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Opening Moves - How to play them - How to reply to them

Formatted by Michael Crane, originally authored by Phil Simborg and Tom Keith

How to Play the Opening Moves

by Phil Simborg



There are two major things you should know about opening moves:

- 1 The experts, having studied opening moves for many years, and having had the benefit of experience, the use of computer programs, and tremendous personal skill and intuition, have virtually all agreed on what are the best opening moves for every possible dice combination.
- 2 If you make any move other than what the experts recommend, you are reducing your odds of winning the game and match.

It's as simple as that. You must simply memorize the best opening moves, and do them. Yes, it will help you greatly to also understand the reasoning for each move, and it will help you to also go to the next step and know and understand what the experts recommend you do on the next roll in response to opening moves if your opponent gets the opening roll. And yes, none of that will be of much help unless you understand how to play the rest of the game.

But since you cannot possibly learn the entire theory of how to become a backgammon expert from a single article, let me offer some help about the opening moves.

There is no question what to do with 31, 61, 42, 65. How to play these opening moves has been agreed to and proven to be correct for many years, and the correct plays are correct for any match score, whether you are winning or losing by a little or a lot, or tied. For all other moves, there is some debate; there are some different plays depending on the score; and the decision is not so clear.

Let's take care of the sure ones first. With 31 you make your five-point. Not only do most experts agree that the five-point is the most important point to make (for many reasons), but any other 31 play puts you at an unnecessary risk of getting hit. Why is getting hit so bad, especially early in the game? Because one of the overriding principles of backgammon is that every game, no matter how complex, ends up as a race to see who can get his checkers around the board and off first. Everything else that happens between the first roll and the removal of the last checker is just preparation for who the one is that gets to remove that last checker. Even games that end as a result of a double/drop are because the dropper determined that he is less likely to be the one removing that last checker first.

With 61 you make your bar-point (seven-point) as that is the second most important point, and again, any other move leaves exposed blots (single checkers on a point). With 42 you make your four-point because that is also an important point, and again, you don't want to leave blots. And with 65 you simply run a back checker all the way because it is very good for the race and, again, you leave no exposed blots.

There used to be much debate about how to play an opening 53. Many experts in the 70s and 80s believed that making the three-point was wrong. That they were better off making several other moves that provided them with more flexibility and put there checkers in better strategic places for the next move. The problem with the other moves, however, is two-fold: first, it leaves exposed blots, and if hit, gives the opponent an immediate advantage; and second, an opportunity to make the three-point has been passed up, and the three-point, while not as critical as the bar, five, and four-points, is still a good point to have. The experts of the new millennium virtually all agree that it is right to make the three-point with your 53, regardless of the score.

Now, let's simply go through the list of what is the preferred play, and reasonable variations. See below (and the next page)

The rolls and their preferred plays	
	Run a back checker.
	There are three acceptable plays. You can make your two-point; you can run a back checker all the way out to your 14-point; you can run a back checker out to your opponent's bar-point (24/18), and then bring down one checker off your mid-point (13/9).
	There are two plays: You can either run a checker all the way off your 24-point, or you can run to your opponent's bar-point and bring one down from your mid-point.
	Two plays: Run all the way, or run to the bar and bring one down.
	Make your bar-point.
	Two plays: Move a back checker up (24/20) and bring one down (13/8), or bring two down from the mid-point (13/8, 13/9).
	Make your three-point.
	Two plays: Move a back checker two spaces (24/22) and bring one down (13/8), or bring two checkers down (13/8, 13/11).
	Generally, it is right to split the back checker and bring one down (24/23, 13/8). When behind in the match and a gammon win is a major plus, you might bring one down and slot your five-point (13/8, 6/5).
	This move has the most possible variation, depending on score, but generally the experts agree that it is best to move up three off your back point (24/21) and bring the four down from the mid-point (13/9).
	Make your four-point.



The rolls and their preferred plays	
	Generally, it is right to split the back checker and bring one down (24/23, 13/9), but it is not a bad gambling play, when gammons are key, to bring one down and slot your five-point.
	This play also has many variations, but generally the experts agree that the best play is to bring your back checker up three (24/21) and bring a two down from the mid-point (13/11).
	Make your five-point.
	Split your back checkers (24/23) and slot your five-point. It was right to split your back checkers until recently, when modern computer rollouts showed that slotting is usually better, but you can vary this depending on the match score.

Will you win more often if you make the above opening moves? Yes, absolutely. It has been proven, statistically. Now, with the computer programs (Snowie and Jellyfish and Gnu BG) we can take any move or position and play out thousands, and even millions of games to prove that over the long run, one play or cube decision is better than another. So not only for opening moves, but for every move, if you want to win more often, you must learn the correct move. It is impossible to memorize the correct move for every possible position, but it certainly is possible to memorize the opening moves. So, as long as you've got the list, why not do it?

Rollouts of Opening Plays

By Tom Keith

The following information is derived from rollouts of opening replies. Each play is rolled out 46,656 times. The **rollouts** use 0-ply **cubeless** play **truncated** at 17.5 plies. While it is possible that stronger rollout settings would give different results, the results below should not be too far off the "true" answer of which play is best.

The **Equity** column shows the estimated cubeless equity of each potential play. The best play is displayed with a white background and the other plays are displayed with progressively darker backgrounds to give a rough idea of the amount of equity lost.

The check marks ✓ denote the best play for each of the following situations:

- **Cubeless (CL):** Cubeless money play.
- **Double Match Point (DMP):** In a match which has come down to one final game.
- **Gammon-Go (GG):** When aggressively going for a gammon win.
- **Gammon-Save (GS):** When aggressively avoiding a gammon loss.

MC: Glossary of the underlined words above. These explanations are taken from the Backgammon Galore web site.

Rollouts

An estimate of the equity of a position obtained through computer simulation. A rollout consists of numerous trials, the results of which are averaged together.

Cubeless Rollout

A rollout performed without using a doubling cube. Each trial is played to the end

PLAY 21	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/23, 13/11	+ .499, .137, .005 - .501, .133, .005			+.003	✓	(.002)	(.011)	✓
13/11, 6/5	+ .500, .142, .005 - .500, .146, .008			-.007	(.009)	✓	✓	(.024)
PLAY 31	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
8/5, 6/5	+ .553, .173, .007 - .447, .120, .005			+.162	✓	✓	✓	✓
PLAY 32	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/21, 13/11	+ .502, .137, .006 - .498, .135, .006			+.007	✓	✓	(.020)	✓
13/11, 13/10	+ .497, .152, .007 - .503, .144, .007			+.001	(.006)	(.010)	✓	(.028)
PLAY 41	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/23, 13/9	+ .498, .143, .006 - .502, .137, .006			+.002	✓	✓	✓	✓
13/9, 6/5	+ .493, .141, .006 - .507, .151, .010			-.028	(.030)	(.010)	(.015)	(.037)
24/20, 6/5	+ .487, .127, .005 - .513, .145, .007			-.047	(.049)	(.023)	(.055)	(.039)
PLAY 42	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
8/4, 6/4	+ .537, .169, .007 - .463, .126, .006			+.118	✓	✓	✓	✓

of the game and scored plus or minus 1, 2, or 3 points depending on whether gamed ended in a single game, gammon, or backgammon. Because cubeless rollouts do not include cube play, they do not perfectly simulate a game, but cubeless rollouts have less variance and less systematic error than cubeful rollouts.

Truncated Rollout

A rollout which is not played to the end of the game. Instead, the position is rolled out a given number of plies (the horizon

of the rollout) and estimates of the equities of the resulting positions are averaged together. A truncated rollout has more systematic error than a full rollout but is faster because each trial is shorter, and a truncated rollout has less variance so fewer trials are required to converge on a result.

Equity

The value of a position to one of the players. Equity is the sum of the values of the possible outcomes from a given posi-



tion with each value multiplied by its probability of occurrence. It is the same as the fair settlement value of the position. Your equity is the negative of your opponent's equity.

Cubeless Equity (CL)

The value of a position if the game is played without a doubling cube. This is a value between -3 and +3 and is equal to $P(W) + P(Wg) + P(Wbg) - P(L) - P(Lg) - P(Lbg)$, where $P(W)$ is the probability of winning the game, $P(Wg)$ is the probability of winning a gammon (or backgammon), $P(Wbg)$ is the probability of winning a backgammon, $P(L)$ is the probability of losing the game, $P(Lg)$ is the probability of losing a gammon (or backgammon), $P(Lbg)$ is the probability of losing a backgammon.

Gammon-Go (GG)

A situation in match play where losing a gammon has no cost, but winning a gammon is particularly valuable.

Examples:

- (a) you trail 4-away, 2-away and opponent owns the cube at 2; or
- (b) you trail 2-away, 1-away in the Crawford game; or
- (c) you trail 3-away, 1-away after the Crawford game and the cube is at 2.

Gammon-go for you is gammon-save for your opponent.

Gammon-Save (GS)

A situation in match play where winning a gammon has no value, but losing a gammon is particularly costly.

Examples:

- (a) you lead 2-away, 4-away and own the cube at 2; or
- (b) you lead 1-away, 2-away in the Crawford game; or
- (c) you lead 1-away, 3-away after the Crawford game and the cube is at 2.

Gammon-save for you is gammon-go for your opponent

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PLAY 43	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/21, 13/9	+ .500, .142, .006 - .500, .135, .006			+ .008	✓	✓	(.018)	(.004)
13/10, 13/9	+ .496, .155, .007 - .504, .141, .007			+ .006	(.003)	(.008)	✓	(.025)
24/20, 13/10	+ .500, .139, .006 - .500, .135, .006			+ .005	(.004)	(.000)	(.025)	(.004)
24/21, 24/20	+ .499, .126, .006 - .501, .132, .005			- .007	(.015)	(.002)	(.052)	✓
PLAY 51	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/23, 13/8	+ .500, .136, .005 - .500, .131, .005			+ .007	✓	✓	✓	✓
13/8, 6/5	+ .494, .138, .006 - .506, .139, .007			- .013	(.020)	(.012)	(.008)	(.028)
24/18	+ .494, .119, .005 - .506, .137, .005			- .031	(.038)	(.014)	(.047)	(.027)
PLAY 52	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/22, 13/8	+ .502, .136, .006 - .498, .133, .005			+ .007	✓	✓	(.019)	✓
13/11, 13/8	+ .498, .149, .007 - .502, .144, .006			+ .003	(.004)	(.006)	✓	(.028)
13/8, 6/4	+ .486, .135, .006 - .514, .142, .007			- .036	(.043)	(.030)	(.052)	(.048)
PLAY 53	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
8/3, 6/3	+ .516, .163, .007 - .484, .135, .006			+ .061	✓	✓	✓	✓
13/10, 13/8	+ .497, .150, .007 - .503, .141, .006			+ .004	(.057)	(.038)	(.065)	(.049)
PLAY 54	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/20, 13/8	+ .508, .140, .007 - .492, .133, .005			+ .024	✓	✓	(.011)	✓
13/9, 13/8	+ .500, .153, .008 - .500, .139, .006			+ .016	(.008)	(.015)	✓	(.025)
PLAY 61	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
13/7, 8/7	+ .535, .156, .007 - .465, .125, .005			+ .103	✓	✓	✓	✓
PLAY 62	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/18, 13/11	+ .507, .132, .006 - .493, .137, .006			+ .010	✓	✓	✓	✓
24/16	+ .502, .121, .005 - .498, .139, .005			- .013	(.023)	(.010)	(.031)	(.013)
13/5	+ .491, .144, .006 - .509, .142, .007			- .016	(.026)	(.032)	(.008)	(.042)
PLAY 63	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/18, 13/10	+ .504, .133, .006 - .496, .137, .006			+ .006	✓	✓	✓	(.003)
24/15	+ .503, .120, .005 - .497, .134, .005			- .007	(.013)	(.002)	(.028)	✓

MC: The rollouts continue on the next page.



PLAY 64	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
8/2, 6/2	+.499, .157, .008 -.501, .145, .006			+.012	✓	(.015)	✓	(.043)
24/18, 13/9	+.503, .137, .006 -.497, .138, .006			+.006	(.005)	(.005)	(.032)	(.019)
24/14	+.506, .120, .005 -.494, .131, .005			+.002	(.010)	✓	(.059)	✓
PLAY 65	W	G	BG	EQUITY	CL	DMP	GG	GS
24/13	+.530, .120, .005 -.470, .122, .004			+.060	✓	✓	✓	✓

Opening rolls ranked from best to worst								
Roll	Play	Equity	W	G	BG	L	G	BG
	8/5, 6/5	0.1615	+.5529	.1729	.0075	-.4471	.1195	.0052
	8/4, 6/4	0.1176	+.5365	.1691	.0074	-.4635	.1263	.0056
	13/7, 8/7	0.1030	+.5349	.1558	.0067	-.4651	.1245	.0048
	8/3, 6/3	0.0614	+.5160	.1631	.0075	-.4840	.1352	.0060
	24/13	0.0596	+.5299	.1202	.0052	-.4701	.1219	.0036
	24/20, 13/8	0.0245	+.5077	.1402	.0071	-.4923	.1335	.0047
	8/2, 6/2	0.0120	+.4988	.1575	.0082	-.5012	.1451	.0061
	24/18, 13/11	0.0096	+.5073	.1321	.0059	-.4927	.1374	.0055
	24/21, 13/9	0.0083	+.5000	.1422	.0065	-.5000	.1346	.0058
	24/22, 13/8	0.0068	+.5016	.1361	.0057	-.4984	.1335	.0046
	24/23, 13/8	0.0067	+.5005	.1358	.0053	-.4995	.1306	.0047
	24/21, 13/11	0.0066	+.5020	.1371	.0063	-.4980	.1352	.0056
	24/18, 13/10	0.0057	+.5044	.1332	.0059	-.4956	.1366	.0057
	24/23, 13/11	0.0026	+.4990	.1372	.0053	-.5010	.1326	.0053
	24/23, 13/9	0.0021	+.4979	.1432	.0058	-.5021	.1371	.0057
	Average	0.0392	+.5126	.1450	.0064	-.4874	.1323	.0053

Gammon Rate and Backgammon Rate

The totals in the above table allow us to compute overall gammon and backgammon rates. We see that the gammon rate when Gnu Backgammon plays itself is $.1450 + .1323 = .2773$. That is, 27.73% of all cubeless games end in a gammon.

And the backgammon rate is $.0064 + .0053 = .0117$. That is, 1.17% of all cubeless games end in a backgammon.

Replies to the Opening Move - by Tom Keith

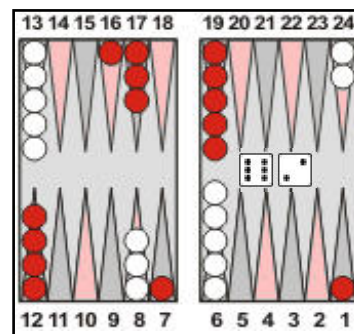
There are fifteen different opening rolls. Those fifteen rolls can be played in perhaps 33 reasonable ways. From there, you can roll 21 different numbers in reply. That makes a total of $33 \times 21 = 693$ different positions you might encounter if you happen to lose the opening roll.

That may seem like a lot, but consider this. One of these positions will come up every other game you play. So it is worthwhile taking some time to learn how to play them.

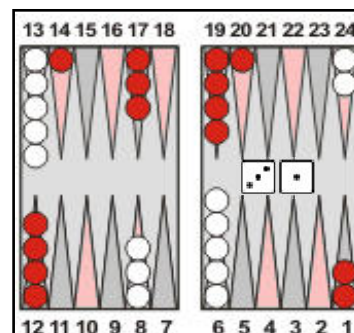
General Principles

What basic principles should you follow when replying to your opponent's opening roll? Here are some points to keep in mind that will lead you in the right direction much of the time. (Check how well these suggestions work on specific positions by consulting the rollouts).

1. Hit an enemy blot on the opponent's side of the board.

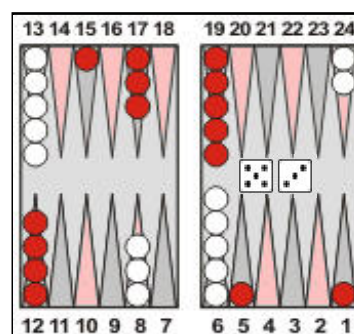


It's better to hit the blot on 16 than on 7.

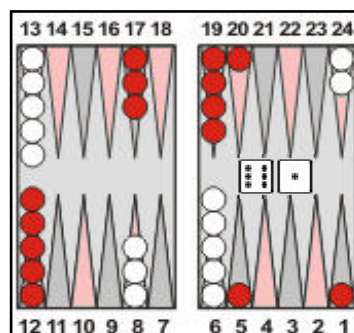


Hit the blot on 20 instead of making your five-point.

2. Knock an opponent's blot off your five-point or four-point.



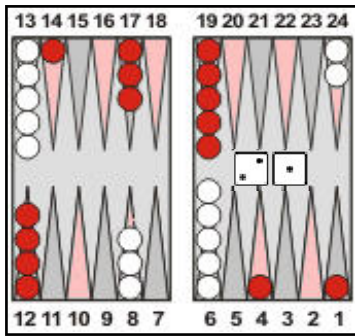
Hitting 13/5* is better than making your three-point.



Hit 24/18, 6/5* rather than make your bar-point.

2. continues on the next page



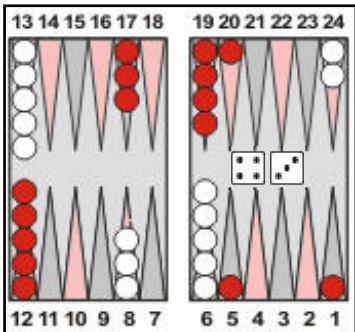


Don't let Red get a foothold on your four-point. 24/23, 6/4*.

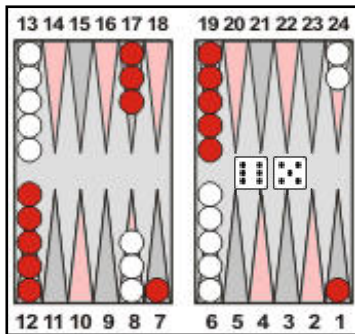
3. When you can't hit, then make a point in the usual way with these rolls:



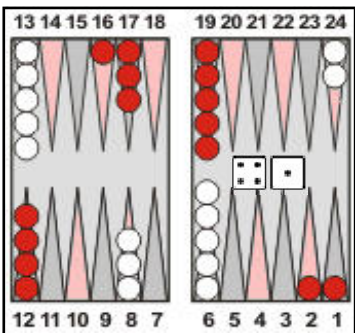
4. Hitting two blots is often good.



24/20*, 8/5* slots two key points and puts two checkers on the bar.

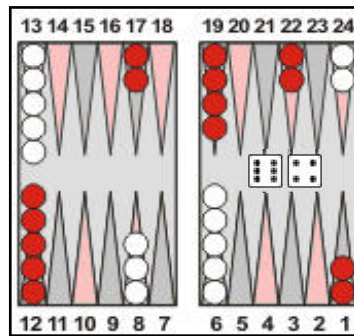


The best play here is the double-hit, 13/7*, 6/1*.

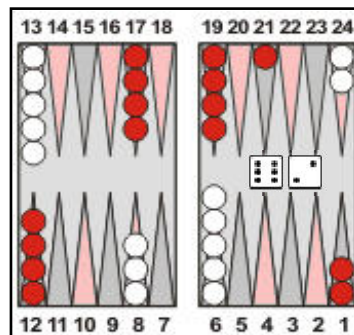


With nothing else particularly good here, 6/2*/1* stands out.

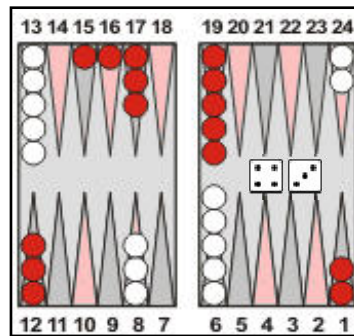
5. Mirror your opponent's play.



Red makes a deep home-board point, you make one too, 8/2, 6/2.

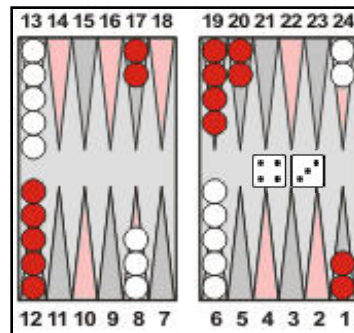


He slots a home-board point, you counterslot 13/5.



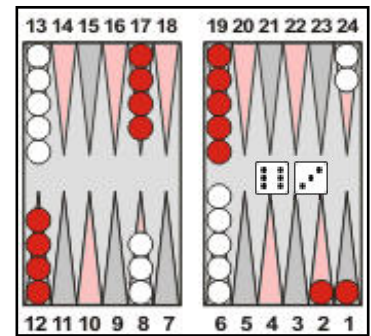
He brings two builders off the mid-point, you do the same 13/10, 13/9.

6. If the opponent makes his five-point, split your back checkers to try for an advanced anchor.



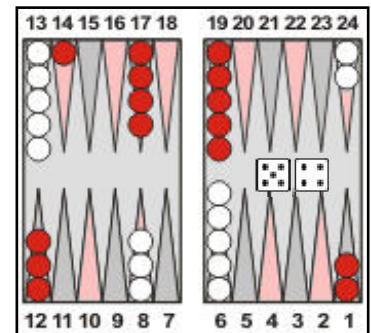
Split 24/21, 13/9 rather than bring down two builders.

7. If opponent splits his back checkers, be careful about leaving indirect shots.



It is safer to run 24/15 than bring a builder down from your mid-point.

8. Be careful about coming under the gun.



Play the 54 off your mid-point, 13/9, 13/8, rather than advance a back checker.

Match Play Considerations

In matches, the correct play often depends on the score. At some match scores, the value of a gammon for one side is quite different than for the other side. For example, if you are trailing with four points to go versus an opponent who owns the cube at 2 and has only two points to go, winning a gammon is particularly valuable for you because it also wins the match.

This situation is called gammon-go because you really go for a gammon. The reverse situation is called gammon-save. Checker play in these lopsided gammon situations is often quite different than when playing even or playing for money.

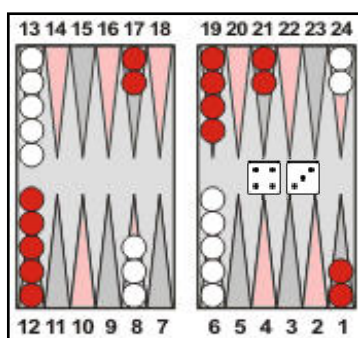
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NB: The boards used in this article have been 'captured' from the www. Due to their low resolution they might look a little blocky or blurred. There is nothing wrong with your eyes!



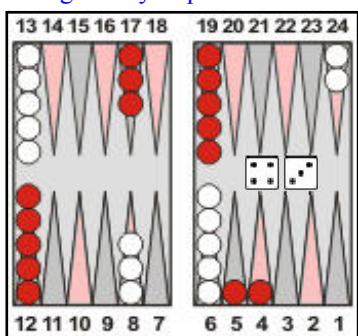
Gammon-go calls for very aggressive play:

1. Bring builders into play quickly; splitting is less important.



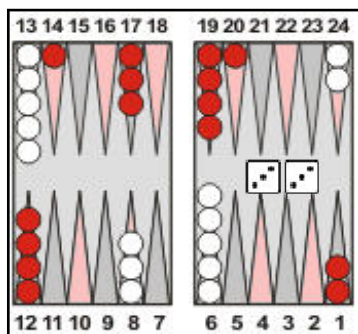
Bring builders within attacking range, 13/10, 13/9.

2. Hitting is very important.



Play the aggressive double-hit 8/5*, 8/4* even though it destroys your eight-point.

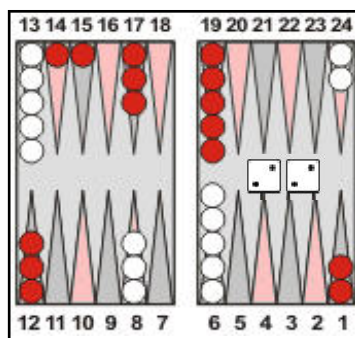
3. Make home-board points as fast as you can.



Make two home-board points: 8/5(2), 6/3(2).

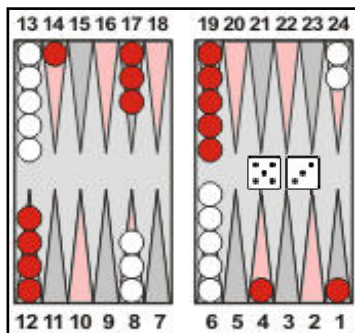
At **gammon-save**, you play very defensively.

1. Make an advanced anchor at your first opportunity.



First priority is to anchor on the opponent's five-point, 24/20(2).

2. Split your back checkers, if you can do so safely, with the idea of making an advanced anchor next turn.



The defensive split 24/21, 13/8 is better than making your three-point.

Rollouts of Replies

On the following pages there are rollouts of all 693 reply positions. A total of 2218 candidate plays were rolled out to determine the best play in each situation.

Rollout Settings

Gnu Backgammon *[A neural-net computer program that plays backgammon and analyzes positions and matches. GNU Backgammon is a cooperative effort of many volunteers. It is "free" software as defined by the GNU General Public Li-*

cense.] was used to rollout the candidate plays. Each play was rolled out 2592 times using cubeless 0-ply play to a truncation depth of 16.5 plies.

"Cubeless" means that games were played without a cube in play. Gammons and backgammons still count.

"0-ply play" means that Gnu Backgammon did no lookahead as it played the games.

"Truncation depth" refers to how many rolls into the game each trial of the rollout is performed. These rollouts were truncated at an average depth of 16.5 plies. (Half the trials were truncated at 16 plies, the other half at 17 plies.)

The advantage of these settings is (1) speed and (2) low random error. Stronger settings, such as using cubeful play, 2-ply evaluation, and untruncated rollouts, would have needed considerably more time to achieve the same low random error. (Perhaps a thousand times more.) Such advanced settings were simply not feasible with so many plays to be rolled out.

Nevertheless, I believe the rollout results will hold up quite well. Cubeless play will do just about as well as cubeful play when the starting position is even. Errors in 0-ply play (compared to 2-ply) will tend to be distributed evenly between the sides. Bias introduced by truncation will also tend to be evenly distributed between the sides. And the truncation bias affects relative errors much less than absolute errors. As long as the relative errors are small, the plays will still usually be ranked correctly.

The rollouts have a standard error of about .002 cubeless equity. That means two plays that differ by less than .002 could easily be ranked out of order. Plays that differ by more than .002 cubeless equity are probably ordered correctly as far as random error is concerned. (Though the order could still be wrong due to systematic errors in play or bias from truncation.)

The DMP, gammon-go, and gammon-save values shown in the tables were derived from the listed cubeless probabilities. They were not performed according to score, so you can't depend on them as much.

The rollouts are on the following pages

Backgammon GALORE!

Backgammon - and plenty of it!





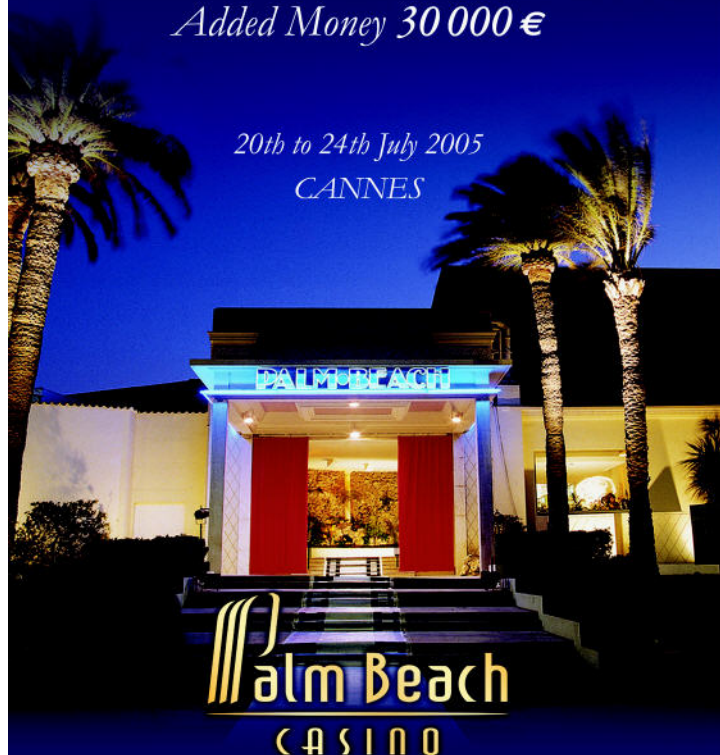
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Informations and Registration

By email : eric.guedj@hpc.fr - ffbg@wanadoo.fr
By post : FFBG-12 rue Chabanais 75002 - Paris - France
Informations : +33 (0)6 6246 7001 / +33 (0)1 4261 8080

Last registration date for the Nations Challenge :
June 30th 2005
Ref. : Nations Challenge

General Conditions and Registration
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Dice roll	Replies to 21 move 24/23, 13/11	Replies to 21 move 13/11, 6/5	Replies to 31 move 8/5, 6/5	Replies to 32 move 24/21, 13/11	Replies to 32 move 13/11, 13/10
	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)
	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/13
	24/14*	24/20*/14*	24/14	24/14*	24/14*
	24/18, 13/10	24/15	24/18, 13/10	13/4*	24/15*
	24/18, 13/11	24/22, 13/7	24/18, 13/11	24/18, 13/11	24/18, 13/11
	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7
	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	13/3(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)
	24/20, 13/8	24/20*, 13/8	8/3, 6/3	13/4*	24/15*
	24/21, 13/8	8/3, 6/3	24/22, 13/8	8/3, 6/3	8/3, 6/3
	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	13/9, 13/8	13/8, 6/4*	24/22, 13/8
	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8
	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20*(2), 13/9(2)	13/5(2)	24/20(2), 8/4*(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)
	24/21, 13/9	24/21, 24/20*	24/21, 13/9	24/21, 8/4*	13/10, 13/9
	8/4, 6/4	24/20*, 13/11	8/4, 6/4	8/4*, 6/4	8/4, 6/4
	6/2*/1*	24/23, 24/20*	24/23, 13/9	24/23, 8/4*	24/23, 13/9
	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	24/21(2), 8/5(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	24/21(2), 8/5(2)
	24/21, 13/11	24/21, 13/11	24/22, 13/10	13/10, 6/4*	13/11, 13/10
	8/5, 6/5	24/20*	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5
	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	24/20*, 6/4(2)	24/22(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4*(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)
	24/21	24/23, 13/11	24/23, 13/11	24/23, 6/4*	24/23, 13/11
	24/22, 6/5(2)	24/20*	24/22, 6/5(2)	6/4*(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)

Dice roll	Replies to 41 move 24/23, 13/9	Replies to 41 move 13/9, 6/5	Replies to 41 move 24/20, 6/5	Replies to 42 move 8/4, 6/4	Replies to 43 move 24/21, 24/20
	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)
	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/18, 13/8
	8/2*, 6/2	24/20*/14	24/20*/14	8/2, 6/2	8/2, 6/2
	24/15	24/15	24/18, 8/5*	24/15	13/4*
	24/16*	24/16*	13/5*	24/18, 13/11	13/5*
	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	24/18, 6/5*	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7
	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	13/3(2)
	24/20, 6/1*	24/20*, 13/8	24/20*, 13/8	24/20, 13/8	24/20, 13/8
	24/16*	24/16*	8/5*, 6/1*	8/3, 6/3	8/3, 6/3
	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	13/8, 6/4*
	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5*	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5*
	24/16*, 6/2*(2)	24/20*/16*, 8/4(2)	13/5*(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	13/5*, 8/4*(2)
	24/21, 6/2*	24/21, 24/20*	24/20*, 8/5*	24/20, 13/10	24/20, 8/5*
	6/2*/1*	24/20*, 13/11	24/22, 24/20*	8/4, 6/4	8/4*, 6/4
	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	24/23, 24/20*	24/20*, 6/5*	24/23, 13/9	8/4*, 6/5*
	8/4, 6/4	24/21(2), 8/5(2)	8/5*(2), 6/3(2)	8/5(2), 6/3(2)	8/5*(2), 6/3(2)
	24/22, 13/10	24/21, 13/11	24/22, 8/5*	24/22, 13/10	8/5*, 6/4*
	8/5, 6/5	24/20*	8/5*, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5*, 6/5
	24/22(2), 6/4(2)	24/20*, 6/4(2)	24/20*, 6/4(2)	24/22(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4*(2)
	24/23, 13/11	13/11, 6/5	24/22, 6/5*	24/23, 13/11	6/5*, 6/4*
	24/22, 6/5(2)	24/20*	24/22, 6/5*(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	6/5*/4*(2)



Dice roll	Replies to 43 move 24/21, 13/9	Replies to 43 move 24/20, 13/10	Replies to 43 move 13/10, 13/9	Replies to 51 move 24/23, 13/8	Replies to 51 move 24/18
	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7*(2)
	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/13	13/7*, 6/1*
	24/14	8/2, 6/2	24/14	8/2*, 6/2	24/20, 13/7*
	13/4*	24/15*	24/15*	24/15	24/21, 13/7*
	24/16*	13/5*	24/16*	24/16	24/22, 13/7*
	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7*, 8/7
	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)
	13/4*	24/15*	24/15*	24/20, 13/8	24/20, 13/8
	24/16*	13/5*	24/16*	8/3, 6/3	24/21, 13/8
	13/8, 6/4*	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8
	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5*	13/8, 6/5	24/23, 13/8	13/7*
	24/16*, 8/4*(2)	13/5*(2)	24/16*, 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)
	24/21, 8/4*	24/20, 8/5*	13/10, 13/9	24/21, 24/20	24/21, 24/20
	8/4*, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	13/7*
	24/23, 8/4*	24/20, 6/5*	13/9, 6/5	6/2*/1*	24/20, 8/7*
	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	8/5*(2), 6/3(2)	24/21(2), 8/5(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	13/7*(2)
	24/21, 6/4*	13/11, 8/5*	24/22, 13/10	24/21, 13/11	24/22, 24/21
	8/5, 6/5	8/5*, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5
	13/11(2), 6/4*(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	24/22(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)
	24/23, 6/4*	13/11, 6/5*	13/11, 6/5	24/21	13/11, 8/7*
	6/4*(2)	24/22, 6/5*(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	24/22, 6/5(2)	8/7*(2), 6/5(2)

Dice roll	Replies to 51 move 13/8, 6/5	Replies to 52 move 24/22, 13/8	Replies to 52 move 13/11, 13/8	Replies to 52 move 13/8, 6/4	Replies to 53 move 13/10, 13/8
	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)
	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/13	24/13
	24/20*/14	13/3*	24/14*	24/14	24/18, 13/9
	24/15	24/15	24/15	24/21*/15	24/15*
	24/16	24/18, 13/11	24/18, 13/11	13/5	24/18, 13/11
	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7
	13/3(2)	8/3*(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	13/3(2)	13/3(2)
	24/20*, 13/8	24/20, 13/8	13/9, 13/8	24/20, 13/8	24/15*
	8/3, 6/3	8/3*, 6/3	8/3, 6/3	24/21*, 13/8	8/3, 6/3
	13/8, 6/4	13/11, 13/8	13/11, 13/8	13/11, 13/8	13/11, 13/8
	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5	13/8, 6/5	13/8, 6/5
	24/20*(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)
	24/20*, 13/10	24/20, 6/3*	13/10, 13/9	24/21*, 13/9	13/10, 13/9
	24/20*, 13/11	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4
	24/23, 24/20*	13/8	13/9, 6/5	13/9, 6/5	13/9, 6/5
	24/21(2), 8/5(2)	8/5(2), 6/3*(2)	8/5(2), 6/3(2)	24/21*(2), 8/5(2)	24/21(2), 8/5(2)
	24/21, 13/11	24/21, 13/11	13/11, 13/10	24/21*, 13/11	24/21, 13/11
	24/20*	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	24/21*/20	8/5, 6/5
	24/20*, 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	24/22(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)
	13/11, 6/5	24/23, 13/11	13/11, 6/5	24/21*	13/11, 6/5
	8/7(2), 6/5(2)		8/7(2), 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)



Dice roll	Replies to 53 move 8/3, 6/3	Replies to 54 move 24/20, 13/8	Replies to 54 move 13/9, 13/8	Replies to 61 move 13/7, 8/7	Replies to 62 move 24/18, 13/11
	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	13/7(2), 8/2(2)	24/18(2), 13/7*(2)
	24/13	24/13	24/13	13/8, 13/7	13/7*, 6/1*
	8/2, 6/2	8/2, 6/2	24/14	24/14	24/14*
	24/18, 13/10	13/7, 8/5*	24/15	24/15	24/21, 13/7*
	24/18, 13/11	13/5*	24/16*	24/16	24/22, 13/7*
	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7*, 8/7
	13/3(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	13/3(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)
	24/20, 13/8	24/20, 13/8	13/9, 13/8	24/20, 13/8	24/20, 6/1*
	8/3, 6/3	13/5*	24/16*	8/3, 6/3	8/3, 6/3
	13/11, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	13/11, 13/8	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 6/1*
	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5*	13/8, 6/5	24/23, 13/8	13/7*
	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	13/5*(2)	24/16*, 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)
	24/21, 13/9	13/9, 8/5*	13/10, 13/9	24/21, 13/9	24/21, 13/9
	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4	13/7*
	24/23, 13/9	13/9, 6/5*	13/9, 6/5	24/23, 13/9	24/20, 8/7*
	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	8/5*(2), 6/3(2)	24/21(2), 6/3(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	13/7*(2)
	24/21, 13/11	13/11, 8/5*	13/11, 13/10	24/21, 13/11	24/21, 6/4
	8/5, 6/5	8/5*, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5
	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	24/22(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)
	24/23, 13/11	13/11, 6/5*	13/11, 6/5	13/11, 6/5	13/11, 8/7*
	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	24/22, 6/5*(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	8/7*(2), 6/5(2)

Dice roll	Replies to 62 move 24/16	Replies to 62 move 13/5	Replies to move 63 24/18, 13/10	Replies to move 63 24/15	Replies to move 64 8/2, 6/2
	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7*(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)
	24/13	24/13	13/7*, 6/1*	24/13	24/13
	24/18, 13/9*	24/20*/14	24/20, 13/7*	24/18, 13/9	8/2, 6/2
	24/21, 13/7	13/4	24/15*	24/18, 13/10*	24/18, 13/10
	24/22, 13/7	24/18, 13/11	24/22, 13/7*	13/5	13/5
	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7*, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7
	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	13/3(2)
	13/9*, 13/8	24/20*, 13/8	24/15*	24/20, 13/8	13/9, 13/8
	8/3, 6/3	8/3, 6/3	8/3, 6/3	13/10*, 13/8	8/3, 6/3
	24/22, 13/8	13/8, 6/4	24/22, 6/1*	24/22, 13/8	24/22, 13/8
	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5	13/7*	24/23, 13/8	13/8, 6/5
	13/9*/5(2)	24/20*(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)
	24/21, 13/9*	24/20*, 13/10	24/21, 13/9	24/20, 13/10*	13/10, 13/9
	24/22, 13/9*	24/20*, 13/11	13/7*	8/4, 6/4	8/4, 6/4
	24/23, 13/9*	24/23, 24/20*	24/20, 8/7*	24/23, 13/9	13/8
	8/5(2), 6/3(2)	8/5(2), 6/3(2)	13/7*(2)	13/10*(2), 6/3(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)
	24/22, 24/21	13/11, 13/10	24/22, 24/21	24/22, 13/10*	13/11, 13/10
	13/9*	24/20*	8/5, 6/5	24/23, 13/10*	8/5, 6/5
	13/9*, 6/4(2)	24/20*, 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)	24/22(2), 6/4(2)
	24/21	13/11, 6/5	13/11, 8/7*	13/10*	13/11, 6/5
	24/22, 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	8/7*(2), 6/5(2)	24/22, 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)



Dice roll	Replies to move 64 24/18, 13/9	Replies to move 64 24/14	Replies to move 65 24/13
	24/18(2), 13/7*(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)	24/18(2), 13/7(2)
	13/7*, 6/1*	24/13	24/13
	24/20, 13/7*	24/18, 13/9	8/2, 6/2
	24/21, 13/7*	24/18, 13/10	24/18, 13/10
	24/16*	24/18, 13/11*	24/18, 13/11
	13/7*, 8/7	13/7, 8/7	13/7, 8/7
	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)	8/3(2), 6/1*(2)
	24/20, 6/1*	24/20, 13/8	24/20, 13/8
	24/16*	8/3, 6/3	8/3, 6/3
	24/22, 6/1*	13/11*, 13/8	13/11, 13/8
	13/7*	24/23, 13/8	24/23, 13/8
	24/16*, 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)	24/20(2), 13/9(2)
	24/21, 13/9	24/20, 13/10	24/21, 13/9
	13/7*	24/20, 13/11*	8/4, 6/4
	24/20, 8/7*	13/9, 6/5	24/23, 13/9
	13/7*(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)	24/21(2), 13/10(2)
	24/21, 13/11	24/21, 13/11*	24/21, 13/11
	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5	8/5, 6/5
	24/16*	13/11*(2), 6/4(2)	13/11(2), 6/4(2)
	24/22, 8/7*	24/23, 13/11*	13/11, 6/5
	8/7*(2), 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)	8/7(2), 6/5(2)

MC: I would like to thank Phil Simborg and Tom Keith for their permission to reproduce their work in this issue of Bibafax and for all their hard work in putting together such an informative document in the first place.

I have tried to include all of their input from the Backgammon Galore web site but I feel I have not done as well as I'd hoped - the confines of a page being somewhat restrictive! However, the entire article in all its glory - including many hyperlinks and references - can be seen at www.bkgm.com/.

If you have enjoyed this article and would like to learn more then please log on and feast upon the delights that Tom has set out for. You won't be disappointed!



Phil Simborg has been playing backgammon for over 40 years and is currently ranked No. 2 on the American Backgammon Tour. Phil lives in Chicago but travels extensively for business and backgammon and pleasure.

He has written many articles on backgammon, both humorous and educational, which have appeared on many web sites and backgammon publications. Many of his articles can be found at www.bg-info.com.



Tom Keith lives in Toronto, Canada. He is owner/curator of Backgammon Galore, a web site devoted to backgammon. (Please drop by for a visit!)

He's always looking for good articles to publish. If you have written an article or would like to write an article on backgammon, please send mail to tom@bkgm.com.

Of special interest are articles for beginning and intermediate players or articles that will attract new players to the game.

Backgammon Galore is now in its tenth year. The site receives 7,000 visitors daily.

NB: In the original printing of this article the rollouts on pages 10, 11, 12 and 13 were incorrect. They have been corrected for this issue.

Letters

Tony Lee emails in regarding a ruling made on penalty points: I'd like to pass on my view regarding your ruling at the British.

Firstly, I appreciate your role as TD is to ensure a smooth running tournament, however there are other points that should have been taken into account on your ruling:

- by the time you imposed penalties it was already 8-all to 11, so there wouldn't be much difference to the timings going to 9-all;

MC: I disagree. At their current rate of play one could expect them to take another 52 minutes to play the remaining points so my penalty does make a difference. Also, one cannot assume that the players involved would have cubed at 2-away, 2-away; they could have fought for each point, one by one.

- in my opinion, there was a large skill difference between the players involved, and esp. at this score, huge equity errors are made by weaker players. Pushing it to effectively DMP, nullifies any advantage the stronger player may have had, or what makes he/her a better player;

MC: TDs should not make timing decisions based upon the relative skill levels of the players. If you are correct in your skill factor analysis then perhaps the stronger should have been farther ahead or even have won this match well before the imposition of a much heralded time penalty.

- I had some equity in the stronger player (from the Saturday auction) which meant that the ruling made the game a coin-flip and significantly reduced my equity;

MC: Your monetary interest in this match bears no relevance to my decision making whatsoever - such interests (sometimes including my own) never had nor ever will cloud my judgment. Are your comments based upon this monetary interest or are they a genuine comment of what you believe is a wrong decision? I would hope the latter but fear it is the former!

- Given the history of known slow players, surely a clock should have been imposed at the beginning of the match!

MC: Everyone starts off at the same time

and no one is deemed slow. I monitor all matches at time intervals and, as in the case of this one, when the score-rate is low I warn about the penalties of not playing faster. Despite my urging to increase the score-rate both players ignored me and consequently they incurred the penalty I had warned them of - as is right and proper within the rules to which both (ALL) players agree to play to.

I guess there isn't really a universal solution to this problem, although Fischer clocks (from my days on the chess scene) would significantly reduce the negatives of both slow play and time-based penalties.

MC: You are wrong, there is a universal solution to this problem and it lies in the hands of the players themselves - play faster! It is my opinion that players who seem to think they have a right to take as long as they wish over a move or match have no regard for their peers who have to wait for them to finish a match before they can start the next round. Slow players are crippling backgammon tournaments and it is the duty of all entrants to play at a rate determined by the TD . . . not a rate set by a few selfish players. One of the two players involved has chosen to leave Biba rather than accept a ruling that was 'unfair' in his opinion - even though he entered the tournament agreeing to abide by the rules of play; and that he was given ample notice to avoid the penalty altogether. I wish to go on record that I have not fallen out with either player and that both are equally welcome to enter future Biba tournaments.

It might have been a coincidence, but following this incident there wasn't a single match thereafter (not just in the Main, but throughout) that even went as far as the time allocated!

Coincidence my arse!

Our next email comes from **Leslie Singleton** regarding Robin Clay's contribution: As I have said to you earlier regarding Bibafax 75, page 15, Problem No.54., 13/11, 13/10 brings down two good builders which are not likely to be hittable in first place and which in any event are not a sensible hit if, as would seem a good idea from White's point of view, he (White) is going to cover his blots if he can--and if he cannot the sequence clearly favours Black. Obviously if White does hit, then fives and fours plus indirects hit on way back in for Black--not to mention

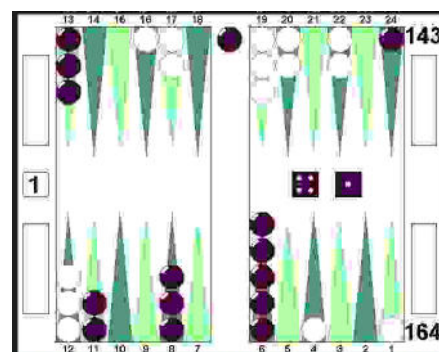
that Black has a better board.

MC: Leslie, you seem to be missing the point. Robin is trying to get readers to see strategies and tactics. He gives a cross-section of moves (which doesn't always include the 'best' move) and the reader has to decide from the candidates which is the better one. I did rollout your chosen move and of those moves mentioned it came out first.

Your move might well be the 'best' move possible, but in this instance you have to choose from the list - not add your own to it!

Regular letter writer, **Cedric Lytton** sent in: No.74 to hand. I enjoyed solving Bill Davis's puzzle "The Great Prime", as well as your usual test paper on Kazaross v. Meyburg - I seem to be better in theory than in practice.

Now a question for your archives. In "Independent View" page 95, Chris Bray quotes Shlomo Vahab v. David Nahmad, World Championship Monte Carlo 1996, DMP, and shows the position after 4 moves by each side (see below).



Being made that way, I wondered what those four moves could have been, and still don't have a satisfactory sequence; one possibility is -

62: 24/16	41: 13/9* 24/23
32: 25/22, 13/11	53: 8/3*, 6/3
52: 25/20, 13/11	21: 23/21, 6/5*
66:	62: 13/5

I'm not entirely happy with this, as Black's 25/20 comes under the gun (Magriel). I asked Chris Bray, and he said it was somewhere in his loft and he'd look for it next car boot sale time; radio silence thereafter. Would you be able to turn it up quickly as a computer file and show me what I've missed?

MC: Well, Chris, been in the loft yet? I checked my extensive match archive but I couldn't turn this one up.

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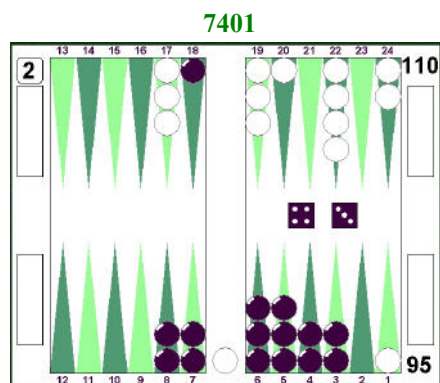
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Competition 2005 No1, 7401-06 Answers

By Michael Crane

Welcome to the first of the 2005 season competition. In issue 74 I asked for answers to the positions 7401 to 7406. Five members were brave enough to submit entries.



11 point match
White 2 Black 2
Black to play 43

MC: For our first problem we have two answers (see Snowie below). However, I have allocated top marks to the player that went for the actual 'best play'. First,

here's an entrant that is well out on his own; and well down on Snowie's list (hence the lowest mark):

Rodney Lighton: 6/2 18/15

Just in time I noticed that White has a white piece lurking on the white bar (would the colour edition have helped here!)? If Black can stop White from anchoring we have reasonable chances of a gammon. If we can pick up a third checker then the chances of a gammon are very good. Hitting loose on the 1-point is an option, but it might be difficult to keep the prime then. I prefer 6/2, hoping for a return hit or moving the prime forward, together with 18/15 to avoid a potential disaster if White throws 1-1.

MC: Although he speaks of stopping White from anchoring he decides to leave the 1-point blot alone thus giving White the chance to anchor! Everyone else, apart from the next entrant goes for the hit. Mark explains why he doesn't:

Mark Oram: 6/2 5/2

Certainly 8/1* is very tempting. However, 6/2 5/2 would maintain our prime long enough that White would likely crunch with two men behind our blockade - and we also duplicate the ace he needs to enter or hit our back checker: giving this checker a good chance of coming home safely. For White to have a playable game he needs to anchor immediately with an ace: if not we are still in great shape to complete the closeout. Even if he does anchor we could also (with an appropriate sequence) break our bar point; thus forcing him to escape with a six and allowing us the chance to then attack and close out his last checker.

MC: Is the possible crunch better than two or more on the bar?

Bob Young: 5/1* 18/15

Hitting increases the gammon chances, firstly by reducing White's chances of anchoring, and secondly by possibly allowing shots at the blot in White's home board, if the Black checker is hit and recycled. Breaking the full prime is not



advisable (8/1*), it just gives White a lifeline, albeit small, that White could eventually escape while Black is pre-occupied with re-entering, especially should White roll a double one. Who wants a seven prime?, not me!

MC: It matters not how you hit the 1-point blot, it just matters that you hit it!

Richard Biddle 5/1* 18/15

We, Black, should be able to go 6-2 ahead, if we go for the gammon. 6/2 5/2 is too passive, we want to avoid White establishing any kind of anchor so a hit is mandatory. We also wish to maintain a six point board as our insurance, so I would avoid hitting from the 8-point.

Therefore, hit from the 5-point. Rather than move down from the 6-point, I prefer 18/15. This gives us flexibility and avoids an uncomfortable White double-one. We will be looking to recycle pieces anyway to pick up the third White blot.

MC: Good reasoning, but it is better to play 8/1; as Steve and his mate Snowie will tell you.*

Steve Hallett: 8/1*

Black is in complete control of the game and is in a position to maximise his gammons but the obvious play of making the 2-point with 6/2, 5/2 allows White to anchor and gammons go way down, so the five must be played 5/1*.

With the three we now have a choice of:

- 18/15 : stops the double hit (maybe) if White throws 1x1 but doesn't bring any more cover numbers for the one and two points
- 6-1 : is similar but except for the double hit (maybe) with 1x1
- 8-5 : goes for the close out but breaks the 6-prime

Because of White's weak board and blot I would go all out to close White out and maximise gammons.

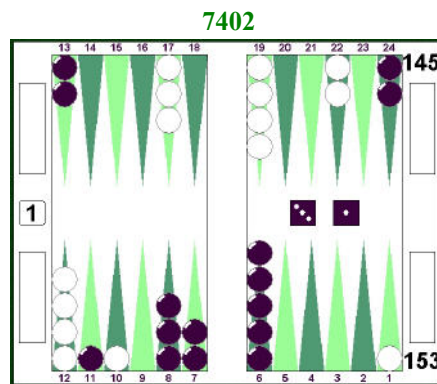
Snowie: 18/15 5/1* and 8/1*

The plan here is to win a gammon so that any plan that doesn't hit on the ace point is going to be a big mistake. 6/2, 5/2, rolling the prime forward, is completely the wrong idea as it gives White the chance to anchor with any 1.

It seems logical to retain the full prime and play 18/15, 5/1*. However, my roll-outs, have the even more aggressive 8/1* as winning by a whisker. The advantage of 8/1* is that keeps another builder for

the ace-point - the disadvantage is that it dismantles the full prime - letting White win the odd game in a thousand when he starts with 62 from the bar. *MC: Mmm, a cock-shot, I like the sound of that!*

The rolls are so close in equity that I would rate them as equal.



11 point match
White 4 Black 4
Black to play 31

MC: According to Snowie, three of our panel have "... the wrong idea"! Here they are:

Richard Biddle: 11/10* 24/21

For me the choice is to build the valuable Golden Point and hence a four point prime or the other choice is to hit. I feel the most effective way to hit is to hit & split, giving good coverage around the board.

MC: Not read Magriel on the Golden Point, Richard? Don't worry, neither has anyone else! You pick it as a choice - and then you discard it!

Rodney Lighton: 11/10* 24/21

A frequent dilemma with 31, make the 5-point or do something else good. Here making the 5-point is nice especially as we also get a four prime. However, we are in danger of then playing with three back against one. I prefer 11/10* to send White back together with 24/21 to attempt to get an advanced anchor.

MC: Is hitting and splitting really as good as the 5-point? I don't think so.

Bob Young: 11/10* 24/21

Black would love to make the 5-point, but with an exposed blot, and still with two checkers back on the ace-point, while White has only one, Black should hit while there is the opportunity. Splitting becomes less dangerous with the hit, so action on both sides of the board is my recommendation.

MC: Ah, but hitting will give White the chance to make an advanced anchor. Did you consider that?

Our next two both agree on the hit 11/10 (in line with the previous entrants) but they advocate continuing with the same checker as opposed to the split.*

Steve Hallett: 11/10* 10/7

Black is only slightly behind in race but has only a one point board, two checkers back on the 24-point and no spares on the mid-point. White has the better board and nearly escaped one checker. Luckily Black has thrown both hitting numbers but the question is does he hit the checker on the his 10-point or does he start building his board by playing 8/5, 6/5?

If Black didn't have the blot on his 11-point making the 5-point would be a big advance in his development, but the threat of having this blot hit means in my opinion that the 5-point will have to wait and White's blot hit but not by losing Black's midpoint so the one must be used 11/10*

We now have the choice of 24/21 and 10/7

- 24/21 starts to get an advanced anchor but with White's stronger board could allow White to get an attack going.
- 10/7 safeties the blot and brings a checker to bear on all of Black's home board

Because of White's stronger board I would not split the back checkers but play 10/7 with the three.

MC: The 11-point blot is worth sacrificing for holding the 5-point, a point that'll be there until the bearoff.

Mark Oram: 11/10* 10/7

Making our 5-point gives White his whole roll to improve: to say nothing of him hitting our blot and sending him back to face a stronger home board than ours. With the hitting play we have two of his checker back behind a 3-point blockade (which has spares enough to easily extend it with low numbers) and no chance of more than one of his back men escaping on anything other than 44 or 55. It seems that 13/10* 11/10 would also send his checker back and make a broken 4-point prime, but at the cost of our mid-point. Given our back men are stranded enough as it is, this seems like too high a price to pay.

MC: So, none of the entrants made the 5-point; and it was the best move. I'll let



Snowie explain.

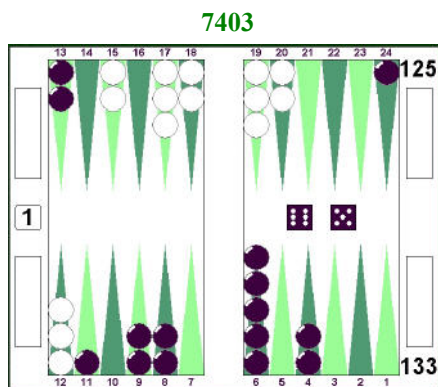
Snowie: 8/5, 6/5

Another close one between 11/10* 10/7 and 8/5, 6/5. (11/10*, 24/21 is the wrong idea).

So, short term gain in the race or long-term asset? The longer you play backgammon -and remember my circuits have played millions of games - the more you realise that what Magriel said 30 years ago is still correct - the 5-point is the most important point on the board, pass it up at your peril.

Here it is statistically the best play, although not by much. The other advantage to making the 5-point is that it leads to far more complex games than the hit and complex games favour the better player. Surprisingly, I've yet to meet a player who didn't think he was better than his opponent. QED - 8/5, 6/5.

MC: Scoring this was a difficult one for me. No players actually got the 'correct' play, three came in at Snowie 3rd and two at Snowie 2nd! I have marked the three at top and the two just one point behind. Poor Snowie, who is by far the better player comes out last, but only by one point!



11 point match
White 2 Black 4
Black to play 65

MC: Let's make a start with a couple that agree on this play.

Richard Biddle: 9/3 8/3

Blimey, I don't think it really matters as I think we are about to be doubled out. So, what move does our opponent least want us to make? We want to stay on the mid-point. Rather than spread builders and blots I would immediately make another point in our home board but I am not sure I would take when doubled.

Mark Oram: 9/3 8/3

We don't have much going for us, so I think we need to maintain our mid-point as long as possible to harass White's own mid-point men, and leave our back checker where it is for additional harassment value. (We may also get a joker roll that allows us to spring him out before White completely traps him.) White likely won't attack our last checker just yet, but once his home board is stronger he certainly will. Our only recourse to this is to have as strong a home board as we can, to deter him from hitting loose. So I see 9/3 8/3 or 11/5 8/3 as working towards this, although 9/3 8/3 makes a three-point board immediately. We also have the remaining builders reasonably placed to close our five-point very soon, whereas 11/5 8/3 risks leading to sequences where we can't quickly close the slotted points.

MC: On reflection, not a good choice of position. Or more correctly, a good choice if we remove the cube use and make it DMP. However, the possibility of being cubed out next roll should still make the entrants consider the best play.

Our next lot all have a different idea.

Rodney Lighton: 11/5 8/3

Although the race is fairly level here Black is in some trouble with his back checker likely to be hemmed in. We are facing a potential cube here (which I don't think is a take at this score, so our play may be academic). We need to build our board quickly (and confidently), I don't think White is leaving any direct shots next go, so we can afford to slot points, 11/5, 8/3 slots the next two neatly.

This looks slightly better than 9/3, 8/3 because we go for the important 5-point.

Bob Young: 11/5 8/3

Make a strong home board quickly. White is unlikely to leave a direct shot next time, so put the checkers on the high open points and cover next roll. Close race, so Black may get the opportunity to escape the last checker, or if not, step up to the edge of the prime, and if hit off, will be in good shape should an exchange of hitting take place.

Steve Hallett: 11/5, 8/3

The race is even but Black's last checker is stuck behind White's broken 6-prime and unable to escape this roll. White has escaped both back checkers but might leave indirect shots in the outfield as he comes home.

Black must build his board quickly in case he does get and hit a shot; also Black must position his checkers if the game transposes into a straight race. Black must keep his mid-point to keep pressure on Whites back checkers.

Possible plays:

- 11/5, 9/4 starts the 5-point and brings a checker to the 4-point; which is best for a straight race.
- 9/3, 8/3 makes the 3-point which could be good if Black hits a shot but doesn't put a checker on the 5-point which could be expensive if the game ends in a straight race.
- 11/5, 8/3 starts two points to build the board quickly and also puts checkers in a good position for the race.

MC: Mmm, now they talk about making the 5-point! In actual fact, in this instance it was better to make the 3-point! Snowie tells us why.

Snowie: 9/3, 8/3

This is not a difficult problem because all moves have the same equity! There is no move that Black can make that will allow him to take a double next roll. At this match score this is a very clear double

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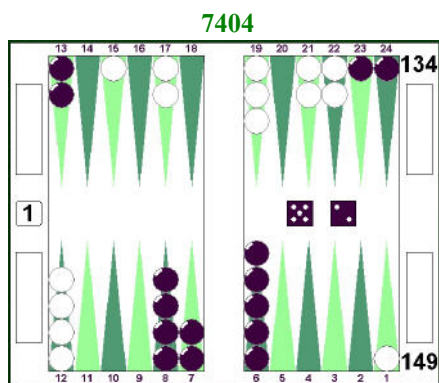


and an equally clear drop.

However, you still have to move and you must do so assuming your opponent won't double. If this were a money game my rollouts tell me that the only move that would allow Black to take a double next roll is 9/3, 8/3 and so technically that is the move you should play here.

My human colleague tells me that he would play 11/5, 8/3 aiming to build as many points as possible as quickly as possible and by showing a temporary a home-board weakness perhaps induce his opponent to play on (erroneously) for the gammon.

This is perhaps over-complicating things but it is at least worth thinking about and reinforces the fact that that knowing your opponent's cube handling habits is often worth more than a few points of technical equity.



11 point match
White 4 Black 4
Black to play 52

Rodney Lighton: 23/18 8/6

Down in the race and with a worse home board, we need an advanced anchor or a hit here. Slotting the 18-point with 23/18 leaving our back pieces connected leaves the ugly 8/6 as the only reasonable 2. The alternative is to run with 23/16, this gives White fewer shots, but gives us fewer return shots as well. If White fails to hit we would rather be on the 18-point than the 16-point.

MC: With this play, Rodney is out on his own. Had he gone with preferring the 16-point to the 18-point he'd have gained more points!

Bob Young: 23/16

No merit in hitting on the ace-point with White's strong home board. Two down from the mid-point is reasonable, but losing the mid-point at this stage should be avoided if possible, and, as it is always

difficult to tie down a lone checker hell-bent on escaping, go for a bit of distraction.

MC: Actually there is merit on hitting on the ace-point. See what Snowie says below.

Mark Oram: 23/16

Another position where there seems very little going right for us. Our last checker cannot move at all; breaking the mid-point with 13/8 and/or 13/11 gains very little and leaves the back men stranded. The only other option might be 8/1* but we could be hit back and then have three men behind a broken five-point prime where White could quickly close up the gaps. With the running play we attempt to get one checker safe, and force White to hit us in his outer board with a one or a four, so preventing him also closing his five-point at the same time (with anything except 44). The running checker can also move to our outer board next turn if missed, threatening to close up our home board and neutralize some of White's home board advantage.

MC: Hitting is correct; and the next couple have the backing of Snowie.

Steve Hallett: 8/1*

Black is behind in the race with no board, no anchor and in a lot of trouble. Any play that doesn't take half of White's roll away is just asking for a beating and even though it seems scary to attack with White having a much stronger board in this position it's kill or be killed so the five must be played 6/1*

After that the two is easy. Black doesn't want anymore loose blots floating around so the two plays 8/6. So even though it seems suicidal play 8/6 6/1*

MC: That's it, Steve, rob him of half a roll.

Richard Biddle: 8/1*

Cor Blimey, we need to stop the cube from being shipped over to us. I am just going to be awkward and hit again.

MC: Short and sweet . . . much like myself!

Snowie: 8/1*

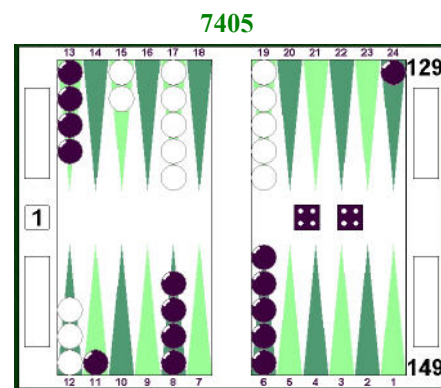
Another position where whatever he plays, Black will be receiving the cube next roll. This time however he can squeeze out a take although no one could be criticised for dropping. In fact if Black is the stronger player he should probably drop this double as it is on the borderline

and gammons abound.

Both 23/16, and 8/1* give Black enough equity to take but 8/1* is the better move as it takes away half of White's move (or all of it if he rolls 66) and gives Black a better chance of making the anchor in White's board that he so separately needs in this position.

Black's plan is to get an anchor, build a board and subsequently contain one of White's men. A fairly unlikely sequence but it happens just often enough for Black to venture a take of the upcoming double.

Even if you don't think White will double next roll (I'd love to be playing anyone who didn't double this!) 8/1* is the best play because it so precisely meets the requirement of Black's game plan.



11 point match
White 2 Black 4
Black to play 44

MC: This position had the panel split 3 and 2; and Snowie made it 3-3. Here's the three:

Richard Biddle: 8/4(2) 6/2(2)

We need contact in this game so we have to stay put on the 24-point. Best to unstack and make a few home points. It will immediately make White play awkwardly for fear of leaving a blot.

MC: Stopping on the 24-point is correct, as is the 4-point, but I'm not too sure about the deep 2-point.

Mark Oram: 8/4(2) 6/2(2)

We again are the underdog here, but if we can hit White even once we can restore some of the balance. If we advance 24/20, however, we will either get pointed on or he will play spare men behind us. By staying back on the 24-point we give ourselves at least a fly-shot at any outer board blot(s) he may leave. We also want a strong home board as quickly as we can to discourage White from leaving any



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such blots, and he may get cramped enough in a few rolls that he will have no choice. In addition, being behind in the race argues that we should wait and hope to hit White as he comes home.

All of this argues that we want to keep the last checker where he is, and strengthen our home board as quickly as possible. Nor do we want to leave any blots on our side of the board, since if we have to rely on a fly-shot we will not be able to cover any loose blots at the same time. Making our 4- and 2-points safely in a single roll addresses all of these needs, and allows us to retain enough flexibility so that we can continue to build our home board smoothly and safely. None of this is true for 13/5(2), which leaves our position far less smooth on the next rolls.

MC: Again, the deep 2-point is preferred.

Bob Young: 8/4(2) 6/2(2)

White will still be ahead in the race after this roll, but in a poor position with very little improvement in outfield or home board. Black should make a strong home board, and seek plays after this that maximise contact. For me, 13/5(2) is not as good, for it makes only one (albeit strong) home point, where as two new home points will be more potent. Likewise, 13/9(2), 8/4(2) again only makes one point, and although a semi-prime, is not as good, leaving the high stacked 5-point untouched. Leaving the lone blot back on the ace-point will prevent White from placing any awkward rolls safely into the home board.

MC: So far none of the above have looked at building/slotting the Golden Point - which we all know, is a very important point! At last, someone decides it is worth doing.

Steve Hallett: 13/5 8/4(2)

Black's slightly behind in race with White having escaped both back checkers. Black's game plan is to stay back on the 24-point and to build his board quickly to contain any hit checkers or, if the dice dictate, to transpose into a running game.

Possible plays:

- 13/5(2) makes the best point but strips the mid-point and doesn't unstack any of the heavy points.
- 8/4(2), 6/2(2) quickly makes a three point board but goes too deep if the game does transpose into a race.
- 13/5, 8/4(2) By far the best for both game plans. It slots the 5-point makes the 4-point and keeps a spare on the

mid-point.

MC: Rodney contemplates three options and settles on the 5-point builder.

Rodney Lighton: 13/5 8/4(2)

Well down in the race, but White is stacked and likely to leave shots, there is no value in moving our checker on the 24-point, it is fairly safe and a threat to White. We want to build our board quickly. Could play 13/5(2) or 8/4(2), 6/2(2) or 8/4(2), 13/5. The first play gets the best point but leaves us stacked, the second gets two points, but does nothing to get the important 5-point. The third looks the best balanced of the three options.

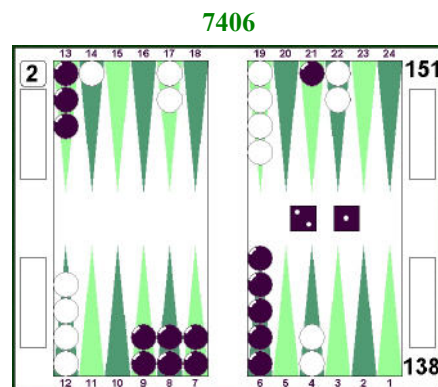
MC: Points built in order should be in all players' mind, and the deep 2-point really is a bit too deep. Slotting the 5-point is a good move.

Snowie: 13/5 8/4(2)

This one is fairly straightforward. After the roll Black will still be four pips behind in the race so any play that involves 24/16 or 24/20 is the wrong idea.

Black needs to build his home board as quickly as possible. When doing this it is important to build the points in order as far as you can so something like 8/4(2), 6/2(2) is an error because the 2-point is too deep a point to build this early.

Logic says that 13/5(2) is the correct play because it builds the 'right' point but in fact Black can do slightly better with 8/4(2), 13/5 which not only builds a home board point but slots another key point in the potential prime. 13/9(2), 8/4(2) is not bad but not as powerful as slotting the 5-point - Black wants that threatening board as quickly as possible.



11 point match
White 2 Black 2
Black to play 21

Rodney Lighton: 6/3

Playing behind the anchor is not ideal,

but anything else either increases White's shots or reduces our prime. The safe play while ahead in the race is thematic.

MC: Rodney is out on his own with this one; which is a shame for I liked it! However, as Snowie will explain later, making points in front of an opponent's anchor is better than making them behind.

Our next two prefer to run a back checker out, despite its 'disadvantages'.

Mark Oram: 21/18

We are ahead in the race, and if we can play with either no men back or at most one checker back we should be in reasonable shape. We have given the cube away so we cannot double White out: instead we need to get home if we can without leaving any blots for White to hit. This seems to rule out something like 13/11 6/5 or 13/10: both of which invite White's fleeing back checkers to hit us. Also, by coming up to White's bar-point we cannot be pointed on in his home board: leaving us a fair chance of re-entry if hit.

Bob Young: 21/18

Placing any blots in front of White's anchor ie..13/11 6/5 whilst having an inferior home board gives White the opportunity he is looking for, to hit and leave the anchor while Black has to re-enter. Black has his prime, so move the last checker out of the home board, preventing White from hitting and starting a good home board point. If hit, (probably will be), just try re-entering and racing to a safe place, i.e. enter and hit with an indirect shot, or "hide" on the 1-point out of harms way, whilst then strengthening the other side of the board.

MC: Running out seems to be favourite with these two - but no one yet has advocated making the 5-point, until now.

Steve Hallett: 7/5 6/5

Black is ahead in the race and needs to escape his back checker but the dice weren't playing so he has to make the best of a bad roll. The question is does Black build his board with 7/5,6/5, dump a checker with 6/3 or brazen it out to the outfield with 20/18 and hope to survive the onslaught?

- 7/5 6/5 equalises the board strength and if White doesn't hit the blot on the 7-point it gives Black the best chance of building a 5-prime in front of White's anchor. If White does hit he does so with the loss of his anchor and



with board strengths being equal Black could come off better in a blot hitting contest with more builders in position.

- 6/3 dumps a checker behind White's anchor but does keep the 4-prime intact but leaves Black with only a one point board if White hits loose on his four point.
- 20/18 only leaves the one blot but if this is hit White is bringing in more builders which will make it easier for him to close Black out, so I reject this play.

6/3 doesn't seem right dumping a checker so I'm reluctantly left with making the 5-point as the best move.

MC: Steve 'reluctantly' comes out with the best play! It's all a matter of elimination.

Richard Biddle: 7/5 6/5

This is quite similar to a problem that Chris Bray had in his column in the Independent earlier this year. I couldn't find the actual article but I remember the principle because it was so far removed from everything I have learnt about the game so far. I think most people would play safe with 6/3 or come off the 21-point. Chris argues for playing 7/5 6/5. If White fails to hit with a three, 17 rolls make a five point prime. I don't know whether this sort of play would be right here, I'll be curious to see what Chris selects.

MC: Well, Richard, you and Chris agree! It seems that you are learning all the time; that article by Chris obviously made a lasting impression upon you and has gained you top marks for our last position.

Snowie(Chris) now explains why you're such a good student!

Snowie: 7/5 6/5

Saving the most difficult position for last. Here Black's plan is more complex. He wants to escape his last man but he also

wants to constrain White's two back men and he must balance these objectives as he selects his play.

A simple rule in backgammon is 'When ahead in the race - then race'. Therefore the pure running play 21/18 has merit despite exposing the blot to a triple shot. If White elects to hit with a one he will have to break his 8-point to do so. The question is whether Black can do something more constructive.

The second option is the no risk 6/3, starting a useful home board and unstacking the overloaded 6-point. This play certainly has its advantages and would be the choice of many. However, whilst making points behind an opponent's anchor can have its merits making them in front is normally stronger if one can do without too much risk. Here Black can start his 5-point with 13/11, 6/5 or make it with 7/5, 6/5. Making a point is nearly always better than threatening to make one so we can quickly discard 13/11, 6/5.

So we are left with (a) 21/18, (b) 6/3 and (c) 7/5, 6/5. Because (c) has very little risk (White may not hit even if he can) and it threatens to make a five prime in front of White's back men it is a more positive play than (b) and a more constructive play than (a). Extensive rollouts prove it to be the strongest play of the three.

One reason for this that may not be obvious at first glance is that it leads to more gammons for Black than the other plays. These gammons are created by the variations where White initially hits the blot left on Black's bar-point but Black then rolls well to close out one or more of White's men.

MC: Well, that's the first one over for 2005, two more to come.

Although Snowie is in the lead with 58 points, Steve Hallett (once again) picks up the £25 towards accommodation at

any Biba tournament - Snowie can't win it for he uses a computer to aid his analysis!

	Move	Score
7401	8/1*	10
	5/1* 18/15	9
	6/2 5/2	4
	6/2 18/15	3
7402	11/10* 24/21	10
	11/10* 10/7	9
	8/5 6/5	8
7403	9/3 8/3	10
	11/5 8/3	8
7404	8/1*	10
	23/16	7
	23/18 8/6	5
7405	13/5 8/4(2)	10
	8/4(2) 6/2(2)	7
7406	7/5 6/5	10
	21/18	8
	6/3	7

Fax	Month	Questions	Answers
76	May	7601-06	7401-06
78	Sep	7801-06	7601-06
80	Jan	8001-06	7801-06
82	May	8201-06	8001-06

**Competition No 2 : 7601-06
on the following page**

Name	7401	7402	7403	7404	7405	7406	Tots
Snowie	8/1* & 5/1* 18/15	8/5 6/5	9/3 8/3	8/1*	13/5 8/4(2)	7/5 6/5	58
Steve Hallett	8/1*	11/10* 10/7	11/5 8/3	8/1*	13/5 8/4(2)	7/5 6/5	57
Richard Biddle	5/1* 18/15	11/10* 24/21	9/3 8/3	8/1*	8/4(2) 6/2(2)	7/5 6/5	56
Bob Young	5/1* 18/15	11/10* 24/21	11/5 8/3	23/16	8/4(2) 6/2(2)	21/18	49
Mark Oram	6/2 5/2	11/10* 10/7	9/3 8/3	23/16	8/4(2) 6/2(2)	21/18	45
Rodney Lighton	6/2 18/15	11/10* 24/21	11/5 8/3	23/18 8/6	13/5 8/4(2)	6/3	43

Competition 2005 No2, 7601-06 Questions

By Michael Crane

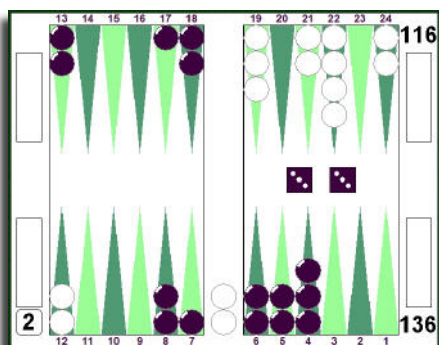
Welcome to the second of the three competitions that make up the 2005 season.

- The winner will win £25 towards accommodation at any one tournament of their choice.
- The member with the highest points total at the end of the year will win £75.

Entries to be in by July 1st. 2005

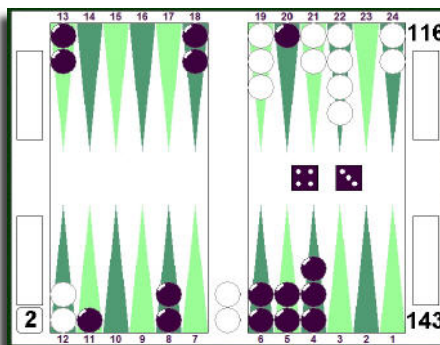
Email: to comps@backgammon-biba.co.uk
and all 'hard copy' to Biba HQ via Royal Mail.

7601



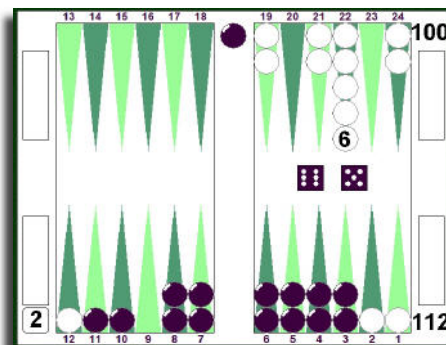
11 point match
White 0 Black 0
Black to play 33

7603



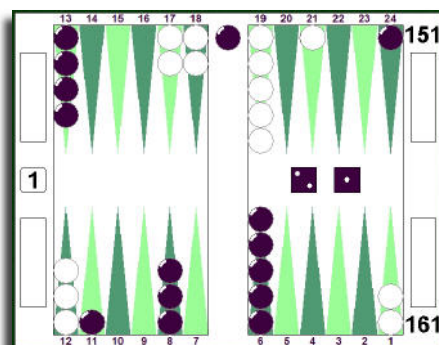
11 point match
White 0 Black 0
Black to play 43

7605



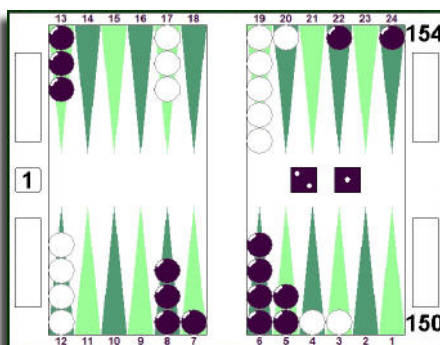
11 point match
White 0 Black 0
Black to play 65

7602



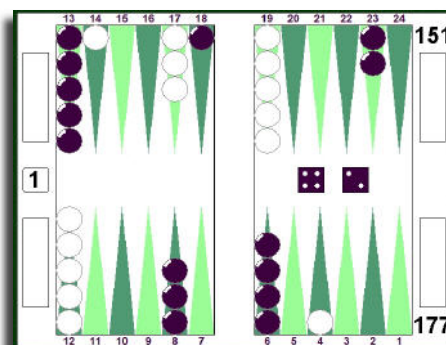
11 point match
White 2 Black 2
Black to play 21

7604



11 point match
White 5 Black 5
Black to play 21

7606



11 point match
White 0 Black 0
Black to play 42

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23	Backgammon De Deauville
15	Casino Bregenze Backgammon Open
15	Competition 2005 No1 - Answers
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May 31st to June 5th 2005 - Deauville France



Tuesday 31st May
18h00 Registration Master, Jackpots
21h00 Initiation for beginner

Wednesday 1st June
14h00 Master last registration
Quarter entry champion and intermediate
15h00 Master 1st Round
21h00 Master 2nd Round / Warm up / Jackpots

Thursday 2nd June
14h00 Registration
15h00 Last registration
16h00 Champion 1st Round and Rebuy
17h00 Intermediate 1st Round and Rebuy
22h00 2nd Round all divisions

Friday 3rd June
14h00 Play resumes, Consolation champion
16h00 Consolation intermediate
21h00 1st Super Jackpot

Saturday 4th June
14h00 Play resumes
16h30 Double consultation
21h00 Semi-finales Master and Open
Beginner starts & 2nd Super Jackpot

Sunday 5th June
14h30 Last Chance all divisions Starts
15h00 Finales all divisions
20h00 Prize giving and cocktail
18h00 Break for Dinner Every Day 6 PM

Entry Fees

Master* :	€ 2,000
Champion:	€ 600.
Intermediate :	€ 250.
Beginner :	Free
Double consultation :	€ 400.
Quarter Entries - Champion	• 200.

Registration Fees

Master:	€ 200.
Champion :	€ 110.
Intermediate :	€ 80.
Beginner :	€ 10.
Double consultation :	€ 50.
1/4 Entry Intermediate	• 100.

Master Division is limited to 32 players

Please contact **Laurent ARNONE** for information and special rates in Lucien Barrière Hotels.

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Friday Warm-up (24)

Always a good turnout for the Open's Warm-up, this year boosted by a couple of our American cousins, Marc LeClerc and Ron Whitehorne.

Both players missed out on the 1st Round byes; and Roy missed out on the final thanks to Nigel Merrigan. Marc fared better, but it was a struggle to the final for him: Roy Hollands, Martin 'Barkers' Barkwill, Peter Christmas and then Emmanuel Di Bonna. Here awaited a 'champion' player... Jason Champion! However, Jason just couldn't live up to his surname and it was Marc who came out on top. His first ever Biba entry and his first victory. Could he continue his winning streak into tomorrow's Main and take home the prestigious British Open trophy back to the States, following in the footsteps of the popular Neil Kazaross in 1999?

Main (73)

OK, here's the short answer to the question above - No! Steve Pickard (a one-time World Champion . . . long story, don't ask!) knocked Marc out in his first match. So, the trophy wouldn't be going back to the States for a second time ... but it did go back elsewhere for the second time!

There were five previous holders of the trophy present this weekend, Nigel Merrigan (1993), Dave McNair (1997), Rachel Rhodes (2000), Steve Hallett (2001) and current holder, Mike Greenleaf (2004). Of these five it was left to Rachel to make it to the final and to take home the trophy for a second time - well done, that girl!

Her route to the final was via the 1st Round whereas her opponent, Julian Minwalla had the benefit of a 1st Round bye. Rachel's most 'difficult' opponent *en route* was without a doubt Sean Casey (former Irish and Scottish holder). Down 10-6 post Crawford Rachel fought her way back into the match to leave Sean reeling when she emerged the victor. In the final itself she once again found herself trailing, this time 6-0. (more later).

At-A-Glance™ British Open

Report by Michael Crane



The final started well for Julian as he went into a 6-0 lead, but it was from here that Rachel shot up a gear and went into overdrive, 6-4, 6-6, 6,8, 6,10, match! She was a girl on a mission and nothing and no-one was going to detract her from the mission. Congratulations, Rachel on a magnificent achievement, and commiserations to Julian on a valiant effort.

Brian Lever and Peter Christmas were the losing semi-finalists - both of whom received a trophy from the sponsor..



Julian, Peter and Rachel

Consolation (69)

If you can't win the Main, then it has to be the Consolation; this was Nigel Merrigan's thoughts as he registered for the Main on the Saturday morning. So confident was he of winning the Main he didn't take up the option of going into the Consolation poll - but he returned a little while later and changed his mind. This turned out to be a good move for he found himself in the final facing Tony Walters.

Both players had entered via the Progressive side thus making it an all-Progressive final. Tony via the Last 16 had to defeat Nicky Check, Mark Dixon, Tim Mooring, Wayne Felton, sponsor, Peter Bennet and finally Sean Casey. Nigel's route was a little smaller coming in from the Last 8, Ron Havenhand, Ian Tarr, Jason Champion and Stephen Drake.



Brian Lever and Peter Christmas

On paper Nigel was the big favourite, but this didn't affect Tony - he was having a great tournament. Unfortunately for him Nigel was having a greater one and it was he that came out the winner. He might have come 2nd but from the smile on his face you'd have thought he was the winner. Well played, both of you.



Consolation
Tony, Peter and Nigel

Last Chance (64)

The re-entries being taken up by many players in this open draw of 64 were eschewed by the two finalists; they made it to the final on their one and only entry. Leslie Singleton and Adrian Jones had cleaved their way through five opponents each; and it was here that Adrian

Julian's journey wasn't an easy one: His last three opponents were very tough, Nigel Merrigan (see above), Jason Champion, and Brian Lever (SAC 1993 & 2002, UK Finals 2001), but it was Julian that came through in the end.



added a further scalp to his score leaving Leslie holding the Runner-up trophy.

Castaway (64)

Castaway? Why Castaway? Well, Peter Bennet, the tournament sponsor likes to have an apposite title for the 3-pointer, and this year he chose Castaway because we were playing at the Hinckley Island Hotel! I know it's a tenuous link, but it is a link, nonetheless!

After a slow start the entries into the open draw began to fill up rapidly. One player in particular is well known for his multiple re-entries in open draws thanks to the Liverpool Open a few years back - Steve Hallett. However, this time he needed just the one entry to get into the final. His opponent, Kevin White took two attempts to get there. His first was thwarted by Fanika Petkovska in the 1st Round; but Kevin got even with her when he knocked her out later in the 3rd Round!

In the final, Steve Hallett was determined to make sure his one-entry was going to be all he needed to win; and he proved it so when he left Kevin in 2nd place.

Doubles (0)

Zero? Yep! There was one team (Tim and I) but no-one else wanted to play with us! They all preferred to play Jackpots and/or Poker. So, for the first time we didn't have a doubles knockout - sad, isn't it?

Jackpots (8s)

Just a synopsis on the three Jackpots:
£100: Lawrence Powell beat John Slattery
£50: Steve Hallett beat Steve Pickard
£25: Sean Casey beat Mar LeClerc.

Poker (18)

Now that Paramount have taken over Hanover they have began enforcing a strict no-smoking rule in the function rooms; much to the dismay of some of the poker players. In fact organiser, Martin Hemming was close to cancelling because smoking wasn't allowed. There was nothing I could do about it - but he did relent and it went ahead ... and to my knowledge, without losing any entrants who did so because they couldn't smoke!

John Glibertson doesn't smoke, but he does play poker - well enough to win it!



Last Chance
Adrian, Peter and Leslie



Castaway
Peter (who has finally moved!), Steve and Kevin

Mark Dixon came 2nd and 'Mr Consistent' (Martin's description), Nigel Merrigan came 3rd.

Finally

It was another successful event and I would like to thank At-A-Glance Calendars, aka, Peter Bennet for the trophies and sponsorship; and all those that entered making it the success it was.

Before I go . . .

I'd like to comment on one incident that marred it for me. TDs have to make diffi-



cult decisions sometimes and the British Open presented me with one; one of time and slow play.

Two players consistently behind time were given several warnings that unless they pulled up their score to a more acceptable level, penalty points would be applied to bring them in line with the other matches. After 90 minutes of play their total points on the score card was a paltry 9 points (this, after being warned about slow play); a sum one would expect after 45 minutes play. I then told them that should their scores become level than I would apply 2 points penalty to each of them.

This happened when they reached 8-8 after two hours twenty minutes play. At their current rate of play one could expect them to take another 52 minutes to play the remaining six points - unacceptable. So I added penalty points to their scores, but only one each as opposed to the two I had previously men-

tioned. Normally at 2-away, 2-away the cube is shipped across early, by adding just one point each I had given them the option to cube and make it DMP or to play it out un-cubed (or cubed and dropped later).

One of the players later came to me and complained about the penalty saying I was 'out of order' to do what I did and that as a consequence he would no longer attend any more Biba tournaments. This is a sad reaction to an application of the rules he was content to play under and should have been aware of. It quite clearly states in Rule 2.4

"Slow Play: Players are expected to play at a reasonable pace. If, in the Director's opinion a match is not progressing at a reasonable pace a warning may be given. If slow play continues the Director can either award penalty points or issue clocks in accordance with BIBA Clock Rules. The Director's decision is final."

I gave both players ample warnings, and plenty of time to increase the speed of the match but they didn't respond. I then apply the rules (under which both have agreed to play) and I am then accused of being out of order! I think this is a little unfair on me and I am upset that the player concerned has decided to leave



following a ruling he didn't like . . . but should have known would have been a consequence of his/their actions!

It is the responsibility of all members to know the rules and procedures we play under, and, when they fall foul of those rules and procedures they should be prepared to accept the penalties incurred. Every player entering a tournament has a responsibility to their peers to play at a rate that doesn't detract from the smooth

running of the event. Taking as long as you like over a match (especially after repeated warnings from the TD) is not only against the rules but it also shows a disregard for one's peers and future opponents.

Rules are in place to protect players from other's actions (or in this instance, inactions) and it falls to me to apply these rules; an onerous task, but one that members bestow upon me. I don't like losing

players under any circumstances but when I lose them after doing what is expected of me is it quite sad. I hope the player concerned reconsiders his decision. He is more than welcome to enter future tournaments and I hope he shall - as far as I am concerned the matter is over.

NB: For more on this issue see Letters on page 14

2nd Casino Salzburg Backgammon Open & Texas Holdem Tournament

7th – 10th April 2005

Brits Triumph One Way or Another!

Backgammon 0 -- Poker 5

Rosey - The Roving Reporter

Follow the backgammon exploits of our intrepid reporter as she rolls her way around the world - ably supported by Slatts and a bunch of Brits !



Was it the Pope? Was it Prince Rainier of Monaco? Was it Charles & Camilla? Or was it Ken & Deidre?? Whatever it was that was happening in Europe it kept the numbers of players down in Salzburg. There were a total of 29 players in two divisions. With 5000 Euros added there was going to be some good equity. The tournament directors were Chiva Tafazolli and Andrea Hollmann.

On Thursday 5 Brits met at Stanstead Airport at 7.30 a.m. – Slatts, John Gilbertson, Ernie Pick, Julian Minwalla and myself. We bumped into Fanika and her friend Sarah in Starbucks, who were travelling on the same plane. They definitely arrived in Salzburg but we didn't see them at the casino until Saturday afternoon. The shopping proved to be too good and as they had a Sunday a.m. plane Fanika decided not to join the tournament.

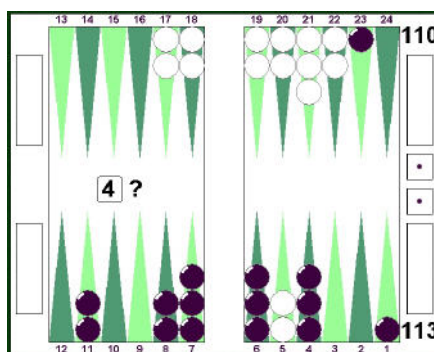
There wasn't that much happening on Thursday night and as we were all really tired from the early start we decided to stay at the hotel. This didn't stop us from having a chouette (apart from Jules who went to bed at 7.30!) The two John's cleaned up leaving me and Ernie to dish out the dosh.

On Friday Ernie, John G and I went into Salzburg. The sun was shining and it put us all in a good mood. We did some shopping and Ernie sampled the delights of an Austrian banana cake, which was delicious.

Play started at the Casino in the afternoon with 18 in the Championship division and 11 in the Intermediates. It was decided that the Intermediates would play a round robin. This meant playing 3 matches on the first day. I already knew my backgammon had gone to pot, so I wasn't

really surprised to only win one match. John G won all 3 of his and Ernie won 1 out of 2 played.

During his third match of the day John, playing as white was leading 5-0 to 9 when he offered his opponent a 4-cube in this position. Was this correct?



He went on to win the match 9-0!

In the Championship division Slatts played an Austrian in his first round but never really got into the game. Because I was busy playing I only saw a couple of games. The one that was being played at the time I started watching was an exciting one. Slatts was playing a back game and managed to get into a *coupe classic* situation. He hit the shot by rolling a 2 and battle commenced. He was doing well, but knew he needed the second checker back if he wanted to win the game. With the score at 2-6 to 13 and the cube on 2 he needed to win! Unfortunately, having forced his opponent to hit him he missed the second blot. His opponent then rolled double-six to come all the way round and off and Slatts got backgammoned! He didn't recover and was out of the backgammon for the day after only one match. Jules flew the flag for the Brits and won his match 13-1.

We all went out for a Chinese that night and the food was so good we booked for Saturday night as well. A thanks has to go to Ernie, who is from Austrian descent, for his language skills. His chat up lines to the waitress fell on stony ground but he did do an excellent job of translating and speaking out for us all in German.

All the Brits except Jules went back to the casino to play poker in the evening – more on this at the end of the report.

Saturday was not a good day for British backgammon. Slatts lost his Consolation match at DMP. Jules not only lost his Main match after a very close battle, but also went out of the Consolation, Warm-up and Super Jackpot.

Meanwhile in the Intermediates, John and I lost all 3 of our matches (we blame the late night and the dice gods!). However, it was Ernie that had the worst day of all.

There was a mega-controversy, which I will report on as fairly as any bystander can. Ernie was drawn against a Turkish player Nedim Yardimci. For once he was getting the dice to allow him to play an excellent game which saw him go 8-0 ahead. His opponent was complaining about his bad luck all the way through. With the score at 8-2 a heated argument ensued when, after Ernie was contemplating a 54 move, his opponent picked up Ernie's piece and moved it! Ernie told him to leave his pieces alone at which point Nedim, instead of apologising, accused him of being a slow-player (which we all know Ernie isn't!). An argument erupted and Chiva, the tournament director, was called over to calm the situation down. When the score was 8-6 he proceeded to watch the rest of the match. Nedim continued to talk and Chiva



warned both players that if either of them spoke again they would get a penalty point. With the match at 8-8 Ernie took a cigarette break but was understandably still angry and upset, as he felt that had the initial incident not happened he would have won the match well before it got to this score. We told him to settle down, be calm and go do it! At DMP things were going well for Ernie. His opponent had two men on the bar and Ernie had started bearing off. He then threw double-five, which left a blot on his 3-point. He then said (to himself, but out loud) "I knew that would f.....g happen!" His opponent rolled and played 6/1, Ernie rolled and Nedim shuffled the pieces and shut his board. Ernie left the room thinking he had won the match only to discover that Chiva had given a penalty point against him. Needless to say Ernie was extremely upset and decided to leave the tournament and go back to the hotel. Slatts and Jules were still playing their game and with Slatts at DMP, John and I were keen to see the end of the game. By the time this was finished Ernie had gone. Slatts decided to go back to the hotel to check he was okay and to keep him company for the rest of the day. When discussing the situation later, Ernie's main gripe as that Chiva should have instantly told him that he had got a penalty point and lost the match, rather than condoning his talking by allowing Nedim to roll. Slatts did speak to Chiva about this on Sunday and he said that because both players were hot-headed he didn't want a scene in the playing room, so with the match only a few rolls from being finished he let play continue.

Chiva asked me to point out that at that stage, a victory or a loss of a match would absolutely not have been decisive for the outcome of the round-robin format. Even though Ernie went away angrily, he waited long enough for him to return, hoping he would calm down and continue his other matches. Unfortunately, as he didn't return he had to scratch him after a few hours, leaving him his warm up match open to be played until the very last day of the tournament. He did return Ernie's registration fee.

It is always unfortunate when incidents occur (which they seem to do more and more often these days!). One thing is for sure I would not like to have the

responsibility of being a tournament director. We did point out to Ernie that he probably could have appealed against the decision and it would have gone to a committee. However, this option would only have been open to him at the time.

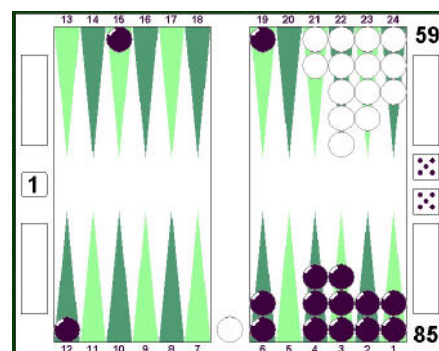
We all met up again at the Chinese for another excellent meal. Ernie, Slatts and Jules went back to the hotel to play chouette and John and I went back to the Casino to play poker.

On Sunday, Jules and Ernie decided to go into Salzburg and then played backgammon at the hotel. Slatts got into the semi-final of the warm-up, but again lost at DMP. The final was between Schinichiro Kaneko and Heimo Krainer. It was a hard fought battle, which Kaneko won at DMP. The two of them had also reached the final of the Super Jackpot and they had agreed to split the prize money. Krainer made it a hat trick of finals by winning the One-Point President's Tournament.

John won 2 out of 3 of his matches and was in with a chance of coming 3rd and picking up some prize money. I hate to say it, but it was me that let him down. I had won one match already and in my last match was winning 8-2 against a Turkish player. All I am going to say is that I agree that backgammon is the "cruellest game"! I had the match almost won in

the post-Crawford game when my opponent chose then to roll some big numbers to win the race. He then got an unlikely gammon to make the score 8-8.

In the last game, playing as black, I had a chance to win when we got to the position shown below.



The dice Gods decided otherwise however! My opponent rolled double-five which came in, hit my blot and left a blot in his home board. I hit! He came in again with double-five, hit again and left a blot. I hit him again and he danced. I then rolled double-six, which meant I got one man off but had to leave a blot on my 5-point. Yes, of course he hit and ran, and I lost the race.

So, unlike last year when the Brits got five BG trophies there were none for us this year. But what happened in the poker?



Slatts, Ernie, John G and I paid 200 euros each for 1,500 chips and sat down to play with five others on Friday night. The game was Texas No Limit Holdem and the re-buys were 100 euros for the first hour. There was an Austrian player, Schmukie, who was quite a reckless player and went all-in with nearly every hand. He was a great character, good fun and really boosted the kitty up! Most players topped up at the freeze out, buying 2,000 chips for 200 euros. The prize fund totalled 4,180 euros = 1st 2,090 / 2nd 1,250 / 3rd 840.

Chiva was playing his first poker tourney and had amassed quite a large chip lead and made it to the final three. There with him was Slatts, who had played his usual entrepreneurial style, with no one really knowing whether he had a hand or not, and me! "Slowly, slowly catchee monkey" is my motto! I am not too good at bluffing but if I can get a few good cards I am in with a chance.



So battle commenced for the glory and the money. At 2.15 a.m. Slatts saw off Chiva with pocket queens against Chiva's A / Q. Heads up was fun, I went down to a few thousand chips when my pocket pair was beaten by Slatts straight. I battled on though and got some chips back. I went all in with a J / Q and Slatts took time to deliberate only for him to turn over pocket Aces and win first prize!!

On Saturday John G and I played on a table of 7 players. Schmukie, the Austrian player, managed to win some good hands early on, as did Chiva. The best hand I got was pocket Jacks and raised, Schmukie re-raised, Chiva played and I went all in as by this time I was pot committed. The flop contained an Ace and Schmukie and Chiva continued to play until Chiva only had a few chips left. I was already resigned to the fact that one of them must have an Ace and I was going out. As it happened, neither of them did, but for once Schmukie had a good hand – pocket Kings and he won a large number of chips. John was having no decent cards at all but managed to stay in until the last 4. At this point he was short-stacked and 2 of the players he was up against had 25,000 chips +. He didn't let this prevent him from playing some excellent poker and he went on to win first prize of 2,090 euros.

On Sunday, after the prize giving, Chiva organised more poker. Ten people sat down to play including the two BG finalists, Kaneko and Krainer. The Brits triumphed again and all three of us got to the final four with Kaneko (who incidentally had that day bought all of the T H Poker books Chiva was selling!). I was the one that went out 4th, John was 3rd (890 euros) which left Kaneko and Slatts to battle it out for first prize. They were evenly matched in chips at this point so it was going to be a case of who could bluff who first, or who could really get some good cards. There was only about four hands played when the blinds had reached 2000/4000 with an ante of 1000. A flop came down showing Q/5/5. The both checked, the turn was an 8, Slatts checked and Kaneko went all in. Slatts looked at him quizzically and said "are you trying to bluff me?" Kaneko smiled but gave nothing away. Slatts went all in and it was show down time. Kaneko grinned as he re-



Poker Medallists
A Rosey between two thorns!

vealed 7/3! Slatts grinned even wider when he showed his Q/5 giving him a Full House. Kaneko went home a rich man adding 1300 euros to his backgammon winnings. Slatts won 2180 euros and yet another trophy.

Despite the controversy I must say I love the Salzburg tournament. It was a great shame there were not more players. The Casino is a nice venue and the Hotel Kamml charming. I will be back next year.

Rules is Rules! Or are they?

There are two rulings by TDs in this issue - and each of them resulting in a player leaving the tourney. Chiva and I have a difficult job juggling the needs of the many against the misdeeds of the few. We try our very best to protect every player and to apply the rules as fairly as we see fit - without fear or favour. It's a job that many players are not willing to take on for it alienates you from your peers, against whom judgments are made - judgments that can end friendships or cause rifts between friends. It's a lonely and frustrating job.

Do you have a 'beef' about any rules? Do we need to update the Biba Rules and make some changes, deletions or alterations? Send in your thoughts for the next issue (to arrive before July 1st) and let us all know them.

Manchester One-Day Report by Rodney Lighton

Manchester's one day event goes from strength to strength. This year there were 54 participants up from 42 last year and 36 the year before. There were contingents from Bristol, Birmingham, Preston, Liverpool and Yorkshire as well as a few players from London and Scotland with a good turnout from the Manchester club members. The format was 5 rounds of 5 point matches with the top 16 going into the main final and the rest into a consolation final.

The ante post favourite John Slattery seemed to be cruising to qualification winning his first three matches. Then Villi Flari beat him in the fourth round and he lost to Peter Snape in the fifth round. Villi Flari and Mark Dixon led the qualifiers with 5 wins. This was only Villi's second tournament, she has obviously been practicing hard since her debut at BIBA in November. So John on three wins was in the hat for a draw with 7 players from 19 on three wins going through. John is rarely out of a hat, but on this occasion he managed it and went on to win the main final beating Nigel Merri-gan comfortably in the last match.

The consolation went to Liverpool's Adrian Jones who beat Matthew Fisher in a closely fought final.

Simon Jones of Liverpool took advantage of the buy backs in the last chance and at his second attempt got to the final beating London's Mike Main.

Manchester's only success came in the one-pointer where Peter Snape (also a Preston club member) beat Manchester's Nigel Shackleton.

Everyone went home having enjoyed the backgammon, buffet lunch and tea and



July 2005

Venice

July 7th to 10th

17th City of Venice

Returns to the Casino di Venice - Center of Venice on the Grand Canal

Contact Studiogiocchi info@studiogiocchi.com

Tel 39 041 521 1029 or Dario De Toffoli 39 329 051 3415

The Big Tournament Just Before MONTE CARLO for the Last 17 Years

Monte Carlo

July 11th to 17th

30th World Championships

Hotel Fairmont (formerly Grand Hotel) sales@montecarlograndhotel.com

Tel. 377 92 16 21 33 - Fax 377 92 16 69 27

or Contact European Backgammon News - backgammon@wanadoo.es

Cannes

July 20th to 24th

Riviera's Challenge 3

Partouche Palm Beach Casino - Cannes France

Contact: Eric Guedj tel. 33 6 6246 7001 - **email eric.guedj@hpc.fr**

Information and Reservations... FFBG tel. 331 4251 8080

Directly after MONTE CARLO.....Don't Miss the Big 3 !

general conviviality. Next year we hope to reach the maximum 64 entrants, so get your entry in early. (Provisionally booked for Sunday April 23rd 2006).

Thanks to Alice Lighton for scoring and administration, Lorraine Lighton for the buffet tea, Peter Chan for providing the score sheets, Adam Tansley and Irving Czechowicz for their assistance and Craig Fisher of the Manchester Bridge club for his hard work during the day.

Main Final (16/54)

- 1st John Slattery
- 2nd Nigel Merrigan
- 3/4 Peter Snape, Ralph Eskinazi
- 5/8 Adam Stocks, Roland Herrera, Adam Tansley, Uldis Lapikens

Consolation (37)

- 1st Adrian Jones
- 2nd Matthew Fisher
- 3/4 Adam Tranmer, Simonetta Barone
- 5/8 Dave Smith, Tim Brown, Peter Chan, Ian Vaughan

Last Chance (62)

- 1st Simon Jones
- 2nd Mike Main
- 3/4 Martin Hemming, Tony Fawcett
- 5/8 Peter Chan, David Wallbank, Jason Champion, Ann Olbison

One pointer (64)

- 1st Peter Snape
- 2nd Nigel Shackleton
- 3/4 Connor Dickinson, Richard Johnson
- 5/8 Ann Olbison, Mark Dixon, Villi Flari, Adam Stocks

Intermediate prize winners

Villi Flari, Lee Gorton, Ian Turner



Above, Peter and Nigel
Below, Mike and Simon



Slats - No 1

Adrian & Matthew



John Slattery	9.29
Adrian Jones	9.29
Nigel Merrigan	6.19
Matthew Fisher	6.19
Simon K Jones	6.19
Simonetta Barone	6.19
Ralph Eskinazi	4.13
Peter Chan	4.13
Peter Snape	4.13
Mike Main	4.13
Tony Fawcett	4.13
Martin Hemming	4.13
Tim Brown	4.13
David Wallbank	2.58
Dave Motley	2.58
Ron Havenhand	2.58
Jason Champion	2.58
Uldis Lapikens	2.06
Connor Dickinson	2.06
Colin Laight	2.06
Kevin Stebbing	2.06
David Fall	2.06
Adam Stocks	2.06
Roland Herrera	2.06
Andrew McKechnie	2.06
Villi Flari	2.06
Fanika Petkovska	2.06
Mark Dixon	1.55

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 right*) 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 - Monday.

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

Bristol - Ian Tarr 0117-9756349 brisgammon@blueyonder.co.uk 2nd Thursday of the month.

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

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

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

Huddersfield - Rachel Rhodes - 07961 355433 - dicewitch@yahoo.co.uk - Tuesdays

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

Liverpool - Simon K Jones - (0151 428 3082) - vineries@btinternet.com - Last Friday of each month

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

London - Ealing -Grahame / Geoff - 020 8 968 6327 - Ealingbackgammon@netscape.net - Every Sunday 3.00pm.

Manchester - Rodney Lighton - 0161 445 5644 lighton@btinternet.com - Tuesdays

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

Perth - Steve Wallace- info@perthgammon.org.uk 01738 587574 - Tuesdays, 7.30

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 - Richard Biddle - chelseamuffin@aol.com - Every Tuesday 19.45. - 01442 885246

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

- 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



Backgammon @ Mindsports Olympiad 2005



Ten days of backgammon - Hundreds of games
Dozens of medals - Plenty of action and fun
New 'stay-and-play' entry option

August 20th to August 29th inclusive.

Hilton Trophy, June 4/5: Usual knockout format offering Main, Progressive Consolation, Last Chance and Paris On Video - 3-point matches!

Keren Di Bona Memorial, July 2/3: Why not attend the Keren Di Bona as your warm-up for the World Championships in Monte Carlo next weekend? Usual knockout format offering Main, Progressive Consolation, Last Chance and Keren's KO - 3-point matches!

10th Liverpool Open, July 23/24: Once again, the Liverpool BG Club host this popular event. Main, Consolation, Last Chance, 1-Point Shootout, Saturday buffet, and more! Contact Simon K Jones 0151 428 3082, 07788 443123.



Backgammon @ Mindsports Olympiad 2005



This year the MSO are offering entrants a new, 'stay-and-play' option that covers entry fees and bed & breakfast! For more details please see online at www.msoworld.com/Olympiad/index.html or contact them on +44 1707 659080.

Beginner's Tournament Saturday August 20 Play starts 09:30 (1 hour per round)	Qualification: Generally but not exclusively, the criteria for a beginner is anyone who has not previously won or has been highly placed in a backgammon tournament. The Director reserves the right to refuse entries if he thinks the entrant does not qualify for this category. Format: One day Swiss Format of 5, 3 point matches without the doubling cube. Medals not given but 1st, 2nd & 3rd. will go through to join the Weekend Tournament on the Sunday, (subject to numbers the 4th placed player may also go into the Weekend Tournament).
Weekend Tournament Saturday & Sunday, August 20, 21 Play starts 09:30 (2.25 hours per round)	Qualification: Open to all players (including top players from Saturday Beginner's Tournament - see above). Format: Two day Swiss Format of 6, 11 point matches, three per day. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze.
1-point Wipeout Monday August 22 Play starts 09:30 (continuous play)	Qualification: Open to all players Format: One day Round Robin of 1 point matches without the cube. Entrant accruing the most points will be adjudged the winner, etc. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze
Biba 1-Day Challenge Tuesday August 23 Play starts 09:30 (1.25 hours per round)	Qualification: Open to all players Format: One day tournament of 5, 5 point matches. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze
Umist Cup Wednesday August 24 Play starts 09:30 (1.5 hours per round)	Qualification: Open to all players Format: One day Swiss Format of 5, 7 point matches. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze
Olympiad Championship Thursday & Friday August 25, 26 Play starts 09:30 (2.25 hours per round)	Qualification: Open to all players. Format: Two day Swiss Format of 6, 11 point matches, three per day. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze.
English Open Play starts 09:30 Saturday & Sunday August 27, 28 (2.25 hours per round)	Qualification: Open to all players. Format: Two day Swiss Format of 6, 11 point matches, three per day. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze.
Manchester Blitz Monday August 29 Play starts 09:30 (45 minutes per round)	Qualification: Open to all players Format: One day Swiss Format of 6, 3 point matches. 1st 2nd & 3rd will win Gold, Silver, Bronze.
Amateur Olympiad Champion (based upon positions in above using the Pentamind formula)	The Amateur Olympiad Backgammon Champion will be the player with the best aggregate result over four Backgammon tournaments (excluding the Beginners tournament). Aggregate results will be based on the number of Pentamind points scored for each of a player's four best results. No extra fee. The winner will be awarded a special trophy.
IMPORTANT Entrants must be in the playing area no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of Round One to register with the Director for entry into the draw.	Tournament positions in all the above: In the event of a tie for position the sums of opponent's scores will determine final positions, followed by any head-to-head matches. The scores of players that fail to complete all rounds will be extrapolated to render a total score. E.G. Wins 2 out of 3, extrapolated to 4 out of 6. Byes: Random byes will be chosen from the lowest scoring players in each round. No player will have more than one bye. Rules: Full Biba rules will be used for all events.



2005 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.

**Registration Fees: Members only: £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)**

**FRIDAY
2130
Warm-up Knockout**

**SATURDAY
Registration 1030 / 1230
Play starts 1300 prompt**

**SUNDAY
Play resumes 1030
(penalty points apply 1035)**

Contact Central Reservations:

Paramount (ex-Hanover) +44 1455 251 000

and quote 'backgammon'

Accommodation costs 2005

Dinner, Bed & Breakfast, standard room, single occupancy

Saturday: £57 per person

Friday & Saturday: £104 per person

Dinner, Bed & Breakfast, standard room, double occupancy

Saturday: £47 per person

Friday & Saturday: £94 per person

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

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			Venue	Type
Jun 04-05	Hilton Trophy	GP	.	Daventry	Knockout
Jul 02-03	Keren Di Bona Memorial	GP	.	Daventry	Knockout
Jul 23-24	10 th Liverpool Open	GP	.	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 06-07	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Aug 20-29	9 th Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	.	Manchester	Swiss
Sep 03-04	Backpacker Trophy	GP	.	Hinckley	Knockout
Oct 08-09	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	.	Hinckley	Knockout
Oct ??	13 th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 05-06	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Dec 03-04	Gilbertson UK Finals	.	.	Hinckley	Combination

County Cups Trophy

By Michael Crane

Main (12/42)

He never really looked like losing . . . that's John Slattery for you! He was his usual colourful self, and is perhaps the most watchable backgammon player in the country.

He slew all before him on his route to the 6th Round with 5/5: Tony Lee, Simon K Jones, Simonetta Barone, Stuart Mann and Peter Chan. His opponent was the top 4/5, David Nathan, he'd beaten Peter Christmas, Mardi Ohannessian, Jason Champion and Martin Hemming. He was stopped in his tracks by Dave Sanders in the 5th Round - but, David, being the only 4/4 was the one to take on Slats.

I have recorded the match but Bibafax deadlines won't allow me to analyse it at the moment. However, I can say that it was well watched and well played! It was played using clocks at John's request, and due to David's reputation for slow play, I allowed their use.

The score went to 9-8 in John's favour with David with just 7 minutes left before his flag fell and he incurred 2 penalty points (losing the match immediately). He cubed but it looked to be an impossible task to win a single game (two points, ungammoned) let alone the gammon for victory.

As it turned out, John actually won the match before David's time ran out, but it was close, and no doubt the time factor affected David's checkerplay and cube action.

So, John ends up the winner, and David, thanks to countbacks, came in second place.

Meanwhile, in the . . .

Consolation (30/42)

Darryl Kirk was having a tremendous tournament. He lost just his first Main match to Martin Hemming and thereafter he didn't lose another one. He went to 4/4 in the Consolation, as did Chris Ternel. In the 5-point playoff it was Chris that came out as the Consolation winner leaving Darryl to pick up the Runner-up trophy.

Three-out-of-Three (14)

Known as TooT this was a pool set up for players that were on zero wins starting in the 4th Round. The money was eventu-

ally shared between Tony Walters and Peter Christmas who were the only ones to get TooT!

Doubles (4)

Four! Well, that's a big improvement on last time! The *Anchors* were scuttled, and *Double Bass* were unstrung in the 1st Round leaving *Sausage Fingers* to battle it out against *Prickly Pair*.

From that encounter the *Sausages* were well and truly battered and the *Pair* took home the bacon! The *Sausages* however did win the best name.

Poker (11)

Most of these poker events are dominated by the Gilbertson family: Paul, John and Rosey (Bensley). This was no exception. They accounted for three of the top four players left in - the 'odd man out' was Tony Lee.

When I last looked in Rosey was chip leader by a pile (as the piccy shows) and Tony only had a little one - if you get what I mean!

However, undeterred by the siblings Tony managed to force a 1st place split with Rosey, with brother John coming in 3rd, and in 4th, just missing out on the pot, brother Paul.

Well done, Tony. That'll show 'em! And thank you, Martin (Hemming) for organising the ever popular poker events.

Finally

This weekend there was supposed to have been a double birthday celebration between John Gilbertson and Myke Wignall, but unfortunately Myke had a contract to fulfil and couldn't make it. Which was a shame for I had slaved for days over making them a backgammon birthday cake! Mind you, Myke didn't miss out for John took it home uncut (much to the dismay of yours truly and several others) for Myke to sample later.



David & John



Chris & Darryl



Rosey and chips



The birthday cake

Tournament Results

At-A-Glance™ British Open. April 2/3 2005

Main (73)

1 Rachel Rhodes
2 Julian Minwalla
3/4 Peter Christmas
3/4 Brian Lever
5/8 Sean Casey
5/8 Peter Bennet
5/8 Jason Champion
5/8 John Slattery

Consolation (69)

1 Nigel Merrigan
2 Tony Walters
3/4 Stephen Drake
3/4 Sean Casey
5/8 Adrian Jones
5/8 Peter Bennet
5/8 Jason Champion
5/8 John Slattery

Last Chance (64)

1 Adrian Jones
2 Leslie Singleton
3/4 Nicky Check
3/4 Matthew Fisher

5/8 Kevin White
5/8 Ron Havenhand
5/8 Brendan Burgess
5/8 Jo Curl

Castaway (64)

1 Steve Hallett
2 Kevin White
3/4 Vicky Chandler
3/4 Uldis Lapikens
5/8 Martin Hemming
5/8 Juanita Ferrer
5/8 Marc LeClerc
5/8 Ian Tarr

Friday Warm-up (24)

1 Marc LeClerc
2 Jason Champion
3/4 Tony Walters
3/4 Emmanuel Di Bona
5/8 John Gilbertson
5/8 Peter Christmas
5/8 Peter Bennet
5/8 Nicky Check

Poker (18)

1 John Gilbertson
2 Mark Dixon
3/4 Nigel Merrigan

£100 Jackpot (8)

1 Lawrence Powell
2 John Slattery

£50 Jackpot (8)

1 Steve Hallett
2 Steve Pickard

£100 Jackpot (8)

1 Sean Casey
2 Marc LeClerc

Grand Prix at British Open

32.00 Rachel Rhodes
24.77 Stephen Drake
18.58 Julian Minwalla
18.58 Tony Walters
18.58 Adrian Jones
13.42 Brian Lever
13.42 Nigel Merrigan
13.42 Peter Christmas
9.29 Steve Hallett
9.29 Tim Mooring
9.29 John Slattery
9.29 Peter Bennet
9.29 Sean Casey
9.29 Leslie Singleton
9.29 David Markwick
9.29 Jason Champion
6.19 Ian Tarr
6.19 Roy Hollands
6.19 Dave McNair
6.19 Simon K Jones
6.19 Nicky Check
6.19 Connor Dickinson
6.19 Stuart Mann

6.19 Kevin White
6.19 Michael Damianou
6.19 Paul Gilbertson
6.19 Chris Ternel
6.19 Wayne Felton
6.19 Ken Gibson
4.13 Brendan Burgess
4.13 Mike Grabsky
4.13 Uldis Lapikens
4.13 Matthew Fisher
4.13 Paul Christmas
4.13 Tony Lee
4.13 Emmanuel Di Bona
4.13 Steve Pickard
4.13 Mike Greenleaf
4.13 Dave Motley
4.13 David Nathan
4.13 Mark Dixon
4.13 Stavros Elia
4.13 Eddie Barker
4.13 Vicky Chandler
4.13 Ron Havenhand
4.13 Jo Curl

4.13 Malcolm Wilson
4.13 Mick Vacarey
4.13 John Gilbertson
2.58 Paul Barwick
2.58 Jeff Barber
2.58 Martin Barkwill
2.58 Alan Greenwood
2.58 Lawrence Powell
2.58 Julian Fetterlein
2.58 Mardi Ohannessian
2.58 Bryony Jessiman
2.58 Martin Hemming
2.58 Stanley James
2.58 Fanika Petkovska
2.58 Juanita Ferrer
2.58 Marc LeClerc
2.06 Jeff Ellis
2.06 Dod Davies
2.06 Rosey Bensley
2.06 Paul Fox
2.06 Catherine Oldfield
2.06 Stepehn Ferrer
2.06 Roy Whitehorne

Colour Bibafax . . . It's very colourful, you know!



County Cups trophy, May 7/8 2005

Main (12/42)

Pos	Name	Wins	GP
1	John Slattery	6	24.77
2	David Nathan	5	18.58
3	Richard Granville	5	13.42
4	Peter Bennet	5	13.42
5	Peter Chan	4	9.29
6	Jason Champion	4	9.29
7	David Sanders	4	9.29
8	Stuart Mann	3	6.19
9	Martin Hemming	3	6.19
10	John Gilbertson	3	6.19
11	Rosey Bensley	2	4.13
12	Simonetta Barone	2	4.13

Consolation (30/42)

Pos	Name	Wins	Main wins	GP
1	Chris Ternel	4	4	9.29
2	Darryl Kirk	4	5	13.42
3	Adrian Jones	3	3	6.19
4	Tony Lee	3	4	9.29
5	Ian Tarr	3	3	6.19
6	Tony Walters	3	3	6.19
7	Grahame Powell	3	3	6.19
8	Jeff Barber	3	4	9.29
9	Peter Christmas	3	4	9.29
10	Paul Christmas	2	3	6.19
11	Mick Butterfield	2	3	6.19
12	Bob Young	2	3	6.19
13	Stephen Drake	2	3	6.19
14	Rodney Lighton	2	3	6.19
15	Simon K Jones	2	3	6.19
16	Uldis Lapikens	1	2	4.13
17	Stephen Cole	1	1	2.58
18	Lionel Mann	1	2	4.13
19	Mick Vacarey	1	2	4.13
20	Roland Herrera	1	1	2.58
21	Kevin White	1	2	4.13
22	Jeff Ellis	1	2	4.13
22	Paul Barwick	1	2	4.13
22	Julian Minwalla	1	2	4.13
22	Alison Lee	1	1	2.58
26	Mardi Ohannessian	1	2	4.13
27	Malcolm Wilson	1	1	2.58
28	Paul Gilbertson	0	0	0
29	Ron Havenhand	0	1	2.58
30	Dave Motley	0	0	0

Friday Warm-up (12)

1	Paul Christmas
2	David Sanders
3/4	Tony Walters
3/4	Tim Mooring

Doubles (4)

1	Prickly Pair
2	Sausage Fingers

Top name: Sausage Fingers

£100 Jackpot (6)

1	John Slattery / Peter Bennet
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Poker (13)

1	Tony Lee / Rosey Bensley
3	John Gilbertson

Grand Prix after County Cups

68.12	John Slattery	23.74	Nigel Merrigan	13.42	Darryl Kirk
57.80	Adrian Jones	23.74	Paul Gilbertson	13.42	Stephen Cole
45.93	Chris Ternel	23.22	John Gilbertson	12.90	Paul Christmas
45.42	Peter Christmas	22.71	Julian Minwalla	12.38	Bob Young
45.42	David Nathan	22.70	Roy Hollands	12.38	Connor Dickinson
42.83	Julian Fetterlein	20.12	Roland Herrera	12.38	Malcolm Robertson
40.25	Stephen Drake	19.61	Vicky Chandler	12.38	Stuart Mann
38.71	Jason Champion	19.09	Mick Vacarey	12.38	Rodney Lighton
38.19	Rachel Rhodes	18.58	Brian Busfield	12.38	Mick Butterfield
35.09	Peter Bennet	18.58	Kevin White	11.87	Alan Greenwood
34.58	Jeff Barber	18.58	Blaine Buchanan	11.87	Lawrence Powell
34.06	Uldis Lapikens	18.58	Neil Young	11.34	Fanika Petkovska
33.03	Mardi Ohannessian	17.55	Danny Cohen	10.32	Dave McNair
31.99	Simon K Jones	17.54	Martin Hemming	10.32	Ralph Eskinazi
31.48	Nicky Check	17.03	Paul Barwick	10.32	Matthew Fisher
30.97	Tim Mooring	17.03	Simonetta Barone	9.29	David Edwards
29.93	Tony Walters	15.48	John Hurst	9.29	Paul Lamford
28.90	Mike Grabsky	15.48	David Fall	9.29	Steve Hallet
28.90	Mike Main	15.48	Wayne Felton	9.29	Andreas Giannopoulos
26.84	Tony Lee	15.48	David Markwick	9.29	Sean Casey
26.32	Rosey Bensley	14.97	Myke Wignall	9.29	Steve John
25.81	Mike Greenleaf	13.42	John Broomfield	9.29	Leslie Singleton
25.80	Ian Tarr	13.42	Chris Bray	9.29	David Sanders
25.29	Ron Havenhand	13.42	Richard Granville	9.29	Rogier Van Gemert
24.25	Peter Chan	13.42	Andrew Sarjeant	8.77	Martin Barkwill
23.74	Brian Lever	13.42	Geoff Conn	8.26	Tim Brown



8.25	Stepehn Ferrer	4.13	Miles Ilott	2.58	Colin Talbot
7.74	Mark Dixon	4.13	Brendan Burgess	2.58	Alison Lee
6.71	Emmanuel Di Bona	4.13	Arthur Musgrove	2.58	Liz Barker
6.71	Dave Motley	4.13	Steve Pickard	2.58	Bob Bruce
6.71	Edwin Turner	4.13	Peter Snape	2.58	Stanley James
6.71	Jo Curl	4.13	Stavros Elia	2.58	David Horner
6.71	Malcolm Wilson	4.13	Stefanie Rohan	2.58	Vince Poil
6.19	Jeff Ellis	4.13	Rebecca Bell	2.58	Kerry Wells
6.19	Dale Taylor	4.13	Tony Fawcett	2.58	Ray Fard
6.19	Grahame Powell	4.13	David Barker	2.58	Marc LeClerc
6.19	John Thomas	4.13	Eddie Barker	2.06	Colin Laight
6.19	Richard Biddle	4.13	Jane Oxley	2.06	Philip Jones
6.19	Dod Davies	4.13	Vicky Gilbert	2.06	Cedric Lytton
6.19	Raj Jansari	4.13	Ian Gwynne	2.06	Karl Simpson
6.19	Kevin Stebbing	4.13	Andy Bell	2.06	Adam Stocks
6.19	Michael Damianou	4.13	Chris F Roberts	2.06	Ann Pocknell
6.19	Ken Gibson	4.13	Sean Williams	2.06	Andrew McKechnie
6.19	Zoe Cunningham	4.13	Howard Furr-Barton	2.06	Paul Fox
6.19	Paul Statter	4.13	Suzy Crabb	2.06	Catherine Oldfield
6.19	Kazu Niki	4.13	Mourad Wahba	2.06	Villi Flari
6.19	Rene Van Der Pluijm	4.13	Gino	2.06	Paul Van Dijke
6.19	Mike Ziemann	2.58	David Wallbank	2.06	Diane Iveson
5.16	Juanita Ferrer	2.58	Jon Sharpe	2.06	Roy Whitehorne
4.13	Paul Money	2.58	Bryony Jessiman	1.55	Michael Crane
4.13	Lionel Mann	2.58	Paul Sambell		

Active Rankings after County Cups

1943	1943	Julian Fetterlein	1651	1651	Mike Greenleaf	1490	1490	Neil Young
1930	1930	Brian Lever	1640	1649	Bob Young	1483	1483	Richard Biddle
1926	1928	Tony Lee	1619	1648	Uldis Lapikens	1492	1482	Tony Walters
1912	1912	Rachel Rhodes	1581	1646	Ron Havenhand	1481	1481	Ernie Pick
1987	1893	John Slattery	1613	1644	Jeff Ellis	1479	1479	David Markwick
1884	1841	David Nathan	1683	1641	Peter Bennet	1476	1476	Wayne Felton
1821	1839	Stuart Mann	1638	1637	Mick Butterfield	1515	1475	Peter Chan
1802	1802	Dave McNair	1633	1633	Ian Gwynne	1447	1474	Kevin White
1801	1801	David Startin	1624	1624	Barry McAdam	1473	1473	Johan Sallfors
1799	1799	Dod Davies	1654	1624	Chris Ternel	1467	1472	Simonetta Barone
1798	1798	Lawrence Powell	1619	1619	Steve Rimmer	1471	1471	Rebecca Bell
1836	1782	Richard Granville	1613	1615	Rodney Lighton	1447	1469	Rosey Bensley
1779	1779	Steve Hallet	1636	1604	Jason Champion	1461	1461	Myke Wignall
1784	1768	Peter Christmas	1600	1600	Kerry Jackson	1460	1460	Anthony Coker
1746	1764	Mardi Ohannessian	1600	1600	Ken Gibson	1527	1459	Darryl Kirk
1759	1759	Emmanuel Di Bona	1599	1599	Edwin Turner	1457	1457	Jane Oxley
1756	1756	Steve Pickard	1601	1595	Paul Christmas	1451	1451	Mike Main
1748	1748	Danny Cohen	1587	1587	Geoff Conn	1444	1451	Malcolm Wilson
1746	1746	Raj Jansari	1587	1587	Paul Statter	1439	1439	Steve John
1735	1735	Mike Grabsky	1612	1584	Jeff Barber	1423	1423	Alan Greenwood
1734	1734	John Hurst	1583	1583	John Wright	1423	1423	Leslie Singleton
1733	1733	Roy Hollands	1549	1579	Paul Gilbertson	1468	1423	David Sanders
1727	1727	Kazu Niki	1562	1577	Paul Barwick	1415	1415	Andy Bell
1726	1726	Kevin Stebbing	1576	1576	Ian Shaw	1409	1409	Hubert De L'Epine
1718	1725	Stephen Drake	1568	1571	Grahame Powell	1407	1407	Bob Bruce
1722	1722	Brendan Burgess	1562	1563	John Gilbertson	1396	1396	Colin Laight
1721	1721	Arthur Musgrove	1557	1557	Vicky Chandler	1395	1395	Catherine Oldfield
1708	1708	Dave Coyne	1481	1542	Roland Herrera	1394	1394	Jo Curl
1707	1707	Nicky Check	1537	1537	Eddie Barker	1382	1382	Chris Evans
1690	1703	Simon K Jones	1535	1535	Stavros Elia	1381	1381	Tim Brown
1698	1698	John Thomas	1528	1528	Kevin Berry	1374	1374	Paul Fox
1705	1695	Tim Mooring	1538	1527	Martin Hemming	1373	1373	Fanika Petkovska
1690	1690	Dale Taylor	1517	1517	Matthew Fisher	1367	1367	Cedric Lytton
1680	1680	Ann Pocknell	1517	1517	David McNamara	1358	1360	Mick Vacarey
1667	1673	Adrian Jones	1489	1514	Julian Minwalla	1333	1357	Stephen Cole
1661	1664	Ian Tarr	1514	1514	David Horner	1344	1344	Tony Fawcett
1663	1663	Brian Busfield	1463	1511	Dave Motley	1248	1337	Alison Lee
1662	1662	Connor Dickinson	1492	1492	Cliff Connick	1322	1322	Jon Sharpe

Pending Rankings after County Cups

1964	John Clark	1549	Phil Caudwell	1450	John Renicks
1823	Jim Johnson	1546	Dave Raynsford	1450	Jonathan Lamb
1791	Ray Tannen	1533	Mark McCluskey	1447	Steve Lynch
1749	Ralph Eskinazi	1532	Alan Beckerson	1435	Grant Dewsbury
1737	Simon Barget	1532	David Barker	1429	Elliot Smart
1713	Sean Casey	1527	Theo	1428	George Plant
1708	David Gallagher	1520	Paul Guy	1428	Peter Murrell
1702	Tim Wilkins	1520	Kyriacous Kyriacou	1425	Will Richardson
1700	Harry Bhatia	1519	David Hale	1425	Ian Sadler
1680	Nigel Merrigan	1517	Andrew Darby	1425	Rowland Brindley
1680	Graham Brittain	1514	Steven Reddi	1420	Kevin Carter
1666	Richard Beagarie	1513	Pat Holly	1417	Sarah Rosich
1644	Helen Helm-Sagar	1510	Ian Hill	1414	Jeremy Limb
1641	Paul Turnbull	1509	Melvyn Abrahams	1412	Paul Jenkins
1634	Bill Pope	1507	Andrew Sarjeant	1405	Kevin Nicholson
1629	Charlie Hetherington	1502	Miles Ilott	1404	Evan Williams
1629	Mark Heidenfeld	1500	Felix Vink	1400	Nick Hamar
1627	Vincent Versteeg	1500	John Napier	1398	David Naylor
1625	Dave Robbins	1495	Tom Duggan	1388	Paul Watts
1623	Steffen Nowak	1495	Gabor Weiner	1381	Rebecca Brindley
1614	Peter Fallows	1493	David Fall	1376	Tony Pryor
1613	Mike Heard	1485	Kevin Williams	1375	Malcolm Hey
1613	Mike Waxman	1484	Spencer Close	1368	Peter Wilson
1610	Rod Jones	1483	Sunni Nicholson	1363	Liz Barker
1608	Corinne Sellers	1477	Stuart Parmley	1357	Simon Fahoury
1603	Bill Spiers	1474	Brendan Bensley	1355	Colin Harrocks
1602	James Hatt	1473	Niclas Wigstrom	1354	Richard Winston
1595	Francine Brandler	1472	Brendan Gasparro	1351	Liz Makepeace
1593	Nigel Briddon	1472	Blaine Buchanan	1342	Amy Woodward
1586	Neil Webb	1468	Suart Dewis	1336	Don Hatt
1580	Karl Simpson	1467	Lorenzo Rusconi	1326	Martin Blindell
1575	Alistair Hogg	1467	Arthur Williams	1319	Sue Perks
1575	Raymond Kershaw	1465	Dzhiga Ulyumdzheva	1295	Cath Kennedy
1574	Simon Gasquoine	1462	Neil Davidson	1291	John P Lewis
1568	Ricardo Falconi-Puig	1459	Roz Nathan	1277	Bob Parmley
1566	Mark Lemon	1458	Vianney Bourgios	1252	Bryony Jessiman
1557	Jacek Brzezinski	1456	Monica Beckerson	1197	Paul Sambell
1550	Amir Mossanen	1450	David Winston		

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- Bar : 25mm

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- Width : 75mm
- Depth : 50mm

Checkers:

- Diameter : 44mm
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