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Competition 2003 No3, 6601-06 Answers

By Richard Granville

In Bibafax 66, all Biba members were invited to enter the third and final 2003 competition, comprising 6 problems. This article contains the competitors' answers, together with selected comments.

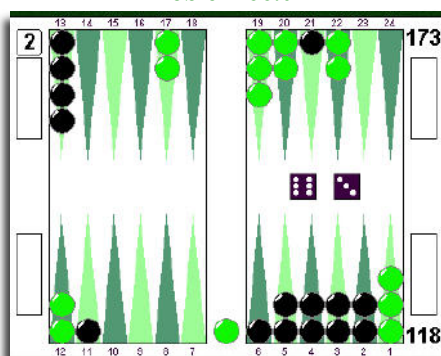


Marks have been awarded primarily according to the number of votes. In some cases, they are also influenced by the Jellyfish equities, as well as my own view.

Once again, Chris Bray has been kind enough to submit the problems to Snowie and provide some justification of its choices. I've chosen to do the following:

- The Snowie choices and Chris Bray's comments will be positioned at the end of each problem. This allows them to provide a "last word" on each problem.
- The choices will not directly contribute to the marks, which will be allocated in the usual way. I may take account of them indirectly to make small adjustments, but I do not want to provide any temptation for competitors to use Snowie to choose their moves.

Problem 66.01



11 point match
White 2 Black 0
Black to play 63

The main decision on this problem is easily identified:

Rodney Lighton: 13/7 21/18. The big question in this position is whether to lift the blot on the six point or not. If we don't then 13/7 21/18 looks best – duplicating ones and sixes as well as bringing up another builder for the six point. If we do lift the blot, then 21/15 6/3 gets the

back checker going. To win a gammon here we need the six point and I think that here it is just worth the risk of leaving it slotted, but only because of the duplication of hitting numbers.

Considering other options but coming to the same conclusion:

Tim Wilkins: A key decision is whether to leave the 6 point slotted or deny White a direct shot with 6/3. Moving the man off the 6 point puts it out of play, and it may take Black many rolls to remake the 6 point, if ever. Therefore I'll reject anything involving 6/3.

The other extreme is 13/7 13/10, which makes Black almost certain to cover if White misses. However Black would have 5 blots to tidy up, and gets hit twice with 61, 62, 64, 65 and 66. This seems too risky to me. I'll go for 13/7 21/18, which still leaves 4 blots but duplicates 1s and 6s and gives Black a good chance to cover next time.

One competitor disagrees over the main question:

Bob Young: 21/15 6/3. Black can win this game without the need to cover the 6-point, so, as it cannot be covered this roll, then it should be lifted. The only consideration in the choice of sixes is to minimise contact, and the best for this is to run the rear checker into the outfield. The blot on the 11-point could be put safely away, but at present is only subject to a 6-5 roll from the bar. This blot may be useful for pick and pass numbers should White enter from the bar, or conceivably used to make a future point somewhere on the way home for Black, so leave it there for the moment.

It's interesting that Jellyfish rates this move the best – perhaps Black still has good chances of a gammon after this move and can afford to protect himself against a possible disaster if White re-enters and hits. Still, Snowie disagrees (see below) – is this because of its improved position evaluation or does the difference result from rollouts?

One competitor flirted with Tim's suggested all-out move:

Cedric Lytton: 13/7 21/18. Having given away the cube, Black must play aggressively. This duplicates 1s and 6s,

slots the bar point, and brings down another builder for the 6-point, while not stripping the mid-point. 13/7 13/10 would be a close contender.

Summing up the position well:

Richard Biddle: We need to press on for the gammon. This can be best achieved by making the six-point, which can't be done on this move. So we need to bring some builders down but at the same time we do not want to play too loose and hence face a gammon ourselves. One move does duplicates sixes and ones: 13/7 21/18. It brings a builder down onto the bar-point and begins to escape the back checker by placing it on the White bar-point. **Correct move 13/7 21/18.**

Finally, the authoritative view of the position:

Chris Bray / Snowie: The key thing to decide here is whether Black can afford the luxury of lifting the man on the 6-pt by playing 6/3. Back in the 1970's no human would have even considered this play but we neural nets have taught you carbon life forms a thing or two and we now have a better understanding of the loss of momentum that happens when a blot is hit during a blitz.

Black has a lot of men in range of his 6-pt so the decision is likely to be close. In fact Black has just too much work to do and leaving the 6-pt slotted is correct. The question then arises as to how to distribute the builders and also what to do about the back man. Don't forget that back man – he still has to reach safety and the best time to do that is whilst White is on the bar.

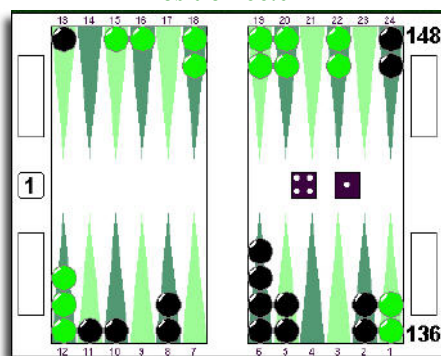
Luckily there is a play that brings a fresh builder, starts the escape of the back man and triplicates 1's and 6's. That play 13/7, 21/18 - is the clear winner and I would class any other play as an error.

This time I'll let Richard kick off the analysis (the position is on the following page):

Richard Biddle: We are likely to lose here due to White's superior home board. Our two back checkers are penned in and not likely to escape cleanly. White on the other hand has a better escape available and in fact still poses a threat to our outer



Position 66.02



11 point match
White 2 Black 0
Black to play 41

board. We could play aggressively with 13/9 24/23 to try and build a home board prime next roll or make a forward anchor if hit. But I do not think this would be a popular move and we are more likely to consolidate our position by making safe some blots and making a point if possible. This can be done with the **Correct move 13/9 10/9**.

Richard, you're supposed to suggest the move you think best, not reject moves because they might be unpopular. Still, you've supplied sound reasons for your choice.

Coming to the opposite conclusion:

Bob Young: 13/9 24/23. The bar-point is available, but at the expense of leaving a direct shot at the mid-point blot, as well as two other indirect shots at blots, so this would be too high a price to pay for this point. The 9-point could be made, but the real problem is that Black will be feeling the effects of his small racing lead soon, so he needs to get the rear checkers going before White. His two checkers on the 2-point give him no flexibility either. The one seems to be clear, 24/23. To then play the four from the mid-point is leaving nine indirect shots, but with some duplication of good sixes on the other side of the board, seems to be the best blend of action and safety.

This time Bob has some support for his choice:

Cedric Lytton: 13/9 24/23. Ahead in the race, Black's plan is to escape his back men and prime his opponent's. White is threatening to make a prime himself when his game will be better-timed, so Black must get his back men moving and threaten to escape and/or hit with 7s, 8s or 9s – so 24/23 with the 1. Then 13/9 with the 4, leaving White only 9 shots and

preparing to make some priming points.

Regarding the back split as too dangerous:

Rodney Lighton: 13/9 10/9. White has a better position than Black here, with the better prime and our big stack on the 6-point. This could argue for a bold play like 13/9 24/23 to get the back men moving. This leaves five blots and could be a disaster though. Similarly 11/7 8/7 is worthy of consideration, but leaves too many shots. I think it is better to play safely and constructively with 13/9 10/9 and hope for improvement later.

Once again Tim analyses a number of alternatives before plumping for the solid move:

Tim Wilkins: Is it worth splitting the back men? Gives up the anchor and doesn't really help Black much - also it doesn't leave a good 4. That leaves 11/7 8/7, 13/9 10/9, 13/9 11/10 or 13/9 6/5. I don't think making the bar point is strong enough to justify 3 blots and a direct shot, especially as it gives up the 8 point. 13/9 6/5 also leaves a lot of shots for the relatively small gain of unstacking the 6 point. Of the remaining 2, 13/9 10/9 leaves fewer shots and makes a better point so I choose that.

Finally, the vote that completes the 3-3 split between the two moves:

Chris Bray / Snowie: The first question to ask in positions such as this is who is the favourite. Here because of better outfield coverage and a slightly better home board White definitely has the edge. The next thing is to have a plan. Black can try for the pure approach of priming White and trust his back men will be able to escape later (Plan A) or he can combine the priming approach with trying to escape his back men (Plan B).

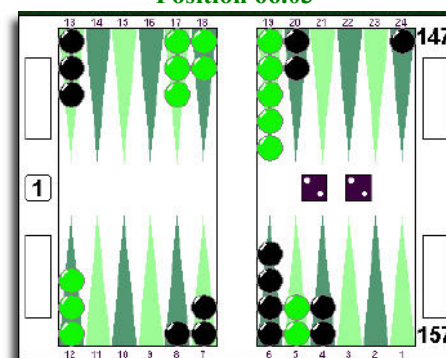
Plan A would indicate 13/9, 10/9 as the play whilst Plan B would indicate 13/9, 24/23. The problem with A is that Black ends up making two points six pips apart (the 9-pt and the 3-pt) which is never a good idea. B is more dangerous but more flexible.

Given the cube is in the middle and Black is not favourite he should seek action on both sides of the board and go with 13/9, 24/23, the more flexible play. My roll-outs have A as an error but not a blunder.

Before supplying my casting vote, I'd like

to point out a small mistake in the above analysis: Black's forward point is the 2-point, not the 3-point, so he already has two points six apart. Despite this, I strongly believe that Black has to start his escape now, with the dangers being more than offset by a number of advantages, including having one man poised to escape. I feel justified in supplying a full third vote for 13/9 24/23 and using the computer-assisted analysis to reduce the award for 13/9 10/9 to 9 marks.

Position 66.03



11 point match
White 2 Black 2
Black to play 22

One way to deal with this position is just to make a new home board point:

Cedric Lytton: 6/2 (2). Black is a little behind in the race and needs to make his 8-point and another board point to equalise, also to make White think twice about hitting if he gets a 3. This play also keeps one spare on the mid-point as a builder for the 8-point, and with one man still back on the 24-point, leaves White no safe place to dump men behind Black's golden anchor.

Alternatively 24/20 6/2 give White sanctuary and only starts the 2-point, but now Black could hit or run out safely from his golden anchor and he would also have a spare in his 6-point to attack with should White leave his own golden anchor. But 6/2 (2) is tighter, and only if Black rolls 6-6 will he wish he'd done the other.

Other competitors are less keen to make a point behind the opponent's anchor:

Bob Young: 24/22 13/11(3). The rear checkers usually need the mid-point as a landing base, but will have to make do with two more pips to reach safety, because the mid point is on the move. Leaving the blot on the 8-point is no great risk, for if White were to hit there, the remaining White checker would be under great threat of attack. Placing checkers



behind the advanced anchor is a move that I am gradually realising is almost a last resort, so the only other two should be advancing the rear checker. True, it gives White the chance to bury all bad rolls behind this checker, but it gives Black the ability now to play a six with this rear piece, and as the race is about equal, Black will be grateful for this flexibility.

Tim Wilkins: As White is fairly inflexible and probably won't want to leave Black's 5 point yet I'd prefer not to move the man on the 24 point. I'm not too concerned about the blot on the 8 point given Black's anchor and White's lack of home table points. 6/2(2) would make a useful 3 point board, but in this case puts too many men behind White's anchor and leaves Black a bit stripped. I choose 13/7 6/4, keeping some spares and hoping White will have to leave a blot soon.

I'm not so keen on 13/7 6/4 myself as Black is reducing the chance or the desirability of making his 8-point. Agreeing with Cedric's more passive choice:

Rodney Lighton: 6/2(2). Advancing 24/20 is wrong here, allowing White to play easily behind the anchor. 8/2 6/4 is a possibility, but simply making the 2-point looks best. White has many rolls which leave blots next go and building a three point board ready for a hit looks sensible. The blot on the 8-point isn't a worry, White would be losing his anchor to hit it and re-entering isn't a problem, Black is behind in the race as well so being hit will improve timing.

Coming to the same conclusion as Bob, with very similar arguments:

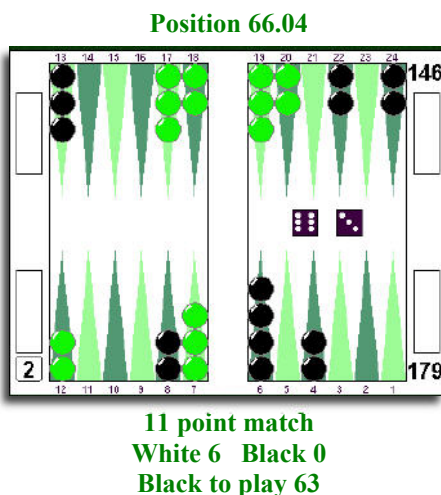
Richard Biddle: The big dilemma for me here is whether the midpoint is more valuable than the 11-point, which blocks White sixes to escape. Because we have the spare back checker to play with, therefore improving our timing, I prefer making the 11-point safely by playing 13/11(3). Then 24/22 duplicates the threes and brings the back checker up for an escape. There's not too much to worry about being hit. In fact, our winning opportunities will come from splitting White's back checkers so there is value in leaving bait on the 8-point. I prefer this to the tame move 13/7 8/6, which wastes builders. **Correct move 24/22 13/11(3)**

With the votes for 24/22 13/11(3) and 6/2(2) tied at 2-2, our final analysis:

Chris Bray / Snowie: The race is close (2 pips after the roll) and chances will be very even. Ignoring the very weak 6/2(2) which does virtually nothing to improve Black's position he needs to decide where to place his men to best effect.

I hope that making the 11-pt is clear to everyone. It blocks boxes by White and makes coming home for Black easier in the long run. After 13/11(3) the real choice is with the last two. 6/4 is the weakest, taking a man beyond the theatre of play. The choices are 24/22, preparing to run the rearmost man and 8/6, safetying the blot.

Because Black now has a spare on his 11-pt, leaving the 8-pt slotted with the potential of making it turns out to be the slightly stronger of the two plays.



Many backgammon books state that the 1- and 3-points are one of the best combinations for a back game. Should Black therefore follow this strategy? Rodney doesn't think so:

Rodney Lighton: 24/15. Black has the best two points for a back game, but the timing is all wrong; playing 13/4 is likely to lead to Black crunching. I think that Black has to get a back checker going with 24/15 and play for a shot from the 22-point anchor.

The next two competitors consider two other moves but also reject the idea of a back game:

Cedric Lytton: 24/15. Better than 22/13 as it keeps the 3-point anchor, and White must give up his mid-point to hit this escapee. 13/4 would strip Black's own mid-point and put another man out of play; Black hasn't enough timing to play a backgame.

Tim Wilkins: Black doesn't have nearly enough timing for a back game. 13/4 does little constructive and leaves Black stripped - may force Black to break an outside point next time. So the question is which back point to break. Leaving the 3 point would give White a good target and risks getting the back men primed in. I play 24/15 to keep the valuable 3 point anchor and leave Black with some flexibility.

Our next competitor seems to be a back game fanatic but was only slightly tempted here:

Richard Biddle: Anybody who plays me regularly will know I would jump on this opportunity to play a courageous back game here and proceed to enter self-destruct mode by leaving further blots to improve my timing. Following this entertaining strategy, I would naturally play 8/2 13/10 to invite hits much to the joy of my opponent. However, just this week, I lost a costly backgammon (triple game) in the Tuesday Night St. Alban's Chouette with this kind of bravado so I am going to play sensibly here with the frightfully dull, but, **Correct move 24/15.**

Our final competitor provides additional insight as to possible developments:

Bob Young: 24/15. An ace-three back game with probably eighty pips short of timing is hopeless. This roll cannot be used constructively anywhere, so should be used to get the rear checker moving, whilst retaining the security of an advanced anchor at this stage. Running from the front anchor will leave an ace-point back game, which would be a last resort, and not at all necessary at this stage. True, Black may get an advanced anchor again, but White is very well poised to attack the blot on the 3-point. The checker moved from the back will be used to either try and make an outfield point, or at least a presence there, which will be necessary to provide resistance to White, or will simply be hit, re enter and try again, or make another advanced anchor.

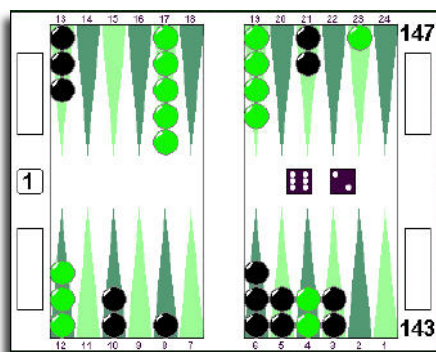
When I set this problem, I thought that one or two competitors might be tempted by the back game possibilities but perhaps I should have looked at the Jellyfish equities more carefully: other moves are at least .03 behind. So I can only apologise in advance of this final comment:

Chris Bray / Snowie: This is the only trivial problem in the set. Black must



realise he doesn't have the timing to play a back game but is in fact playing a 3-pt holding game. 24/15 is the only move that plays to this game plan. Any other move is a gross blunder (or worse!!).

Position 66.05



11 point match
White 6 Black 6
Black to play 62

Two competitors are in no doubt as to the correct move:

Bob Young: 21/13. Time to run while Black's home board is stronger, White has a blot in his home board and the race is close. The duplication of fours and the lack of any strong alternative choice of checker play elsewhere makes this a clear cut choice for me.

Cedric Lytton: 21/13, giving up our anchor while we can conveniently play to our mid-point and White has no board and a loose blot; also hoping to re-make our 8-point. White will think carefully about leaving his anchor to hit should he get a 4, Black already having a good 3-point board, and 4s are duplicated and 2s essentially so.

Alternatives leave a lot of shots, strip the mid-point or put men out of play.

Providing a possible alternative:

Rodney Lighton: 21/13. Black cannot play this awkward roll safely. 13/5 is OK, but 21/13 is preferable, getting one back checker out safely while White has no board, with some duplication of hitting numbers. When ahead in the race, race.

13/5 and its close relative 13/7 10/8 indeed have virtually the same Jellyfish equity and one competitor opted for the former.

Tim Wilkins: Here Black has the better board and White is inflexible. Splitting the 21 point is not attractive, not so much

because it leaves a blot but because it gives W an extra target with the big stacks on his 6 and 8 points. White is unlikely to want to hit loose from his anchor so I'm not too worried about Black's 8 point blot. I play 13/5, which puts extra pressure on White's back men.

13/5 is clearly a very sound move, but may be rather too passive:

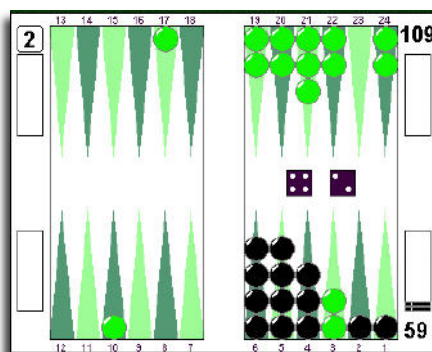
Richard Biddle: Fours are duplicated here and we have a forward anchor so I feel we can leave the blot on the 8-point. We don't mind leaving bait to break White's anchor. 13/5 is a sensible move; ready to pounce, if White starts to escape. But I do not want to strip the mid-point while White has that anchor. I would rather forego my anchor as White has no home board to worry about and start my escape. **Correct move 21/13.**

Providing more rationale in favour of the popular choice:

Chris Bray / Snowie: Another position where having the right plan is important (I've noticed how often you humans seem to play without any clear plan in mind). After the roll Black will be ahead by 12 pips. He has the better home board whilst White's position is disconnected. This should quickly lead you to the plan of mobilising the back men – a move like 13/5 that does nothing to improve the position is a waste of a good roll.

The choices then are 21/13 and 21/15, 8/6. When bearing men in that 8-pt is likely to be very useful and it is not at all clear that White will hit a blot there next turn even if he can. This consideration of White's plan should lead Black to make the strongest move, 21/13.

Position 66.06



11 point match
White 9 Black 3
Black to play 42

Finally, a bear off position:

Tim Wilkins: White is 50 points behind in the race and has very little chance of winning unless he hits. Black has a number of men on high points, but White has to make 10 crossovers to save the gammon, so Black's gammon chances are not trivial. My choice is the natural 4/0 2/0. No roll forces a blot next time and it maximises gammon chances.

Arguing in similar vein:

Bob Young: 4/off 2/off. The target must be to pursue the gammon, after which the match would be far from over. The game is probably secure barring a string of unlikely sequences, so to strip the 6-point and not take any checkers off will backfire with a 6-3 roll next time. To take two checkers off will leave a very flexible position, and despite the stripped 4-point, safety and aggression can be combined by taking off two checkers. The checkers remaining for Black can be juggled to make eleven or twelve, depending if he considers not taking off two, but this is unimportant in the overall assessment of the situation.

Providing some alternatives, but agreeing in the end:

Rodney Lighton: 4/0 2/0. I suspect that I would make this move automatically in a match. White needs 8 crossovers to save the gammon and Black needs 13 to bear off, so gammon is unlikely but not impossible. The main alternatives seem to be 5/1 2/0 or 5/1 4/2, hoping to be able to hit White if he leaves the anchor with one checker. I reject these because the possibility of doing that and getting a gammon looks less likely than getting a gammon by just bearing off quickly. All plays seem to have similar shot leaving potential (small).

When I set this problem I was influenced by the Jellyfish equities, which have 4/0 2/0 languishing in third place, even though it seemed the natural move to me. The remaining competitors also chose to bear two men off:

Richard Biddle: I can only assume we are being asked whether we would go for the gammon here. White still has 10 crossovers to prevent the gammon, so Black must go for the gammon especially considering the match score. Time to take the maximum off. **Correct move 4/0 2/0.**

Cedric Lytton: 4/0 2/0. Black has plenty of spares and will be unlucky not to clear



with ease. He could hope to win a gammon by preparing a close-out with 5/1 4/2, but White has plenty of spare tempi before he will be forced to come out. Black has far better gammon chances (and would love to win one at this match score) by going for a quick bear-off.

Chris Bray / Snowie: Black is obviously a massive favourite and nearly any play is OK. However, maximising your equity in positions like this is a key to winning backgammon. You should notice that the gammon will be close. White needs to roll a minimum of 44 pips to get of the gammon – this will probably take him six rolls. After the roll Black will be somewhere around the 6 roll mark for taking off his remaining men - a close race!

This should tell you that safe plays like 6/2, 6/4 is not the right idea and the choice lies between 6/off; 4/off, 2/off and 5/1, 2/off. In general you want the men on the higher points in the early part of the bear-off so we can reject 5/1, 2/off.

Between the other two plays even my silicon brain can't decide which is better. The rollouts have 4/off, 2/off winning by a hair but it is a very thin hair indeed. For all intents and purposes the two plays are a dead heat.

I'm sorry that two of the problems failed to split the competitors, but I hope that readers nonetheless found the analysis interesting. Congratulations to Richard Biddle for an excellent score of 59. Once again, I would like to thank all the competitors for taking the time and trouble to enter the competition.

Well, Richard, not only were you top scorer this time (we don't count Snowie - he uses rollouts!) but you are also the 2003 top scorer after Peter Bennet, who was only 1 point behind last time, failed to compete in the final competition.

You have won half price accommodation for Saturday night at any Biba tournament held at a Hanover Hotel during 2004, plus £75 for being the annual winner.

Jellyfish equities (level 7)			
66.1	1	0.616	21/15 6/3
	2	0.581	21/15 13/10
	3	0.580	13/7 21/18
	4	0.569	13/7 6/3
	5	0.557	21/15 11/8
66.2	1	-0.346	13/9 10/9
	2	-0.347	13/9 24/23
	3	-0.358	13/9 11/10
	4	-0.391	11/7 8/7
	5	-0.403	13/9 6/5
66.3	1	-0.127	24/22 13/11(3)
	2	-0.132	6/2 6/2
	3	-0.136	13/7 8/6
	4	-0.141	24/20 8/4
	5	-0.141	8/2 6/4
	6	-0.148	13/11(2) 8/6
	7	-0.148	24/22 8/2
	8	-0.148	13/7 6/4
66.4	1	-0.549	24/15
	2	-0.579	22/16 24/21
	3	-0.603	22/13
	4	-0.623	22/16 6/3
66.5	1	0.170	21/13
	2	0.169	13/5
	3	0.168	13/7 10/8
	4	0.160	8/2 13/11
	5	0.157	13/7 8/6
66.6	1	0.951	6/2 6/4
	2	0.939	6/0
	3	0.928	4/0 2/0
	4	0.917	5/1 2/0
	5	0.916	5/1 6/4

No.	move	score
66.1	13/7 21/18	10
	21/15 6/3	2
66.2	13/9 24/23	10
	13/9 13/10	9
66.3	24/22 13/11(3)	10
	6/2 6/2	6
	13/7 6/4	3
66.4	24/15	10
66.5	21/13	10
	13/5	2
66.6	4/0 2/0	10

Competition 2003				
	Scores			Tot.
Richard Biddle	50	53	59	162
Bob Young	54	42	52	148
Rodney Lighton	52	36	55	143
Snowie	34	33	60	127
Peter Bennet	44	60	-	104
Cedric Lytton	-	-	56	56
Tim Wilkins	-	-	44	44
Steve Hallett	43	-	-	43
Mark Oram	-	41	-	41

Fax	Month	Questions	Answers
68	Jan	6801-06	6601-06
70	May	7001-06	6801-06
72	Sep	7201-06	7001-06
74	Jan	7401-06	7201-06
76	May	7601-06	7401-06
78	Sep	7801-06	7601-06

competitor	66.1	66.2	66.3	66.4	66.5	66.6	score
Snowie	13/7 21/18	13/9 24/23	24/22 13/11(3)	24/15	21/13	4/0 2/0	60
Richard Biddle	13/7 21/18	13/9 10/9	24/22 13/11(3)	24/15	21/13	4/0 2/0	59
Cedric Lytton	13/7 21/18	13/9 24/23	6/2 6/2	24/15	21/13	4/0 2/0	56
Rodney Lighton	13/7 21/18	13/9 10/9	6/2 6/2	24/15	21/13	4/0 2/0	55
Bob Young	21/15 6/3	13/9 24/23	24/22 13/11(3)	24/15	21/13	4/0 2/0	52
Tim Wilkins	13/7 21/18	13/9 10/9	13/7 6/4	24/15	13/5	4/0 2/0	44

Competition 2004 starts on
the following page ►

Competition 2004 No1, 6801-06 Questions

By Michael Crane

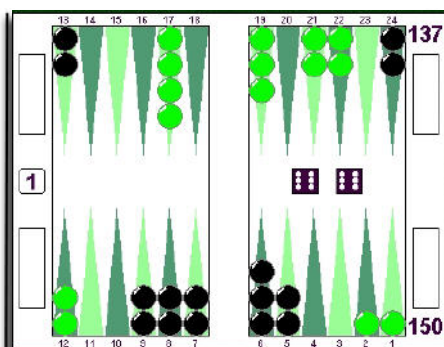
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Entries to be in by March 31st. 2004

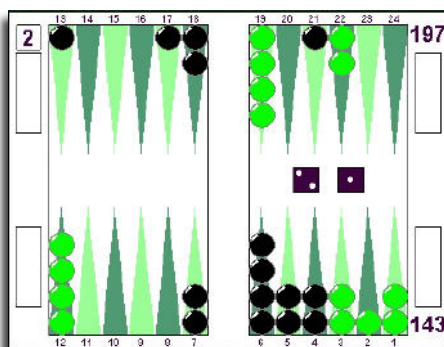
Email: to comps@backgammon-biba.co.uk
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6801



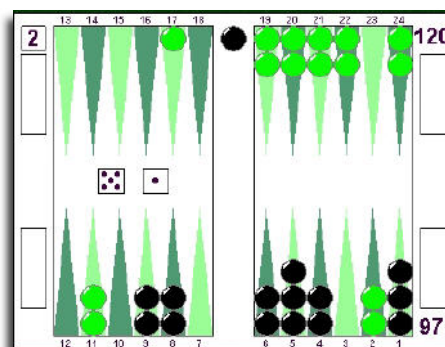
5 point match
White 0 Black 0
Black to play 66

6803



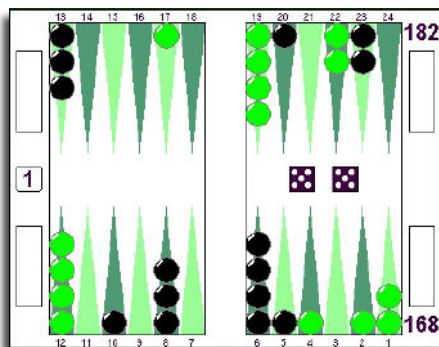
5 point match
White 0 Black 1
Black to play 21

6805



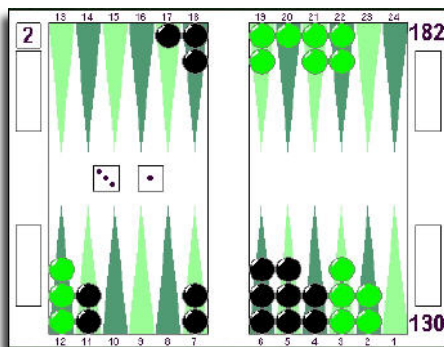
11 point match
White 0 Black 1
White to play 51

6802



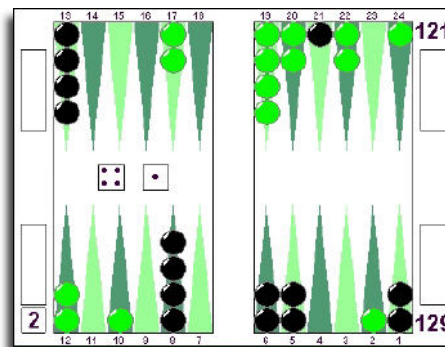
5 point match
White 0 Black 1
Black to play 55

6804



5 point match
White 0 Black 1
White to play 31

6806

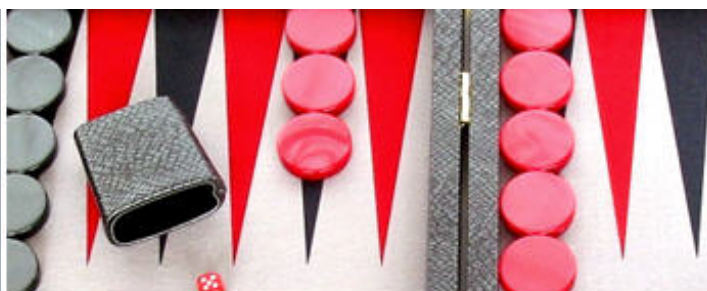


5 point match
White 2 Black 2
White to play 41



The
choice
is yours





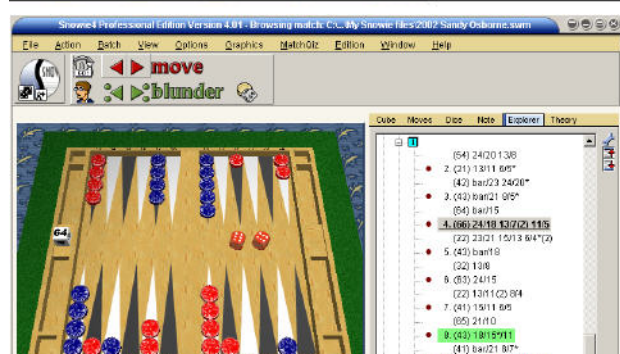
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BACKGAMMON SNOWIE 4 Blunders from the Biggies!

By Michael Crane

When someone can win the World title after playing 59 errors including 12 blunders, and his opponent can play 81 errors including 20 blunders (you can see why he came 2nd, can't you?), there's hope for us all.

This was the case in the 1979 Monte Carlo World Championship final between Luigi Villa (the winner) and Jeff Westheimer.

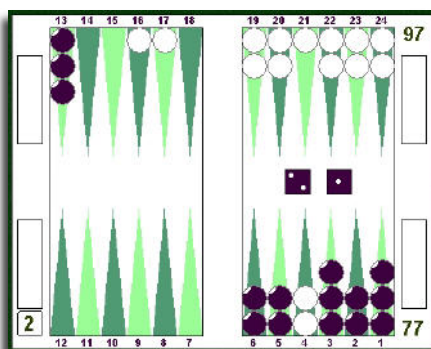
In July of '79 Luigi had another (dubious) title added to his portfolio:

"World champion backgammon player, Luigi Villa of Italy, became the first human champion of a board game to be defeated by a computer program [BKG9.8], which was written by Hans Berliner of Carnegie Mellon. The program evaluated its moves by evaluating a weighted set of criteria that measured the goodness of a move. It did not use the alternative process of searching amongst all possible future moves and counter-moves, a method used in chess, as there are too many alternatives in backgammon."

Jeff (as far as my research goes) seems to be bridge player rather than a backgammon player - which possibly explains his error rate.

The final was to 25 points and Luigi is playing black. I have not shown the entire match but certain positions. However, the full match is available on the PDF version of Bibafax for the PC.

Game 1, Position 14



25 point match
Black 0 White 0
Black to play 21

No doubt worried by a flyshot, Luigi decides to move 3/1 2/1 playing very

safely indeed. However, at Snowie 5th and with an equity of -0.219, there were quite a few better moves.

Snowie 1st is 13/11 3/2 leaving the flyshot that Luigi feared. But, is this fear real? Let's look at the two plays:

13/11 3/2

This leaves a seven, and they all play; but this is just 19%, which means that 81% miss. If he is hit then white's 4-point blot is vulnerable to 11 shots, 30%, and the two blots on the 9- and 8-points can be scooped up too. If he's missed then he'll have a chance to either make a point in his outer board or get the man safely home. Small risk, but a good gain.

3/1 2/1

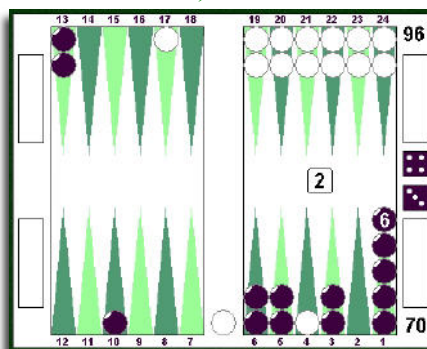
Doesn't do much at all. He still has to move the men off the mid-point, and, who knows, next roll could be a 63. If playing safe is to be the move then it has to be 3/1 3/2 leaving a better bearoff position. No risk, but no gain either.

An alternative mid-point play is 13/12 3/1. This leaves 8s, 14%, but is perhaps just a little harder to get safe next roll.

13/11 3/2	0.409	
13/12 3/1	0.360	-0.049
13/11 2/1	0.258	-0.150
3/1 3/2	0.248	-0.161
3/1 2/1	0.190	-0.219

Jeff rolled 65 and decided to make his 4-point and play the six out leaving a blot (Snowie said, run all the way, Jeff!). Luigi's reply was 31, hitting the blot and lifting the home board blot. Jeff then danced, Luigi cubed and Jeff dropped.

Game 1, Position 16



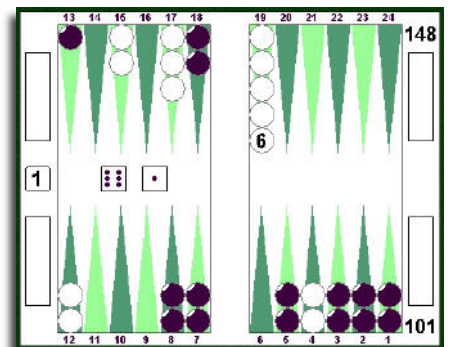
25 point match
Black 0 White 0
Black cube action?

This was, according to Snowie, No redouble, take.

The pass cost white 0.368 whereas the take would have been 0.089; quite a considerable difference.

No redouble	0.632
Redouble, take	0.543 -0.089
Redouble, pass	1.000 +0.368

Game 2, Position 6



25 point match
Black 2 White 0
White to play 61

Having been forced to vacate his 6-point with a double five, Luigi leaves Jeff with a shot on the mid-point. But, should Jeff hit it?

No. With a 1-point board what's the use? He'll not be bothered a great deal, and it means coming off a valuable holding point to do so. However 13/12* 12/6 is Jeff's play.

The top play is to slot the 2- and 5-points with 8/2 6/5 and try to build a board for later.

No play better than Jeff's hits at all.

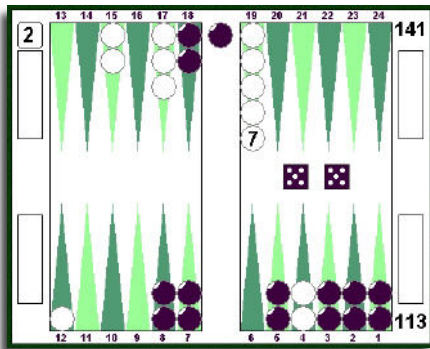
8/2 6/5	-0.385	
10/4 6/5	-0.511	-0.126
8/1	-0.608	-0.223
13/12* 12/6	-0.608	-0.223

Following this move, black doubles and white takes. According to Snowie this was not a double and was a take; marginally, losing 0.014 in equity. However, cube ownership is often vital and might well be a deciding factor later in the game.

Following the cube action, black rolled 55 in the following position:



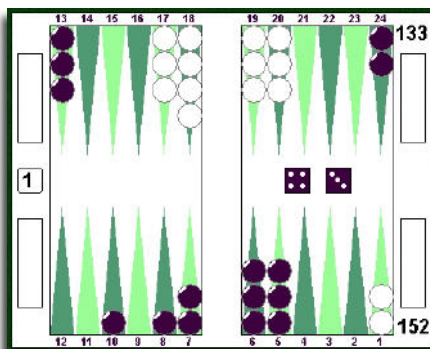
Game 2, Position 8



25 point game
Black 2 White 0
Black to play 55

He moves 25/20 18/13(2) 13/8. White rolls 63 and plays 21/12* hitting the mid-point blot. From hereon, one or more of black's men remain in white's home board until white ships across a 4-cube, and black has to drop. As I said, cube ownership can be crucial.

Game 3, Position 4



25 point game
Black 2 White 2
Black to play 43

Luigi makes the 2-point playing 6/2 5/2. A point too far, and not worth having at the moment. Both players have a holding prime and the first to break it might just be the one to lose the game. He should be concentrating on making the 4- and then 3-points.

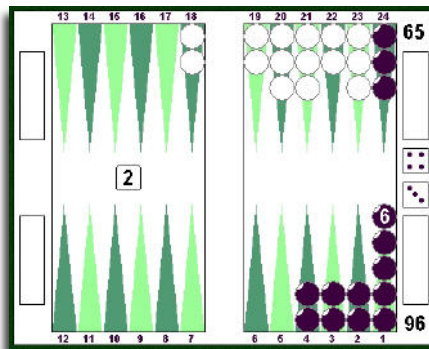
A third man back won't help black at this stage of the game so the simple 13/10 8/4 is the best move to make. Fractionally behind this is 13/10 13/9 attempting to make the 4-point, although not without an element of risk.

13/10 8/4	-0.084	
13/9 13/10	-0.098	-0.015
13/9 10/7	-0.182	-0.099
10/7 8/4	-0.238	-0.155
6/2 5/2	-0.241	-0.157

Black then ran out with 62, 24/16 and was hit back with 42, 13/9* 10/8. White even-

tually has a 6-prime with 3 black men on his 1-point when he offers across the cube:

Game 3, Position 17



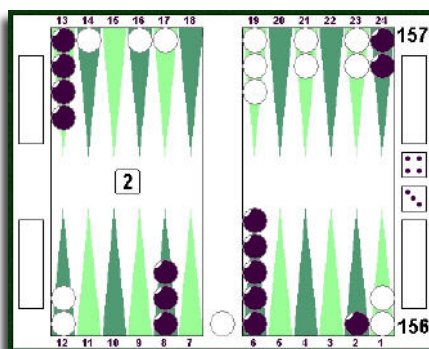
25 point game
Black 2 White 2
White cube action?

This is by far too good to double and black is more than happy to pass. By doubling in this position white gave away 0.302 in equity.

Even if he were hit during the bearoff the cube option for cashing in would be at his disposal so there was no need to let black off so lightly.

No double	1.302
Double, pass	1.000 -0.302
Double, take	2.541 +1.239

Game 4, Position 4



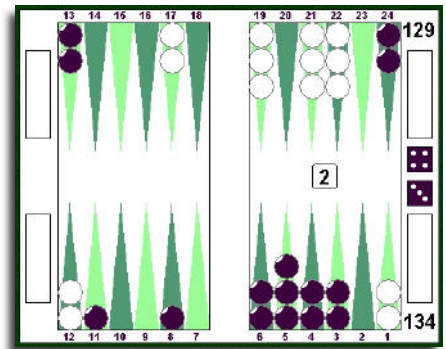
25 point game
Black 2 White 3
White cube action?

After only three moves each and on the bar, white cubes. This is not a double and, instead of dropping, black should have taken. Dropping cost black 0.528 in equity.

No double	0.472
Double, take	0.388 -0.084
Double, pass	1.000 +0.528

In the next position, white once again drops and gives away loads of equity.

Game 5, Position 6

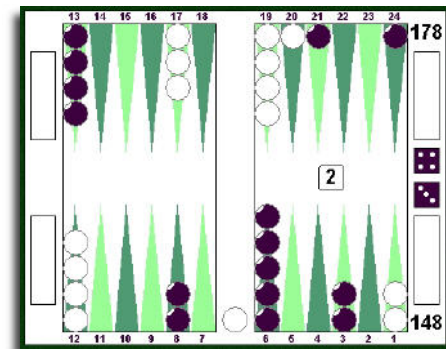


25 point game
Black 2 White 4
Black cube action?

The race is very even (5 pips up for white) and each player has runners still on the 24-point. Being on roll gives black the edge. This is a double and a take. By dropping white loses 0.214 in equity whereas the take would have been 0.085.

Double, take	0.786
No double	0.701 -0.085
double, pass	1.000 +0.214

Game 8, Position 4



25 point game
Black 3 White 6
Black cube action?

Again white goes for the pass in this double, take position.

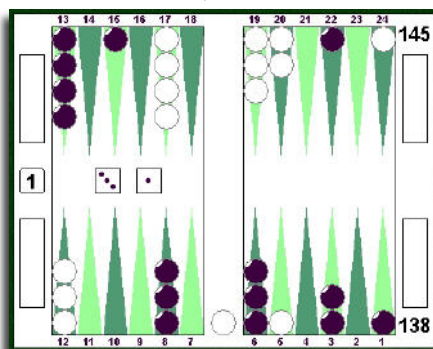
Having four men back (three now, one more to come!) at this stage of the game isn't reason enough to pass this cube. By doing so white loses 0.340 equity whereas if he took it would have been 0.014 and he'd own the cube.

Double, take	0.660
No double	0.646 -0.014
Double, pass	1.000 -0.340

Continued on the next page



Game 9, Position 4



25 point game
Black 4 White 6
White to play 31

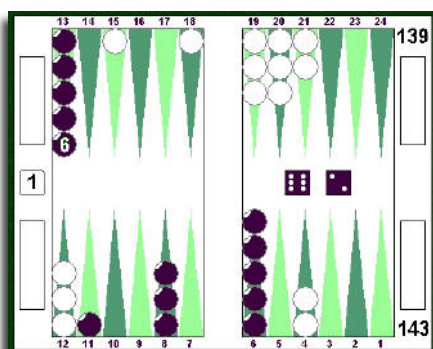
Well one part of this roll is easy, 25/24*, but what about the 3?

Certainly a double hit is favourite, and this is what white did. Unfortunately he chose to hit playing 6/5* and leave two home board blots into the bargain! He should have played 13/10* and kept return shots to a minimum. Not hitting at all with the 3 was a better play than hitting on the 3-point.

25/24* 13/10* 0.505
 25/24* 8/5 0.338 -0.167
 25/24* 6/3* 0.298 -0.208

As it turned out, black rolled 55 and danced and white cubed and black passed, both in correct fashion.

Game 10, Position 5



25 point game
Black 4 White 7
Black to play 62

White is nicely building a home board prime and would dearly love to have a black man behind it. Black should bear this in mind and play accordingly. So, it is a surprise that he should play 13/7 13/11 and give white a direct blot to have a go at!

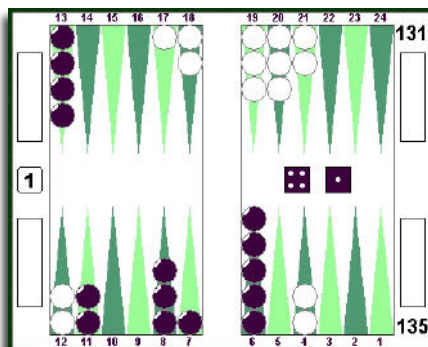
Making the 11-point's not a bad play but leaving a direct hit is. Better to have played 13/11 8/2, or 11/3 instead and just

keep things nice and safe. The actual play gives away masses of equity.

13/11 8/2 0.028
 11/3 0.013 -0.012
 13/7 13/11 0.177 -0.202

White responded with a 62 of his own and correctly played 13/7 10/8. Following this, black has another, shall I, shan't I, leave a blot decision:

Game 10, Position 6



25 point game
Black 4 White 7
Black to play 41

White's prime has improved and it's even more important to keep away from it, but black decides that playing 11/7 8/7 and leaving the joker 61 is worth it. Even though this play is Snowie's 2nd choice it is a blunder.

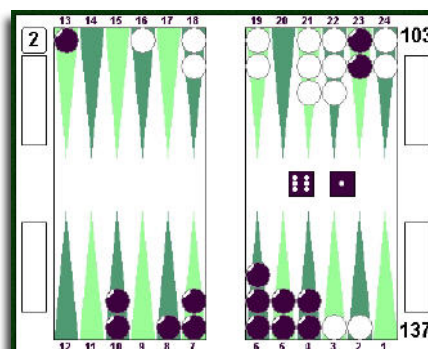
Making the 7-point is correct, but leaving the joker isn't. The better play with the 4 is 6/2, ignoring the 5-point anchor for the moment.

8/7 6/2 0.108
 11/7 8/7 -0.006 -0.114

White did indeed roll a 1, but it was accompanied by a 5 and not the required 6!

A few rolls later, black doubles (incorrectly giving away 0.080) and white rightly takes.

Game 10, Position 19



25 point game
Black 4 White 7
Black to play 61

When offered a joker flyshot that not only escapes a runner but hits into the bargain most players would take it with both hands - not Luigi! He prefers to double up two men onto the 7-point by playing 13/7 8/7, and loses 0.156 equity in doing so.

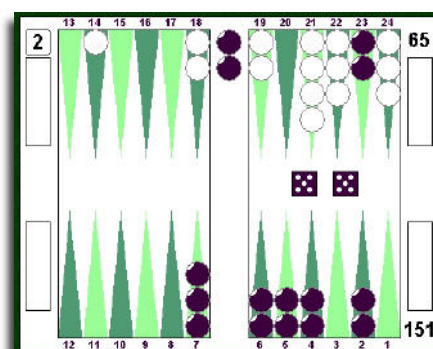
The actual play is Snowie's 7th choice, the previous six all being hitting moves, 16-2- and 3-points in that order.

There's nothing to be gained by stacking four men on the bar-point, and especially not when a great 61 can hit instead. Generally, hitting (anywhere) is better than not hitting. Although the 61 played 23/16* leaves 33% return hits on the 8-point blot, it should be viewed as having 66% that do not.

23/16* 0.365
 8/2* 6/5 0.348 -0.017
 13/12 8/2* 0.336 -0.030
 8/2* 2/1 0.333 0.032 -0.032
 10/3* 0.322 -0.043
 10/9 8/2* 0.250 -0.115
 13/7 8/7 0.209 -0.156

White's response was 55, which he played 22/7 9/4, instead of dancing if he'd been hit. The remaining runner was hit a couple of times but, finally it came in and hit back and a roll or two later saw black with two men on the bar and two anchoring on the 23-point.

Game 10, Position 24



25 point game
Black 4 White 7
Black to play 55

A great roll for black, re-entering two men off the bar. It's a pity he misplayed the remaining two 5s!

He played 25/20(2) and then loaded his 2-point by playing 7/2(2). Waiting on the 20-point for a hit is outweighed by the fact that he's just lost 2 good men off the

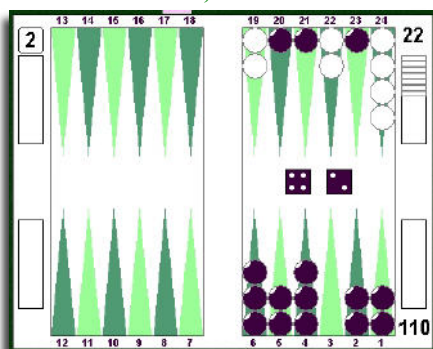


7-point. He should have kept running from the bar and played 25/15(2).

25/15(2) -0.760
 25/20(2) -0.804 -0.044
 25/20(2) 20/15 7/2 -0.919 -0.159
 25/20(2) 7/2(2) -0.943 -0.182

White then rolled a nightmare 54 playing 11/6 7/3 and had to leave a double shot, which black missed with 31. White began bearing off until black rolled a 42 in this position:

Game 10, Position 29



25 point game
 Black 4 White 7
 Black to play 42

We have to go a long way down Snowie's choices to find the actual play of 6/2 4/2. It's in 11th place!

The only plays worse than this are plays that no-one would play. Black has just played two men past the very point he wants to make/attack.

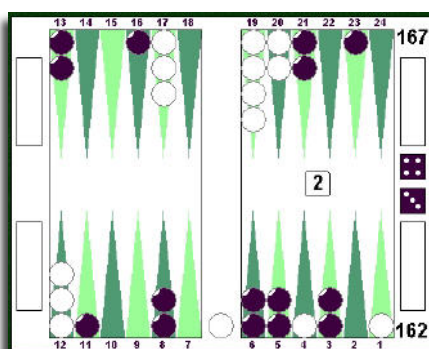
The No1. play is 20/14, running the nearest blot to home out leaving the other two to have a chance of a shot. In all 22 rolls (61%) leave a shot, a good few of them a double shot. Leaving all three men behind would not have increased this sum, although it would have increased the hitting chances. But, the ability to hit or point on a re-entry roll off the bar onto the 3-point is of more importance.

20/14 -1.347
 21/15 -1.371 -0.025
 20/16 6/4 -1.395 -0.049
 21/17 6/4 -1.417 -0.071
 20/16 4/2 -1.432 -0.086
 21/17 20/18 -1.436 -0.089
 20/18 6/2 -1.446 -0.100
 21/17 4/2 -1.450 -0.103
 20/16 5/3 -1.461 -0.114
 21/17 5/3 -1.493 -0.147
 6/2 4/2 -1.522 -0.176

White rolled a great 65 and played it safe. His next roll was double six, and black

scrambled to save a backgammon, which he did when white rolled 42 and left one man on his 1-point. Black got away with losing just a gammon in a match he could have won by doubling black out had he played the 61 in Position 19 correctly!

Game 11, Position 7



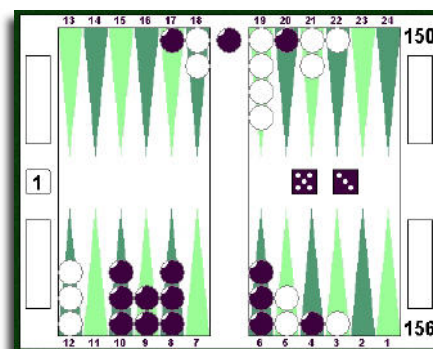
25 point game
 Black 4 White 11
 Black cube action?

With one white man on the bar and two in black's home board, this is a double for black; should white take?

Snowie says yes. It's a close race (black is 5 pips ahead) and, if he can anchor, white will be well in this game. Black can hit loose or pick and pass, but actually pointing on the 4-point blot is a slim chance. By passing white gave away 0.354 in equity.

Double, take 0.646
 No double 0.610 -0.036
 Double, pass 1.000 +0.354

Game 12, Position 6



25 point game
 Black 5 White 11
 Black to play 53

Paul Magriel has always advised that making the *Golden Point* is correct in most circumstances. It's a great anchor to have for re-entry rolls and it covers an opponent's outer board to boot. So, you'd think that with this roll it'd be correct to make it, wouldn't you?

Well, no actually, it's better here to hit playing 25/22* and continuing 22/17.

Just what Luigi was thinking here isn't recorded, but he did play 25/17 but he didn't hit! Was it a lack of concentration or was it deliberate. Let's be kind and go with the former.

25/22* 22/17 0.299
 25/20 17/14 0.136 -0.164
 25/17 0.119 -0.180

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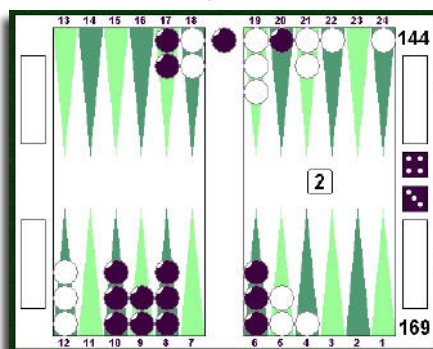
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White rolls 51 and plays 22/21* 6/1 and then black decides on some cube action:

Game 12, Position 7



25 point game
Black 5 White 11
Black cube action?

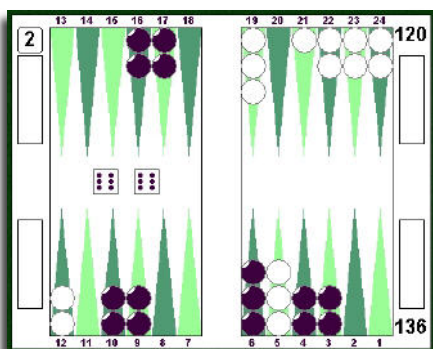
Blinded by the dazzle of two home board blots but on the bar and behind in the race by 25 pips, black decides to cube. This action lost him 0.124 in equity when white snaps it up.

Even if one or both of white's blots are hit, black's 1-prime (the one he was born with!) isn't much of a nuisance.

No double	0.275
double, take	0.151 -0.124
Double, pass	1.000 +0.725

Handing over the cube so easily here leads, eventually to a gammon loss and four points!

Game 12, Position 12



25 point game
Black 5 White 11
White to play 66

Black's weak point here are the men on his 16- and 17-points, therefore white must concentrate on these men. White doesn't quite see it like that and he plays 20/14 13/7(2) 7/1 and achieves precisely nothing!

Black is more than pleased for a direct double shot at the 11-point blot, and even white's advanced anchor won't deter him

from hitting it.

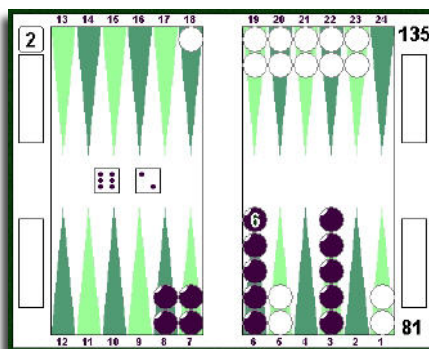
The actual play was a massive loss in equity and it's just the sort of play an opponent would have played for you! It might come in at Snowie 3rd but there's a huge gap in equity between 2nd and 3rd place.

Bringing out two men 20/14(2) and then 13/7(2) is much stronger.

20/14(2) 13/7(2)	0.183
20/14(3) 13/7	0.163 -0.019
20/14 13/7(2) 7/1	-0.175 -0.357

Black does hit, 63: 17/11* 17/14; but the reply is a devastating 65 off the bar and hit, 65: 25/14*. Black fails to enter, and is joined by a second man a few rolls later. White bears off without incident to win a gammon despite a double six from black.

Game 14, Position 11



25 point game
Black 6 White 15
White to play 62

Having built up a handy 5-prime and anchored twice in black's home board, white now goes and spoils it by playing 7/1 3/1 and makes the 1-point!

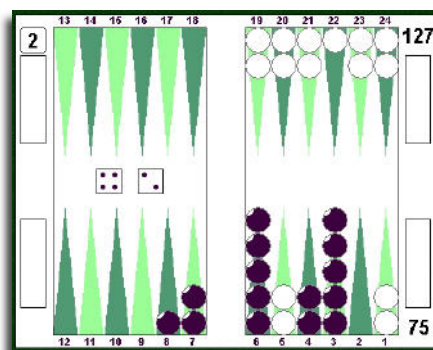
This is a running play, either 20/12 or 20/14 7/5, but not the 1-point. The actual play is Snowie 3rd, but there's a big equity difference between 2nd and 3rd plays.

White's asset here is the 1-point anchor. It might cost him a gammon but it is his best hope of a hit, without which he'll lose the game.

20/12	0.000
20/14 7/5	-0.053 -0.053
7/1 3/1	-0.198 -0.198

Black then rolls 42 and correctly plays 8/4 6/4 leaving white 3s and 61 for a hit and a big swing in doing so, however, white rolls none of these numbers and instead rolls 42.

Game 14, Position 12



25 point game
Black 6 White 15
White to play 42

Nothing has changed for white, he should still run out off the 20-point and keep going, 20/14.

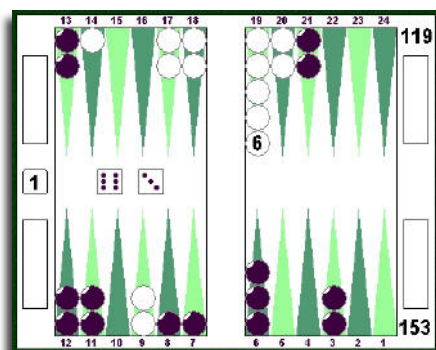
But, he decides to clear his 5-point instead! Once again, he shifts points, and, although he maintains a 5-prime, the gap is on the 5-point and not the 1-point it originally was. If he were to hit black now there's not much to keep him there.

20/14	-0.556
20/16 5/3	-0.580 -0.024
20/16 3/1	-0.621 -0.065
5/1 5/3	-0.669 -0.112

Black survives the blot and the game continues until he is forced to hit during the bearoff (he has 8 men off) with a 62 leaving white to roll a 1 to hit and with a full prime in his home board. He rolls a 61 and hits and dances for while.

Black eventually re-enters and is just 4 pips down in the race, and white has taken only 4 men off. Black wins the bearoff (he could have rolled a 1 and lost) to win the game and two points.

Game 16, Position 9



25 point game
Black 8 White 16
White to play 63

Leaving a triple shot in this position cannot be correct; and Snowie relegates it



right down to 8th place, yet this is the play made by white, 63: 16/7!

Black might not have much of a board but I know he'd much rather play around with this blot than no blot at all.

Snowie says, keep it safe and wait. Play 11/5 6/3. In fact none of the moves prior to the actual play advocate running one man off the 16-point.

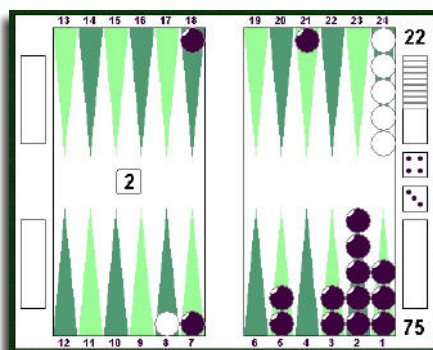
11/5 6/3	0.480	
11/2	0.442	-0.037
8/2 8/5	0.392	-0.087
11/5 8/5	0.358	-0.122
11/8 7/1	0.331	-0.148
8/2 8/3	0.272	-0.207
7/1 6/3	0.236	-0.244
16/7	0.221	-0.259

Black rolls 63 and plays 13/7 12/9* and white obliges by rolling his own, dancing 63. This prompts black into more cube action which Snowie says, no double, take and in which black once again loses 0.086 in equity and relinquishes the all-powerful cube to his opponent.

However, this time the cube isn't returned and Luigi picks up two points and the score moves to 10-16 to white.

Luigi wins another two points in Game 17, and then, with the score at 12-16 to white, he is faced with this double from black:

Game 18, Position 25

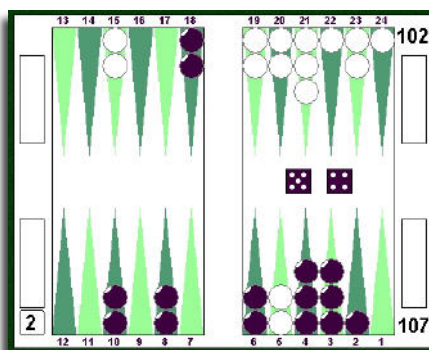


25 point game
Black 12 White 16
White cube action?

Black happily passes what in fact is too good to double! White was heading for equity of 1.370 and by doubling loses the 0.370. He should have held on for the gammon and cashed later when on, if or when it passed.

No double	1.370
Double, pass	1.000 -0.370
Double, take	2.652 +1.282

Game 19, Position 12



25 point game
Black 12 White 17
Black to play 54

Black rolls the perfect roll to move both back men past the 15-point white block . . . so he doesn't do it. Instead he clears his 8-point by playing 8/3 8/4. This loses him a lot of equity and gains him nothing.

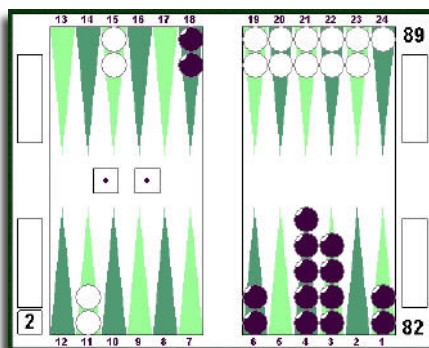
Perhaps he's scared of the 7 flyshots (19%); but the two blots on white's home board are compensation enough for the risk. He risks being hit 19% of the time for a chance to knock back another man 25% of the time. Good exchange.

18/13 18/14	0.302	
6/1 6/2	0.060	-0.242
8/3 8/4	0.036	-0.266

White rolls 61 and plays 20/14 4/3, black's 63 fails to hit, 10/4 10/7. White then rolls 51 and covers the 14-point blot, 20/14. Black rolls 61 and makes his 1-point, 7/1 2/1 (although 7/1 3/2 was better by 0.032 equity).

It's at this position that we have to trawl right down the Snowie list to find white's next move:

Game 19, Position 14



25 point game
Black 12 White 17
White to play 11

At Snowie 13th, the actual play of 10/8(2) is hard to play worse without being silly. Moving these two men this close just

means it's going to be harder to hit should black roll a six.

Because 6s are bad for black, white should be playing 14/13(2) with two 1s or even 14/12(2), in fact almost any move that gives a direct shot at black should be a 6.

14/13(2) 10/9(2)	0.165	
14/12(2)	0.122	-0.042
14/13(2) 3/1	0.104	-0.060
14/13(2) 2/1(2)	0.083	-0.082
14/13(2) 6/4	0.057	-0.108
14/13(2) 5/3	0.044	-0.120
14/13(2) 6/5 2/1	0.016	-0.148
5/1	0.016	-0.149
14/13(2) 5/4 2/1	0.006	-0.158
14/13(2) 4/3 2/1	0.005	-0.160
10/9(2) 3/1	-0.001	-0.166
14/13(2) 4/2	-0.004	-0.169
10/8(2)	-0.007	-0.172

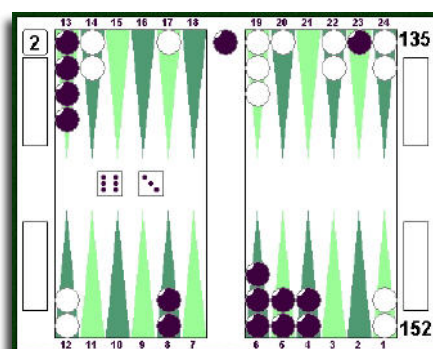
Black didn't roll a 6, he rolled 51: 6/1 4/3. Two rolls later black rolled a six and had to leave a blot (1s only) which white hit. Although black responded with a re-entry hit he failed to roll a 6 to escape the white prime and consequently white picked up a second black man and both men ended up on the bar facing a full prime.

White's bearing off was flawless and he notched up a gammon and four points and now leads 12-21.

In a very short Game 20, Luigi pulled back a point to go 13-21 down.

Jeff was nearing the target 25 points following an early (and correct) double, take this was the position:

Game 21, Position 5



25 point game
Black 13 White 21
White to play 63

Now you'd expect that being Snowie's 2nd choice that you'd not lose much equity, wouldn't you? Well, you'd be wrong! The actual play was 24/18 8/5; which doesn't look too bad until you realise that point-

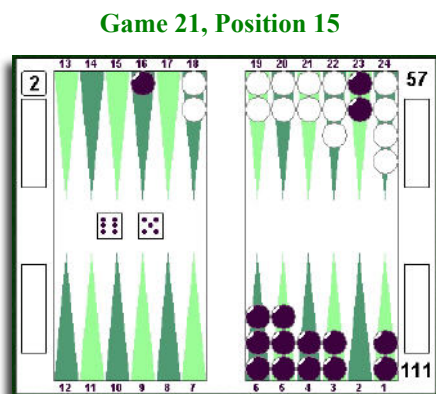


ing on the blot on the 2-point by playing 8/2* 5/2 is better and safer and places two men on the bar.

Although making the 5-point is good, poking ones neck out onto the 18-point and exposing oneself to a six isn't. Two in the air is favourite; who knows, might even turn into a blitz!

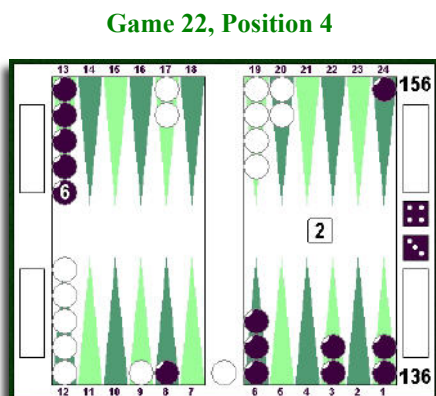
8/2* 5/2 0.337
24/18 8/5 0.113 -0.224

White entered with double four, but black was unable to shift his runners (two just prior to the bearoff) off whites 1-point and it was this anchor that proved to be black's salvation:



25 point game
Black 13 White 21
White to play 65

White rolls the nightmare 65 and black punishes it with a devastating 41 picking up both blots. White fails to re-enter and soon black completes his prime. White dances long enough for black to win the gammon and four much needed points.



25 point game
Black 17 White 21
Black cube action?

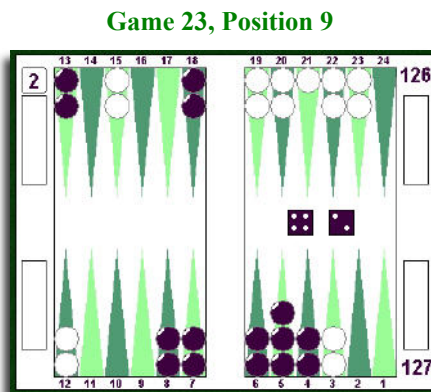
Just five rolls into the game and already black ships across the cube. White, no doubt in awe of black's three blocked points drops - and in doing so loses 0.184 in equity. He should have taken and kept

it to 0.149; still pretty large but at least he'd hold the cube in a game that has a long way to go.

Double, take 0.816
No double 0.667 -0.149
Double, pass 1.000 +0.184

Well, at least it's another point n the match, 18-21 in white's favour.

After another, no double, take in Game 23 in which Luigi gave away 0.072 in equity (once again, giving the cube away cheaply), he is faced with this:



25 point game
Black 18 White 21
Black to play 42

Although the actual play of 8/4 8/6 produces some active builders it does remove a safe haven for the last four remaining men.

Now is the time to vacate the mid-point, 13/7 and leave just a 61 to hit and cover.

Snowie isn't impressed with clearing a point at all.

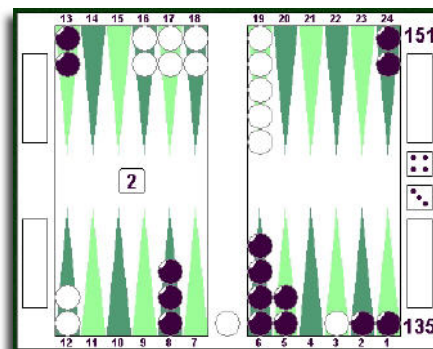
13/7 0.344
13/9 13/11 0.308 -0.037
13/11 5/1 0.202 -0.142
8/4 6/4 0.172 -0.173

White misses rolling a 43; and, after a small blot-hitting contest from which white emerges the worse, black goes on to another gammon, taking the score to 22-21 in his favour.

In Game 24, Jeff doubles and Luigi passes (both correct) to level the score at 22-22.

On the bar and looking down on two blots, white decides to cube in the following position in the next column:

Game 25, Position 5



25 point game
Black 22 White 22
White cube action?

This costs him 0.141 in equity.

Black's not too bothered about the two blots, they're dead men at the moment and re-circulating them would be helpful. In fact if black can make a second anchor, it'd do him the world of good.

No double 0.375
Double, take 0.235 -0.141
Double, pass 1.000 -0.625

Black is hit, but after lots of toing and froing he anchors and turns the cube to a four that Jeff has to drop. Now Luigi moves to 24-22, Crawford.

In the Crawford, apart from a couple of minor errors from Luigi, (-0.041 and -0.044), the Dice Gods were on his side and he won in the bearoff with white left with 6 men to shift.

This entire match is featured on the PDF version of this Bibafax for the PC. At just £12 for the entire year (2004) it is a 'must have' for any serious student of backgammon. Details on the web or from Biba HQ.

Rollout to order

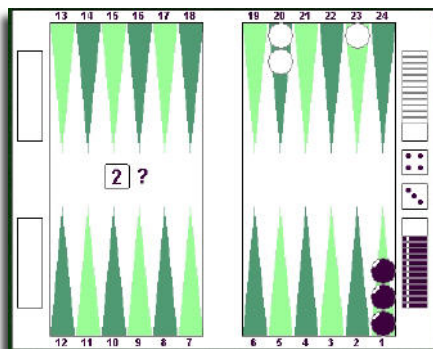
Roy Hollands & Snowie 4 offer a service

Mark Heidenfeld writes:

I had a very interesting match against Eamon the other day. The score was 6 - 6 in a 9-point match. Eamon as white doubled me in the position, which I thought was inaccurate. I think he should wait a move. However, when I showed the position to a few of Ireland's leading backgammon players, I was surprised to find out that they all considered this to be a double - pass. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with calculation techniques at backgammon, and also do not own any backgammon program, such as Snowie or Jellyfish. I enclose some of my calculations and analysis, and would appreciate, if an expert could give me some feedback on my findings.

As it happens, Eamon threw 4-1 after which I redoubled. Having 44% he took, of course, and after my 2-1, he threw another 4-1 to lose the match.

Match to 9 Points



Score: Black 6, White 6
White cube action?

My analysis is: In this position white has an equity of 58.2% and black 41.8%. The question is should white double now or wait another turn?

Important match equities are:

6-6: 50% - 50%
7-6: 60% - 40%
8-6: 75% - 25%

I'd assume a take for black is easy, as (without calculating any take points) his equity is higher than his 40% match equity at 7-6. After a white double, black can redouble in 25/36 cases as in case of a loss, his match equity would only be

25%.

Without white doubling, black can only initially double in 7/36 cases, after which in each case white has a pass. If black were to double initially in other cases he would be facing a huge number of redoubles (the same dilemma as white now).

Is my analysis correct?

Roy replies: Dear Mark, hard luck. All the experts are away for Christmas and the New Year so you are saddled with me.

It is surprising how seemingly simple position, such as yours, give rise to quite complicated calculations.

Let's leave the calculations for now and see why it is a definite double using Kit Woolsey's Rule: *If you are unsure whether a position is a correct take or a correct drop, you should double.*

You were not sure, and I am not sure, so White should double.

Another useful guide: If you think your opponent may well drop, even though you may think it is a take, then you should double with a smaller advantage than you would normally have wanted.

Your Irish friends' view that it is a pass, together with your opinion that it is a take, fit in neatly with both rules. Hence it is a clear double.

Before deciding whether or not it is a take let us look at some calculations that might help us to decide.

- White wins outright with 55 or 66, that is two rolls out of 36. If we take all results to 1 decimal place this is 5.6%.
- If White fails, as he does on 34 out of 36 times, then Black can win immediately with any double.

In the initial position, therefore, White's chances of winning on his first roll are (17/18x1/6) or 15.7%.

What is Black's take point in the starting position?

- If he takes and wins the score is 8-6 to Black with 75% winning chances.
- If he takes and loses the score is 6-8

to White and Black has 25% winning chances.

- If he drops the score is 6-7 to White and Black has 40% winning chances.

Risk/ (Risk + Gain) = 15/50 or 30%.

Does Black have 30% chances of winning?

Snowie, for a money game, gives Black 41.8% of the wins and says the correct cube action is No Double, Take. A 7776 rollout (36x36x36) gives Double, Take with White's equity 0.267. No Double has an equity of 0.238, thus losing 0.027 equity. Double, Pass, as your friends suggest, would be a blunder costing a loss of 0.733 equity. (1-0.267).

Let us now look at the positions that arise after each player has had one roll and neither player won outright. Black will have one checker on his 1-point so it is a one roll situation. Thus the player on roll needs 50% or more to double and his opponent 25% to take.

Below I have given White's position, for all 36 possible rolls, after he has made the best possible move.

Key:

VLW Very likely, or certain, to win.
LW Likely to win.
B Borderline.
VLL Very likely to lose
LL Likely to lose,

The first numbers give the roll and the second give the position of the checkers after the best move.

11 43 VLL (11 rolls win)
22 42 LW (23 rolls win)
33 2 VLW (36 rolls win)
44 1 VLW (36 rolls win)
55 & 66 VLW (both give White a win)
65 2 VLW (36 rolls win)
64 21 VLW (36 rolls win)
63 22 LW (26 rolls win)
62 5 LW (26 rolls win)
61 51 LW (23 rolls win)
54 21 VLW (36 rolls win)
53 22 LW (26 rolls win)
52 5 LW (26 rolls win)
51 51 LW (23 rolls win)
43 122 VLL (5 rolls win)
42 51 LW (23 rolls win)
41 52 B (as in the game)
32 52 B (19 rolls win)
31 234 VLL (4 rolls win)
21 54 VLL (10 rolls win)

Summary

VLW 10, LW 15, B 4, VLL 7, LL 0

Let's share the four Bs as 2 each. Assume White wins 9 of the VLWs and 11 of the LWs and wins one of the VLLs. This



gives White 23 wins and Black 13. So White wins 63.9% and Black 36.1%.

So what is the bottom line? We have seen it is a clear double. Snowie's money game gives Black 41.8% wins. The 7,776 roll-out only gives White's equity as 0.267. My calculation after the 'best moves' gives Black 36.1% wins. Black's take point from the Risk/Gain calculation is 30%. With the added value of having the option to recube it is a clear take.

But was Black right to redouble? He has a 1 in 6 chance of rolling a double and if he fails to do this he has a 17/36 chance that White will not win on his next roll. This gives White's winning chances as $5/6 \times 19/36$ which is 44.0%. Hence Black's winning chances are 56.0%.

Being a last roll situation Black should redouble with 50% or more so the correct cube action was **Redouble and Take**.

How Good Is Your Backgammon? Asks Michael Crane

We continue with the 1991 Monte Carlo World Championship 1/4 Final between Neil Kazaross and Michael Meyburg. We pick up the action in Game 8 in which Kazaross plays as white and Meyburg black..

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

Game 8

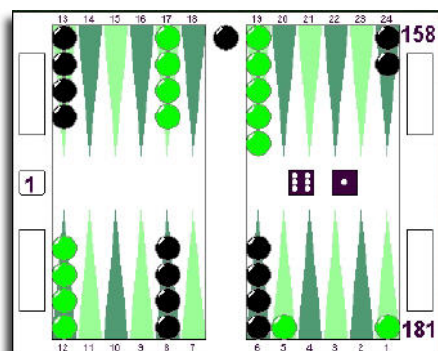
Kazaross : 5

Meyburg : 7

01)

51: 13/8 6/5

02) 54: 13/8 24/20*



??? Black to play 61

Well here we are, it's black's second move of the game and already we have a

decision to make. With just three moves to choose between it's not a difficult task because one of these three is patently wrong!

The options are:

Should we play to our own bar?

Should we play to his bar?

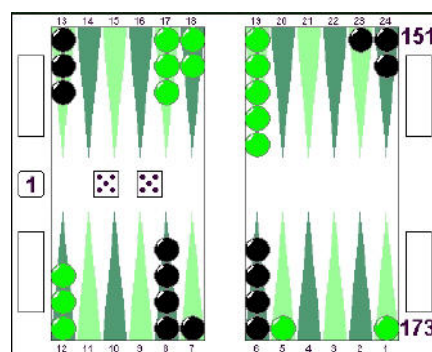
Should we play 8/2?

Now, if you went with option three, stop reading now and step away from the Bibafax! They get harder from hereon.

Playing 25/18 is the way to go. Less shots and less to lose in the race. If you go for 25/24 13/7 all you'll succeed in doing is having four checkers back from the start of the game.

25/18 5A
25/24 13/7 3
25/24 8/2 -5

03) 61: 13/7* 8/7 61: 25/18
62: 25/23 13/7



??? White to play 55

Doublets always represent good value in quizzes. Four moves for the price of two.

Well, it's rare that hitting & pointing in your home board is incorrect, and this is no exception. If your move didn't include this then expect fewer points.

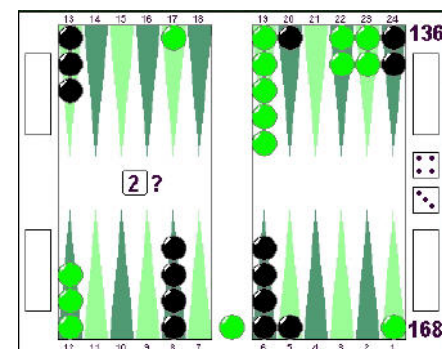
Although Snowie marginally prefers not to hit, playing 20/15 13/8 8/3(2) in my opinion lets black off the hook. I know blitzing is out of the question, but placing him on the bar certainly ruins his tempo. Also, 20/15 misses the opportunity for another hit.

On the other hand, 8/3(2) 7/2*(2) has a lot going for it. More than 1/3 of the moves dance, and of those rolls that enter, 9 of them fail to cover the bar-point blot.

The 3rd possible good play is 20/10 7/2*(2). This comes in 3rd because the 20/10 leaves the runner on its own.

8/3(2) 7/2*(2) 5A
20/15 13/8 8/3(2) 4
20/10 7/2*(2) 3
20/10 8/3(2) 2

04) 55: 8/3 8/3 7/2* 7/2 52: 25/20 7/5*



??? White on roll. Cube action?

White, whilst on the bar considers a cube. This is a close thing where Snowie thinks that by doubling he'll lose 0.009 in equity; not enough to worry about. The worry here is that by giving away the cube for little or no gain is playing into the hands of your opponent. If he takes (and this is an easy take) then he'll have a very powerful 4-cube to ship across later should circumstances change - and they could because there's a lot of play in this game yet.

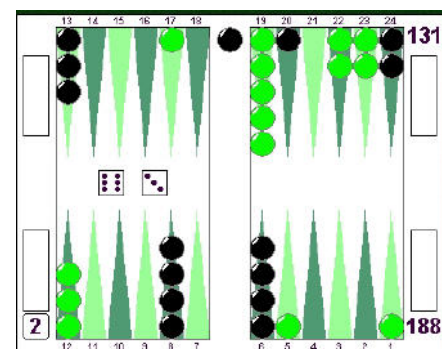
No double, take 5
Double, take 3
Double, pass 0

05) Doubles => 2

Takes

06) 32: 25/20*

63: Dances



??? White to play 63

If you let black anchor on your 5-point then you're going to be in trouble. You have to be bold here and play 8/5*. All you really have to think about is how to play the six.

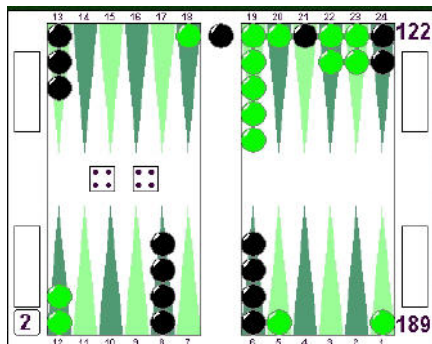
There are three moves we can make: 24/18, 20/14 and 13/7. Of these the most aggressive is 13/7. It brings into play another builder for a slight risk. But, doing the same for a better gain, 20/14 just goes ahead. The final move, 24/18 ena-



bles white to make the 18-point, but the priority should lie with the 5-point.

20/14 8/5* 5
 13/7 8/5* 4A
 24/18 8/5* 2
 20/11 1

07) 63: 13/7 8/5* 64: 25/21



??? white to play 44

Well, obviously we all make the 5-point moving 24/20. After this choices are a little limited if one's looking for a good move.

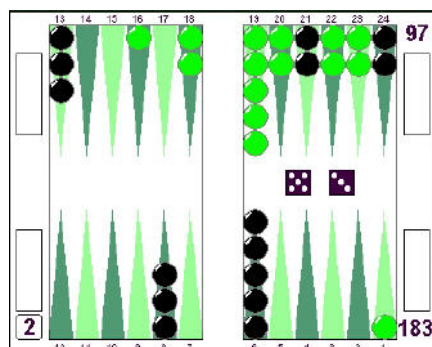
Let's start with 13/9(2) 9/5. That covers the 5- and leaves us with two good builders for the 4-point blot. So where shall we move the remaining 4 from?

By the slightest margin Snowie prefers to make the 20-point, 24/20, whereas in the game, the actual move was 20/16.

On balance I prefer the latter, Holding the 20-point is going to be a temporary thing. Very soon it'll have to be vacated, and therefore at the moment it serves no real purpose as a point.

20/16 13/9(2) 9/5 5A
 24/20 13/9(2) 9/5 5
 24/16 13/5 2
 13/5(2) 1

08) 44: 20/16 13/5 13/9 42: 25/21 8/6
 09) 54: 16/7



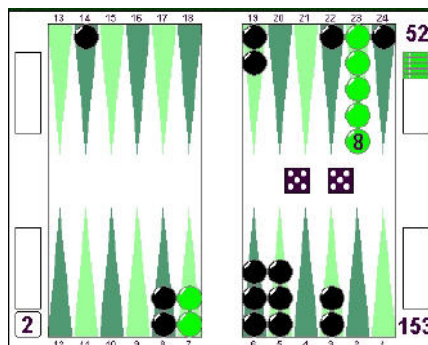
??? Black to play 53

Great, just what black needed, a hitting roll. So it's 21/16* for a start, now what? If you seriously think this is a correct move then I advise you to take a gander at your home-board. You only have one point closed off, and you were given that one to start with! Hitting now is a big blunder. What's the point of hitting until you can contain the checker?

Make a point by playing 8/3 6/3. Do almost anything except hit!

8/3 6/3 5A
 Any non- 21/16* play 2
 Any 21/16* play -3

53: 8/3 6/3
 10) 61: 9/3 6/5 51: 13/8 13/12
 11) 33: 24/12* 65: Dance
 12) 55: 12/2 7/2 7/2 43: 25/21 8/5
 13) 64: 6/0 6/2 53: 21/16 8/5
 14) 66: 6/0 6/0 5/0 5/0 41: 12/8 21/20*
 15) 21: 25/23 3/2 32: 20/15
 16) 33: Can't move 52: 21/14
 17) 54: 23/14 41: 15/11* 6/5
 18) 32: 25/23 54: 16/7
 19) 51: 23/18* 3/2 64: 25/19 11/7*
 20) 61: 25/18* 62: 25/19 24/22*
 21) 61: 25/18



??? Black to play 55

Well, white has five checkers off and is ahead in the race by 101 pips, but this 55 looks handy!

The Joker 66 is nicely blocked, and the others don't make it home, so no real worries on Joker doubles at the moment.

We need to concentrate here on maximising the shots if we get a hit and making more home-board points.

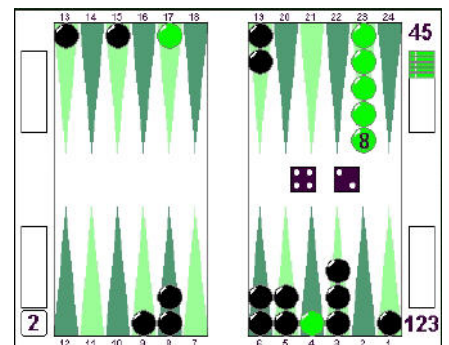
One move stands out in my opinion. It is the only move that gives black a chance of a third checker back and a real chance to turn the game around. As the board stands at the moment no roll containing a 1 will leave a shot, however, moving 19/14 and then 14/9(2), two rolls leave a shot, 21 and 12. OK, slim chances they might be, but not as slim as zero chances.

The bonus is that if white rolls a 2 then black will get a double-shot at the remaining blot on his bar-point.

The actual move here of 24/14 22/17 6/1 did nothing more than block one runner getting safe with 44. Playing off the 24-point left white to roll 11 and thus any chance of leaving another blot, and playing 6/1 is playing to a point that he doesn't need to make. This came in at Snowie 8th and lost 0.221 in equity.

22/17 19/14 14/9(2) 5
 22/17 19/14 4
 19/14(2) 14/4 3
 19/9(2) 2
 22/17 19/14(2) 14/9 1
 24/14 22/17 6/1 0A

55: 24/14 22/17 6/1
 22) 53: 18/10 52: 14/9 17/15*
 23) 54: 25/16* 42: 25/21 5/3
 24) 43: 18/11* 66: 25/13 21/9*
 25) 43: 25/21 11/8



??? Black to play 42

Black keeps knocking him back! Here's the opportunity to do it twice by playing 19/17* 8/4*.

Should he be afraid of leaving two blots in his home-board? Even a double-four? The short answer is, no!

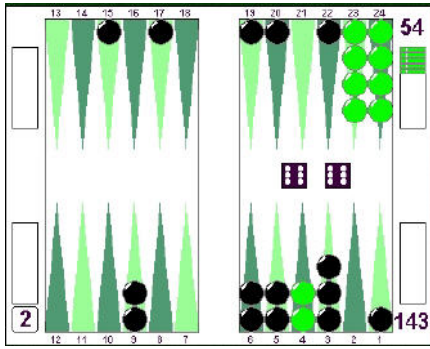
Black's blots are not liabilities any more, they are gun-fodder, whose sole purpose is to be pitched against the foe no matter what the cost.

19/17* 8/4* 5A
 19/17* 13/9 4
 19/15 19/17* 4
 19/17* 17/13 3
 19/17* 9/5 2
 19/17* 15/11 1

42: 8/4* 19/17*
 26) 42: 25/21* 25/23 43: 25/22 8/4*
 27) 22: 25/21* 23/21 54: 25/20 13/9
 28) 11: 2/1 2/1 2/1 2/1

Continued on the following page . . .





??? Black to play 66

Another big double to play. Black needs them to save the gammon, but on the other hand his checkers are getting closer to white's runners, which means that white's chances of getting both men past are greater.

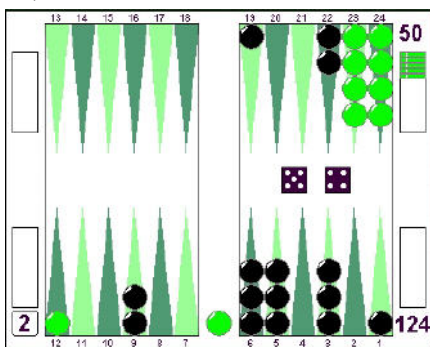
Joker doubles don't help white, and the only real blot in 'danger' is the one 11 pips away on the 15-point.

Black needs as many chances of hitting back as he can get. At the same time, now that white has rolled 11 and made his 1-point, black would be advised to make his too.

22/16 19/1 gives great coverage of any roll that white might slot out of the cup. The actual play 20/14 17/5 15/9 plays one checker onto a point already held, the 9-point, and one onto the 5-point to threaten the 4-point, but it is in the outer boards that the greater danger lies. The actual play lost 0.096 equity and was placed 6th by Snowie.

22/16 19/1 5
20/14 19/1 4
19/1 15/9 3
19/1 17/11 3
22/16 17/5 15/9 2
20/14 17/5 15/9 1A

66: 20/14 17/5 15/9
29) 63: 21/15 21/18 61: 14/7*
30) 21: 25/24* 15/13 33: 25/22 9/6 7/1*
31) 53:



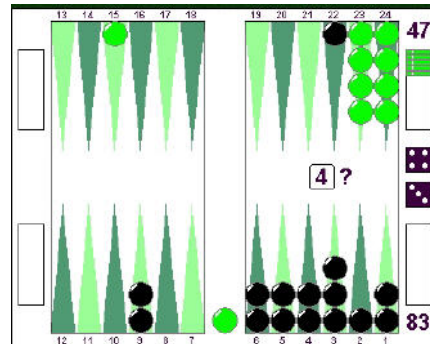
??? Black to play 54

So, white's on the bar and it's time to close off the 1-point. Two ways to do it, 6/1 or 5/1. The real answer here lies in how the remaining die is played. Hitting the other blot, on the 12-point is paramount, and, the best way to do this is with a six, thus the play should be 22/18 giving maximum hits of 22 rolls. Using this as criteria, points have been awarded for maximising the hit. This is Snowie's order:

22/18 6/1 5
22/17 5/1 4
19/15 6/1 3
19/14 5/1 2A
9/4 5/1 1

54: 19/14 5/1
32) 32: 25/23 13/10 66: 22/10 14/2*
33) 31: 22: 10/4 6/4
34) 63:

As it turned out (see below) the 'worst moves' in fact hit and the 'better' didn't.



That's backgammon for you!

Re-doubles to 4
35) Drops Wins 2 points
Kazaross : 5 Meyburg : 9

Well, that dodgy double came in handy and white is unable to accept the recube to four; mind you, it'd be just as much a drop with a single!

So, how did you do? Check out the list below - and no cheating!

50 Cheating again?
40-49 You are Michael Meyburg
30-39 You are Neil Kazaross
20-29 You'll do, at a pinch!
10-20 Fancy a game of ludo?
0-10 Yawn! Yawn! Yawn!

Letters

A few points from **Cedric Lytton**: Well done all those solvers who correctly spotted the misprint in my 3D cube puzzle (Bibafax 65). I've not been able to check the printed version as copy is out on loan,

but my carbon copy correctly shows I at a334 as reported by Rodney Lighton.

MC: My fault, I think!

In the English Open I played four 11-point matches with established BIBA members, but my new active ranking (probably around 1410 by now) doesn't appear Bibafax 66.

MC: Sorry. You are in the Pending List.

The switch from quarterly to 2-monthly publication seems to mean that we no longer get any full game or match scores in hard copy, or even your excellent feature "How Good Are You?" This is a retrograde step. Can we have these back again, even if we must go back to quarterly publication for you to have time to prepare copy?

MC: "How Good" is in this issue. If you'd like a copy of any featured match, let me know and I'll send you one.

Could someone please explain why Kit Woolsey's Rule (Bibafax 67, page 14; Chris Bray, "An Independent View", page 49) is non-trivial? In general, roller's doubling or redoubling point is lower than opponent's take points (otherwise all doubles would be drops), so if the roller thinks opponent is somewhere near the take point he must also think he (roller) is beyond his doubling point, and of course he must double (unless he is Too Good). Whether it is a take or a drop is the opponent's problem, not the doubler's! I wonder if what Kit Woolsey really meant was:

"If it is not 100% clear whether you have a double, then double anyway".

This covers the (many) cases when roller must double at once or risk losing his market. The worst that can happen is that roller hasn't a double and loses equity on the take; but roller must have had some advantage to consider doubling in the first place. Another potential advantage is that opponent, with a different playing model, may drop your (marginal to you) double. This happened in the opening games of my two matches, against Tim Mooring at the 2003 Scottish and Kevin Stebbing at the 2003 English Opens, when I confidently made marginal doubles and both dropped faster than I could say "bear market".

MC: Well, anyone going to reply?



2004 Details, Deals and Dates



Registration: Saturday 1030 to 1230

Play Starts: Friday 2130, Saturday 1300, Sunday 1030

Auctions: Group, Saturday 1245, Individual, Sunday 1015

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

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

All tournaments feature a Friday night Warm-up and Super Jackpot (8 players, £250 entry fee) with £2000 1st prize, Saturday night Doubles Knockout and Jackpots on demand.

FRIDAY

***Warm-up Knockout & Super Jackpot**

**Play starts 2130, *1st prize,
Weekend break for two at
Hanover events, plus first
byes in next Main knockout**

SATURDAY

Registration 1030 / 1230

**Players arriving after close of
registration only accepted at
Director's discretion.**

**All jackpot pools will close
promptly at 1230**

SUNDAY

Play resumes 1030

(penalty points apply)

Presentation 1630 - 1730

**Registration Fees: Members: £16 (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)**

Hanover accommodation costs:

Dinner, Bed & Breakfast, standard room (*no single supplement*)

1 night £55 per person

2 nights (*or two people sharing 1 night*) £50 per person

Members can be upgraded to deluxe rooms for just £20 per night upon arrival at the hotel.

Contact Central Reservations

08457 444 123 and quote 'backgammon'

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.

Date	Tournament	GP		Venue	Type
Jan 30-Feb 01	2nd Cotswold 'Fireside'	GP	.	Blockley	Knockout
Feb 07-08	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Mar 13-14	Slattery Scottish Open	GP	UK	Daventry	Knockout
Apr 03-04	At-A-Glance British Open	GP	UK	Daventry	Knockout
Apr 25	Manchester 1-Day	GP	.	Manchester	Knockout
May 08-09	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Jun 05-06	Hilton Trophy	GP	.	Daventry	Knockout
Jul 03-04	Keren Di Bona Memorial	GP	.	Hinckley	Knockout
Jul ??	Liverpool Open	GP	.	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 07-08	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Aug 21-30	Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	.	Manchester	Swiss
Sep 04-/05	Roy Hollands Trophy	GP	.	Daventry	Knockout
Oct 09-10	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	.	Daventry	Knockout
Oct 30-31	12th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 06-07	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Dec 04-05	UK Finals	.	.	Hinckley	Double KO

Local clubs

Anyone requiring a fuller list can see one on the Biba web site or via the mail from Biba HQ. If your club isn't on this list then send me the details (*see key*) either via Biba HQ or you can email information in the order below, to: clubs@backgammon-biba.co.uk

Birmingham - Dave Motley - 0121 476 4099 - davemotley@blueyonder.co.uk - Every Monday.

Brighton - <http://eilart.com/bbc/> - Tuesday 8pm until closing.

Bristol - Ian Tarr 0117-9756349 brisgammon@blueyonder.co.uk Second Thursday of the month.

Dublin - Brendan Burgess - 603 0891 - wildlife@indigo.ie - 2nd Monday of every month.

Eastbourne & Bexhill - John Thomas - 01424 219415 - jtrincesgaragelimited@btinternet.com - Mondays 19.30.

Halifax/West Yorkshire - Rachel Rhodes - 07961 355433 - dicewitch@yahoo.co.uk - Sporadic.

Herne Bay/Broomfield - Bob Bruce - 01227 362181 or mobile 07754 549 576 - Monday.

Lincoln - Michael Crane - 01522 829649 - michael.a.crane@ntlworld.com - Every Tuesday.

Liverpool - John Wright - 0151 280 0075 - jpwright@cableinet.co.uk - Last Friday of each month

London - Fox Reformed - Robbie (020) 7254 5975 - robbie.richards@fox-reformed.co.uk - Mondays

London - Ealing - Helen Helm-Sagar - sagusb@aol.com - Every Sunday 3.00pm.

Manchester - Rodney Lighton - 0161 445 5644 lighton@btinternet.com - 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month.

Nottingham - Conrad Cooper - 0115 9113281 - conrad_cooper@excite.com - Monday, 9.00 pm.

Preston - David Wallbank - d.wallbank@blueyonder.co.uk - Last Tues of every month.

Reading - Kevin Carter - kevin@profundus.com - 0118-971 2948 - Alternate Wednesdays.

St. Albans - Not really a club, no membership - Uldis Lapikens - 01582 455970 - uldis@talk21.com - Every Tuesday 19.45.

Tunbridge Wells - Liz Park - email: LizP@parksconsulting.com - Every Tuesday.

York - Leo Waters is hoping to start a club in York. Contact him on watersleo@hotmail.com.

Key:

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

Forthcoming Events

Cotswold Fireplace 30 Jan/ 01 Feb

Tournament Organiser & Director, Martin Hemming

The Tournament entry fee is £100 per player (all returned in prizes) and the programme is as follows:

Friday 4.30pm onwards: Quarter-entries (costing £25), eighth-entries (£12.50) and jackpots by demand.

Saturday 10.30am: Main flight draw. Matches will comprise best-of-three series, match length to be determined by number of entries. The Cotswold 'Fireside' Champion will receive 45% of the prize fund and the runner-up 25%.

Saturday 2.30pm: 11-point progressive consolation flight draw The consolation winner will receive 20% of the prize fund and the runner-up 10%.

Saturday evening: £10 buy-in unlimited re-buy pot-limit Texas Hold'em tournament. Winner 70% of stakes, runner-up 20%, third 10%.

Sunday: Last Chance tournament with separate pool.

Contact Martin Hemming on email at: mhemming@lineone.net

Jarvis Trophy 7/8 February

The first of the new, 2004 Swiss format

tournaments to incorporate the Swiss Consolation. (see page 3 for full details) It is also the first Biba event to be held in the new, Hanover International Hotel chain. This inaugural one is in the Hinckley one, just off the M69. A superb venue, you're assured of a great weekend's backgammon.

Playing 11 point matches, these formats are the ideal ones in which to boost up your Ranking Score - and have a shot at the Ranking Championship prize money.

Slattery Scottish Open 13/14 March

OK, so it's not actually *in* Scotland, but, when it was hardly any Sots turned up, so we're going to hold it the Hanover, Daventry.

The usual elements, Main, Progressive Consolation, Last Chance and The Haggis!

Also, as last year, there will be an evening of magic and entertainment on the Saturday night. If you'd like to provide some entertainment then let me know. Be sure to book early and get ready to put on your party hats because we're going to have a great time!

At-A-Glance™ British Open 3/4 April

Once again, that Harry Potter of backgammon, Peter Bennet is the sponsor of this prestigious tournament. Following just one month after the Scottish Open, this event also includes the usual four elements plus Hot Pots and extras to keep you occupied all weekend.

Due to the expected number of entrants it is envisaged that the Friday night Super Jackpot will soon fill up. If you want to enter, email me and register as soon as possible. An up-to-date list of entrants is posted on the Biba web site.



Main (34 / 16)

A couple of the pre-qualifiers failed to show up - one overslept and lost his lift! So, much to the delight of those looking to qualify on the Saturday, two more than expected would go through to the Main 16.

The new format (see previous Bibafax or on the web) proved to be effective if somewhat 'complicated'. What it boiled down to in a nutshell was - win 3 in row and get in, win 1 out of 2 and then win 2 in a row and get in, win 0 out of 2 and don't get in!

Using this we ended up with 10 players joining the 6 in the Main. Players denoted * were the pre-qualifiers.

Round 1:

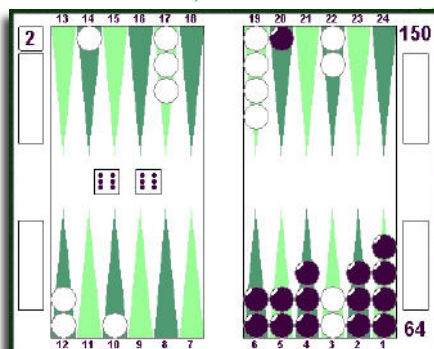
Nigel Merrigan vs Andrew Darby
Jeff Barber vs Emmanuel Di Bona
Paul Gilbertson vs Mardi Ohannessian*
Paul Sambell vs Tony Lee*
Uldis Lapikens vs Peter Chan*
David Nathan vs Bob Young*
Peter Bennet vs John Slattery*
Kevin Stebbing vs Ian Shaw*

Previous title holders Mardi Ohannessian (2000) and Peter Bennet (2002) both got through to the 2nd Round. They were then stopped in their tracks by Tony Lee and Ian Shaw respectively. This placed Tony and Ian into two separate halves of the draw and into the semi-final. Their opponents here were Emmanuel Di Bona and Peter Chan - the two latter players succumbing to the two former players.

So, the Final. Tony, winner of the SAC Trophy and Ian, the At-A-Glance British Open winner. Who, out of these would emerge as the UK Champion? Ian took the first game, led 1-0, then Tony got a doubled gammon in the second game to go 4-1 ahead.

The four points came his way following this little confrontation (Ian, white, Tony, black):

Game 2, Position 17

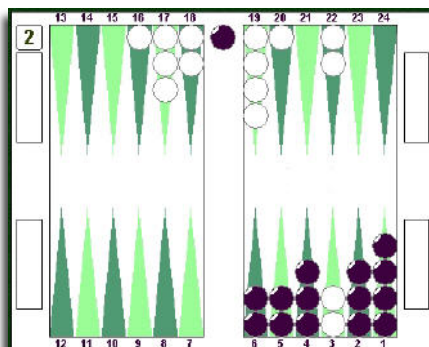


UK Finals - 2003

By Michael Crane

11 point match
Black 0 White 1
White to play 66

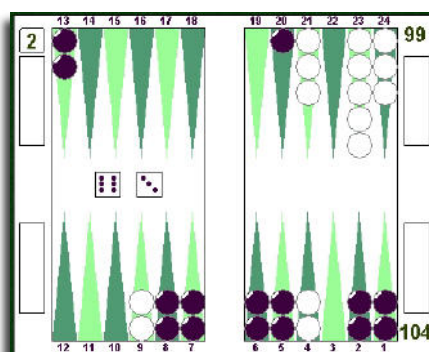
Not too much to think about here; Ian picks the best play, 15/9 13/7(2) 11/5* and pops Tony onto the bar. Shaking his dice Tony remarks, "Mmm, a 54 here . . .



. . . will give a massive swing in my favour!" And it did. The outcome was that Tony went from 55.7% wins and 26.1% gammons to 86.6% wins with 70.8% gammons! A massive swing indeed.

Ian then went on to win the next three games and three points making the score 4-3 to Tony. It was at this score that a pivotal move from Ian (white) in the next game proved to be very costly.

Game 5, Position 20



11 Point match
Black 4 White 3
White to play 63

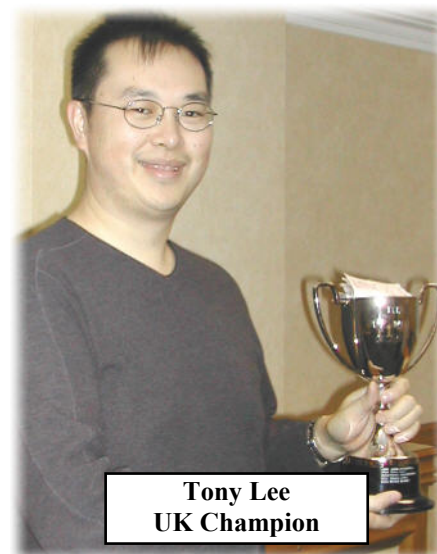
Ian was torn; should he break off the anchor or move off the 19-point with the 6? After some deliberation he decided to break off the anchor playing 21/15 4/1. This, apart from being a blunder according to Snowie (-0.167), was a mistake because Tony then rolled 64 and hit by playing 20/10*. Ian failed to recover from this hit and Tony went on to win the gammon and go ahead 8-3.

Snowie's plays were

16/7	-0.848
16/10 16/13	-0.858 (-0.009)
16/10 4/1	-0.952 (-0.103)
21/15 4/1	-1.016 (-0.167)
21/15 16/13	-1.304 (-0.455)

It is ironic that the only play (not counting the appalling 21/15 16/13) that Tony could hit with his reply roll of 64 was the one Ian played!

From here on, Ian gained only one more point, in Game 6, and thereafter it all went Tony's way, culminating in him winning the match 11-4 in Game 9. Well done, Tony, and hard luck, Ian.



Tony Lee
UK Champion



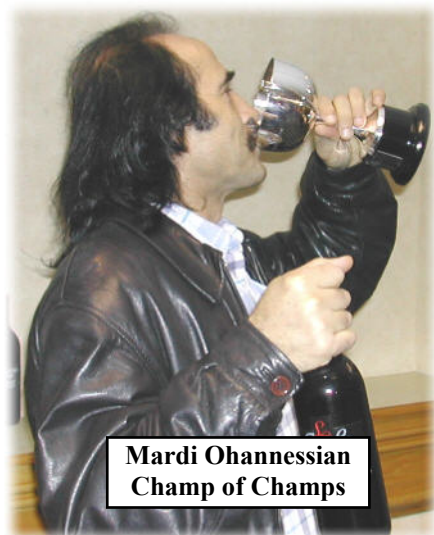
Ian Shaw
Runner-up

Champion of Champions (6)

This little element was devised to keep the pre-qualifiers occupied on the Saturday until they got down to the real business of becoming UK Champion. So, six sat down and one walked away as the Champ of Champs.



The Final was due to start at 5:00pm, but, with dinner being early at 6:00pm, one of the finalists, Mardi Ohannessian wanted to play it after dinner; but his opponent, Peter Chan wanted to play it before (and return to it after dinner if necessary). Reluctantly Mardi agreed to play the 11-pointer immediately and so at 5:05pm they started; and at 5:15 they'd finished! Peter was backgammoned on a 4-cube and it was all over in one game and in plenty of time for dinner!!



**Mardi Ohannessian
Champ of Champs**

Progressive Consolation

(44 with re-entries on the non-side)

Meanwhile, in the Consolation. Liz Barker, playing from the non-side, made a clean sweep of her opponents . . . on her **third** attempt! and found herself in the Final facing Jeff Barber from the Prog-side. Liz took an early and big lead, leaving Jeff training 6-1 at Crawford.

Jeff dug in his heels and pulled back point by point until the score reached 6-5 to Liz. Jeff doubled in the next game, Liz took, and Jeff managed to turn the 6-1 score of earlier into 6-7 in his favour! Good playing, Jeff. I've always said the hardest game to win is the one at 1-away; and in this instance, Liz agrees!



Jeff Barber



Liz Barker

Suicide! (16)

Because of the Consolation and Main tying up players the entry for this element was just 16. This didn't dilute the quality though. Two of the UK Qualifiers faced off in the Final; John Slattery vs Bob Young. Could Bob defeat the playing skills of the reigning European Champion or would he be put off by the bright yellow suit worn by John?

We'll never know what the reason was (possibly a combination of the two) but poor Bob was relegated into second place - and the limelight by John and the suit!

Friday Knockout (10)

Once again I found myself in the Final of the Friday KO. This time against Paul Gilbertson. Once again the Dice Gods were with me and I rolled whatever I wanted whilst Paul rolled whatever I wanted him to and I emerged the winner. Yippee, another free weekend . . . for a man that gets free weekends!

Doubles (5)

The entry was too low for anything but a Round Robin format, and therefore we all played 4 games and the winners would be the team with the most wins. This honour was shared between *The Yorkshire Buries* and *Dancer & Blitzen* (who also were awarded the Top Name for a topical Christmas name with a backgammon theme.)

One half of *A Right pair of Christmas Anchors* proved himself to be a real anchor (Cockney rhyming slang!) when he lost his cool and behaved badly against his opponents - for which I apologise. Sorry, *Dancer*,

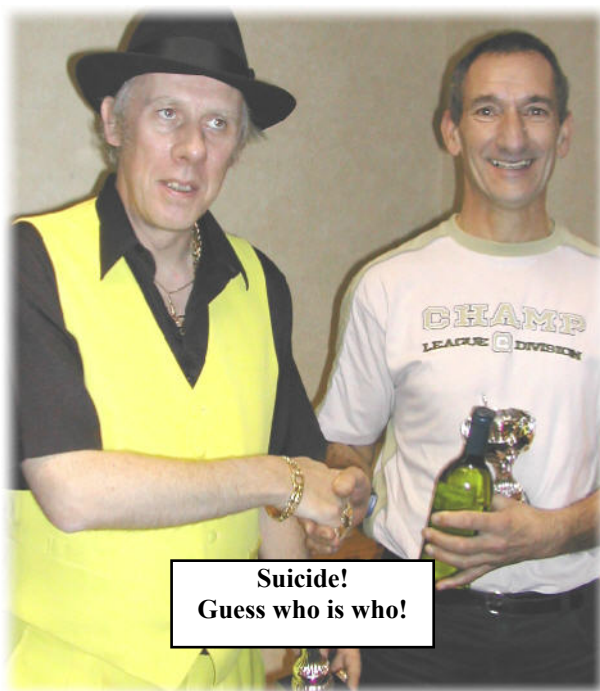
sorry, *Blitzen*.

Finally . . .

Slats, in his usual quiet, reserved manner persuaded me to rank the 11-point matches in the Main, the £100 Jackpot and the Champion of Champions; so I did. Here's the results of this extra work foisted upon me at Christmas time when I am supposed to be relaxing! NB, *Tony Lee* is 4 in the 1000-to-1.

Ranking & win%	Rank	win%
Tony Lee	1905	64.46
Ian Shaw	1577	64.52
Emmanuel Di Bona	1729	55.00
Peter Chan	1541	41.25
Andrew Darby	1522	33.33
Mardi Ohannessian	1783	64.65
David Nathan	1812	59.34
Peter Bennet	1631	59.85
Nigel Merrigan	1620	67.74
Uldis Lapikens	1627	54.22
Jeff Barber	1585	57.80
Bob Young	1627	54.12
John Slattery	1825	58.69
Geoff Conn	1420	47.06
Kevin Stebbing	1714	58.20
Paul Gilbertson	1407	37.14
Mike Butterfield	1504	
Paul Sambell	1207	
Martin Hemming	1505	

See the next page for extra pictures . . .



**Suicide!
Guess who is who!**





Julie and Sharen in a Christmasy mood. They tried to get Tim and Michael in a Christmasy mood, forcing them into wearing silly hats to promote a feeling of fun and festivity!

It didn't work!



Paul Gilbertson advertises
the new slogan for Biba in 2004!

Bright 'n' Breezy Report by Michael Crane

Oh I do like to be beside the seaside, oh I do like to be beside the sea!

Yep, we're back in Brighton. The sea is fairly calm, but inside, with 110 players to handle it's anything but calm. When Registration ended at 1230 there was a queue of 20 players backing up into the entrance. By the time the final one was on the laptop it was 1300 - already we were ½ an hour late.

I had a bad head-cold (de riguer for Brighton as far as I'm concerned!) so Dod Davies kindly offered to do the auction for me. He proved to be very successful and he provided us with a very handsome amount of dosh to handout following the final.

Main (110)

Notable 1st Round victims were Paul Lamford courtesy of Uldis Lapikens, Raj

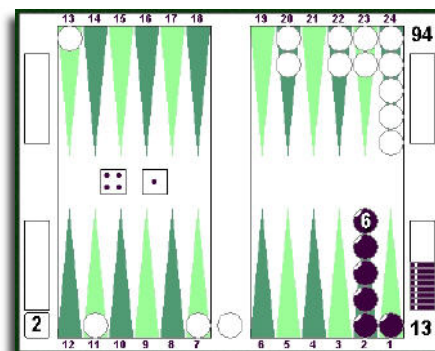
Jansari courtesy of Geoff Conn, Dave McNair courtesy of Jane Oxley, Ray Tannen courtesy of Myke Wignall, Mike Greenleaf courtesy of Ann Pocknell, Dale Taylor courtesy of Andreas Giannopoulos, Peter Bennet courtesy of Ray Kershaw. Much to the chagrin of the losers, of their victors only one progressed as far as the 4th Round, Ray Kershaw, two got to the 3rd Round, Ann and Andreas and the rest went out in the 2nd Round!

On the Sunday we'd whittled the field down to just 16 players: Peter Christmas vs Ralph Eskinazi. Mike Heard vs Jim Johnson. Paul Guy vs John Thomas. Mark Heindenfeld vs Alex Naylor. David Robbins vs Alan Beckerson. Clyde Wolpe vs Ray Kershaw. Johan Sallfors vs Steven Reddi. Nicky Check vs Dod Davies. In each pairing the first mentioned prevailed. Then Peter beat Mike, Mark beat Paul, Clyde beat David and Nicky beat Johan.

So, into the semis: Peter vs Mark and Nicky vs Johan. From this foursome it

was Mark and Nicky that emerged victorious leaving Peter and John in joint 3rd/4th.

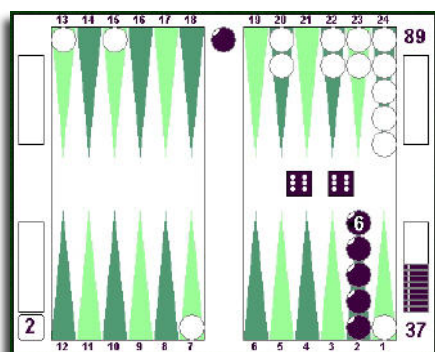
The final was a very one-sided affair with Mark making all the plays and going into an unassailable lead. With the score at 8-1 in Mark's favour, Nicky (white), drinking in the Last Chance saloon, rolls a last ditch 41 to lessen the gammon chances to 85.6% by hitting Mark during the bearoff.



11 Point Match
Nicky 1 Mark 8
White rolls 41



He placed Mark (black) onto the bar only to see him come in with a devastating double-six joker!



11 Point Match
Nicky 1 Mark 8
Black rolls 66

Nicky is suddenly faced with three on the bar and the gammon chances are sky high at 96.8%. He has a couple of goes at the blot but to no avail. Mark rolls out to take the gammon and the match.

I can't remember who is was, but someone did remark that Mark did appear to be a lucky roller. According to Snowie this is true, his luck factor was 34.903; pretty big!



Mark Heidenfeld



Nick Check



The final, as usual was videod and later transcribed into Snowie. The device I use for the video camera is a wooden frame I call Lilly Gantry. It looks a bit Heath Robinson, but it does the job!

Consolation (106)

Always a bugger to do, the Progressive side gives me nightmares! I'd much rather have a single-entry drawsheet and dispense with the Progressive side altogether; but that'd leave too many players kicking their heels after the 1st Round.

So, two sides it was. Eddie Barker cleaved his way through dozens of Rounds to face Elliot Smart in their little face-off to see who'd go through to the Final against the Progressive side. Eddie was determined to win not only the match against Elliot but the Final as well - he achieved the first half and went through to meet Dod Davies, who, on his way to the showdown had to despatch John Clark and then Mardi Ohannessian before he could get at Eddie.

Would Eddie become another victim of Dod's awesome play? No, he wouldn't have anything to do with it - he emerged the winner leaving Dod as the bridesmaid! Not only did Eddie get a nice trophy, he also became the second recipient of the Albert Tinker Tankard. A memorial to Albert from his friends from Huddersfield, Mick Butterfield and Tony Fawcett.

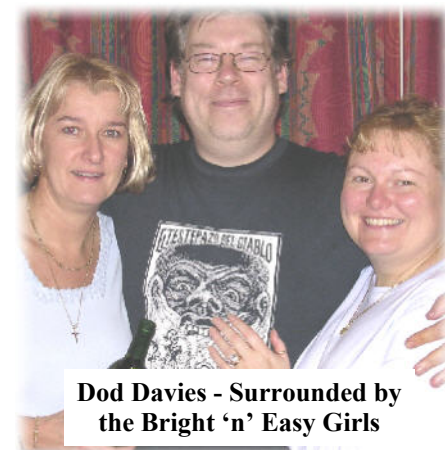
Last Chance (64)

This misnomer of an element saw Raj Jansari (more on him later) vs Diana Sulimirski, and David Markwick vs Nodar Gagua in the semi-finals.

Both Nodar and David were playing in their first ever Biba tournament so the outcome of their match would guarantee



Eddie Barker



Dod Davies - Surrounded by the Bright 'n' Easy Girls

a new-member winning a trophy on their first attempt. This honour went to David as he left Nodar out in the cold. Usually a gentleman always lets the lady come first - but not if your playing backgammon he doesn't! Raj made sure of his place in the final by beating Diana. It was Diana's own fault. She had considered making Raj wear a paper bag over his head so that she was not distracted by his good looks . . . but she couldn't help herself, and so, like a siren drawing her to the rocks, Raj's come-to-bed eyes lured her to her destruction.

David put up a valiant fight against Raj but resistance was futile. Raj took 1st place and David went home clutching the Runner-up Trophy.



Raj Jansari . . . and groupie!





David Markwick

Tidal Wave (64)

Everyone knows who David Naylor is, he's that nice man with the smiling eyes that makes the Italian leather backgammon boards. But David has made other things too - namely two (very handsome - Sharen's words!) sons, Lorenzo and Alex. Although both of them were playing backgammon this weekend, one of them was making a name for himself to rival his father's. Alex. He's had a fantastic backgammon year (2003), apart from winning a total of 4 out of five of the Fox Reformed tournaments (16 players) and a finalist in the 5th he went on to his first international in San Remo and won the Intermediate against 27 nations becoming at the same time the Italian Intermediate Champion. He won the Last Chance at the European Championships in Slovenia and then won the Main at the London Live against another international crowd; and now the Tidal Wave at Brighton. Always a trophy!

His hapless opponent in the Tidal Wave was Peter Bennet, taking yet another trophy home for his daughter!



A bemused Alex is given the Roy Hollands' treatment by the Bright 'n' Easy Girls

Friday Night Warm-up (32)

New member, Paul Statter, playing in his first ever Biba event had to cut a swathe through an established field to meet veteran, Mardi Ohannessian in the Final.



Peter Bennet

Mardi's experience and attacking style was just a bit too much for Paul and he had to content himself with the runner-up position.

Super Jackpot (8)

This new event for Friday nights (at least when we have a good many staying over) saw a very strong field vying for the £2,000 Winner-Takes-All pot.

One notable 1st Round match was between Chris Bray and Mick Butterfield. At one time Chris was leading 10-0. It got to 11-3 to Chris in the 13 point match when, during a contact bearoff Mick conceded a gammon loss and two points. When he realised this would mean the loss of the match he changed his mind and played on; Chris, being the gentleman that he is (and with a good lead) accepted this decision. As fate would have it Mick hit Chris's 15th checker during the bearoff and went on to win the point.

This galvanised Mick into action and, with a lot of luck and a bit of skill here and there he turned the match upside down and came out the winner. Shell-shocked, Chris will be dining out on this match for years to come. Watch out for it in *The Independent* in Chris's backgammon column on Saturdays; it's bound to end up there one day!

Following this victory Mick was then trounced 13-0 by Raj Jansari! In the Final between Raj and Peter Bennet (who had beaten Tony Lee in the semi) they decided to divide the prize money rather than risk a Winner-Takes-All encounter . . . Pity!

Doubles (32)

It was a long and tiring night. Sixty-four of us sat down in pairs and battled it out

to take a share of the £640 pot. In a very late finish the semis saw *Cirque de Son* battle it out against *Another Charitable Donation*. *Cirque de Son* were grateful for the donation as they progressed to the Final. In the other half two couples, *Im 'n' Er* battled it out - handbags at the ready - with *Bright 'n' Teasy*. *Teasy* was far too bright for their opponents and they teased their way into the Final against *Cirque*.

From this encounter *Bright 'n' Teasy* proved unstoppable and their opponents had to accept 2nd place. In a break from tradition I have included a photo of the winning pair (they also won last year) but I am not prepared to give out their names . . . but you might guess who they are!



Turn the page for a special treat . . .





This is for all you shoe fetishers out there!

£100 Jackpot (8)

Dave McNair missed out on the Super Jackpot and so on the Saturday night he

ran one himself. It was ironic because he was out in the 1st Round, beaten by Simon Barget. Simon was in turn beaten by Raj (he's everywhere!). This placed Raj in the Final against Clyde Wolpe from South Africa via London where he's now living for a while. Clyde did the business that others failed to do and he relegated Raj into 2nd place. Good for you, Clyde!

Finally . . .

Once a thief always a thief! There's one in the Brighton Metropole. He had it away with my laptop two years ago and this year he nicked my briefcase containing my digital camera, PDA, spectacles, cordless screwdriver (see picture of Lilly

in action if you're wondering what that was doing in my briefcase), two-way radios and twenty quid. I hope he dies a painful and lonely death!

Mind you, it's not all bad. A young girl found my PDA on a bus and took it home to her parents. After experimenting with it they were able to identify me as the owner and it's on its way back to me. Thank you, Charlie, you have restored my faith in people.

Tournament Results

Bright 'n' Breezy - January 10/11 2004

(pos / name / wins)

Main (110)

- 1 Mark Heidenfeld
- 2 Nicky Check
- 3/4 Peter Christmas
- 3/4 David Robbins
- 5/8 Mike Heard
- 5/8 Paul Guy
- 5/8 Clyde Wolpe
- 5/8 Johan Sallfors

Consolation (116)

- 1 Eddie Barker
- 2 Dod Davies
- 3/4 Elliot Smart
- 3/4 Mardi Ohannessian
- 5/8 John Clark
- 5/8 Mike Greenleaf
- 5/8 Miles Illott
- 5/8 Clyde Wolpe

Last Chance (64)

- 1 Raj Jansari
- 2 David Markwick
- 3/4 Diana Sulimirski
- 3/4 Nodar Gagua

- 5/8 Ray Tannen
- 5/8 Robbie Richards
- 5/8 Sean Williams
- 5/8 Bob Bruce

Tidal Wave (64)

- 1 Alex Naylor
- 2 Peter Bennet
- 3/4 Lawrence Powell
- 3/4 Dan Boxall
- 5/8 Stefanie Rohan
- 5/8 Myke Wignall
- 5/8 Paul Lamford
- 5/8 David Nathan

Friday KO (32)

- 1 Mardi Ohannessian
- 2 Paul Statter
- 3/4 Emmanuel Di Bona
- 3/4 Jane Oxley
- 5/8 Dan Boxall
- 5/8 Vicky Chandler
- 5/8 Rosey Bensley
- 5/8 Jeff Barber

Super Jackpot (8)

- 1/2 Raj Jansari / Peter Bennet
- 3/4 Mick Butterfield
- 3/4 Tony Lee

£100 Jackpot (8)

- 1 Clyde Wolpe
- 2 Raj Jansari
- 3/4 Simon Barget
- 3/4 Barry McAdam

Doubles (32)

- 1 Bright 'n' Teasy
- 2 Cirque De Son
- 3/4 Another Caritable Donation
- 3/4 Im 'n Er

Top names:

Bright 'n' Teasy
Don't Get Sand On My Donut - It'll Ruin Me Ring!

Grand Prix from Bright 'n' Breezy (Championship so far 2004)

Mark Heidenfeld	32.00	Alan Beckerson	9.29	Mike Greenleaf	9.29	John Hurst	6.19
Eddie Barker	24.77	Alex Naylor	9.29	Ralph Eskinazi	9.29	Lawrence Powell	6.19
Dave Robbins	18.58	A. Giannopoulos	9.29	Raymond Kershaw	9.29	Martin Hemming	6.19
Nick Check	18.58	David Markwick	9.29	Ann Pocknell	6.19	Miles Illott	6.19
Peter Christmas	18.58	Elliot Smart	9.29	Barry McAdam	6.19	Myke Wignall	6.19
Clyde Wolpe	13.42	Emmanuel Di Bona	9.29	Brian Busfield	6.19	Neil Webb	6.19
Dod Davies	13.42	Jim Johnson	9.29	David Nathan	6.19	Nodar Gagua	6.19
John Clark	13.42	Johan Sallfors	9.29	Diane Sulimirski	6.19	Paul Gilbertson	6.19
Mike Heard	13.42	John Thomas	9.29	Francine Brandler	6.19	Peter Bennet	6.19
Raj Jansari	13.42	Mardi Ohannessian	9.29	Jeff Barber	6.19	Roy Hollands	6.19

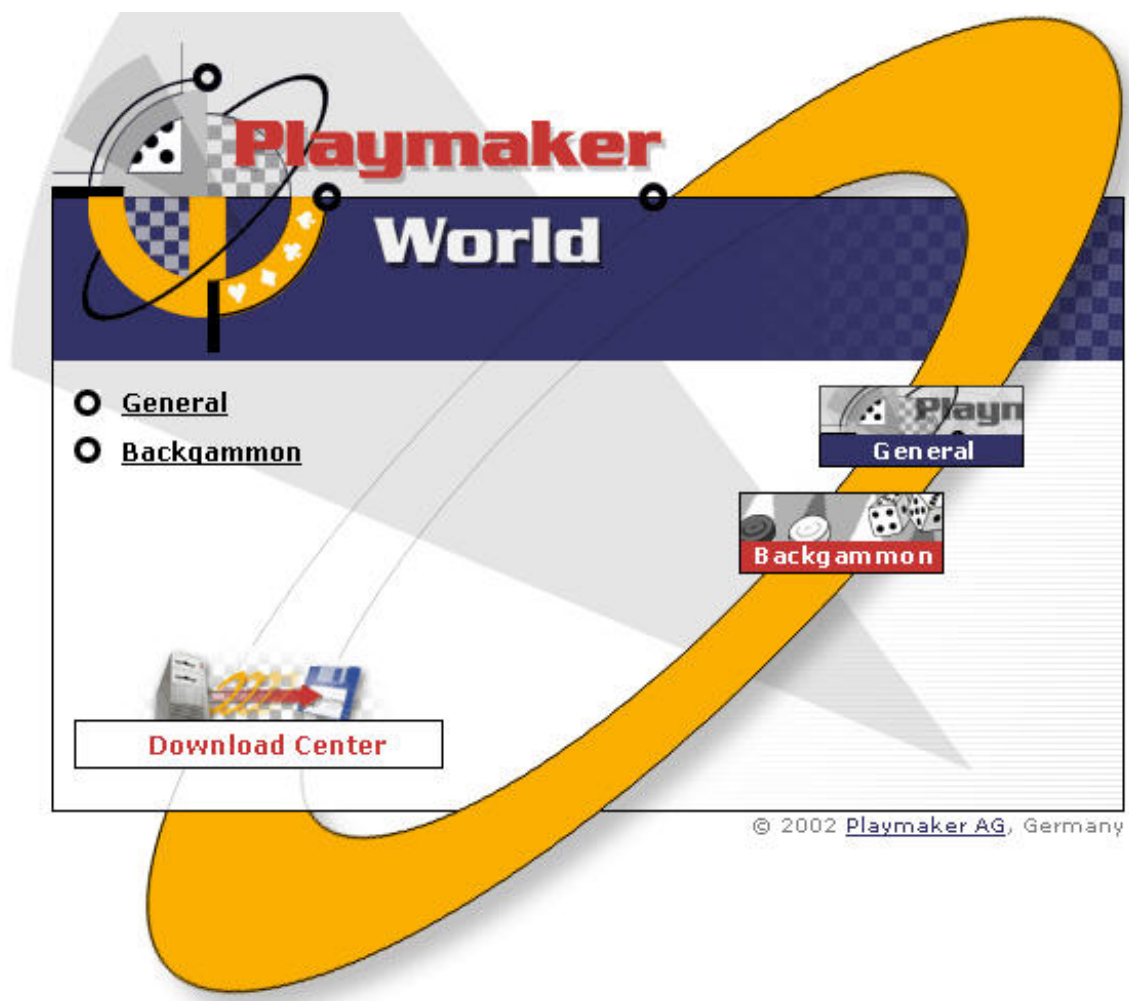
Steven Reddi	6.19	David Horner	4.13	Sue Keeble	4.13	Michael Vacarey	2.58
Tony Fawcett	6.19	Geoff Conn	4.13	Tim Mooring	4.13	Paul Lamford	2.58
Andrew Darby	5.13	Grahame Powell	4.13	Tim Taylor	4.13	Rosey Bensley	2.58
Alison Lee	4.13	Jane Oxley	4.13	Tim Wilkins	4.13	Sonia Spencer	2.58
Andrew Kindler	4.13	Kerry Jackson	4.13	Tony Lee	4.13	Stefanie Rohan	2.58
Bill Spiers	4.13	Mahmoud Jahanbani	4.13	Uldis Lapikens	4.13	Sue Perks	2.58
Bob Bruce	4.13	Malcolm Robertson	4.13	Vicky Gilbert	4.13	Vianney Bourgios	2.58
Bryony Jessiman	4.13	Mike Butterfield	4.13	Cliff Connick	2.58	Vicky Chandler	2.58
Chris Bray	4.13	Monica Beckerson	4.13	Dale Taylor	2.58	Chris F Roberts	2.06
Colin Laight	4.13	Paul Guy	4.13	Dave McNair	2.58	David Naylor	2.06
Colin Talbot	4.13	Paul Statter	4.13	George Suilimirski	2.58	Jon Sharpe	2.06
Dan Boxall	4.13	Ray Tannen	4.13	Hubert De L'Epine	2.58	Paul Christmas	2.06
Dave Raynsford	4.13	Robbie Richards	4.13	Jason Champion	2.58	Zoe Cunningham	2.06
David Barker	4.13	Sean Williams	4.13	Jo Curl	2.58	Colin Harrocks	1.55
		Simon Morecroft	4.13	Michael Main	2.58	Lorenzo Naylor	1.55

2004 January Active Rankings (new / old / name)

1982	1959	John Clark	1623	1623	Simon K Jones	1484	1484	Anthony Coker
1957	1957	Julian Fetterlein	1622	1614	Grahame Powell	1483	1483	David Horner
1921	1921	Brian Lever	1622	1622	Rodney Lighton	1482	1482	Ernie Pick
1883	1905	Tony Lee	1621	1621	Roland Herrera	1476	1476	Julian Minwalla
1851	1829	Dod Davies	1620	1592	John Thomas	1473	1473	Niclas Wigstrom
1825	1825	John Slattery	1618	1606	Francine Brandler	1472	1440	Johan Sallfors
1823	1816	Jim Johnson	1608	1608	Nigel Briddon	1467	1467	Arthur Williams
1809	1783	Mardi Ohannessian	1607	1585	Jeff Barber	1460	1481	Hubert De L'Epine
1808	1812	David Nathan	1600	1600	Steffen Nowak	1458	1473	Vianney Bourgios
1806	1806	David Startin	1594	1594	Steve Rimmer	1456	1451	Monica Beckerson
1797	1797	Steve Hallet	1591	1631	Peter Bennet	1454	1461	Cliff Connick
1783	1783	Richard Granville	1585	1585	Steve Pickard	1450	1450	Jonathan Lamb
1774	1809	Ray Tannen	1584	1575	Ann Pocknell	1448	1448	Kevin White
1770	1775	Lawrence Powell	1583	1583	John Wright	1448	1449	Jane Oxley
1765	1803	Dave McNair	1581	1524	Eddie Barker	1444	1444	Simonetta Barone
1749	1730	Ralph Eskinazi	1577	1577	Ian Shaw	1436	1436	Simon Fahoury
1744	1729	Emmanuel Di Bona	1573	1550	Mike Greenleaf	1432	1403	Myke Wignall
1732	1732	Rachel Rhodes	1569	1572	Kerry Jackson	1429	1395	Elliot Smart
1725	1670	Raj Jansari	1566	1566	Alistair Hogg	1425	1447	Will Richardson
1714	1714	Kevin Stebbing	1565	1576	Tim Mooring	1424	1435	Rosey Bensley
1702	1710	Tim Wilkins	1560	1526	Raymond Kershaw	1416	1407	Paul Gilbertson
1697	1646	Nick Check	1551	1502	Mike Heard	1414	1438	Wayne Felton
1695	1695	Stuart Mann	1550	1550	Amir Mossanen	1406	1406	Leslie Singleton
1691	1691	Jeff Ellis	1541	1541	Peter Chan	1405	1405	Kevin Nicholson
1689	1688	John Hurst	1533	1533	Dave Motley	1398	1421	David Naylor
1685	1685	Ian Tarr	1532	1506	Alan Beckerson	1397	1403	Colin Laight
1680	1711	Dale Taylor	1525	1525	Matthew Fisher	1392	1370	Tony Fawcett
1666	1614	Peter Christmas	1524	1548	Paul Christmas	1385	1399	Michael Main
1664	1664	Mike Grabsky	1521	1505	Martin Hemming	1380	1380	Tim Brown
1651	1651	Arthur Musgrove	1514	1508	Steven Reddi	1375	1375	Malcolm Hey
1643	1630	Brian Busfield	1513	1513	Pat Holly	1366	1366	Liz Barker
1639	1616	Barry McAdam	1510	1504	Mike Butterfield	1363	1363	Alison Lee
1635	1627	Uldis Lapikens	1508	1508	Ron Havenhand	1328	1328	Rebecca Bell
1629	1629	Charlie Hetherington	1507	1507	Andrew Sarjeant	1319	1326	Sue Perks
1627	1627	Bob Young	1502	1502	Paul Barwick	1295	1295	Cath Kennedy
1627	1627	Vincent Versteeg	1497	1497	David McNamara	1292	1314	Jon Sharpe
1626	1626	Edwin Turner	1495	1495	Tom Duggan	1291	1291	John P Lewis
1625	1607	Roy Hollands	1495	1495	Gabor Weiner	1254	1250	Bryony Jessiman
1625	1574	Dave Robbins	1488	1488	Darryl Kirk	1207	1207	Paul Sambell

2004 January Pending Rankings

1719	Brendan Burgess	1533	Mark McCluskey	1435	Grant Dewsbury
1708	David Gallagher	1527	Theo	1428	George Plant
1700	Harry Bhatia	1524	Felix Vink	1428	Peter Murrell
1699	Dave Coyne	1520	Paul Guy	1425	Ian Sadler
1689	Simon Barget	1520	Kyriacous Kyriacou	1425	Rowland Brindley
1680	Graham Brittain	1519	David Hale	1423	Geoff Conn
1666	Richard Beagarie	1517	Andrew Darby	1420	Kevin Carter
1662	Stephen Drake	1510	Ian Hill	1417	Sarah Rosich
1644	Helen Helm-Sagar	1509	Melvyn Abrahams	1414	Steve John
1641	Paul Turnbull	1506	Miles Illott	1414	Jeremy Limb
1635	Connor Dickinson	1500	John Napier	1412	Paul Jenkins
1634	Bill Pope	1493	David Fall	1404	Evan Williams
1614	Peter Fallows	1485	Kevin Williams	1400	Nick Hamar
1613	Mike Waxman	1484	Spencer Close	1388	Paul Watts
1610	Rod Jones	1483	Sunni Nicholson	1381	Rebecca Brindley
1608	Corinne Sellers	1477	Stuart Parmley	1379	Alan Greenwood
1608	Mark Heidenfeld	1474	Brendan Bensley	1376	Tony Pryor
1603	Bill Spiers	1474	Bob Bruce	1373	Cedric Lytton
1602	James Hatt	1472	Brendan Gasparro	1368	Peter Wilson
1592	Karl Simpson	1472	Blaine Buchanan	1368	Neil Young
1586	Neil Webb	1470	Steve Lynch	1355	Colin Harrocks
1574	Simon Gasquoine	1468	Suart Dewis	1354	Richard Winston
1568	Ricardo Falconi-Puig	1467	Lorenzo Rusconi	1351	Liz Makepeace
1566	Mark Lemon	1462	Neil Davidson	1342	Amy Woodward
1557	Jacek Brzezinski	1459	Roz Nathan	1336	Don Hatt
1549	Phil Caudwell	1450	David Winston	1326	Martin Blindell
1546	Dave Raynsford	1450	John Renicks	1277	Bob Parmley





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UK Finals December 2003

Main (34/16)

1	Tony Lee
2	Ian Shaw
3/4	Emmanuel Di Bona
3/4	Peter Chan
5/8	Andy Darby
5/8	Mardi Ohannessian
5/8	David Nathan
5/8	Peter Bennet

Consolation (44)

1	Jeff Barber
2	Liz Barker
3/4	Tim Mooring
3/4	Mardi Ohannessian
5/8	Martin Hemming
5/8	Dave Motley
5/8	Paul Gilbertson
5/8	Peter Bennet

Suicide (16)

1	John Slattery
2	Bob Young
3/4	Chris Eveans
3/4	Paul Sambell

Friday KO (10)

1	Michael Crane
2	Paul Gilbertson
3/4	Geoff Conn
3/4	Emmanuel Di Bona

£100 Jackpot (8)

1	Mardi Ohannessian
2	Geoff Conn
3/4	Mick Butterfield
3/4	Martin Hemming

Doubles (5)

Joint 1st	Yorksire Buriers
	Dancer & Blitzen
Top name:	Dancer & Blitzen



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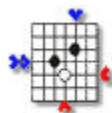
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