) 65: 23/12

65: 22/11

Both sides have freed a piece but Robertie still has a clear advantage, with Black needing a 1 and a 6 and White needing a 2 and a 5 or 6 to free the other piece. Of course, White's helper distribution and timing are also better. It is tempting to play 7/1*, 6/1 to aim for a gammon, but that would be completely wrong, since any 2 would give Black excellent chances. White's pieces on 1 would be out of the game and unable to join in the fight for point 2. Finally, to carry out his plan White would have far too many things to do: free his back men, hit the blot on 13 and close point 2, which is a great deal to expect, even from a World Champion!

11) 63: 12/6 5/2

Slotting with 12/3 is pointless, since only (1,1) and (2,1) on the next throw could be used to build up a six-prime, whereas any 2 by White would lead to a serious chance of a gammon.

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21: 24/22 11/10
 12) 51: 6/1 24/23 41: 6/2* 3/2
 13) 21: 25/24 7/5

In prime versus prime situations the danger of a gammon is particularly high. Ballard's position is collapsing and Robertie will now aim to hit a second blot.

32: 10/5

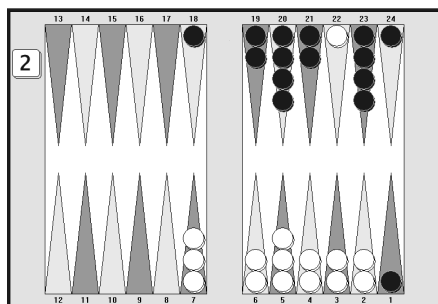


Fig.356

14) 52: 6/1 6/4

Ballard duplicates the enemy 4's needed to hit on 1 or 18. He is hoping not to be hit so that he can secure his blot on 18, so no credit for 6/1, 7/5.

41: 22/18* 7/6

15) 21: 25/24 5/3

This anchor considerably reduces the danger of a gammon and a timely double 6 could still give Black a slight chance in the running game.

52: 18/13 6/4

In such positions there are hidden possibilities of still obtaining a gammon. With 7/2, 7/5 White could open up his prime; if then Black throws a 6 (other than a double one), his remaining blot on 1 can be mercilessly attacked to shut Black out of the game, while the piece on 18 can be brought up and the loose blot in Black's outer table picked up. If all this works, White would have around 40% chances of a gammon. The main disadvantage is that, if Black immediately rolls a double 6, White would suddenly find himself in a poor running game! In the game position, there are even extra

problems:

If White later makes an open-hit on a blot a rising on point 1, a counter-shot could be unpleasant, because Black's inner table is still relatively strong.

Since White has few waiting moves, he could fail to hit the outer table blot.

16) 61: 4/3

65: 13/2

17) 65:

52: 7/2 7/5

18) 41: 5/1 2/1

63: 6/0 6/3

19) 43: 5/1 5/2

65: 5/0(2)

20) 54: 24/15

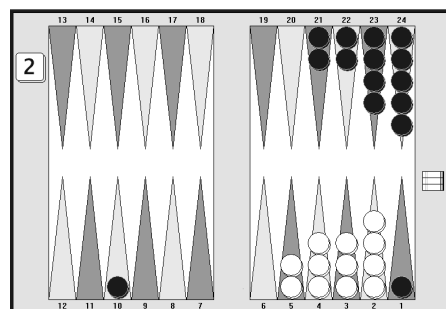


Fig.357

22: 5/1* 5/1

This throw ensures the win, but Black's bad inner table also leaves White free to try for a gammon with the sharp 4(2/0). Then it would take a great deal to give Black any real winning chances when in two moves White will have at least 8 pieces off the board. However, the game move also offers gammon chances if Black has to stay on the bar too long.

21) 32:

42: 4/0 2/0

22) 63: 25/19 15/12

53: 4/0 3/0

23) 54: 19/10

21: 2/0 1/0

24) 31: 10/6

53: 4/0 3/0

25) 32: 12/7

63: 3/0 2/0

26) 21: 7/5 1/0

21: 2/0 1/0

Wins 2 points

Game 21

Ballard's double 6 gives him a clear advantage by the 2nd move, so Robertie tries to free a back piece. Ballard hits this and Robertie continues his risk-taking by exposing two pieces in Ballard's inner table instead of adopting the

more cautious Bar/20, 6/4. Ballard must have considered doubling before his 4th move, since many possible throws, especially doubles (except double 6) would have given him a won game. However, his next move is nothing great, although enough to begin an attack and threaten to form a prime. Robertie misses the blot and begins another attempt at flight, but Ballard's double finishes the game at once. There are too many good winning chances for Black:

He can launch a strong attack

Any 1 roll will give him a five-prime

He can simply play safe and wait for a suitable double throw, since he leads by 127 pips to 153 in the running stakes.

Ballard : 15

Robertie : 15

01) 42: 8/4 6/4

31: 8/5 6/5

02) 66: 24/18(2) 13/7(2)

64: 24/14

03) 32: 13/11* 11/8

52: 25/20 24/22

04) 41: 8/4 6/5*

62: 25/23 22/16

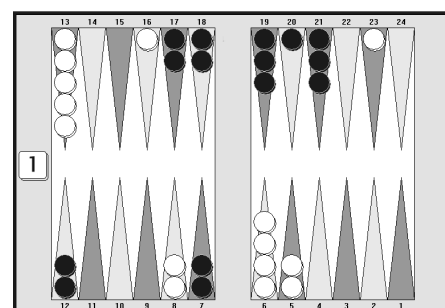


Fig.358

05) Doubles to 2

Drops

Wins 1 point

Game 22

This game begins like so many others with a lengthy exchange of hits. Robertie has the bad luck to throw a 6 from the bar (move 5), thus giving Black time to build up his position. However, Robertie still manages to close the enemy bar-point and a welcome 2 gives him point 21 on his next move, equalising the game. Matters proceed quietly until Ballard throws a

disastrous double 1 allowing White a bold hit to exploit Black's ruined inner table and build up his own. As Ballard cannot sort out his inner table immediately, Robertie plays for maximum flexibility. It is not until move 17 that Ballard can recover from the consequences of his double 1 roll, when he obtains an acceptable holding game that gradually takes on the character of a running game after his double 5 throw. Just as a second double 5 is steering Ballard towards victory, Robertie counters with a powerful double 6. Black's next double roll is too low and, faced with 55 pips to 63, he must unfortunately decline the double.

Ballard : 16 Robertie : 15
 01) 63: 24/18 13/10
 02) 54: 24/15* 32: 25/23 13/10*
 03) 65: 25/20 13/7*
 63: 25/22 24/18*
 04) 61: 25/24 13/7*
 44: 25/21 22/18* 13/5*
 05) 51: 25/20* 25/24
 65: 25/20 10/4
 06) 31: 8/5* 6/5 61: 25/18
 07) 41: 24/20 6/5 21: 23/21 4/3
 08) 52: 13/8 24/22* 43: 25/18
 09) 42: 22/16 42: 8/4 6/4
 10) 41: 24/20 16/15 21: 6/3
 11) 11: 15/13 6/5 6/5 65: 18/7
 12) 51: 20/14 43: 18/11*
 13) 64: 54: 8/3 11/7
 14) 54: 25/20 6/2 61: 21/15 8/7
 15) 62: 8/2 5/3 21: 18/15
 16) 41: 8/4* 4/3 51: 25/19
 17) 41: 8/4 5/4 22: 19/13 6/4
 18) 41: 13/8 32: 7/2
 19) 51: 8/2 62: 13/7 4/2
 20) 43: 20/13 32: 7/2
 21) 55: 20/15(2) 13/3
 44: 15/11(2) 13/9(2)
 22) 61: 13/6 52: 9/4 7/5
 23) 55: 15/5 15/10 13/8
 66: 11/5 11/5 9/3 7/1
 24) 11: 10/9 8/6 2/1

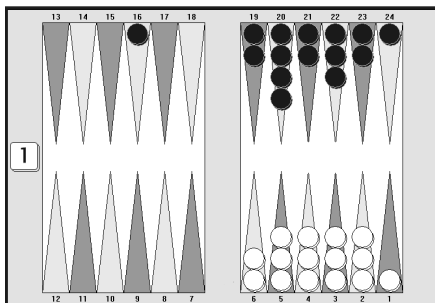


Fig.359

MC: For a change, the original shows an error for Black. The third checker on Black's 3-point is shown as being on the 2-point.

Doubles to 2
 25) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 23

The mutual blood-shedding of the opening stages (moves 1 to 11) results in an accumulation of enemy pieces in Ballard's inner table. Despite a grandiose double 3, however, Ballard fails to control the game. Robertie's 15th move does not fit in with a position bereft of helpers, and 23/20, 13/12 (or 14/13) was preferable. In his anxiety about timing, Ballard leaves his 'golden' point (move 18) when he would have done better to hit on 24. White's double 2 gives him a clear advantage, whilst Ballard fails to set up an advanced anchor. Robertie's following double 6 sees his pieces poised for the attack and another bad roll by Ballard leads to a very strong double which should clearly be declined, because the position is looking like a back-game in which White has already eliminated three enemy pieces. Nevertheless, Ballard takes up the challenge and is quickly blockaded by a five-prime. He has to leave a shot on which White converts (move 25), after which first Ballard's blockade and then his inner table collapse, allowing Robertie to begin his final attack without any risk. However, when he liquidates the 6th point in an attempt to shut Black out, Ballard counters with a

double 6, bringing the game back to life once more. Unfortunately, Black fails to usher his men safely into his inner table. Robertie makes a hit and shuts his opponent out, but Ballard escapes a gammon by a timely re-entry from the bar.

Ballard : 16 Robertie : 16
 01) 43: 24/20 13/10
 02) 54: 24/15* 63: 25/22 13/7
 03) 21: 6/5* 5/3*
 53: 25/20 25/22*
 04) 63: 25/22 24/18*
 53: 25/20 6/3*
 05) 31: 25/22* 22/21
 52: 25/20 6/4*
 06) 31: 25/21* 62: 25/23 13/7*
 07) 53: 25/20 21/18* 65: 25/14
 08) 62: 20/14 13/11*
 63: 25/22 20/14*
 09) 62: 25/23 15/9 52: 23/16*
 10) 32: 25/23 14/11*
 62: 25/23 13/7*
 11) 22: 25/23 11/9* 6/4(2)
 51: 25/20 8/7
 12) 31: 13/12* 12/9
 54: 25/20 24/20
 13) 54: 13/8 13/9 61: 20/13
 14) 42: 13/9 23/21 62: 20/14 6/4*
 15) 33: 25/22 23/20(2) 9/6
 31: 23/20 4/3*
 16) 61: 25/24 8/2 32: 14/11 13/11
 17) 32: 9/6 24/22*
 51: 25/24 20/15
 18) 54: 20/15 6/2
 53: 15/10* 10/7
 19) 62: 25/23 22/16
 22: 11/9* 9/5* 7/5
 20) 31: 25/22 25/24
 66: 24/12 20/14 11/5
 21) 54: 6/1 8/4

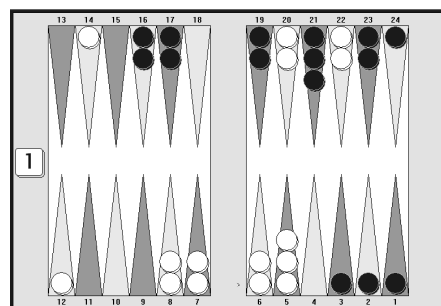


Fig.360

Doubles to 2

22) Takes 42: 14/10 12/10
 23) 65: 22/11 52: 10/5 10/8
 24) 54: 11/2 41: 8/4 5/4
 25) 41: 8/4 24/23

52: 22/17* 17/15

26) 64: 63: 15/6

27) 53: 25/22 9/4 21: 6/3*

28) 31: 25/22* 23/22 42:

29) 31: 4/1 23/22 31: 25/22 5/4

30) 33: 9/6 4/1(3) 53: 20/15 20/17

31) 11: 6/4 6/5(2) 63: 22/16 22/19

32) 21: 5/3 5/4 54: 17/12 16/12

33) 22: 4/2(3) 3/1 43: 19/15 12/9

34) 64: 22/16* 16/12

52: 25/20 15/13*

35) 62: 25/23 22/16 52: 7/2* 4/2

36) 65: 52: 8/3* 15/13

37) 22: 52: 8/3 12/10

38) 43: 42: 13/9* 10/8

39) 31: 25/24 52: 8/1*

40) 41: 25/24* 62: 25/17

41) 53: 55: 17/12 13/8 6/1(2)*

42) 66: 25/13* 25/19(2)

31: 25/22 8/7

43) 64: 19/13 19/15

41: 22/18 7/6

44) 54: 15/6 21: 18/16 20/19*

45) 31: 42: 16/10

46) 51: 62: 19/11

47) 41: 22: 10/6 9/5

48) 66: 21: 7/4

49) 66: 22: 11/3

50) 66: 31: 3/0 5/4

51) 66: 64: 6/0 6/2

52) 21: 44: 4/0(4)

53) 63: 25/19 13/10 64: 5/0 5/1

54) 63: 19/10 41: 3/0 1/0

55) 63: 13/7 10/7 52: 3/0 2/0

56) 51: 10/5 7/6 65: 2/0 2/0

57) 21: 7/5 1/0 21: 1/0 1/0

Wins 2 points

Game 24

Robertie frees a piece immediately and a battle of prime versus prime soon ensues, with an indirect hit giving Ballard the advantage. Robertie has a counter-hit, whereupon Black must take a calculated risk to maintain chances of creating a six-prime. Robertie hits but plays a dubious 2 (move 9) when 17/15 was preferable. Ballard's counter-hit leaves the game open and he is forced to attack when

White liquidates his anchor. Robertie's hit from the bar allows him to play on for a gammon rather than double. Ballard's inner table collapses and it is a little late when he finally frees his back men.

Instead of sending Black to the bar (move 23), White chooses to play for a prime, thus giving Ballard time for an anti-gammon run. Robertie manages to shut out his opponent but has to leave a shot on as he bears-off (move 28). Ballard scores a hit, thus avoiding a gammon, and is finally doubled.

Ballard : 16 Robertie : 18

01) 62: 24/18 13/11

02) 31: 8/5 6/5 52: 18/11

03) 64: 24/18 13/9 33: 13/7(2)*

04) 11: 25/24 8/7(2) 6/5

32: 13/10 13/11

05) 11: 13/12 6/4 5/4

61: 11/5 6/5

06) 53: 13/8 12/9 32: 10/7 11/9

07) 53: 24/16* 11: 25/23 11/9*

08) 65: 42: 8/4 6/4

09) 41: 25/24 13/9

62: 23/17* 24/22

10) 51: 25/24 13/8*

33: 25/22 9/3 6/3

11) 21: 8/6 24/23 63: 8/2* 8/5

12) 21: 25/23* 24/23

32: 25/23 7/4

13) 52: 9/2* 44:

14) 42: 6/2 9/7 64:

15) 41: 9/5 24/23 61: 25/24 22/16

16) 32: 7/4 5/3* 43: 25/22* 16/12

17) 55: 53: 22/14

18) 41: 25/24 6/2 11: 14/11 12/11

19) 31: 6/3 4/3 62: 11/3

20) 43: 7/3 7/4 52: 24/7

21) 53: 4/1 11: 11/7

22) 33: 5/2(2) 4/1(2) 65: 17/6

23) 66: 23/11 23/17(2)

53: 7/2 5/2

24) 64: 17/11 17/13 21: 3/1* 6/5

25) 32: 42: 7/1

26) 66: 64: 7/1 4/0

27) 66: 53: 6/1 6/3

28) 43: 55: 5/0(2) 5/0 4/0

29) 64: 25/21* 21/15

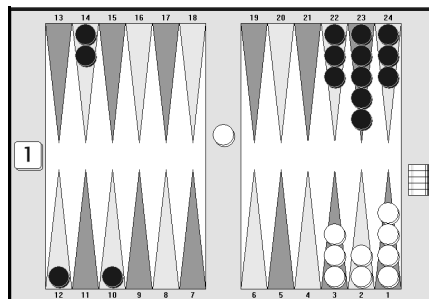


Fig.361

30) Drops **Doubles to 2 Wins 1 point**

This article will continue in the next issue of Bibafax, August 2002.

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How Good Is Your Backgammon

Asks Michael Crane

We continue our series starting with the third game of the 1991 Monte Carlo World Championship 1/4 Final match between two of the giants of backgammon; Neil Kazaross and Michael Meyburg.

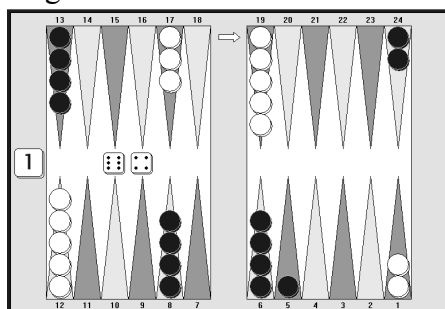
When you come to ??? cover up the text below the diagram and work out your move before continuing. At the end of the article you can check your score to see how good you are.

21 point match

Game 3

(White) (Black)
Kazaross: 1 Meyburg: 1

01) 51: 13/8 6/5
As in Game 2, an aggressive start from Meyburg, slotting the important 5-point; Kazaross's 'Golden Point'. If he gets away with it he'll have a good chance to make it, but he got hit last time.



??? White to play 64

Well, I think there's no doubt about the four! But, the six isn't as obvious.

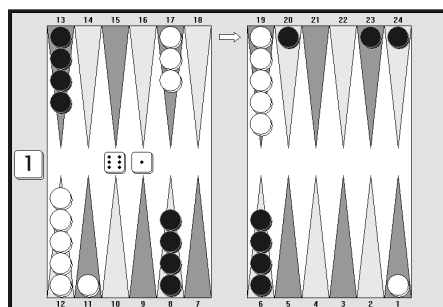
One of the choices facing Kazaross is to remain on the *Golden Point* and move 24/18 or 13/7 with the six. He didn't do this, however, he decided to run on with the same checker and play 24/20* 20/14. This was the best move.

24/20* 20/14 5A
24/20* 24/18 4

24/20* 13/7 3
24/20* 8/2 -2

02) 64: 24/20* 20/14 51: 25/20 24/23

Meyburg easily re-enters and rightly splits his back checkers. Slotting the bar- or 5-point would not be a good idea at the moment.



??? White to play 61

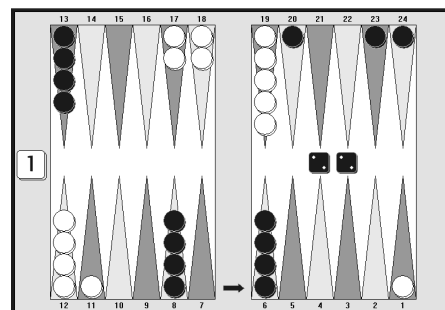
Having moved the checker from the 20-point to the 14-point in the last move, what does Kazaross do now? Leaves it to be hit! He completely ignores it and makes his bar-point. Is this a good idea, or should he hit the blot on his 5-point to stop Meyburg making his *Golden Point*?

Of course not - the bar-point is under threat and this is the ideal move to make it. The blot on his 14-point is well worth the sacrifice.

13/7 8/7 5A
14/8 6/5* 3
14/8 24/23 3
24/18 14/13 2

Hitting with 14/8 6/5* gives an equity of 0.106 whereas making the bar-point gives 0.165. The bar-point is of far greater value now, and long term, than stopping Meyburg making the 5-point.

03) 61: 13/7 8/7



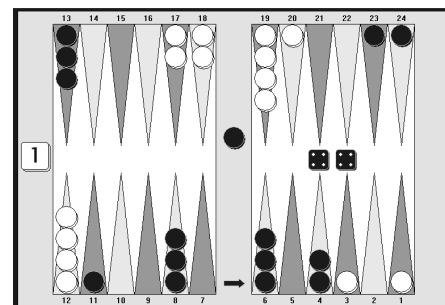
??? Black to play 22

Doubles are always good for quizzes - lots of choices. In this one there are 87 ways to play a double two! Mind you, all but four of them are pants! I give nothing away here in stating that one of the twos will be used to hit, 13/11*, but what of the remaining three twos?

13/11* 8/4 6/4 5A
13/11(2)* 6/4(2) 4
13/11* 23/21 6/4(2) 3
13/11(2)* 24/20 2
13/11* 24/22 6/4(2) 1

Why is the top one the top one? Because it keeps an active and valuable builder on the 6-point, and the same on the 13-point whilst only risking a return shot off the bar of 65

22: 13/11* 8/4 6/4
04) 31: 25/22 6/5*
Hitting is far superior to anything else with the one.



??? Black to play 44

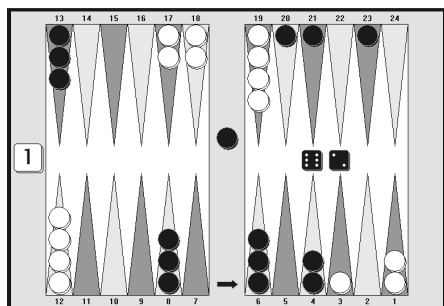
As I said, doubles are good for quizzes. Although there are over three dozen ways to play it, one stands out above the rest. Can you

pick it out? Kazaross did.

It was 25/21 24/20* (both obvious moves), then he moved the blot/builder from his 11-point to hit on the 3-point. Although this leaves a direct three blot, it does place two checkers on the bar, and this can be covered next roll with all the fives, all the threes and a six-four. Well worth the risk. More often than not two in the air is worth doing.

25/21 24/20* 11/3*	5A
25/21 24/20* 13/9(2)	3
25/21 24/20* 20/16 13/9	2
25/21 24/20* 20/16 8/4	1

44: 25/21 24/20* 11/3*
05) 31: 25/22* 25/24
Hitting off the bar White attacks.



??? Black to play 62

Not such a hard one this time, but, in this instance I disagree with JellyFish and overrule it on its choice. I stick with the actual move played as being the better (and not 2nd choice as per JF).

25/23 21/15	5A
25/23 20/14	3
25/23 8/2	1
25/23 13/7	-2

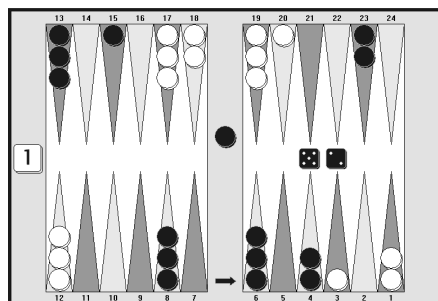
If, as JF suggests, the six is played 20/14 then it is out of communication with the nearest back checker on the 21-point. It can be hit loose with a two with only a 65 as a return shot off the bar. However, if the actual move played is chosen the blot is only a six away from the 21-point and, if it is hit loose then any six, except 66, will be a good

return shot off the bar.

62: 25/23 21/15

06) 51: 13/8 6/5*

Hitting once again in an attempt to block Black from making the White 5-point and to try to make it for White. Mind you, it is unlikely to be missed.



??? Black to play 52

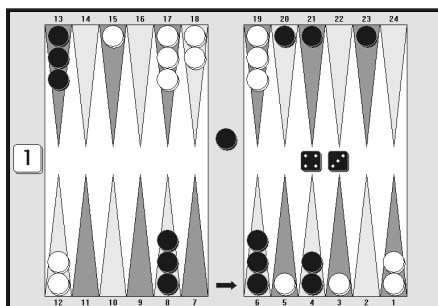
Once again I'll give you half a move, 25/20*, but what of the other half? Meyburg splits with the two playing 23/21. This play attacks White's 18- and 20-points. This is the best play. Moving 15/13 and playing safe is too wimpish and doesn't put pressure on the opponent.

25/20* 23/21	5A
25/20* 15/13	4
25/20* 13/11	3
25/20* 8/6	2
25/20* 6/4	1

52: 25/20* 23/21

07) 53: 25/20 13/10*

It appears that White has given up the battle for his 5-point. Black is a huge favourite to make it on his next roll.



??? Black to play 43

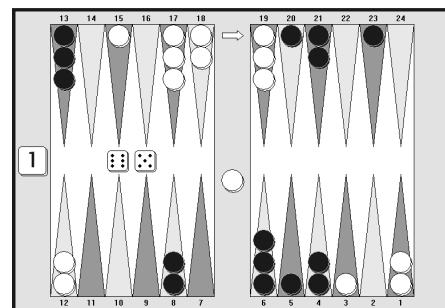
At first glance this looks an easy one - 25/21 23/20 making two

strong points in Whites' home board. But, for how long will they remain there and how soon would Black make the 20-point? Once again I am overruling JF as I think the actual move played (JF2) is better and more flexible.

25/21 8/5*	5A
25/21 23/20	4
25/21 6/3*	1

Just one anchor, the 21-point is enough. It is far more important here to stop Kazaross making the 20-point and, if missed, making it yourself.

43: 25/21 8/5*



??? White to play 65

This time I am with Jelly and against the actual play.

25/20* 24/18	5
25/20* 22/16	3
25/20* 8/2*	1A

Putting two in the air doesn't really work with a one-point board unless you're looking to blitz in the opening rolls of a game or have a few tasty builders. Here, unless Meyburg rolls 66 he's going to enter, and with most of his rolls he's going to have a good re-entry. Of course, Kazaross could be hoping to re-circulate the 2-point blot but this is still a drastic move and not the way to improve your timing.

08) 65: 25/20* 8/2*

43: 25/21 25/22

Incredibly the roll of 43 didn't do a damned thing; it missed the blot

and failed to make the 20-point!

09) 52: 10/5* 7/5

At last, the 5-point is secured!

21: 25/23* 6/5*

The battle for Meyburg's 5-point continues. He is determined to occupy it and so hits loose again. This time two in the air is correct.

10) 42: 25/23

62: 13/5

And finally Meyburg triumphs and covers the 5-point. However, he is very flat in all tables except the White home table. Unless he can escape one of his back checkers he's going to have to break off a point.

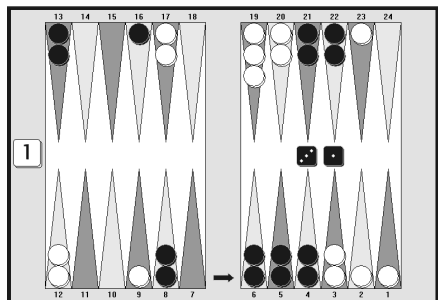
11) 53: 25/22 7/2*

Kazaross now needs the timing that being hit back will give him.

53: 25/22 21/16

12) 62: 24/16

White too is very flat in all but one table. So, out comes a runner leaving the valuable advanced anchor on the 22-point.



??? Black to play 31

There are times when you've just got to attack no matter what - this, at least according to Jelly and Meyburg, is one of those times.

13/9*

5A

22/18

2

16/13 22/21

1

The actual play is very risky, leaving three blots on, but one cannot ignore the equities from JF:

13/9*

0.560

22/18

0.358

16/13 22/21

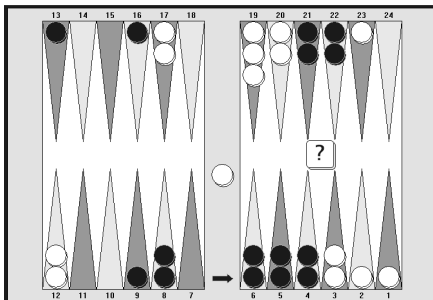
0.320

Kazaross needs to re-enter now else he might be forced into making a cube decision.

31: 13/9*

13) 54:

Kazaross dances . . .



??? Cube action

Well, Kazaross danced and now the cube has been touched and turned. The question is, what is the correct cube action?

Double/Drop

5

Double/Take

3A

No double/Drop

2

No double/Take

1

JellyFish Level 7 Evaluation:

	wins	g/bg	eqty
Black	70.0	27.1	0.625
White	30.0	6.2	

I think this is a borderline take, even if JF doesn't. Certainly it's a double, but is it a drop? With the match score as it is and the match being in the early stages (the score is one all to 21 points) then 30% seems a reasonable take to me. Mind you, what do I know?

Doubles to 2

14) Takes

Well it seems I know as much as Kazaross. He took the cube and the match continued . . . but it'll continue in the next issue!

So, here's the *score-ometer*. How

did you do?

50 You are the best player

40-49 You are the second best player

30-39 Good enough to play the best player

20-29 Good enough to play second best

10-20 Oh dear, what a pity, never mind!

0-10 Go back to ludo.

This match and many many more was recorded by Harald Johanni of Germany. It appears in this issue with his permission and my gratitude. When this match is completed it will be available as a Jelly match file or as a plain text for those of you without the Fish or Snowman.

Are You Making The Most Of Your Ability?

By Roy Hollands & Dave Sharples

There are many players who fail to reach their full potential. This may be due to numerous factors, such as lack of time available, other competing interests or unwilling to spend time studying and so on.

In this article we attempt to list some key aspects that would enable average players to improve their play. We have allocated numerical values to these but if you consider them to be inaccurate by all means change them to whatever values you think to be correct

For the first section, **Playing**, we have given examples to illustrate scoring 40 out of 50 and 25 out of 50 and 10 out of 50. It is left to the reader to interpolate and decide their own score, - for instance 32 out of 50.

We will consider the factors: **Playing and Studying**.

The two are closely linked as playing with little study will bring little improvement in one's play and studying without an adequate amount of playing will be similarly fruitless.

First we will consider **Playing**.

There are two main aspects.

- a The amount of time spent playing, and
- b The quality of the play.

Once more we see the necessity for a sensible balance between these two facets. At the two extremes a large amount of time is negated if the level of play is very low, similarly a small amount of time is inadequate compensation for high quality play.

B) is best met by playing against an expert who comments on the moves and the reasoning behind them. It can also be done by playing against a bot, for example, Snowie or Jellyfish, studying the analysis that they provide. In the same way they can provide an analysis of the moves when you play another 'human'.

We will allocate a score of 50 to **Playing**. Three examples are given where the scores are 40, 25 and 10 respectively.

Decide where you fit into the range from 50 down to 0:

40 George plays four hours a week at his local club. The better players comment on his weaker moves and George helps weaker players than himself in a similar way. They copy down particularly interesting positions and later use Snowie to analyse them.

George plays on the Internet on *GamesGrid* (*NetGammon* is one alternative) for about four hours a week. He spends a further two hours watching matches between top players. He uses Snowie to

analyse three or four of his matches each week. He spends approximately two hours a week playing Snowie or Jellyfish at their top level. He attends four or five tournaments, such as BIBA, in the year.

25 Ellen plays for about three hours a week with some friends. One of these is a better player than Ellen and discusses some to the difficult plays with her. She occasionally plays on *NetGammon*, say two hours a week. She uses Snowie to analyse one or two of these matches. She plays Snowie or Jellyfish for about two hours a week. She attends one or two tournaments, such as BIBA, in the year.

10 Al plays with friends for a couple of hours a week. They are all about the same standard. They rarely discuss the moves they make. He has Jellyfish and plays it at a mid-level, scoring just under 50%.

We will now consider **Studying**.

Due largely to the bots, especially Snowie and Jellyfish, there have been many changes in the theory of backgammon during recent years. This means that many books contain what are now known to be errors. This is clearly demonstrated in *Classic Backgammon Revisited* by Jeremy Bagai (2001).

Consequently we have concentrated on recent books, magazines and articles where if appropriate, the authors have been able to make use of the bots' analysis. This is not to deny the great contributions made by such classics as *Backgammon* by Paul Magriel (1976), *Advanced Backgammon* by Bill Robertie (1991) and many others.

In particular we regard *Modern Backgammon* by Bill Robertie

(2002) as being essential reading. Other recommendations, in addition to *Classic Backgammon Revisited* are *New Ideas in Backgammon* by Kit Woolsey and Hal Heinrich (1996), *Jerry Grاندell - His Most Important Matches* by Antonio Ortega and Danny Kleinman (2001), *Backgammon With the Giants*. - Neil Kazaross by Ortega and Kleinman (2001) and *Boards, Blots and Double Shots* by Norm Wiggins (2001).

Two very instructive magazines are *BIBAFAX* and *Backgammon Today* (MC: See the advert in this issue for details on BG Today).

The Internet contains a wealth of excellent material with numerous articles by top players and matches between experts with Snowie analysis and often a commentary showing the reasoning behind the moves.

There are numerous sites online where one can compete against players of all levels and from countries throughout the world. Two of the best sites are *GamesGrid* and *NetGammon*. *GamesGrid* probably has the greatest number of World Class players including the current World Champion, Jorgen Granstedt of Sweden. Other players on *GamesGrid* read like a *Who's Who* of backgammon :- Robertie, Grاندell, Woolsey, Goulding, Senkiewicz, Ballard, Meyburg, Magriel, etc.

A great way to learn is simply to watch these players as they play on-line and, if you are fortunate enough to own Snowie, you can even record their matches for later analysis. You can check out this great learning aid free of charge, simply download the *GamesGrid* software and log on as a guest

Many of the players on *Games-*

Grid play for money so if gambling is not for you maybe your best bet (if you will pardon the pun) is *NetGammon*. You will not find the 'big names' there but you will find many excellent players to test your improving skills against.

Oasya, the providers of *Snowie*, also have elaborated *MatchQiz* by adding data from *Snowie*. *MatchQiz* was written by Kit Woolsey and Hal Heinrich and this program is a very efficient way of studying backgammon. It consists of matches between world class players with comments by the world's best commentator, - Kit Woolsey.

We regard **Playing** as more important than **Studying** and have allocated a score of 20 to **Studying**, as opposed to the 50 for **Playing**. Those readers who disagree with these figures are free to modify them as they wish.

Use the three examples below to decide where you fit into the range from 20 down to 0:

16 George owns four of the books recommended above. He has read them all and often refers back to them. Each week he records two or three matches from *GamesGrid* or *NetGammon* and studies their analysis using *Snowie*.

He subscribes to one or both of *BIBAFAX* and *Backgammon Today*. He spends about three hours a week studying articles and matches that appear in the Internet site *GammonVillage* (www.gammonvillage.com) or on Kit Woolsey's *GammOnLine* at (www.gammonline.com)

10 Ellen owns and has read two of the recommended books. She occasionally re-reads parts of them. She occasionally records a match on *GamesGrid* or *NetGammon* and spends a little time studying the errors and blunders revealed

by *Snowie*. She sometimes borrows *BIBAFAX* or *Backgammon Today* from a friend and reads the parts she finds most interesting. She spends about half an hour a week looking at articles on Internet sites

4 Al has borrowed and read one of the recommended books. He plays on *GamesGrid* or *NetGammon* for one or two hours a week. He has occasionally borrowed *BIBAFAX* or *Backgammon Today* and read a few of the articles in them. His rare visits to an Internet site involve one or two hours a month.

So where do you stand out of a total mark of 70?

70-56 Congratulations. You have the consolation of knowing you are making the most of your ability and the time you have available for backgammon.

55-35 OK you have plenty of other interests and demands on your time. You enjoy your backgammon but it does not feature highly in your priorities. By taking note of the points you scored badly on you could improve your results by 20 to 25%.

34-0 You are not willing to put in the effort to improve your backgammon. If it suits you that way then so be it.

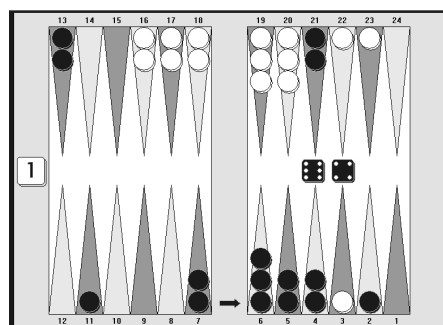
We think everyone should strive to make the most of their ability no matter whether they are very talented or of limited ability. We hope this article will help some readers to reach this goal.

Roy Hollands & Dave Sharples

Missed a Bit!

By Michael Crane

In the last issue, on page 11 I mentioned a reference to a position (see below) that was supposed to appear at the end of the Archive on The Crueslt Game. For reasons I am unable to explain the best positions were not given. I do so now.



JellyFish Evaluation Level 7

-0.025	13/3*
-0.094	21/15 6/2
-0.117	11/5 6/2

However, if we roll out the positions on:

Level 6, Full Rollout (35 games)

-0.040	13/3*
-0.044	11/5 6/2
-0.098	21/15 6/2

So, it looks as if 13/3* gets the number one spot with 11/5 6/2 in second when the equity is taken into consideration.

And if we look at win%:

Move	wins	g/bg
13/3*	51.4	11.4
11/5 6/2	47.5	7.7
21/15 6/2	47.4	14.0

Our leader, 13/3* is still leading with the remaining two moves in the same position.

Whatever way it is looked at, and no matter what you set your criteria by, the best move is without doubt, 13/3* every time.

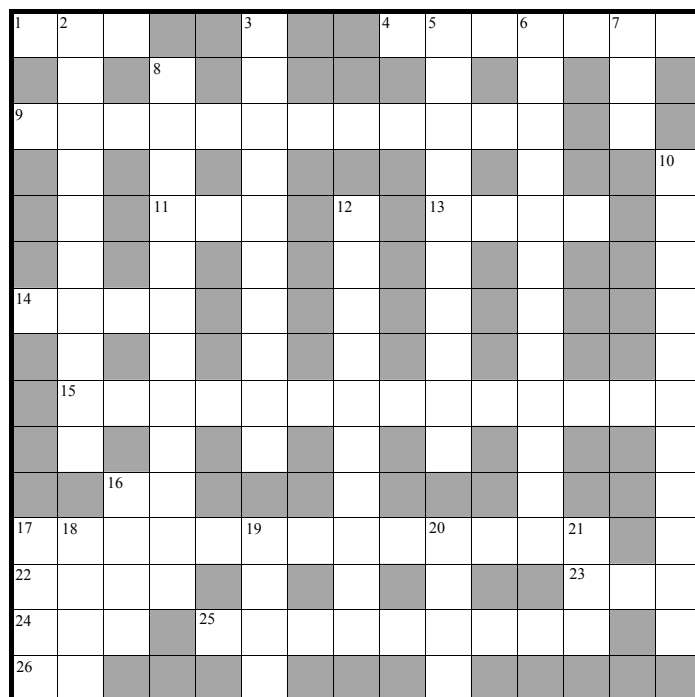
Prize Crossword 01

Compiled by
Arthur Williams & Michael Crane

Here's a test of your backgammon knowledge and lore. Just how much do you know about backgammon?

The first correct solution opened on July 1st 2002 will win half price accommodation for any tournament during 2002 (one night only). The next two correct solutions will win £10.

Please send to Biba HQ or via email to:



Across

- 1 One (3)
- 4 6-6 (7)
- 9 Ely's verso jet taken by the 1988 World Cup Champion (3,9)
- 11 (also 14a, 13a) What we all want when shaking the dice (3,4,4)
- 13 (see 11a)
- 14 (see 11a)
- 15 Claudia bade Ian to be one of Danny Kleinman's fictitious characters (5,4,1,4)
- 16 (also 26a, 25d) What a backman might do with an opening 5-4 (2,2,5,5)
- 17 (see 25a)
- 22 What the weaker player in the Doubles does on his partner (4)
- 23 Ace (3)
- 24 (see 25a)
- 25 (also 24a, 17a) A classic in its day, the advice in this book is now largely discredited (9,3,13)
- 26 (see 16a)

Down

- 2 Famous London gaming club said to be where Beau Brummel lost most of his cash, and the Earl of Sandwich invented the world's favourite snack (10)
- 3 Holly in bra of the winner of the 1990 & 1994 World Cup (5,5)
- 5 (see 16a, 26a)
- 6 Cocoa or jelly for this Founder of the Flint Area Backgammon Club? (5,3,4)
- 7 What a backman does (3)
- 8 Jo claws a body whilst being the co-author of *The Backgammon Book* (6,6)
- 10 TV's *Backgammon Boy* (4,7)
- 12 The 1979 World Champion (5,5)
- 16 John Clark, among others, won one of these medals (4)
- 17 The Lamford doubling acronym (4)
- 18 A Roman emperor fits into this venue (4)
- 19 He always takes an independent view (4)
- 20 Twelve ways to roll them (4)
- 21 Distress signal used when on the bar? (1,1,1)

It is over a year since Robin Clay died and now BIBA has had another sad loss, Albert Tinker. I am not being morbid, but I do find that thinking about death can help one to a greater appreciation of the joy of being alive.

When I am dead by Roy Hollands
(To the memory of Robin Clay and Albert Tinker)



I'll miss the clatter of the dice,
the shaking and the rolls.
the silent seconds to decide
how best to reach our goals.

I'll miss the building of a prime,
making anchor and the blitz,
escaping with my last back man
- especially if it hits.

I'll miss the many battles fought
as fortunes ebb and flow,
excitement with the doubling cube
is it a 'Yes' or 'No'?

I'll miss the 'doubles' Saturday night
with my partner on the brandy.
His play is better when like that
- and the money comes in handy.

I'll miss the joy of others
as they relish their success
- I've played my games and lost them
but my pleasure's nonetheless.

I'll miss the many games I've lost
and the few that I have won
in Monte Carlo's Grand Hotel.
It's costly, but it's fun.

I'll miss the Gala Dinner too
with nations far and wide,
the sumptuous meal, the chorus girls
- I'm glad I've not yet died.

I'll miss the men in penguin suits
their ladies dressed to kill,
money and paint their wonders work
on those over the hill.

I'll miss the many friends I've made
and all the fun we've had,
the cock-shots and the ribald jokes.
Departing is so sad.

I'll miss the help that I've been given
when feeling far from well.
It's when the goings really rough
my true friends I can tell.

I'll miss the love my wife has given.
I'll miss her tender care
and the joys and sorrows we have known,
- the memories we share.

This poem and my life now end.
I've had enough of pain.
And so, dear friends, we'll play no more
- until we meet again.

I'll miss the writing of this ode
with its sorrowful regret
but as an atheist I can say
'Thank God I'm not dead yet.'

Roy Hollands



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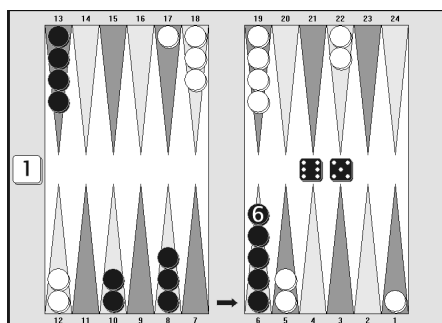
Help For The Hopeless Norah gives advice

Most esteemed Norah,

I am a student thereof English, living in Pakistan. Being of plentiful money and exceeding keen of the backgammon, I purchased of you the illustrious Snowie 3. Truly marvelous is the play and picking of my errors and blunders - all provisioned in yellow and red.

However, explanation of why my carefully designed moves are not correct is lacking forthwith. Please, at no charge to my good self, inform me as the whyness if my mistakes.

Diagram 1



**Black 0 White 0
Money game
Black to play 65**

In Diagram 1 I played 65 as 6/1* 13/7 which highly regarded Snowie said was a blunder.



camel's dung taste as sweet as honey. I would rather you didn't bother Allah about the children as I am pushing sixty and unmarried! Mind you, as you can see from my picture, I'm still a looker!

In Diagram 1 you have a strong position and should win 62% of the time. It is therefore important to play as safely as possible. Playing

13/2 is safest because White only hits with a 1.

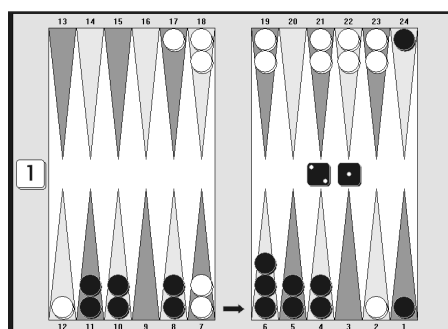
Now, consider your move of 13/7 6/1*. White not only hits with all 1s but also with 25 34 24 22 and 32. Definitely a bad blunder.

In Diagram 2, playing 6/3 leaves you with a completely stripped position. White has considerable freedom to improve his position. He hits with a 1, covers his 8-point with a 5, or else safeties his blot on the 23-point by moving 23/18. He has the stronger board so can consider a blitz with a 6 or 7.

After your play, unless you can roll a 4, your position will be further weakened when you have to give up your 11- 10- or 8-point.

This all points to attacking in order to buy time. Hence 4/2* 2/1 is best. This keeps the valuable checker on the 6-point.

Diagram 2



**Black 0 White 0
Money game
Black to play 21**

In Diagram 2 I played 21 as 6/3 and was even more badly blundered.

Tell me for the whys and I will plead with Allah to bless you with manifold children.

Your excessive admirer,

Raj Ataloss

Dear Raj,

May your dice cup runneth over with rolls of splendour. May your

Funny Piece of Gnudung - - Rejecting a Resignation

By Murat Kalinyaprak



Background: GNU Backgammon (gnubg) plays and analyses backgammon games and matches. It is currently a work-in-progress. So far it is able to play both independent games and tournament matches, evaluate and roll out positions, tune its own evaluation functions using either TD or supervised training, maintain databases of positions for training and other purposes, and more.

It currently plays at about the level of a championship flight tournament player (depending on its parameters and its luck in recent games, it rates at around 2000 on FIBS, the First Internet Backgammon

mon Server -- at its best, it is in the top 5 of over 6000 rated players there) and is gradually improving; it should be somewhat stronger than this when released. Since almost all of the CPU time required during supervised training is spent performing rollouts, and rollouts can easily be performed in parallel, it is hoped that users will be able to pool rollout results and collectively train it to a level stronger than any individual could obtain.

Murat Kalinyaprak is a regular on the Internet newsgroup, rec.games.backgammon (rgb). His views are always provocative, often controversial; and never ig-

nored! He is a man of strong personal convictions, suffers fools badly and generates pages of comments whenever he voices one of his opinions.

As you can already see from the title of this article (first aired on the newsgroup) he has started with contention; referring to gnubg as gnudung.

Hopefully he can be persuaded to contribute to Bibafax on a regular basis. Members' reaction to this and future articles will make interesting reading. MC

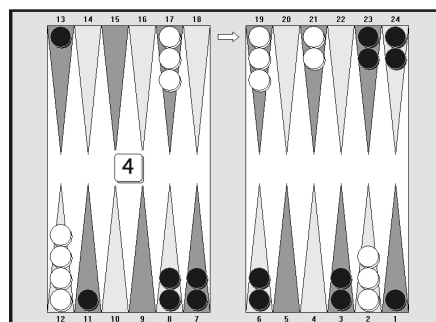
Yet another rgb discussion degrades into stupid garbage, unrelated to backgammon, about speedos, etc. Before they go on to talking about their undescended testicles and all that sick stuff again, I thought I would intervene to revive the subject and even make it more interesting by bringing in gnudung into the discussion about "rejecting resignations".

This is the second game of a 64-point match (maximum allowed by gnudung) and Murat is 2-0 ahead. Being at the early stages of a very long match, Murat doubles on his second move (i.e. his first chance to double).

Here are some critical positions/cube decisions:

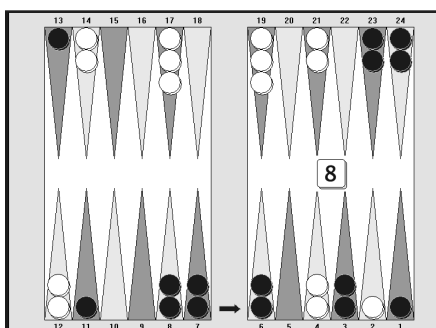
In the position in the next column, gnudung (white) doubles to 4...

Pos.1



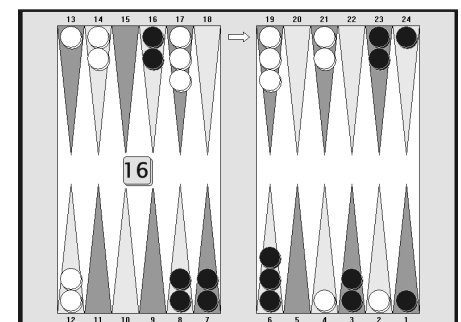
Of course, I accept and double right back to 8 in the following position (after gnudung plays 22):

Pos.2



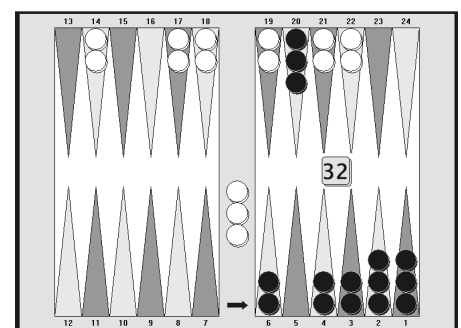
Then, after a few more moves gnudung doubles to 16 in the next position:

Pos.3



I don't know why but I wait several moves before I double back to 32 here:

Pos.4

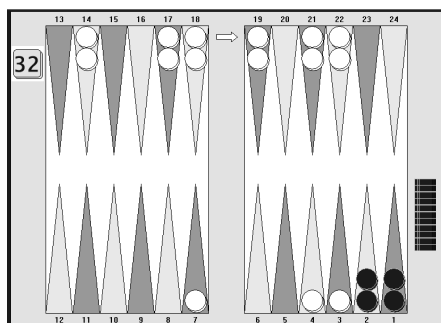


Gnudung accepts and now we are getting towards the end of the game. In this position it offers to



resign a backgammon:

Pos.5



I reject and gnudung then doubles to 64!!!

In the next and last two rolls, it gets 52 and 43 but makes no effort to move any one of its two pieces still in my home board. We know by now that these robots make the first evaluated move when it does not matter, but somehow I still think that it's an interesting coincidence that neither times the first move evaluated during those two last rolls involved moving at least one of those checkers out.

The final score is Murat 194 - gnudung 0! And I stress the 194-0 vs. 64-0 because it is significant in many ways. For example, it is "extraterrestrial" enough to know that it lost the match before the end of the game (and it's even "smart-ass" enough to double to 64 after I rejected) but it's not smart enough to resign only a gammon, (i.e. 64 points) which would be enough.

I'm not trying to be rude; just making fun of it. Do you know that if you raise the cube to a value above what you would need to win the match, gnudung completely shuts down in a blink, without any error messages or any other messages? I suppose its developers don't like the idea that some of us may toy with them/their product but how does that differ from raising the cube following a rejected (and an inflated, not to say jacked-up:) of-

fer to resign?

So, what points am I making here? Well, here's a few:

Gnubg's evaluating some of its own doubles as errors even when the strength settings are the same for both the play and analysis modes.

Gnubg's doubling to 64 one turn after it had tried to resign a backgammon is one of the weirdest bot behaviour I have ever seen and I feel every bit justified to be suspicious.

Gnubg's shutting down when its opponent raises the cube beyond a value needed to win the match. Maybe such an action is not intended but the sequence starts with an "if..." statement in the programming code (i.e. if the cube value is greater than... etc.) which is completely unnecessary and inconsequential but somebody did bother to insert that code in there. When you ask "Why?", doesn't it make you suspicious also?

Then there is the issue of making the first evaluated move towards the end of a game. I find it fun to make such moves myself against the bots also.

As regular readers on rgb know, I've never been in the pro-bg circles, and I don't know how smart I am or how good I am. All I can claim is that I think I'm strong enough to run circles around gnubg and I feel comfortable to experiment/toy with it. If you won't believe me on this I surely can understand but you have to give it to me that there must not be too many people on this planet who would reject gnubg's resigning a backgammon (and the whole 64-point match with it) just to see what it will do next?

Anyway, during the times I didn't post in the newsgroup, I accumu-

lated several dozens of recorded 25, 32, 50 and 64-point matches. My winning ratio is so high that I'm sure nobody would take it seriously if I mentioned here (the land of robot-ass-kissers).

In fact, it's downright boring for me to play long matches against gnudung anymore, especially so when I feel that I can guess the "scenario to be played" whether I win or I lose. I guess from my own point of view, I can do nothing more than wait for the day they will release a non-rigged version of those free bg-robots so that extraterrestrials like me can enjoy an honest challenge also.

In the meantime, the only fun is doing things like making lesser moves when it doesn't matter; just like the robots do themselves. Suppose you figure out five rolls before the end of the game that there is no way you can lose (or win) and you start making those move your brain evaluates first. Do you know how those funny robots evaluate your moves? Let me tell you, nothing beats being a beginner and kicking extraterrestrial ass!

Murat Kalinyaprak. March 2002

Do you fancy your chances against gnubg? Would you like to test out Murat's observations?



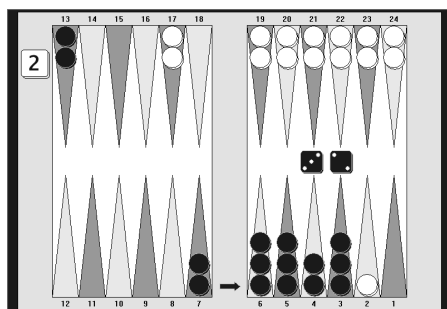
If so then log onto www.gnu.org/software/gnubg/gnubg.html

Rollout To Order

Michael Crane & JellyFish offer a service

On the Lincoln Backgammon Club web site we have few 'problem' positions. One (4 Sept. 2001) prompted a reply. This was the position and report:

During an 11-point match between Tim (white) and Neal (black), Neal had a difficult 32 to play:



Black (Neal) to play 32

Neal was left with several choices but the consensus was to hit with the three at least. Michael wasn't too sure about the merits of hitting arguing that it would be better to play off the mid-point and hopefully get a hit if Tim escapes with anything but a 62, 63. JellyFish disagreed! It advocated the hit, 5/2* 13/11, putting Michael's choice down into 5th place.

But . . . What's the benefit to this move of 5/2* 13/11? OK, so a direct two off the bar will hit, but, if white then gets a six he'll most likely pick up another blot or perhaps even both and then black is in gammon danger. If it is correct to hit then surely 5/2* 6/4 is far superior: It gives white the opportunity to enter on the 1-point and for his board to crunch, and it gives black better timing with his two men on the 13-point. It also ensures that if white does hit on the 2-point he won't pick up any more checkers and thus saves black the

gammon and the match.

Neal played safe - 6/3 5/3, JF 7th, but to no avail as Tim went on to win the match.

David Wildgoose writes in:

I disagree with all the options presented.

I would play both the 2 and 3 off the bar point, resulting in 4 points with builders - very dangerous to the opponent, who is going to want to take the opportunity to escape - providing he rolls a 5 or a 6, which means there are 16 rolls out of 36 where he is trapped behind a wall of builders.

And if he does escape, then unless he rolls 5-5 or 6-6 he has to leave a blot, and a direct shot with a minimum chance of being hit of 11 chances out of 36. Because of this, he will try and get as close as possible to the mid-point, which reduces the risk of an unlucky 6 and a missing low number which could force you to leave a blot in turn.

And of course, if he does escape then you have moved more of your men into your inner board ready for bearing off, so you are still in with a chance, (even if behind). You will have 2 men to move from your outer board before bearing off. He has 3, but an excellent distribution that won't waste 1s and 2s. You are behind, but it is not hopeless.

Hitting is all or nothing. You either win or lose on a single roll. He has 12 chances in 36 of hitting your blot on the 2 point. If he hits, you lose. He has 2 other men to move whilst waiting for a 6, so he is almost certain to escape. If he misses, then you have to cover - which isn't certain. You are the one under pressure, when it should be your opponent.

That's my take on it anyway. But I'm a complete amateur, so I'm probably missing something.

Michael Crane replies:

I did some analysis on three moves. JellyFish 'best move', my move and your move:

- | | | |
|----|-------------|---------|
| 1. | 5/2* 13/11 | JF 1st |
| 2. | 13/11 13/10 | JF 5th |
| 3. | 7/4 7/5 | JF 11th |

I did a Level 5 Truncated rollout x 1296 games and here are the results:

move	wins	eqty
1.	68.0%	0.257
2.	64.3%	0.267
3.	59.3%	0.182

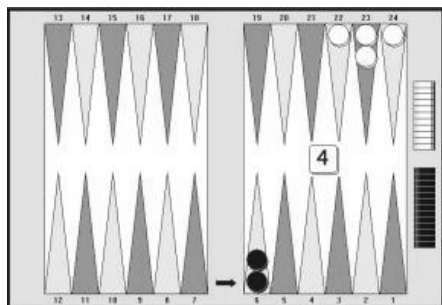
Quite clearly the moves are in the correct order. Although your reasons are sound, you give white too many chances to escape; from 11 to 20 (almost doubling his escape rolls). In return you have 16 rolls that can point on the blot should it not escape that do not leave a fly-shot off the bar. Or put another way, you have 20 rolls that cannot point on him next roll.

If he does escape (most likely) then, as you correctly put it, he will leave a minimum of 11 shots, or seen another way, he'll have a maximum of 25 shots that miss!

Hitting is clearly correct in this position. He does have 12 (33.33%) shots that hit off the bar but, once again, seen differently, he has a 66.66% chance of remaining on the bar or entering on the 1-point. Also, the odds that he rolls a 62 or 63 are slim, so, even if he gets the return hit you are still very much in the game.

This next couple also came from the LBC web site. During their 11-point match, Michael and Stephen battled it out. Stephen led

7-3 when Michael shipped over a 4-cube in this position:



Black 3 White 7
Black (Michael) on roll
Cube action?

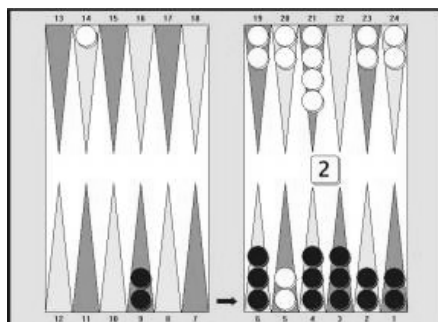
Was this a brave or stupid cube to offer? Well, Michael was banking on Stephen dropping - which he did.

JellyFish sees it differently:

	wins	eqty
Stephen	27.5	
Michael	72.5	0.450

This was a bluff from Michael that came off. Stephen had a 27.5% chance to win the match and he missed it!

A little later, when Michael had pulled back to lead 9-7 he once again shipped over another suspicious cube, this time a 2-cube.



Black 9 White 7
Black on roll
Cube action?

Once again despite the odds Stephen dropped. This should

have been a clear take for the match. Look what JellyFish says:

	Wins	Eqty
Stephen	16.2	
Michael	83.8	0.671

Stephen is left with two choices.

- 1 Drop and go to Crawford 10-7 down - or;
- 2 Take and turn with the current 16.2% winning equity, but this time for the match rather than the game.

According to Kit Woolsey's *Match Equity Table* at 4-away, 1-away, he'd have a 17% chance to win the match but he would have to win at least two games (or even four). I think it better to go for the one game at 16.2% than try to win the next four points - but what do I know?



Jake Jacobs

Modern Backgammon by Bill Robertie, *Reviewed by Jake Jacobs*
Modern Backgammon, by Bill Robertie, ©2002, soft-cover, 361 pages, \$45 + \$18 air mail shipping to Europe, sold exclusively by **The Gammon Press**, P.O. Box 294, Arlington, MA 02476, USA E-mail: Gammon_Press@msn.com

*This article is reprinted from the Jan./Feb. 2002 issue of the **Flint Area Backgammon News**. It appears here acknowledgements to Jake Jacobs (the author) and the Editor of the **Flint Area Backgammon News**, Carol Joy Cole. MC*

There is a journalistic imperative that the lead should not be buried. So I will state forthwith: You *must* own a copy of Bill Robertie's **Modern Backgammon**!

Two-Time World Champion Bill Robertie has been writing about backgammon for a long time. (That's his full title, much as Tony Hopkins, actor, is now Sir Anthony Hopkins, icon. Bill's friends are permitted to shorten it to "Two-Time.") In fact, he is now, in his fourth decade, having started with a newspaper column in the 1970s. As Bill's head start in life is not sufficiently longer than my own, I will refrain from adding

that he is writing in his second century. During the 1980s, in-between winning his two World Championships, Bill produced three, I believe, of the ten best books on the game. In the 1990s, while doing excellent work on the magazine *Inside Backgammon*, his books were not of the standard we had come to expect. [*He wrote mass-market BG books for a publisher of gaming and gambling books. CJC.*]

Come to think of it, whose books were up to standard? Once upon a time, authors attempted to formulate principles to guide their readers toward correct play. Since the advent of the bots, most books

have been either annotated matches "Look, here's how Snowie would have played this match!" or collections of problems "Most people would bring down the five, but it is correct to hit on the ace-point because it wins 4.8% more gammons. . ." How dreary! Mind you, the authors mostly gave us their best effort, and some of those efforts were very good, but in the end, the problems assembled were collections of exceptions, and the only way to learn from them seemed to be brute memory.

In **Modern Backgammon**, Bill tries to do something far more ambitious. He has looked at hun-

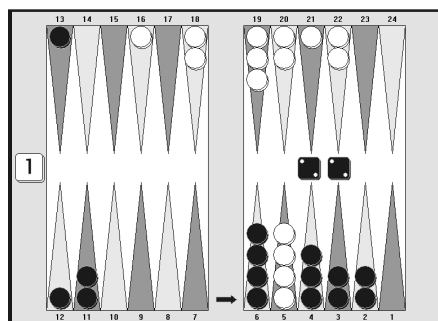
dreds of positions and tried to divine what sort of principles might underlie and unify the sometimes unique approach that the bots have taken to the game. It is relatively easy to look at two similar positions that have different answers and find an *ex post facto* analysis that accounts for their differences. It is quite another thing to look at a hundred positions with a variety of answers and try to isolate one principle that governs them all.

Bill claims to have identified four such principles. They are: **Efficiency** (put your checkers where they'll do the most good); **Connectivity** (what we used to call Communication); **Non-Commitment** (keep your game plans flexible); and **Robustness** (have spares to play with). If I have skimped on my definitions, it is because I am confined to a single review, while Bill has an entire book in which to develop his theses. Quite a long book it is. There is an introductory chapter, then chapters covering each of the four principles. Chapter Six is a set of problems, with solutions and explanations provided after you have worked them. Finally, there is a 25-point match between Nack Ballard and Jerry Grandell from the 1998 Istanbul Super Jackpot semi-finals annotated with a view toward showing the four principles in action. Altogether the book is 361 pages, and there are 364 positions to study. The match alone would make a decent book.

Given the scope and ambition of this book, it shouldn't be surprising that there will be a lot of discussion, not all of it friendly. For instance, from the chapter on Efficiency, here is a position demonstrating the sub-principle Risk versus Reward.

(see next column)

Position 2-10



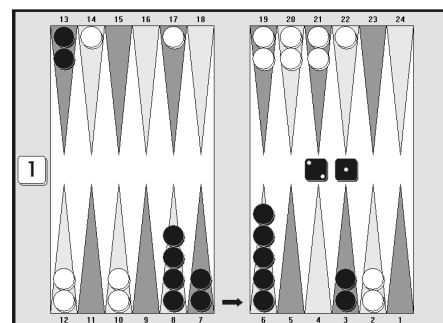
Black to play 2-2.

It should be remarked that all of Bill's positions are intended to be checker play problems, but here he freely admits that the solution is partly based upon future cube action. Bill's solution is 13/9, 11/9(2), a play that is safer than 11/7(2), but it leads to a fairly efficient pass when White fails to hit. I recalled this as a problem from *Inside Backgammon*, but thought that the solution back then was to play the completely safe 13/11, 12/6. My copies of that magazine are packed away in boxes, so I simply put the problem to *Snowie*, checking to see if perhaps the original included a solid prime for White (in which case the safe play is correct), instead of one containing a blot. It turns out that on the lower levels, *Snowie* sees Bill's play as a blunder. However, on its highest rollout settings 3-ply checker, 3-ply cube, 100%, huge it finally reverses itself, and ranks Bill's play .081 better. (Or does it? Using the Rollout With Doubling Cube In Play feature, the Live Cube result still has the safe play .058 better! I will give Bill the benefit of the doubt, but I wish Olivier [of Oasya] would tell us, once and for all, which set of numbers to trust, and why, and possibly do away with the ones that are flawed.)

So where's the beef? Well, if Bill had simply put the cube on White's side of the board, not inconceivable in this position, his play would be unambiguously cor-

rect, and would still illustrate his point quite nicely.

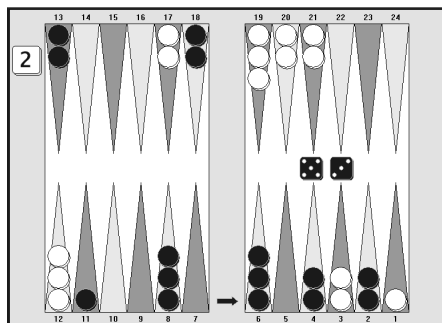
Position 2-29



Black to play 2-1.

This comes slightly later in the Efficiency chapter, from the section dealing with Handling Dead and Semi-Dead Checkers. One might guess, coming from that section, that the correct play is not 6/3. The best play is the perhaps surprising 7/5, 6/5. This play is still correct if the blot on the 8-point is moved to the 5-point (so that fives are no longer duplicated), though not right by as much. If White's 3-point is made, 6/3 becomes correct. Now this section deals with unstacking loaded points, so what about 8/7, 6/4? It turns out that that play is a distant fourth. One could write a nice, short article about this position. In fact, one could write a nice, long book called *Modern Backgammon Annotated*, filling in the details that Bill omits. It is hard to fault Bill for not writing the 800 pages that this book might have become, and yet many positions, such as this one, cry out for a little more. (There are several reasons that making the 5-point is better than slotting the 4-point. One is that, in the event of a hit, we need that extra tooth to bite back. Another is that we are not necessarily trying to prime White. We hope in the near future to be bearing in, clearing the barpoint, so its value is of short duration. Also, numbers that cover the bar may also clear the midpoint.)

Position 4-21



Black to play 5-3.

Chapter Four treats Non-Commitment. Here Black plays 18/13, 18/15 because 13/8, 13/10 is too “committal.” Clearing the 18-point is one of Black’s immediate goals, and doing so now gives only four more shots than clearing the midpoint. Bill points out that if Black clears the midpoint, he will be “committed” to cleaning up his outfield blots, hopefully making good new points in the process, and will be prevented from his primary goal of bringing his back checkers home. But I am not sure that it follows that, by not committing himself one way, he is not committing himself another. Twenty shots versus that board, with the barpoint no longer a safety valve, seems pretty committal in its own right. Stick this problem back in Chapter Two, and say that it illustrates Risk Versus Gain, and no one would blink. Place it here, and the reader wonders whether he is dealing with a unifying principle, or merely fun with semantics.

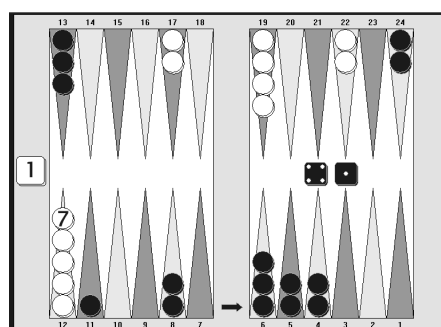
And speaking of fun with semantics. . . Chapter Five is devoted to Robustness. Bill defines that as “the ability to play numbers while maintaining the key features of the position.” Fine, except he then goes on to say: “Chess has an analogy to robustness in the idea of *zugzwang*, a German phrase which means move-compulsion.” I don’t know German, so I’ll trust Bill that *zugzwang* is a phrase, not a word. I do know that it

means the opposite of what Bill is getting at with Robustness. Bill knows it too; he just could have said it better.

Perhaps the most acrimonious debate will revolve around whether Bill’s ideas have merit, or are merely clever packaging for what might otherwise be another random set of positions. I may have implied as much when I discussed position 4-21 above, so let me say that I think Bill is on to something. I don’t fully understand it (and suspect Bill might admit the same), but I think he has spotted something, or some things, that are tangible, if evanescent. Perhaps you recall the story of the three blind men touching the parts of an elephant, its tail, its ear, its tusk, and describing them variously as a snake, a palm frond, or a spear? We laugh at their failure, but they didn’t “fail.” Each partially succeeded. This time, all of us are blind, and only Bill has been brave enough to reach out and touch the elephant.

So let me introduce you to one more position.

Position 6-24



Black to play 4-1.

How many positions like this pass over our boards, unnoticed and unmentioned? Bill comments: “My guess is that virtually every strong player would play 24/20 in a shot.” Bill would have; I would have. Only two categories of players, I think, would not: beginners, and those shown this as a

“problem,” and my guess is that both those groups would then keep the anchor. The beginners because “splitting is dangerous;” the others because “obviously, there’s a trick.” That leaves no category of players who would get this one right! The correct play is to make the minor split of 24/23. Bill tells us that Snowie would then play 13/9, while *JellyFish* slightly prefers 11/7. Ranking those two plays is unimportant; what *is* important is that all other plays are blunders. Bill puts this into “. . . a core of positions where humans have not and likely cannot catch up to the nets.” And then he does a remarkable job of attempting to catch us up. His two pages of analysis are classic Robertie displaying the painstaking attention to detail that made his name twenty years ago when he demonstrated (in *Lee Genud vs Joe Dwek*) how a match should be analyzed.

This book is filled with gems like the one above. Sure, you and your friends will pick this book apart. You will argue over Bill’s definitions, question some of his plays, and debate whether he has simply repackaged old ideas in new wrapping paper. I know this because I know you will buy this book. You must. You must because in the coming years, the articles you read will discuss positions in the terms Bill has just defined. You must because in your chouettes, your teammates will rebut your play because it is “overly committal,” or “not sufficiently robust!” Finally, you must buy it because, if you read this book, you *will* become a better backgammon player.

Jake Jacobs, expert player and raconteur, is the 2001 winner of the American Backgammon Tour (ABT), and a popular columnist in The Flint Area BG News and on www.gammonvillage.com.

Letters

Asger Kring writes: In one of the last issues of the 2001 BIBA newsletter, you had a small article about the fact that if someone makes a mistake, you could end up in a position where both players had closed boards and a man on the bar. And concludes "It could happen!"

Indeed it could. I have thought about what I would do if I was the tournament director and the situation arose. And I have come to the conclusion that I would let the player who made the illegal move replay his move.

The reason being that the position after he closes his board and puts himself on the bar is illegal. Not just the move, but the position arising from it is illegal, in the sense that you cannot construct a sequence of rolls and legal moves which will result in that position. It does not belong among the set of possible backgammon positions.

For me, it's like being asked to rule

in a situation, where white and black both have one man on the same point! Can't happen either in any legal way, but it could happen (specially if you have checkers with similar colours, bad light and/or a colorblind player!). The only reasonable way for the match to continue is to let the player replay his move.

But I still think the position (with two closed boards) is a funny one.

It was intended to be funny . . . but, it could happen! The second scenario you mentioned happened to me when I was playing against John Broomfield in Dublin a couple of years ago. I played a checker into my home board right on top of one of John's and I never noticed!

Roy Hollands writes regarding the word 'cruellest' in Bibafax 58: I e-mailed my brother who is an American (honestly) and he confirmed that cruelest is the correct American spelling. In the Oxford version I looked in, it give cruell-

est but also give cruelest as an alternative. My Chambers says that cruelest is now 'obsolete'. Interesting, because it could well mean it was used early on and probably taken to America (Puritan fathers, etc) and hence survived as correct there.

*Two (of many) letters regarding the British Open. New to England from South Africa, **Steve Andrews** writes: Thanks for a great weekend at the British Open a few weeks ago - I am resettling here for a while and I look forward to more tournaments.*

Ali Safa writes: I would like to thank *all* the staff that contributed towards this years British Open Championships Tournament; the atmosphere was great and I thoroughly enjoyed competing in it! Thank you and hope to see you soon.

Thanks to both of you and to all the others that wrote in on the British Open.

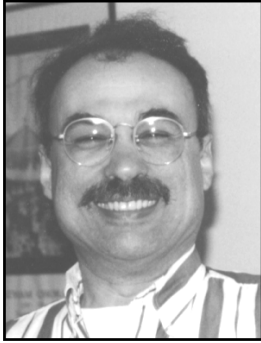
The British Isles Backgammon Association Sportsmanship Trophy 2002 £100

The following players have been nominated for this competition sponsored by Dod Davies. He has very kindly donated a special trophy and a prize of £100 to the player polling the most votes at the SAC Trophy in August. The nominees are:

Will Richardson	Stuart Man	Kerry Jackson	Bob Parmley	Mike Wignall
Lawrence Powell	Paul Sambell	David Startin	Julian Minwalla	Ian Tarr

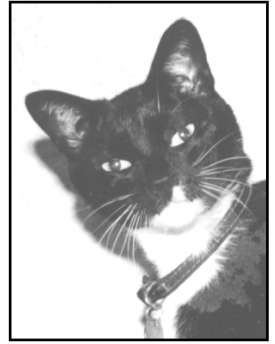
Voting slips will be available at the SAC, however, if you cannot attend the tournament but would like to cast your vote then you can do so by naming any **three** of the above. Send your vote to Biba HQ or via email to sportsmanship2002@backgammon-biba.co.uk. Ensuring that it arrives before August 1st 2002.

NB: Please quote your name and Biba No. on all voting slips. One vote per member.



The Horror! The Horror!
A Devastating Look Into The Mind
Of An Average Backgammon Player

By Ric Gerace (assisted by Nike)
Institut pour des joueurs de jacquet de Deranged



Ric Gerace is a man of many parts - most of them in full working order. Multi-talented, Ric has done almost everything there is to do (forty different jobs so far!), and then some! He is a prolific writer and wobbles between the serious (he has just written a novel) and the comic with equal *èlan*. Some of his most humorous articles have appeared on **GammonVillage.com** wherein which he has an avid readership.

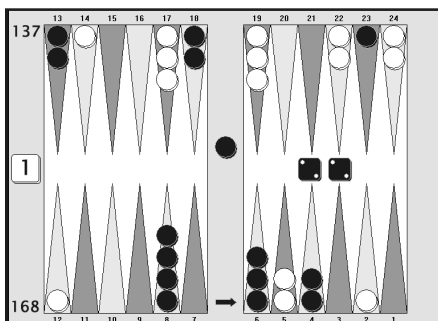
Ric lives live in an apartment in his mother's house at Cape Cod. From here he travels the world via the Internet and publishes his own web site at **www.ricgerace.com/**. In his own words it is, "*the personal website of a political liberal, absolute Atheist, not-so-bad writer who is owned by ten cats, and suffers from Lyme Disease.*" I urge you to take a peek . . . if you dare! MC

In an endeavor to cure myself of this horrid mental disease called Backgammon (oh, even the word itself contains such implications of darkness – why ‘Back’? Why not ‘Front’, out in the light and gaiety of society – no, always in the back, in back rooms, in dark places of the mind... ummm... I digress), I have decided to publicly humiliate myself by presenting the key errors, indeed, blunders, of a recent game with the harsh, dark mistress, Snowie.

My therapist, Boo, assures me that once I have done this, I will no longer be able to face the shame I will feel on seeing a backgammon board, and will thus be freed of this affliction. Boo, as you may have deduced from the name, is quite capable of inducing a terrible fright. But she is otherwise a polite and demure woman, always stressing the positive to be found in any event, not given to negativity or mindless outrage.

So, on to the cure, to my salvation, to the restoration of my much dimmed sanity. I am playing Black, of course, in deference to my condition. It is the profound hope of myself and the therapeutic staff at my current habitation that this look into the abyss will help to bring reason and sanity to players the world over who are in danger of tumbling into similar states of mind. Save yourselves! It's not too late!

Position 1:
Move 10



bar/23	18/14*	12*	0.382	
bar/23	23/21 (2)	8/6	0.027	(-0.355)
bar/23	18/16 (2)	16/14*	0.089	(-0.293)
bar/23	18/14*	8/6	0.056	(-0.326)
bar/23	18/14*	6/4	-0.004	(-0.385)
<u>Alert: Blunder (0.355)</u>				

The intelligent reader cannot fail to see why my mind became unhinged at this early point in the game.

And how did I think through this astounding blunder? (Note the cruelty of Mistress Snowie, hurling my infirmity in my face with her demeaning “Alert.”)

Of course, still rational, I see that I must come in on the 23. Then I see the insidious white blot poised on the 14, ready to leap in and slam the door on my poor nose by closing the five point. So I must, must, I say, immediately make my mind safe for democracy by anchoring on the 21. Ah, a sigh of relief escapes me. Only one more two to play, it must play 8/6. Wonderful! I claim my dice.

At which point Boo says, “You bloody moron!”

“What? What?!”

“23, 18 to 14 to 12. Hit twice. Did someone spike your Thorazine today? You bumbling idiot. You make George Bush look like a foreign policy genius. Pah!”

One can only imagine the devastation in my reeling brain as synapse after synapse shut down in horror at the stupidity of it all.



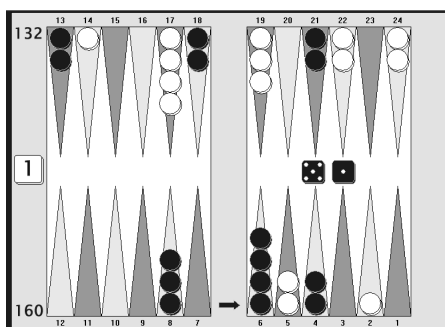
“Put the gun down,” Boo commanded. “You’re not getting out that easily. Play on! And next time look at *all* the alternatives, not just what jumps immediately into that addled thing you call your conscious mind. Twit.”

“I can’t. Don’t force me. Please, Boo, be merciful.”

“I’d sooner kick a kitten. Play on.”

Boo is a serious taskmaster in my attempt to regain my mental health, a project of apparently mammoth proportion.

Position 2: Move 11



13/8 13/12	-0.095	
8/2*	-0.125	(-0.030)
18/12	-0.171	(-0.076)
8/3 4/3	-0.179	(-0.084)
13/7	-0.244	(-0.149)

A simple enough play, yes? Keep my men in front, create builders and hitters to catch his men coming out, not to worry about the indirect shots as I have good anchors. Of course. Even a moron can make this play.

Then an evil devil pops out and before I can restrain my hand I have clicked 8/2 putting one on the bar, exposing myself to a direct shot with very little to gain from it and pushing a man deep into my own board.

Boo’s hand smacks her forehead. “The last of the mental giants,” she hisses.

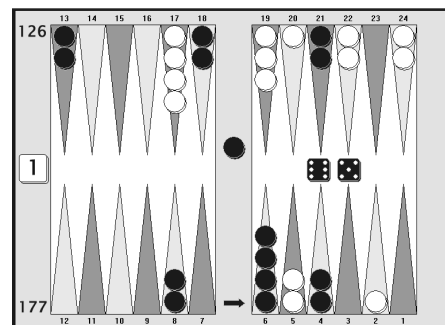
“I just don’t know what happened. I saw the correct move, Boo, I did, but my hand just, well, it just took over.”

She gives me a withering stare. Quite kind of her, actually.

“Play on!”

I must discuss with her sometime the damage she may be doing when she grits her teeth that way.

Position 3: Move 12



bar/20*/14	0.143	
bar/20* 18/12	0.040	(-0.102)
bar/20* 8/2*	-0.164	(-0.307)
bar/20* 21/15	0.037	(-0.106)
bar/20* 13/7	-0.072	(-0.214)
Alert: Blunder (0.307)		

“I see we have a long, long way to go,” Boo says, sneering her upper lip much as the lovely Elizabeth Hurley does. In fact there is quite a resemblance between Ms. Hurley and Boo. Best not to dwell on it. “What on earth were you thinking?”

“I thought it reasonable to put two men up. A perfect opportunity to rock Ms. Snowie a little.”

“Clever, yessirree. Give up your long term structure by destroying your eight point, leave yourself with bloody little forward offense, and her with an anchor.”

“Ummm.”

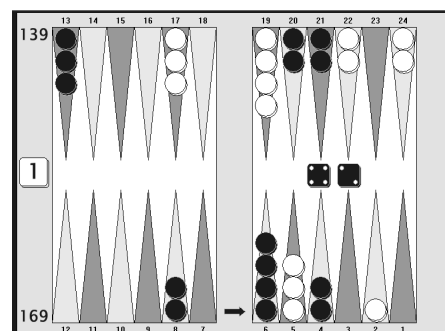
“‘Ummm’ indeed. Let me check the records. Perhaps we already did that lobotomy I scheduled for you.”

In certain religions humiliation and suffering are believed to work wonders on the human soul. Perhaps instead of being an Atheist, I should have chosen to become a monk in the Himalayas – they have a much easier life than mine.

“I’m sorry, Boo. I’ll do better.”

“Sorry doesn’t cut it, Blotboy. Play on!”

Position 4: Move 14



20/16 20/18		
13/9 6/4	-0.061	(-0.022)
20/14	-0.070	(-0.031)
13/7	-0.088	(-0.049)
13/11 6/2*	-0.091	(-0.051)

On seeing this, I think immediately that I can get rid of that pesky blot on my two point and bring a builder down to the eleven. Quite clever of me, really, and only an error, not a blunder. Progress.

Boo grimaces. “You call that progress? You plopped a blot on the two, out of play if it’s not hit, and left another ripe for the hitting on the eleven.”

“Your point?” I say stiffly.

“Wouldn’t Snowie just love to come off your five and hit you?”

“Yes, well, I see. Perhaps we need to adjust my valium dosage.”

She mumbled something about cyanide.

“I am holding two anchors, you know.”

“For what? A four five backgame? Puhleeze. You have no timing.”

“Ummm.”

“Stop that!”

“Um, okay. So I should take advantage of Snowie’s lack of a midpoint to break one of those anchors and give myself some forward strength at the price of some indirect shots?”

She pasted a star on my forehead. Rather roughly, I

think. She must like me.

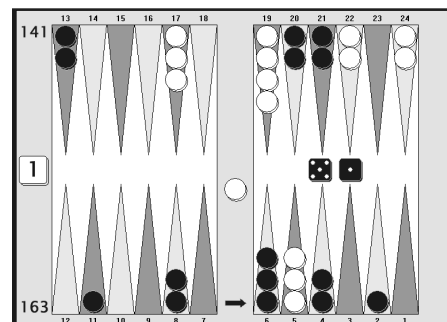
“What about,” said I, cleverly, “the blot left on her bar point?”

“It’s a one, very little loss of race, leaves return shots, and if she doesn’t hit it, you can be in a good position.”

“Well,” I pout, “my play wasn’t that far off.”

She rips off the star, taking a little flesh with it. “Play on before you bleed to death!”

Position 5: Move 15



6/1 2/1	0.030	
8/2	-0.039	(-0.069)
13/8 11/10	-0.105	(-0.135)
13/12 11/6	-0.068	(-0.098)
11/6 2/1	-0.084	(-0.114)
Alert: Blunder (0.135)		

Continuing on with a similar idea in mind, I step into another pile of blunder. I place great faith in the double anchor, thinking it allows me to take risks I otherwise might avoid. And I won’t mind too much if the two blot is recirculated, conveniently forgetting



Serving The Online Backgammon Community

GammonVillage is the web’s largest Backgammon magazine and community website, with international tournament news, feature articles, interviews, tutorials, forums, and many other fine backgammon resources. Check out our reasonably priced subscription packages and benefits at www.GammonVillage.com. Here we publish the very best articles on strategy and backgammon. Whether you’re a novice or a seasoned pro, you will find what is appropriate for you. Our weekly and monthly columnists include famous backgammon authors and world class players such as Bill Robertie (two-time World Champion), Mary Hickey, Walter Trice, Jake Jacobs and Douglas Zare. Our resident devil’s advocate, Mark Driver, will entertain you with his weekly series entitled “The Game”.

that my previous thinking was to get rid of his pesky blot on my two.

“We have to adjust your medication,” snorts Boo. “Perhaps find something that will kill off those pesky cells in your head.”

“Which cells?” I say innocently.

“Your brain. All three cells.”

I sigh. She takes a valium.

“You just contradicted your last rationale about the two point. Now you leave a blot there for the taking, you blow apart your midpoint and leave two in the outfield, and you don’t really gain anything.”

“Well,” I sniff, “what if I want to play a backgame? I don’t care about getting hit.”

She smacked me on the back of the head. Such a kiddler!

“He has a forward anchor. What are you going to do him? Kick him under the table? You’ve already got three men behind him, and you ought to put a fourth one to safety the blot.”

“Sure, and he rolls 56 and puts me up.”

“Less pip loss. Play 61 and 21. Not the prettiest, but neither are you,” she said generously.

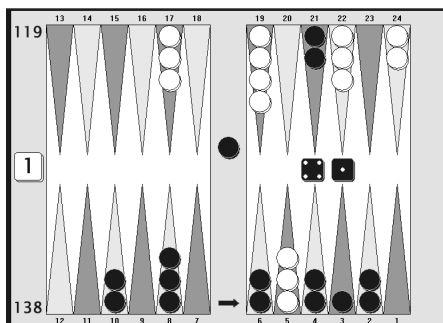
“What about breaking the 20 point?”

“Good thinking. Play the classic four blot defense.”

I should have taken up something simple, like chess.

“Play on, TwitDuff.”

Position 6: Move 20



bar/21 4/3	-0.035	
bar/20	-0.049	(-0.014)
bar/21 3/2	-0.138	(-0.103)
bar/21 8/7	-0.137	(-0.102)
bar/21 2/1	-0.166	(-0.131)

“Three two? You played three two?” Boo pulled out a small tuft of hair. Fortunately it was hers.

“Well, yes. I need a one to play and I don’t have my twin anchors anymore and didn’t want to leave a blot in case something bad happens.”

“Something bad is about to happen. Where are my syringes?” She rummaged in her black bag. “Look, you have an anchor. And now you have a third back man which gives you some flexibility. There’s not much danger of anything untoward happening soon. Your three two deprives you of flexibility in your board.”

“Perhaps I should take up Yogagammon?”

She smacked me on the head. With her black bag.

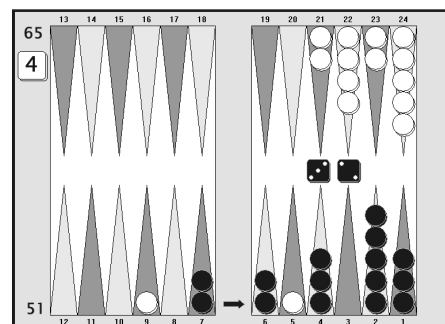
“Play the four three and it’s still safe. See? No little white guys shooting at it, are there? No. Ones, threes, fives, sixes play from the 21, fours cover the blot, and twos play to the one point.”

“What? Say that again...” I said. A neuron winked out.

“No. Play on.”

“But, but...”

Position 7: Move 38



7/5*/2	0.709	
6/3 6/4	0.566	(-0.144)
4/1 4/2	0.495	(-0.214)
7/4 7/5*	0.408	(-0.301)
7/5* 4/1	0.260	(-0.450)
Alert: Blunder (0.144)		

Well, I managed to bumble through to the 38th move making several lightweight errors and avoiding further damage from Boo’s black bag, syringes, and backhands. You might note that her therapeutic methods are somewhat unusual, but they are indeed responsible for me being where I am today.

However, on this move I believe I suffered a setback.

“This one hurts my head, Boo, but the safest move is

certainly 6/3 6/4.”

“Your head is about to go in a sling. Why is that the safest move?”

“Well, obviously there are no shots.”

“Aren’t you clever?”

“Ouch.”

“And what if you next roll a six, five, or four with a one or two? Hmmm, hmmm? Lots of shots. I count twelve and I’m just a psychiatrist.”

“Oh.”

“Oh, my butt.”

I looked but she kicked my shin.

“And what if he rolls a big double, fives or sixes, where’s your race chances then, you with those gaps in your board?”

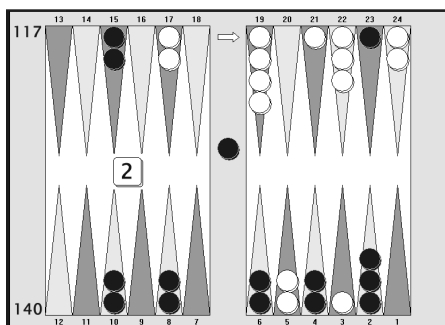
“Please don’t hurt me, Boo.”

“Here, swallow this checker and call me in the morning.”

“Grmph. Mrrphle. Frmmmpfh!”

After a brief struggle I was able to proceed with the rest of the game, arriving finally at the last position. I should add that I successfully and accurately took one cube and later recubed, and the Snowball was wrong both times, and I hope that Boo will put that in her report.

The Double: Move 25



Cube action

Rollout Money equity: 0.257
0.3% 27.1% 54.6% 45.4% 10.5% 0.4%
95% confidence interval:
- money cubeless eq.: 0.257 ±0.030,
- live cube no double: 0.284 ±0.058,
- live cube double take: 0.102 ±0.087.
Rollout settings:
Full rollout,
324 games (equiv. 8682 games),

played 2-ply (medium), cube 2-ply,
settlement 0.550 at 16 pts,
seed 1, with race database.

Evaluations

No double	0.335
Double, take	0.179 (-0.156)
Double, pass	1.000 (+0.665)

Proper cube action: No double, take 19%

Live cube

No double	0.284
Double, take	0.102 (-0.183)
Double, pass	1.000 (+0.716)

Proper cube action:
No double, take 20%

“Why double me here? I wouldn’t have,” I said, putting on my best bemused confused face while underneath I gloated.

“That girl needs help,” Boo added, shaking her head. “You’re shooting at her blot, maybe putting two up. Neither one of you has a really decent structure.”

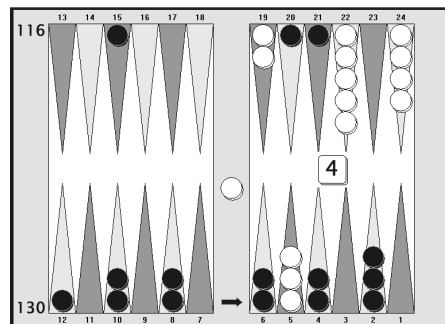
“And I’m 23 pips behind in the race.”

“Maybe that’s what she’s thinking. Are you sure you didn’t drug her hard drive?”

“Cross my eyes, didn’t lay a finger on her.”

“Hmmmph.”

The Redouble: Move 29



Cube action

Rollout Money equity: 0.660
0.3% 14.0% 76.6% 23.4% 1.4% 0.0%
95% confidence interval:
- money cubeless eq.: 0.660 ±0.023,
- live cube no redouble: 1.021 ±0.020,
- live cube redouble take: 1.149 ±0.026.
Rollout settings:
Full rollout,
324 games (equiv. 9602 games),
played 2-ply (medium), cube 2-ply,
settlement 0.550 at 16 pts,
seed 1, with race database.

Evaluations

Redouble, pass	1.000
No redouble	0.986 (-0.014)
Redouble, take	1.148 (+0.148)

Proper cube action: Redouble, pass

Live cube

No redouble	1.021
-------------	-------

Redouble, pass	1.000	(-0.021)
Redouble, take	1.149	(+0.128)
<u>Proper cube action:</u>		
Too good to redouble, pass	14%	

Well, I never claimed my redouble was right!

Boo said, "And she took anyway!"

"And me behind still, and neither structure is anything to write home about. Though I'd rather have mine than hers."

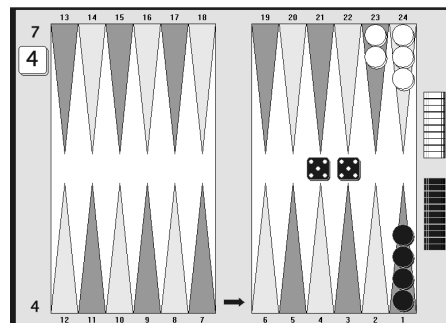
"Who would she write home to? Does she have family? Kids? Siblings?" She popped another valium. "And why are you getting these breaks? Why?! Why?!"

"There, there," I stroked her hair. My fingers began to bleed.

"You've got better distribution, her board's weak. Barring double ones, you're in good shape, relative-

ly." She sighed. "Where is justice?" Her shoulders slumped. I think I saw a tear.

**Final Position:
Move 45**

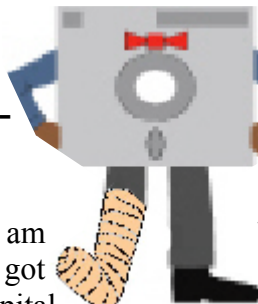


(Wild laughter, crazed screams.)

As a final note, visiting hours are 2 – 4 and 7 – 9, and I try to visit Boo at least once a week. For some reason, she never seems pleased to see me, and she absolutely refuses to play backgammon. Since she won't play with anyone except for a weekly chouette with Napoleon, Judas, Christ, and the cleaning lady, I don't take it personally.

ZX81

**Half man -
Half machine -
Halfwit**



Well, here I am again. Just got back from the hospital after having my foot reset after a session with Beckers. Would you believe it, we've both gone and broken our foot? He did his playing football, I did mine tripping over Tone's feet as he bent down to kiss GWB's backside! Really, hasn't that man got any dignity? Between you and me I think he's lost it. I mean, here we all are paying National Insurance for a National Health Service and he still puts up taxes to pay for healthcare!

Mind you, he is getting one thing right - his campaign to clear up our streets. Soon we'll be able to roam the streets free from fear. He's got a real catchy catch-phrase, "Tough on grime and the causes of grime." It is evident from this sound-bite that it'll not be long before our

streets are free from litter and we'll be able to walk without fear of dog shit or half eaten Big Macs sticking to our shoes. You can trust old Tone to get the job done.

Well, my last competition was a bit predictable inasmuch as Mr Biba came in for a lot of stick; as this entry from **Richard Biddle** illustrates, "*In Goldfinger, by Ian Fleming, the Afghan Prince Kamal Khan was known for cheating at backgammon. I can imagine several people at Biba competitions who would like to fit the bill except for the whispered rumours. How many times has Michael been married?*"

I asked Michael how many times and he replied, "Four . . . so far!"

But, this wasn't the correct answer to my question. **Bob Young** (yes, he's at it again) had a different theory, "*Hi ZX, if I can be familiar and drop the 81. I can only assume that the true answer is Lord Lucan, but my other answer would have to*

be Prince Phillip, but I'm not sure about his previous marriages, perhaps it's a case of perming any two vices from three."

Talk about hedging your bets! But, they are both wrong ('though they still win a free tournament entry). The correct answer is: **Prince Semyon Romanov** in Frederick Forsyth's *Icon*.

Now, we all know that backgammon is all about numbers, so . . .

What am I? What is and how big is, A & B? What are we all part of?

- ☐ I cover an area of 377cm²
- ☐ I obscure 13.71% of A . .
- ☐ But have the use of B, 18.36% more.

Answers to be in before July 1st 2002. Sent to Biba HQ or via email to zx81@backgammon-biba.co.uk

Competition 2002 No.2 59.01-06

Due to holiday commitments, Richard Granville was unable to edit and format the answers to Competition No.1 from the last issue. These will appear in a *double-whammy* in Bibafax No.60 with the positions below.

To encourage a greater number of entries and quicker payouts the following new rules are now applicable:

£20 for the winner of each individual competition.

£5 for the contributor of the "best presented" set of answers. (*This would be Richard's decision, based upon the amount of editing he has to do*).

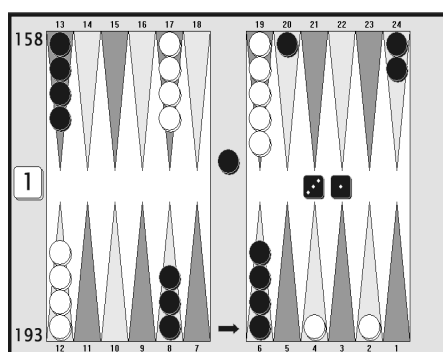
£50 for the highest point scorer of the year, using the best 3 out of 4 scores.

Hopefully these new rules of entry will result in a lot more of you entering the competitions and in the proc-

ess, beginners will get an insight into the thought processors behind the moves.

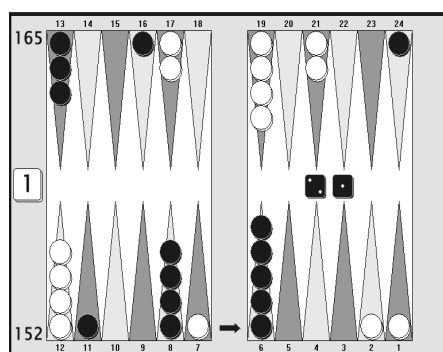
The entries for this competition must be in before 1st July 2002. Send email entries to this address richard.granville@tinyworld.co.uk and a cc to comps@backgammon-biba.co.uk and all 'hard copy' to Biba HQ via Royal Mail. Please remember to follow the formatting suggested in Bibafax 53, page 23.

5901



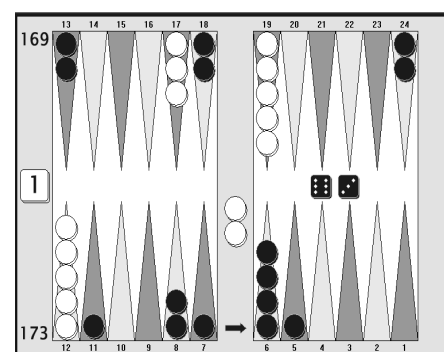
11 Point Match
White 7 Black 3
Black to play 31

5903



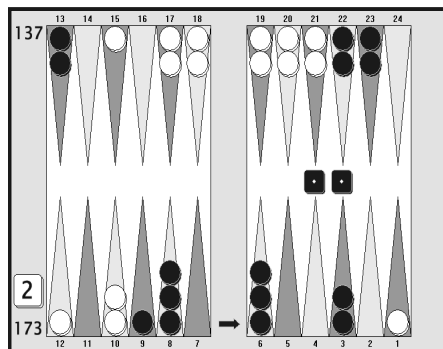
11 Point Match
White 4 Black 0
Black to play 21

5905



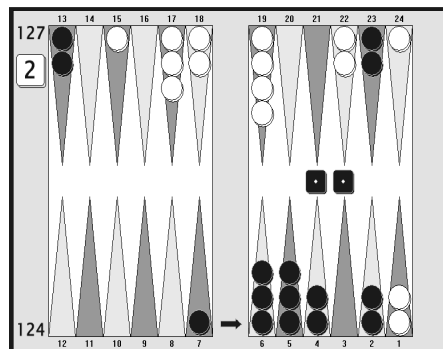
11 Point Match
White 0 Black 0
Black to play 63

5902



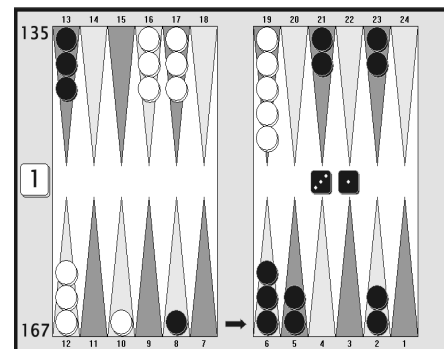
11 Point Match
White 0 Black 2
Black to play 11

5904

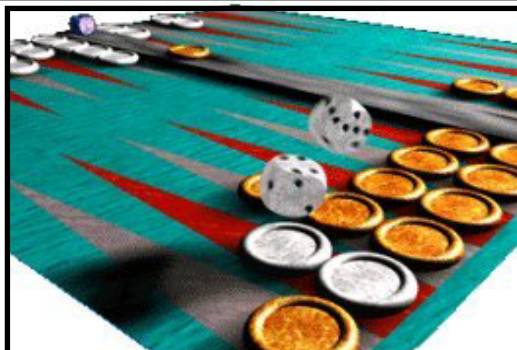


11 Point Match
White 1 Black 0
Black to play 11

5906



11 Point Match
White 1 Black 3
Black to play 31



Snowie 3.0

Professional £280

Contact Michael Crane on:

Email; snowie@backgammon-biba.co.uk

Tel: 01522 829649

Backgammon Clubs – In Your Area

I have updated and changed the format of local club information. It is now possible to see who, what, where, when, and how much it'll cost you to play all over the country. Some clubs charge nothing to play, others fifty pence a week and one or two £20 or more.

Where I have marked a category with * means that more specific information is required - would club organisers please send in the information (see below).

The list isn't complete because some of the clubs I canvassed failed to send in their details, subsequently they are absent.

If your club isn't on this list then send me the details either via Biba HQ or you can email information to:
clubs@backgammon-biba.co.uk

Key:

1. Club Name
2. Venue
3. Address/location
4. Club contact
5. Club web page
6. Club nights
7. Club format and activities
8. Club fees or cost to join/play
9. Accepted playing standard
10. Can beginners/guests play
11. Comments

Birmingham

1. Birmingham BG Club
2. Moseley All Services Club
3. 91 Church Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 0LA
4. Dave Motley 0121 476 4099
motleydavid@hotmail.com
5. <http://website.lineone.net/~dstartin>
6. Every Monday
7. Knockouts, Leagues, Doubles
8. No joining fee. Subs of £2 per week (1st week free).

9. Beginners are welcomed.
10. Yes
11. Friendly club. Feel free to try us out

Brighton

1. Brighton Backgammon Club
2. Lion & Lobster Pub
3. Bedford Place, Brighton
4. None
5. <http://eiloart.com/bbc/>
6. Tuesday 8pm until closing
7. Eight player knockouts, 7 point matches. Winners of 8 tournaments play in the "big 8". Unlimited re-entries.
8. £1 pa plus £1.50 per tournament entry. All entry fees are returned in prizes.
9. All
10. No reply *
11. None

Bristol

1. Bristol BG Organisation
2. Bristol County Sports Club
3. Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5AE
4. Ian Tarr 0117-9756349
brisgammon@messages.co.uk
5. www.freenetpages.co.uk/hp/brisgammon
6. Second Thursday of the month for knock-out tournaments, last Wednesday of the month for league night
7. Monthly knock-out tournaments (usually two flights) contribute to two annual grand prix competitions; annual leagues (currently two)
8. No membership fee, just fees (which cover prizes) for individual competitions entered
9. All standards welcome
10. Beginners are always welcome to play in any of our competitions, although qualification for our Premier League has to be earned via results in other competitions; guests are also welcome to our tournaments,

but must fully understand the conditions of entry before entering; players in our Premier League are barred from certain of our competitions which are designated as "intermediate"

11. We do our best to give a warm welcome to all players, and are prepared to listen to any suggestions for modifying or adding to our existing programme of competitions

Dublin

1. Dublin Backgammon Club
2. Sach's Hotel
3. Donnybrook
4. Brendan Burgess 603 0891 .
wildlife@indigo.ie
5. None
6. 2nd Monday of every month.
7. Knockout tournament
8. £1 per night
9. All standards
10. Yes
11. Money play is discouraged so that we can encourage new members

Eastbourne

1. Eastbourne & Bexhill BG Club
2. The Lamb near Pevensey
3. The Lamb, Hooe (On main Pevensey to Bexhill road)
4. Roy Hollands 01323 722905
e-mail royhollands@aol.com
5. Nil
6. Mondays 19.30
7. 5 point all play all. Monthly championship to 7 point. Chouettes.
8. Free
9. Any
10. Special arrangements to fit any guests or beginners.
11. Couldn't be cheaper. Give us a try.

Halifax

1. Halifax/West Yorkshire Club
2. Nominally The Three Pigeons
3. The Shay, Halifax 1

4. Rachel Rhodes 07961 355433
dicewitch@yahoo.co.uk
5. No
6. Sporadic
7. Informal
8. No fees
9. Anyone
10. n/a
11. Let's get this going on a more regular basis

Lincoln

1. Lincoln BG Club
2. The Liberal Club
3. St. Swithin's Square, Lincoln
4. Michael Crane, 01522 829649,
michael.a.crane@ntlworld.com
5. www.users.globalnet.co.uk/
~biba/index.html
6. Every Tuesday from 19:30 to 23:00
7. Round Robin, knockouts and chouettes
8. We don't have a membership fee, just 0.50p per night subs plus (optional) 0.40p for sandwiches
9. All standards accepted
10. Yes. They can play in all formats except the 5-point monthly Knockout, unless of course they are visiting for a month!
11. LBC is a friendly low cost BG Club where we all standards of players are welcome. Check out our web site for full details

Liverpool

1. Liverpool Backgammon Club
2. The Bridge Club
3. 7A, Croxteth Road, Liverpool
4. John Wright, 0151 280 0075,
jpwright@cableinet.co.uk
5. http://my.cybersoup.com/
lpoolbg
6. First Friday of each month from 20:00 to 23:00
7. Monthly round Robin, winter knockouts and annual Open tournament
8. We don't have a membership fee, just £4 per night plus optional sweep

9. All standards accepted
10. Yes
11. LBC is a small friendly, low cost BG Club where we all standards of players are welcome. Check out our web site for details.

London

1. Double Five BG Club
2. St. Johns Wood Bridge Club
3. Grove Hall Court, Hall Road, London NW8
4. George Sulimirski. 020 7381 8128 jgsulimir@aol.com
5. None
6. Thursdays 7pm. and Sundays 5pm. £100 Tournament on the third Sunday of the month at 3pm
7. Money games - chouettes and head up. Occasional tournaments
8. Hourly table fees depending on stakes played (mostly £2 - £20 per point) plus £1 for non members
9. See 11
10. See 11
11. The club is quite informal and visitors are welcome but since all the games are for money we cannot accommodate beginners (except Lottery winners!)

London

1. Fox Reformed
2. Fox Reformed Wine Bar
3. 176 Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 0JL
4. Robbie (020) 7254 5975,
robbie.richards@fox-reformed.co.uk
5. www.fox-reformed.co.uk
6. Monday (tournament); other nights by mutual arrangement
7. Weekly, 16-player knockout tournament with main and consolation; annual ladder open to all
8. £20 for the weekly tournament (includes buffet. Rest of entry fees returned as cash prizes); £30 per annum for the ladder (includes membership of

FRILLS which gives discounts on wine and organises other events) then £3 fee per match in the ladder (all match fees are returned as prizes at the annual dinner)

9. All abilities welcomed; all tournament players are guaranteed two matches and also play other friendly yes, every Monday
10. Yes, and guests sometimes turn up from other countries
11. Club includes several of the top British players and organises regular trips to foreign events (we had 22 at Monte Carlo and 9 in Nova Gorica). Most players will be as happy to play 50 pence a point as £20 per point

London

1. The Brave New World (formerly The Bell Inn BG Club)
2. (see below)
3. 22/26 Berrylands Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 8QX
4. 020-8399-0200 or 07946 801801
5. n/a
6. Tuesday
7. Weekly knockout (£30 entry) start time 7.30 pm and chouettes at £3, £5, and £10 per point start time 2pm.
8. £30 (see above)
9. All players welcome
10. Yes
11. Busy, friendly and sociable club - newcomers always welcome. Knockout tournament statistics are compiled and half-yearly championship prizes awarded.

London

1. Ealing Backgammon League
2. The Kings Arms Pub
3. 55 The Grove, Ealing, London W5 020-8567 0606
4. Grahame Powell 020-8968 6327, abbast@aol.com.net or sagub@aol.com

5. None, yet....
6. Every Sunday 3.00pm onwards, other nights by arrangement
7. Weekly League Tourney (8-player invitation knockout), chouettes.
8. Annual Fee £10, weekly fee £1, Tourney Entry £25
9. All standards accepted, free lessons by arrangement
10. All welcome for chouettes, weekly tourney is restricted to members or special invitation.
11. There has been backgammon in Ealing for at least 20 years now, and for the last 9 years the Kings Arms has been our home. It's a friendly informal 'locals' pub, and that's the way we like our backgammon.

Manchester

1. Manchester & District Club
2. Heaton Moor Conservative Club
3. Heaton Moor Road, Stockport
4. Kevin Stebbing. Email kevin@stebbing.net 0161 283 1886
5. www.stebbing.cwc.net/bgman/bgman.htm
6. 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7:30pm
7. Knockout
8. Free (optional £3 pool)
9. All
10. Yes
11. Join us for a sociable evening of backgammon. All standards are welcome

Nottingham

1. Nottingham BG Club
2. The Horse and Groom.
3. Radford Road, Basford, Nottingham.
4. Conrad Cooper 0115 9113281 conrad_cooper@excite.com
5. <http://beehive.thisisnottingham.co.uk/clubinfol>
6. Monday, 9.00 pm
7. All matches played around flexible league system and

- also knockouts
8. Free
9. All playing abilities welcome
10. Yes they can
11. Nottingham Backgammon has a friendly, sociable, relaxed atmosphere. We welcome players of all standards of play.

Reading

1. Reading Backgammon Club
2. Various, publicised in advance by e-mail - reading_backgammon-subscribe@egroups.com
3. See 2 above
4. Kevin Carter on kevin@profundus.com & +44-118-971-2948
5. <http://www.ratbag.demon.co.uk/reading.html>
6. Usually the penultimate Wednesday of each month, publicised in advance via email
7. A Swiss tournament every 2-3 months interspersed with other less formal evenings involving eg chouettes and friendly games
8. No fees except for tournament entry of £5 (all money returned as prizes)
9. Too friendly and informal for professionals but beginners welcome
10. Yes, but beginners should attain a reasonable grounding in the rules and etiquette before entering the tournaments
11. None

St. Albans

1. Not really a club, no membership
2. The Mermaid (pub)
3. Hatfield Road, St. Albans
4. Uldis Lapikens, 01582 455970, uldis@talk21.com
5. Not applicable
6. Every Tuesday 19.45 (for 20.00) to 23.30
7. Knockout tournament and consolation playoff

8. No fees, £5 knockout entry (optional)
9. All
10. Yes
11. Friendly & informal, real ale, car park, 5 minutes walk from city station

Wirral & Chester

1. Wirral & Chester BG Club
2. The Yacht Inn
3. The Yacht, Parkgate Road, Woodbank, Cheshire.
4. Kristin Bradbury 0151 632 0417 kristin.bradbury@care4free.net
5. www.kristin.bradbury.care4free.net/backgammon/
6. Every other Tuesday
7. Informal matches until membership is established
8. £1 per night, provisionally.
9. All
10. Yes
11. This is a new club to serve a new area.

Forthcoming Events

Hilton Trophy 08/09 June: The familiar Knockout format offering the usual elements: Main, progressive Consolation, Last Chance and Suicide.

Keren di Bona Memorial Trophy 06/07 July: Another knockout with the usual format. This tournament is sponsored by Emmanuel di Bona, in memory of his wife, Keren.

SAC Trophy 03/04 August: The third of the four Swiss Format ranking tournaments. Another opportunity to improve your ranking score.

Roy Hollands Trophy 07/08 September: Once again good old Roy comes up with the sponsorship for his (future memorial) tournament. (continued on page 45) 

Tournament Details

Registration: Saturday 1030 to 1230

Play Starts: Saturday 1300, Sunday 1030

Auctions: Group, Saturday 1245, Individual, Sunday 1015

Pools: Private, members only prize pools available at £50, £25, £10 & £5

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

All tournaments feature a Friday night Warm-up and a Saturday night Doubles Knockout

ACCOMMODATION DETAILS - Biba rate

Dinner, Bed & Breakfast per person: 1 night £55, 2 nights £100

Hilton Reservations: 08705 201 201 quoting Backgammon. Credit card required

(Hilton terms & conditions for Special Events)

Backgammon Tournament weekends cannot be booked through any other Hilton special offer or promotional rate. Current Biba members not obeying these terms and conditions will be barred from entering the tournament excepting non-residents who shall pay a surcharge of £10.

FRIDAY

Warm-up Knockout

Play starts 2200, 1st prize, free accommodation for this tournament plus first byes in next Main knockout entered.

SATURDAY

Registration 1030 / 1230

Players arriving after close of registration only accepted at Director's discretion.
All jackpot pools will close promptly at 1230

SUNDAY

Play resumes 1030

(penalty points apply)
Presentation 1630 - 1730

Registration Fees

Full Members: £15 (you can join on the day)

Entrants not residing at the hotel, £10 surcharge

(all fees and surcharges to be paid on the day - prepayment not required)

Biba & Hilton Hotels present the Knockout tournament



Grand Prix

Hilton Trophy 2002

Hilton National - Coventry

8th & 9th June 2002



Biba & Hilton Hotels present the Knockout tournament



Grand Prix

Keren di Bona Memorial Trophy

Hilton National - Coventry

6th & 7th July 2002



Sponsored by
Emmanuel di Bona



Biba & Hilton Hotels present the Swiss Format tournament

**UK Final
2002**

Studio Anne Carlton Trophy 2002

Hilton National - Coventry

3rd & 4th August 2002



Grand Prix

Biba & Hilton Hotels present the Knockout tournament



Grand Prix

Roy Hollands Trophy

Hilton National - Coventry

7th & 8th September 2002



**Sponsored by
Roy Hollands**

European Backgammon Calendar

Jun 08-09	Hilton Trophy, Coventry Hilton, England	01522 888676
Jun 15-16	Danish Mixed Doubles, Humlebaek BG Klub, Denmark	0045 20671995
Jun 15-16	Tournament of Spirits, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	0031 20463 3724
Jun 29	7th Liverpool Open. Liverpool, England	0151 428 3082
Jun 30	Schwaben-Cup, Waldheim, Stuttgart-Sillenbuch, Germany	0049 71148 6190
Jul 06-07	Keren Di Bona Trophy, Hilton Coventry, England	01522 888676
Jul 08-14	World Championship Grand Hotel Monte Carlo	0208 767 02 82
Jul 15-16	11th Nice Open, Lido Plage, Nice, France	0033 4938 79436
Jul 17-21	4th Czech Open, Corinthia, Prague, Czech Republic	0049 911 409505
Jul 04-07	14th Venice Tournament, Venice Casino, Venice, Italy	0039 41521 1029
27 Jul	The 'Bristol 50', Bristol, England	07940 284652
Aug 03-04	Studio Anne Carlton Trophy, Hilton, Coventry, England	01522 888676
Sep 06-08	14th European Championship, Nova Gorica, Slovenia	0039 2690 18168
Sep 07-08	Roy Hollands Trophy, Hilton, Coventry, England	01522 888676
Sep 21-22	Amsterdam Open 2002, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	0031 20463 3724
Oct 05-06	Sandy Osborne Trophy, Hilton, Coventry, England	01522 888676
Oct 10-13	Austrian Open & Doubles, Veronika, Seefeld, Austria	0043 512 287244
Oct 12-14	8th Japan Open & 32nd Championship, Tokyo, Japan	0081 3 337 33814
Oct 30-Nov 2	3rd Doubles World Championship, Lugano, Switzerland	0041 79 3374425
Oct 31-Nov 3	22nd Swedish Open, Quality Nacka, Stockholm, Sweden	0046 8189346
Nov 09-10	Townharbour Trophy, Hilton, Coventry, England	01522 888676
Nov 23-24	Danish Championships 2002, Copenhagen, Denmark	0045 3336 3601
Nov 23-24	Swiss Championship, Hotel Krafft, Basel, Switzerland	0041 61 4812755
Dec 07-08	UK Finals, Hilton, Coventry, England	01522 888676

(continued from page 42)

This year the format is changed to a normal knockout (as per all others) to reflect popular demand.

June 13/20: Island of Zakynthos - Greece. Backgammon & Bridge Extravaganza.

Join a week long party of Bridge and Backgammon. Daily Tournaments of various formats, Chouettes, Rubber Bridge and/or Four Deal Chicago.

Venue:- The Peligoni Club, Zakynthos. If you need a break from the games, there is sailing, canoeing, massage, yoga, mountain walks, tennis and windsurfing all available. In only 30 seconds, you can be away from the game and diving into the clearest sea you will ever experience – in fact, ‘The other half’ would enjoy this holiday too.

Cost:- £350 – to include room at nearby hotel with pool, and magnificent views, transport on the

island and three meals a day. (£25 per head reduction for those sharing a room.)

Extras:- Flight (approximately £180), drinks, massage, reflexology etc. and any island or boat trips.

Party hosts:: John Clark and Neil Davidson. To book please call: Neil Davidson 07798 614800 Or our reservation department 01243 511499.



Grand Prix

The Tenth Irish Open Backgammon Championship

Wynn's Hotel, Dublin 26/27 October 2002

Tournament Director: Cáit Skelly

**UK Final
2002**

Saturday: Registration opens 12.00 noon. Auction of all the players at 12.30 pm. Play starts promptly at 1.00 pm (If you are arriving late or your flight is delayed, call Brendan Burgess to hold a place. On the day you can call Cáit on 086 8232517)

Sunday: Playoffs for last sixteen 9.00 am. Last sixteen 10.00 am. Consolation 10.30 am. Team event 12 noon. Scheduled finishing time: 6.00 pm

Format: Combined Swiss And Knockout: Six rounds of 7 point matches will be played on Saturday. Winners of 6 matches out of 6 will go into the last 8 on Sunday. Winners of 5 matches out of 6 will go into the last 16. Winners of 4 matches out of 6 will go into a playoff for any remaining places in the last 16.

Chess clock preference. Any player can insist on playing with a chess clock, subject to availability. **Strict time controls** will be in place on the Saturday and late finishers in any round will have the length of their subsequent round matches reduced by the Tournament Director. Players who have not requested a chess clock, will have no grounds for complaint about their opponent's speed of play.

Entry Fee: €20. There will be an optional €100 side-pool.

Friday night: €200 Jackpot. A jackpot, completely separate from the main tournament, will start on Friday night at 7.30 pm. If necessary, it will continue at 10.00 am on Saturday morning.

Accommodation: Dublin is very busy and accommodation is difficult to find at short notice. Last year, some people who wanted to attend just could not find accommodation. So book your accommodation now.

WYNN'S HOTEL – 35 Lower Abbey Street, + 353 1 8745131

If Wynn's is full or if you are looking for cheaper accommodation, the Irish Tourist Board Reservation Service freephone number in the UK is 0800 7835740. Gardiner Street is the most convenient place. The Townhouse is a guesthouse with a separate hostel. + 353 1 8788808. Double rooms in the guesthouse are €102 per night including breakfast. Rooms in dormitory style accommodation start at around €19.

Further Information

(Pre-registration is not required)

Brendan Burgess, 107 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2.

Tel: + 353 1 6030891 E-mail: brendan@thepanel.com

29 June 7th Liverpool Open. Registration £15 (includes food) from 10:00 until 11:30, play starting at 12 noon. Main, Consolation, Last Chance and 1-Point Shoot-out. Details from Simon Jones, email vineries@thefreeinternet.co.uk or telephone 0151 428 3082.

27 July: The "Bristol 50." Close to the centre of Bristol there is a new – hopefully annual – tournament taking place.

The **Bristol 50** will be held at the Bristol County Sports Club, in Colston Street, from noon till around midnight, and will feature

a maximum of 32 players. The format is simple. The entry fee of £50 funds a main flight, a consolation, and two waves of buffet. The main flight will consist of 11-point matches, and the consolation 7-point matches with an 11-point final. Assuming all 32 places are taken up – and around half of these are already committed to local players – the prizes will be £750 and £350 for the main, £250 and £100 for the consolation. Prizes will be scaled down in the unlikely event of there being fewer than 32.

Organiser Ian Tarr welcomes en-

quiries by mobile (07940 284652) or email (brisgammon@messages.co.uk), and entry will be guaranteed for the first 32 players to pay the fee. If you would like to ensure you don't miss out, send a cheque for £50 payable to Ian Tarr at 27 Quarrington Road, Horfield, Bristol BS7 9PJ. Fees will be refundable in the event of a no show, and a waiting list will be maintained when the entry list is full. If the event is a success, a move to a larger venue for future years will be the inevitable outcome.

Club Corner

Bristol: Inter-Cities Challenge trophy goes back to Birmingham

The twice-yearly meetings of teams from Bristol and Birmingham had their fifth incarnation on Sunday April 28th, and for the third time Bristol found a new venue – the Langley Arms at Emersons Green.

Birmingham's new captain Dave Motley was understandably keen not to disappoint any of the current Birmingham group, and so brought a team of fourteen players down the M5. The home team managed to match that number, despite the absence of numerous possible participants, so a feast of good backgammon was assured. And four players on each side were making their first appearances in the series – Spencer Close, Paul Jenkins, Steve Reddi and Peter Watkins for Birmingham, Simonetta Barone, Roland Herrera, Steffen Nowak and John Ryan for Bristol.

Players were drawn in a random order to play three members of the opposition in 9-point matches, a slight departure from previous oc-

casions, but a formula that seemed to work admirably.

For some reason, Bristol seem to make a habit of getting off to a slow start, and this occasion was no different, as Birmingham

threatened to put the match out of reach by registering nine of the first twelve victories. Paul Watts and Simonetta Barone managed to make it 5-9 before the buffet break.

Bristol needed an improvement in the second series of matches, and although this came it was only enough to keep the gap from getting any larger. Four of the visitors had won both matches at this stage, including debutant Paul Jenkins and the ever-reliable Ralph Eskinazi. Only two Bristol players had matched this effort.

Trailing 12-16, Bristol were in desperate need of a rally. Jerry Limb, Charlie Hetherington, John Lewis and David Horner obliged, and it was 16-all! Matthew Fisher and Steve Reddi edged the visitors ahead once more, then skipper Ian Tarr pegged one back. Dave Fall restored the two-point advantage, but Paul Watts reduced the arrears.

Then Captain Motley moved Birmingham into a 20-18 lead, and Fak Laight ensured that the worst they would accomplish was a sudden-death play-off like the one in October.

John Napier kept Bristol in the hunt, and there were just two matches to finish. Bristol's hopes of regaining parity rested with two debutants – an Italian and a German! And both were experiencing the unique Ryder Cup-like atmosphere of the Inter-Cities Challenge for the first time. Being surrounded by virtually all the other players did nothing to relieve the tension!

With seasoned opposition in BIBA veteran Steve Malins and one of the stars of October's climax, Dougie Webley, the odds were stacked in Birmingham's favour. Simonetta Barone drew gasps of approval at 3-7 down, when she took Steve's cube and immediately re-doubled. And there were more than gasps when she rolled the necessary double to level things at 7-all.

But that was the end of the good news from a Bristol viewpoint as Steve went on to clinch the match

– and the trophy for Birmingham. And Steffen Nowak's subsequent hard fought win over Dougie did nothing more than make the final score a little more respectable.

Final score: BRISTOL 20 BIRMINGHAM 22

The teams (with wins : defeats in parentheses):

BRISTOL: Kevin White (0:3); David Horner (3:0); Steffen Nowak (1:2); Charlie Hetherington (2:1); Simonetta Barone (1:2); John Ryan (1:2); John Napier (2:1); Ian Tarr (1:2); Paul Watts (2:1); Blaine Buchanan (1:2); Martin Hemming (1:2); John Lewis (1:2); Roland Herrera (1:2); Jerry Limb (3:0).

BIRMINGHAM: Paul Jenkins (2:1); Peter Watkins (1:2); Steve Reddi (2:1); Dougie Webley (1:2); Dave Fall (2:1); Steve Malins (3:0); Dave Startin (1:2); Matthew Fisher (2:1); Spencer Close (0:3); Sunanda Nicholson (1:2); Nick Hamar (1:2); Dave Motley (3:0); Ralph Eskinazi (2:1); Fak Laight (1:2).

Birmingham, apart from winning the trophy for the third time, took the team prize pool, and their individual pool was shared by Dave Motley and Steve Malins, who each won all three matches. The Bristol pool went to their three-win stars, David Horner and Jerry Limb.

Once again, a great time was had by all. Bristol will be looking to maintain the sequence of away wins in Birmingham in the autumn.

-- Ian Tarr

Lincoln BG Club: We are now one third of the way through the club fixtures and at the moment it is pretty much open to most members.

In the **Championship** Darryl Kirk leads at the moment with a creditable 80% (we do not count BZ or NB as their scores are inflated due to only playing 1 or 2 matches).

	W	L	P	Chmpshp
BZ	2	0	2	100.00
NB	1	0	1	100.00
DK	12	3	15	80.00
JE	17	5	22	77.27
TM	13	5	18	72.22
BB	7	3	10	70.00
MC	16	7	23	69.57
PG	11	5	16	68.75
JM	13	7	20	65.00
KS	4	3	7	57.14
JB	10	8	18	55.56
SD	8	7	15	53.33
AD	4	6	10	40.00
GW	2	3	5	40.00
MV	4	11	15	26.67
BC	4	13	17	23.53
MS	3	12	15	20.00
AS	2	30	32	6.25
GR	1	15	16	6.25

Mind you, at the time of going to press (30 April) Jeff (JE) and Darryl were currently embroiled in a match that might change the top places.

Michael Crane (MC) is doing very well in the **5-Pointer** competition, having won 90% of his matches.

	W	L	P	5-pointer
KS	1	0	1	100.00
BZ	1	0	0	100.00
MC	9	1	10	90.00
JE	7	3	10	70.00
PG	6	3	9	66.67
TM	3	2	5	60.00
DK	3	2	5	60.00
SD	3	2	5	60.00
GW	3	2	5	60.00
JM	8	6	14	57.14
BB	2	2	4	50.00
MV	2	3	5	40.00
AD	2	4	6	33.33
MS	1	2	3	33.33
BC	1	2	3	33.33
JB	2	5	7	28.57
GR	1	4	5	20.00
AS	0	8	8	0.00
NB	0	2	2	0.00

In doing this he has won eight

consecutive matches and has become the first LBC player ever to gain a **500-to-1** trophy for doing so.

In the **1-Pointer Knockout**, Darryl is again, number one. But, Michael and Jeff are closing slowly but surely.

	A/R	1pt	1000	500
MC	36.56	10	0	8
JE	35.86	12	3	0
JM	28.58	3	2	0
TM	27.14	8	0	0
DK	27	16	1	0
PG	24.5	1	1	2
SD	17.12	4	0	1
JB	16.64		2	0
BB	14.1	1	3	1
MV	9.88	6	0	1
AD	8.2		1	0
KS	8	3	0	0
BC	7.52		0	0
MS	6.3		2	1
GW	6.16		0	1
BZ	5	3	2	1
AS	3.84		0	0
GR	3.58		0	0
NB	2.9	1	1	0

Michael leads (just) in the **All-Rounder** with 36.56 points, but Jeff, his closest rival is snapping at his heels. This is an event based upon all elements, 11- 5- and 1-point wins.



Darryl Kirk
LBC Current leader

Tournament Reports

Scottish Open March 9/10

Report by Michael Crane

Well, it's is now apparent that the Scots don't travel well . . . and those that do, travel badly! Not one Scottish member, except the sponsor, John Slattery, turned up. Three *new* Scottish members turned up and they went to the wrong hotel! They went to the Hilton *Leeds* hotel (on the Friday night) and not the Hilton Leeds *Garforth* – about twenty miles away. Happily they did find the correct Hilton but too late to enter the warm-up on Friday night.

So, following such a poor turnout of Scottish players this leaves the future of this annual national title in doubt. Do I give it up as a bad job? Do I keep it in Leeds? Do I return it to Scotland and give them another chance? Do I rebuild Hadrian's Wall and keep them out forever? Suggestions please.

Main (79)

An entry of seventy-nine is good for any tournament, but for the Scottish Open it is a fantastic turnout and a new record. I am at a loss as to the reason for this amazing number. Was it because of the location? Was it because players wanted to support my efforts to stage a Scottish tournament no matter where? Was it because it was a national title? Or was it because of the Prize Fund, which finally finished at £2,025? I really don't know.

Whatever their reasons for entering; only one out of seventy-nine went home a winner. That was Ray Tannen. He'd fought his way

through six rounds to prevail over Brian Busfield in a DMP final that could have gone either way. In the game before DMP, Brian misplayed a 44 by playing one man 13/10 instead of 13/9; Ray entered off the bar, hit the misplayed blot and, two rolls later, doubled Brian out to take the score to nine all. The entire match follows this report; with copies available as a JF match file via email.



Ray Tannen (L) Scottish Open Champion 2002
and Runner-up Brian Busfield

Ever since winning the Bright 'n' Breezy in January, (but failing to win the Prize Fund. He refused to enter as he thought it unlikely to be very popular), Brain was on his second attempt to boost his bank balance. Ray, however had other plans and went home considerably happier and richer than anyone else this weekend. Well done, Ray, and better luck next time, Brian.

I don't often mention individual efforts but I'm making an exception this time. In his quarterfinal match against Bob Young, Ernie Pick went 10-0 down very quickly.

I'd bought Ernie in the Sunday auction for a tenner (I was the only bid-



Ernie Pick

der!) and was resigned to waving goodbye to my money. But, Ernie wasn't. He played like a man possessed and took it all the way to DMP – and then won the match much to Bob's dismay. Unfortunately for me (and Ernie) his next opponent was Ray Tannen and we all know what happened there. Ray told me later that Ernie was leading 7-4 and looked like winning until suddenly a large cube appears and Ernie went off the rails. If only Ernie could control his urge to take/give wrong cubes his match winning percentage would increase dramatically. Paul Lamford would be more than pleased to give you private tuition; and, before you ask, no, I'm not on commission!

Consolation (75)

As usual this was the last element to finish thanks to the Progressive side of the draw. Playing from the non-progressive side and having the advantage of a first round bye, Brian Lever had a long wait to play his final match against the 'winner' of the progressive side.

The 'final' of the progressive was between Mike Butterfield and Mathew Fisher. Unfortunately for him Mathew made an error when instead of re-entering from the bar and hitting he illegally played another checker leaving his own checker on the bar. Mike, quite rightly, let the illegal play go and went on to win the double match point game. Although Mathew might not be too happy about this play it does illustrate how much concentration is required throughout the entire match and just how painful one small lapse can be.

In the Final, between Brain and Mike the cube was passed back and forth and the points were racked up very quickly for both players, however, it was Brian who emerged victorious and he took home the winner's trophy leaving Mike the Runner-up.

Last Chance (42)

The misleading, *Last Chance* is the third of four elements and in its ranks were many of the top players – Paul Lamford, John Slattery, Roy Hollands and Peter Bennet amongst them. Slats fell in the first round and Roy went out in the second after losing to Paul. Paul then went on to the final playing against Cedric Lytton in the fourth round. This was the highlight of Cedric's weekend, playing against Paul – (this is one of the benefits of knockouts with differing elements; the not so top players get a chance to play the top players) – and he relished it enormously. Paul often gives lessons in backgammon (for a fee, of course), but in a tournament you can get one for free! Cedric was more than pleased with his free lesson!

In the lower half of the draw, Peter Bennet had a tough time reaching the final, but reach it he did. However, he then lost to Paul. Mind you, he also got a free lesson!

The Haggis! (64)

This 3-pointer is the real last chance. Starting at 13:00 it is the final element of the four, and the hardest to win if you rely upon skill alone! Mind you, the eventual winner, Paul Gilbertson did it on



**Consolation Winner, Brian Lever (L)
Runner-up, Mike Butterfield**



**Last Chance Winner, Paul Lamford (L)
Runner-up, Peter Bennet**



**Haggis Winner, Paul Gilbertson (L)
Runner-up, John Batty**

pure luck, plain and simple. I know this for a fact because he beat me in the third round and I am always being beaten by the lucky players!

John Batty (from the Lincoln BG Club), the losing finalist also discovered that his array of top class moves and strategies were no

match for the luck of Paul and he had to content himself with the Runner-up trophy. So, there you have it, luck will always prevail . . . we have to keep repeating this else we'll all have to admit that the better player won; and that would never do!

Friday Knockout (44)

Whenever a Friday Knockout entry goes over thirty-two players I make the decision not to enter. If I am lucky enough to make the final it'll be played too late for me and I'll be wrecked in the morning – so, I don't enter and give everyone else a chance.

Taking advantage of my absence, Rachel Rhodes and Emmanuel Di Bona played out the final from which the prettier one emerged the victor. Of course it was Rachel; have you seen Emmanuel?

Doubles (19)

Lots of good names this time and that meant the judges had a hard task deciding to whom they should award the bottle of wine for best name. I'll tell you later.

If prizes were awarded for the longest name then *They May Take Our Dice But They'll Never Take Our Freedom* (a Scottish reference) would have been the outright winner, but it wasn't them. They made a meal of *Feta Salad and Rosemary* in the first round, and then they went on to beat *Who Needs Peter Bennet?* (well. Mike, since you asked the question; You do!). *Leeds on MacDuff* (a nice Leeds and Scottish pun) showed that the dopes were in fact *The*

Lib-Dems on Dope but they were then beaten by *Cocked and Crooked*. However *C&C* themselves were stopped by the *Braveheart* pair in the semi-final.

The *Bar Studs* (they were), were beaten by *Two Fat Ugly Bastards* (they were). But *Posh and Becks* (she looks taller on TV and he seems far smarter) played all the way to the Final. Here, the team with that very long name sent *Posh and Becks* back to Brooklyn as they emerged the winners.

The best name? That went to *Who Needs Peter Bennet?*

And finally. It was a good tournament and without incident. A little disappointing in the Scottish turn-out perhaps, but more than made up by the large English, Welsh and Irish entries. The only criticism I have is that the playing rooms were approximately three and half miles from the bar – or so it seemed! And lastly, but by no



means least, a huge thank you to the sponsor, John Slattery, without whom the tournament would have been without trophies!

Scottish Open Finals 2002

11 point match

Game 1

Busfield : 0	Tannen : 0
01)	52: 13/8 24/22
02) 52: 13/8 24/22	66: 22/10 13/7(2)
03) 51: 6/1* 24/23	33: 25/22 10/7 6/3(2)*
04) 53: 25/20 23/20	52: 22/15
05) 54: 6/1 13/9	Doubles to 2
06) Takes	64: 15/9 13/9
07) 31: 13/12* 12/9	41: 25/20
08) 31: 8/5* 6/5	43: 25/21 7/4
09) 62: 13/5	63: 21/12*
10) 43: 25/21* 8/5	43: 25/18
11) 44: 9/5(2) 8/4(2)	52: 9/4* 6/4
12) 41: 25/24 20/16*	54:
13) 63: 16/13* 13/7*	64:
14) 42: 24/20 7/5	66:
15) 51: 20/15 5/4	41:
16) 32: 5/2 4/2	52:
17) 54: 15/6	42:
18) 65: 20/9	62:
19) 43: 5/1 9/6	65:
20) 62: 6/0 6/4	43: 25/22
21) 53: 5/0 5/2	55:
22) 42: 6/2 6/4	65: 25/19
23) 61: 5/0 5/4	64: 25/15
24) 64: 4/0(2)	53: 15/10 8/5
25) 32: 4/1 2/0	32: 19/16 8/6
26) 54: 4/0(2)	65: 22/16 10/5
27) 52: 2/0(2)	54: 16/11 8/4
28) 55: 2/0 1/0(3)	

Wins 4 points

Game 2

Busfield : 4	Tannen : 0
01) 63: 24/18 13/10	32: 13/8
02) 64: 24/18 13/9	66: 24/18(2) 8/2(2)
03) 33: 18/15(2) 13/10 6/3	42: 18/14 18/16*
04) 21: 25/24 6/4	53: 14/9 16/13
05) 21: 8/6 4/3	Doubles to 2
06) Takes	65: 9/3 8/3
07) 63: 24/15	42: 13/9 6/4
08) 64: 15/5	42: 13/9 6/4
09) 62: 10/4 6/4	51: 13/8 6/5
10) 65: 8/2 10/5	61: 9/3 8/7
11) 51: 8/2	43: 9/5 8/5
12) 54: 13/8 13/9	66: 13/1(2)

13) 51: 15/10 15/14	42: 7/3 2/0
14) 63: 14/5	21: 2/0 1/0
15) 11: 10/6	41: 4/0 1/0
16) 41: 9/4	53: 5/0 3/0
17) 43: 8/4 3/0	53: 5/0 3/0
18) 51: 6/0	51: 6/0
19) 51: 6/0	66: 6/0 5/0 4/0 3/0

Wins 2 points

Game 3

Busfield : 4	Tannen : 2
01)	51: 13/8 24/23
02) 21: 13/11 24/23	64: 24/14*
03) 51: 25/24 23/18	32: 14/11 13/11
04) 44: 8/4(2) 6/2(2)*	65: 25/14
05) 52: 13/8 13/11*	62:
06) 62: 24/18 13/11	42:
07) 54: 24/15	63: 25/22 8/2
08) Doubles to 2	Takes
09) 43: 13/9 6/3*	64:
10) 41: 8/3	41: 25/24 6/2
11) 43: 9/5 8/5	52: 13/8 6/4
12) 63: 15/6	66: 24/6 8/2
13) 54: 6/1 11/7	31: 4/1 2/1
14) 42: 7/1	33: 11/5(2)
15) 61: 11/4	31: 6/3 6/5
16) 65: 18/7	54: 8/3 5/1
17) 66: 7/1	54: 8/3 8/4
18) 61: 18/11	33: 13/4 13/10
19) 63: 11/5 3/0	32: 10/5
20) 42: 4/0 2/0	42: 4/0 2/0
21) 31: 3/0 1/0	32: 3/0 2/0
22) 52: 5/0 2/0	52: 5/0 6/4
23) 61: 6/0 1/0	52: 5/0 6/4
24) 32: 5/0	22: 4/0(2)
25) 53: 5/0 6/3	52: 5/0 4/2
26) 51: 4/0 1/0	52: 3/0 2/0
27) 65: 4/0 3/0	

Wins 2 points

Game 4

Busfield : 6	Tannen : 2
01) 64: 24/18 13/9	42: 8/4 6/4
02) 44: 18/10 13/9(2)	41: 13/9 24/23
03) 61: 8/2* 2/1*	21: 25/23 25/24*
04) 61: 25/18	63: 24/15*
05) 54: 25/20 24/20	21: 15/13 9/8
06) 51: 18/13 9/8	41: 23/18
07) 52: 13/8 9/7*	65: 25/14
08) 63: 20/11*	62: 25/23 8/2
09) 33: 13/7 8/5(2)	63: 8/2 8/5*
10) 55: 25/20* 20/15 7/2(2)	

41: 25/21 25/24
 11) 21: 15/13 9/8 65: 13/7 13/8
 12) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 5

Busfield : 7 Tannen : 2
 01) 43: 13/9 24/21
 02) 42: 8/4* 6/4 42: 25/23 13/9
 03) 21: 13/11 24/23 21: 9/7 8/7
 04) 54: 6/1* 24/20
 33: 25/22 13/10 8/5(2)*
 05) 65: Doubles to 2
 06) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 6

Busfield : 7 Tannen : 3
 01) 41: 13/9 24/23
 02) 31: 8/5 6/5 42: 8/4 6/4
 03) 51: 13/8 24/23
 11: 8/7(2) 6/5(2)
 04) 61: 23/16* 43: 25/22 13/9*
 05) 41: 25/24 13/9 Doubles to 2
 06) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 7

Busfield : 7 Tannen : 4
 01) 43: 13/9 24/21
 02) 64: 24/14 21: 13/11* 21/20
 03) 65: 25/14* 54: 25/20 13/9
 04) 55: 8/3(2) 6/1(2)* 63:
 05) 64: 14/8 24/20 63:
 06) 32: 20/15 42: 25/21 6/4
 07) 54: 15/6 42: 8/4 9/7
 08) 65: 13/2 51: 8/3 21/20
 09) 65: 13/2 63: 9/3 8/5
 10) 66: 13/1 13/7(2) 53: 13/5
 11) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 8

Busfield : 8 Tannen : 4
 01) 64: 24/18 13/9 53: 24/16*
 02) 21: 25/22 64: 13/7* 7/3*
 03) 54: 25/20 25/21 64: 13/3
 04) 64: 21/15 24/20 51: 16/10*
 05) 53: 25/20 13/10 64: 10/4 8/4
 06) 32: 13/10 8/6 53: 24/16
 07) 31: 8/5 6/5 21: 16/13
 08) 42: 8/4 6/4 Doubles to 2
 09) Takes 22: 13/11(4)
 10) 53: 13/8 6/3 54: 11/2
 11) 64: 13/3 21: 11/8
 12) 54: 20/11 54: 6/1 6/2
 13) 64: 10/4 11/7 52: 8/1

14) 62: 8/2 4/2 65: 8/2 8/3
 15) 21: 10/7 65: 6/1
 16) 61: 7/1 6/5 42: 6/2 6/4
 17) 51: 7/1 41: 11/7 11/10
 18) 43: 20/13 53: 10/5* 5/2
 19) 43: 43: 7/3 4/1
 20) 61: 25/18 44: 4/0(2) 3/0(2)
 21) 55: 18/3 13/8 32: 3/0 2/0
 22) 54: 8/4 5/0 51: 3/0 1/0
 23) 54: 5/0 4/0 54: 2/0(2)
Wins 2 points

Game 9

Busfield : 8 Tannen : 6
 01) 65: 24/13
 02) 44: 24/20(2) 13/9(2)
 62: 8/2 6/4
 03) 32: 8/5 13/11 65: 24/13
 04) 21: 6/4 6/5 64: 13/3
 05) 61: 11/4 65: 13/2
 06) 32: 6/3 9/7 64: 13/3
 07) 31: 7/3 41: 13/8
 08) 32: 8/5 9/7 55: 13/3 13/8(2)
 09) 22: 13/9(2) Doubles to 2
 10) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 10

Busfield : 8 Tannen : 7
 01) 51: 13/8 6/5 31: 24/20*
 02) 65: 25/20 24/18
 64: 13/7* 24/20
 03) 54: 25/20 24/20 43: 8/4 7/4
 04) 62: 13/7 6/4 51: 13/8 4/3
 05) 52: 20/13 41: 6/2 3/2
 06) 61: 13/7 8/7 22: 13/11(3) 6/4
 07) 54: 13/4 52: 11/4
 08) 22: 20/16(2) 63: 8/2 4/1
 09) 44: 16/12(2) 13/9(2) 52: 8/1
 10) 21: 7/4 33: 11/5(2)
 11) 43: 12/8 12/9 65: 20/14 20/15
 12) 55: 8/3(2) 7/2(2)
 31: 15/12 14/13
 13) 44: 9/5(3) 8/4 61: 13/6
 14) 64: 8/4 6/0 66: 12/0 8/2 6/0
 15) 61: 6/0 2/1 21: 2/0 1/0
 16) 65: 6/0 5/0 52: 5/0 2/0
 17) 44: 4/0(4) 54: 5/0 4/0
 18) Doubles to 2 Drops
Wins 1 point

Game 11

Busfield : 9 Tannen : 7
 01) 51: 13/8 6/5 52: 13/8 24/22
 02) 33: 13/10 8/5 6/3(2)*
 32: 25/23 13/10

03) 52: 10/5 8/6 41: 13/9 24/23
 04) 51: 13/8 24/23 63: 9/3 6/3
 05) 32: 24/21 23/21
 55: 23/18(2) 10/5 8/3
 06) 54: 8/3 6/2 43: 6/2 8/5
 07) 53: 8/3 8/5 31: 6/2
 08) 52: 6/1 3/1 65: 8/2 8/3
 09) 64: 13/3 Doubles to 2
 10) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 12

Busfield : 9 Tannen : 8
 01) 51: 13/8 24/23
 02) 51: 24/18 21: 13/11 8/7*
 03) 44: 25/21 6/2(2)* 13/10

The last four, 13/10 was a misplay. The correct move should have been 13/9. This misplay cost Busfield the point because Tannen rolled 55 off the bar and hit, later doubling Busfield out. MC

55: 25/20 20/15* 6/1(2)*
 04) 21: 25/23 Doubles to 2
 05) Drops **Wins 1 point**

Game 13

Busfield : 9 Tannen : 9
 01) 21: 13/11 24/23
 02) 65: 24/13 Doubles to 2
 03) Takes 43: 24/20 23/20
 04) 32: 24/21 6/4 32: 13/10 6/4*
 05) 43: 25/21* 13/10
 64: 25/21* 21/15*
 06) 32: 25/22 25/23
 21: 15/13 11/10
 07) 32: 23/20 22/20
 64: 10/4* 8/4
 08) 65: 25/20 13/7 51: 10/4
 09) 51: 13/7 43: 20/13
 10) 61: 13/7 6/5* 53: 25/20* 13/10
 11) 52: 25/23 20/15*
 22: 25/23 6/2* 4/2
 12) 41: 25/20 31: 23/20 4/3
 13) 33: 13/10(2) 7/4 6/3 64: 13/3
 14) 43: 15/8 65: 13/2
 15) 42: 8/4 8/6 31: 4/1 2/1
 16) 41: 6/2 3/2 61: 20/13
 17) 62: 20/14 7/5* 42:
 18) 63: 14/5 44:
 19) 42: 10/6 7/5 66:
 20) 11: 10/9 8/7(2) 5/4
 11: 25/24 13/12(3)
 21) 32: 9/4 55: 12/2 12/7(2)



22) 62: 20/12	65: 8/2 8/3
23) 52: 20/15 4/2	52: 24/17
24) 32: 12/7	66: 17/5 7/1(2)
25) 31: 15/12 7/6	65: 6/0 5/0
26) 65: 12/6 7/2	32: 3/0 2/0
27) 31: 7/3	32: 3/0 2/0
28) 62: 6/0 2/0	53: 6/1 3/0
29) 31: 4/0	52: 6/1 2/0
30) 64: 6/0 4/0	31: 2/0 1/0

**Wins 2 points
and the match**

British Open April 6/7 2002

Report by Michael Crane

Main 112

Everyone that knows me knows that I have two passions in my life (three if you count Sharen!). They are backgammon and Turkey. Note the latter is capitalised, meaning the country not the feathered kind. So, when both of these passions come together I am a happy bunny.

Mind you, I wasn't as happy as Murat Imamoglu from Istanbul. He learnt about the British Open on Wednesday of last week (3 April) and decided to enter; which proved to be well worthwhile. His snap decision saw him sitting down in the Final against Hubert de l'Epine from France – now who'd have predicted that back on Wednesday?

Where were all the top British players? What were they doing letting a couple of foreigners compete for our British Championship title? For goodness sake what is the world coming to? I'll tell you where they were: All but three of them were left behind in the last sixteen, that's where they were. Mike Grabsky Connor Dickinson and David Startin were the only *British* players left in the last eight; and with a surname like Grabsky, Mike is a little suspect! I am not too sure about Tony Lee's origins (semi-finalist), but I think

I'm on safe ground saying that he isn't of Anglo Saxon stock!

In the last eight we had Irish, English, French, Turkish . . . and Tony Lee who can claim yet another nationality – a great mixture of cultures and personalities.

Back to the French/Turkish final. Backgammon is played everywhere in Turkey and by everyone. It is played on street corners, pavements, roads, by the pool, on the beach. There's not a place I've been to in Turkey where I haven't heard the clatter of dice, the slap of the checkers or the exclamations of frustration and delight that alert me to a game in progress. Mind you, it's not backgammon, as we know it. It is fast and furious and played without the cube. In fact the only cube a Turk recognises is white, made of granulated sugar and is used to sweeten the copious amounts of *chi* (tea) consumed during backgammon sessions. So, it was with delight that I sat down to watch the Final between a Frenchman and a Turk.

It was obvious that Murat had played *proper* backgammon before. He knew all about the cube and what to do with it. And so did Hubert. The game went at a cracking pace and the cube flew from one side of the board to the other in a blur that was reminiscent of Turkish backgammon.

I can't say it was the best backgammon I'd ever seen, but it was perhaps the fastest. In no time at all



**Murat Amamoglu
British Open Champion**

an eight-cube was residing on Hubert's side of the board with the match score at 6-4 to Murat; and this eight-cube was accepted one roll prior to the bearoff and at a stage where Hubert was a roll behind. Murat made a major error in shipping the cube over at this time. Hubert had a far greater chance to win the match from this position than from 10-4 down at Crawford. However, he failed to bear off four men in one roll and was unable to stop Murat from being the 2002 British Open Champion. This is



**Hubert de l'Epine
Main Losing Finalist**

the second time a Turk has won a Biba tournament, the first being my Turkish brother, Mustafa Manav in 1995, when he won the 5th Birthday Tournament.

A consequence of this particular pairing in the final was that neither player had chosen to enter the Prize Fund and therefore the £1,020 in the fund went unclaimed and is now awaiting a new owner to emerge from the County Cups Trophy in May.

Progressive Consolation (108)

The progressive side of the consolation always holds up the competition, starting as it does, a couple of hours after the non-progressive side. Therefore this time I decided to make the progressive side 5 points instead of 7 points in an attempt to bring the finals together at a reasonable time. This proved unsuccessful inasmuch as Simon K Jones, entering from the non- side had a wait of four hours before he could play the final against Connor Dickinson who emerged from the progressive side.

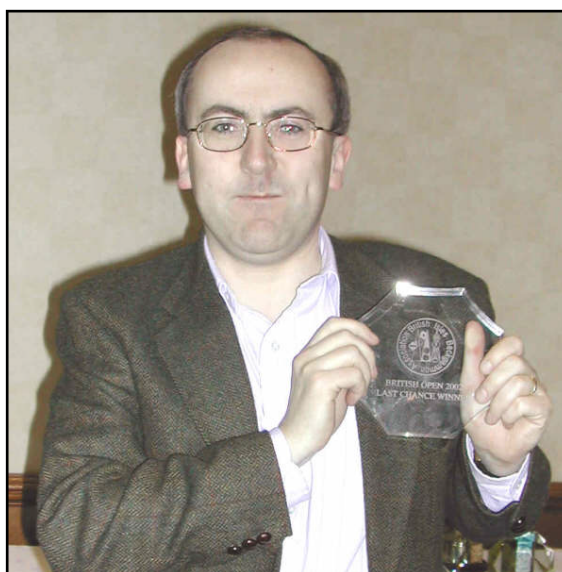
Not only was it late starting (19:00) but also once again it was the last event to finish, at 19:45, at which time the only persons present were the two finalists, two spectators and two staff - Sharen and me.

A wait of four hours proved to be too long for Simon and he lost (at DMP and on the last roll) to Connor. Simon is a very quiet person, not one for complaining and he bore the wait with good humour - and optimism, as his frequent visits to the playing-room showed as he checked on the progress of his awaited opponent.



Consolation Winner, Connor Dickinson (r) and Runner-Up, Simon K Jones

My decision to make it five points was not only unsuccessful, it was also unpopular. Therefore, in an attempt to keep the timings more in synch and remain at 7-point matches, I have decided to reduce the number of entrants into the progressive side. In future the last entrants into the progressive side will be the first round losers in the Main on Sunday. This will be the last eight or sixteen players left in the Main (four or eight entrants) depending upon the overall entry. This will only effect four players' entry into the Consolation . . . one of which would have been Connor! Any member with strong objections to this decision should make them known to me as soon as they can.



Last Chance Winner, Sean Casey

Last Chance (72)

This misnamed event has finally turned out to literally be *the last chance* for a number of players. Over a dozen players failed to let me know they were not intending to enter before the draw was made, and, some of them even told me whilst the draw was in progress of their intention of not playing. Such behaviour is very rude, disruptive and inconsiderate. The draw-sheet was rewritten three times

before it was finished after Julie and I had to eliminate byes playing byes and absent players.

In future any player intending to enter the Last Chance on Sunday will have to register their intent on the Saturday by 22:00 by filling in a 'draw-sheet' which will be available after the close of registration. I shall take a very dim view of any entrants who later decide to scratch after the draw has been made at 10:00 on Sunday.

Right, now that's off my chest (as the actress said to the Bishop) I shall return to the Last Chance.

Cliff Connick, Biba's oldest member, narrowly missed out on the trophies when he was beaten in the semi-final by Eddie Barker. In the other semi, an all Irish battle between Sean Casey and Felix Vink (honorary Irishman) saw the real Irishman, Sean emerge victorious to go into the Final. Having been robbed of the Main trophy in the 3rd round by Arthur Musgrove, Sean made certain that he returned to Ireland a winner, leaving Eddie with the Last Chance Runner-up Trophy.

Suicide! 128 (open draw)

One hundred and twenty-eight entrants. OK, so it was an open draw, but we filled it, and in less than two hours from start to finish. Perhaps we should play all matches to three points.

players decided to call it a night in the early hours of Saturday morning.

Doubles (28)

So, what action was there this time? Well, *We Won It Last Time*

didn't win it this time; *Laurel & Hardy* made us all laugh going out in the 1st round; *Shy & Retiring* went out quietly and retired to bed; *Simple Men* could only take to two places; and *Nickers* came down in round two.

Given the number of re-entries available I decided to enter and left the draw-sheets in the capable hands of Julie Mooring. This proved a wise decision as I almost went home with a trophy. I was robbed by a 61 when I left a blot on my 6-point which Ray Tannen rather unsportingly hit with a 1. Ray, then went into the final in my place and lost it to Kevin White (whom I'm convinced I'd have whupped if it wasn't for Ray). My only consolation is I did a deal with Ray over the substantial pool fund and I went home with a fistful of fivers.



Last Chance Runner-Up, Eddie Barker

Jabaris and *Cubeez* made the semis, losing to *The Weakest Vink* and *Batgirl & Boy Blunder*, respectively. In the final, *The Weakest Vink* proved to be *The Strongest Vink* as they sent their opponents packing like a bat out of hell.

The Top Name this time went to *Lovelee Doublee* which was a clever use of a surname for a husband and wife team. Can you guess who it was?

And finally. I'd like to say a big thank you to the tournament sponsor, **At-A-Glance Calendars**, aka Peter Bennet. Unfortunately Peter was

unable to be there due to a prior engagement – he was skiing in Norway. Obviously he'd failed to consult his calendar before booking a holiday that clashed with a backgammon tournament! However, he did telephone to ask about progress and, coincidentally he called just as the Main final was completed.

The trophies were magnificent and much admired. Everyone who took one home seemed very happy with Peter's choice. He plans to be the sponsor next year (and following

Friday KO (37)

Once upon a time I looked forward to playing in this event, but now, when the entries go over 32 I decide to step down on the grounds that I cannot afford to stay up all night to play the Final. Nor am I able to play it over the weekend due to being busy doing other things. So, with an entry of 37 I sat and watched what I could.

What I didn't see was Vincent Vers-teeg (from Amsterdam) beat Ray Tannen in the Final. Mind you, I could have done as it was played late Saturday afternoon after both



Suicide Winner, Kevin White



Runner-Up, Ray Tannen



The Weakest Vink Doubles Team

years) and is fully intending to be present to take home the big one for himself.

The tournament went quite smoothly apart from a couple of incidents in the Main final. Both problems were relatively minor and could have easily been prevented had the protagonists read and played to the rules!

The first incident was regarding shaking the dice prior to rolling. Hubert complained that Murat was failing to shake his dice before rolling - and, I must admit, he was correct. However, there wasn't anything sinister in the action, nor was Murat trying to gain an advantage. Despite the poor shaking, the dice were being thrown correctly.

The rule here is:

4.1 Random Rolls: *Both dice must be placed into the cup and shaken vigorously before rolling simultaneously to the right of the bar. They are to be thrown from a discernible height and be seen to bounce.*

The next incident entailed a *yes you did - no I didn't* contention over the position of the cube. One player argued that he hadn't cubed in this game and his opponent refuted that statement replying that he did do so early in the game. Who was correct?

It didn't matter who was correct - they were both at fault and in contravention of the rules on cube play.

5.2 Cube Set-up: *It is the responsibility of both players to ensure that the cube is not on their side of the board and that the "64" face is showing at the start of every game. In the event of a dispute the current position and level of the cube will strongly affect the Director's ruling.*

This unambiguous wording, putting the onus on both players, made my decision easy. When I came to look at the board the cube was residing snugly on the side nearest one of the players. Neither would retract their opinion over whether or not a cube had been offered/taken so I cited the above rule and left it where it was.

Harsh? I don't think so. I canvassed opinions of kibitzers but none were able to give a positive opinion as to the correct position of the cube.

County Cups 4/5 May 2002

Report by Michael Crane

County Cups (70)

Yes he can! No he can't! These were the two arguments on everyone's lips about Dod Davies. Can he win the County Cups Trophy for a fourth successive year; or can't he? Well, the can'ts had it; thanks to Rachel Rhodes who beat him in the 2nd round, ending the longest run of unbeaten matches in the history of any Biba tournament. He still had a chance of being Runner-up, but even that position was denied him when he lost a second match to Dave McNair in the 4th round. Eventually Dod had to settle for joint 13th position with Al Hogg; and a begrudging handing over of his beloved trophy!

On the Sunday morning we had nine players on 3/3 (which meant we had a potential 7th round play-off to look forward to) so a 'top-two' was drafted in to even out the draw - and hopefully knock out one of the threes. The player entrusted with this task was John Thomas, who was chosen completed at random; I mean, John Thomas! Who'd have picked him deliberately? Mind you, he did the business and we were down to just

four players in the 5th round with 4/4: David Startin, Vincent Vers-teeg, John Napier and Julian Fetterlein. In the 5th round, Julian beat David and John beat Vincent.

So, into the 6th it was Julian vs John. Now, bearing in mind this was a Swiss format tournament, this wasn't the 'Final' but the last round. From this match the winner would emerge, but not necessarily the Runner-up. The Runner-up would be the player with five wins and the highest sum of opponents' wins; who might or might not be one of these two players. As it turned out, Julian emerged the winner and the new, County Cups champion but John slipped down into 5th place overall being passed by Lawrence Powell who came 2nd, and Rachel Rhodes and David Startin who came in at joint 3rd.

But, John didn't go home empty handed. He won a copy of Jelly-Fish Player for being the highest Beginner, and the 'Losing Finalist' Trophy which is awarded to the player who loses in the last round having lost only their last match. Complicated, isn't it?

What this format shows is that even when you lose a match it is technically possible to come second (when we don't have a 7th round play-off). Lawrence lost in the 4th round but his opponents won a total of 25 matches whereas John's opponents only won a total of 22 matches. John was let down by two players: 1st round, Gary Stark and 2nd Liz Barker, both of whom didn't do well after being beaten by John.

David Startin added to his collection of trophies being the 'Top Intermediate' having been the 'Top Beginner' in the Jarvis Trophy in February. He'll be in the Championship category next time so you'll



County Cups Line-up (left to right)
David Startin, Top Intermediate. Julian Fetterlein, Winner.
Lawrence Powell, Runner-up. John Napier, Top Beginner

round match between Julian and John – hopefully I can transcribe it into a JellyFish match file later on when I've got more time; at the moment I am frantically collating the results and editing and formatting the Bibafax ready for postage on Friday (why do I set myself such tight deadlines?!).

Just before I go, what about the shirt? Nice one eh? This stunning little number was

all have an opportunity to win something!

A couple of players failed to complete the tournament . . . and I shall be talking to them both later on about what is expected of entrants into Swiss format tournaments.

Friday Knockout (22)

Tim Mooring made a cracking start to his weekend. He started by knocking me out in the 1st round and then going all the way to the final in which he beat Peter Bennet to win his first ever Friday KO.

Doubles Knockout (16)

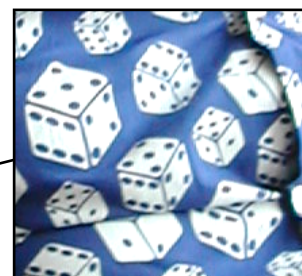
Once again the weird and wonderful battled it out on the Saturday night. *Move Over Lady Godiva*, *Here Comes Amy* lost their shirts in the first round; *Last Minute.com* didn't last much more than one minute; *Double Dutch* conducted their entire conversation in Dutch – I didn't understand the language but I certainly understood the tone! *Idle Dice* and *The Two Snow(ie) Drops* flowered for three rounds but then withered to *The*

Diceperados and *It's All Her Fault*, respectively. In the final, *The Diceperados* were knocked out and it certainly **was** *All Her Fault* because *she* was able to roll whatever *he* asked for!

The top name went to *Idle Dice*.

And finally. This years' County Cups was a good tournament. No problems (well, none worth mentioning), everything going smoothly. I have videoed the last

worn by Vincent Versteeg. It turned many a head (and stomach!) over the weekend. So much was it admired(?) that I have decided to hold a '**I Wouldn't Wear This Shirt In Public**' competition to be judged at the **Roy Hollands Trophy**, in September. A bottle of wine and accommodation for one night (worth fifty-five quid) will be awarded to the wearer (male or female) of the shirt polling the most votes by those present over the weekend. Have you a shirt you're ashamed to wear in public? Then put it on and wear it with pride at the Roy Hollands Trophy . . . if you dare!



Tournament Results

Scottish Open March 9/10

<u>Main (79)</u>			<u>Last Chance (42)</u>			<u>Friday KO (44)</u>		
1	Ray Tannen	15	1	Paul Lamford	6	1	Rachel Rhodes	
2	Brian Busfield	10	2	Peter Bennet	2	2	Emmanuel Di Bona	
3/4	Tony Lee	7	3/4	David Sharples	1	3/4	Mike Greenleaf	
3/4	Rachel Rhodes	6	3/4	Steve Hallet	1	3/4	Vianney Bourgios	
5/8	Peter Wilson	4	5/8	Peter Chan		<u>Doubles (19)</u>		
5/8	Ian Shaw	3	5/8	Paul Barwick		1	They May Take Our Dice	
5/8	Ernie Pick	3	5/8	Kevin Willaims			But They'll Never Take	
5/8	Mike Waxman	3	5/8	Simom K Jones			Our Freedom	
<u>Consolation (75)</u>			<u>Haggis (64)</u>			2	Posh & Becks	
1	Brian Lever	13	1	Paul Gilbertson	3	3/4	Cocked & Crooked	
2	Mike Butterfield	8	2	John Batty	1	3/4	Granted, It's Appauling	
3/4	Mathew Fisher	3	3/4	Jim Moore		Top name:		
3/4	David Nathan	4	3/4	Dave McNamara		Who Needs Peter Bennet?		
5/8	Mike Wignall	3	5/8	Leslie Singleton				
5/8	Dave Motley	3	5/8	John Slattery				
5/8	Ernie Pick (see Main)		5/8	Adam Stocks				
5/8	Vincent Versteeg	2	5/8	Stephen Reddi				

British Open April 6/7

<u>Main (112)</u>			<u>Last Chance (72)</u>			<u>Friday KO (37)</u>		
1	Murat Imamoglu	15	1	Sean Casey	6	1	Vincent Versteeg	
2	Hubert de l'Epine	13	2	Eddie Barker	3	2	Ray Tannen	
3/4	Brendan Burgess	7	3/4	Cliff Connick	1	3/4	Jim Johnson	
3/4	Tony Lee	7	3/4	Felix Vink	1	3/4	Kevin Stebbing	
5/8	David Startin	4	5/8	Julian Minwalla		5/8	Aubrey Tapley	
5/8	Dave Coyne	4	5/8	Bill Pope		5/8	Geoff Conn	
5/8	Mike Grabsky	4	5/8	Peter Chan		5/8	Tony Lee	
5/8	Connor Dickinson (Cons)		5/8	Jeff Barber		5/8	David Nathan	
<u>Consolation (108)</u>			<u>Suicide (128)</u>			<u>Doubles (28)</u>		
1	Connor Dickinson	10	1	Kevin White	4	1	The Weakest Vink	
2	Simon K Jones	7	2	Ray Tannen	1	2	Batgirl & Boy Blunder	
3/4	Anthony Coker	4	3/4	Michael Crane		3/4	Jabaris	
3/4	Stephen Drake	7	3/4	Gerry Smith		3/4	Cubeez	
5/8	Darryl Kirk	3	5/8	David Fall		Top Name:		
5/8	Harry Bhatia	3	5/8	Frank Conway		Lovelee Doublee		
5/8	Helen Helm-Sagar	2	5/8	Uldis Lapikens				
5/8	Geoff Conn	2	5/8	Alaa Jaber				

May 1000-to-1

7	Salvador Leong	6	Murat Imamoglu
6	Julian Fetterlein	4	Martin Sloane
6	Willy Stanton		

County Cups Trophy 4/5 May

(Pos / Name / Wins / GP)

001	Julian Fetterlein	6	15	029	Kevin White	3	1	059	Stuart Fryett	2
002	Lawrence Powell	5	7	029	Steve Field	3	1	060	Bob Young	2
003	Rachel Rhodes	5	7	029	John Renicks	3	1	061	Julian Minwalla	2
003	David Startin	5	7	033	John Wright	3	1	062	Alison Hobbs	1
005	John Napier	5	10	033	Mardi Ohannessian	3	1	062	Gary Stark	1
006	Jacek Brzezinski	5	7	033	Andrew Sarjeant	3	1	064	Martin Blindell	1
007	Stephen Drake	5	7	033	Wayne Felton	3	1	065	John P Lewis	1
008	Ralph Eskinazi	4	3	033	Amir Mossanen	3	1	066	Paul Sambell	1
008	Peter Christmas	4	3	038	Brian Busfield	3	1	067	Malcolm Storey	0
010	Tim Mooring	4	3	038	Arthur Williams	3	1	068	Alexis	0
011	Stuart Mann	4	3	038	Steven Reddi	3	1	069	Mike Butterfield	2 *
011	John Jacobs	4	3	041	Paul Barwick	3	1	070	Paul Jenkins	0 *
013	Emmanuel Di Bona	4	3	041	Simon K Jones	3	1	* Failed to complete		
013	Alistair Hogg	4	3	043	Dave Motley	3	1			
013	Dod Davies	4	3	043	Nick Hamar	3	1			
016	Tony Lee	4	3	045	Hubert De L'Epine	3	1	Friday KO (22)		
016	Paul Gilbertson	4	3	046	David Fall	3	1	1	Tim Mooring	
018	John Thomas	4	3	047	Peter Bennet	2		2	Peter Bennet	
019	Peter Chan	4	3	048	Liz Barker	2		3/4	Andrew Sarjeant	
019	Ian Hill	4	3	048	Nigel Briddon	2		3/4	Julian Fetterlein	
021	Vincent Versteeg	4	3	050	Roy Hollands	2		Doubles (16)		
022	Will Richardson	4	3	051	Kerry Jackson	2		1	It's All Her Fault	
022	Freddy Mossanen	4	3	051	Mike Wignall	2		2	Diceperados	
024	Stuart Parmley	4	3	053	Bob Parmley	2		3/4	The Two Snow(ie) Drops	
025	Dave McNair	3	1	053	Mike Greenleaf	2		3/4	Idle Dice	
026	Tim Brown	3	1	055	Jeff Barber	2		Top Name: Idle Dice		
027	Ian Tarr	3	1	055	Peter Wilson	2				
027	John Slattery	3	1	057	Rosemary Bensley	2				
029	Uldis Lapikens	3	1	057	Tony Fawcett	2				

May 2002 Active Rankings

(new / old / name)

1982	1982	Paul Lamford	1693	1650	Rachel Rhodes	1612	1618	David Fall
1879	1879	Brian Lever	1690	1690	Graham Brittain	1611	1611	Tim Wilkins
1878	1866	Dod Davies	1688	1688	John Hurst	1608	1608	Rodney Lighton
1852	1780	Julian Fetterlein	1683	1699	John Slattery	1607	1610	Uldis Lapikens
1837	1830	Tony Lee	1678	1647	Emmanuel Di Bona	1604	1604	Martin Barkwill
1822	1822	John Clark	1674	1655	Stuart Mann	1602	1602	Harry Bhatia
1821	1847	Mardi Ohannessian	1672	1672	Salvador Leong	1601	1638	Roy Hollands
1781	1781	Richard Granville	1668	1611	Stephen Drake	1601	1576	Peter Christmas
1772	1772	Jim Johnson	1668	1668	Helen Helm-Sagar	1600	1564	Alistair Hogg
1763	1786	Brian Busfield	1654	1654	Ray Tannen	1597	1597	Bill Pope
1749	1768	Dave McNair	1650	1650	Arthur Musgrove	1596	1540	David Startin
1747	1695	Lawrence Powell	1650	1650	Connor Dickinson	1591	1622	Kerry Jackson
1744	1721	Ralph Eskinazi	1647	1647	Charlie Hetherington	1591	1579	Mike Butterfield
1742	1742	Tim Cross	1645	1645	Raj Jansari	1589	1589	Mike Waxman
1724	1724	Steve Hallet	1628	1628	David Nathan	1589	1626	Peter Bennet
1717	1717	Jeff Ellis	1626	1626	Steve Pickard	1586	1586	Steve Rimmer
1711	1732	Ian Tarr	1622	1622	Gavin Crawley	1583	1583	Francine Brandler
1708	1708	David Gallagher	1618	1627	Simon K Jones	1580	1615	Bob Young
1704	1704	Mike Grabsky	1615	1660	Jeff Barber	1570	1570	Kevin Stebbing

1567	1534	Tim Mooring	1482	1482	Martin Hemming	1401	1401	Colin Laight
1559	1559	Shaun Herd	1476	1439	Will Richardson	1393	1381	John Renicks
1555	1526	John Thomas	1462	1457	Wayne Felton	1388	1388	Rebecca Bell
1553	1483	Jacek Brzezinski	1451	1442	Arthur Williams	1387	1387	Paul Watts
1553	1553	Simon Macbeth	1450	1479	Mike Greenleaf	1386	1386	Cliff Connick
1549	1549	Phil Caudwell	1448	1448	Elliot Smart	1383	1406	Peter Wilson
1547	1508	Peter Chan	1441	1439	Andrew Sarjeant	1379	1379	Leslie Singleton
1546	1545	Hubert De L'Epine	1441	1441	David Naylor	1377	1335	Paul Gilbertson
1542	1542	James Vogl	1439	1439	Jeremy Limb	1372	1372	Malcolm Hey
1541	1541	Wayne Auty	1433	1433	Rob Dean	1362	1383	Tony Fawcett
1533	1533	Jim Moore	1430	1458	Liz Barker	1354	1354	Don Hatt
1531	1531	Stavros Elia	1425	1447	Julian Minwalla	1354	1354	Sue Perks
1525	1525	Matthew Fisher	1418	1418	Steve Malins	1310	1313	Mike Wignall
1520	1452	John Napier	1418	1418	Neil Young	1308	1322	Rosemary Bensley
1516	1505	John Wright	1417	1417	Sarah Rosich	1300	1336	John P Lewis
1515	1515	Edwin Turner	1414	1414	Steve John	1292	1292	Andrew Maxwell
1510	1510	John Gale	1413	1406	Kevin White	1284	1304	Bob Parmley
1508	1509	Dave Motley	1411	1411	Kevin Carter	1281	1281	Helen Dean
1501	1504	Paul Barwick	1409	1409	Jerry Smith	1224	1263	Paul Sambell
1498	1498	Michael Damianou	1404	1404	Ernie Pick			
1486	1452	Stuart Parmley	1403	1403	Steve Simkin			

May 2002 Pending Rankings

(rank / name)

1725	Simon Barget	1512	Steven Reddi	1455	Neil Davidson
1721	Brendan Burgess	1510	Miles Ilott	1450	Winston<David
1639	Paul Turnbull	1505	Daphne Smith	1428	George Plant
1636	Rod Jones	1497	Jyesn Qwt	1428	Peter Murrell
1608	Corinne Sellers	1495	Vianney Bourgios	1425	Ian Sadler
1602	James Hatt	1489	David McNamara	1424	Grant Dewsbury
1587	Dave Raynsford	1485	Kevin Williams	1404	Evan Williams
1574	Dave Robbins	1483	Sunni Nicholson	1402	Alan Greenwood
1555	Vincent Versteeg	1481	Lorenzo Rusconi	1377	Michael Main
1538	Tom Duggan	1474	Brendan Bemsley	1377	Alison Hobbs
1534	David Hale	1472	Monica Beckerson	1376	Tony Pryor
1533	Mark McCluskey	1472	Blaine Buchanan	1363	Liz Makepeace
1527	Theo	1470	Steve Lynch	1361	Jon Sharpe
1520	Alan Beckerson	1469	Ian Shaw	1354	Richard Winston
1520	Kyriacous Kyriacou	1465	Johan Salfors	1326	Martin Blindell
1519	Paul Christmas	1459	Roz Nathan		

May 2002 Grand Prix

(points / name)

29	Brian Busfield	14	Hubert De L'Epine	8	Ian Tarr
26	David Startin	13	Connor Dickinson	8	Simon K Jones
20	Tony Lee	13	Barry McAdam	7	Brendan Burgess
20	Rachel Rhodes	12	Paul Lamford	7	Jacek Brzezinski
17	Stephen Drake	11	John Slattery	7	Lawrence Powell
16	Ray Tannen	10	Emmanuel Di Bona	7	Raj Jansari
16	Dod Davies	10	Edwin Turner	7	Rodney Lighton
15	Tim Mooring	10	John Napier	7	Paul Gilbertson
15	Julian Fetterlein	9	Peter Bennet	7	Tony Fawcett
15	Murat Imamoglu	9	Mike Butterfield	7	Kevin Williams
14	Brian Lever	8	Paul Barwick	6	Peter Chan

6	Sean Casey	3	Mike Waxman	1	Steve Hallet
5	Dave Motley	3	Mark Flanagan	1	John Wright
5	Kevin White	3	Charlie Hetherington	1	Jeff Barber
5	Peter Wilson	3	Will Richardson	1	Martin Barkwill
5	Vincent Versteeg	3	Richard Granville	1	Bill Pope
4	Dave Coyne	3	Mike Greenleaf	1	Bob Young
4	Mike Grabsky	3	Alistair Hogg	1	John Clark
4	Uldis Lapikens	3	Raymond Kershaw	1	Sue Perks
4	Matthew Fisher	3	Harry Bhatia	1	Andrew Sarjeant
4	Peter Christmas	3	Julian Minwalla	1	Felix Vink
4	Chris Bray	3	Ian Shaw	1	Steve Field
4	Peter Fallows	3	Vianney Bourgios	1	George Suilimirski
4	Mardi Ohannessian	3	Ian Hill	1	David Sharples
4	Stuart Parmley	3	Juliet Fennell	1	Paul Watts
4	Kerry Jackson	3	Martin Sloane	1	Nick Hamar
4	Stuart Mann	3	John Jacobs	1	Wayne Felton
4	David Nathan	3	Freddy Mossanen	1	Arthur Williams
4	Mike Wignall	2	Geoff Conn	1	Andrew Kindler
4	Anthony Coker	2	David Fall	1	Mark Lemon
4	Ernie Pick	2	Helen Helm-Sagar	1	Tim Brown
4	Darryl Kirk	2	John Renicks	1	Amir Mossanen
4	Eddie Barker	1	Cliff Connick	1	Gary Slocombe
3	Jeff Ellis	1	Phil Caudwell	1	John Batty
3	John Thomas	1	Tim Wilkins	1	Peter watkins
3	Dave Raynsford	1	Roy Hollands	1	Steven Reddi
3	Ralph Eskinazi	1	Dave McNair		

May 2002 Rankings Championship

(played / points / name)

18	2049.44	Tony Lee	15	1862.13	Emmanuel Di Bona	10	1325.30	Grant Jewsbury
18	2027.89	Brian Busfield	15	1664.07	Peter Chan	9	1808.44	Jeff Ellis
18	2027.22	Rachel Rhodes	15	1639.80	Mardi Ohannessian	9	1777.89	Ray Tannen
18	1868.17	David Startin	15	1576.40	Uldis Lapikens	9	1750.00	Richard Granville
18	1687.56	Stuart Mann	15	1484.53	Paul Gilbertson	9	1652.78	John Wright
18	1667.17	Mike Greenleaf	15	1407.67	Andrew Sarjeant	9	1611.56	Steven Reddi
18	1657.89	Hubert de l'Epine	14	1638.07	Jacek Brzezinski	9	1550.00	Vincent Versteeg
18	1543.22	David Fall	14	1596.07	Paul Barwick	9	1495.00	Wayne Felton
18	1459.17	Jeff Barber	14	1555.71	Peter Christmas	9	1480.67	Dave McNair
17	1630.59	John Slattery	14	1492.00	Kevin White	9	1457.11	Paul Watts
17	1590.00	Mike Butterfield	14	1484.14	Julian Minwalla	9	1415.78	Sue Perks
17	1516.82	Peter Wilson	14	1467.21	John Renicks	9	1365.22	Colin Laight
17	1500.71	Mike Wignall	14	1269.50	Paul Sambell	9	1357.56	Gerry Smith
17	1498.18	Bob Young	13	1913.77	Dod Davies	9	1303.67	Neil Young
17	1427.24	Arthur Williams	13	1754.00	Edwin Turner	9	1270.11	Elliot Smart
17	1271.65	Bob Parmley	13	1577.00	Ernie Pick	8	1836.25	Julian Fetterlein
16	1737.19	Stephen Drake	12	1587.83	Stuart Parmley	8	1799.00	Rodney Lighton
16	1733.50	Ian Tarr	12	1318.58	John P Lewis	8	1704.25	Lawrence Powell
16	1590.44	Tim Mooring	11	1644.73	Conner Dickinson	8	1637.25	Ian Hill
16	1581.56	Peter Bennet	11	1546.73	Kerry Jackson	8	1579.25	Peter Watkins
16	1538.38	Tony Fawcett	11	1456.55	Vianney Bourgeois	8	1573.13	Matthew Fisher
16	1517.00	Dave Motley	11	1418.82	Mike Waxman	8	1558.50	Juliet Fennell
16	1507.94	Roy Hollands	11	1379.82	David Nathan	8	1517.38	Amir Mossanen
16	1352.94	Liz Barker	10	1639.60	Will Richardson	8	1490.88	Tim Brown
16	1261.06	Rosemary Bensley	10	1433.60	Simon Macbeth	8	1396.13	Brian Lever

7	1775.57	Arthur Musgrove	6	1984.00	Raj Jansari	6	1503.50	Steve Field
7	1727.00	Helen Helm-Sagar	6	1939.83	John Napier	6	1495.33	Gary Slocombe
7	1723.57	Dave Gallagher	6	1891.17	Brendan Burgess	6	1486.67	Phil Caudwell
7	1556.86	Kevin Williams	6	1799.00	Mike Grabsky	6	1407.17	David Welch
7	1554.43	Mark Flanagan	6	1775.50	Al Hogg	6	1398.67	Tim Wilkins
7	1501.43	Darryl Kirk	6		1770.33-	6	1336.50	Johan Sallfors
7	1455.43	Bill Pope			Ralph Eskinazi	6	1290.33	Stuart Fryett
7	1440.57	Simon K Jones	6	1726.33	C. Hetherington	6	1282.67	Steve Malins
7	1434.86	John Thomas	6	1721.83	Freddi Mossanen	6	1215.33	Alison Hobbs
7	1421.71	Eddie Barker	6	1704.67	Mike Bailey	6	1211.67	Martin Blindell
7	1406.29	Aubrey Tapley	6	1680.00	Martin Sloane	6	1147.83	Tim O'Hanlan
7	1316.14	Nigel Briddon	6	1678.50	John Jacobs	6	1102.17	Gary Stark
7	1010.57	Malcolm Storey	6	1675.00	Tom Duggan	6	1029.33	Stephen Wilson
6	2029.50	Murat Imamoglu	6	1569.67	Nick Hamar			

May 2002 11 Point Win Percentage

(pos / name / played / won / win%)

001	Simon Barget	39	28	71.79	039	Graham Sievers	91	58	63.74
002	Paul Lamford	239	171	71.55	040	Michael Crane	85	54	63.53
003	Julian Fetterlein	35	25	71.43	041	Peter Bennet	71	45	63.38
004	Chris Bray	24	17	70.83	042	Arthur Musgrove	46	29	63.04
005	Dod Davies	155	109	70.32	043	Gavin Crawley	27	17	62.96
006	Rick Janowski	168	117	69.64	044	Joseph Levy	32	20	62.50
007	Salvador Leong	46	32	69.57	045	Paul Cohen	24	15	62.50
008	Mark Adkins	78	54	69.23	046	Rodney Lighton	32	20	62.50
009	Jim Johnson	237	164	69.20	047	Paul Money	111	69	62.16
010	Steve Bibby	96	66	68.75	048	Connor Dickinson	29	18	62.07
011	Helen Helm-Sagar	32	22	68.75	049	Lawrence Powell	86	53	61.63
012	John Hurst	35	24	68.57	050	Stuart Mann	99	61	61.62
013	Mike Butterfield	57	39	68.42	051	Ralph Eskinazi	211	130	61.61
014	Brendan Burgess	126	86	68.25	052	Adrian Chambers	52	32	61.54
015	Nigel Merrigan	25	17	68.00	053	Simon Osborne	132	81	61.36
016	Stephen Turner	93	63	67.74	054	Barry Williams	105	64	60.95
017	Derek Matheson	181	122	67.40	055	Francine Brandler	33	20	60.61
018	Dale Taylor	237	159	67.09	056	Mike Waxman	162	98	60.49
019	Brian Lever	286	191	66.78	057	Mark Leah	43	26	60.47
020	Michael Brereton	24	16	66.67	058	Andrew Grkow	48	29	60.42
021	Dave Coyne	36	24	66.67	059	Tim Found	48	29	60.42
022	Mardi Ohannessian	172	114	66.28	060	John Clark	192	116	60.42
023	Tim Cross	195	129	66.15	061	Steve Hallet	128	77	60.16
024	Brian Busfield	65	43	66.15	062	Mike Grabsky	168	101	60.12
025	David Levi	38	25	65.79	063	Andrew Plater	25	15	60.00
026	Dave McNair	173	113	65.32	064	Paul Turnbull	157	94	59.87
027	Thomas Connor	169	110	65.09	065	David Fall	107	64	59.81
028	John Broomfield	249	162	65.06	066	Roger Porter	154	92	59.74
029	Geoff Oliver	120	78	65.00	067	Raj Jansari	57	34	59.65
030	Stefan Paliwoda	37	24	64.86	068	Dan O'Farrell	84	50	59.52
031	Philip Ward-Ackland	105	68	64.76	069	John Wright	153	91	59.48
032	Tony Lee	68	44	64.71	070	Charlie Hetherington	116	69	59.48
033	Murray Henderson	28	18	64.29	071	Richard Beagarie	123	73	59.35
034	Ray Tannen	67	43	64.18	072	Danny Cohen	177	105	59.32
035	Richard Granville	156	100	64.10	073	Richard Wenban	76	45	59.21
036	Gerry Corolan	25	16	64.00	074	Jeff Barber	269	159	59.11
037	John Napier	25	16	64.00	075	Marc Steyvers	39	23	58.97
038	Nev Hyde	36	23	63.89	076	David Startin	34	20	58.82

077	Michael Steingold	29	17	58.62	133	Neil Webb	83	44	53.01
078	Rachel Rhodes	130	76	58.46	134	Raymond Kershaw	34	18	52.94
079	Ian Tarr	238	139	58.40	135	Jacek Brzezinski	144	76	52.78
080	David Nathan	55	32	58.18	136	Michael Earnshaw	110	58	52.73
081	Geoff Hall	38	22	57.89	137	Jim Moore	114	60	52.63
082	Adam Jacobs	66	38	57.58	138	Ray Pelly	105	55	52.38
083	Tim Wilkins	193	111	57.51	139	James Hatt	42	22	52.38
084	Mike Loughman	68	39	57.35	140	Simon Morris	109	57	52.29
085	Nigel Gibbions	68	39	57.35	141	Matthew Fisher	165	86	52.12
086	Simon Baker	133	76	57.14	142	Phil Charlton	150	78	52.00
087	Jeff Ellis	261	149	57.09	143	Bill Brierley	54	28	51.85
088	Tom Breheny	102	58	56.86	144	Jens Neregaard	27	14	51.85
089	Peter Ozanne	88	50	56.82	145	Steve Rimmer	64	33	51.56
090	Graham Brittain	148	84	56.76	146	Alan Lennox-Smith	97	50	51.55
091	Alistair Hogg	148	84	56.76	147	Paul Christmas	68	35	51.47
092	David Gallagher	177	100	56.50	148	Brian Jackson	37	19	51.35
093	John Slattery	154	87	56.49	149	Leslie Singleton	37	19	51.35
094	Simon K Jones	179	101	56.42	150	Kerry Jackson	80	41	51.25
095	Ken Staines	117	66	56.41	151	John Dean	96	49	51.04
096	Ewan McLeod	32	18	56.25	152	Julian Hayhurst	57	29	50.88
097	Roy Hollands	269	151	56.13	153	Philip Tabberer	67	34	50.75
098	Shahid Baig	25	14	56.00	154	Stuart Patterson	42	21	50.00
099	David Hale	25	14	56.00	155	Steve Bland	48	24	50.00
100	Paul Grant	34	19	55.88	156	Miles Ilott	56	28	50.00
101	Romolo Mudu	72	40	55.56	157	Kyriakos Charalambous	24	12	50.00
102	Martin Barkwill	143	79	55.24	158	Rob Dean	182	91	50.00
103	Martin Lee	154	85	55.19	159	Andrew Sarjeant	84	42	50.00
104	Keith Screene	49	27	55.10	160	Jim Pennington	24	12	50.00
105	Steve Pickard	129	71	55.04	161	Tony Beckerson	95	47	49.47
106	Richard Howes	120	66	55.00	162	Peter Fallows	75	37	49.33
107	Dave Raynsford	91	50	54.95	163	Steve Malins	61	30	49.18
108	Kevin Stebbing	93	51	54.84	164	Tim Mooring	200	98	49.00
109	Uldis Lapikens	262	143	54.58	165	Jeremy Limb	43	21	48.84
110	Bill Spiers	77	42	54.55	166	Julian Minwalla	58	28	48.28
111	Simon Gasquoine	132	72	54.55	167	Mark Flanagan	79	38	48.10
112	John Thomas	191	104	54.45	168	Julian Hayward	188	90	47.87
113	Phil Caudwell	186	101	54.30	169	Rosalie Johnson	220	105	47.73
114	Corinne Sellers	70	38	54.29	170	George Plant	86	41	47.67
115	Richard Gibney	48	26	54.17	171	Suart Dewis	143	68	47.55
116	Shay Shannon	24	13	54.17	172	Peter Gittins	38	18	47.37
117	Martin Sims	24	13	54.17	173	Colin Laight	57	27	47.37
118	Graham Powell	111	60	54	174	Jimmi Wong	36	17	47.22
119	Peter Christmas	202	109	53.96	175	Paul Heaton	36	17	47.22
120	Rod Jones	117	63	53.85	176	Stuart Milbourne	70	33	47.14
121	Emmanuel Di Bona	186	100	53.76	177	Nigel Hurneyman	32	15	46.88
122	Bill Pope	162	87	53.7	178	Neil Clarke	47	22	46.81
123	Alan Beckerson	218	117	53.67	179	Bob Freeman	88	41	46.59
124	Peter Walker	41	22	53.66	180	Jack Darian	28	13	46.43
125	Dave Motley	110	59	53.64	181	Patrick Campbell	84	39	46.43
126	Bob Young	140	75	53.57	182	Paul Barwick	291	135	46.39
127	Chris Andrescu	28	15	53.57	183	Gerry Cornish	91	42	46.15
128	Robert Bush	28	15	53.57	184	Monica Beckerson	213	98	46.01
129	Nick Check	142	76	53.52	185	Michael Proto	59	27	45.76
130	Hubert De L'Epine	58	31	53.45	186	John Gale	59	27	45.76
131	James Grenier	30	16	53.33	187	Stavros Elia	59	27	45.76
132	Shaun Herd	124	66	53.23	188	Cato Fordham	33	15	45.45

189	Michael Damianou	33	15	45.45	242	Matthew Pinnell	41	16	39.02
190	Dave Clifton	141	64	45.39	243	John Renicks	36	14	38.89
191	Conrad Cooper	42	19	45.24	244	Rob Walk	31	12	38.71
192	David Bridges	31	14	45.16	245	Caroline East	31	12	38.71
193	Paul Buckley	31	14	45.16	246	Keith Robertson	44	17	38.64
194	Stuart Parmley	31	14	45.16	247	Ernie Pick	26	10	38.46
195	Peter Wilson	91	41	45.05	248	Peter Davis	24	9	37.50
196	Mahmoud Jahanbani	29	13	44.83	249	Liz Jackson	24	9	37.50
197	Wai Mun Yoon	36	16	44.44	250	Johann Waterworth	24	9	37.50
198	David Edwards	43	19	44.19	251	Don O'Neal	32	12	37.50
199	Paul Seaton	59	26	44.07	252	John Baucher	24	9	37.50
200	Barry Teece	25	11	44.00	253	Alison Jones	32	12	37.50
201	Kate Porter	87	38	43.68	254	John Hamlen	24	9	37.50
202	Karen Proto	55	24	43.64	255	Carl Dell	116	43	37.07
203	Steve Taylor	55	24	43.64	256	Giovanna Bett	54	20	37.04
204	Laura Walker	78	34	43.59	257	Martin Blindell	41	15	36.59
205	Bernadete Santos	39	17	43.59	258	Mike Wignall	55	20	36.36
206	Malcolm Hey	85	37	43.53	259	Harry Bhatia	53	19	35.85
207	Steve Simkin	46	20	43.48	260	Anna Hayward	28	10	35.71
208	Arthur Williams	30	13	43.33	261	John Azraq	59	21	35.59
209	Karen Hare	44	19	43.18	262	Will Richardson	124	44	35.48
210	Bob Parmley	190	82	43.16	263	Carl Jones	48	17	35.42
211	Mark Tucker	86	37	43.02	264	Helen Clarke	60	21	35.00
212	John Kane	42	18	42.86	265	Sherry Taylor	60	21	35.00
213	Rosemary Bensley	77	33	42.86	266	Pamela Hare	119	41	34.45
214	Steve Field	35	15	42.86	267	Paul Gilbertson	62	21	33.87
215	Lionel Mann	108	46	42.59	268	John P Lewis	167	56	33.53
216	Ann Maher	40	17	42.50	269	Keith Hancock	60	20	33.33
217	Ergin Ahmet	40	17	42.50	270	Jon Forshaw	60	20	33.33
218	Michael Maley	66	28	42.42	271	Zoe Gregory	27	9	33.33
219	David Naylor	45	19	42.22	272	Andrew Baxter	30	10	33.33
220	Mike Shelton	100	42	42.00	273	Paul Watts	24	8	33.33
221	Cliff Connick	208	87	41.83	274	Mike Curtis	56	18	32.14
222	Gill Horne	36	15	41.67	275	Jordan Wensley	28	9	32.14
223	Tahir Babar	24	10	41.67	276	Sima Sahami	28	9	32.14
224	Chris Evans	48	20	41.67	277	Brian Tilley	25	8	32.00
225	Elliot Smart	24	10	41.67	278	Sarah Rosich	25	8	32.00
226	Peter Chan	222	92	41.44	279	Rebecca Bell	24	7	29.17
227	Alan Farrell	58	24	41.38	280	Paul Sambell	53	15	28.30
228	Guy Rankin	29	12	41.38	281	Ro Marsh	25	7	28.00
229	Neil Jackson	29	12	41.38	282	Brian Algar	36	10	27.78
230	Tony Fawcett	34	14	41.18	283	Matthew Curtis	37	10	27.03
231	Geoff Page	54	22	40.74	284	Sue Perks	72	19	26.39
232	Derek Irwin	27	11	40.74	285	Susie Green	39	10	25.64
233	Kevin White	96	39	40.63	286	Paul Edwards	43	11	25.58
234	Don Hatt	163	66	40.49	287	William Caudwell	24	6	25.00
235	Anna Price	77	31	40.26	288	Shirley Innes	67	15	22.39
236	Pauline Rowlands	97	39	40.21	289	Helen Dean	132	29	21.97
237	Raymond Bramzel	30	12	40.00	290	Zoe Mann	42	9	21.43
238	Jerry Smith	60	24	40.00	291	Liz Morgan	42	9	21.43
239	Alan Greenwood	68	27	39.71	292	Bob Atkins	48	10	20.83
240	Angela Dell	106	42	39.62	293	Margaret Algar	36	6	16.67
241	Carol Southby	84	33	39.29	294	Andrew Maxwell	27	4	14.81

David Naylor



Corner section showing glued and screwed checker housing



Very strong, reliable and harmonious leather closure



Leather covered brass checkers in various colours



Hand-stitched, lipped and lined shakers in top quality leather



Hard wearing and extremely strong 16mm brass hinges



Screwed leather handle for maximum security

The unique, David Naylor doubling cube



Discover the Beauty of Leather in its Greatest Form - BACKGAMMON

David has been building leather backgammon boards for over 20 years at his workshops in the Italian Alps and now in his London workshop. All leather used is finest Tuscan quality selected personally by David himself.

For further details contact Michael Crane on 01522 829649, email dnb@backgammon-biba.co.uk

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