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Editor/Publisher: Michael Crane, 2 Redbourne Drive, Lincoln. LN2 2HG

Office: 01522 888676, Mobile: 07900 916468

info@backgammon-biba.co.uk, www.backgammon-biba.co.uk



Dedicated To Backgammon



Biba World Champion 2009

Chris Ternel

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Chris Ternel Biba World Champion

Chris(topher) Ternel, born London 1951. Moved to Denmark in 1973, where he lived for nearly 30 years (he had 3 years in England in the late 80's). In 2005 he decided that he needed to re-locate his business (The Backgammon and Board Games Company Ltd. - bgshop.com) to a country that was more geared to private enterprise and lower taxes - England.

He gave up playing poker and started playing backgammon in 1981 after he was introduced to the game by a poker friend. After several years of travelling to backgammon tournaments in Europe - backgammon was only known to a handful of people in Denmark at that time - he founded the Danish Backgammon Federation (DBgF) in 1987, and served actively on the board until 1998. He is affectionately known in Denmark as "Mister Backgammon" and in England as "the (grand)father of Danish backgammon".

In 1988 a company was formed - Backgammon Shop, to meet the demand for backgammon equipment for the growing numbers of Danish players. In 1989, his then business partner Erik Gravgaard and Chris, negotiated with Carlsberg the Brewers to organise a nationwide backgammon café tournament - Hof Backgammon Cup - which later became known as Carlsberg Backgammon Cup (CBC) and which he continued to organise and direct for 12 years. At its height in 1998 CBC had over 300 participating venues and some 5,500 players. A weekly tournament was played at each venue over a 5-week period; each venue produced a winner who received a place in the final event, a knock-out for the nearly 300 players - the first 3 got all expenses paid trips to the World Championships in Monte Carlo and the 4th place loser got 5 crates of beer (approx. 50 litres) - now we know why it is the cruellest game in the world!

In 1988 Chris and Erik also formed the structure for National League for Teams (4+ players), which reached 120 teams nationwide. The same year they also started the Nordic Open Backgammon Tournament, which he organised and directed until 1998, by then it had become known as "the worlds largest international backgammon tournament". It had 5 flights, the Championship Flight had 118 players, the total number of players present that year was 525.

Whilst on the board of the DBgF, he was also the tournament director for the National Danish Championship and several 100 regional and local backgammon tournaments.

This constellation of backgammon activities for players at all levels, undoubtedly formed

the basis for the DBgF's meteoric growth, from the initial 9 members in late 1987 rising to 1250 by 1998 and has made Denmark the world's most successful backgammon nation in modern times. Even today many bars and cafes have backgammon sets for their customers, and weekly backgammon tournaments are popular in bars, with a typical entry fee of £2 - £5. During the summer, it is not unusual to find some of the "sharks" on the main pedestrian street in Copenhagen playing for small stakes against anybody who thinks they are good.

Both during and after his active days of DBgF board membership, he (when in attendance at international tournaments) is asked to sit on a tournament's Ruling Committee. He is also often approached by tournament organisers, for equipment, as a consultant, and also to act as tournament director.

He is internationally known and respected in the backgammon community as a world-class player, and attributes part of his success in no longer organising and directing, and now can just concentrate on playing. He is extremely thankful to those who run regular tournaments, giving up their weekends, and seldom with very little thanks from the players and even less in the way of remuneration, so that he can do what he likes doing best.

Needless to say he is, after almost 30 years still a most active player, participating in the vast majority of tournaments in the UK, and many of the major European tournaments, and has faithfully attended the World Backgammon Championships in Monte Carlo for the last 25 years, this year will make it 26 and 25 years of playing in them - in 2008 he was on the tournament staff. His first 2 years of Monte Carlo were spent in the intermediate flight which at that time had fields in the 150+, but after winning the consolation the 2nd year, he decided that it would be the championship flight from then on, when he realised that it wasn't enough being a good player, you also needed to be lucky - so when you are lucky, you might as well strike gold in the top flight. He prefers tournament play to money games, as he feels that they are more demanding, that said he is not adverse to playing "heads-up" or chouette with the best of them - well maybe not Gus Hansen, Sander Lyloff, Falafel, Trabi and a couple of others.



Winning the BIBA World Championship was a great warm-up for next weeks Monte Carlo world championships where he hopes to make it a double. The Biba World Championship was his third tournament victory at Biba tournaments since returning to the UK, and altogether he has picked up 100 and something trophies worldwide.

He says that he is still, at the age of 58, capable of learning new things about the game - although

it does take longer, and getting rid of the stuff he learnt 20 years ago to replace it with the newer theory. He plays daily online at CasinoRip and Ladbrokes, and downloads all his games and matches and analyses them with Snowie. Most of his backgammon knowledge has come from books, he believes he has all backgammon (bar one) that are in English and printed in the last century; that Danny Kleinmann is his favourite author, followed closely by Kit Woolsey, but that there are also several other authors, including our own Chris Bray whose dedication to enlighten the backgammon population is to be admired - because as he says "he doesn't know anybody that got rich from writing a backgammon book, so they are doing it because they LOVE the game". He also thinks that first Jelly-Fish, and later Snowie (because it can do batch-rollouts) have helped him most to improve his game, and that they are the greatest addition to backgammon since the doubling cube.

He prefers to play backgammon with a clock, and can't wait to get to Cannes for the first leg of this years WSOB, where they have a unique side event - a 5-point blitz, with 2 minutes bank time and 12 seconds a move - that's backgammon in the fast lane and a real adrenalin rush.

He thinks that the future for backgammon is again looking up, after 4 lean years when poker boomed. He believes that poker has reached a plateau, and that many players who left backgammon to play poker are starting to return to the game, after not having made the money they had hoped. When he talks to many ex-backgammon players that are playing poker the one thing that he hears constantly is "if there was as much money in BG as in poker, I would be playing BG, it's a fascinating game" - his own sentiments all those years ago.

See page 23 for full report

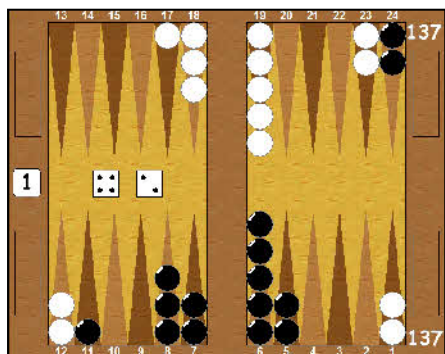
It has been said of John Clack that he is, "arguably the best player in Britain," a statement that many, perhaps, don't agree with. However, the statement that John Clark is "arguably the tallest player in Britain," is one shared by many players.

Another statement that few will dispute is, "Rachel Rhodes is arguably the best female player in Britain." Since joining Biba in April 1995 Rachel has won five tournaments, three of them national titles: British Open 2000, Scottish Open 2004, British Open 2005, Sandy Osborne 2006, County Cups 2009. Her nearest rival is Ann Pocknell with two tournaments, Keren Di Bona 2004 and the British Open 2008.

Rachel is a thoughtful but aggressive player. She has the Julian Fetterlein approach to being behind in a match - never give up. To give an example of the type of player she is, take a look at her dice shaking. A lot of players when trailing in the race or game or match or are on the bar facing a 5-prime will give the cup an arbitrary shake and tip the dice out with little or no effort. Not Rachel. Every shake is vigorous and forceful, the cup is shaken to death and the dice are propelled out of the cup at a rate of knots as she wills them to a halt on the numbers she seeks - a bit like Peter Chan, only quieter!

During the May 2009 County Cups Trophy she was trailing in many of her matches, one of them 10-1 down. She simply cranked up into positive-mode and rolled and played her way to victory. Her last round match against Marcus Wrinch wasn't exactly like that, although she did trail at the beginning, she soon got into her stride and came out on top yet again.

We join the match in Game #2. Rachel is playing as black, and Marcus is on roll.

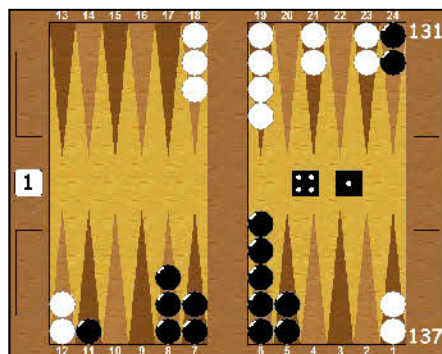


Black 0 White 1
White to play 42

With both Marcus and Rachel sitting on each others' 1-point, Marcus correctly

Arguably ... By Michael Crane

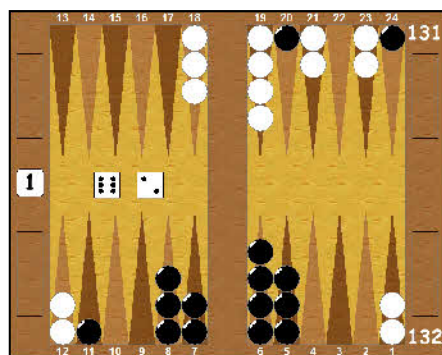
makes his 4-point. Rachel then rolls ...



Black to play 41

Although Snowie prefers the safe play of 11/7, 6/5, Rachel decides to run off the 1-point with the 4: 24/20 and the 1: 6/5. This a typical Rachel move - slightly aggressive with good potential. Marcus would like to point on her but can only do so with five rolls; however, another five can point on the back checker (includes 33: 6/3(2), 4/1*(2)), plus a further 20 rolls will hit one or both blots. In fact the only rolls that don't hit or cover are 64, 63 and 43 (although 43 is good played 7/3 6/3).

On balance it looks as if Rachel's move is far too risky, certainly compared to the elegant 4-prime 11/5, 6/5 gives her. But, if Rachel can anchor on her Golden Point she'll be in a commanding position. Marcus has to stop her.



White to play 62

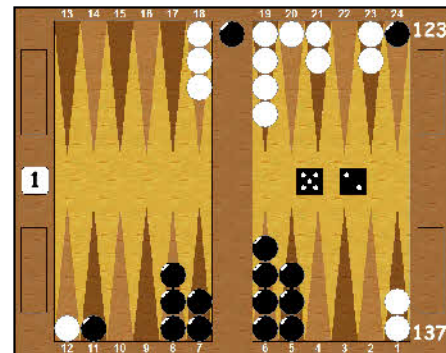
Marcus fails to point on either of Rachel's checkers and so he hits loose with 13/5*. This is a mistake and he should have gone for the double-hit, 7/5*, 7/1*. Very aggressive and perhaps the move Rachel would have made; however, Marcus is a very careful player and isn't prone to bouts of aggression (normally!).

With just the one blot on Rachel has 17 rolls that hit on white's 5-point, and an extra three that anchor. With two blots on



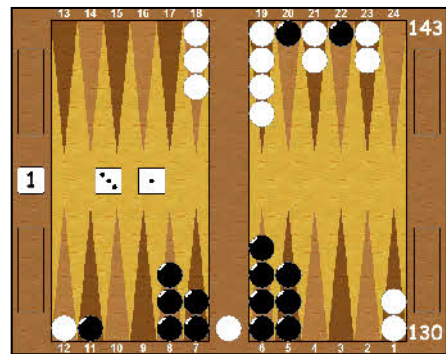
she has the same chances of 20/36, of which only a roll of 51 will hit both checkers.

In white's position it is better to have two in the air here: Rachel is favourite to hit or re-anchor with one or two blots on, but she might well dance with one die (or even with two). On the plus side for Marcus, if he is hit he might be able to advance his own anchor, and if he's hit off his 1-point it is an opportunity to re-circulate a 'dead' checker.



Black to play 52

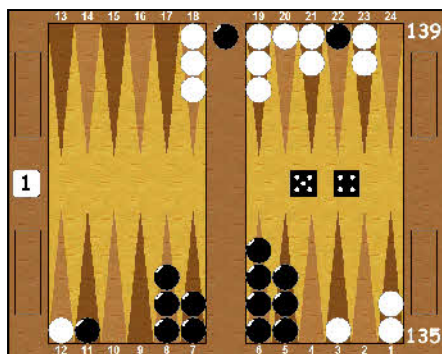
Rachel re-enters with 52: 25/20* and correctly moves up the back checker two pips, 24/22 in readiness for escape. Had Marcus put two on the bar she would have danced with half her roll.



White to play 31

Having started hitting on his 5-point, Marcus has to continue and does so with 31: 25/22, 6/5*, going back to the previous position but this time with one fewer builders and Rachel's back checker now in a position to form a (semi-) advanced anchor.

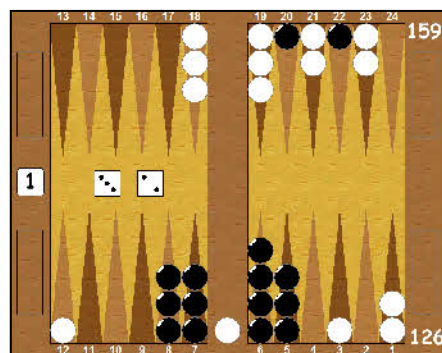




Black to play 54

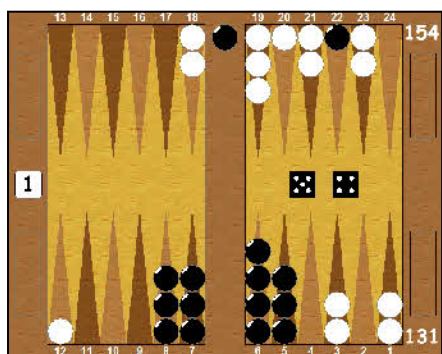
Rachel rolls a 5 and re-enters 25/20* and then moves the 4: 11/7. Snowie rates this as almost an error and prefers to move the 4: 20/16. This is good duplication of 2s and 4s, of which 22 will hit, but 44 is a killer roll placing two on the bar and another home board point made.

However, Rachel is keeping it tight and hoping to either catch the blot on her 12-point as it comes towards her, at the same time maximising builders for her home board with 1s, 2s, 3s and 4s at her disposal.



White to play 32

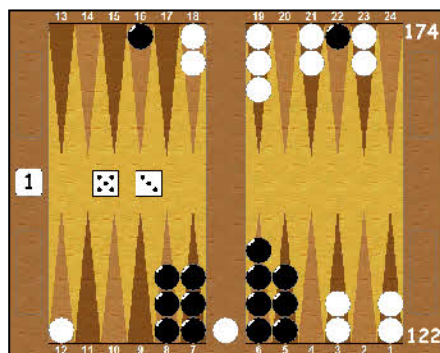
Once again Marcus re-enters and hits loose on his 5-point when he rolls 31: 25/22, 7/5*. His battle for his own 5-point is proving very costly indeed; in just a few rolls he has doubled the number of white checkers in Rachel's home board.



Black to play 54

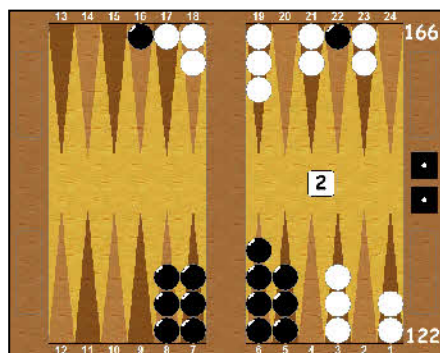
Another 5 from Rachel, and another white checker on the bar. This time, because she doesn't want to slot with the

4 she continues on 20/16 - and Snowie concurs. Marcus has two good points for staging a backgame, but he doesn't have the timing to see it through. He's approx 30% in this position.



White to play 53

Not a lot of choice for Marcus. He should have played 25/22, 13/8, but instead played 25/22, 6/1 wasting a checker. Rachel now has a good chance of picking up a 6th white checker . . .



Black cubes

. . . but she decides instead to double. In this position she is too good to double and Marcus thankfully drops. She has a 33% chance of a gammon and should have left the cube in the middle for a while. In fact, Snowie had been saying "Double" for two rolls (the two previous 54s) when it would have been double/take. The next sequence is the very next game. The first seven rolls almost play themselves . . .

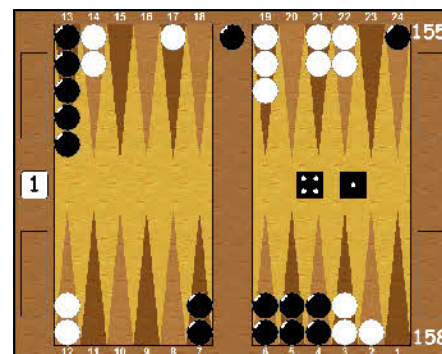
White

53: 8/3 6/3
42: 8/4 6/4
22: 24/22(2) 13/11(2)
52: 25/23 13/8*

Black

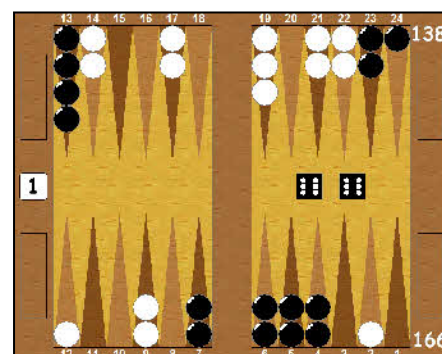
42: 8/4 6/4
11: 8/7(2) 6/5(2)
43: 24/17*

We now get to the first 'think about it' move! (see top of the next column). Although there are only four possible moves many players will probably go for 25/20 instinctively preferring to keep just a couple of blots on with the back checkers - and they'd be wrong! Rachel comes in on the 24-point and then ships one off the mid-point: 13/9.



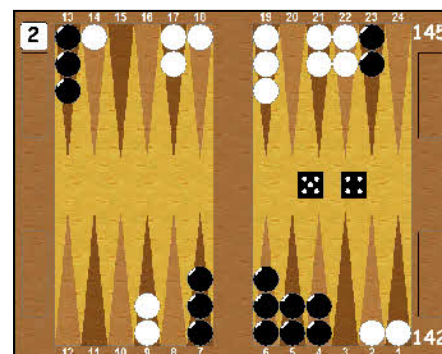
**Black 1 White 1
Black to play 41**

Unless Marcus rolls a 61 he's got to move off his anchor should he roll a single 6 or 51. At the moment it is a very strong anchor and Rachel would be more than willing to sacrifice the blot to see it dismantled. Marcus does dismantle it with 51: 22/16*. Rachel rolls 21 and anchors on the 23-point with 25/23, 24/23; and then Marcus rolls an excellent 65 and forms two very good points: 22/16 13/8. Snowie thinks he should have retained the mid-point and played 8/3 with the 5 but the 8-point nicely blocks 6s for two of Rachel's checkers.



Black to play 66

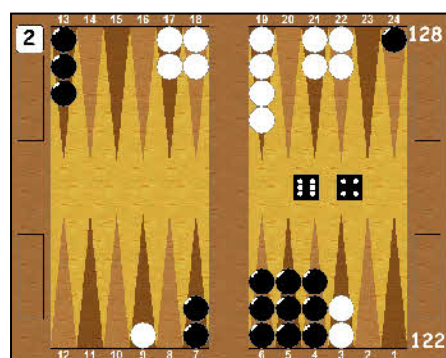
The move, 13/8 for Marcus really paid off as Rachel rolled double-six; however it only stopped her back checkers from leaping out. Instead she played 24/12*, 12/6, 13/7 placing a white checker on the bar. Marcus rolls 41: 25/24 11/7 and Rachel cubes to two. This is a double/take; and Marcus takes.



Black to play 54

Once again Rachel shows she knows her way around a backgammon board. Instead of the instinctive 7/2* 6/2 she correctly plays 23/18* 18/14* putting two on the bar. Although making the 2-point looks attractive it's really a beer-goggles move inasmuch as if white rolls a 4 he's going to cover his bar-point and make it very difficult for black to escape the back checkers. As it turned out Marcus rolled 31, a move which would have closed off his bar-point, but instead was used to re-enter off the bar.

Some time later we get to this position.



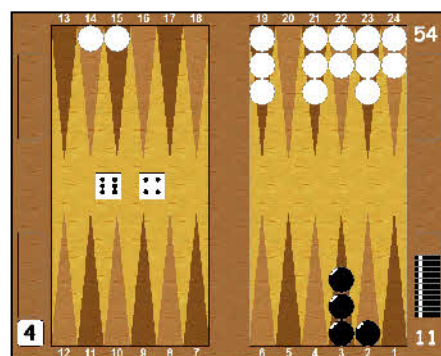
Black to play 64

Marcus has made his bar-point and he has Rachel trapped with only 4s to escape with - so it is a surprise to see her make a huge blunder here when she ignores the running play of 24/14 and instead plays 24/20, 13/7! The 20-point blot is in grave danger and in this position as opposed to being on the 14-point, it has reduced Rachel's game winning chances from 63% down to 52.7% - although, in her favour, her play does return 4.7% more gammons. Marcus has a 25% chance to point on the blot, and if he has to, he's got 26 rolls that will hit.

However; Marcus replies with 55 and is unable to hit the blot. He moves out with his two runners: 22/17(2), threatening Rachel's back three checkers and moves his 16-point blot: 16/6. Rachel then makes another blunder and moves 20/15, 7/5 after rolling 52. Soon after, when both players occupy their mid-points with two checkers each, and it's a straight race, Rachel rolls 64 and brings them both down, Marcus responds with 53 and does the same and the dice Gods now will decide who wins. A timely 55 enables Marcus to re-cube and Rachel drops the 4-cube.

With the match at 1-3 against Rachel, we come to Game #4. I have already dealt with this in Bibafax 100, Page 35. However, for the benefit of new readers this is what happened at the end.

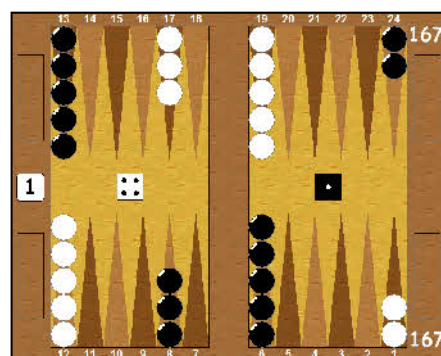
After a couple of cube decisions Rachel is holding a 4-cube and Marcus is struggling to save the gammon.



Black 1 White 3
White to play 64

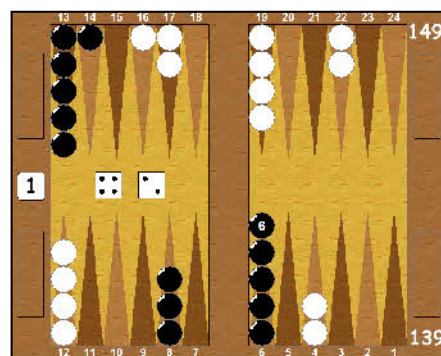
Marcus is relieved to roll enough to get him into a possible gammon-saving position as he plays 11/5, 10/6; however, the dice Gods are against him as Rachel rolls 44 to win the gammon and goes 9-3 ahead.

Now trailing 2-away, 8-away, Marcus has to be a little more adventurous - or to put it another way, he has to play more like Rachel. Here's an example.



Black 9 White 3
White to play 41

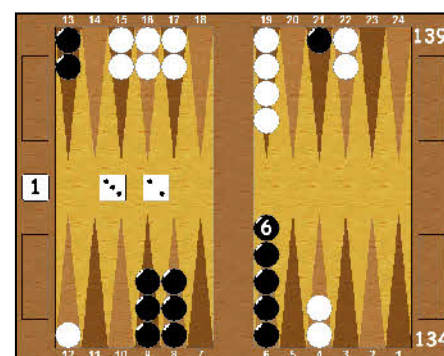
Usually Marcus's move of 24/23, 13/9 would be fine, but he needs to take the initiative here from the start. It would have been better to make an early assault on his 5-point with 13/9 6/5. Not long after we get to this position.



White to play 42

Rachel has already got one checker safely on her mid-point and, until this 42: 13/9,

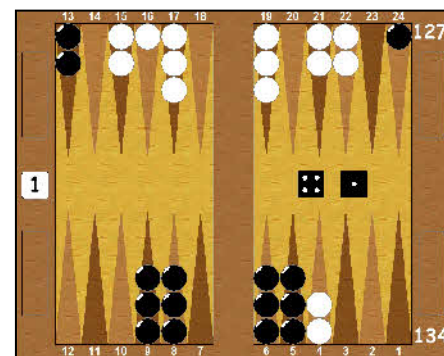
13/11*, is rolled, she was about to make her last runner safe too. She re-enters with 64: 25/15. Marcus strikes back with 13/10*, 10/11, and Rachel replies with 44: 25/21, 13/9(3).



White to play 32

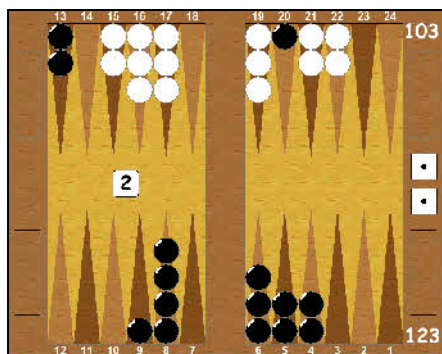
Marcus has successfully kept the black runner in his home board and now he has a choice to make. The video recording shows he thought a long time over this move as he tried to decide between 13/8 and safety or 13/10, 6/4* and (slight) danger. Going against his usual, quiet play, Marcus correctly plays the latter.

Although Rachel hits with all 4s except double-one this is a good play for it robs Rachel of at least half a roll and gives Marcus some very good rolls to cover and hopefully keep Rachel out. Rachel rolled 11: 25/24, 6/5(3). Marcus covered the blot with 52: 10/8, 9/4; and then Rachel places herself 'under the gun' - a blunder!



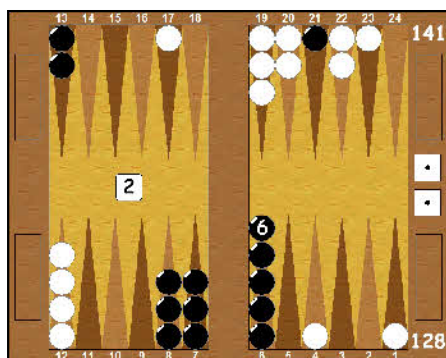
Black to play 41

Typically, Rachel makes a run for it with 24/20, 9/8 even though the 20-point blot is under enormous pressure from white's many builders. Even if he doesn't cover, Marcus will hit loose or pick&pass. However, Rachel's luck holds out as Marcus rolls 66: 21/9(2). Her reply of 51: 9/4 5/4 isn't enough to stop Marcus cubing in the position shown on the next page. ➡



White cubes

This is too good to double, and is an easy drop for Rachel. It would have better for Marcus to play on and see if he could pull off one of the 17% gammons that Snowie predicted. He did (as seen on the video) take a while to cube as he thought about it. Afterwards Rachel can be heard saying that he should have cubed earlier when he placed her on the bar with his 31 or at least with his 32; he replied that he wasn't sure, the race was close and he didn't think he had enough advantage.

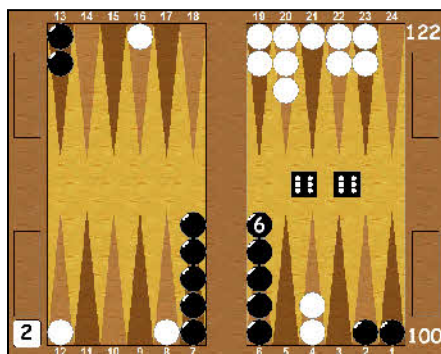


Black 9 White 4
White cubes

Once again, Rachel has safetied a runner and Marcus has decided to cube. Despite

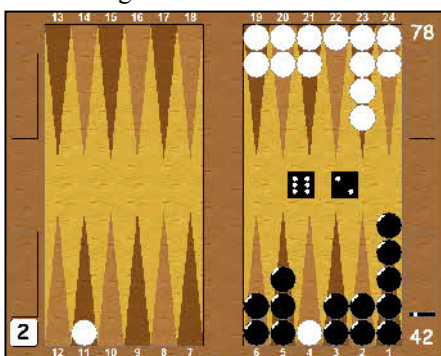
his (slight) advantage bearing down on Rachel's blot this is an easy take for Rachel. Snowie rates their chances at almost even - which isn't a good time to double. She takes without hesitation. Marcus rolls 63: 13/4*, the correct play. Unfortunate for him, though, Rachel rolls 54: 25/21* 21/16.

Much later Marcus is banking on getting a shot at Rachel's mid-point checkers as she soon starts to shift them homeward onto her side of the board...



... but she rolls 66 and gets them safe.

Six rolls each later and Rachel is forced into leaving a shot as she rolls 62.



She decides to take two checkers off 6/0, 2/0 whereas the better play according to

Snowie is 6/0, 6/4*; the difference being a tad over 1% with the hitting play. But, as so often happens in backgammon, the 'wrong' play turns out well - Marcus rolled 64, and instead of hitting he had to content himself with running 21/11. Although this is quite an economical cross-over play it would have been better to wait a while to see if he could get a shot. He is already 44 pips behind in the race, equivalent to 5.5 rolls, and is very unlikely to win the race; and as we all know, he failed to win to do so losing 11-4.

Match detailed statistics for County Cups		
Player	Rachel	Marcus
Rating	advanced	advanced
Overall	8.447/12.045	7.722/12.876
Errors(blunders)	11(7)	10(4)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	6.709/10.513	4.423/7.494
Errors(blunders)	8(5)	8(2)
Double errors		
Overall	1.738/1.532	3.299/5.382
Missed double	1.321/1.160	0.296/0.283
Wrong double	0.417/0.372	3.002/5.099
Errors(blunders)	3(2)	2(2)
Take errors		
Overall	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Wrong pass	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	0(0)	0(0)
Rachel was 50.83% - 49.17% favorite.		

MC: This match is featured on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax or can be requested from Biba HQ in Snowie or Jelly-Fish match file formats, or as an html file to view using your web browser.

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Sponsors of the Biba web site

Sponsors of the following tournaments:

The Bright 'n' Breezy, January 2009

The British Open, April 2009

The English Open, June 2009



4th

TrueMoneyGames Portuguese Backgammon Open 14 – 17 MAY 2009



Arthur Wright reports from Portugal, in the coastal resort of Estoril

The first event of the European Backgammon Tour 2009 was the 4th Portuguese Backgammon Open held on 14th -17th May in the Estoril Casino, the largest Casino in Europe.

Estoril lies on the coast just 20 minutes by train from the capital, Lisbon. It has a micro Mediterranean climate providing pleasant weather in May. There is a wide promenade frequented by joggers, strollers and us tourists stretching 2km alongside the beach to the town of Cascais. It offers picturesque views of the coastline with café/bars providing welcome watering holes en route.

True Money Games were the event sponsors but with no added prize money the organisers were surprised at the volume of entries: 52 for Masters and 32 for Intermediate. A truly International event:

- 18 Danish
- 15 British
- 10 German
- 8 French
- 6 Portuguese

The remainder was made up of Italian, American, Austrian, Japanese, Georgian and Israeli.

Two of the "Giants of Backgammon" were in attendance Falafal world #1 and Mochizuki world #6. Unfortunately both fell in the first round of the Main as did Raj Jansari who travelled all the way from the UK to be drawn against Peter Bennett. Peter narrowly lost in the 2nd round whilst Raj later received a "Special Player" Trophy.

Nicky Check was the best British player in the Masters progressing to the last 8 before losing in the early hours of Sunday morning.

There were three straight knockout tournaments: Main, Consolation and Last Chance but unfortunately not a single British finalist in any of the Masters.

However in the Intermediate section 5 of the 6 finalists were British and all BIBA members.



The Casino Estoril



Cecelia & David



Marcus & Rosey

Star player was Cecelia Sparke who fought her way to a Romantic Final in the Main where she faced boyfriend David Ablett (you might know him as Dave Moon, his stage name). Rather diplomatically she lost the final 10-13.

Gaz Owen marched steadily through to the final of the Consolation where he comfortably beat German opposition.

In the Last Chance Rosey Bensley was pleased to at last play against overseas opposition and knocked a few Danes over en route to the final. Here she came up against another Bristolian, Marcus Wrinch, who triumphed and added yet more Euros to Bristol's overflowing Prize Fund coffers.



David, Gaz, Marcus, Cecelia

A very pleasant friendly tournament in a delightful seaside setting. Alas there may not be a 5th Portuguese Backgammon Open in 2010 unless a sponsor can be found.



Backgammon's most prestigious Tour is ongoing for 2009 "The European Backgammon Tour" (EBGT)

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City of Venice, Venice, November 2009



Lots of other surprises coming up during the year !!!!

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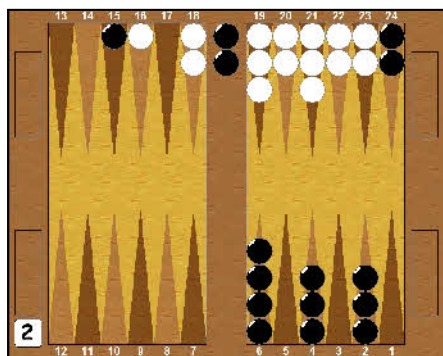
Email for more info: info@world-backgammon-association.com

How Experts Analyze Backgammon Games

By Hank Youngerman

First of all, I don't claim to be an expert. But I've read enough high-level backgammon material to know at least how experts approach backgammon problems. I chose a relatively simple one, that came from an actual match.

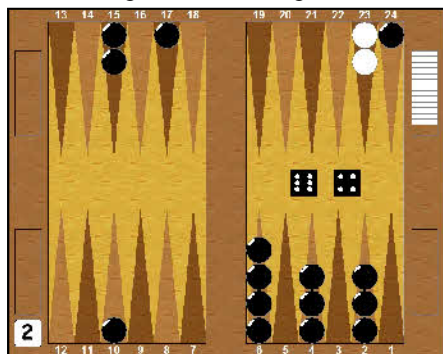
I was playing a match to 11 points on the Microsoft Gaming Zone against a player named Relu, who was at the time the top-ranked player there. I was leading 3-2, when the following position came up. I was "white" and I had earlier doubled my opponent to 2.



Black on roll

As you can see, black is in a lot of trouble. He's likely to get gammoned unless he can hit a shot, either by entering both checkers from the bar and staying back, or by hitting from the bar itself. Even then, he still has to contain white's checkers. A lot will depend on him entering his checkers and getting some around to close his 5- and even 3-points (the 20- and 22-points on the board diagram), and he'd also like to hit sooner rather than later, before white gets too many checkers off. Black's position isn't hopeless. If things go well, he can still win this game, but he needs things to go very well.

Well, things went pretty badly for black. He took a while to enter his two checkers, and white rolled a couple of sets of doubles, including a very important one just before this position came up:



Black now rolled a 64. Clearly, he has only one key decision: whether to run from the 1-point and save the backgammon or not. Should he?

Now, I've chosen this position because I think the answer is pretty clear and should be found by any decent player, but I thought I'd give the complete analysis.

First, what if he runs? He loses 4 points. That's easy.

What if he stays? I'm going to analyze this in terms of the next two rolls, one for each side, a total of 1296 possibilities.

First, I have 26 rolls that score an immediate backgammon. Of the 36 dice rolls, 25 don't contain a 1, plus one of those is double-1s. So I have 26, black has 36 (it doesn't matter what his next roll is) immediate backgammons, or 936.

What about when I leave a blot on the 1-point? Well, he can do three things:

1. He can hit me (11 rolls, any with an ace).
2. He can enter without hitting but also leaving a blot in my board (4 rolls, 32 and 42), in which case I win a backgammon.
3. He can enter and clear my board without hitting (21 rolls) in which case I win a gammon.

Cases 2 and 3 are easy. In case 2, I win a backgammon. This means 10 of my rolls times 4 of his, for 40 more backgammons. Case 3 is 10 of my rolls times 21 of his, for 210 gammons.

Now, we've actually "solved" 1186 of the 1296 possible outcomes already. What are left are the 110 times that I leave a shot and he hits me.

Well, a lot of things can happen. Remember, I can still win a backgammon!

It's not likely, but suppose just for fun that I enter with 54, letting me hit him. He has to come in from the bar **and** move the checker that he hit me with out. If I roll double 4s or 5s next, I will be off before he can get going. But let's say that's just a 1% chance, one of the 110 times.

If he hits me, he'll be trying to move his checkers around and hit me and send me

back while I'm trying to go forward. He'll also be trying to close his board by making first his 5-, then 3-, then 1-point. He has only 3 points now, so it's going to be hard to keep me out for long.

Let's say that he manages to close his board 25% of the time (28 times out of 110). In this case, his winning chances are about 10%, so he'll win 3 games and lose 25.

When he doesn't close his board, the question is whether he can hit me enough times to get his checkers around and get one off. Let's say that he can do that 60% of the time. Remember, all I need is to enter and get one nice set of doubles before he can make points to block me.

Let's say that there are two positions coming up where he will have two shots at me, two numbers that can hit me. Let's say he can hit me at some point with a 5 or a 2. That hits with any 5, or 2, or 41, or 11, a total of 23 rolls. His chances of hitting a 23/36 shot twice in a row are $23/36$ times $23/36$, or about 40%. If I can ever slip past him, I'll get a gammon. So containing me 60% of the time isn't an unreasonable estimate.

So of the 81 rolls where he enters, hits, doesn't lose an unlucky backgammon, and doesn't close me out, we get 49 single losses and 32 gammons. Now let's add it all up:

- Backgammons: $936 + 40 + 1 = 977$, total of 5862 points (the cube is at 2, remember).
- Gammons: $210 + 32 = 242$, total of 968 points.
- Single losses: $25 + 49 = 74$, total of 148 points.
- Wins: 3, gain of 6 points.

Adding it all up, we get a net loss of 5.38 points a game, compared to a loss of 4 if he runs. But you knew before we even started that running was the right play, I'm sure.

MC: This article was first published by Hank in 1999 (or so he thinks) and it is reproduced here with his permission.



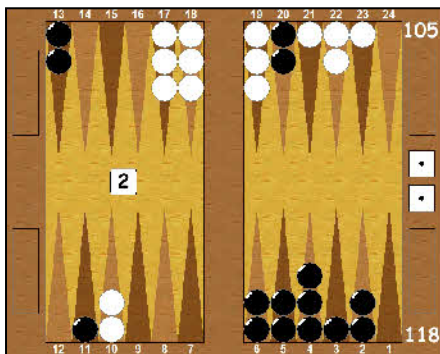
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The English Open, 2009



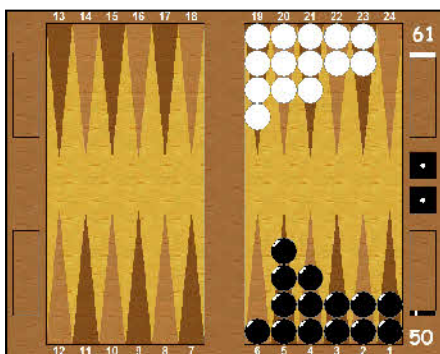
It wasn't the biggest turnout for the **Main** (33) we've ever had, but what it lacked in quantity it made up for it in quality. Some of the best players in the UK turned out, but only two of them made it to the final: Brian Lever and Kevin Stebbing.

Brian (black) got off to a cracking start in Game #1, all thanks to a couple of doubles. Mind you, the first cube, from Kevin, was a bit on the dodgy side.



Black 0 White 0
White cubes

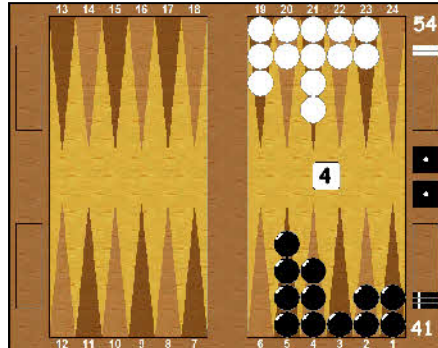
It's an easy take for Brian. Kevin really doesn't have a lot going for him in this position. Direct 1s but if he does hit he's got a lot to do to safety his two home board blots which need a specific 21 roll for the hit&cover play. After Brian takes the cube, Kevin rolls 42 and makes his 4-point. Brian then replies with a beautiful 66: 20/8(2), Kevin misses the blot again . . . and some time later we get to this position:



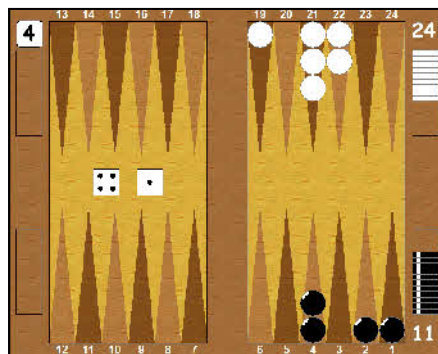
Black on roll. Cube action?

Although only 11 pips ahead in the race Brian has good distribution and will be bearing off two checkers for a while; Kevin, on the other hand is stacked on higher points and has an open 1-point. It should have been a re-double/pass but Brian rolled giving Kevin a chance to roll a big double and perhaps take the lead.

Brian rolled 63: 6/0 3/0, Kevin replied with 6/1: 6/0 2/1, dropping a checker and then Brian cubes . . .



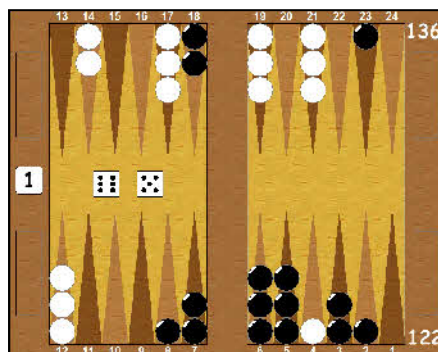
. . . and Kevin (after some time considering it) takes! This is a huge blunder with an equity of almost 0.470. Brian was very pleased, but he was even more pleased to see this:



White to play 41

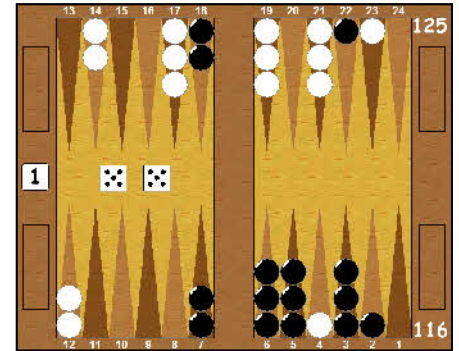
It's an awful roll and Kevin is left with five checkers, leaving Brian with just four. On his final roll Kevin needed 55 or 66 to win and he rolled 62. Brian went into an immediate 4-0 lead. This he increased to 5-0 and then Kevin fought back, first to 5-1 then 5-3. Brian pulled ahead one more to 6-3.

In the next game, Game #6, both players make some big blunders. First is Kevin:



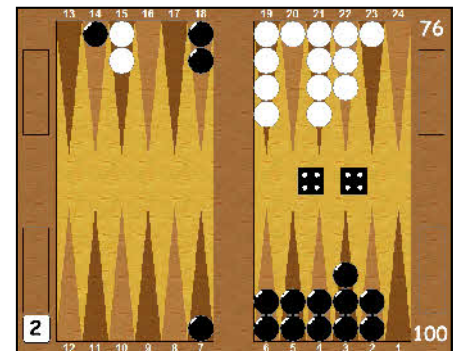
Black 6 White 3
White to play 65

The better move here is almost anything that contains 21/15, especially with 13/8. But, for reasons only he can explain, Kevin hits 13/2*! Brian rolls 53: 25/22 8/3 and then:



White to play 55

Having previously left his runner behind Kevin gets a second chance to move . . . and plays 21/16, 8/3*(3) making another big blunder. Having already escaped from black's home board it makes no sense to send another one back with this play. Here, the better move is the simple, pure and safe, 21/11, 13/8(2). Kevin gets away with it as Brian rolls 61: 25/18. Eventually Kevin is left with two checkers to bear in and Brian is blocking them just three pips away:

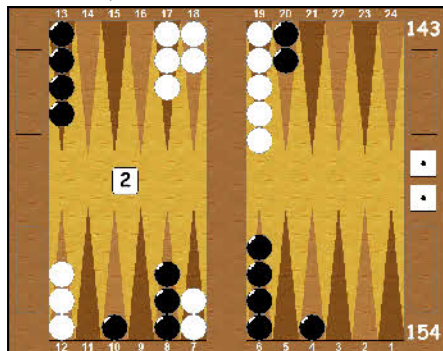


Black to play 44

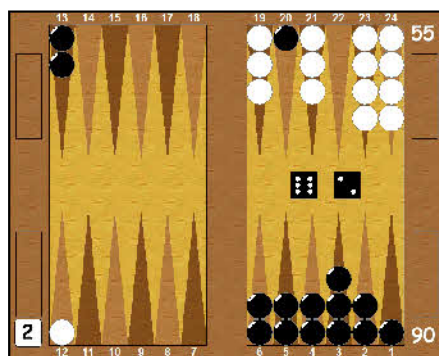
Brian took a long time over this, deciding whether or not to run both or no checkers off his 18-point. Eventually he settled for 18/10(2) and makes a blunder. This play lets Kevin off the hook if he rolls 61, 62 or 63 - all of which would leave a shot for Brian and might even lead to a gammon. However, Sod's Law came into play and Kevin rolled The Girls (55) and leapt in and off in one move. A little later a timely 66 led to Kevin making the score respectable at 6-5 to Brian.

The score then moves: 6-7, 7-7, 8-7 ►

and then 9-7 to Brian. In what turns out to be the final game of the match Brian starts with 43: 24/20, 13/10. Kevin rolls 66: 24/18(2), 13/7(2) and says, "I knew I should have doubled." Brian and I laughed . . . but not for long! Brian rolled 42: 24/20, 10/8 and then:



Kevin doubles! This is not a double and quite an easy take for Brian. Now all Brian has to do is win a single game and the match is his. Much later Brian gets a shot:



Black to play 62

Kevin is hit and only re-enters when Brian is 100% certain to win with four checkers on each of his 1-, 2- and 3-points. Forlornly Kevin rolls a few times but in the end he resigns and Brian Lever adds the 2009 English Open to his list of four other Main titles: SAC 1993, UK Finals 2001, SAC 2002, and British Open 2007.

Congratulations, Brian, and hard luck to Kevin. He told Brian and me that his tactics were to hypnotise Brian so that he played slowly thus making Brian lose on time! I told him he was about 20 years too late! ☆



Brian & Kevin battle it out

Meanwhile

In the **Consolation (29)** Marcus Wrinch, joining it in the 2nd Round, played his way into the final via John Hedge, Chris Ternel, Mick Vacarey and Talan Evans. Here he met Richard Biddle who came in from the Main quarter-finals, beating Paul Barwick and Mardi Ohannessian to

play against Marcus. Without losing any momentum, Marcus prevailed . . . but at least Richard didn't go out in the round before the payout!

In the **Last Chance (32)** it was down to David Nathan and Uldis Lapikens. Being an open draw each entrant was able to re-enter; however, David managed to get to the final on his first attempt whereas Uldis did it on his second. David, making full use of his one entry cashed in in 1st place leaving Uldis the Runner-up.

Once again we paid homage to Grahame Powell with **The Grammy (8)** - an event that saw the second airing of the famous tee-shirt. It drew a few puzzled looks around the hotel, which would have pleased Grahame. Due to the lowish turnout only eight entrants were available for this 3-pointer. Staking his claim to fame, Mick Vacarey triumphed over Tony Fawcett to take home the winner's trophy.

Of course, the weekend got off with the **Friday 500 (16)**, an event that saw Tom Duggan notching up a good few points after he beat Marcus Wrinch in the final. Marcus has now taken his score to 72, fifteen points ahead of nearest rival, Paul Gilbertson who has 57 points. This will probably alter after the Biba World Championship in July. See page 31 for the latest list.

The **Poker (14)** was a Freeze-out this weekend, and it was Martin Barkwill that emerged the winner with Lawrence Powell 2nd and Gilberto Nieto (Casinorip/GammonAccount Global, Affiliate Manager) 3rd. The 'usual suspects' didn't feature in the



Top: Main, Kevin & Brian
Bottom: Consolation, Richard & Marcus

Top 8 (though to be fair, Myke Wignall and Rosey Bensley were both absent. Even though Myke was absent for the weekend, he is still hard to beat! He remains at the top with Paul Gilbertson still in 2nd place. John Hedge moves Tony Fawcett down (still not on form, eh Tony?) and Marcus Wrinch enters in 5th place and just into the money . . . for the moment. See page 31.

Lastly we come to **The Team (4)**. Not the biggest of turnouts, but as usual, Richard Biddle was there in the final where ►



Top: The Trophies
Bottom: Close-up of the 1st place trophy

Top: Main Losing Semi-finalists,
Gheorghe Filipas & Martin Barwill

Middle: Last Chance, David Nathan & Uldis Lapikens

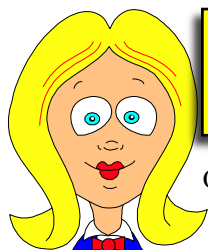
Bottom: The Grammy, Mick Vacarey & Tony Fawcett

he lost to Nicky Check. And in the **Jackpot** (4) Tony Fawcett beat me into 2nd place.

Finally

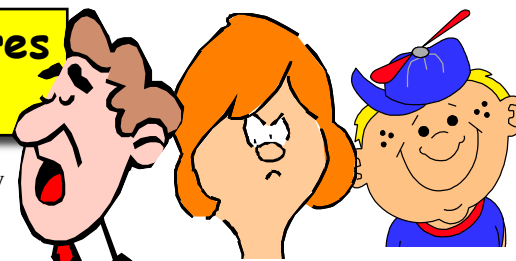
This event was played with clocks for the Quarter Finals and it all appeared to go fairly smoothly. John Hedge kindly donated four new clocks so that if needed we can use them on Saturday as well. Thank you, John.

Gilberto from Casinorip, represented the tournament sponsors and the trophies they supplied were very popular. Thanks, guys. Of course, I can't go without thanking Tony Fawcett for the poker, and Deana for assisting me in the running of the backgammon - thank you, both.



Goldiblots and the Three Bores

By R Umplestiltskin

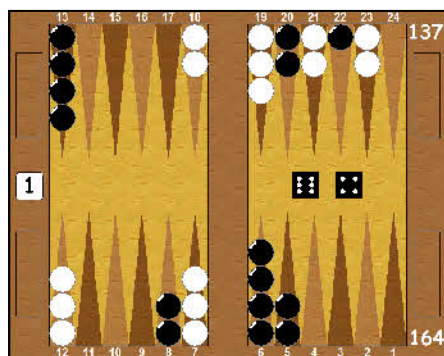


Once upon a time there were three bores, Daddy Bore, Mummy Bore and Baby Bore. All day long they'd play backgammon on the webinternet for peanuts, they liked peanuts - a lot.

Each week, after a hard week's tap tap tapping away on their loptaps they would have a lovely bowl of soup and then settle down for the arrival of Goldiblots, their friendly next-door neighbour who would pose them three problems and she would award the winner with a nice massage and a rub down with the Sporting Times.

This week's first problem was:

Problem 1



11 point match
Black 5 White 5
Black to play 64

Keeping with the same order, it was Mummy Bore who got to her feet first. "Mmm, I think the best play here is to run off my mid-point making use of the spare checkers and play it all the way with 13/3. I am behind in the race and I don't want to do anything that puts me even further behind." She sat down next to Daddy Bore accidentally knocking his elbow.

"Ow!" he exclaimed, "Be careful, you nearly had my eye out." In actual fact, following last week with Goldiblots when he was excavating his belly button, Daddy Bore had been laid into by Mummy Bore and this week, so instead of having a go at his belly button he was exploring his nose and ears! He was just about to slide a finger up his nostril when Mummy Bore nudged him. He got up.

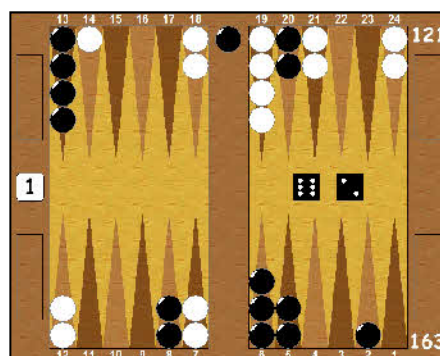
"Just like a woman," he looked across at Mummy Bore - who was a woman - and continued, "to keep it all tidy and safe. No

flair, that's your problem. Clearly black has to make the 16-point with 22/16, 20/16 and make a good, advanced anchor. If he doesn't do it now he might never get another chance to do it, and even if the blot left behind on the 20-point is hit, it should be quite easy to get back in again." He turned to sit down, his finger already navigating its way toward his flared nostril.

Baby got up, smirking. "Mater, Pater, why do you bother? It isn't rocket salad to see that the only move here is to make the 2-point, 8/2, 6/2. The 8-point isn't doing anything to contain or bother white whereas the 2-point is well worth having. If the blot is hit it should re-enter quite easily, in fact it might even make the 22-point." He sat down with a bump next to Daddy Bore.

"Ow!" he exclaimed again. They all turned to see Daddy Bore's index finger stuck up his nostril right past the knuckle. "I suppose you fink dats funny?" he mumbled nasally. They all laughed at him; but it was cut short when he removed it to reveal the biggest bogey they'd ever seen. It wasn't the bogey that stopped the laughter - it was the wiping of it onto the arm of the sofa as he rose to go first on the second problem.

Problem 2



11 point match
Black 5 White 5
Black to play 62

"I can't believe my luck," he began. Mummy Bore and Baby Bore were appalled for they thought he was referring to the bogey. "By going first I am assured

of getting it correct. Tough totty," he directed at Mummy Bore, "the last person to go has to take what's left! I think with the 6 I will play 25/23," a big smile split his face in two, "and then I will make my 2-point with 8/2 in readiness for the hit when it comes." He sat down his right index finger unerringly travelling towards his right ear hole.

Baby Bore took to the floor. "Well, pops, you might have had first dibs, but you've picked the wrong move. The best play here is the pure play of running out 25/17. Even though white can hit with 5s and 3s they hold no fear for me. I have my Olden Point" (there's a snigger from Daddy Bore) "and that'll be a nice safe place for me to land on."

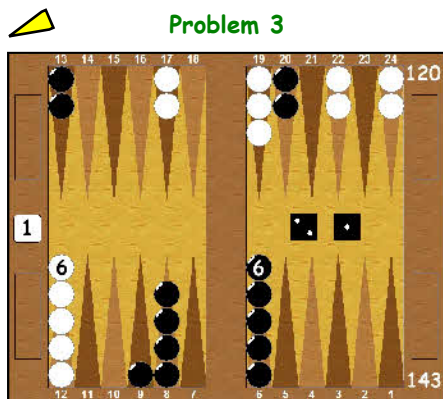
Mummy Bore was just rising when she shrieked out, "Oh my God! Will you look at that?" and she pointed at Daddy Bore as the tip of his finger poked out of his left ear! She shot up and away from the ungodly sight.

"This is unbelievable, it really is. Here I am, left with the one remaining move and it's the correct one! 25/23, of course, but then hitting 20/14* not only puts white well back in the race but it also duplicates 2s. I might have four blots on but three of them are under threat from 2s, my duplicated roll. The only real drawback is 'quack, quack' twenty-two, double-two, but the odds are well against it." She was about to sit down (Daddy Bore's finger had been removed from his ear hole) when she turned to Baby Bore, "Sweetie, it isn't Olden Point, it is Holden Point because your checkers are holding the 20-point."

Daddy Bore guffawed, "Holden shmolden. You are both such ignoramarses, it is Bolden Point from Paul Magriel's advice on bold play. Every good tactician knows that."

Baby Bore got up for the final problem.





Problem 3

11 point match
Black 5 White 5
Black to play 21

"I am not going to make the beginner's mistake and play 9/7 8/7, that is far too obvious, instead I am going to slot with 6/4, 6/5. I need to make home board points in descending order and this move will make the top two." Pleased with his choice he allowed Mummy Bore to take his place.

"I fully agree with Baby Bore on the beginner's play, but I disagree with his move. It is far better to play 8/5 and slot the 5-point. If I leave two blots like Baby Bore and I get a shot and hit white next roll I might well leave a return shot off the bar. With just one slot this is less likely." Satisfied she had got the correct answer she sat down as Daddy Bore rose.

He stood up, absentmindedly poked a finger up his nose, brogged around and then retracted it and placed it in his mouth. Baby Bore, Mummy Bore and even Goldiblots were all sick. Daddy Bore wasn't even aware of what he'd done. He started, "My name is Daddy Bore and I am a beginner! My move is 9/7, 8/7."

"Where do you think you are, Acohol Anonymouse?" asked Mummy Bore as she giggled to herself.

Daddy Bore replied, "Yesh," and went on to explain his move. "The bar-point is the strongest on the board and this is an excellent chance to make it now. If I hit white next roll he'll have a job escaping if he rolls little numbers, and this will give me time to get my checkers from his side of the board." He sat down heavily on the sofa.

They all looked at Goldiblots. She began, "I am very surprised this week. It is very strange indeed for each of you has one correct answer and one very incorrect answer. This week there isn't a winner."

"What?" bellowed Daddy Bore, "you mean to say I got two out of three wrong? You must be mistaken, I am certain *all* my answers are correct." He sulked, pro-pelling fingers into both ears. "I refuse to

listen to another word."

"I know for a fact I got two correct," protested Mummy Bore, "I have been studying SmellyFish."

Baby Bore's bottom lip began to tremble. He tried hard not to cry but a little sniffle crept out. "I can't have gotten two wrong. I have been using Snotty all week and I am absolutely certain I have all of mine correct." He choked back a tear.

"Well," said Goldiblots, "I am correct in my analysis . . ." She was interrupted by Daddy Bore's, "What?" She continued, "and you all have exactly what I said. If you all stop being such boors I will tell you the correct solutions."

"Stop being Bores? We are Bores, so how on earth do you expect us to stop being so?" asked Mummy Bore. Goldiblots sighed in exasperation. "The correct solutions are . . ."

Can you work out who got what right and wrong? It is a puzzlement, isn't it? Turn to page 17 to see Goldiblot's analysis.

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The Noel Coward Backgammon Board

By Mike Shelton

World Exclusive!

Toward the end of his life, Sir Noel Coward decided to give away personal possessions to friends rather than have them wait until he died.

On 26th March 1973, he hand wrote a label for his backgammon board for the gift to the director and choreographer, Wendy Toye, and placed it with his board; it was probably his last act as he died that day from heart failure at his home in Blue Harbour, Jamaica.

The label reads "Darling Wendy - here is your present from Master".

Earlier this year, Wendy Toye CBE decided to downsize and in so doing gave away a number of mementoes, including the board, which she gifted to the actress, director and writer Denise Coffey.

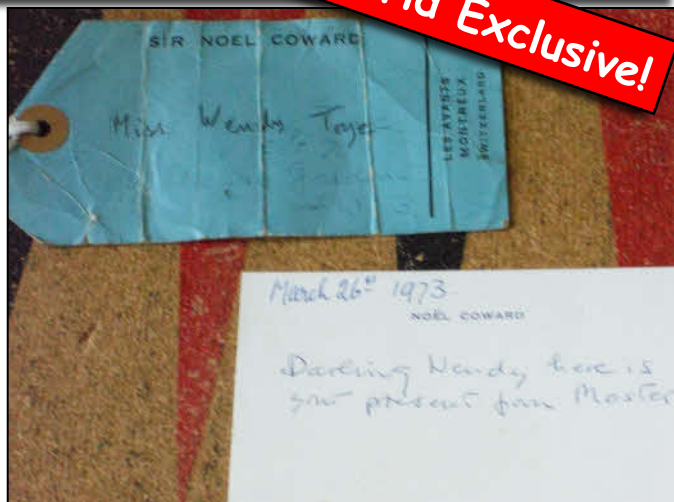
As Denise lives in, Devon, and does not drive, I collected the board from Wendy's London apartment and delivered it to Denise subsequently.

The board is worthy of note as it is most unusual in a number of aspects. It was constructed by or for Fortnum and Mason, and there is a label inside to that effect.

The board is covered with tan leather, and the playing surface is cork. The lock itself is of a mechanism I have never seen, as there is a button in the top of the handle which , upon pressing, causes the handle to bisect laterally, after which one has to line up a slot with a small post on each handle mounting to open the board.

Inside on one half are two indentations built in to the wooden frame, and into these fit two lugs inbuilt to a separate leather case, purpose made for housing the stones, the dice, and - in case one should ever get bored with backgammon - cribbage and some sets of playing cards.

Continued on the next page ►



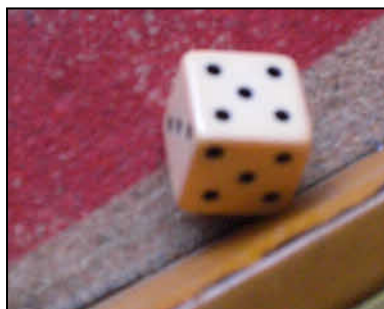
From the top:

The label and note to Wendy, dated March 26th, 1973 in Coward's own handwriting.

The leather board bearing the initials N. C.

The unique locking handle.

Provenance is by way of the label of the gift to Wendy, another label from Coward's Montreux villa, and a photograph of Wendy and Sir Noel playing on the board



The board has several sets of dice, but one set is of particular interest, in that one of the dice in this set has no six on it, but two fives.

I am told that Sir Noel used to give this set of dice to his opponents as he believed that it gave him an advantage, but in playing with the sets of dice alternating each game there was no discernible advantage or disadvantage; I suppose that the second five increases the chances of a double five by a theoretical 50%, so Sir Noel might have been doing his opponents a service by this subterfuge!

On the right:

The separate leather case, purpose made for housing the stones, the dice, etc.,

Wendy and Sir Noel playing on the board.



MC: I would like to thank Mike for the article and Denise and Wendy for allowing Biba to publish it.



"Well," said Goldiblots, you might not like it but the analysis speaks for itself. You each came 1st, 2nd and 3rd, so we don't have an outright winner this time.

Position 1

13/3		Mummy
22/16 20/16	-0.174	Daddy
8/2 6/2	-0.181	Baby

Position 2

25/23 8/2		Daddy
25/17	-0.039	Baby
25/23 20/14*	-0.051	Mummy

Position 3

6/4 6/5		Baby
8/5	-0.041	Mummy
9/7 8/7	-0.061	Daddy

DailyGammon North v South 2009 Challenge

Arthur Wright reports: An ever increasing number of Biba members are signing up to play backgammon on www.DailyGammon.com. This is a great free site where you can play 3, 5, 7, 9 and 25 point tournaments against players all over the world or choose to play individual private matches. Its big advantage is that your opponent is not necessarily on line at the same time as you. The moves are stored in the computer until your opponent logs in, a bit like postal chess. Thus you can log in for say 20 minutes play a few moves, in several different matches, and then log out and return a few hours later.

Rating points are awarded for completed tournament matches and our very own gm2 alias Peter Bennet is at the heady height of 4th in these world ratings.

The 2009 challenge arose when Neil Young suggested a tournament between Bristol members and we lot along the M62 corridor. Chris Purchase got wind of the challenge and gate-crashed with some of the St Albans mob. Hence the title North v South 2009 Challenge.

Eleven players were in each team playing one-off 25 point matches with opponents drawn at random by Michael Crane.

Maud's (Vicky Chandler) match was completed in two weeks during which she offered *Rallyline* (Tim Line) an 8-cube which he accepted and she won 16 points!



By five weeks another three matches had been completed with South being victorious in all three including humiliation of me *SKU Master*. Two days later the Manchester *fisi* (Dorothy Lee) and Liverpool *Mr 888* (Peter Chan) duo pulled it back to North 3 – South 3.

Four days later *Agnes* (Rachel Rhodes) went one better than *Maud* by accepting a 16-cube from *John P* and went on to win the game and match.

At this point *Sparkie* (Cecelia Sparke) was 13-19 down to *derring-do* (Chris Deering) who was beginning to feel the pressure of playing for a team rather than

as an individual. Keeping her composure, (which she later did in Estoril), she eventually won 25-23.

With the 2009 Challenge score now North 4 – South 5 could *ReggiePerrin* (Neil Young) clinch overall victory for the South? In a nail-biting see-saw match *Barpoint* (Paul Barwick) triumphed to make it all square with five wins each.

At this time in the proceedings the final match stood at *trickydicky* (Tony Fawcett) 21 – *wainwda* (David Wainwright) 13 and we thought it would soon be all over. It virtually was when David was facing an almost certain gammon

and the match. However the DG computer had other ideas facilitating him to not only save the gammon but to win 2 points.

Finally after 26 games and 2,076 moves the eleventh match ended – *trickydicky* 25, *wainwda* 22.

So the North won the “2009 Challenge” by the slimmest of margins finishing on 6 matches to 5.

A rematch is on the cards.

Dice-O-Matic - The world's biggest dice rolling machine

Introducing the Dice-O-Matic mark II, now generating the die rolls on GamesByEmail.com. It is a 7 foot tall, 104 pound, dice-eating monster, capable of generating 1.3 million rolls a day.

Currently, GamesByEmail.com uses some 80,000+ die rolls for play in games like Backgammon, Gambit (a RISK clone), W.W.II (an Axis & Allies clone) and others. To generate the die rolls, I have used Math.random, Random.org and other sources, but have always received numerous complaints that the dice are not random enough. Some players have put more effort into statistical analysis of the rolls than they put into their doctoral dissertation.

A few years ago I tinkered with a dice rolling machine made from Legos.

Though great fun, it was noisy and cantankerous and unreliable, and it never recovered from the move two years ago. But it had made players happy, at least for a while. So I decided to make a 'professional' grade rolling machine.



I had been slowly accumulating parts for over a year when I put out a plea for financial assistance. Many players donated small amounts, and a few made some over-the-top donations. I also received a large donation of the elevator parts. The help allowed me to gather the last and most expensive bits, and four months of spare time later, everything is working better than planned.

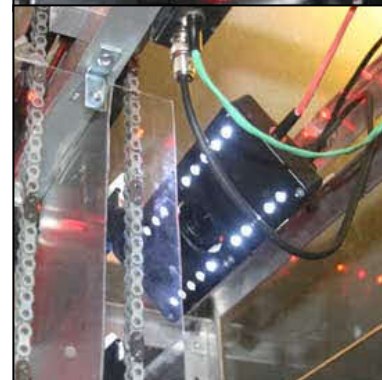
I had a soft target of a machine capable of 200,000 rolls a day, as site traffic is growing. However, any automation project worth doing is worth over doing, and I way overshot the mark. The result is what you see here: a machine that can belch a continuous river of dice down a spiraling ramp, then elevate, photograph, process and upload almost a million and a half rolls to the server a day. I may not get nominated for a Nobel prize, but the deep rumbling vibration you feel more than hear when two rooms away is quite impressive.

There is no doubt that I will still receive complaints about the rolls, but now I can honestly say I have done all that I can possibly do: the rolls you get are exactly as random as those you would get throwing by hand. As I promised earlier, if you donate to the site and are unhappy about the rolls, let me know and I will pull a die out of the machine, melt it flat and mail it to you, as an object lesson to the other dice. Tangible revenge.

Details of the Dice-O-Matic

The Dice-O-Matic is 7 feet tall, 18 inches wide and 18 inches deep. It has an aluminum frame covered with Plexiglas panels. A 6x4 inch square Plexiglas tube runs vertically up the middle almost the entire height. Inside this tube a bucket elevator carries dice from a hopper at the bottom, past a camera, and tosses them onto a ramp at the top. The ramp spirals down between the tube and the outer walls. The camera and synchronizing disk are near the top, the computer, relay board, elevator motor and power supplies are at the bottom.

The dice start the cycle at the top of the



ramp, toward the rear of the machine. The ramp is comprised of ten steps, each at about a 20 degree incline, with a right hand thread through two and a half spirals. Two layers of cloth covered

foam (car headliner) keep the noise down. Felt covered foam quarter-obelisks are at each corner, sewn to the side padding. It took a few tries to get the pitch just right. Too shallow and the dice stopped tumbling, too steep and they would start banging against the Plexiglas. Now they roll very well, sometimes stopping and then getting knocked back into the stream. Perfect.

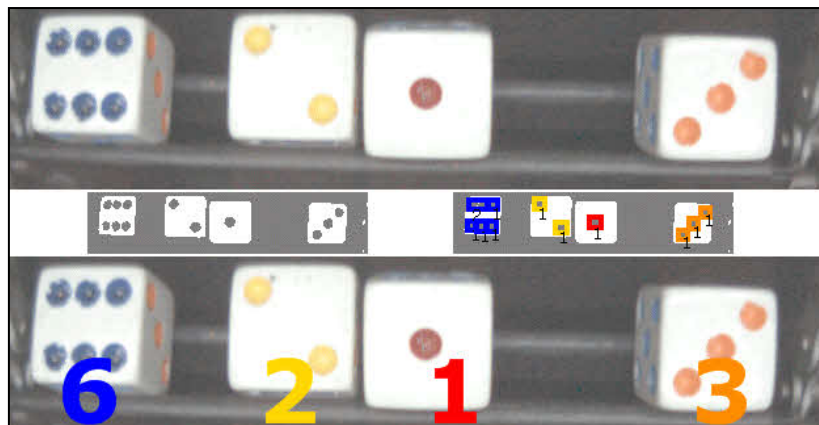
The hopper at the bottom of the ramp is pure seething violence. I am sure there is a better way to load the dice into the buckets (vibrating tables and all that) but not in the budget and footprint I have. Instead, buckets come up through the bottom of the hopper, smashing their way through the accumulated pile of dice and scooping some up. It is rather hard on the dice, much of the paint gets chipped from the edges of the pips. The buckets are close enough together that dice cannot slip through the bottom.

The 'buckets' are lengths of 1/2 inch aluminium U channel, about 5 inches long, attached to chains on each side. I cut grooves into each side of each leading edge, then slit and mounted plastic stir straws to reduce the noise and impact levels. Up to six dice can fit on a bucket, and tend to ride at a neat 45 degree angle.

The chains and attachment links are the key to the whole machine. The chains are ANSI-35 with A-1 attachment links every tenth link. I had a number of false starts with cheaper ladder chains and home-made attachments, but they simply were not up to the strain, always stretching and rattling apart. After getting the professional grade hardware, the design changed so much for the better. The hopper, buckets, and camera became a simple, streamlined sequence all from using the proper chain.

The two chains ride over 20-tooth drive sprockets at the top and bottom, powered by a car power window motor on the bottom shaft. The motor and sprocket shaft are coupled using a short piece of vinyl tube and some hose clamps. This gives some leeway in the motor-shaft alignment and provides a simple slip clutch in case something jams.

The buckets rise pretty fast, travelling over a foot per second. It takes about 5 seconds to go from the hopper to the camera near the top. Along the way there are plastic flaps to beat against the dice and make sure they have settled properly into the buckets.



Had you told me two months ago that getting the dice settled into the buckets would be the trickiest part, I would have called you insane. Processing the picture, probably. Getting them reliably into the buckets to begin with, maybe. But getting them settled once they are in, when they have tendency to settle properly anyway? What is the big deal? The deal is that some orientations you would not believe even possible, much less stable, turn out to be ridiculously frequent. A die will happily rise out of the combat-fury that is the hopper, land on an edge, and ride on that edge all the way up five feet of vibrating chain. I have seemingly impossible pictures of dice posing quite daintily on their corners, thwarting the camera by not showing a face. It certainly helped me appreciate the fine art that is automated orientation.

A machine vision/inspection camera is near the top of the elevator, looking down at a 45 degree angle to match the dice in the buckets. 20 bright white LEDs surround the lens so that the exposure time (1/2000th of a second) is short enough to eliminate any blurring.

The synchronizing of the exposures is accomplished using the camera's external trigger connection. As mentioned, the buckets are 10 links apart and the sprockets have 20 teeth, so two pictures are needed for each rotation of the shaft. A disc with two slots 180 degrees apart rotates between an infra-red LED transmitter/receiver pair on a home-built circuit, and the pulse triggers a snapshot.

After the picture is taken, the buckets crest over the top sprockets, which throws the dice out onto the ramp. In all, it takes about 13 seconds for an individual die to make a round trip. There are 200 dice in the machine, each rolling four times a

minute, totalling over 1,330,000 rolls a day.

The dice are not true "Michigan Red Eyes" as I had earlier thought, but have different colored pips for each value. The different colors make it pretty easy to count rolls. For example, if 6 yellow dots are found in the image, there were three 2s rolled, no need to worry about determining the proper grouping or orientation of pips.

The images captured by the USB camera are processed by software I wrote in .NET. The camera comes with a nice software development kit with a ton of features, and you can fine tune every aspect. Because the computer cannot quite keep up with the elevator at full image resolution, the images are sampled every 3rd pixel horizontally and vertically.

The image processing begins by looking for the bright white of the dice. This eliminates everything except the faces toward the camera, and these are the areas of interest. Inside those areas are holes of darkness. The size of the hole determines whether it was a pip or not, and how many pips it represents (sometimes the pips of 6s bleed together). The average color of the pip determines the value it represents. The pips are then counted left to right and rolls the determined. The data is uploaded to the server via wi-fi in blocks of 1,000 rolls.

The program also controls the power to the lights, camera trigger and conveyor motor using a slick little USB relay board. When the server has enough rolls in the bank to last for a few weeks (I am currently storing a million or so), the conveyor shuts down until needed again. It runs for maybe 1.5 hours total each day.

GamesByEmail.com

Correspondence Gaming Headquarters



This article is reproduced from the web site above

Rules are for the guidance of wise men and the obedience of fools

My 'postbag' this month has been overflowing with questions and queries regarding the Biba Rules of Play. So I thought I'd pinch Oscar Wilde's witticism and share them with you.

John Hedge: I gather we're to have clocks on Sundays for those that are fortunate enough to get there. Why on Sunday? Saturday is when everything seems to bunch up. In the only two times I've managed to have an interest in Sunday this year it's Saturday that's caused the problem. Brighton I had to play my Saturday round at 8am Sunday and last month I had to play the remainder of my Saturday round at 10pm. I hasten to add, not due to my slow play. I've never played with a clock (others as well I'd guess) so maybe it'd be a good idea to explain how it works and the tactics it'll bring about.



MC: The simple answer is - I don't have enough clocks to use effectively on the Saturday. I have just purchased four new ones that are easier to use and to see, and you have kindly donated four more (to help out on Saturdays), thank you.

Your problem in Brighton was caused by the 4th Round being played on the Saturday. Even using clocks and using the time allowed (approx 2h 15m per 11-point match) the starting times for each round would be: 1 @ 1300, 2 @ 1515, 3 @ 1730, 4 @ 1945 finishing at 2200. Allowing 2h 15m per round isn't generous and doesn't even allow for breaks in-between rounds. At least on the Saturday (most) players are there for the night.

On the Sunday all players will be going home and do not want to finish so late. The timings for Sunday are: 1 @ 1030, 2 @ 1245, 3 @ 1500 finishing at 1715. Because timing is crucial on the Sunday I have decided to use clocks from the quarter-finals.

Your match last month was, I admit, late, but only by 30 minutes or so. The 'official' starting time being no earlier than 1715 (which, again, does not include breaks between rounds).

I do not class you as a slow player, often quite the opposite; and herein lies a problem. Players that finish sooner will have the longest to wait for an opponent and

this waiting often results in a feeling of the 'slow' players taking too much time, when in fact they are taking no longer than the allocated 2h 15m.

You ask how to use the clocks. Take a look at the Clock Rules to get a full idea. In a nutshell, you have 12 seconds to shake, roll and move your checkers, after 12 seconds have passed, if you have not hit your button on the clock to conclude your move your allocated reserve time of 22 minutes (11 points @ 2 minutes per point) is then counted down. When a player's clock reaches zero reserve minutes they have lost the match unless they are at match point and in a position where it is mathematically impossible for an opponent to win or save a gammon or backgammon. This position is known as gin.

There aren't any 'clock tactics' as such when using digital clocks, certainly when compared to the old analogue ones. My advice is to play your normal game and not become obsessed with clock-watching. Think about possible moves and cube decisions during your opponent's time and don't waste your own trying out loads of different move combinations when you know the correct move but want to see how it compares with other candidates.

I hope this answers your questions and that you will be starting with a clock every Sunday.

Chris Purchase: As you're probably aware, we play strictly to Biba rules in St Albans (with our own local chouette rules "overlying" the BIBA gold standard). One area where we'd appreciate confirmation /clarification relates to illegal moves...



Where, before rolling or cubing himself, a player draws an opponent's attention to an illegal play, am I right in saying that the opponent then has the right to replay the entire move? We had a situation recently where the 6 of a 6-5 was played legally and the 5 illegally; the player who drew attention was of the opinion that he could insist that the 6-play should stand and just the 5 be corrected. I ruled that, if the illegal move was not condoned, then the player had an obligation to replay the 6, and an option also to replay the 5 if they wished (Indeed, if that were not the

case, then I can see further dispute where an otherwise "forced move" needs re-playing!). Please can you confirm my interpretation and, perhaps, consider making this detail explicit in the Biba rules?

MC: Chris, you are correct, the full roll has to be played legally, not just the one moved illegally. I have made a slight change to the rules to clarify this:

4.8 Illegal Moves - Upon drawing attention to an illegal move the player may condone it or demand that the full roll be played legally. The offending player has the option to move their entire roll again (i.e., they are not obliged to replay just their illegal move). An illegal move is condoned by the opponent rolling their own dice or turning the cube.

John Broomfield :

In puzzle 9805 on page 23 of Bibafax #100 is the suggestion that black could hit white by moving from 6 to 1. How could that be, when white - on your board - does not have any men in the black home board. What have I missed?



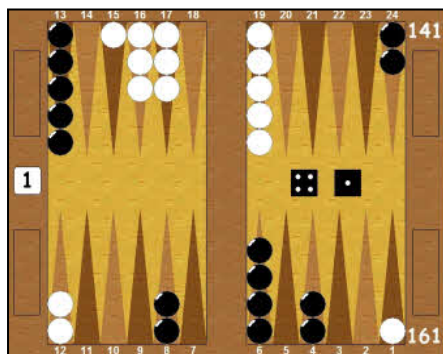
Disappointingly, almost every single issue contains errors when reviewing matches. As a result, the magazine lacks credibility for those of use who are really enthusiastic about the game. Obviously, you are not making all of these mistakes on purpose - but you do profess to be doing it for a living. What do you think the reason is - for example, are you now tiring of running the magazine? It is clearly not proof-checked and yet you are charging a number of pounds for each copy. Is it being harsh to suggest that the readers are entitled to better standards than those which seemingly are displayed?

MC: I don't think you are being too harsh. You make a good point.

I am as enthusiastic as I've always been. The problems with proofreading content written by me is I become blinkered and I don't always see what is written but what my mind/memory tells me I've written. On the occasions when a third party have proofread their own articles mistakes have still slipped through. I will try harder, after all, I do know you're checking up on me!



By the way, you missed the real mistake on that page . . . I have shown the wrong board! It is a place-holder of 9804. This is the correct board:



Black to play 41

I apologise for this mistake and I hope this correct board will enable you to make sense of the solutions.

Phil Tutchings: Regarding rules on premature rolling. I was interested to read the ruling on premature rolling following an issue in a game at my last Biba tournament. We were at a position with myself having two points made in my opponent's home board, he having blots to safety and myself having rolled 55 missing the blots. He then rolled



prematurely (I still had two of my 5s to take). I pointed out that I had still to finish my play but he told me that his roll stood and I couldn't ask him to re-roll. His premature roll safetied his blots and guaranteed him a gammon. A player, watching the game, who overheard our conversation said that my opponent's interpretation was correct. Although not happy with the rule I was happy to take the advice of two experienced players, although they did mention I could always seek your advice.

The rule section on the Biba web site states "All completed premature actions shall stand or be re-rolled at the opponent's discretion". If this stands as the current rule it seems much fairer than their interpretation as it never allows an advantage to the player who rolled prematurely.

MC: Since March 2008 the rules were as seen on the web site. The moral is: Never believe an opponent's interpretation of the rules, they have a vested interest. Check with the TD!

I have since had occasion to tweak the Premature Action rule and it now has the added comment: An exception to the penalties above is one where the player on roll has a forced move. In this instance

the forced move and the premature action are both valid.

In a semi-related matter, I have been made aware that some players have not read the rules or have failed to remember them! During a recent match one player shook and rolled his dice and one of them was propelled off the board striking his opponent before rebounding back onto the playing surface and coming to rest legally. The rules on Valid Rolls have been clear for a very long time:

4.2 Valid Rolls - Both dice must come to rest flat (not cocked) on the playing surface to the right of the bar; otherwise they must be rolled again. If any dice are projected off the board and subsequently land back on the board then the entire roll shall be deemed invalid and both dice must be rolled again.

Frequently occasions arise when the rules have to be tweaked. The up-to-date rules are always available online at the Biba web site. It is in all members' interests to read them and to be familiar with them. If you are ever in doubt about a rule when playing, please ask me for clarification.

31 July, August 1, 2 - SAC Trophy

The third of our four Swiss format events and yet another UK Finals Qualifier event. If you like playing 6 x 11 point matches over the weekend, then this is the event for you. Keep racking up those championship points, both Grand Prix and Ranking - it could keep you in the money!



Mindsports Olympiad XIII, 21 to 31 August.

Royal Horticultural Hall Conference Centre, Vincent Square. London. SW1
(www.msoworld.com)

22nd @ 0930 to 23rd @ 1330 The Vincent Square Cup. 6 x 11 points @ £12 entry

24th @ 0930 The Blitz. 7 x 3 points @ £8 entry

25th @ 0930 to 26th @ 1330 The Olympiad Championship. 6 x 11 points @ £12 entry

27th @ 0930 1 point Round Robin @ £8 entry

All those playing in both of the 11 pointers get free entry to the Rapid-Play, 4 x 5 point matches, which is one tournament split over the afternoons of 23rd and 26th, starting both days 1430 sharp.



BACKGAMMON in LONDON

4, 5, 6 September 2009

Mike Main, is now sponsoring his venture, Backgammon in London (in its second year) with this event at Biba. The knockout format offers the usual four elements plus extras, Stoppots and Jackpots to be held during the event. Check out www.backgammoninlondon.com for more details and to see if Mike will be running any satellite events.

This is always a popular tournament so book your accommodation as soon as you can.

The Scottish Open returns to Scotland! Scheduled for mid-March 2010, this popular knockout tournament will be taking place at the Barceló Carlton Hotel, Edinburgh. Although Biba is seeking a sponsor for the event (see bottom of the page) there is already a guaranteed first prize of £500 minimum! Keep your eyes peeled for other goodies including something special for the Friday 500 Knockout.

Advice on Booking Accommodation

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

2009 Backgammon Calendar

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

Jul 25,26	14th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Jul 31, Aug 1,2	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss
Aug 21 to 31	13th Mind Sports Olympiad	-	-	tba	Swiss
* Sep 4,5,6	Backgammon in London @ Biba	GP	-	Daventry	Knockout
Oct 2,3,4	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Daventry	Knockout
Oct 23,24,25	17th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Knockout
* Oct 30,31, Nov 1	Arthur Wright's Big 70 Birthday Bash	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss
* Dec 4,5,6	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	Daventry	Double KO

2010 Backgammon Calendar

* Jan 8,9,10	Cliff Connick's 90th Birthday Bright 'n' Breezy	GP	UK	Brighton	Knockout
Feb 5,6,7	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Mar 5,6,7	*new* Biba International Championships *new*	GP	-	Hinckley	Knockout
Mar 19,20,21	*new* The Scottish Open *new*	GP	-	Edinburgh	Knockout
Apl 9,10,11	British Open	GP	UK	Hinckley	Knockout
Apl ??	Manchester 1-Day	GP	-	Manchester	Combination
May 7,8,9	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Jun 4,5,6	The English Open	GP	-	Hinckley	Knockout
Jul 2,3,4	Biba World Championship	GP	UK	Hinckley	Knockout
Jul ??	15th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 6,7,8	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Aug ??	14th Mind Sports Olympiad	-	-	tba	Swiss
* Sep 3,4,5	Backgammon in London Trophy	GP	-	Hinckley	Knockout
Oct 1,2,3	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Hinckley	Knockout
Oct ??	18th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Knockout
Nov 5,6,7	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
* Dec 3,4,5	Gilbertson UK Finals	GP	-	Hinckley	Double KO

What does sponsoring an event entail?

At the very least you are required to supply the trophies for the event - the costs vary, but are usually in the region of £150 to £200. If you wish to attract a good turnout then extras should be considered to boost attendance. You can rename some of the above events to suit your sponsorship, details upon request. Once sponsorship has been agreed you are obliged to supply/fund the trophies in order to exclusively reserve your event.

2009 Details, Deals and Dates



Registration: Saturday 1030 to 1230

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

Auctions: Group, Saturday 1245. Individual, Sunday 1015

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

All tournaments feature a free entry Friday 500 **

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

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

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

FRIDAY

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

SATURDAY

Registration 1030 / 1230
Play starts 1300 prompt

SUNDAY

Registration 1030
(penalty points apply @ 1035)

Dinner, bed and breakfast @ all Barceló Hotels for 2009

Reservations on 0870 1610 797 (Hinckley & Daventry)

(9am to 9pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm @ weekends) and quote 'backgammon'.

Single room: 1 night £63.50, two nights £110.50

Double or twin room: 1 night £103, two nights £193

Note: There are a limited number of rooms made available to Biba at these rates and they will be allocated on a first come - first served basis.

Backgammon tournament weekends cannot be booked through any other special offer or promotional rate. Players not on the Biba special rate or not staying in the hotel shall pay a surcharge of £10 to cover facilities provided.

** Friday 500 entrants who are not on the Biba rate or staying in the hotel will have to pay a £20 entry fee.



Biba World Championship - July 2009

Report by Michael Crane

For a change I am going to report in the correct order!

In the **Friday 500** (32) Marcus Wrinch went out in the 1st Round and only gained 4 points. This left his nearest rivals an opportunity to catch up or even overtake him in Paul Gilbertson's case. But Paul only managed to gain 9 points, still 10 short of Marcus. The night's winner was Julian Fetterlein who beat David Nathan (2008 500 Champion). See page 31 for the latest listings.

Main (54). Was I happy to see the 50th entrant come through the door! I was

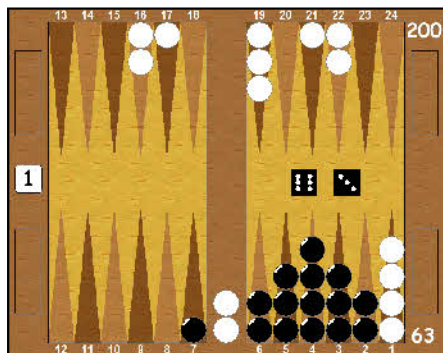
guaranteeing a £1000 first prize and I eventually ended up with £1080 divided thus: £1000 to the winner, £40 to the runner-up and twenty quid each to the losing semi-finalists. I hope to increase this next year - if enough of you turnout!

By the time we got to Sunday we were down to eight: Paul Gilbertson vs Adrian Jones; Chris Ternel vs Mike Heard; Wayne Felton vs Brian Lever; Marcus



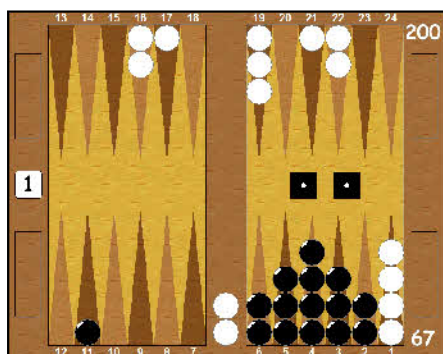
Wrinch vs Kevin Stebbing. In each match the first mention prevailed, and from there Chris beat Paul and Marcus beat Wayne for a Chris Ternel, Marcus Wrinch final.

You can't let a world-class player like Chris Ternel take a 7-0 lead in an 11 point match, unless you don't mind losing, that is! Marcus really didn't have a lot of choice in the matter, not until he scored his first point in the 6th game and made it 7-2. He then made it 7-4; Chris pulled away to 9-4; Marcus scraped back to 9-5 and then 9-6; and it is here as Chris starts to bear-in that Marcus looks like going out 11-6 as Chris (b) looks very good for the gammon he needs to become the Biba World Champion. However ...



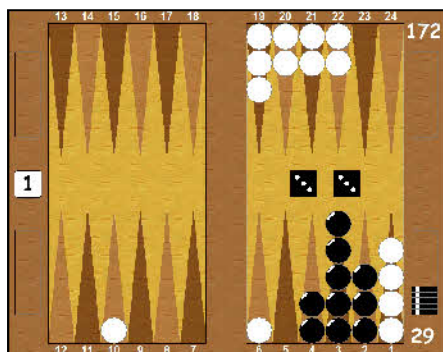
Black 9 White 6
Black rolls 63

The roll prior to this could have been played safely ...



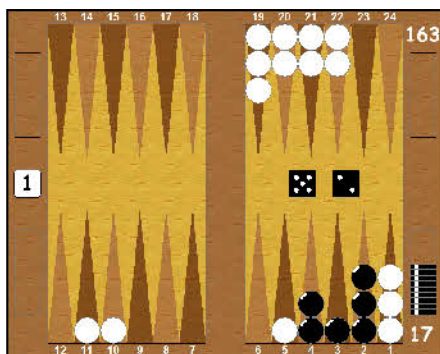
Chris plays 11/7

Now the 63 leaves a shot as Chris plays 7/4, 6/0. Marcus rolls 21 and misses. A little while later Chris is forced to leave another shot:



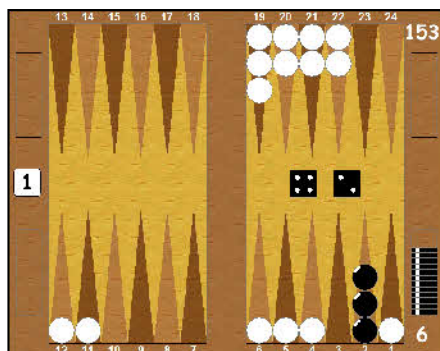
Black to play 33

Marcus rolls 54 and misses. Chris is unable to get things safe:



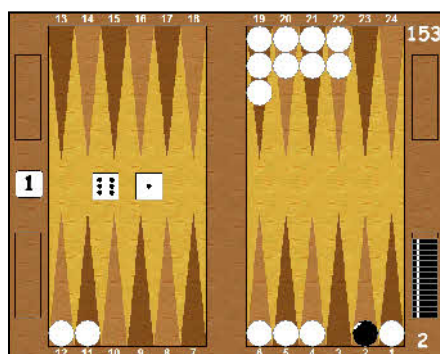
Black rolls 52

He plays 4/0, 4/2. Marcus rolls 31 and misses! Chris rolls 42: 3/0, 2/0 and Marcus replies with 51: 24/19 15/14. And it's here that Chris leaves another shot:

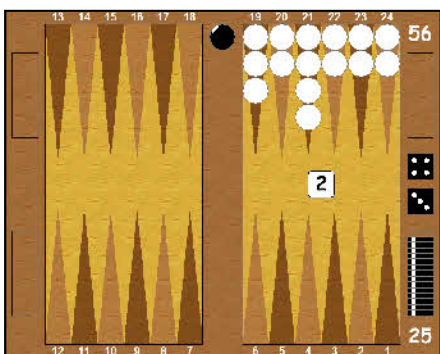


2/0 2/0

Marcus is now facing his very last chance to save the gammon and thus keeping in the match.



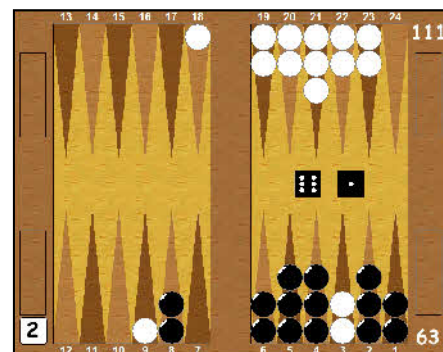
He rolls 61: 24/23*, 14/8! As soon as Chris knows he can't win the gammon, he cubes:



Black cubes

Marcus cannot take it and he drops and

the score moves to 10-6, Crawford. Marcus wins the Crawford, 10-7, he takes a quick point as Chris drops an early cube, 10-8. Chris takes the next cube and well into the game Marcus gets what is his last chance of a hit:



Black to play 61

Chris plays 8/2, 8/7 leaving just a direct 4 (11 rolls) and Marcus rolls a 4 - but it's Snake Eyes (11) and he can't hit! Chris then bears in and off to take the game, the match, and the Biba World Champion title! Congratulations, Chris; and hard luck to Marcus. He put up a good fight but was somewhat handicapped by the 7-lead that Chris built up.

In the **Consolation** (50), Mick Vacarey (suffering from a severe stomach pain) fought his way into the final from the non-prog side of the draw. In the meantime, Martin Barkwill entered from the Main 3rd Round, he too fought through to the final of the prog side to beat Kevin Stebbing and then went on to meet Mick in the Consolation final. Visibly distressed, Mick just couldn't manage to beat Martin and he had to settle for runner-up to Martin's 1st.

In the **Last Chance** (32) Nicky Check pipped Chris Evans to 1st place, and in the 3-pointer, **World's End** (32), Kevin Jones emerged victorious over Gheorghe Filipas. As part of his 'prize' Kevin took home an antique plastic globe, so old that many of its African countries no longer exists! He has to bring it back next year ... hopefully!



Saturday night's **Team** (11) was won by me (again) when I beat Nicky Check in the final. In the previous round we almost lost to Richard Biddle and Linda Taylor - but we prevailed as I struggled to control 'Captain Nicky'! In the freeze out **Poker** (19), John Hedge came out on top with Robert Tutchings in 2nd place, Paul



Gilbertson in 3rd and Myke Wignall in 4th. An out-of-form Tony Fawcett could only manage 10th. See page 31.

Finally, I'd like to thank Tom Duggan for sponsoring the event and supplying the trophies (and the globe thingy!). They were admired for their relevance to a world event and (for a change) none were left behind for recycling! The free prize draw went very well. Fanika Petkovska had her eye on the leather board and Tom Duggan his on a Biba backgammon watch - neither were disappointed as they

were able to take their pick of the goodies.

Overall it was a very successful event. The new Biba World Champion is off to another World Championship next week-end somewhere in Europe, I believe. Let's wish him good luck and hope he makes it a double! Finally, thanks to Deana & Tony Fawcett for their hard work with the admin and the poker and to Sharen for covering when Deana and I were out of the playing-room, and for updating the Biba Twitter page so that all the followers

could keep up with the events as they unfolded; and of course, thanks to all the entrants that made it the success it undoubtedly was. See you all next year? Who knows, I might up the 1st prize to £1500! Also, a special mention to Dave (Cracker) McNamara who flew in from Dublin . . . our only oversea entrant! Thanks, Cracker. ➤



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Top left: Main, Chris & Marcus

Top right: semis, Wayne & Paul

Middle left: Con, Martin & Mick

Middle right: L/C, Nicky & Chris

Bottom right: The Trophies





Top left: World's End, Kevin & Gheorghe

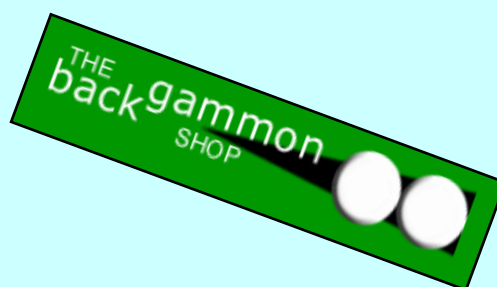


Top right: Sharen and Deana with
Fanika and the Hatrick board

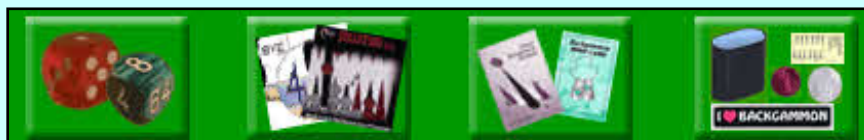
Bottom right: The free prize draw table
laden with twenty prizes, ranging from
the sublime to the ridiculous!



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The casinorip.com English Open 5, 6, 7 June. 2009

Main (33)		Last Chance (32)		Friday 500 (16)		Jackpot (4)	
1	Brian Lever	1	David Nathan	1	Tom Duggan	1	Tony Fawcett
2	Kevin Stebbing	2	Uldis Lapikens	2	Marcus Wrinch	2	Michael Crane
3&4	Martin Barkwill	3&4	Tom Duggan	3&4	Paul Gilbertson	Grand Prix @ English Open	
3&4	Gheorghe Filipas	3&4	Jeff Barber	3&4	Brian Lever		
5to8	Mick Vacarey	5to8	Peter Bennet	5to8	Jeff Barber	18.58	Brian Lever
5to8	Paul Gilbertson	5to8	Tony Fawcett	5to8	Mardi Ohannessian	13.42	Kevin Stebbing
5to8	Richard Biddle	5to8	Vicki Pemberton	5to8	Martin Barkwill	13.41	Marcus Wrinch
5to8	Mardi Ohannessian	5to8	Tony Fawcett	5to8	Julian Fetterlein	9.29	Martin Barkwill
Consolation (29)		The Grammy (8)		Poker (14)		9.29	Mardi Ohannessian
						9.29	Gheorghe Filipas
						9.27	David Nathan
						6.19	Richard Biddle
						6.19	Paul Gilbertson
						6.19	Mick Vacarey
						6.18	Paul Barwick
						6.18	Talan Evans
						6.17	Uldis Lapikens
						4.13	Nicky Check
						4.13	Lawrence Powell
						4.13	Chris Evans
						4.13	Chris Ternel
						4.13	David Startin
						4.13	Phil Tutchings
						4.12	Julian Fetterlein
						4.12	Paul Plumptre
Team (4)		Team (4)		Team (4)		Team (4)	
4.12	Stewart Pemberton	2.58	Tim Vasiljevic	2.57	Peter Bennet	2.06	Reg Wegener
4.11	Jeff Barber	2.58	John Hedge	2.57	Tony Fawcett		
4.11	Tom Duggan	2.58	Mick Harris	2.57	Vicki Pemberton		

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The Biba World Championship 3, 4, 5 July, 2009

Main (54)		Last Chance (32)		Friday 500 (8)		Team (12)	
1	Chris Ternel	1	Nicky Check	1	Julian Fetterlein	1	Michael Crane
2	Marcus Wrinch	2	Chris Evans	2	David Nathan	2	Nicky Check
3&4	Paul Gilbertson	3&4	Steve Rimmer	3&4	Gerry Enslin	Jackpot (8) Joint 1st. Arthur Wright & Dave McNamara	
3&4	Wayne Felton	3&4	Talan Evans	3&4	David Phillips		
5to8	Adrian Jones	5to8	David Nathan	5to8	Paul Gilbertson		
5to8	Mike Heard	5to8	Dave McNamara	5to8	Tony Fawcett		
5to8	Brian Lever	5to8	Jean Wade	5to8	Martin Barkwill		
5to8	Kevin Stebbing	5to8	Tim Vasiljevic	5to8	Dan Tutchings	Grand Prix @ The World	
Consolation (50)		World's End (32)		Poker (19)		24.77	Chris Ternel
						13.42	Marcus Wrinch
						13.41	Martin Barkwill
						9.29	Brian Lever
						9.29	Mike Heard
						9.29	Paul Gilbertson
						9.29	Wayne Felton
						9.29	Adrian Jones
						9.28	Mick Vacarey
						9.28	Vicki Pemberton
9.27	Nicky Check	4.13	Peter Christmas	4.12	Andrew Darby	2.57	Jean Wade
6.19	Kevin Stebbing	4.13	Simon K Jones	4.12	Paul Plumptre	2.06	Uldis Lapikens
6.19	Tony Fawcett	4.13	David McNamara	4.12	Marc Turner	2.06	Peter Chan
6.19	Gerry Enslin	4.13	Richard Biddle	4.12	Gheorghe Filipas	2.06	Rachel Rhodes
6.19	Arthur Wright	4.13	Tim Vasiljevic	4.11	Steve Rimmer	2.06	Phil Tutchings
6.19	Kevin Jones	4.13	Simon Morecroft	4.11	Talan Evans	2.06	Linda Taylor
6.19	John Hedge	4.13	Tom Duggan	2.58	Jon Barnes	2.05	Daniel Tutchings
6.18	Irving Czechowicz	4.13	Stewart Pemberton	2.58	Myke Wignall	2.05	Robert Tutchings
6.17	Chris Evans	4.13	David Phillips	2.58	Fanika Petkovska	1.55	Richard Holness
4.13	Steve Hallet	4.13	Eric Westbrook	2.57	David Nathan	1.55	Mike Barrett

New rankings after		1765	Mike Heard	1561	Paul Plumptre	1469	Andy Bell
The World Championship		1761	Paul Gilbertson	1538	Talan Evans	1468	Myke Wignall
2033	Julian Fetterlein	1746	Steve Hallet	1534	Tony Fawcett	1467	Marc Turner
1981	Chris Ternel	1743	Steve Rimmer	1521	Kevin Jones	1463	Mike Barrett
1954	Brian Lever	1722	Simon K Jones	1517	Simon Morecroft	1462	Daniel Tutchings
1858	Kevin Stebbing	1693	Tom Duggan	1515	Richard Biddle	1436	Chris Evans
1841	Rachel Rhodes	1665	Peter Chan	1511	Jean Wade	1431	Neil Everitt
1834	Adrian Jones	1660	Jon Barnes	1510	Gerry Enslin	1425	Arthur Wright
1819	David Nathan	1660	David Phillips	1490	Eric Westbrook	1424	Robert Tutchings
1815	Peter Christmas	1630	John Hedge	1485	Irving Czechowicz	1403	Richard Holness
1806	Martin Barkwill	1610	Wayne Felton	1483	Phil Tutchings	1366	Mick Vacarey
1794	Uldis Lapikens	1586	Stewart Pemberton	1479	Mahmoud Jahanbani	1317	Vicki Pemberton
1781	Marcus Wrinch	1579	Gheorghe Filipas	1479	Tim Vasiljevic	1226	Fanika Petkovska
1770	Nicky Check	1570	Andrew Darby	1476	David McNamara	1200	Linda Taylor

Grand Prix Championship, July, 2009 (156 entrants)

Paul Barwick remains at the top even though he was absent for the Biba World Championship. The new Biba World Champion, Chris Ternel leaps from 11th to 2nd place and is just 1.5 points behind Paul. Marcus Wrinch moves down one spot into 3rd but he is just 1.05 points behind Chris and 2.55 behind Paul. We lose Peter Chan and Julian Fetterlein, and gain Chris (2nd), Martin Barkwill (5th).

64.97	Paul Barwick	20.64	Eric Westbrook	7.74	Kevin Jones	4.12	Steve Taylor
63.47	Chris Ternel	20.12	Stewart Pemberton	6.71	Simon Morecroft	4.12	Julian Minwalla
62.42	Marcus Wrinch	19.60	Rosey Bensley	6.71	Lewis Young	4.12	Michael Brigdale
52.62	Gerry Enslin	19.09	Tim Vasiljevic	6.70	Carl Dell	4.12	Marc Turner
49.54	Martin Barkwill	19.07	Tony Fawcett	6.69	Simonetta Herrera	4.11	Roland Herrera
49.02	Paul Gilbertson	15.99	George Miltiadou	6.69	Jason Dennis	4.11	George Hall
48.46	Uldis Lapikens	15.48	Mick Harris	6.19	Brendan Burgess	4.11	Mike Williams
46.58	Nicky Check	14.45	Mike Ireland	6.19	Geoff Conn	4.11	Steve Rimmer
46.41	Rachel Rhodes	13.42	Arthur Musgrove	6.19	Mark Dixon	4.10	Steve Fowles
45.91	Lawrence Powell	13.42	Chris Purchase	6.19	Neil Davidson	2.58	Mahmoud Jahanbani
45.91	Wayne Felton	13.42	Simon Heath	6.19	Eamon Keogh	2.58	Leslie Singleton
44.85	Peter Chan	13.42	Mike Heard	6.19	Mark Heidenfeld	2.58	Zoe Cunningham
43.85	Brian Lever	13.41	Tony Lee	6.19	John Ingamells	2.58	Nick Valley
39.73	Julian Fetterlein	13.41	Gheorghe Filipas	6.19	Miles Farren	2.58	Paul Learmount
38.68	John Hedge	12.90	John Wright	6.19	Kevin Dale	2.58	Sidney Van Gelder
38.13	Richard Biddle	12.38	Reg Wegener	6.19	Michy Kageyama	2.57	David Wallbank
35.08	Kevin Stebbing	11.87	Richard Holness	6.19	Rowena Paliwoda	2.57	Peter Snape
34.58	Jon Barnes	11.84	David Nathan	6.18	Raj Jansari	2.57	Rodney Lighton
31.85	Peter Bennet	10.81	David Motley	6.18	Sean Casey	2.57	Howard Furr-Barton
31.48	Mardi Ohannessian	10.81	Fanika Petkovska	6.18	Adam Stocks	2.57	Jean Wade
30.90	Talan Evans	10.31	David Startin	6.18	Dorothy Lee	2.06	Ian Tarr
29.40	Myke Wignall	9.81	Mike Barrett	6.17	Crispin Duke	2.06	Ralph Eskinazi
28.89	Arthur Wright	9.81	Raymond Kershaw	6.16	Simon Jones	2.06	Fak Laight
28.88	Adrian Jones	9.29	Michael Proto	5.68	Larry Bennett	2.06	Tim Brown
28.86	Chris Evans	9.29	Tim Mooring	5.16	John Batty	2.06	Michael Horne
27.86	Neil Everitt	9.29	Lee Wood	4.13	Cliff Connick	2.06	Steve Grundy
27.85	Andy Darby	9.29	Dave Ablett	4.13	Roy Hollands	2.06	Gill Bray
27.32	Jeff Barber	9.29	Todd Young	4.13	Chris Bray	2.06	Pat Parkes
26.84	Sean Williams	9.28	Malcolm Robertson	4.13	Bill Young	2.06	Ken Osakabe
25.80	Brian Metcalf	9.28	Felix Vink	4.13	Frank Conway	2.05	Robert Tutchings
25.77	Tom Duggan	8.77	Linda Taylor	4.13	Jackie Griffiths	2.05	Daniel Tutchings
25.28	Peter Christmas	8.76	Stefan Paliwoda	4.13	Ray Fard	1.55	Ian Shimwell
25.27	Paul Plumptre	8.76	Neil Young	4.13	Cecelia Sparke		
24.77	Gaz Owen	8.26	John Reddington	4.13	Athanasia Petselis		
24.77	John Hurst	8.25	David Phillips	4.13	Scott Parker		
24.77	Michael Bennett	8.24	Dave McNamara	4.13	Luan Howitt		
27.32	Vicky Pemberton	8.24	Irving Czechowicz	4.13	Shea Mulhall		
23.72	Mick Vacarey	8.23	Edwin Turner	4.13	Taka Ito		
22.70	Stuart Mann	8.23	Ann Pocknell	4.13	Steve Hallett		
22.19	Phil Tutchings	8.23	Chris Johnson	4.13	Simon K Jones		
22.18	Bob Young	7.74	Angie Dell	4.12	Nigel Merrigan		

Ranking Championship, July, 2009 (146 entrants)

Just over halfway and things are now taking shape. Marcus Wrinch usurps Nicky Check at 1st place, Paul Gilbertson moves into 2nd place, and Chris Ternel, the Biba World Champion, comes in at 3rd. Wayne Felton moves up and Mardi Ohannessian drops out of the Top 10. Mardi is currently in Greece for the summer so you can expect him to move further down until October.

The next event, the SAC Trophy, is a Swiss. With 6 x 11 point matches over the weekend there's a potential 26 new qualifiers waiting to get into the Top 10. Will you be one of them?

2141.14	Marcus Wrinch	1484.00	Paul Barwick	1617.25	Mike Barrett	1262.00	John Batty
2137.43	Paul Gilbertson	1481.36	Mick Harris	1433.25	David Startin	1255.50	Tony Walters
2088.57	Chris Ternel	1949.67	Gaz Owen	1318.50	Fanika Petkovska	1235.50	Roland Herrera
2079.71	Nicky Check	1718.78	Stewart Pemberton	1925.33	John Ingamells	1209.00	David Nathan
2067.07	Uldis Lapikens	1701.33	Rachel Rhodes	1892.67	Brendan Burgess	1171.50	Simonetta Herrera
2016.36	Martin Barkwill	1628.89	George Miltiadou	1841.33	Eamon Keogh	1531.00	Michael Brigdale
1960.79	Gerry Enslin	1297.33	Reg Wegener	1830.00	Kevin Jones	1503.00	Bob Bruce
1954.79	John Hedge	2107.13	Jon Barnes	1821.00	Michy Kageyama	1439.00	Carl Dell
1947.79	Wayne Felton	1696.13	Adrian Jones	1815.67	Mark Heidenfeld	1439.00	Chris Johnson
1911.93	Julian Fetterlein	1481.63	Vicky Pemberton	1815.33	Neil Davidson	1384.00	Roger Coram
1839.79	Mardi Ohannessian	1446.25	Ray Kershaw	1786.33	Mark Dixon	1337.00	Julian Minwalla
1766.79	Lawrence Powell	1421.38	Richard Holness	1722.00	Geoff Conn	1310.00	Daniel Tutchings
1761.07	Arthur Wright	1376.50	Tom Duggan	1711.00	Kevin Dale	1307.00	Gill Bray
1670.71	Brian Metcalf	1124.13	Neil Young	1647.67	Ann Pocknell	1256.00	Raj Jansari
1668.93	Neil Everitt	1712.86	Lee Wood	1559.33	Miles Farren	1256.00	Marc Turner
1662.14	Richard Biddle	1449.71	John Reddington	1551.00	Simon Morecroft	1233.00	Jean Wade
1651.57	Chris Evans	1318.57	Lewis Young	1477.00	Ed Turner	1182.00	Angie Dell
1644.43	Bob Young	1172.29	Zoe Cunningham	1389.67	Dave McNamara	1178.00	Ian Tarr
1625.00	Eric Westbrook	2146.00	John Hurst	1308.67	Rowena Paliwoda	1126.00	Andy Bell
1570.29	Rosey Bensley	2032.33	Michael Bennett	1744.50	Simon K Jones	1110.00	Mike Williams
1557.29	Myke Wignall	1763.33	Mike Heard	1730.00	Frank Conway	1092.00	Leslie Singleton
1554.71	Phil Tutchings	1726.67	Stuart Mann	1724.50	Cliff Connick	1083.00	Howard Furr-Barton
1497.50	Jeff Barber	1544.67	Todd Young	1693.50	Jackie Griffiths	1082.00	Mahmoud Jahanbani
1194.14	Linda Taylor	1513.83	Larry Bennett	1685.50	Malcolm Robertson	1070.00	Jason Dennis
Qualifiers above this line		1419.17	Peter Chan	1619.50	David Phillips	1042.00	Paul Learmount
1794.15	Peter Bennet	1353.67	Athanasia Petselis	1612.00	Bill Young	1037.00	Anne Ryder
1485.77	Talan Evans	1886.40	Chris Purchase	1611.50	Chris Bray	1035.00	Ken Osakabe
1434.85	Tim Vasiljevic	1854.60	Simon Heath	1574.50	Felix Vink	1025.00	Sue Metcalf
1338.92	Mick Vacarey	1822.80	Arthur Musgrove	1555.50	Roy Hollands	1023.00	Karen Proto
1921.58	Kevin Stebbing	1723.80	John Wright	1537.00	Cecilia Sparke	1006.00	Pat Parkes
1698.75	Peter Christmas	1707.00	Tim Mooring	1534.00	Crispin Duke	1003.00	Sean Casey
1545.92	Andy Darby	1706.20	Gheorghe Filipas	1522.50	Scott Parker	1000.00	Robert Tutchings
1470.83	Michael Ireland	1664.40	Tony Lee	1516.50	Shea Mulhall	984.00	Nick Valley
1441.58	Tony Fawcett	1399.20	David Motley	1500.00	Taka Ito	976.00	Sidney Van Gelder
1893.18	Sean Williams	1884.75	Michael Proto	1476.00	Luan Howitt	929.00	Steve Taylor
1850.36	Brian Lever	1855.25	Dave Ablett	1467.00	Ray Fard	904.00	Steve Rimmer
1711.00	Paul Plumptre	1693.75	Stefan Paliwoda	1439.00	Steve Hallett		

Annual Championships Prize Fund £1805 @ July 2009

Grand Prix	Payout	Ranking
Paul Barwick	£252.70	Marcus Wrinch
Chris Ternel	£180.50	Paul Gilbertson
Marcus Wrinch	£144.40	Chris Ternel
Gerry Enslin	£108.30	Nicky Check
Martin Barkwill	£72.20	Uldis Lapikens
Paul Gilbertson	£54.15	Martin Barkwill
Uldis Lapikens	£36.10	Gerry Enslin
Nicky Check	£18.05	John Hedge
Rachel Rhodes	£18.05	Wayne Felton
Lawrence Powell	£18.05	Julian Fetterlein

Just over halfway through the season and the chart is beginning to take shape. I would expect there to be quite a few changes over the coming months as members vie for Grand Prix points and Ranking scores.

The best way to attack the list is via the 6 x 11 point matches of the Swiss events.

As last year, quite a few of you will be taking home a double pay-package from the Brighton tournament - will one of them be you?

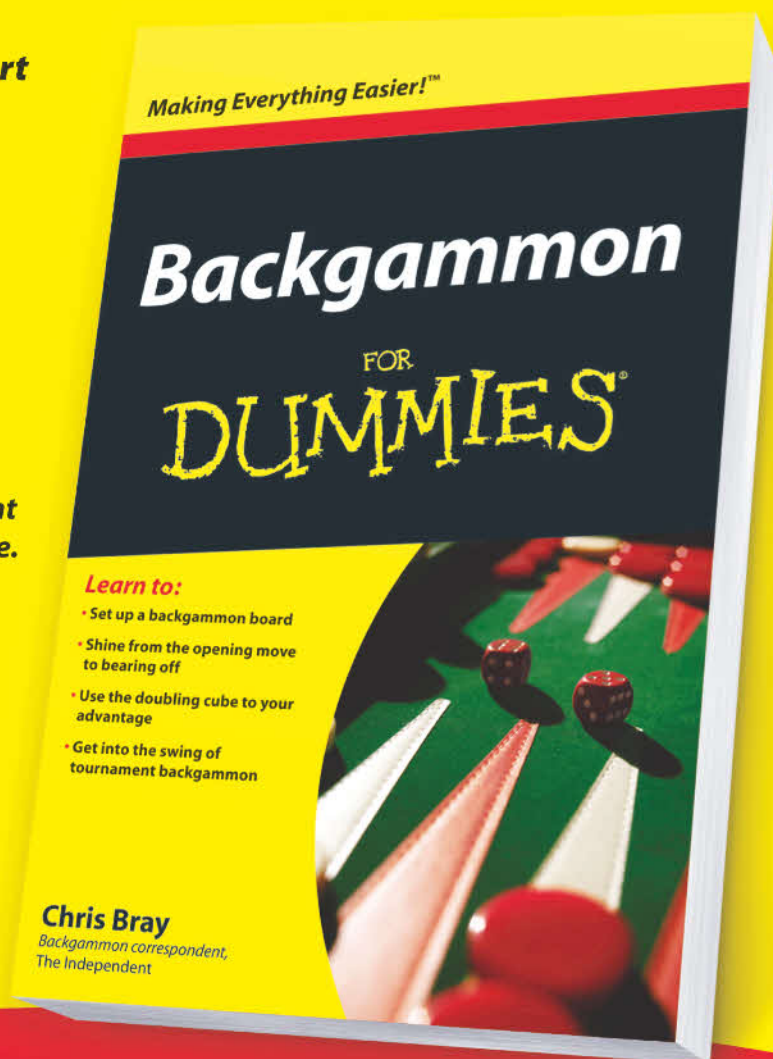
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Friday 500 Positions - July

76	Marcus Wrinch	13	Brain Metcalf	7	Rachel Rhodes
66	Paul Gilbertson	13	Ray Kershaw	7	Sidney Van Gelder
56	Richard Biddle	12	David Phillips	4	Steve Rimmer
51	Tom Duggan	12	Fanika Petkovska	4	Marc Turner
50	Jeff Barber	12	Athanasia Petselis	4	Kevin Stebbing
43	Gerry Enslin	12	Peter Chan	4	Irving Czechowicz
41	Andy Darby	12	Raj Jansari	4	Phil Tutchings
40	Julian Fetterlein	11	Gheorghe Filipas	4	Angie Dell
40	Myke Wignall	11	Ed Turner	4	Ann Pocknell
40	Brian Lever	11	John Wright	4	Geoff Conn
38	Tony Fawcett	9	Dan Tutchings	4	Ian Tarr
36	Martin Barkwill	9	Peter Christmas	4	Jason Dennis
36	Mardi Ohannessian	9	Todd Young	4	John Ingamells
34	Mike Ireland	8	David McNamara	4	Kevin Dale
29	Rosey Bensley	8	Anne Ryder	4	Luan
25	Neil Young	8	Gaz Owen	4	Mark Dixon
<u>Top 16 Qualifiers above this line</u>		8	Tony Walters	4	Nicky Check
23	David Nathan	7	Simon Morecroft	4	Paul Barwick
20	Lee Wood	7	Kevin Jones	4	Paul Learmount
20	Peter Bennet	7	Rob Tutchings	4	Rowena Paliwoda
19	Simonetta Herrera	7	Jean Wade	4	Roy Hollands
18	Mick Harris	7	Carl Dell	4	Stefan Paliwoda
16	Jeff Bailey	7	Chris Evans	4	Steve Taylor
16	Roland Herrera	7	Chris Johnson	4	Stuart Mann
15	Arthur Wright	7	Gilberto	4	Sue Metcalf
15	Reg Wegener	7	Ken Osakabe	4	Taka
14	Lewis Young	7	Linda Taylor	4	Talan Evans
13	Mahmoud Jahanbani	7	Michael Crane	4	Tim Vasiljevic
		7	Michy	4	Tony Lee
		7	Neil Davidson		

Marcus Wrinch is still #1, but Paul Gilbertson has lessened the gap. Richard Biddle remains static in 3rd and Jeff Barber (absent this weekend) drops down to 5th. Rosey Bensley and Neil Young remain at the bottom and Lee Wood drops out of the Top 16. With four more to go (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov,) will Marcus be able to cling to to the #1 spot and get £100 for doing so or will be be pipped at the post? The SAC Trophy might prove a turning point. Make sure you enter and get those scores pumped up!

Poker Grand Prix - July

Pts	Player	Pts	Player	Pts	Player
130	Myke Wignall	17	Mick Harris	17	Simon K Jones
106	Paul Gilbertson	47	Alison Lee	16	Roy Hollands
105	John Hedge	46	Gilberto Nieto	14	Tim Vasiljevic
77	Vicki Pemberton	44	Tony Lee	13	Kevin Dale
76	Chris Evans	33	Ed Turner	11	Shea Mulhall
73	Tony Fawcett	28	John Batty	11	Daniel Tutchings
54	Mick Vacarey	24	Dave McNamara	9	Paul Learmount
51	Marcus Wrinch	20	Talan Evans	8	Ray Fard
<u>Qualifiers above this line</u>		18	Tony Walters	8	Simonetta Herrera
80	Rosey Bensley	13	Gaz Owen	7	Jason Dennis
59	Martin Barkwill	13	Lee Wood	6	Ann Pocknell
53	Andy Darby	11	Tom Duggan	6	Mardi Ohannessian
46	Lawrence Powell	32	Julian Minwalla	6	Marc Turner
71	Neil Young	30	Roger Coram	5	Stefan Paliwoda
68	Reg Wegener	27	Robert Tutchings	4	Felix Vink
36	Julian Fetterlein	21	Cecilia Sparke	4	Philip Tutchings
36	Kevin Stebbing	20	Frank Conway	2	Eamon Keogh
		20	Nick Valley	1	Mark Dixon
		19	Lewis Young	1	Steve Hallett

The top three remain in their positions from last month, each of them increasing their points total. Tony Fawcett (still not on form) and Marcus Wrinch are replaced by Viki Pemberton and Chris Evans in the money positions. Rosey is likely to qualify next month and would (if nothing changes) slot into the 4th slot. Myke and Paul might find it difficult to make much headway in future, they have some high scores to discard whereas the chasing pack have some very small ones to replace, especially Chris! Watch out for him next month.



1ST – 5TH AUGUST 2009

3rd "Gogi Bukia Memorial" Georgian Open

4th Backgammon Davis Doubles



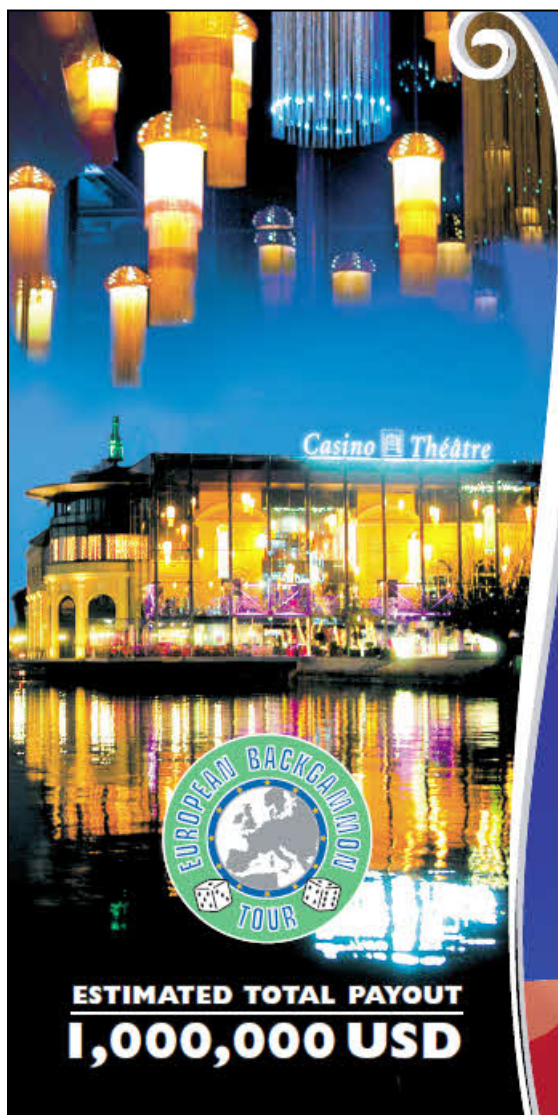
Part of



SEASON III

Estimated total payout
1,000,000 \$

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ESTIMATED TOTAL PAYOUT
1,000,000 USD



BAE POKER TOUR

22 - 25 OCT. 2009

GUARANTEED PRIZE POOL

300,000 €

5th European Backgammon Doubles Championships

7th French Open
d'Enghien-les-Bains
Lucien Barrière

28TH OCT. –
1ST NOV. 2009

TOTAL ADDED PRIZE

UPTO **50.000 €**

LAST YEAR'S TOTAL PAYOUT 200.000 €



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