

Magazine of the British Isles Backgammon Association

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Dedicated To Backgammon

Mind
The Fours!

David Nathan and John Slattery
get to grips with fours during
their Hilton Trophy encounter.

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Read how Paul
Magriel plays
The Girls in this
article based
upon his 1981
match against
Nick Maffeo in
Las Vegas.
Page 2

The Girls - A Bunch of Fives

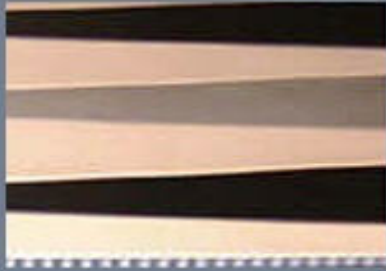


Snowie and JellyFish
battle it out to see
Who's The Daddy in this
battle of the bots in this
3-point match
Page 11



Battle of the Bots





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The Girls - A Bunch of Fives

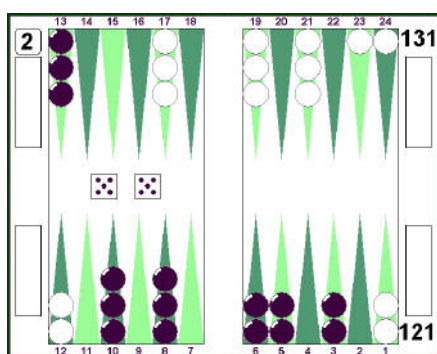
By Michael Crane

Paul Magriel's 'Backgammon' defines "The Girls" as "The roll of double 5s on the dice." This fact prompted me to take a look at my database of matches and see if I could use one of Paul's where 'The Girls' featured more than a couple of times. Happily I found one played in 1981 against Nick Maffeo in Las Vegas. The match is to 15 points. Choose from the four candidate rolls which you think is the correct move and then check your answer at the end of the positions - where I shall reveal who played as what colour.



Picture courtesy of Bill Davis
www.chicagopoint.com/girls.html

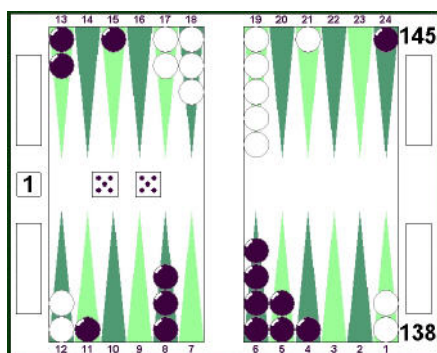
Position 01



Black 0 White 0

- 13/8(2) 8/3 6/1
- 13/8 8/3(2) 6/1
- 8/3(3) 6/1
- 13/3(2)

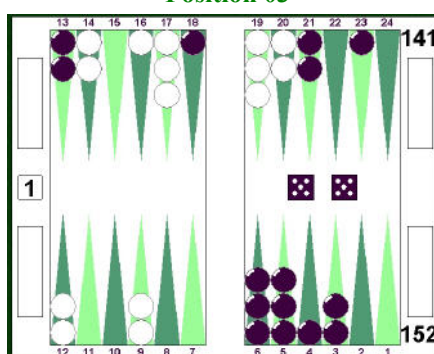
Position 02



Black 1 White 8

- 13/8(2) 6/1*(2)
- 8/3(2) 6/1*(2)
- 7/2(2) 6/1*(2)
- 13/3(2)

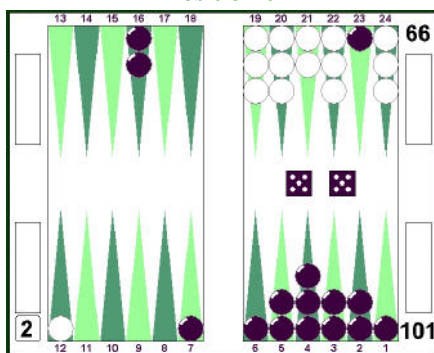
Position 03



Black 6 White 8

- 23/18 21/16*(2) 16/11
- 23/18 21/16*(2) 13/8
- 23/18 21/16* 13/8(2)
- 21/16*(2) 18/8

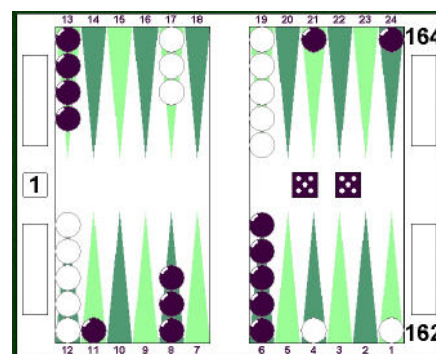
Position 04



Black 6 White 8

- 23/18 16/11(2) 11/6
- 23/8 7/2
- 23/8 6/1
- 23/3

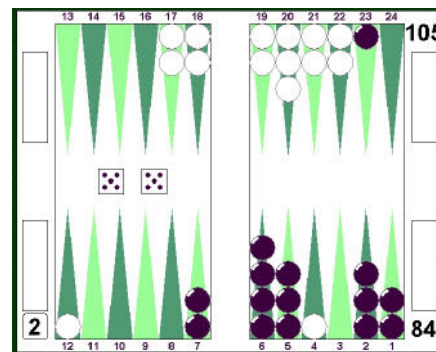
Position 05



Black 6 White 11

- 21/16 11/6 6/1*(2)
- 21/16 13/8 6/1*(2)
- 8/3(2) 6/1*(2)
- 21/11 6/1*(2)

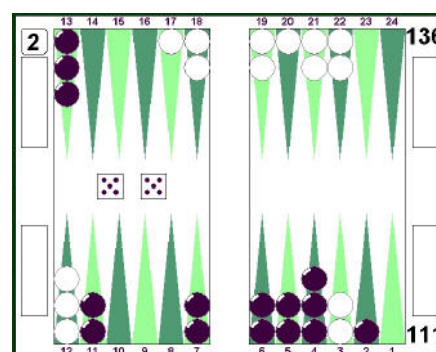
Position 06



Black 6 White 11

- 21/11 7/2*(2)
- 21/16 13/8
- 21/11 13/3
- 21/1

Position 07



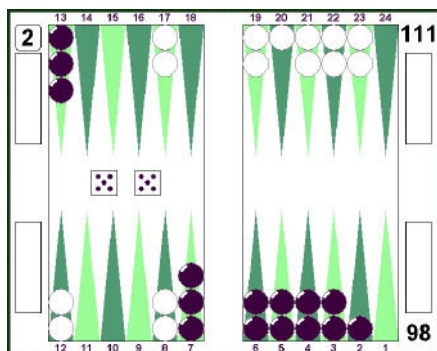
Black 6 White 13

- 22/17(2) 13/8 7/2
- 22/17(2) 8/3 7/2
- 22/17(2) 7/2(2)
- 22/17(2) 13/3

The full match is on the
 CD-ROM version of Bibafax



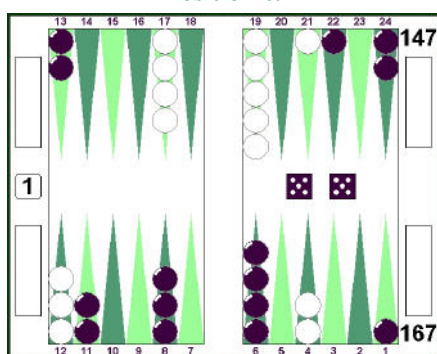
Position 08



Black 6 White 13

- 13/8(2) 8/3 6/1
- 13/8(2) 6/1(2)
- 8/3(2) 6/1(2)
- 13/3(2)

Position 09



Black 8 White 13

- 13/8 8/3(2) 6/1
- 11/1 8/3(2)
- 8/3(2) 6/1
- 13/3(2)

Position 01 ('A' denotes actual move)

Twenty pips in the race is (nearly) always good - but this isn't a race. White will lead by 30 pips after this move, but because he can't move his runners it's not such a good roll for him.

8/3(3) 6/1 A -0.600

This is the only candidate move that doesn't advocate moving off the mid-point; and this might have been a major clue to the best move. If white moves off his mid-point two things happen: 1. Black gets full control over his outer board, 2. White's runners are left to fend for themselves with nowhere to land on their long journey home.

13/3(2) -0.632 -0.032

With two open points in white's home board black can safely leave a builder or two in his outer board. Because it'll take a combination shot to hit him he'll have plenty of return shots off the bar at the

two white blots. However, the distribution of the spare checkers does give white good chances to cover his blots or make his 5-point.

13/8 8/3(2) 6/1 -0.663 -0.063

Although this leaves only one blot in white's home board with 6s and 2s for cover, the downside is the blot on the mid-point. Eleven rolls for black can hit it back and white is in danger of crunching his board due to poor timing.

13/8(2) 8/3 6/1 -0.666 -0.066

Stacking on the 8-point is very poor and offers white little flexibility.

Position 02

This is very similar to Position 01, inasmuch as moving off the mid-point leaves the runners out on a limb. Clearly two correct 5s are 6/1* hitting, it's just what to do with the other two.

7/2(2) 6/1*(2) -0.058

If black rolls a four he's going to hit the blot on white's 4-point, but he also needs a four (or a 2) to cover his own blot on his own 4-point; so some duplication there. The benefit this move has over the next one is that white increases his building rolls from 21 to 28; and that might make all the difference.

8/3(2) 6/1*(2) A -0.121 -0.063

What would you rather have, 21 rolls or 28? Choosing this move loses 0.063 in equity as compared to the best move above.

13/8(2) 6/1*(2) -0.547 -0.489

This is soooo wrong. Playing two checkers onto an already established point is a waste.

13/3(2) -0.818 -0.759

Not hitting is a sin. This is the move that black would have picked for you.

Position 03

A good roll for black, the only drawback being the blot on his 4-point. White is well spaced to make progress for black difficult so this double is very welcome.

23/18 21/16* 13/8(2) 0.336

Well, with each candidate roll extolling hitting on the 16-point, at least 25% of the move is out of the way. So what makes this the best move? It doesn't even point!

With just 0.013 between the 1st and 3rd moves none of the top three is 'right' or 'wrong' it's too close in equities. However, of all the moves this one does at least

make the 8-point and it gives cover for the 4-point blot and is aiming at the 2-point as well.

23/18 21/16*(2) 16/11 0.329 -0.007

Very close in equity to the one above. I'm not so keen on this for it leaves one less cover for the 4-point blot; and it evacuates white's home board thus making it impossible to anchor if hit - a slight benefit to the above move.

21/16*(2) 18/8 0.323 -0.013

Still not a big loss in equity. In fact this is my move. I like the cover the 18/8 gives and really the only roll to fear from white is double four. The only thing that I don't like is that it might end up with black holding a too deep anchor - but only might!

23/18 21/16*(2) 13/8 A 0.300 -0.035

Snowie's least favourite move. It gives white 4s and 1s to hit back and it abandons the white home board leaving him free to build points without restriction.

Position 04

Currently 35 pips down in the race (15 after this move) black would have gladly swapped this double for a little roll of 41. White has just to get his last checker home and he's warm and dry. Black's got to look to the race and use this 55 as best he can and hope.

23/18 16/11(2) 11/6 -0.595

This move hopes that white will not roll a six or more than a six. This leaves just 9 rolls in favour of black or 25%. It also covers the important 6-point if he gets the hit and, if it comes to a race he needs 18 pips to get his three last checkers home.

23/3 A -0.646 -0.051

Not leaving a blot looks good, but it isn't the best move, just 2nd best. Fewer rolls give black a chance of a shot next roll: six as opposed to nine, but at least there's no danger of being hit. However, the odds are that white will leap over the block and then leave black 21 pips to get home. In the bearoff such a small difference as just three pips could make all the difference.

23/8 7/2 -0.660 -0.065

Not much in it compared to the one above, except that it requires one more pip to come home.

23/8 6/1 -0.664 -0.069

Cross-overs are what's needed, and moving 6/1 is a waste. Now black needs another pip to come home, but more importantly it'll require six cross-overs as



opposed to 4 with the 1st, and 5 with the 2nd and 3rd.

Position 05

Following rolls of 32 and 21 white gets an early double five. The favourite move here has to be making two points, 8/3(2) 6/1*(2). But, is it correct? It usually is.

21/11 6/1*(2) A 0.448

If black was going for a blitz he'd play the double-pointer (2nd best) but with just one white checker airborne it's wiser to concentrate in making white's escape from black's side of the board difficult. Black's lone runner will ensure that white can't play loose into his home board.

8/3(2) 6/1*(2) 0.132 -0.016

Not a big loss of equity but, if white re-enters on the 4- or 5-points then the extra two checkers now on the 3-point are behind him and not as effective. The equity loss is smallish but game winning chances have slipped from 60.1% to 56%.

21/16 11/6 6/1*(2) 0.332 -0.116

21/16 13/8 6/1*(2) 0.332 -0.116

These last two candidates are no-hopers and I hope that no-one actually chose them as their play! All black has done is waste a decent double five. White is very happy with these moves.

Position 06

White is the proud owner of a nice six-prime straddling his bar-point and all he has to do is roll it forward and keep white from escaping too soon.

21/16 13/8 A 0.924

Perfect. Three spare checkers to nicely keep toying with black. It's so good that if he wanted too white could even hit loose.

21/11 13/3 0.868 -0.056

Not as flexible as above. The checker on the 11-point is too far out to do much.

21/1 0.851 -0.073

Playing a checker out of contention is

wrong. White needs them all bearing down on the last black checker.

21/11 7/2*(2) 0.803 -0.121

Black's not overly fussed about being on the bar; not now the prime has been broken. Of the four candidates this is black's favourite.

Position 07

Leading 2-away, 7-away and holding a 2-cube, all white needs to do now is keep it simple and go for the race. These 20 pips will put him just five pips behind after they've been played.

Just 0.006 in equity separates these four candidates and it really is impossible to get it wrong. I favour 22/17(2) 7/2(2) myself; it leaves a spare checker on the mid-point for big rolls and makes a tidy home board.

22/17(2) 13/8 7/2 A -0.278

22/17(2) 7/2(2) -0.282 -0.004

22/17(2) 13/3 -0.283 -0.005

22/17(2) 8/4 -0.284 -0.006

Position 08

Just two rolls after Position 07 and white has another double five to play; and black's checkers on the mid-point are now proving to be a bugger! Only one of the candidate moves advises leaving the checkers on the mid-point - but is this correct? Or is abandoning the last white checkers the answer?

13/8(2) 8/3 6/1 -0.093

There's a measly 0.002 in equity between this move and the 2nd best. The only benefit this one has - because white seems to have abandoned all hope of hitting black - is that it'll give white a little more time to roll the joker double to escape the back checkers.

13/3(2) A -0.095 -0.002

I prefer this even if I do have one less checker to spare with big numbers. At least I have a board in case I get a hit . . . I wish!

13/8(2) 6/1(2) -0.107 -0.014

I don't really mind this one either. More time to roll the joker?

8/3(2) 6/1(2) -0.160 -0.067

Not a good play. Just imagine if you rolled 61 or 51 next time!

Position 09

It's early in the game and this roll will level off the pip count to 147 each.

13/8 8/3(2) 6/1 0.225

Ones don't play too well for white (unless it's with another one or a 5 or a 3), so I am surprised at this play being 1st. I suppose white's home board might be a factor, and it does make a third home board point, but for me the 2nd best is the play.

13/3(2) A -0.272 -0.047

White is under pressure to cover his 4-point blot else get it sent onto the bar. The spare checker on my 8-point helps a bit with my timing and I can use a spare five (if I roll one) from my 6-point to make the 1-point.

8/3(2) 6/1 -0.295 -0.071

Although it's nice to keep a presence on the mid-point, playing three to the 3-point wastes a checker.

11/1 8/3(2) -0.322 -0.098

Leaving two blots on is a bad idea. Don't even consider doing this move!

So, how did you fair? In the positions above Paul was playing black and Nick, white. Nick won.

MC: The picture at the start of this article is available as a wallpaper download from the url at Chicago Point. It is also on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax.

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When I pushed the recent Slattery Scottish Open final match between Peter Christmas (left) and Jason Champion (right) into Snowie I was amazed at the size of some of the blunders; especially in a final. I therefore decided to take a closer look at them. Peter plays as white.

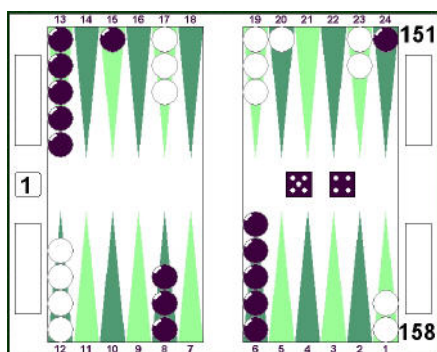


Let Them Eat Haggis! By Michael Crane

to come.

Quite obviously the hit, 24/20* is one move but this is where black and Snowie part company for black then plays off the mid-point 15/10. It is only Snowie's 2nd choice but it does lose -0.115. The preferred move is to continue 20/15 and make the 15-point.

Game 2, Position 3



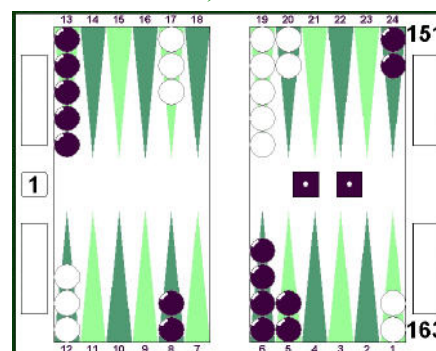
**Black 1 White 0
Black to play 54**

We'll start off with a relatively 'small' loss in equity, just to give you a taste of what's



24/23 splitting his runners and finally 6/5. I think it was the 24/23 that pushed this move into 6th place with a massive loss of -0.280

Game 4, Position 2



**Black 5 White 0
Black to play 11**

Splitting the back men is very wrong, it just gives white some good pointing rolls. The 'benefit' of making the bar-point is negated by these pointing rolls. Playing 6/4(2) is a good solid play, and, if and when black launches a runner out into the

The actual move, though looking to perhaps build another point really leaves too many return shots and doesn't really gain much.

01: 24/20* 20/15 0.362
02: 24/20* 15/10 0.247 -0.115

In the next position, (next column) for me the choices of move boiled down to bar-point or 4-point; and I chose the 4-point in the end preferring an home board point to the blocking play. Home board points are usually there until the bearoff whereas the bar-point has to be moved eventually. Snowie agreed; but black didn't he played a rather strange combination. of 8/7(2)

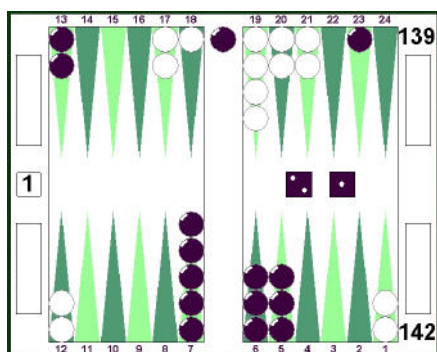


outer boards the third point will prove useful in keeping a white checker on the bar if it's ever hit.

01: 6/4(2) 0.131
 06: 24/23 8/7(2) 6/5 -0.150 -0.280

The irony is, white rolled 62 and played 13/5 and then black rolled 66; a move that would have made both bar-points and given him a tremendous advantage! Instead he moved 24/18 13/7(3). White's reply was double-one, 8/7* 6/5 5/4(2), and now, instead of that great advantage he could have had, black is now on the bar and in this position:

Game 4, Position 4



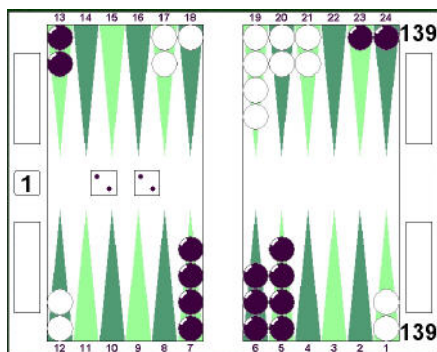
Black 5 White 0
Black to play 21

The actual play here of 25/24 7/5 had an equity loss even greater than that played above, this one is -0.391! It is this huge because of the 25/24. It might look as if it's threatening white but the reverse is true. White must have been delighted to have seen this play, which gives his 5% more winning chances including 1.7% more gammons!

01: 25/23 7/6 -0.307
 04: 25/24 7/5 -0.698 -0.391

He's quite content to replace the checker back onto the bar. But, on his roll . . .

Game 4, Position 4



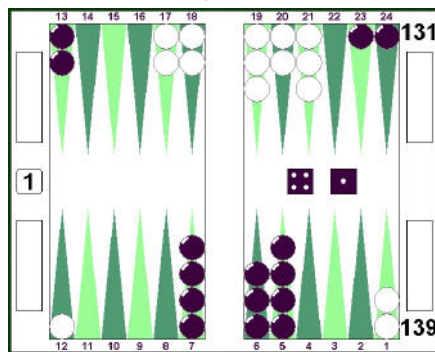
Black 5 White 0
White to play 22

. . . white falls foul and racks up an equity loss of -0.168 by neglecting to look at the entire board before making his play. The play 13/7 is correct but then playing 6/4 isn't! Although it reduces the number of excess checkers on the 6-point it would have been far better used moving a runner 24/22. Unless the white runners are able to exit black's home board the two checkers therein will be liabilities and now is the time to get 'em moving. Even moving both of them and ignoring the bar-point is better than not moving either of them.

01: 24/22 13/7 0.786
 05: 13/7 6/4 0.734 -0.168

The very next roll and subsequent move results in an equity give-away of -0.279 and the lowly position of 12th in Snowie's list!

Game 4, Position 5



Black 5 White 0
Black to play 41

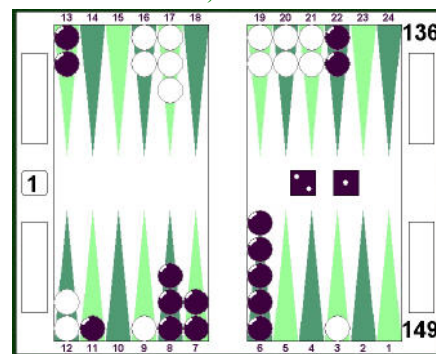
Black's loose play with the 1, 23/22 gives white fifteen good pointing rolls; and then he compounds it by moving off the mid-point 13/9!

Black should be anchoring now with 24/23 and then playing 7/4 in an attempt to get white on the bar and give him poor sixes to play. The fact that white is still on his 24-point means that most, if not all of his next move will be taken anywhere but by the runners. Black should be preparing for this.

01: 24/23 7/3 -0.732
 12: 23/22 13/9 -1.011 -0.279

As it turned out, white cubed to two and black dropped - which was the correct procedure for both players. This point for Peter, (white) was a turning point (pardon the pun!) for he won all the rest of the games to win the match 11-5, poor Jason failing to add to his five points after his 5-0 lead; but I'm getting a bit ahead at the moment. Back to the match.

Game 5, Position 6



Black 5 White 1
Black to play 21

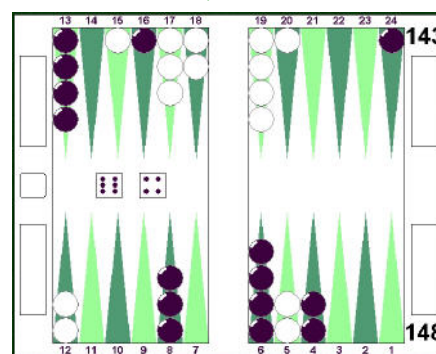
Hitting, 11/9* is OK, but unless the checker carries on, 'pick & pass', then white will have good sixes off the bar or 54 and black will lose 16 pips. The simple play of 11/9* 9/8 is better than the actual play of 11/9* 8/7; which, although in Snowie 2nd place, it does lose -0.118 in equity.

01: 11/9* 9/8 -0.701
 02: 11/9* 8/7 -0.819 -0.118

On his roll, and on the bar, white cubed to two and black took; and then white rolled 54 and hit off the bar!

That third checker back for black never got away from white's home board and was later joined by two more; these two greatly contributing to black's gammon loss. It would have been a backgammon if white had rolled any double, 16.66% likelihood!

Game 6, Position 5



Black 5 White 5
White to play 64

With the match now tied 5-5 Peter (white) starts to make his presence felt.

How often is it that you play Snowie 2nd and still lose -0.269 in equity? Not often, I'll warrant, but that's what white managed to do playing 13/7 13/9*. Blot world! Black can hardly miss. A much safer and better play would have been to

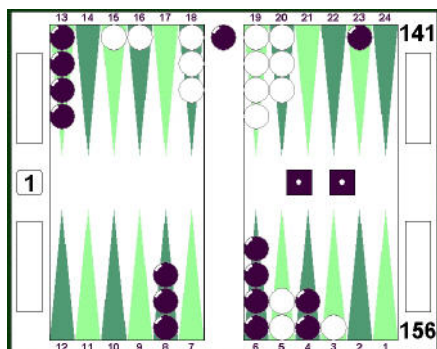


make the 4-point and ride out black rolling a four and hitting the 5-point blot.

01: 10/4 8/4 0.519
02: 13/7 13/9* 0.250 -0.269

Rolling 42 black re-entered and hit 25/23 24/20*; and white must now be regretting the other juicy blots in black's line of fire. He rolls 33 and attacks 25/22 8/5*(3). Leaving the following position and black the opportunity to lose a shitload in equity!

Game 6, Position 7



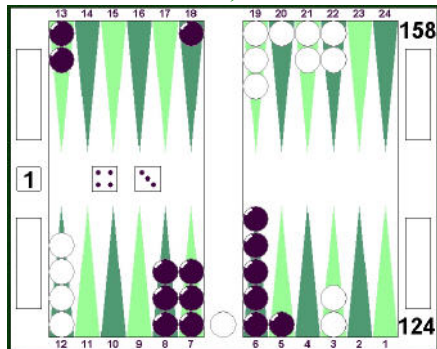
Black 5 White 5
Black to play 11

I don't think anyone will argue with 25/23 but will they argue with 23/22(2)? Or with 13/12(2)?

The latter was black's play; making another point, which in itself looks a reasonable move. But . . . he's missing a great opportunity to make a better anchor (which is the 23/22). In this position it is far better to be able to get the runners out than it is to have the 12-point. One might even argue that 'stripping' the mid-point to make the 12- is wasting a couple of handy builders that could be put to better use later.

01: 25/23 23/22(2) -0.286
05: 25/23 13/12(2) -0.568 -0.282

08: Game 7, Position 6



Black 5 White 6
White to play 43

White has the makings of a very good home-board prime, that is, except for the gap on his 5-point! So, it's essential that he cover this as soon as he can. With this in mind it is the move that gives the most chances to do this that is the correct play. Moving 13/9 gives white 15 rolls and 13/10 gives white 15 rolls! They're the same! So, if that is the case then what is better 25/21 or 25/22?

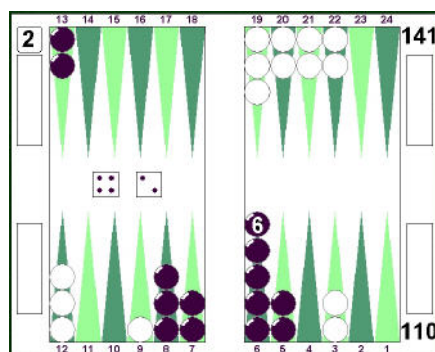
Well, the first one. It needs one pip less to escape or it could become an advanced anchor. This difference of just one pip lost white -0.120 equity.

01: 25/21 13/10 -0.591
02: 25/22 13/9 -0.712 -0.120

Although black rolled 42 next roll he didn't hit the white blot preferring to keep things safeish and instead played 18/14 7/5. White's reply of 64 failed to hit the blot (22/16 9/5) after which black cubed to two and white took. Black then rolled 62 and got his little blot safe with 14/6.

The position then looked like this:

09: Game 7, Position 9



Black 5 White 6
White to play 42

With a loss in equity of -0.064 it wasn't the biggest loss we've seen, but what makes it worthy of comment is that Snowie rated nine moves better ones!

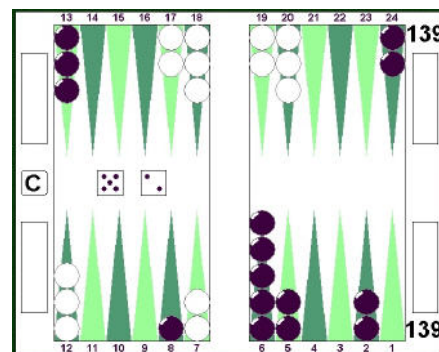
In at 10th was 16/10; a move that is failing to see what's happening. Black is going to have trouble moving off his mid-point; but if the white blot on his 9-point moves off it's going to be a lot easier.

White should remain on black's 9-point for at least this roll. Black's poor 2-prime home board isn't much to worry about and therefore the best play is to shift across to the bar-point for later use playing 13/7.

01: 13/7 -0.429
10: 16/10 -0.493 -0.064

A couple of rolls later black rolls 62 and takes the opportunity to move both off his mid-point; and white replies with a *cock-shot* and turns the game around - as described in the previous Bibafax!

Game 9, Position 3



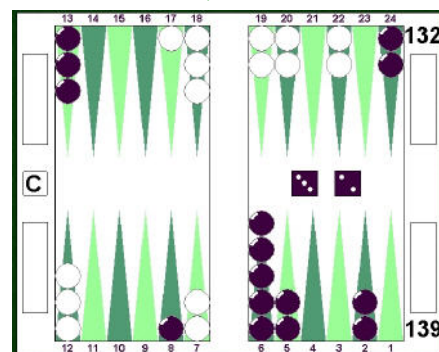
Crawford Game
Black 5 White 10
White to play 52

The 2nd best play here is to make the 2-point, 8/3 5/3 to make it difficult for black to move his anchor or escape; but it isn't necessary. The next point white really wants is his 4-point so 13/6 is better. It gives white great point-making chances without losing a point and should deter black from splitting his runners.

01: 13/6 0.426
02: 8/3 5/3 0.348 -0.078

However:

Game 9, Position 4



Crawford Game
Black 5 White 10
Black to play 32

Black has failed to realise the significance of white's move above and he should now slot a runner 24/21 while white has fewer builders; and then slot his own 4-point, 6/4. Instead he does half of this and moves 8/5 6/4 and in the process loses -0.158 in equity.

Black's blot on his 8-point is fairly safe for white won't want to be hit now; and if he does, then the 24/21 play could be-

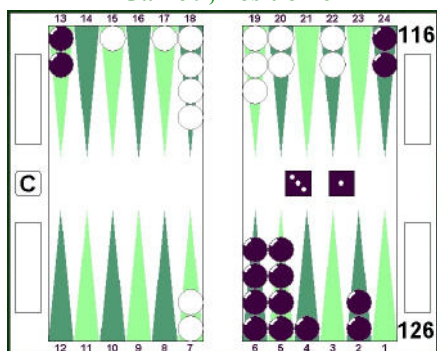


come a nice advanced anchor. Black's blot via 24/21 is only at risk from three rolls, realistically, whereas had white played 13/6 it'd be at risk from sixteen!

01: 24/21 6/4 -0.257
05: 8/5 6/4 -0.282 -0.158

White's reply is 62 which he plays 13/7 8/6 (13/5 is better, especially while his blot on his 8-point is a combination hit and black has a blot on his own 4-point). Black then rolls 62 and is forced to play 13/5. White next rolls 53 and takes two checkers from his mid-point 13/8 13/5 leaving indirect shots but giving him great potential. Then . . .

Game 9, Position 6



Crawford Game
Black 5 White 10
Black to play 31

Well, certainly playing 5/4 is a good use of the 1, but what about the 3? Take a look at white's position now that he's moved off his mid-point. His back two checkers are isolated now and out of communication with the rest of the checkers; he has decided to go for a solid prime first before moving them off - unless of course he rolls an appropriate double. With this in mind black should slot the 21-point with the 3; forcing white to make the point or safety his two blots.

01: 24/21 5/4 -0.358
08: 6/3 5/4 -0.514 -0.155

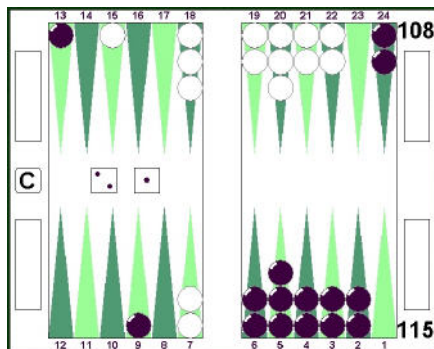
White rolls double two playing 8/4 6/4 7/5 - which would have placed black on the bar had he played the best move last roll! A lot of players would now justify the previous move (Snowie 6th losing -0.155) saying it was the correct move -- it isn't!

Black is now really up against it and he rolls 43 and moves 13/9 6/3 leaving white two blots to have a go at! Initially I thought this a blunder but a rollout revealed it be an error, and a minor one at that at just -0.012. The benefit of being

hit now is that if he can remain on the bar long enough he's got a chance of a hit and during the dance his home board will remain static.

Snowie preferred to play safe and chose 6/3 5/1; perhaps waiting for a hit later with a better board?

Game 9, Position 7



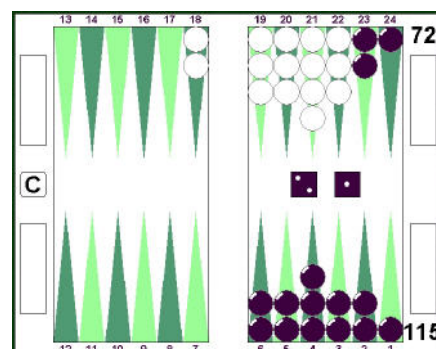
Crawford Game
Black 5 White 10
White to play 21

White is suckered in to hit, 18/16* 7/6 and in the process his move loses -0.115 at Snowie 10th. He should be ignoring the black blots, asking himself, why did white leave me so many shots? This play has increased black's winning chances from 10.6% to 15.2%.

01: 7/4 0.776
10: 18/16* 7/6 0.661 -0.115

Black's reply off the bar was double-one

Game 9, Position 13



Crawford Game
Black 5 White 10
Black to play 21

The only way black is going to save the Crawford game and have any chance to win the match is if he gets a hit; and therefore he's got to maximise his chances of getting one. The actual play of 24/23 4/2 lessens the chances by allowing white to roll sixes without much of a risk - barring 65, that is.

The best way to maximise hitting chances is to make the pure move of 4/1 making a full prime and hope that white rolls a six.

According to Snowie there were 14 better moves than that played by black, none of which advocated 24/23!

When black has closed out his home board he won't care too much about being on the bar - while he sits there waiting for a blot to appear his prime will remain intact. As it turned out he did get a shot, but much later, by which time his chances of winning the game were reduced to 1.4%; however, he missed!

01: 4/1 -0.704
15: 5/3 5/4 -0.809 -0.106

MC: The full match is on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax, readable via Acrobat.

Match Detailed Statistics		
Player	Champion	Christmas
Rating	Intermediate	Advanced
Overall	14.068/5.249	6.278/2.343
Errors (blunders)	23(8)	18(5)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	10.105/17.225	5.139/10.127
Errors (blunders)	20(8)	15(4)
Double errors		
Overall	1.015/2.421	0.751/1.146
Missed doubles	0.836/2.170	0.751/1.146
Wrong doubles	0.178/0.250	none
Errors (blunders)	3(0)	2(0)
Take errors		
Overall	0.034/0.129	0.584/0.729
Missed doubles	none	none
Wrong doubles	.034/0.129	0.584/0.729
Errors (blunders)	none	1(1)
Christmas was 57.77% - 42.23% favourite		



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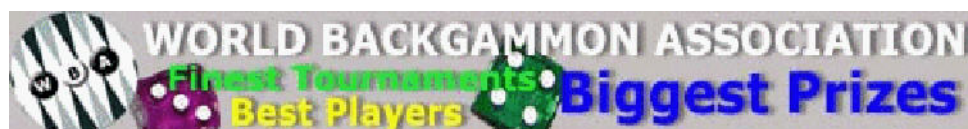
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- 11 Battle of the Bots - Snowie and Jelly have a fight!
- 5 BGShop.com (advert)
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INDEX



As you all know from the adverts in the Bibafax I sell both the above bots, and you will also know from seeing the costs involved that one is considerably more expensive than the other! By quite a margin Snowie is by far the dearer one selling at approx. £220 for the Pro as opposed to JellyFish Analyser at only £140. In fact the playing levels and abilities of Jelly's Tutor (a paltry £65) and Analyser are equal - the difference between the two versions being the analysing capabilities of the dearer option via rollouts.

Over the years Snowie has outsold Jelly by a good amount, its interface and analysis options being far far superior to the lowly Fish. But, it's been my observation that a lot of purchasers of the bots are buying them to play against - and a lot of the purchasers of Snowie will only scratch the surface of its many features. All they are interested in is playing against it.

So, solely on a playing basis is it worth forking out the extra for the Snowman? Well I decided to try a little experiment (flawed though it might be!) and got Jelly to play a 3-point match with itself (11-pointer at 8-8). This was a simply task - I merely set up the match choosing random dice, and then for each of its choices on moves made it play its 'best move' on a 2-ply verify; or to put it simply, at its very best!

Now, Jelly picks its moves on 2-ply (looking ahead two rolls) whereas Snowie looks ahead 3-ply - ergo, Snowie looks a bit further and deeper. When you've finished a match on Snowie you can go that little bit further; you can ask it to analyse the entire match and it will kindly do this and then display its outcome in a nice colour code that's easy to understand. This is what I did with the game Jelly played. I imported it into Snowie (this feature is lacking in Jelly, as is many more found within Snowie) as a JellyFish .mat file. This type of file is just one of several formats the Snowman can import, he'll import games or matches from online backgammon servers; True-Moneygames, Playmaker, Netgammon, GamesGrid, FIBS and MSN Gaming Zone as well as Mastergammon.

After importing I did a basic 3-ply analysis of the match and it revealed twenty checker-play instances where Jelly made

Battle of the Bots

By Michael Crane
(assisted by Snowie & JellyFish)

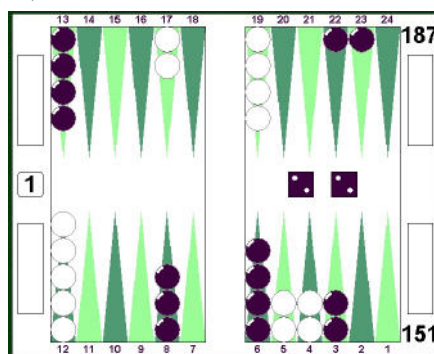
a move that was lower than 1st in Snowie's list of best moves; and one cube decisions regarding a take. According to the stats, of the 20 checker play differences there were just 3 errors including one blunder. A play is an error if its equity (*see below) differs from the correct play by more than 0.030; and a blunder is where it differs by more than 0.110.

*** Equity:** The expected value of a backgammon position. Specifically, the sum of the values of the possible outcomes from a given position with each value multiplied by its probability of occurrence.

I then got Snowie to rollout these 21 positions to see what, if any, changes were made in their position in the best play list. Of the checker plays just six of them moved up to 1st place which I have marked thus, #1. Following the rollouts there were five checker-play errors and one blunder, which I have marked **Error** or **Blunder**; and the cube decision was (apparently) a blunder!

11 point match Game 1

Black : 8 **White : 8**
01) 41: 13/9 24/23 43: 6/2* 24/21
02) 33: 25/22 9/3 6/3 52: 8/3* 3/1*
03) 61: 25/24* 51: 25/20 21/20
04) 31: 25/22 24/23* 43: 25/21 24/21



Black to play 22

Well here's the first position over which the two bots differ; albeit by a narrow margin. JF played 13/9(2) which came 2nd in Snowie's list; 1st being 23/21 22/20 13/11(2).

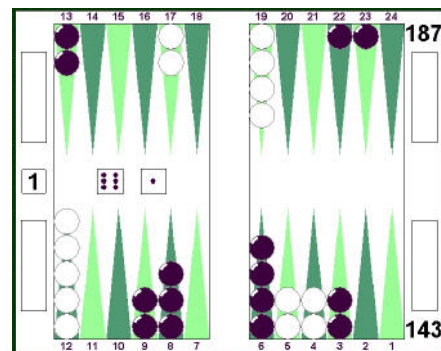
Jelly's move goes a bit too far, allowing white's back foursome to kick off with a nice big double. Instead, playing 13/11(2) means that the runners will have a more



difficult escape route. Also when black's back two move up 23/21 22/20 they are threatening any potential builders that might consider slotting from the white mid-point.

Equity: -0.016

05) 22: 13/9(2)



White to play 61

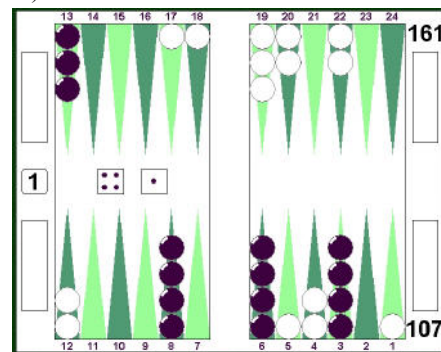
This play (from both bots) is a teasing play looking for a bit of bover! There'll be more on this theme later. In at 3rd place Jelly teases with 13/6; but Snowie goes that bit further and plays 13/7 6/5! Why leave one blot when two will do?

These are not loose plays or all that risky at the moment. White has two strong anchors in black's home board and is now looking to build some in his own home board. If black hits him he'll just re-circulate them.

Equity: -0.095

Error!

61: 13/6
06) 62: 23/15 #1 51: 13/8 6/5
07) 11: 22/20* 15/13 61: 25/24 13/7 #1
08) 53: 20/15 6/3 51: 8/3 6/5
09) 43: 15/8 55: 20/5 8/3
10) 63: 9/3 9/6



White to play 41

The play made by Jelly drops like a stone on this one, right down into 9th place! Its



play of 5/4 isn't in doubt, but its 24/20 is. Snowie would rather move to make the 4-point.

Black is currently very inflexible and it is very likely that he'll be leaving a shot soon, if not immediately. By playing 24/20 white lets him off with a few bad rolls that might have left a blot. Anchoring on the 20-point isn't necessary, not with an anchor already firmly placed on the 21-point; it's far better to make another excellent point and wait for the hit.

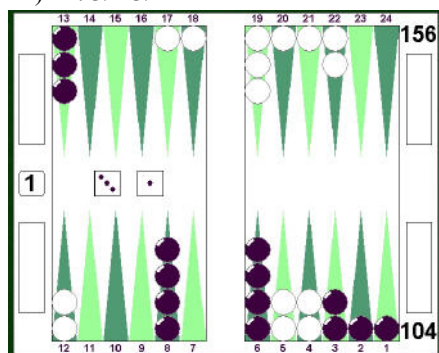
Looking a bit further ahead it'll be seen that black rolled 21 and was able to play it nice and safely; and that white's next roll would have hit the blot!

Equity: -0.048

Error!

41: 24/20 5/4

11) 21: 3/1 3/2 #1



White to play 31

Not too much to worry about here, hardly worth a mention! He plays Snowie 2nd 13/10 6/5. As before, Snowie agrees with half of the move, 6/5 but he then prefers to move 7/4 and make the 4-point (still trying to make it!).

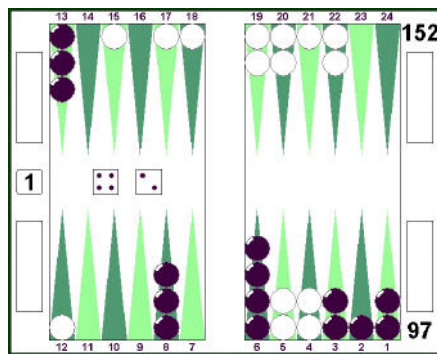
Wondering why Jelly moves 13/10? Well no doubt he's got his beady eyes on the two blots on black's 1- and 2-points; and he's taunting black into hitting with a 1. The 4-point is more valuable and a chance of a hit might come soon.

Equity: -0.008

31: 13/10 6/5

12) 52: 8/1

This match is available on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax, £2 for this Bibafax or £6 to the end of the year.



White to play 42

This one from JF falls down to 6th place in Snowie's list. The best play here included making the 4-point moving 8/4. . but by now you might have grasped that!, coupled with the safetying of the mid-point blot, 13/11. Jelly decided that moving off the mid-point was correct but chose to do it playing 13/9 and then he ignores the point making play and plays 7/5.

Soon white might get a shot and therefore plugging any holes in his home board makes sense, and making it now makes perfect sense. Any exposed blot in white's home board could be used to black's advantage whereas a 4-prime is a bit scary.

Equity: -0.024

13) 52: 13/6
14) 42: 8/2
15) 64: 13/3
16) 65:
17) Drops

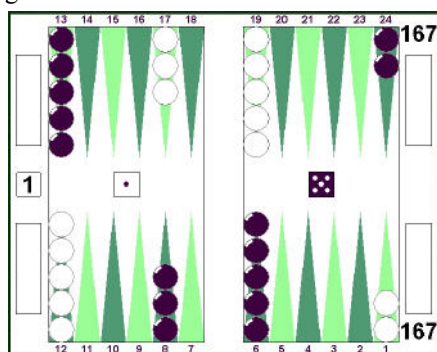
42: 13/9 7/5
62: 10/4 9/7
65: 8/2 7/2
54: 21/12*
Doubles to 2
Wins 1 point

Game 2

Black : 8

White : 9

On the opening roll Snowie already disagrees with the JF move:



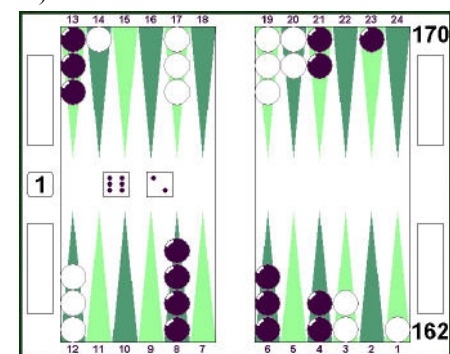
Black to play 51

This difference in moves might just be the difference in playing styles - Snowie does tend to be more adventurous than the Fish. In this instance more adventurous means playing 13/8 and the slotting 6/5. Fishy preferred to do what most of us

would do and play the split with a runner, 24/23 instead of the slot. Either way, at a lowly -0.015 in equity and 2nd place, Jelly's move is sound.

Equity: -0.015

01) 51: 13/8 24/23
02) 51: 13/8 6/5*
03) 66:
04) 65: 25/14*
05) 22: 23/21 8/4 6/4
06) 32: 25/23 24/21*
07) 31: 25/21



White to play 62

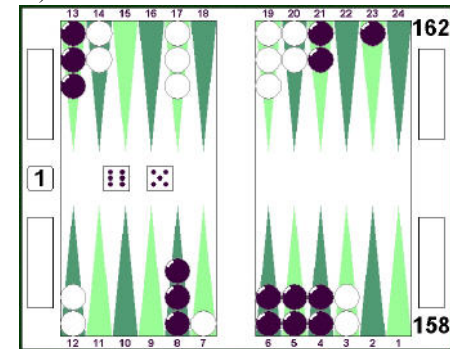
Another move where Jelly picks Snowie 2nd; but this time the equity almost doubles. JF makes his 11-point, 13/11 and then runs out his back checker 24/18. It's the 24/18 that Snowie doesn't like - it comes under the gun a bit from two black points, whereas Snowie's play of 24/16 keeps it to just one point and 15 hitting rolls.

Making the 11-point isn't that crucial at the moment. The blot there isn't under any immediate danger and, if white's checker resides on the 16-point it's a nice cover for the 11-point blot.

Equity: -0.028

62: 24/18 13/11

08) 31: 8/5 6/5



White to play 65

Coming in 2nd is getting to be a habit for Jelly. Once again his chosen move does just that. This time he elects to move 18/13 11/5. It's the 11/5 that Snowie ob-



jects to - he'd rather play a back checker 22/16!

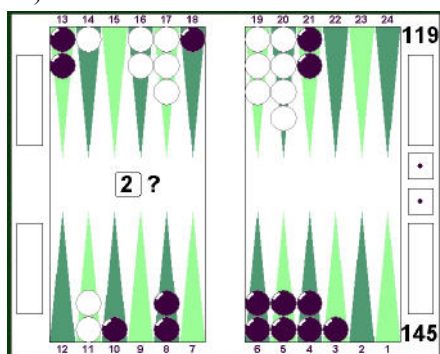
I can't quite see why myself, but according to the rollout analysis this play gives white 47.4% game winning chances whereas the safer play (and I'd have thought, more popular play as chosen by the Fish) with almost 3% fewer at 44.5%.

Certainly white will have to start shifting the runners soon, but is this really the time to do it?

Equity: -0.053

Error!

09) 31: 13/10 23/22
10) 32: 8/3 #1
11) 31: 22/18
65: 11/5 18/13
44: 22/14(2)
44: 13/5 13/9(2)



White cube action

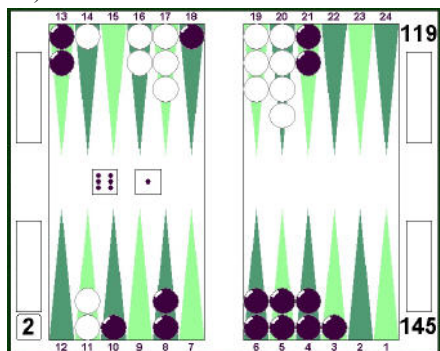
Leading 2-away, 3-away, white has to be sure of himself when offering the cube. If black has a take then he'll be turning it on his next roll making it for the match. According to Snowie black needs at least 25% to take - and if the score moves to 1-away, 3-away, he's got a 25% chance to win the match. Snowie puts his current game winning chances at 23.8% and says it's Double / Pass and marks it as a **blunder!**. However, Jelly took and then played on for the match.

Equity -112 (for take)

Blunder!

Doubles to 2

12) Takes



White to play 61

Jelly played 11/5 8/7*. It might only come in at Snowie 3rd but the equity is appalling, and the game winning chances are reduced from 72.7% (with 11/5 6/5) to 62.5%.

Black is just wishing for a shot at white and whites play this time will give him eleven chances. Better to play safe here than be sorry!

Equity: -0.299

Blunder!

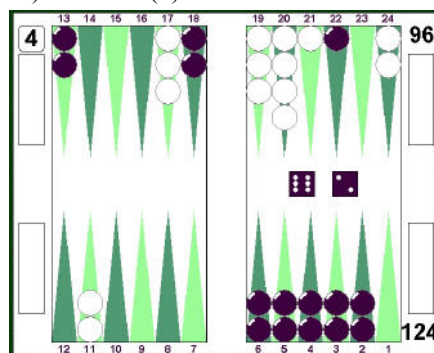
61: 11/5 8/7*

Takes

51: 7/1

31: 5/1

13) Re-doubles to 4
14) 63: 25/22 10/4 #1
15) 52: 8/3 4/2
16) 33: 21/18(2) 8/2



Black to play 62

Well, being 2nd seems to be Jelly's lot. This time he moves 18/10 teasing white into hitting and hoping for a return shot. His home board certainly is ready for a blot! Snowie's says, "if you're gonna go for a teasing hit, go all the way," and he opts for 18/16 13/7, or Blot World as I call it!

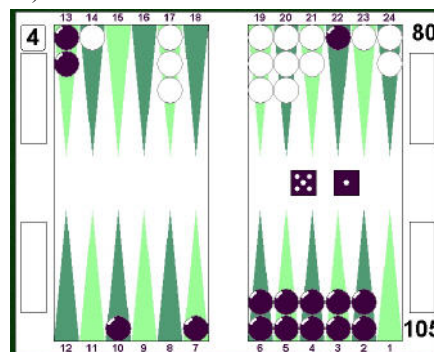
White doesn't want to hit - at least not if it means any chance of a return hit off the bar - so the Snowie move is the better of the two and the one most likely to produce the goods. Jelly's move produced a loss of 1.4% winning chances.

Equity: -0.028

17) 62: 18/10

61: 8/2 5/4

18) 65: 18/7



Black to play 51

Fifteenth, that's where we find Jelly's move. He moves 13/12 10/5, two crossovers; at a time when he needs to slow down his tempo. He is currently 25 pips down in the race (equivalent to three rolls) and needs to drop his checkers near the top of his home board but not exactly in it.

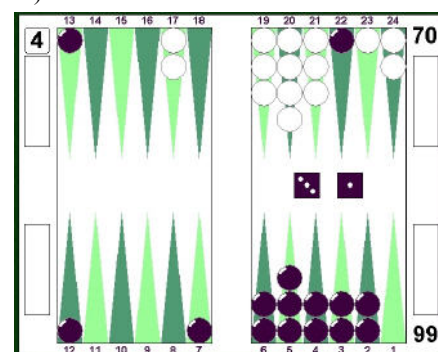
Snowie plays 10/9 and then 6/1. 6/1? Yes, although he's opened up his valuable 6-point he's gonna have loads of chances to remake it. Without crossing over Snowie maintains his timing; although it is looking a bit grim for him on the white 3-point. But, as you can see below, white's 64 roll cannot point on him.

Equity: -0.053

Error!

19) 51: 10/5 13/12

64: 11/5 8/4



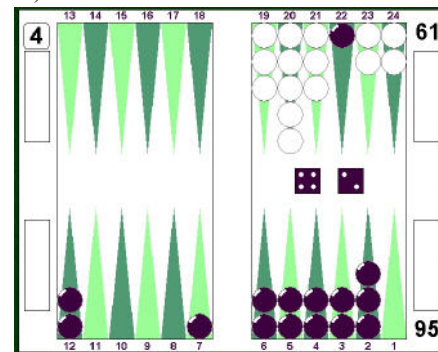
Black to play 31

Still crossing over when he should be dragging his heels, Jelly moves 13/12 5/2. This is a racing move and he really isn't in a racing position, currently being 29 pips behind; it also comes at 6th place, but returning a very low equity. Snowie once more plays without crossing, 12/9 5/4, conserving his men and hoping perhaps that white will roll 65 or 61 or even 66!

Equity: -0.008

20) 31: 5/2 13/12

63: 8/2 8/5



Black to play 42

I have to admit I am completely baffled here with Snowie's play of 6/2 3/1! I

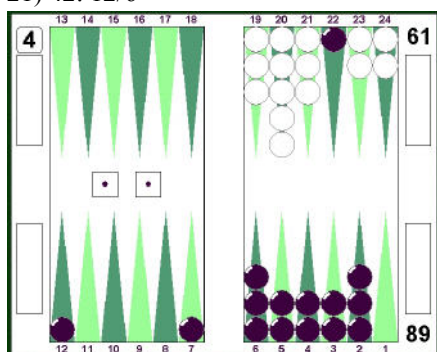


know gammons don't matter and perhaps the race is lost for him, but this does seem to be clutching at straws. It does at least do away with crossovers! Jelly's move came in 7th place; but this is nothing compared to the game/match winning chances of 4.8% with this play as opposed to 7.5% with the that chosen by Snowie. So it looks as if leaving all those blots is the right play!

Equity: -0.054

Error!

21) 42: 12/6



White to play 11

Jelly's move of 6/3* 4/3 will mean that his next six will allow black out and perhaps into the race. In 2nd place it would have been better to have played 5/3(2) and kept the 6-point for one roll more.

Equity: -0.020

11: 6/3* 4/3

So, black's on the bar; and this is where he remains until he rolls 54, playing 25/16.

22) 66: Closed board

23) 43:

24) 55:

25) 43:

26) 54: 25/20 20/16

31: 6/3 6/5

31: 5/2 5/4

65: 5/0(2)

54: 5/0 5/1

From hereon Snowie shows black as having 0% chance of winning, which is not exactly true. If white were to take just two checkers off each roll and if black were to roll big doubles on every roll and was able to take four men off each time then

black could win leaving white with two men on his 1-point. Possible but highly improbable!

So, is it worth forking out for Snowie? Well, yes, it is, most definitely . . . if you can afford it! It does a lot more than Jelly ever will; but to get your money's worth you have to make full use of its programming and not just play against it. Playing on Level 7, JellyFish will give most players a run for their money (and it's not a lot of money), all you'll be missing are the buttons and bells that are stuffed into the Snowman - but only you can decide their worth.

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Mind The Fours!

By Michael Crane

When I fed the County Cups 6th Round match between David Nathan and John Slattery into the ever hungry Snowie, it spewed out a few misplays which featured fours. I always like to find an angle to my analysis and I thought, why not fours? After all, we've already had the fives; why should they have all the fun!

To add to its interest value I have made it into a 'Guess Who Played What' sort of quiz.

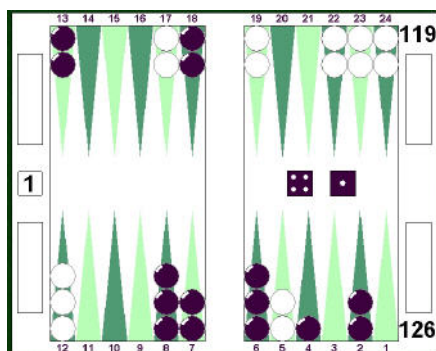


There are six candidate moves for each position (all matches to 11 points) and you have to determine which Snowie designated the best play, and what play David or John played (they do differ for each player never made the best move).

To add a bit of mystery to it I will reveal who played what colour later - which you can find on the next page after the 7th position.

This entire match is featured on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax - in full colour!
£2 for this issue or £6 for the remainder of 2005

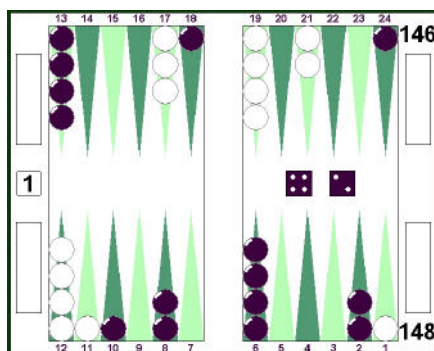
Position 01



Black 0 White 1
Black to play 41

- a) 8/3
- b) 6/1
- c) 7/3 7/6
- d) 8/4 2/1
- e) 8/4 7/6
- f) 8/7 6/2

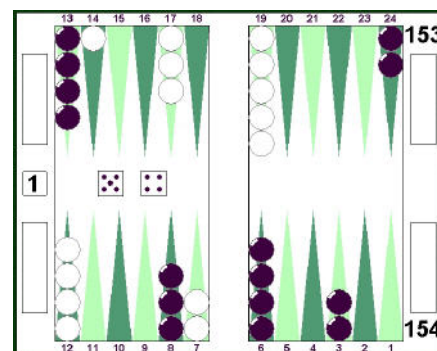
Position 03



Black 7 White 3
Black to play 42

- a) 13/11* 10/6
- b) 13/11* 11/7
- c) 13/9 13/11*
- d) 18/14 13/11*
- e) 24/18
- f) 24/20 13/11*

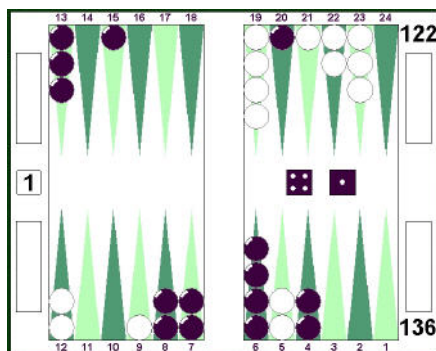
Position 05



Black 9 White 6
White to play 45

- a) 13/8 13/9
- b) 13/4
- c) 13/8 11/7
- d) 13/8 6/2
- e) 13/9 11/6
- f) 18/13 18/14

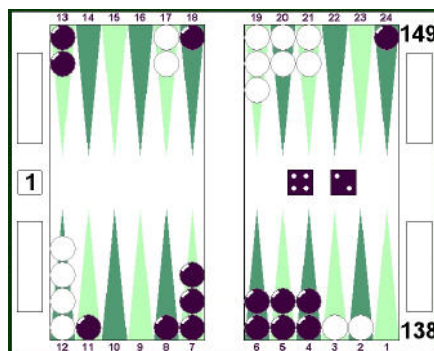
Position 02



Black 4 White 3
Black to play 41

- a) 13/9* 7/6
- b) 13/9* 8/7
- c) 13/9* 9/8
- d) 15/10
- e) 15/14 13/9*
- f) 20/15

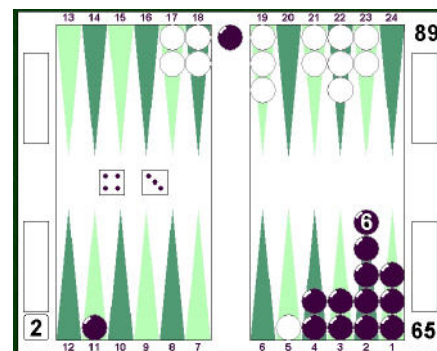
Position 04



Black 9 White 5
Black to play 42

- a) 11/7 8/6
- b) 11/9 7/3*
- c) 24/18
- d) 24/22 7/3*
- e) 8/2*
- f) 8/6 7/3*

Position 06

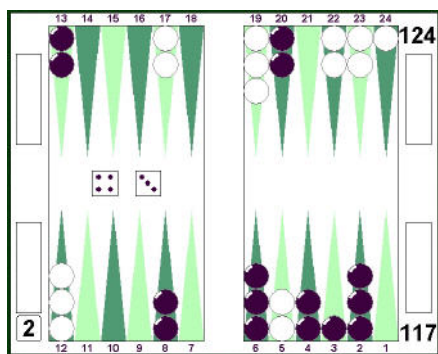


Black 9 White 6
White to play 43

- a) 8/1
- b) 20/16 7/4
- c) 20/17 8/4
- d) 8/4 6/3
- e) 8/4 7/4
- f) 8/4 8/5



Position 07



Black 9 White 8
White to play 43

- a) 13/10 6/2
- b) 13/10 8/4
- c) 13/6
- d) 13/9 6/3
- e) 20/13
- f) 8/1

Position 01

The actual play is very wasteful placing another checker on the 2-point. Certainly there's an argument to be made by keeping the spare on the 8-point viable, but the equity loss over the top play is significant.

Playing 8/3 is useful for making another point which is something that black needs.

8/3	0.055	
8/4 2/1	0.003	-0.025
7/3 7/6	0.014	-0.042
6/1	-0.029	-0.084
8/4 7/6	-0.005	-0.106
8/7 6/2	-0.059	-0.115 A

Position 02

The race is even at the moment at 131 each so hitting should be a consideration. The top move advocates this and then carrying on to safety onto the 8-point. There are really only two rolls that black has to fear, 11 and 33.

The actual play of making the 20-point is a temporary measure and it'll have to be broken sooner or later, at which time white's home board could well be closed or nearly closed. At -0.276 this play is clearly a big blunder and yet it comes in at 3rd place.

13/9* 9/8	0.347	
15/14 13/9*	0.295	-0.051
20/15	0.070	-0.276 A
13/9* 8/7	0.006	-0.341
13/9* 7/6	-0.086	-0.433
15/10	-0.145	-0.492

Position 03

A lot of players fail to see the benefits of

not hitting. In this instance if black hits the 11-point blot he will give white the opportunity to make an anchor and give him a foothold that could prove to be very useful later on. The actual play does this, and then moves 18/14 which doesn't seem to do much except isolate the runner.

The top play is the simple and pure play of 24/18. Holding an opponent's bar-point isn't always the best thing to do but the alternative returns -0.159 making it a blunder.

24/18	0.018	
18/14 13/11*	-0.141	-0.159 A
24/20 13/11*	-0.167	-0.186
13/11* 10/6	-0.178	-0.196
13/9 13/11*	-0.237	-0.255
13/11* 11/7	-0.265	-0.284

Position 04

It might be Snowie 2nd but it comes in at -0.164. The actual play of 8/6 7/3* is playing into white's hands. He'd like to hit back at black and with this play he has 27 rolls that enter: 15 of which hit one blot, 8 of which hit two blots and 4 of which merely re-enter.

As above, the simple 24/18 is by far the better move. I know you're going to say that this play leaves a double shot, and I agree - but it leaves 7 fewer.

24/18	0.043	
8/6 7/3*	-0.120	-0.164 A
11/7 8/6	-0.297	-0.220
8/2*	-0.297	-0.340
11/9 7/3*	-0.301	-0.344
24/22 7/3*	-0.312	-0.356

Position 05

There comes a time in any game when you have to vacate your opponent's bar-point; and this isn't it! All it does is give him chances to send a checker back and little else.

It is better to give black indirect shots by playing both off the mid-point. If missed (only 8 rolls hit one of the blots) white has thirty-one rolls that can make a point using one or more of the checkers on his 11-, 9-, or 8-points.

13/8 13/9	0.251	
13/9 11/6	0.184	-0.067
18/13 18/14	0.117	-0.133 A
13/8 11/7	0.085	-0.166
13/4	0.083	-0.167
13/8 6/2	0.036	-0.215

Position 06

If white gets the black second checker

back he'll have a good chance of getting a possible gammon; therefore he needs to make a play that helps him out in this position.

Moving closer with 20/16 isn't going to help, black could easily jump over to safety or hit in his outer board. What's needed is another white checker back in black's home board and therefore the play is 8/1.

This leaves the back checker in a prime position to hit the white blot with any roll from black except *The Girls*!

8/1	0.625	
8/4 8/5	0.606	-0.019
8/4 7/4	0.546	-0.079
8/4 6/3	0.545	-0.080
20/17 8/4	0.543	-0.082
20/16 7/4	0.450	-0.175 A

Position 07

Holding a 5-point anchor is a panacea for bad rolls - you can afford to play a little dangerously in the knowledge that you have a re-entry point if hit. Therefore, giving it up lightly is a mistake; or in this case, a blunder!

Our actual play does this and leaves the lone blot on the white 5-point under the gun from 13 rolls, six hit and cover and seven hit and leaving one blot. It also leaves the white 1-point blot open to re-turn shots off the bar.

It's the 1-point blot that Snowie advocates covering at the moment. It leaves black any 3 to hit but he's got to come off the anchor to do it - and 3s are duplicated.

8/1	0.061	
13/6	0.040	-0.022
13/10 8/4	-0.017	-0.078
13/9 6/3	-0.047	-0.108
13/10 6/2	-0.055	-0.116
20/13	-0.077	-0.138 A

David was playing as white, and John, black . . . but you might have guessed that by the match scores! Well, how did you fare? Are you a Snowie, a David or a John?

On the following 3+ pages are tables that were incorrect in Bibafax 76, pages 10 to 13. Sorry about that!

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)

I don't know what happened and I'm offering no excuses. I carefully cut & pasted from the web site but I still managed to cock it up and get things wrong! These are correct - I hope!!!

Sorry!

How Good Is Your Backgammon?

Asks Michael Crane (assisted by Snowie)

Well, here we are, back to the battle between Neil Kazaross (white) and Michael Meyburg (black) during the 1991 Monte Carlo World Championships ¼ Finals.

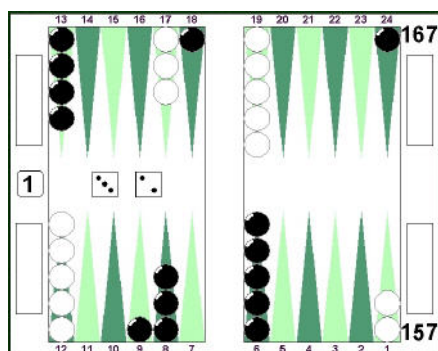
We restart the article in Game 12. When you come to ??? Cover up the text below the position and decide your move. Keep a record and at the end see how you scored. The match is to 21 points

Game 12

Kazaross : 5
01)

Meyburg : 14
64: 24/18 13/9

??? White to play 32



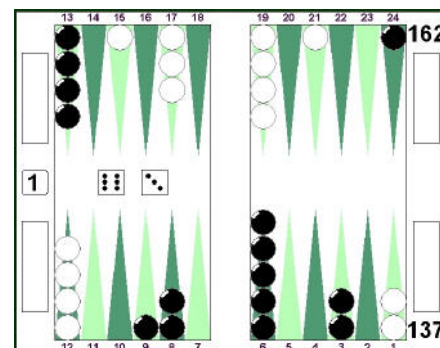
Mmm, a reply to the opening roll of 64 played 24/18 13/9; now here's a move we can reference immediately by looking above for replies to 64! It recommends 24/21 13/11; which is the correct move as chosen by Snowie. However, white decides to really attack and plays 13/10 6/4.

This play could be a spoiling play and designed to make black hit instead of making a point - but unless it's a bloody good point he's going to hit. There's some merit in duplication of 3s but not enough to warrant the move coming in at 4th place.

24/21 13/11	5
6/1*	4
13/11 8/5	4
13/10 6/4	3 A
24/21 24/22	2
13/8	1

02) 32: 13/10 6/4 55: 18/3 8/3
Black's *Girls* don't get the hit he was perhaps hoping for but it does make his 3-point. Mind you, the runner might now face a long lonely trek to safety.

??? White to play 63



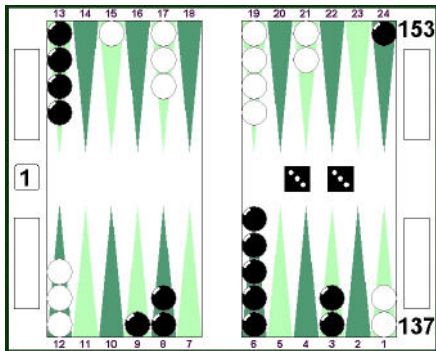
A couple of point-making plays here, bar-point or 4-point? Leading by a small margin is making the 4- playing from the mid-point. Making the bar- comes out in 3rd place and is a loss of 0.064 in equity! Although it's good to have the bar-point made inner board points are better at the moment. The 2nd best play of covering the blot and then slotting the 5-point is almost as good as the top play - it loses just 0.009 in equity but it does improve the game winning chances (GWC) by 0.03%.

13/4	5 A
10/4 8/5	4
13/10 13/7	2
24/21 10/4	1
10/4 6/3	1



03) 63: 13/4

??? Black to play 33



White's previous 4-point making move has stopped the black runner, but he's got other options - and they all involve making points; 10-point, 7-point, 5-point.

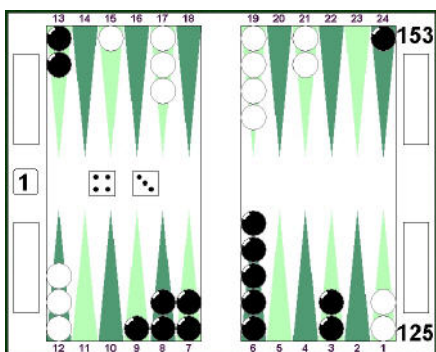
The clue to the correct play here is, what anchor would white like to hold? Answer, the *Golden Point*. So the 'usual' move of 13/10(2) 8/5(2) is best. Once you've made your own 5-point you hardly ever vacate it until the bear-off.

I liked the 2nd best move with the extra builder on the 3-point but it did lose quite a bit of equity. The actual play of making the bar-point squanders an opportunity to make the most valuable point on the board.

13/10(2) 8/5(2) 5
13/10 8/5(2) 6/3 3
13/7(2) 1 A

33: 13/7 13/7

??? White to play 43



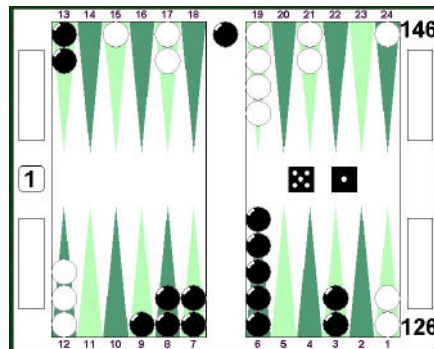
Hitting on the 1-point, 8/1*, although in 2nd place, is an error (-0.066) and is perhaps trying to stop black from making another inner board point. If white has to leave a shot then 13/9 8/5 is better. It puts white under a lot of pressure, fourteen single hits and five double hits, but if missed (47.2% of the time) then 100% of the rolls play well! In fact only one roll, double-six can't cover the slotted 5-point;

but it does make a point! So, is it worth risking being hit 52.8% of the time to have a 97.2% chance of making the 5-point? Yes!

13/9 8/5 5
8/1* 3 A
13/9 10/7 2
24/20 13/10 1
13/9 13/10 1
13/9 6/3 1

04) 43: 8/1*

??? Black to play 51



I was very surprised at the actual play here for it loses 0.260 in equity and comes in at a lowly 6th place. It's not the hit, 25/24* that's so bad according to Snowie but the 8/3 that follows! White would have made this move himself if he were allowed to play it for black I'm sure. Playing 6/5 would have lessened the equity to -0.156; still a huge blunder!

Hitting with any combination of a five elsewhere at best loses 0.093 so hitting is out of the running.

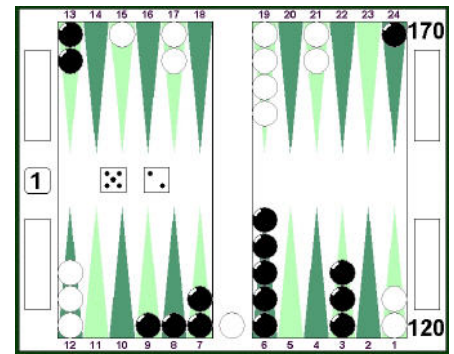
Quite often it's the simple plays that are the correct plays, and this is simply off the bar onto the 20-point and pick up the 9-point blot/builder. It returns just over 8% more GWCs than the actual play.

25/20 9/8 5
25/34* 13/8 3
25/24* 9/4 2
25/20 6/5 1
25/24* 8/3 -3 A

51: 25/24* 8/3

(continues in the next column)

??? White to play 52



If white re-enters onto the 20-point he's going to come under the gun from plenty of black checkers so he should be looking to avoid that if possible.

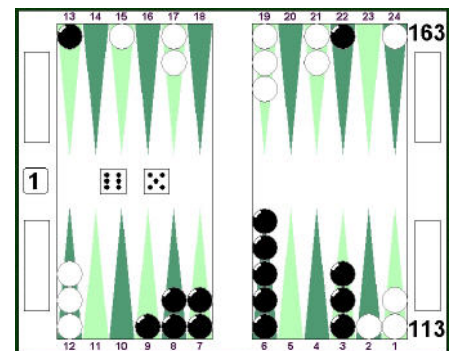
One possible play is to play 25/23 and then, because black has great potential, hit on the 1-point 6/1*. This was my choice and it is so close to Snowie 1st that it shares top marks.

Snowie preferred to play 10/5 to attempt to make his 5-point. Although black 4s hit they are perhaps more useful on the other side of the board.

25/23 10/5 5
25/23 6/1* 5 A
25/20 13/11 4
25/20 10/8 2
25/23 13/8 1

05) 52: 25/23 6/1* 53: 25/22 13/8
Black makes the only realistic play

??? White to play 65



Things aren't going white's way. The black runner is threatening to escape and black is fifty pips ahead in the race. White needs to attack the black runner and force hits off the bar to try and gain another anchor in black's inner board.

Snowie goes about this by making his 1-point and then slotting his bar- with the spare checker on his mid-point. The slot is likely to be hit . . . and that might just enable white to anchor.

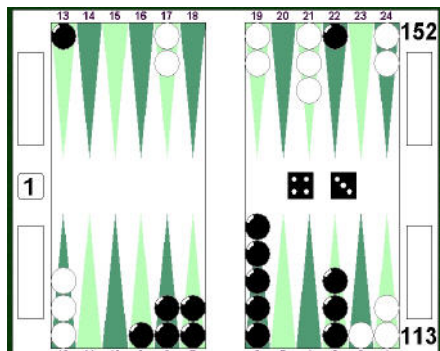


The actual play makes the 1-point but then plays the six safe, 10/4 leaving black free to do whatever he wants next roll.

13/7 6/1 5
13/7 10/5 4
10/4 8/3* 3
10/4 6/1 2 A
13/7 8/3* 1

06) 65: 10/4 6/1

???Black to play 43

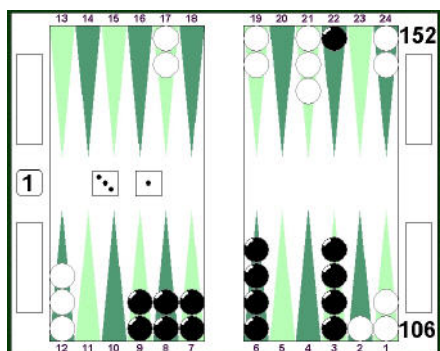


I've thrown in this 'obvious' play to see if anyone actually looked for something deeper than 13/9 6/3. Often in quizzes entrants look for something else when the 'correct' answer seems too obvious. If you played anything except the correct play it'll cost you points!

13/9 6/3 5 A
All others -5

43: 13/9 6/3

??? White to play 31



White has to take charge here. He's got to get to the front of the black prime and concentrate on the black runner.

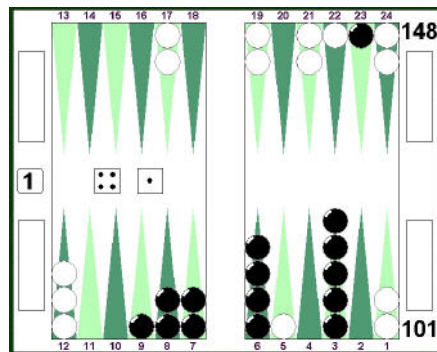
This is best achieved by playing 23/20, hoping to make an advanced anchor, and 4/3*; not being bothered about being hit back.

Although playing 13/10 4/3* looks good, it doesn't aid making an advanced anchor if hit back.

23/20 4/3* 5 A
13/10 4/3* 4
24/21 4/3* 2

07) 31: 23/20 4/3* 62: 25/23 9/3

??? White to play 41



At last white rolls a move that makes the advanced anchor . . . and then he doesn't make it! The double-hitting play 20/16* 3/2* is far better now. The advanced anchor is nowhere near as good as the 20/16* play and it'd be a waste not to do it. The position Snowie puts the anchor in is 7th.

20/16* 3/2* 5 A
20/16* 13/12 3
20/16* 16/15 2

For ages now white has been trying to get back into this game and this play gets him right in. As you can see below, black himself rolls a 41, which dances and white doubles him out to take the point.

08) 41: 20/16* 3/2* 41: Dances
09) Doubles to 2 Drops
White wins 1 point

Kazaross : 6

Meyburg : 14

So, what are you, a mouse or a man?
Check your score:

50 Blimey! You're good!
40-49 Neil, how are you?
30-39 Hi, Mike, how's it going?
20-29 You are Lobby Ludd!
10-19 Have you tried dominoes?
0-10 Squeak, squeak.

This match will continue in future issues.

An Opening 43

By Cedric Lytton

In the spirit of Norah Loft's "Help for the Hopeless", this article points out some disadvantages of playing an opening 43 by starting the *Golden Point* 24/20, 13/10 rather than the 4-point anchor 13/9, 24/21, when you are at match point (so that gammons do not matter to you) or when the opponent has already split her back men, e.g. with 51: 13/3, 24/23.

Introduction

Over breakfast at the Keren di Bona Memorial in July last year, I read Chris Bray's weekly Independent column (i), discussing the contents of his openings database. That same day, two of my opponents had obviously not read this up-to-date news (I resisted the temptation to comment) and opened with 43: 13/9, 24/21. For convenience, we'll denote this play as Z_A , and 43: 34/20, 13/10 as Z_B .

In (i) Chris had reported finding in practical play over around 12,00 games, mostly for money, that 43: 13/9 13/10 is best, accepting the risk of 11 indirect shots in return for enormous inner-board coverage, priming potential, powerful early doubles and gammon prospects. Indeed, in an earlier 2002 study (ii), over 9521 games Chris had found 65% of wins for this move, compared with 49.2% for Z_A and 51.9% for Z_B .

However, when you are at match point and do not need a gammon, it may be better to start a forward anchor, aim for a game and lessen the risk of a prime vs prime game which often leads to a gammon either way - no use to you but very useful to opponent. Also, if opponent has won the opening roll and split her back men with e.g. 51: 13/8 24/23, then bringing down two men would leave her 17 indirect shots with 7s as well as 8s and 9s, a far less attractive risk (we follow Lamford and Gasquoine (iii) and refer to our opponent as 'she'.)

In either of these situations, then, should we play Z_A or Z_B ? Before discussing this we comment on Lytton (iv) and the alternative play 43: 24/20 24/21. We have found that double hit e.g. 21: 6/4* 6/5* leaves her a 5-4 favourite to hit back, but when she misses we are massive favourites to make one or both points, and even when she hits we have good chances of making the other point. (Dorothy and I still enjoy our almost daily tubeless best-



of-three!)

Comparison

For a long time in my early backgammon days, before realising the deadly potential of bringing down two men, I had persuaded myself that Z_B , (starting the 9-point) was better than Z_A . It seemed that either high anchor was good, and if the 9-point is made, adjacent to the 8-point, it starts a better prime and yields a more flexible game than with points made two apart after playing Z_A and later making the 10-point.

Then I noticed that good tournament players were slotting the enemy 5-point (with Z_A and other rolls) almost automatically, and began to wonder. I have read that Paul Magriel had rolled out by hand a KO tournament with 64 players, X-1, X-2 . . . (presumably all possibilities for 2 ways of playing each of six situations) with X-22 prevailing, so I copied him and hand rolled out three matches to 25 points between Z_A and Z_B , each playing the eponymous opening in alternate games. (With hindsight I think 25 matches to 3 points would have been better, avoiding possible distorting effects of high cubes, but that's another story.) Z_A won all three matches, two by narrow margins, one by 25-16. In the course of the rollouts, several advantages of Z_A became obvious,

overshadowing the 'primal' advantage of Z_B mentioned above.

- The Golden anchor neutralises 3 spares on opponent's 6-point; against Z_B she may use these three spares to attack and make her 5-point with 1s
- The Golden anchor is even more difficult to prime than the 4-point anchor
- The Golden anchor, particularly with a spare, covers the outer-board up to the opponent's 11-point; if we have only a 4-point anchor, this point is sanctuary
- The Golden anchor gives more scope for escaping all back men with convenient large doubles
- If it comes to a race, the 20-point is that much better a starting point than the 21-point
- If the 20-point is finally vacated after a holding game, the opponent does not put men on it during the bear-in, in the bear-off some of her 5s will be wasted; this is worse than the corresponding waste of 4s after vacating the 21-point
- If opponent leaves one man behind on her mid-point when coming in, there are a possible 6 shots from the Golden anchor, only 5 from the 4-point anchor
- Against Z_A , the pointing rolls, 31 etc. are only a small improvement on already excellent rolls; against Z_B , the

pointing rolls 42 etc. increase their status from good to very good. This is an example of Magriel's advice, (v): you shouldn't try too hard to avoid what are good rolls for your opponent already

- Against Z_B , 6 rolls hit and run out 24/16*; against Z_A , only 5 rolls hit 24/15*

Conclusion

These factors suggest that for the title opening, it is better to start the golden anchor 24/20 13/10 rather than the 4-point anchor 24/21 13/9. This conclusion, reached via general principles, differs slightly from the findings of Chris Bray (ii), but possibly his sample size was not large enough.

References

- i) iChris Bray, 'Inside the Database', The Independent, 03/07/04.
- ii) Chris Bray, 'What Colour is the Wind?' (2002) pages 200-201
- iii) Paul Lamford and Simon Gasquoine, 'Improve Your Backgammon' Everyman Mindsports (2002) page 5
- iv) Cedric Lytton, 'Dorothy's Opening', Bibafax No. 64 (May 2003) page 35
- v) Paul Magriel, 'Backgammon', Z-22 publishing (1976), page 237

17th European Backgammon Championship

4th Velden Backgammon Open

May 20 - 22nd 2005

Held At The Casino Velden, Austria

This year's visit to Velden exceeded my expectations, not because of my backgammon skills (which are very few and far between!) but because the atmosphere, weather and tournament directing were all first class. Marco Fornasir and his team did an excellent job in keeping everything on time and the tournament ended with a dinner party and the awards ceremony. This always ensures that the prizewinners receive a good reception, which they deserve, and the players who weren't so fortunate still leave the tournament with good memories.

This year there were seven Brits. John Broomfield, Martin Barkwill and Slatts in the Masters. Danny Cohen, Ian Tarr, and myself in the Championship division and Gay Roberts (resident of Tenerife) in the Intermediates. Altogether, there were 123 players from 27 countries - Masters 30, Championship 51, Intermediates 42.

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!



Francois Tardieu won the European Championship for the third time in five years - a very impressive record.

This year I decided that I would try a different slant to my reporting and I would be interested to hear what readers think of it. I can't notate a match (getting too old - my brain doesn't think quick enough!) but I tried writing down edited highlights.

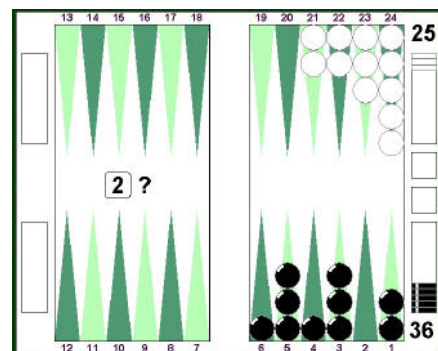
On Day Two Slatts found himself up against Francois Tardieu in the Quarter Finals of the Master's Main, so here we had the last two years European Champions playing each other. The last time they played was in the Super Jackpot in Salzburg last year and Tardieu went 0-10 up

to 11. Slatts ended up the victor winning 11-10.

In this 15 point match Tardieu, playing as white went 0-6 ahead - here is how it went.

Game 1

Tardieu is on roll in this position, cubes Slatts which he takes.



Tardieu throws two doubles and wins.
Score 0-2

Game 2

Slatts cubes when he has 11 cross-overs to Tardieu's 13, with T having two checkers on Slatt's 4-point. T takes and promptly rolls two double 6s in a row (now we've never seen S do that have we!?!). With the pip-count at S = 90, T = 83, T re-cubes and S takes. Again it's T that rolls two doubles and wins the game.
Score 0-6

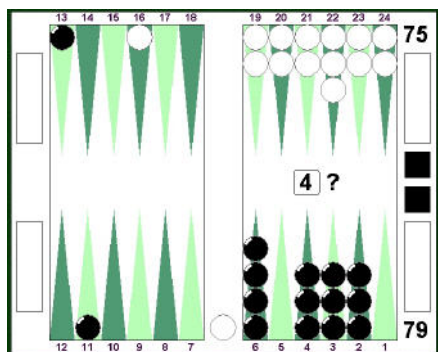
Game 3

Slatts cubes when he is holding his 3- to 7-points with Tardieu on his 1-point. T drops.
Score 1-6

Game 4

In the early part of the game Slatts gets hit twice with 55 and takes Tardieu's offer of the cube after dancing once. T continues with the blitz play and after some hitting of blots by both players T ends up with four checkers back but with a five-point board. S makes a three-point board and has two men on T's 2-point. T has to run with a 61, leaving a blot, which S misses. T cubes and S takes.

On his next roll S rolls an awkward 62, which forces him to leave a blot, which he leaves on his 2-point, leaving T a 1-shot. T misses and runs from S's 1-point. S rolls 6 6 and runs from 23 to 11, which leaves him 6 away from T who has a 5-point anchor. T closes his board just as S rolls an eight meaning he can't safety his man on his 13-point. A 65 from T means he has to leave his anchor, S picks and passes, T dances. S re-cubes to 4 in this position.



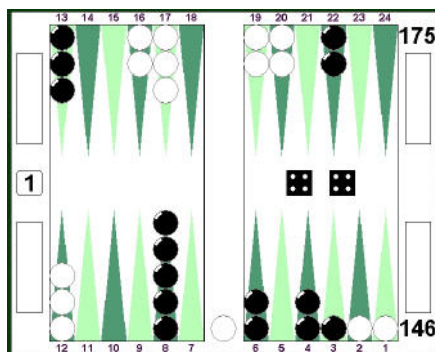
T considers the position for at least 10 minutes and decides to drop.
Score 3-6

Game 5

In this game Slatts hits loose on his 5-point. Tardieu rolls 62, comes in and out to the bar-point. S rolls 66, hitting twice. T rolls 66 and dances. S cubes and T drops.
Score 4-6

Game 6

Slatts rolls 44 in this position.



His play of 22/18 (2) 13/9 8/4 is Snowie's 3rd choice

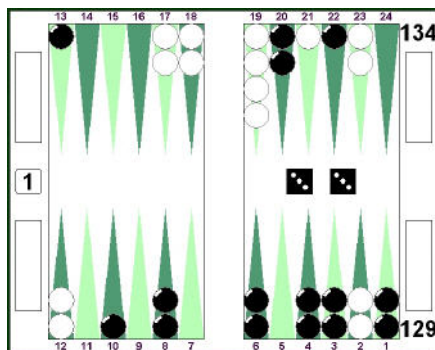
T rolls 55, comes in and plays 13/3 8/3, which is Snowie's 2nd choice. S rolls 66 and this time does play the Snowie move - 13/7 9/3 8/2*. T does come in next roll but turns down S cube.
Score 5-6

Game 7

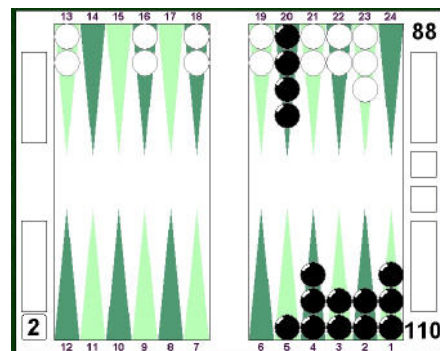
This was quite a quick game which Slatts won after Tardieu dropped the cube.
Score 6-6

Game 8

This game got interesting at this point. Slatts rolls 33 and chooses Snowie's 2nd play 10/4 8/5(2).



Tardieu rolls 55 and hits on his 3-point and comes out to S's bar-point (Snowie's play). S then rolls 65 and has a forced move, which means he leaves blots on his 13- and 14-points. T rolls 22 and plays correctly with 13/11(2)* 6/4(2). S rolls 65 and only the 5 plays. T considers cubing at this point but decides against it. He rolls 61, hits on his 12-point and moves 18/17. S rolls 51 and this roll is enough for T to offer the cube. S takes. After a few more rolls the position looks like this: *see next column*



For those of you that want to follow the game to the end here are the rolls and moves made!

Tardieu (w)

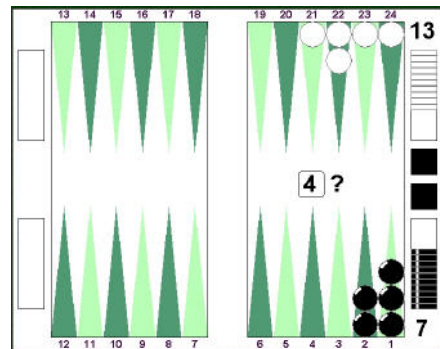
42: 12/6
11: 12/9 2/1
62: 9/1
31: 6/2

Slatts (b)

54: 20/11
32: 11/6
53: 20/12
65: 20/14 20/15

It is worth noting that Snowie's play for the 65 would have been 12/1. It might be interesting to play the rest of the moves from that position to see if it would have made a difference to the plays made, which were:-

31: 9/5
41: 9/5 7/6
32: 7/4 2/0
64: 6/0 4/0
55: 6/1 6/1 5/0 5/0
11: 1/0 1/0 1/0 1/0
51: 4/0 2/1

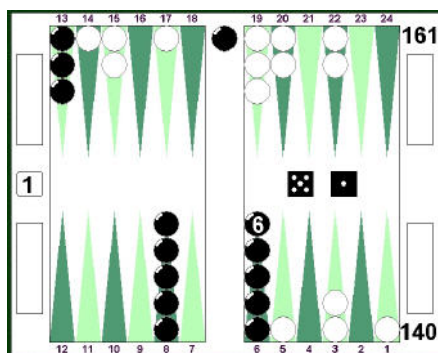


With the position as shown above S cubes to 4 and T drops.
Score 8-6

Game 9

After a few rolls and a 55 from Tardieu, Slatts finds himself in this ugly position shown on the next page :





S comes in with 51 playing 25/24 13/8 and he now has six men on his 8-point! After a few more rolls S ends up on the bar again and this time he dances. T cubes and S takes. S manages to clear all his men and has 3 men off when he re-cubes and T drops. **Score 10-6**

Game 10

In this game Slatts takes a cube when he is on the bar against a 4- point (2 and 5 points open). Tardieu cubes and S takes. He does get back into a reasonable racing position after throwing a 66 but T follows that up by rolling a 44 followed by a 55 and wins the 2 points. **Score 10-8**

Tardieu asks for a break at this point.

Game 11

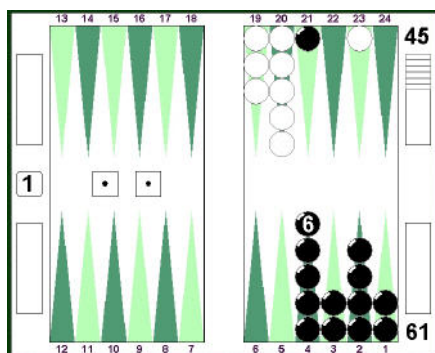
This turns out to be a very quick game. Slatts has the opening roll 62 and plays the usual play (24/18 13/11). Tardieu hits lose with a 54. S dances with 66! T rolls 55 and makes his 1- and 3-points. Slatts must have felt the dice gods were conspiring against him when he rolled 11 and danced again. No surprise when the cube is shipped over soon after that. S drops. **Score 10-9**

Game 12

This was another short game with Tardieu in control. Slatts drops the cube when offered. **Score 10-10**

Game 13

Tardieu gets ahead in the next game and cubes with the pip-count 93 to 107 in his favour. He has six cross-overs to Slatts' ten. I think a lot of us mere mortals would have dropped but S took! T has a 11 to play in this next position:-



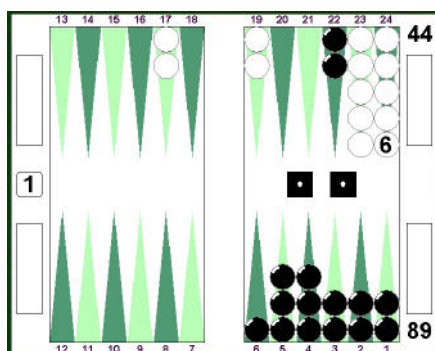
He makes the correct play (5/4*(2) 2/0) and S is now on the bar. He comes in with 22 but doesn't manage to hit anything. He manages to save the gammon by rolling 44. **Score 10-12**

Game 14

Tardieu cubes when he has three men in Slatts' home board but has a broken 5-prime with S on the bar. S takes and promptly rolls 65 twice dancing both times, he eventually comes in with a 41 but not until T has the 6-prime in front of him. After a few more rolls S has to leave another blot which gets hit, but does manage to secure T's 1-point. He ends up with all his men on his 1- and 2-points but hasn't moved from T's home board. He eventually rolls a 61 and has to run. T points on him and the gammon for match looks likely. T has three men off when S rolls a 55 and saves the gammon. **Score 10-14**

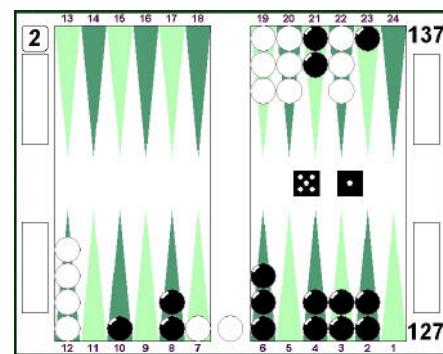
Game 15

Tardieu has three men back on Slatts 5-point with S holding T's 3-point but with T having a 5-prime on his 5- to 9-points. T has control of the game but rolls awkwardly while bearing in. S rolls a 11 and makes a move, and as soon as he made it, he knew it was a blunder. I didn't write down the complete position, so don't take too much notice of S's home board, but this was how it looked from T's side of the board when S rolled the 11.



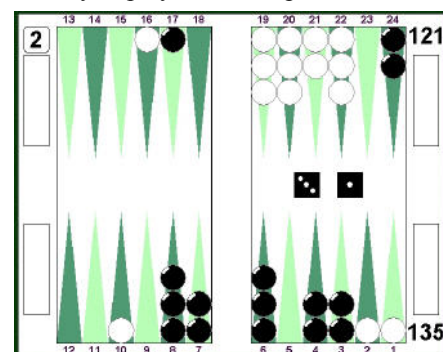
He splits his anchor and allows T to pick and pass. He doesn't get a shot and loses the game and the match. **Score 10-15**

So, how were all the other Brits doing? Not so well, at this point in the tournament there were no real success stories. There was, however, an interesting interlude when Slatts managed to make 150 euros from my blunder. I was playing in the Championship Main when I had match-winning chances, but threw it away by making the wrong move. My opponent went on to win the Championship final! What would you have done in this position? The right move probably! My first instinct was to play the correct move and then I decided against it!



The correct move was 23/18 8/7* but I decided to make the 5-point. Okay, so I am stupid, I admit it! But I wasn't the only one! Thomas from Germany (not the one I was playing) agreed with making the 5-point, as did Marco. That made me feel less of an idiot! Thomas was so convinced he was right that he had a bet with Slatts that Snowie would also make the 5-point. He lost of course! I would add, then when I got the chance to put two men on the bar the next day, I did! I was playing the first round of the Consolation and the score was 3-6 post Crawford so I obviously cubed early. I rolled a 44 which hit a loose checker and then I moved from 6- to 2- to pick up a second man. I won the gammon for match! Who says I'm too old to learn!?!

When my opponent Thomas Loew was playing the final he couldn't believe it when the other finalist, Lo Surdo, helped him to victory by making a blunder. How would you play 31 in this position?



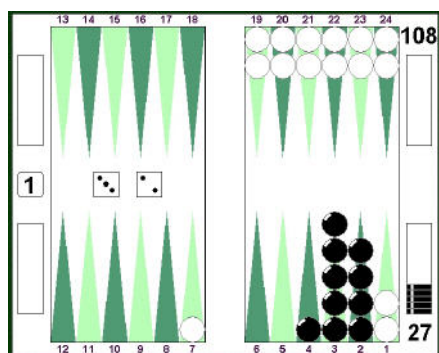
Although making the 5-point was correct,



Lo Surdo decided the hit was correct. This cost him the match and a lot of money no doubt!

As I mentioned at the beginning of the report the weather was glorious. Blue sky, no clouds, and a lot of sunshine. We took advantage of this and decided we would all go out on a boat trip to Klagenfurt and back (except for Gay who was having her hair done!) It took three hours and was well worth it. We all relaxed and felt ready to do battle again!

Martin B had a stroke of luck in one of his Last Chance matches. Martin always maintains that it is much better telling people good luck stories rather than bad luck stories. I expect most people tell him that they don't have good luck stories - if they win, it's through good play, if they lose it's bad luck! Anyway, Martin is 2-0 up to five when his opponent rolls a 32 in this position. The move was fairly clear, but this is where Martin's good luck starts.



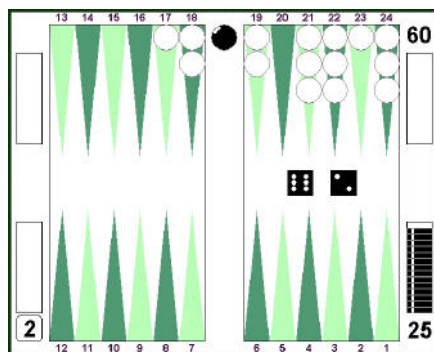
Rosconi moves 24/19 and forgets to pick up Martin's checker! He then ships Martin the cube (not his turn obviously) and Martin is delighted to accept! R then rolls 31 and instead of playing it he realises his mistake and points it out. M says, very politely, "Sorry, it's my turn."

Play continues and R fails to save the gammon, therefore losing the match 5-0. He refuses to shake M's proffered hand!

Danny Cohen was the only one of the Brits to pick up a trophy. He was in the final of the Warm Up against Ernie's adversary, Nedim from Turkey.

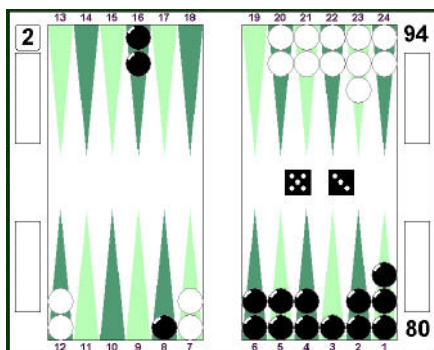
During the first game after Danny had cubed and was in a strong position, he rolled a reverse joker and Nedim was put on the bar against his 4-point board. Danny could only remember his side of the board, but it is the only part that is relevant! I suppose you can guess what Nedim rolled! Poor Danny, having gone from big favourite he finds himself get-

ting gammoned and being 0-4 down to five points! Here's the rest of the story!



Nedim rolled the 62 from the bar and hits both checkers. MC: *Did he call a 'cockshot' before rolling? If so, do you have any pictures!?!* Danny then danced twice on a 3-point board. Nedim started gloating and told Danny he shouldn't have doubled. This only made Danny more determined to win! At 0-4 down to five he wasn't happy but like a true fighter he clawed his way back and won the next three games and the tournament. Nedim was not happy, even when Danny offered him some Turkish delight as a consolation! As well as the trophy Danny won two nights accommodation at the Casino Hotel in Velden.

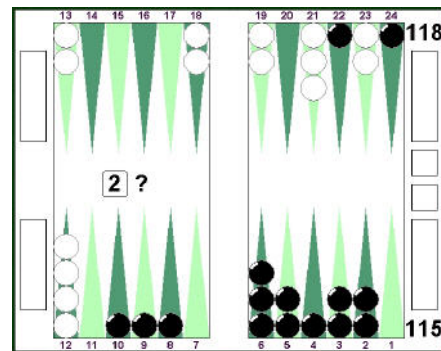
In the Super Jackpot semi-final Slatts was playing Tardieu's good friend Matten. Matten gave Slatts an early cube when the score was 5-4 in Slatts favour. On-lookers actually thought that it would have been a beaver in a money game. However, M rolled well and S rolled badly and ended up getting gammoned! He won the Crawford game and found himself in this position at DMP with a 53 to play. Interestingly, whilst the Brits that were watching felt that Slatts play of 16/8 was correct, Snowie makes it the 5th best play. Slatts went on to win the match!



Slatts played 16/8, M rolled 65 and moved 18/7. S rolls 63 and hits. End of story!

In the final of the Super Jackpot Slatts was playing a Romanian player Veres

Marius Corneliu. He is a really nice guy and it was a pleasure to watch the match. My comment after the match was that he played the player. He felt he was the underdog in the match, and having already done a deal on the prize money, he decided to be aggressive and offer early cubes. The strategy paid off. With the score at 5-6 he cubes Slatts in this position, which Snowie confirms is a No Double, Take position.



Corneliu hits on the 1-point and Slatts dances. C fails to take the man on his 3-point and S anchors. Play continues and S manages to close his board and still has the anchor, however, he is forced to run with 64. He doesn't get a shot and C wins. Score 5-8 Crawford. Well, at least Slatts couldn't get cubed early this time! He won the Crawford game but had no luck in the next one and lost the match 6-9. He did win €1,500 though so it wasn't all bad!

Ian, John B and Martin all had successes in the jackpots. Gay and I didn't win anything but had a great time anyway!

We found out that Marco is doing another tournament in Cannes the weekend before Monte Carlo with a guaranteed prize fund of €60,000. I would recommend you try and be there!

Pictures of the tournament appear on the following page . . .





The Champions, Harald Johanni, Slatts and Francois (all Biba members).

Three finals taking place at the same time, alongside a stunning view over the harbour.

From left to right:
Gay, Ian, John B, Slatts
and trophy winner, Danny



Hilton Trophy

By Michael Crane

Main (28)

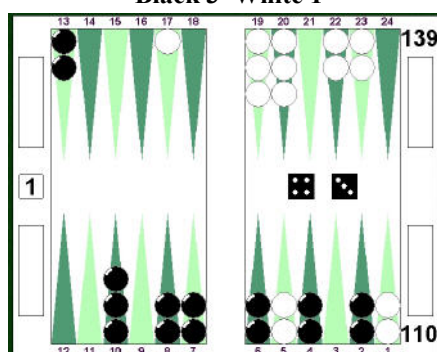
I think I'll start off with the good news: The prize Fund was rolled over! It will start at £285 for the next tournament and will almost certainly top £500.

In a match lasting just 1 hour 13 minutes (a nice quick one despite the fact that there were 12 games totaling 20 points) there were many ups and downs. Mardi Ohannessian and Simon K Jones (neither of them in the prize Fund) battled it out for the glory in the final round.

The match was rife with errors and blunders, and by far the biggest blunder came from Simon. Here he is playing as black

- what would you play?

Black 3 White 1



Black to play 43

Hands up all those that made the pure 13/6 play. Mmmm, all of you or thereabouts. Did anyone play 13/9 10/7? Well Simon did! I don't know what he was thinking but it was a huge blunder at 0.343. But, these things often work out

well and it did this time, Mardi rolled 31 and couldn't hit and Simon cubed him out.

Simon climbed to a 9-4 lead and then Mardi upped a gear and brought to score to 9-10 Crawford. By Position 25, Simon was playing a semi-backgame but he didn't have the spare checkers for timing. He did get a couple of shots but he missed them and Mardi rolled out to win the match.

Consolation (26)

Entering into the Non-prog draw, Tim Mooring fared better than anyone else winning his first four matches. Then he came up against Paul Barwick from the Main last eight. Paul knocked Tim out and then went on to be beaten by Chris Ternel - who entered from the Prog-side.

Dutchmen (and friends) Paul Van Dijke



and Rogier Van Gemert were 'late' entrants thanks to the last minute cancellation of the Deauville tournament. I don't know how they'd have fared there but here they faced each other in the semi-finals of the Consolation, each entering from the Prog-side of the draw.

It was Rogier who triumphed and went on to face Chris Ternel in the Final. The match swung back and forth and the final game was a very exciting one - one in which Rogier came out the winner.

Last Chance (17)

Bugger! Seventeen entrants! If John Slatery and Paul Van Dijke hadn't played their Consolation match on the Saturday I'd've had a perfect 16 draw. As it turned out, John was drawn out to play a pre-lim round against Myke Wignall - and I swear it was a totally random choice!

Slat doesn't care where he starts off, it's where he finishes that is important to him. This time he finished in the semis

beaten by Uldis Lapikens. However, Slat got his revenge secondhand when Uldis lost in the Final to Rosey Bensley!

Paris Hilton Video (28)

Sorry, no actual video; I don't peddle that sort of stuff!

It seems that Mick Vacarey is making a habit of coming second in the event - he came 2nd last year and 2nd this year to Dave Motley. Perhaps he'll go for the hat-trick next year.

£100 Jackpot (8)

Once again, no winner; just a split of the loot between Peter Bennt and Paul Van Dijke.

Poker (8)

It's not a proper poker tourney if there's not a Gilberston in the last three . . . and this time it was down to Rosey to see that it was indeed a 'proper' one for brothers Paul and John were absent this weekend. True to form she delivered the goods

ending up in 3rd place. Simon K Jones took 2nd and Simonetta (trying out a new hairstyle for her wedding to Roland in August) came 1st.

Friday KO (14)

Mardi Ohannessian got off to a good start by winning the Warm-up. The Final was almost an all-Dutch affair but Rogier was knocked out by Mardi in the semi; and Paul failed to stop Mardi in the Final.

Finally.

The turnout was a little disappointing but that didn't detract from the enjoyment of the tournament. We had ten fewer than last year - but I'm hopeful of a bigger attendance at the Keren Di Bona due to the generosity of Mardi & Simon choosing to give the Prize Fund a miss this weekend to boost the kitty for next month!

Clockwise: Main, Mardi & Simon. Consolation, Chris & Rogier. Last Chance, Uldis & Rosey. Paris Hilton, Mick & Dave



Letters

Brian Lever emails in regarding the ruling made on penalty points in the match commented on last issue. Brian was one of the players involved. I have reproduced my comments. The entire letter from Tony Lee can be read in Bibafax No.76 page 14:

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.

Actually only 5 points not 6!

MC: Sorry, my mistake! But potentially the match was still far from over and had already gone on long enough.

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.

Of course neither of us **deliberately** ignored you. It's just that we fell behind and weren't able to catch up sufficiently. At the time you imposed the penalty – to which neither of us objected – there was at least one other match at a similar stage, perhaps slightly more advanced.

MC: One other match was on DMP and it was down to the final moves. They had responded to 'suggestions' about penalties when I first mentioned them and, with constant monitoring they kept up an acceptable rate of play.

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.

I think part of this comment is OTT – it's an exaggeration to suggest that slow players are “crippling backgammon tournaments” or indeed that they are (deliberately?) being selfish in the way that they play. I don't know of anyone – myself included - who feels that they have a right to take as long as they want over a move or a match, nor with the salient exception of the Irish Open do I know of any tournament which has consistently suffered from slow play (and in the case of the Irish, the problem is exacerbated, perhaps even created, by the need to catch flights).

MC: I agree with you on the Irish Open. For years it has suffered from timing and, if memory serves me well three players have been the victims of time penalties in the final.

You may have some statistics to show how many times you have had to impose penalty points on players to hurry up matches – I 'd guess that you've only rarely had to resort to this sanction.

MC: I rarely have to impose penalty points or use clocks because players respond to my warnings and thus avoid them.

MC: 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!

Never mind your arse, of course it was coincidence! Most matches in most tournaments don't exceed the allocated time, otherwise backgammon really would be crippled.

MC: I believe in cause and effect, and your incident had some bearing on following matches.

Chris Bray adds his comments: Some comments and replies to issues raised in the last edition of Bibafax:

Slow Play

I fully endorse your action with regard to slow play. Ignorance of the tournament

rules is no excuse and all players must abide by the Tournament Director's decisions. The key for the TD is the smooth and timely running of the tournament to the benefit of all the players – he should not be influenced by differences in skill levels, status of auction pools or anything else.

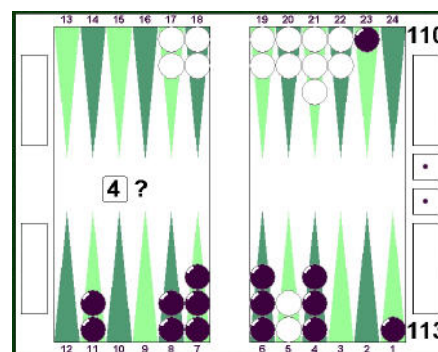
Slow play is the bane of tournament players and directors alike. One of the problems is that slow players quite often don't realise that they are playing slowly. They see themselves as playing normally whilst everyone else is playing quickly!

In an ideal world perhaps clocks would be used in all matches but this is cost prohibitive for tournament organisers at the moment. I believe the best interim solution is to give players one warning about slow play. If that is not heeded then at the second visit by the TD a clock is imposed on the players for the remainder of the match. This has the dual benefit of getting the match finished on schedule and giving the players involved some idea of what constitutes a reasonable rate of play.

MC: Thanks for your support - I shall wear it always! I try to do a difficult job to the best of my ability but you can't please everyone. Whenever I make a ruling there is always one party that doesn't like it. It upsets me when they take it personally and then stop attending future tournaments.

Chris continues:

Shlomo Vahab vs David Nahmad



RE Cedric Lytton's query I no longer have a copy of this match from Monte Carlo 1996 and neither does anybody else I have contacted. Cedric and the rest of us must forever wonder what those four moves were because I think the records have been lost in the sands of time.

John Slattery's Redouble

In her report on the Salzburg open Rosey Bensley asks whether Slats was correct to



redouble as white in the position above, leading 5-0 in a match to 9.

I trust that Rosey's question was tongue in cheek and that Slat's was just bored and wanted to get to the bar that day! An extensive Snowie rollout shows that this is a mega-blunder with an equity error of 0.473 – that's about as big as they come!!

It is instructive to understand just why this is such a massive error and to be able to learn from it. Cube action at widely skewed scores is vastly different from money play and the best tournament players spend hours studying these type of problems and honing their skills.

In a money game, redouble and drop are the correct actions for this position. Now let's examine the tournament situation:

I think most people are familiar with the concept of doubling windows. The doubling window for any given position defines the range of game winning chances for which the correct doubling actions are double/take. In a money game a doubling window can normally extend from 51% to 78%, the upper and lower bounds are governed by factors such as volatility, gammon chances and how near the players are to the end of the game (last roll situations take the lower bound down to 51%, i.e. it is correct to double with any advantage on the last roll of the game when your opponent will have no chance to redouble).

Most people are also familiar with charts for Match Winning Chances at any match score. However no one can remember them so we need formulae. I think the easiest one to remember and apply is Neil's Numbers (developed by Neil Kazaross). If you are of a more mathematical bent then Rick Janowski's formula is very accurate and relatively easy to apply.

If you don't enjoy the technical aspects of backgammon - look away now. I will use figures derived from Neil's numbers:

From Black's Perspective

Black can drop the redouble and be behind 7-0 (10% winning chances). If he takes he will either lose the match

9-0 (0%) or be ahead 8-5 (82%) – note he has an automatic redouble to 8.

Black is risking 10% to gain 72% and therefore needs to win the game only 1 time in 8 (12%) in order to be able to take.

From Slat's Perspective

If he holds the cube and loses he will be ahead 5-2 (70%)

If he redoubles and loses he will be behind 5-8 (18%)

If he holds the cube and wins he will be ahead 7-0 (90%)

If he redoubles and wins he will win the match 9-0 (100%)

He is therefore risking 52% to gain 10% and needs to be at least a 6-1 (84%) favourite to win the game before he can double.

The doubling window is tiny at 84% - 88%. Actually it is even narrower because I haven't shown the calculations to allow for gammons. When gammons are factored in the doubling window actually shrinks to 87% - 88%!! Thus Slat's cannot double until he is at least 87% favourite to win the game.

How easy is it to evaluate the position over the board? Let's try. We'll use Robertie's method of sampling 36 games and breaking them down by white's next roll:

Whenever Slat's rolls a 4 or a 5 (20 rolls) on his next turn he is likely to win but assume he rolled something like 52 followed by 66 and 33 he might get into trouble. Let's give him 19 wins out of the 20. When he keeps the prime but doesn't escape a man (21,62,22,33,66 – 7 rolls) he will have increased his jeopardy but is still OK – let's give black 1 game out of the seven. In the other nine games (61,63,32,31,11) white's prime is broken, he has two men behind a four prime versus one man behind a five-prime and the race is equal. I'd estimate winnings chances as equal and I'll give black 4 ½ wins.

In total black wins 6 ½ games or 18 %. Again, I haven't factored in the gammon

factor and that will favour black. If the estimates are correct Slat's is way off having a double.

An extensive Snowie rollout shows White winning 80% games with 26% gammons. Of black's 20% wins 2.5% are gammons. It is now clear why Slat's redouble was such a massive blunder.

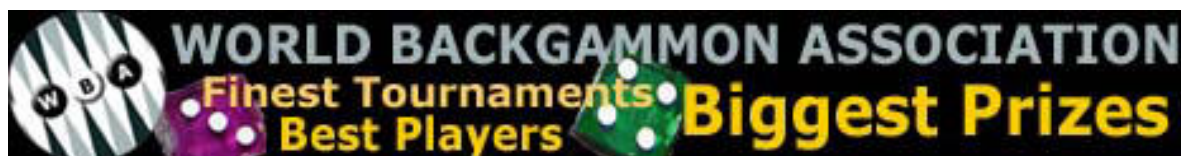
What are the lessons to be learnt here?

- 1) With a large skew in the score be very careful about giving the cube way – be very, very, very careful about redoubling.
- 2) It is important to understand doubling windows and Match Equity Charts and ideally learn to how to apply them to critical decisions.

Can you do this stuff over the board? The answer is that as with everything else, practice is essential and you do need some basic mental arithmetic skills. I am not suggesting you should go through the decision making process above very often but I do suggest you do it in important match situations. When you see good players taking a long time over a doubling decision in major tournaments they are going through calculations exactly like those above. Faced with this position over the board, I would have done the doubling window calculation, noted how narrow it was, and have quickly decided that playing on for the gammon was a better game plan than trying to decide whether I was inside the doubling window. If it had occurred in the later round of a tournament like Monte Carlo I would have gone the whole hog and estimated game-winning chances as well.

In the original position Slat's should have just played on for the gammon. One point to note though is that it would have been a very good double if his opponent had dropped! Reading your opponent is an absolutely vital part of the decision making process and if he could have induced a drop that would have been an impressive bit of character analysis.

MC: Thanks, Chris. I think we all understand that!!!



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 - John Ingamells - john.ingamells@ntlworld.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

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. Entries please by July 17.

SAC Trophy, August 6/7: The third Swiss format ranking tournament of the year. A chance to top up your ranking score and Grand Prix points.

Read this bit!

Re Countbacks in Swiss format to decide positions:

A lot of players have been unhappy with the countback system (sum of opponent's wins) to determine a players position in a Swiss tournament. I have been looking for a 'fairer' way to decide position for a long time and finally, Paul Gilbertson has come up with a workable suggestion. Instead of the sum of opponent's wins the average ranking score of your opponents is used. This is easily done using a relational file from the main database and it requires far less time and trouble incurred by me compared the countback system. I have done a test run using the County Cups matches and small but important differences were made.

This does seem a fairer way. The higher ranked the opponent the tougher the match one could argue - and basing your position on the average ranking score is better for at least one major reason : If one of your opponents fails to play all six matches you're average won't be affected by their dropping out! Those that do drop out will have their position decided by dividing their opponents' ranking scores by six instead of the actual number of matches played. This might seem a bit harsh but dropping out of a tournament causes problems for the TD and it is hoped this measure may deter some players from doing so.

Pools: At the moment pools are divided among players who share the same number of wins; however, it is my opinion that the division should use the average and be based upon positions within the tournament. This isn't set in stone and I welcome input from members regarding the pools and the proposed new system in general.

Unless there's a lot of members against this new system being used I intend to implement it at the SAC in August.

Mind Sports Backgammon - Manchester, August 20/29 (see next page) . . .

Backpacker Trophy, September 3/4: Once again I am handing over my TD's hat to Mike Main (aka Mad Mike Monk) who will be retuning his revolutionary tournament software and directing his own sponsored tournament. It will be the usual knockout format with all the drawsheets on the big screen.



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 or £10

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

All tournaments feature a Friday night Warm-up with a weekend break prize,

Saturday night Doubles Knockout, Poker 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)

Accommodation costs 2005 - Contact Central Reservations:

Paramount (ex-Hanover) +44 1455 251 000 and quote 'backgammon'

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

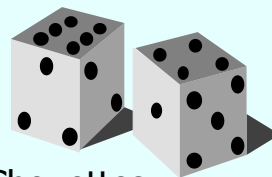
Members can be upgraded to deluxe rooms for just £20 per night upon arrival at the hotel.

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

Date 2005	Tournament			Venue	Type
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 29-30	13th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 05-06	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Hinckley	Swiss
Dec 03-04	Gilbertson UK Finals	.	.	Hinckley	Combination
2006 Tournament Calendar - * denotes confirmed event dates and venue					
* Jan 14-15	Bright 'n' Breezy	GP	UK	Brighton	Knockout
* Jan 27-29	4 th Cotswold 'Fireside'	GP	-	Blockley	Knockout
Feb 04-05	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	tba	Swiss
Mar 04-05	Slattery Scottish Open	GP	UK	tba	Knockout
Apr 08-09	At-A-Glance British Open	GP	UK	tba	Knockout
Apr ??	Manchester 1-Day	GP	-	Manchester	Combination
May 06-07	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	tba	Swiss
Jun 03-04	Hilton Trophy	GP	-	tba	Knockout
Jul 08-09	Keren Di Bona Memorial	GP	-	tba	Knockout
Jul ??	10 th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 05-06	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	tba	Swiss
* Aug 19-28	Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	-	Manchester	Swiss
Sep 09-10	Backpacker Trophy	GP	-	tba	Knockout
Oct 07-08	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	tba	Knockout
Oct ??	13 th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 04-05	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	tba	Swiss
Dec 02-03	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	tba	Double KO

FESTIVAL OF BACKGAMMON
September 1-8 2005
ISLAND OF ZAKYNTHOS – GREECE



Join our week long Backgammon Party
Daily Tournaments of various formats and Chouettes

VENUE: - THE PELIGONI CLUB ZAKYNTHOS

- After 4 successful years, 2005 is bigger and better than ever and will include poker evenings, back by popular demand.
- If you need a break from the games there is sailing, canoeing, massage, yoga, mountain walks, tennis and windsurfing all available. In only 30 seconds, you can be away from the game and diving into the clearest sea you will ever experience – in fact, 'The other half' would enjoy this holiday too.
- COST: - £395 per week (single occupancy) includes transfers and full board. (£355 per person for those sharing a room.) Prices reduced from last year !
- We also have a superb film star quality villa newly available, details on request.
- EXTRAS:- Flight (approximately £180), drinks, massage, reflexology etc. and any island or boat trips.

PARTY HOST: Neil Davidson and John Clark

To book please call: Neil Davidson 07798 614800
Or our reservation department 01243 511499

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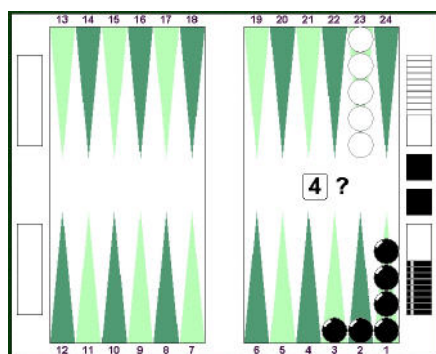
Keren Di Bona Memorial Trophy

Report by Michael Crane

Main (27)

Last year's winner, Ann Pocknell was hoping to defend her title, and, until she met Martin Barkwill in the 3rd Round, she was on line to do it. Martin, however was in no mood to let any former (or present) titleholders stand in his way and he relegated Ann to the Consolation.

In what was an exciting match to watch, Martin, playing as white in the position below was offered a recube to 4 by opponent, Uldis Lapikens in their semi-final match. With the score at 7-4 to Uldis the 4-cube, if taken, would be shipped back like a scud missile thus making it for the match. Would you double? Would you take?



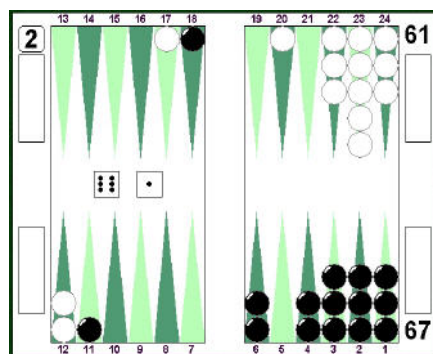
Black on roll
11 point match
Cube action?

Martin took a long think over it, thinking aloud to himself about the pros and cons of taking. If he drops he goes down 2-away, 7-away, approx 15%. If he takes and turns he has approx 19%: and he finally decides to take. Uldis rolls 64 and takes two off. Martin now needs at least four checkers off with one of his two rolls (unless Uldis rolls a double next roll). Martin rolls out a double . . . *Snake Eyes!* He takes off two checkers.

Uldis shakes and rolls and takes off two more. Martin shakes and shakes and shakes and shakes . . . and out pops *The Girls*, double-five! He whoops and springs out of his chair faster than Michael Jackson playing hide and seek with the kiddies. His leap into the air is in direct proportional conflict with Uldis's plunge into disbelief.

Both players made the correct decision, Redouble/Take followed by Redouble/Take . . . but it was still a brave decision by Martin to take the 4-cube.

David Nathan was hoping to be the first player to regain the trophy he first won in 2003. He had to beat Ian Shaw in an exciting last-eight match. With the score at 8-1 to David (white) he had to play a 61.



11 point match
White to play 61

Typical David, he moved almost every combination of 6s and 1s (several times) before settling upon 8/2 5/4 whereas Roy Hollands and a few others, myself included, favoured 8/1 leaving a four in case it was needed. On a 3-ply lookahead Snowie rated the latter move the better one but only by 0.022. David went on to win the game and the match. He then took care of Kevin White in a very exciting match that went to DMP to face Martin Barkwill in the Final.

Martin, buoyed by his victory over Uldis had almost the whole match to himself and relegated David into Runner-up and thus depriving him of not just the trophy, but a nice wedge of Winner-Takes-All as well! Time restraints in getting the Biba-fax out on time mean I am unable to analyse this match at the moment but it will appear on GammonVillage.com soon.

Progressive Consolation (25)

Uldis and Kevin from the Main were pleased to find that they were entered into the Consolation after losing their semi-final matches. They were even more pleased when they faced each other in the Consolation Final after beating Paul Barwick and Ian Shaw respectively . . . and Kevin was the most pleased when he came out the winner!

Not one of the non-progressive entrants made it into the semi, Ian and Paul above were also progressive entrants.

Last Chance (32)

With an open draw of 32 the pool was boosted somewhat and this made the event a close fought battle of playing skills and luck. Having being knocked out of the Consolation by Rosey Bensley, Simon K Jones got his revenge when he knocked her out in the 1st Round. He then went on to beat two more female players, Ann Pocknell and then Vicky Chandler. His next opponent was a bloke: could he beat a bloke or was it only girlyies he could beat?

Adrian Jones (no relation) proved no more difficult than the girlyies and it was into the Final where Dave Motley awaited him. It was a tense match and at DMP it looked as if Dave had done it. They were both bearing off and Dave was well ahead . . . that is until Simon rolled three doubles and took off eleven checkers to win the match! Dave, normally a very quiet guy was even quieter - except for the occasional sob!

Kamikazi! (24)

Main defending champion, Ann Pocknell was determined to take home some sort of trophy this weekend. The only one standing in her way this time was Ron Havenhand. Ron was yet to win a Biba 1st trophy and there was no way Ann was going to deprive him of adorning his mantelpiece with a Keren Di Bona trophy.

The 3-pointer went all the way to the wire but it was Ron who prevailed . . . but at least Ann still took home a trophy.

Friday Warm-up (8)

Emmanuel Di Bona came the closest this weekend to winning something when he came second to Martin Barkwill in the Final. This was the fillip Martin needed to carry him on through the weekend without losing a single match.

Doubles (4)

Emmanuel almost made a 1st placing but *Dead 8* swatted his *Spanish Fly* in the Final. *Dead 8* also won the Top Name - and were far more exciting to watch than that *Live 8* rubbish that several trillion people watched. In fact *Dead 8*'s banter was far funnier than Ricky Gervaise . . . but that wasn't such a feat, was it?!!!

£50 Jackpot (8)

Getting a winner out of the Jackpots nowadays is harder than getting your kids out of Michael Jackson's bedroom. As in the past the 1st place was split between two players, John Slattery and Chris Ternel.



Poker (8)

Shock! Horror! Not one Gilbertson sibling managed to win any dosh in the poker! At last the stranglehold the Gilbertsons had over the poker has been broken. The daring threesome that did the dirty on them were, 1st: Mick Vacarey,

2nd: Martin Hemming, and 3rd: Myke (Mad Mullah) Wignall. Watch out, you three, the Gs will be gunning for you next time.

Finally.

I'd like to thank Emmanuel for sponsor-

ing the tournament and for providing some magnificent trophies. And I'd like to thank those members that turned out to play instead of stopping at home to watch Live 8 . . . you didn't miss much!



Can you spot Emmanuel playing his , 'Where's Wally?' Game?



Top Left: Main

Top Right : Consolation

Bottom Left : Kamikazi

Bottom Right: Last Chance

Tournament Results

Hilton Trophy, June 4/5 2005

Main 28

- 1 Mardi Ohannessian
- 2 Simon K Jones
- 3/4 Rogier Van Gemert
- 3/4 Chris Ternel
- 5/8 John Slattery
- 5/8 Ron Havenhand
- 5/8 Stephen Cole
- 5/8 Paul Barwick

Consolation 26

- 1 Rogier Van Gemert
- 2 Chris Ternel
- 3/4 Paul Barwick
- 3/4 Paul Van Dijke
- 5/6 Tim Mooring
- 5/6 Ron Havenhand

Last Chance 17

- 1 Rosey Bensley
- 2 Uldis Lapikens
- 3/4 John Slattery
- 3/4 Martin Hemming

Paris Hilton Video 26

- 1 Dave Motley
- 2 Mick Vacarey
- 3/4 Ian Tarr
- 3/4 Myke Wignall

Friday Warm-up 14

- 1 Mardi Ohannessian
- 2 Paul Van Dijke
- 3/4 Rogier van Gemert
- 3/4 John Slattery

Poker 8

- 1 Simonetta Barone
- 2 Simon K Jones
- 3 Rosey Bensley

£100 Jackpot 8

- 1 Paul Van Dyke
- Peter Bennet

Grand Prix at Hilton Trophy

- 18.58 Mardi Ohannessian
- 13.42 Simon K Jones
- 9.29 Tim Mooring
- 9.29 Chris Ternel
- 9.29 Paul Van Dijke
- 9.29 Rogier Van Gemert
- 6.19 John Slattery
- 6.19 Rosey Bensley
- 6.19 Ron Havenhand

- 6.19 Stephen Cole
- 4.13 Jeff Ellis
- 4.13 Paul Barwick
- 4.13 Ian Tarr
- 4.13 Uldis Lapikens
- 4.13 Dave Motley
- 4.13 Kevin White
- 4.13 Peter Bennet
- 4.13 Myke Wignall

- 2.58 Jeff Barber
- 2.58 Martin Hemming
- 2.58 Simonetta Barone
- 2.58 Adrian Jones
- 2.06 Lionel Mann
- 2.06 Mick Vacarey
- 1.55 Jason Champion
- 1.55 Tony Walters

Keren Di Bona Memorial Trophy, July 2/3 2005

Main 27

- 1 Martion Barkwill
- 2 David Nathan
- 3/4 Kevin White
- 3/4 Uldis Lapikens
- 5/8 Ian Shaw
- 5/8 Ron Havenhand
- 5/8 Mick Vacarey
- 5/8 Ann Pocknell

Consolation 25

- 1 Kevin White
- 2 Uldis Lapikens
- 3/4 Ian Shaw
- 3/4 Paul Barwick
- 5/6 Steve Rimmer
- 5/6 Ron Havenhand

Last Chance 32

- 1 Simon K Jones
- 2 Dave Motley
- 3/4 Chris Ternel
- 3/4 Adrian Jones

Kamikazi 24

- 1 Ron Havenhand
- 2 Ann Pocknell
- 3/4 Emmanuel Di Bona
- 3/4 Jeff Barber

Doubles 4

- 1 Dead 8
- 2 Spanish Fly
- Top name: Dead 8

Friday Warm-up 8

- 1 Martin Barkwill
- 2 Emmanuel Di Bona

£50 Jackpot 8

- 1 John Slattery & Chris Ternel

Poker 8

- 1 Mick Vacarey
- 2 Martin Hemming
- 3 Myke (Mad Mullah) Wignall

Grand Prix at Keren Di Bona

- 13.42 Martin Barkwill
- 13.42 David Nathan
- 9.29 Kevin White
- 9.29 Paul Barwick
- 9.29 Simon K Jones
- 6.19 Uldis Lapikens
- 6.19 Steve Rimmer
- 6.19 Dave Motley
- 6.19 Ian Shaw

- 6.19 Ron Havenhand
- 6.19 Mick Vacarey
- 4.13 Roy Hollands
- 4.13 John Slattery
- 4.13 Rosey Bensley
- 4.13 Chris Ternel
- 4.13 Ann Pocknell
- 4.13 Adrian Jones
- 2.58 Jeff Barber

- 2.58 Peter Christmas
- 2.58 Rachel Rhodes
- 2.58 Emmanuel Di Bona
- 2.58 Martin Hemming
- 2.58 Vicky Chandler
- 2.58 Jason Champion
- 2.06 Stephen Drake
- 2.06 Myke Wignall



Grand Prix Championship July 2005

68.12	John Slattery	13.42	Chris Bray	6.19	Mike Ziemann
58.84	David Nathan	13.42	Richard Granville	5.68	Suzy Crabb
57.80	Adrian Jones	13.42	Andrew Sarjeant	5.16	Juanita Ferrer
54.70	Simon K Jones	13.42	Geoff Conn	4.13	Paul Money
52.64	Chris Ternel	13.42	Darryl Kirk	4.13	Miles Illott
49.03	Mardi Ohannessian	12.90	Paul Christmas	4.13	Brendan Burgess
48.00	Peter Christmas	12.38	Bob Young	4.13	Arthur Musgrove
42.83	Julian Fetterlein	12.38	Connor Dickinson	4.13	Steve Pickard
42.31	Stephen Drake	12.38	Malcolm Robertson	4.13	Peter Snape
41.29	Jason Champion	12.38	Stuart Mann	4.13	Stavros Elia
40.77	Rachel Rhodes	12.38	Rodney Lighton	4.13	Stefanie Rohan
40.26	Tim Mooring	12.38	Mick Butterfield	4.13	Rebecca Bell
39.22	Peter Bennet	11.87	Alan Greenwood	4.13	Tony Fawcett
38.19	Uldis Lapikens	11.87	Lawrence Powell	4.13	David Barker
37.16	Jeff Barber	11.35	Paul Van Dijke	4.13	Eddie Barker
32.51	Ron Havenhand	11.34	Fanika Petkovska	4.13	Jane Oxley
32.00	Kevin White	10.32	Jeff Ellis	4.13	Vicky Gilbert
32.00	Rosey Bensley	10.32	Dave McNair	4.13	Ian Gwynne
31.48	Nicky Check	10.32	Ralph Eskinazi	4.13	Andy Bell
31.48	Tony Walters	10.32	Matthew Fisher	4.13	Chris F Roberts
30.45	Paul Barwick	9.29	David Edwards	4.13	Sean Williams
29.93	Ian Tarr	9.29	Paul Lamford	4.13	Howard Furr-Barton
28.90	Mike Grabsky	9.29	Steve Hallet	4.13	Mourad Wahba
28.90	Mike Main	9.29	Emmanuel Di Bona	4.13	Gino
26.84	Tony Lee	9.29	Andreas Giannopoulos	2.58	David Wallbank
26.83	Roy Hollands	9.29	Sean Casey	2.58	Jon Sharpe
25.81	Mike Greenleaf	9.29	Steve John	2.58	Bryony Jessiman
25.28	Mick Vacarey	9.29	Leslie Singleton	2.58	Paul Sambell
24.25	Peter Chan	9.29	David Sanders	2.58	Colin Talbot
23.74	Brian Lever	8.26	Tim Brown	2.58	Alison Lee
23.74	Nigel Merrigan	8.25	Stephen Ferrer	2.58	Liz Barker
23.74	Paul Gilbertson	7.74	Mark Dixon	2.58	Bob Bruce
23.22	John Gilbertson	6.71	Edwin Turner	2.58	Stanley James
22.71	Julian Minwalla	6.71	Jo Curl	2.58	David Horner
22.19	Martin Barkwill	6.71	Malcolm Wilson	2.58	Vince Poil
22.19	Vicky Chandler	6.19	Dale Taylor	2.58	Kerry Wells
21.16	Myke Wignall	6.19	Grahame Powell	2.58	Ray Fard
20.64	Martin Hemming	6.19	Lionel Mann	2.58	Marc LeClerc
20.12	Roland Herrera	6.19	John Thomas	2.06	Colin Laight
19.61	Simonetta Barone	6.19	Steve Rimmer	2.06	Philip Jones
19.61	Stephen Cole	6.19	Richard Biddle	2.06	Cedric Lytton
18.58	Brian Busfield	6.19	Dod Davies	2.06	Karl Simpson
18.58	Blaine Buchanan	6.19	Raj Jansari	2.06	Adam Stocks
18.58	Neil Young	6.19	Kevin Stebbing	2.06	Andrew McKechnie
18.58	Rogier Van Gemert	6.19	Michael Damianou	2.06	Paul Fox
17.55	Danny Cohen	6.19	Ian Shaw	2.06	Catherine Oldfield
17.03	Dave Motley	6.19	Ann Pocknell	2.06	Villi Flari
15.48	John Hurst	6.19	Ken Gibson	2.06	Diane Iveson
15.48	David Fall	6.19	Zoe Cunningham	2.06	Roy Whitehorne
15.48	Wayne Felton	6.19	Paul Statter	1.55	Michael Crane
15.48	David Markwick	6.19	Kazu Niki		
13.42	John Broomfield	6.19	Rene Van Der Pluijm		

Ranking Championship July 2005 (3 or more played)

14	2144.93	Simon K Jones	14	1896.14	Adrian Jones	14	1667.93	Peter Chan
14	2127.14	John Slattery	14	1860.93	Peter Bennet	14	1483.57	Rosey Bensley
14	2102.00	Chris Ternel	14	1832.29	Tim Mooring	14	1452.21	Tony Walters
14	2086.07	David Nathan	14	1818.21	Ron Havenhand	14	1449.93	Stephen Cole
14	2056.57	Jason Champion	14	1774.07	Roy Hollands	13	1695.15	Nicky Check
14	2036.93	Peter Christmas	14	1738.86	Kevin White	13	1677.77	Julian Minwalla
14	2018.14	Mardi Ohannessian	14	1724.43	Paul Barwick	13	1587.92	Vicky Chandler
14	1995.07	Jeff Barber	14	1696.07	Mick Vacarey	12	1626.92	Paul Gilbertson
14	1992.79	Uldis Lapikens	14	1670.93	John Gilbertson	12	1592.17	Bob Young



12	1577.08	Stephen Drake	7	1374.71	Connor Dickinson	3	1782.67	Ken Gibson
12	1573.92	Rodney Lighton	7	1367.43	Lionel Mann	3	1756.00	Kazu Niki
12	1374.17	Myke Wignall	7	1225.86	Alison Lee	3	1734.33	Michael Damianou
11	1702.09	Ian Tarr	6	1950.50	Richard Granville	3	1719.00	Paul Statter
10	1713.30	Tony Lee	6	1877.83	Brian Busfield	3	1714.67	Dale Taylor
10	1533.70	Jeff Ellis	6	1809.67	Rogier Van Gemert	3	1622.67	Raj Jansari
9	1889.78	Neil Young	6	1663.67	Wayne Felton	3	1464.67	Jane Oxley
9	1862.78	Rachel Rhodes	6	1526.00	Graham Powell	3	1448.67	Ann Pocknell
9	1784.11	Brian Lever	6	1381.50	Ed Turner	3	1411.67	Stephen Ferrer
9	1648.56	Mick Butterfield	5	1981.60	Martin Barkwill	3	1406.00	Howard Furr-Barton
9	1565.78	Paul Christmas	5	1734.20	Nigel Merrigan	3	1337.33	Eddie Barker
9	1441.78	Martin Hemming	5	1503.00	Mike Greenleaf	3	1094.67	Julian Fetterlein
9	1396.00	Dave Motley	4	2012.50	Dave Edwards			
9	1180.89	Fanika Petkovska	4	1994.25	Sean Casey			
8	1866.00	Mike Grabsky	4	1878.50	Steve John			
8	1336.75	Roland Herrera	4	1826.00	John Hurst			
7	1844.43	Mike Main	4	1530.00	David Markwick			
7	1795.86	Darryl Kirk	4	1491.50	Dave McNair			
7	1689.71	Dave Sanders	4	1415.00	Malcolm Wilson			
7	1584.71	Alan Greenwood	4	1367.00	Emmanuel Di Bona			
7	1524.14	Stuart Mann	3	2004.33	Ian Shaw			
7	1420.00	Simonetta Barone	3	1803.67	Malcolm Robertson			

Active Rankings July 2005

1961	1969	John Slattery	1660	1660	Ian Tarr	1490	1490	Neil Young
1943	1943	Julian Fetterlein	1651	1651	Mike Greenleaf	1489	1462	Dave Motley
1930	1930	Brian Lever	1644	1619	Steve Rimmer	1489	1489	Julian Minwalla
1926	1926	Tony Lee	1643	1633	Adrian Jones	1483	1483	Richard Biddle
1889	1912	Rachel Rhodes	1640	1640	Bob Young	1481	1481	Ernie Pick
1889	1866	David Nathan	1638	1638	Mick Butterfield	1481	1481	Roland Herrera
1836	1836	Richard Granville	1633	1633	Ian Gwynne	1479	1479	David Markwick
1821	1821	Stuart Mann	1630	1618	Uldis Lapikens	1476	1476	Wayne Felton
1816	1816	Mardi Ohannessian	1624	1624	Barry McAdam	1473	1473	Johan Sallfors
1802	1802	Dave McNair	1619	1626	Jason Champion	1471	1471	Rebecca Bell
1801	1801	David Startin	1613	1613	Rodney Lighton	1470	1470	Tony Walters
1799	1799	Dod Davies	1611	1611	Jeff Ellis	1468	1468	David Sanders
1798	1798	Lawrence Powell	1609	1576	Ian Shaw	1460	1460	Anthony Coker
1779	1779	Steve Hallet	1603	1576	Paul Barwick	1454	1454	Simonetta Barone
1769	1784	Peter Christmas	1601	1601	Paul Christmas	1453	1457	Rosey Bensley
1756	1756	Steve Pickard	1600	1600	Kerry Jackson	1451	1451	Mike Main
1748	1748	Danny Cohen	1600	1600	Ken Gibson	1444	1444	Malcolm Wilson
1747	1735	Simon K Jones	1599	1599	Edwin Turner	1439	1439	Steve John
1746	1746	Raj Jansari	1593	1581	Ron Havenhand	1439	1463	Myke Wignall
1739	1733	Roy Hollands	1587	1587	Geoff Conn	1430	1457	Jane Oxley
1735	1735	Mike Grabsky	1587	1587	Paul Statter	1423	1423	Alan Greenwood
1734	1734	John Hurst	1583	1583	John Wright	1423	1423	Leslie Singleton
1727	1727	Kazu Niki	1568	1568	Grahame Powell	1415	1415	Andy Bell
1726	1726	Kevin Stebbing	1564	1597	Jeff Barber	1409	1409	Hubert De L'Epine
1722	1722	Brendan Burgess	1562	1562	John Gilbertson	1407	1407	Bob Bruce
1721	1721	Arthur Musgrove	1548	1557	Vicky Chandler	1396	1396	Colin Laight
1717	1759	Emmanuel Di Bona	1545	1533	Martin Hemming	1395	1395	Catherine Oldfield
1708	1708	Dave Coyne	1540	1549	Paul Gilbertson	1394	1394	Jo Curl
1707	1707	Tim Mooring	1537	1537	Eddie Barker	1382	1382	Chris Evans
1707	1707	Nicky Check	1535	1535	Stavros Elia	1381	1381	Tim Brown
1701	1701	Peter Bennet	1528	1528	Kevin Berry	1374	1374	Paul Fox
1701	1678	Chris Ternel	1527	1527	Darryl Kirk	1373	1373	Fanika Petkovska
1698	1698	John Thomas	1517	1517	Matthew Fisher	1367	1367	Cedric Lytton
1694	1718	Stephen Drake	1517	1517	David McNamara	1362	1343	Mick Vacarey
1692	1680	Ann Pocknell	1515	1515	Peter Chan	1353	1353	Stephen Cole
1690	1690	Dale Taylor	1514	1514	David Horner	1344	1344	Tony Fawcett
1663	1663	Brian Busfield	1496	1460	Kevin White	1322	1322	Jon Sharpe
1662	1662	Connor Dickinson	1492	1492	Cliff Connick	1248	1248	Alison Lee

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