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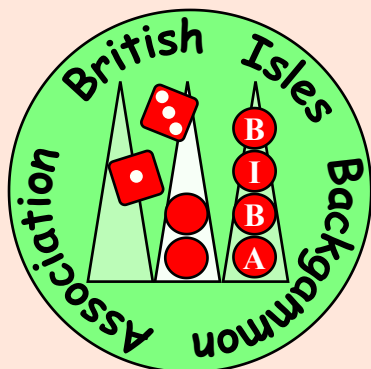
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Jeff Barber

Mind Sports Triple Gold Winner

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See page 23



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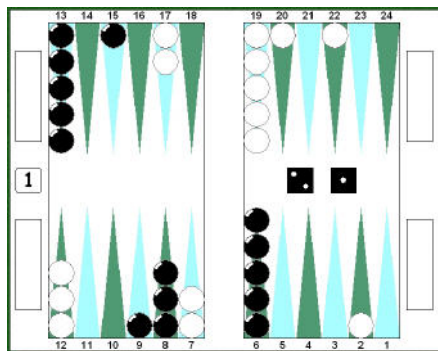
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Archive - Articles by Paul Magriel, New York Times

Below I have reproduced four articles written by Paul Magriel that appeared in the New York Times from December 1979 to June 1980. I would like to acknowledge Paul's and the New York Times's part in this article, and thank them. I have used Snowie Pro4 to provide rollouts as a comparison on each of the positions. MC

A Triple Duplication Totalled A Sum Equal to Fine Victory - 9 Dec 1979

Last summer the first International Backgammon Championship of Puerto Rico was held at the Cerromar Beach Hotel in Dorado Beach. This event, sponsored by Rums of Puerto Rico, drew a strong field of internationally recognised experts. Kal Robinson of Los Angeles defeated Peter Gold of London, in the best of two-out-of-three 15-point finals match. Many new young players also turned in excellent performances. For example, 20-year-old Eric Sedel of New York won the consolation, and 18-year-old Jay Whitehead, a San Francisco chess senior master, won the last chance.



In the position above, Sedel, (black) demonstrated the mature judgment that enabled him to beat a strong opponent in the consolation finals match. The game is still in its formative stage; neither side has yet made a point in the home boards. Although white has a third man sent back, he has compensated by establishing black's bar-point (the 7-point).

With 21 to play, black could safety both his blots (exposed men) by moving 15/13 9/8. Despite his lead in the race, Sedel realised that it was premature to attempt to avoid any contact with white. Indeed, stacking all his men on only three points (the 6- 8- and 13-points) would be short-sighted. Without any flexibility black would soon find that most of his rolls played awkwardly. By playing safe immediately black will only postpone the danger and give white a chance to strengthen his home board. If black is hit later he will not be able to fight back because of his failure to improve his position.

At the beginning of the game black's first priority is to rapidly bring all his men into play and attempt to establish new points. Black correctly plays 15/14 6/4. With this move black unstacked a man from the 6-point and starts the 4-point while retaining valuable builders on the 14- and 9-points. Black is willing to accept the risk of being hit in order to develop a strong game. Furthermore, even if hit next turn, black has little to fear because white is temporarily so weak and disorganised.

Notice also that the danger of being hit is not as great as may first appear. Even though black has three men exposed (on the 4-, 9-, and 14-points) white needs the same number, a 2, to hit in each place. The number that white needs to hit with, 2, is said to be 'duplicated'. By duplicating white's good numbers, black reduces his chances of being hit - despite his three blots he is effectively leaving only a single direct shot instead of a double or triple shot.

MC: Perhaps this position was one of the reasons for 'Duplication & Diversification' in Paul's 'Backgammon' which he published in 1976.

I Googled a few names and found that Jay Whitehead is still involved in backgammon. Here's an extract from Craig Mar's 'Life in the Chess World': "Jay Whitehead was just 12 and cocky, bordering on arrogant, but even at that age I could see the great love and intensity he had for the game [chess], qualities you couldn't teach, which would propel Jay 8 years later into the U.S. closed championship. Jay became a serious backgammon player a few years later, joined the Hare Krishna organization, and quit chess before he turned 30."

Did Snowie agree with Paul's move?

13/10	
15/13 9/8	-0.007
15/14 6/4	-0.049
15/14 13/11	-0.062
13/11 9/8	-0.066

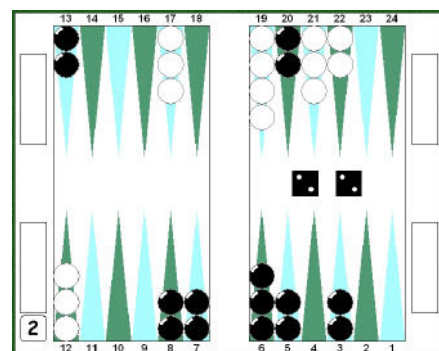
Well, Snowie rates it an error and it prefers it's own duplication move with 3s and 2s being duplicated. It does give more game winning chances (GWC) with

51.3% as opposed to 50.4% but it's just not a big difference. One thing in Paul's favour is the number of gammons won by white. In Paul's move white has 13.9% and with Snowie's 14.2%. .

Although 15/13 9/8 is almost as good as Snowie's 1st choice, I personally like the clean lines of the duplication moves and my move was the duplication of 2s.

Fine Holding Game Requires Getting Wagons in a Circle - 4 May 1980

Often in backgammon a player will fall behind in the race yet still have good winning chances. The basic strategy in such games is to play a holding game. In such a game the player who is behind seeks to hinder his opponent from coming home safely by holding certain key points on the opponent's side of the board. To play an effective holding game, it is necessary to plan ahead in order to create the best defensive formation.



In the position above, white has gained a significant lead in the race and has already doubled black. Thus, black's main winning chance is to wait and hope for a shot. White may have trouble bringing home all three men on his mid-point, his 13-point. White will be able to move the first man easily, but then 'clearing' the point with the remaining two men will be difficult. In fact, with black holding the 20- and 13-points, white will need a double to come home safely. If white fails to roll a double in time, he will be forced to leave a man exposed.

With the roll of 22, one plan for black is to improve his home board by playing 8/4(2), making the 4-point and so building a powerful 5-in-a-row prime (from the 3-point to the 8-point). Another plan



is to make a different holding formation by switching from the 20-point to the 18-point. The remaining twos could be played 6/4(2). By making the 18-point, white's bar-point, black also prevents white from coming home safely without a double.

Which formation is better? If we view black's position from a static point of view - that is, if black does not have to move - then both formations give black about equal chances for a shot. From a dynamic point of view, however, making the 18-point is far superior.

The holding formation black now has requires black to hold *both* the 20-point and the 13-point. Unfortunately black lacks the time to hold both. Black will soon run out of constructive moves on his side of the board and be forced to give up the 13-point. When black gives up the 13-point, white can bring his last two men down one at a time, exposing himself to an indirect 8-shot. By contrast, the 18-point alone is sufficient to stop white's men on the mid-point. Thus, making the 18-point, black creates a holding position that he will be able to keep; black frees his men on the 13-point giving himself valuable time. Therefore, by planning ahead, black can give himself a good holding game. Failure to plan ahead will result in a position that, although superficially adequate, will not be able to be maintained.

MC: Moving to the 18-point is definitely correct - it makes it very awkward for white to shift off his mid-point. The 'actual' move of 6/4(2) is a bit ambiguous: "The remaining twos could be played 6/4(2)." The word, 'could' here might imply that 6/4(2) is just an option and not 'the' move to make. The whole point is, the holding formation, not the

entire move.

Snowie says:

20/18(2) 8/4	
20/18(2) 7/5 6/4	-0.003
20/18(2) 6/2	-0.006
20/18(2) 6/4(2)	-0.007
20/18(2) 8/6 7/5	-0.007

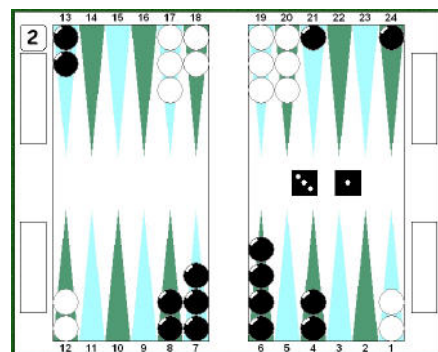
Shifting off the 6-point is my favourite move because it makes a new point, and, although it does vacate the 5-point, it can be made fairly easily and quite soon, perhaps. White is unlikely to leave a blot just yet, and the mid-point checkers for black gives him a little more timing. With an equity of -0.007 max for the top five moves, any move is acceptable - just so long as it's accompanied by 20/18(2)

Before Planning Big Attack, Be Sure to Cover Your Rear - 1 June, 1980

The Black and White San Francisco Classic Backgammon Tournament last weekend attracted a strong field that included all the top West Coast players. Allen van Gelder of San Francisco took top honors by defeating Michael Maxakuli, president of the Las Vegas club. Aram Kouleyan, last year's winner, and Alan Martin were semi-finalists. In other sections: George Matthews overcame Ted Kim to win the consolation; Lynn Madlener took the last chance, and Richard Maurer beat Mike Margollis in the intermediate.

With the two finalists sequestered in a closed room, several hundred spectators were able to observe the 21-point finals on closed-circuit television. In the first half of this well-played match, both players won some lucky games but neither was able to build up a lead. With the score tied 11-11, however, the luck of the dice shifted in favour of van Gelder. He

won the next two games and went ahead 14-11. In the following decisive game, van Gelder (black) obtained a slight advantage, and gave Maxakuli (white) a somewhat premature double. Several rolls later this position was reached.



With the roll of 31, black has several favorable plays. One possibility is 8/5 6/5, making the 5-point. Control of this point is critical for containing white's two backmen. But as much as black desires this point, he has a more pressing concern.

Black's first priority is the safety of his own two backmen, which are split in white's home board, the blot on the 21-point is dangerously exposed to white's builders, which are poised to attack. Black cannot afford to give white the opportunity to seize the 21-point and so form a 5-in-a-row prime (from the 21-point through to the 17-point). Accordingly, it is essential for black to button up by playing 24/21 with his 3. By making the 21-point himself, black settles the situation on white's side of the board and can then turn his attention to containing white.

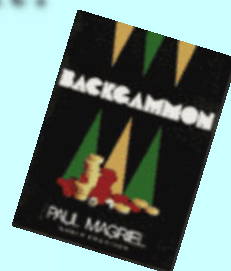
After playing the 3, 24/21, black still must decide how to play the 1. The conservative choice is 7/6, stacking a fifth man on the 6-point. Although safe, ►

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this play is awkward and makes it difficult for black to further develop his position. Instead, van Gelder decided on a more aggressive alternative.

The correct play is 24/21 6/5, putting a single man on the 5-point, by slotting the 5-point, black gambles that white will be unable to hit next turn with a 4 (14 chances out of 36 possible). If white misses, then black will be in a position to cover his blot and obtain a winning position. Slotting here is the most forceful and direct way for black to realise his advantage.

Furthermore, even if white hits, all is not lost - because black has established the 21-point, he will still have a lot of counterplay.

In the actual game van Gelder's play succeeded: White failed to roll a 4, black covered the 5-point, and black was fortunate to win an unexpected gammon (double game). Maxakuli tried hard to make a comeback, but van Gelder's 18-11 lead proved insurmountable.

MC: Another google and here we have: "Michael 'Max' Maxakuli was publisher of the Las Vegas Backgammon Magazine for a decade during the 1970s and early 1980s. Over the past 30 years, Max has accumulated a treasure trove of people pictures from the days when the backgammon scene was an elegant way of life. With the advent of Snowie, "techies" dominate the game and style is a thing of the past. But as long as these photographs are saved, we will always remember the game at its most glamorous." These pictures can be seen at the Bill Davis's Chicago Point web site, www.chicagopoint.com/maxpix.html from which the this picture of 'Max' is taken.



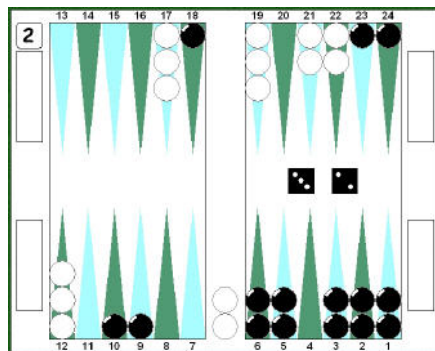
So, what did Snowie say?

24/21 6/5	
24/21 7/6	-0.057
8/5 6/5	-0.187

*In his book, 'Backgammon', Paul stresses the importance of making 'The Golden Point', the 20-point (your opponent's 5-point); and here he is telling you **not** to make it! And he's correct. As tempting as it looks to own your 5-point, the threat to the black checker on the 21-point is too great to ignore.*

Question is Not What to Do. But the Best Way of Doing It - 15 June 1980

In backgammon some games become violent confrontations in which the less fortunate player finds himself facing a closed board several men on the bar. Because the outcome of such confrontations may be decided by a single roll, luck seems to predominate. Skilful play, however, is seldom more important than in these life-or-death situations. The successful player knows not only when to launch an all-out attack, but how to press it to final victory.



In the position above, black has attacked white and has so far been successful. With five points closed in his home board, black needs only to make the 4-point in order to complete the close-out. Conversely, white, with two men on the bar, has only one hope for survival - to establish the 4-point himself. There is no question that, as black, you must ruthlessly attempt to squelch this hope - the only question is what is the most effective and reliable way to do so.

One method for making the 4-point is to *slot*; that is, to leave a single man exposed there. With the roll of 32, for example, you can play 9/4. If white fails to roll a 4 (to re-enter and hit you), then you will have the opportunity to cover the blot (exposed man) on the 4-point and so complete the close-out. Although slotting is the most direct approach and can yield the quickest results, there is a better and more reliable technique to close white out.

The proper method in positions such as this (where the opponent has two or more

men on the bar), is to wait until he re-enters with one man and *then* hit him - even with a blot if necessary. Accordingly, the correct play in the position is 18/13, not slotting, but bringing a new man closer to the 4-point. To see why this method is better, compare what white needs to survive if (a) you slot, or (b) you wait until he comes in and then you hit him.

In case (a), if white hits you with one 4, you may not be able to hit him back immediately because you are on the bar, and you have lost a builder. If you fail to hit him back, white needs only one more 4 to establish the 4-point.

In case (b), you wait for him to re-enter with one man, in the meantime bringing more builders to bear on the 4-point. First, white must roll one 4 to come in. Then, after you hit him, white must immediately roll a second 4 to keep from being closed out. This, in turn, must be followed by a third 4 to make the point before you can hit him again. Thus, to survive, white needs more 4s in rapid succession if you *don't* slot.

MC : I'm not sure about the actual play of 18/13. If it's supposed to be in a position to hit white when he comes in then I fail to see what moving to the 13-point achieves. It is 9 pips away and the rolls that can hit on the 4-point, 63, 54 and 33 can all be used from the the 10- and 9-points. I looked at what could go wrong for black after this roll and I thought 66 would be a real pain in the arse: a blot left on the 4-point and nothing to cover it. With 66 in mind I chose to play 18/16 23/20; thus making the 4-point if it rolled out with some time to spare to get the last checkers home.

Snowie says:

23/20 18/16	
23/20 9/7	-0.011
23/18	-0.035
18/13	-0.036
18/15 9/7	-0.043
9/4	-0.318

Well, slotting really is a bad choice (and that's the point of this article)- but I often see 'experienced' players slotting when it isn't necessary instead of waiting to either make the point outright or knock their opponent back onto the bar after re-entering.

Mind Management: Emotional Skills Training Insights into Peak Performance

By Nigel Merrigan

“A serious competitor with dreams of success would never leave his or her mental training to chance”, although, “psychological preparation is the one component often neglected” (The Online Journal of Sport Psychology, 2006).

Advances in Sport Science over the past twenty years have increased the supply and demand for Sport Psychologists in many of today's high profile sports. Once perceived as an airy-fairy supplement for sport enhancement, today psychology offers a way for the aspiring athlete to tap into areas of most concern, which without the facilitative guidance of a Psychologist could remain hidden from view. Let's be very clear from the onset, no amount of psychological training can ever substitute knowledge and technique of ones' sport. That is not to say we should be ambivalent towards what psychology has to offer. On the contrary, we need only to look within the ranks of our own mind sport to notice those who excel under intense pressure. Were they successful because they were lucky, maybe! Perhaps their opponent choked as they neared the finish line, possibly! Alternatively, was it because they had superior psychological readiness? For those of you who rant on about hard luck stories, you are not required to read any further. For the rest of you, especially the “chokers” please continue, who knows you may learn to loosen that necktie that has been cooking your brain.

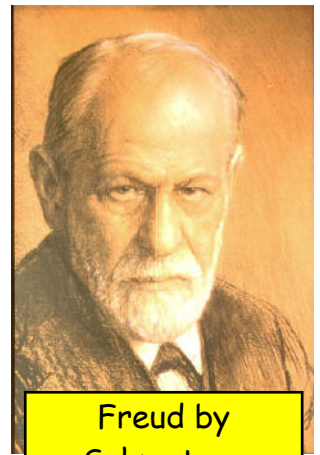
The purpose of this article is not to convince you how significant and applicable Sport Psychology is to Backgammon. Only you can be the judge of that. Neither is it the intention to advise you in any way on what your psychological response should be, especially in situations where your opponent has jumped all over your cube decisions by redoubling you back in three consecutive games. Since we are on the topic however, many high profile competitors believe mental preparation to be a significant factor when the heat is on. Take Pete Sampras for instance, for him “you need the game, you need the heart and you need the mind”. At the very core of Peter Ebdon's emotional buoyancy lies an intrinsic ability to strengthen and sustain self-confidence, which in contrast to many other competitors in the world of sport, self-confidence is sought extrinsically. For example, everything is peachy when they get their noses in front but whenever their opponent threatens to oppose the lead they can become vulnerable to attack from within, resulting in self-confidence shifting to self-doubt, self-doubt manifesting into mental disorganisation and as reliable as a

pristine Swiss watch failure inevitably follows. By definition, they are their worst enemy.

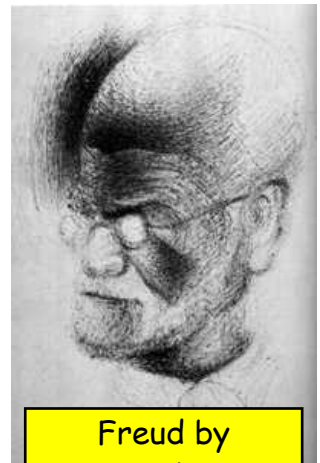
In anticipation, there are no quick fixes, so if you are looking for some I am sorry but I have run out of band-aid. Fast track solutions are merely inspirational delusions of grander that inevitably do more harm than good. Any attempt to enhance performance beyond the scope of ones' limitations must commence on a holistic level, that is to say the whole person mentally and physically. Physically because the mind functions, so much better when the body is fit and given the right kind of nutrition. Current research has focused extensively on the ‘self-concept’ the nerve centre of perceptual awareness where perceived components such as confidence are either high or low. While confidence is a necessary ingredient for success, other trait characteristics need to be present as well. The purpose of this article is to present you with a number of insights deemed appropriate where emotional skills training and peak performance is concerned. On a legal issue, the author has no formal declaration for you to sign exempting him from any responsibility in cases where second or third parties require a lobotomy.

Joking aside, this article will discuss the usefulness of Emotional Intelligence (EI), the ability to recognise and manage your emotions, motivating yourself, recognising, and understanding the emotions of others. Including a piece on Neuro Linguistic Programming the ability to reacquire mental equilibrium was tempting. However, as a pseudo-science it fails to remain within the parameters of objectivity and refutability. Alternatively, and relevant to EI is Social and Cognitive Psychology; in particular attitudes, body language, reasoning and decision making respectively. An integral component for success is Mental Toughness, which falls under the sub-categories of Resilience, Self-Efficacy and Self-Esteem. This is by no means an exhaustive list but it is a selective one. In turn, no discussion on the topic of Sport Psychology would be complete without an exposé on what Sport Psychologists refer to as ‘being in the zone’. Lastly, attention will focus on ideas for developing a framework for an emotional skills programme in the pursuit of peak performance.

A succinct definition of EI is “the ability to perceive, identify and manage emotions”. We all possess the ability to perceive an emotion and to a large degree, we are able to identify specific emotions at any given time. However, manag-



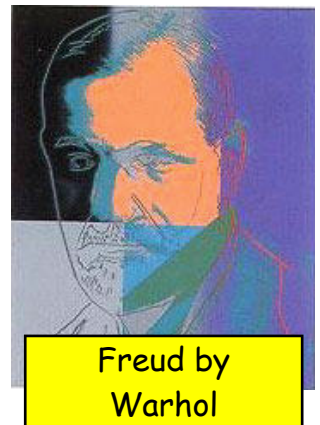
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ing emotions involves a process of learning unlike our innate ability to perceive and identify emotions. Self-Awareness, the cornerstone of EI and the embodiment of emotional regulation allow for a more flexible adaptation to weathering the emotional storms, and the lack of it is hazardous to ones' sporting well-being. For instance, swings of fortune especially in Backgammon can often trigger a plethora of mixed and unbalanced set of emotions that threaten to derail an athlete's composure. As such, the relationship between emotions and Backgammon in essence is as prevalent as skin on the body.

There is considerable congruity among research theses reflecting the impact of EI on performance. In short, research findings report an increase of 43% in performance, where participants received EI training compared to those that did not. Our perceptions of competitive situations of significant importance constantly challenge us and can often disrupt our state of mind if we lack awareness to identify unwanted emotions that affect the decision-making process and performance overall. If "chance favours the prepared mind", then being ill-equipped to adapt to any situation be it unfamiliar opponents, playing styles or unfamiliar surroundings etc, then our emotional adaptiveness is dependent on which direction the wind is blowing.

Countless situations in Backgammon challenge the emotional state. For example, your opponent rolls boxes in the bear-off winning the game is a case in point. As the next game gets under way, do you focus on the PAST, FUTURE or in the MOMENT? If you are ill prepared, you are susceptible to focusing on either the past or future. The former is most likely to invoke emotions such as frustration, anger or even despondency. The latter on the other hand could invoke irrational decision-making in the shape of avoiding race positions altogether. If your opponents' observational skills are up to the mark, they should be able to detect fluctuations in your emotional management or the lack of it. Conversely, they will focus on heightening your emotional state by altering or adapting their strategy based on inferences between your emotional state and decision-making. For this reason, it is essential you remain in the MOMENT. To reiterate, EI requires learning and rehearsing, so next time you have free time between rounds of an event, go and observe players like JF, JS and PJB and focus on how

they manage situations of significance and practise making inferences between their emotional states and decision-making, it could be the difference that makes the difference in your own performance.

Your level of Emotional Intelligence is an excellent predictor of the type of attitude you possess during or prior to engaging in competition. You may think of attitudes being independent from body language, reasoning and decision-making. However, the interdependency between these behavioural and cognitive characteristics is complex, in that we would find it difficult to function without possessing some sort of value belief and emotional affect. The Triadic Model defines attitudes as "Ideas charged with emotion (positive or negative) which predispose a class of actions to a particular situation" (Triadic, 71). The decision to split, slot, hold, prime or run etc in complex positions often depend on our knowledge, experiences and unique way of thinking. The danger of emotions dominating rational thought risk setting in motion a chain reaction that is very difficult to change. For instance, an aggressive attitude may surface because you lost a game you should have won provoking a slot when splitting is correct. Conversely, a passive attitude may influence you to split when slotting is correct.

Attitudes are pervasive in everyday life. Ironically, we pay little attention to the formation of attitudes. We either have a like or dislike for something, period. The ease at which we able to form an attitude; sometimes with only fragments of the whole picture can spill over into our world of Backgammon unconsciously distorting our perceptual beliefs to reason and make decisions with clarity. In turn, our attitude over the board acts like a gateway through which our body language seeps through into the external world unveiling our true emotional state. All sorts of mannerisms like slumping in your chair when your opponent rolls a good number or indecisive checker shifting to agonising facial expressions provide non-verbal cues to your opponent. You had better say something convincing to your opponent like "I forgot my Imodium tablets" to distract them from stamping all over your emotional disarray. In contrast, a positive attitude in the face of adversity is the mark of a strong player who resists all temptation to succumb to perceived lucky or unlucky events that attempt to compromise his or her emotional well-being.

Emotional management is but a single part of the success equation. Additionally, we require sound reasoning and decision-making skills. However, not just any kind of reasoning and decision-making skills, we need to be selective towards the type of terrain in which our cognitive skills will be most effective. Backgammon has multiple domains requiring different forms of reasoning and decision-making skills. For example, the decision to hang back or break contact requires a calculative-based reasoning approach, whereby key aspects of the position focus on the race, number of crossovers, board distribution, match score and your opponent's knowledge and technique of the bear-in process etc. It would be unwise to adopt an intuitive-based decision-making approach where 'gut feeling' becomes a matter of protocol.

Subtle changes in a game of Backgammon require fresh thinking and an alertness to discover that a particular reasoning approach is insufficient to deal with the demands of the position. The susceptibility of drifting into a mode of 'unconscious incompetence' where we lose track of what the goals and objectives are is more common than you might believe. Under clock conditions, this is perhaps even more pervasive as we tend to rely more and more on intuition or gut instinct. Decisions by intuition are a fallacy we can ill afford in a mind sport that demands every ounce of discipline and concentration. The question is what can we do about it? Expanding our knowledge base of reference positions, concepts and principles will only take us so far in addressing the question in hand. The source of the problem is ourselves; the way in which we process information, selectively attend to information and the way in which we reason and make decisions. This is but the tip of the iceberg and far exceeds the scope of this article. Suffice it to say, self-analysis through introspection is key.

We have only just begun to scratch the surface. There is still a lot to get through and simply cannot be comprehensively addressed in a follow-up article. Although, as an appetite prior to the main dish – a forthcoming book, I hope this has given you a taste of this fascinating area, the psychology of backgammon. Lastly, if you have any issue you wish to raise concerning this article or any other related topic then get in touch: acumen1@blueyonder.co.uk.



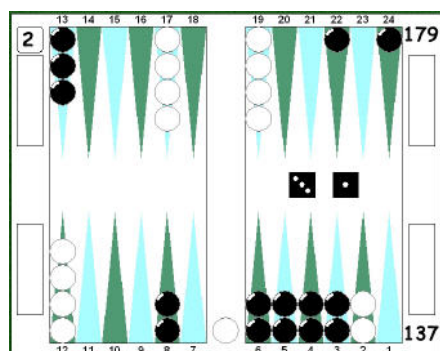
1000-to-1 Are You Good Enough? Asks Michael Crane



Recently, two members gained entry into the exclusive '1000-to-1' club, that is, they both won at least ten consecutive 11-point matches in Biba Main tournaments. Nigel Merrigan and Paul Gilbertson, the two members faced each other in the last round of the County Cups

Trophy. I have taken ten positions from the match and it's your mission to see if you might one day join them in the '1000-to-1' club. In each of the positions, Nigel is playing black and Paul, white. Write down your preferred move from the candidates and then check out your score after the 10th position. Each candidate move is given points, the higher your score, the better your chances of joining the club.

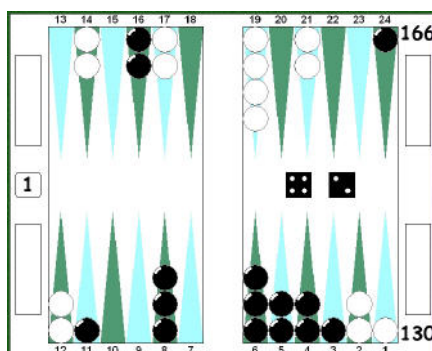
Position 01



Black 0 White 0
Black to play 31

13/9
22/21 13/10
24/21 22/21
24/23 13/10

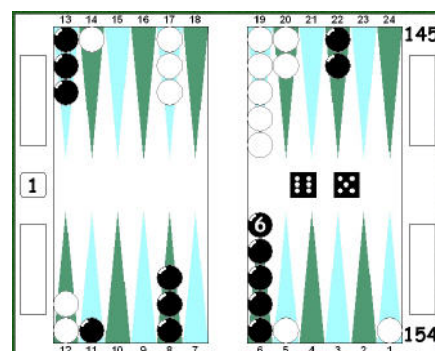
Position 03



Black 3 White 5
Black to play 42

11/7 3/1*
24/20 3/1*
11/5
8/4 3/1*

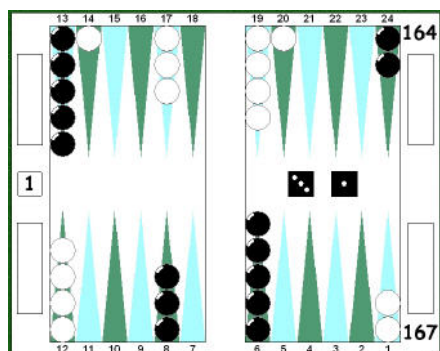
Position 05



Black 4 White 6
Black to play 65

22/11
11/5 8/3
11/5* 6/1*
11/5* 13/8

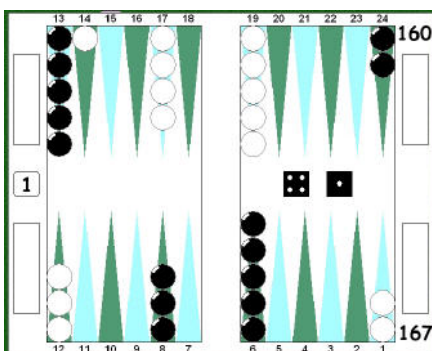
Position 02



Black 0 White 2
Black to play 31

24/20*
8/5 6/5
13/10 6/5
24/21 6/5

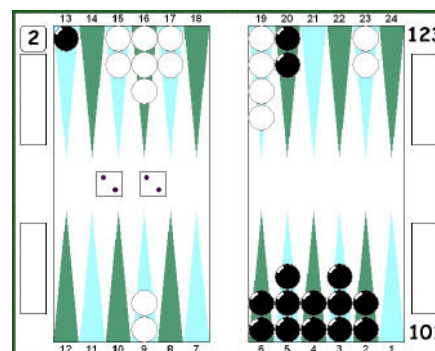
Position 04



Black 4 White 5
Black to play 41

13/8
13/9 6/5
13/9 24/23
24/20 24/23

Position 06

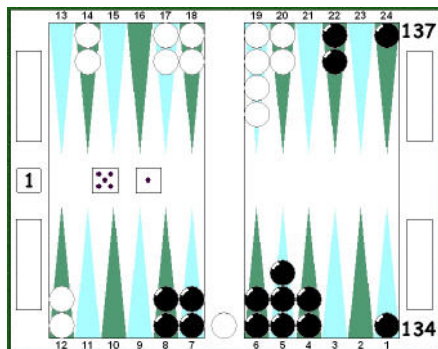


Black 0 White 2
White to play 22

16/12*(2)
16/12* 6/4(2)
16/12* 12/8
16/14(2) 14/12* 12/10



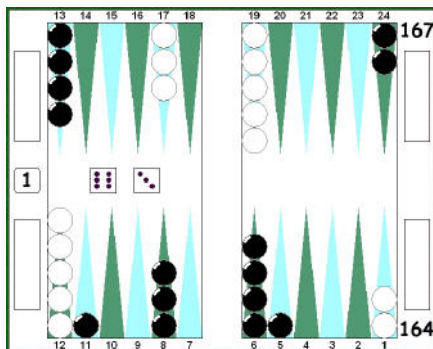
Position 07



Black 0 White 4
White to play 51

25/24 7/2
25/24* 13/8
25/24* 6/1*
25/24* 11/6

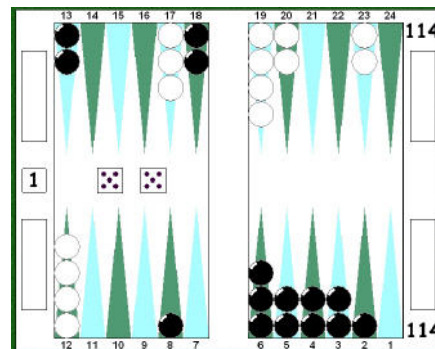
Position 08



Black 1 White 4
White to play 63

24/15
24/21 13/7
24/18 24/21
24/18 13/10

Position 09



Black 3 White 4
White to play 55

13/3(2)
13/8(4)

The Answers

Position 01

The move to make here is from the mid-point, but not by using the entire roll, 13/9. Playing 13/10 with 22/21 or 24/23 is a good bit better than 13/9. Bringing a builder down off the mid-point will help keep white's back checkers under control. There's a slight tactical benefit to playing 22/21 instead of 24/23, by moving the latter white is able to play 5s onto his 1-point.

4 24/23 13/10
4 22/21 13/10
3 24/21 22/21
2 13/9

Position 02

It is common knowledge that the most important point on the board is the 5- or 20-point. Paul Magriel called it *The Golden Point*, and its ownership is paramount. Ideally you want to occupy them both, at the very least you need to occupy your own 5-point; and therefore playing 8/5 6/5 is the correct move.

If that was your choice then you're going to be disappointed with the score it gained, just one! The one thing more important than you making your 5-point is stopping your opponent from making theirs. As much as you crave your 5-point, hitting 24/20* is by far the best play. Early ownership of this vital point often leads to bloody, blot-hitting contests; but it is worth every risk to make it or to stop your opponent making it.

4 24/20*
1 8/5 6/5
0 13/10 6/5
0 24/21 6/5

Position 03

Black has loads of covering rolls and he still manages to miss! So, what to do? Well, if you didn't hit by playing 3/1* then you're going to get some very sore knuckles knocking on the club door! You have got to hit here. White's home board is very poor and you'll have 5s, 7s and 10s to cover your blot if you were to pick up your dice now and forfeit the 4.

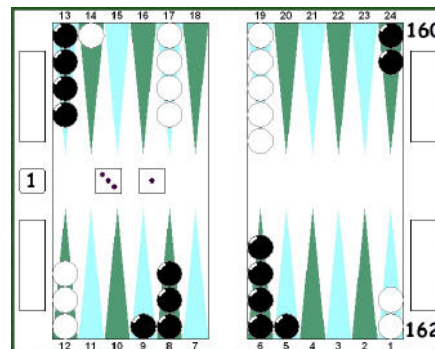
Playing 8/4 looks reasonable, it adds to the covering numbers, but it does remove a bar-point builder. The 1-point isn't that important to you at the moment. Playing 11/7 is poor, it might increase the covers (6s) but it is also vulnerable to all the 7s (four) plus 53 and 51. It would be nice to make the bar-point but doing it this way is wrong. The best play is to move the runner up 24/20. Two-fold benefits: 1. If the 1-point blot gets hit it could form an strong advanced anchor, 2. It puts the runner in communication with its mates.

4 24/20 3/1*
2 8/4 3/1*
1 11/7 3/1*
0 11/5

Position 04

White's move of 13/8 13/11 with a roll of 52 has left black with a dilemma. Should he split the back checkers or not? Well, the short answer is No. Here it is better to attack your own 5-point by slotting 6/5

Position 10



Black 4 White 6
White to play 31

24/20*
8/5 6/5

and then coming off the mid-point with another builder, 13/9. Playing 13/9 with 24/23 isn't too bad but it lacks the immediacy of the slot. Aiming to make an advanced anchor or threatening white's blot with 24/20 24/23 just puts black under pressure, whereas the slot puts white under a certain amount - for this move is all about the 5-point.

4 13/9 6/5
3 13/9 24/23
2 24/20 24/23
1 13/8

Position 05

Playing 11/5* 13/8 is OK, but only half OK, as is 11/5* 8/3. The more observant among you will have now deduced that the OK bit is 11/5*; so, what about the other die? Well, if you favour the hit,



11/5* you have to follow it up with 6/1* and put two in the air. This leaves us with the covering play of 22/11. There's so little between these two plays (double hit or cover) that I can't separate them. If forced into declaring a favourite I'd go for the hit. Holding my 11-point but perhaps losing my 5-point sways me in this direction.

4 22/11
4 11/5* 6/1*
2 11/5* 13/8
0 11/5* 8/3

Position 06

Well it's quite clear that the blot is going on to bar so at least two 2s are played 16/12*; it's just a matter of what to do with the remaining two. Duplicating the first pair with 16/12* is very inflexible and comes in last. Playing all the way to the 8-point, 16/8 and hitting on the way has the small merit of another builder bearing down on the black advanced anchor; but it is only 3rd. Leaving a checker back with 16/14(2) 14/12* 12/10 gives better chances of hitting black again if he rolls any 6 except 61 (62 dances); but the best move is 16/12* 6/4(2); not just because it makes a handy point, but because if black does roll a 6 that forces him to vacate the white 5-point, white will have two checkers primed to knock him back.

4 16/12* 6/4(2)
3 16/14(2) 14/12* 12/10
2 16/12* 12/8
1 16/12*(2)

Position 07

Before we go any further, if you played

7/2 with the 5, then you should be ashamed of yourself. I only put it in because there were only four possible plays! It has to be 25/24* 13/8 to give you an extra builder on your 8-point. If you play 11/6 all you're doing is stacking; and if you go for the double hit, 25/24* 6/1* you are taking unnecessary risks for little or no gain.

4 25/24* 13/8
2 25/24* 11/6
1 25/24* 6/1*
0 25/24* 7/2

Position 08

On his next roll black has nearly a 92% chance of making his 5-point, and there's not a lot white can do about it. All the plays involve a bit of duplication, and it's to this that we look for the best return. 24/18 13/10 might duplicate 6s and 1s but it also ensures that if black rolls 54 (one of the three rolls that don't cover the 5-point) he'll hit by playing 24/16*. 24/18 24/21 looks like a good attempt at intimidation and a possible advanced anchor but it's giving black too many hitting chances. 24/21 only duplicates 6s but it has the benefit of perhaps making the bar-point. But, the best move is the pure play, 24/15 duplicating 1s and 3s without giving too much back.

4 24/15
3 24/21 13/7
2 24/18 24/21
1 24/18 13/10

Position 09

OK, which move will get you into the club - the multi-stacking 13/8(4) or the

3-point maker? Well, if you thought that making the 3-point was correct, you won't even get to reach the knocker, let alone have the door opened up for you. It might look clumsy but stacking is the correct play by a huge margin. Look at black's home-board, soon he'll have a 5-prime and white can't take the chance of being stuck behind it. By stacking on the 8-point this possibility is greatly reduced.

4 13/8(4)
0 13/3(2)

Position 10

Well, did you spot the duplication? No, not on the board, but on the actual move of 31? It is almost identical to Position 02 . . . and the answers is exactly the same. I put this one in to see if you'd been paying attention and learnt anything. If you didn't get both correct, why not???

4 24/20*
1 8/5 6/5

So, do you have the key to the door?

40	Come on in, sit down and have a cup of tea
32 to 39	Come in and wipe your feet
24 to 31	Come in, I'll be with you in a minute
16 to 23	Not today, thank you
0 to 15	Don't answer it, it'll be kids trick or treating!

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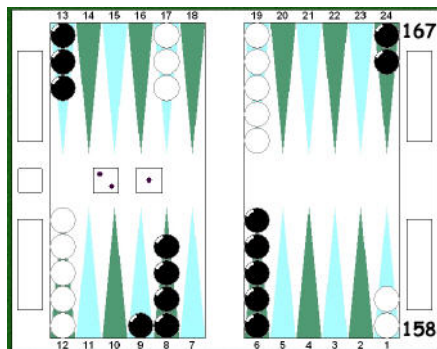
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Report by Michael Crane

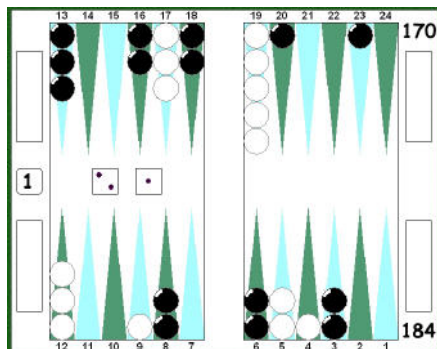
In April of last year, at the At-A-Glance British Open, Julian Minwalla had a comfortable 6-0 lead over Rachel Rhodes in the Final. And then it all went wrong, Rachel moved up, 6-4, 6-8, 6-10 and match! In the Main (17/34) of the SAC it happened again! The only difference being, it was Julian who came up from 6-0 behind against Lee Wood to win the title with six-out-of-six wins!

Remarkably Julian didn't make one checker-play blunder; and he only made nine errors; Lee made 28 errors and 11 blunders! According to Snowie, Julian played as World Class; and I must admit at times he was really moving. In the first three games Julian made a couple of errors with a roll of 21 (he is playing as white).



Black 6 White 0
White to play 21

An error on the opening move is often just a matter of style or taste. In this instance, slotting the 5-point 6/5 with 13/11 is the best move. It's aggressive but is a great opportunity to make the 5-point; and black is threatening to do the same. The slotting play has merits with duplicating 4s as well. Julian played the standard opening 21, 24/23 13/11.



Black 6 White 0
White to play 21

Julian does like hitting loose on his 5-point! He played 16/14 6/5* when all he really needed to do was play safe with 16/13. I know he is trying to stop black taking the 5-point, but this encounter only resulted in white being back on the bar.

It is during this game that Julian gets his first point on the score-sheet, and Lee remains forever on six points.

The runner-up went to Uldis Lapikens with 5-5. Uldis pipped Lawrence Powell to the position after the tie-break. Unfortunately Uldis wasn't aware of his good fortune and he left before the prize-giving. No matter, I have plenty of pictures of Uldis!

This game will appear on Gammon-Village shortly or is available from Biba via email and the Snowie stats appear on the following page.

In the Consolation (17/34) bracket of the SAC, two players, Myke Wignall and Tony Fawcett came out with three wins each, but on the tie-breaker, Tony came out on top.

Tony also did very well in the Poker Grand Prix (13) where he came 1st, followed by Tim Line and then the ubiquitous, Paul Gilbertson.

In the £50 Jackpot (4) Eamon Keogh prevailed; and on Friday night it was Slats that came out a winner against Richard Wenban. It was good to see Richard back after a 10 year absence.



Julian & Uldis (inset)



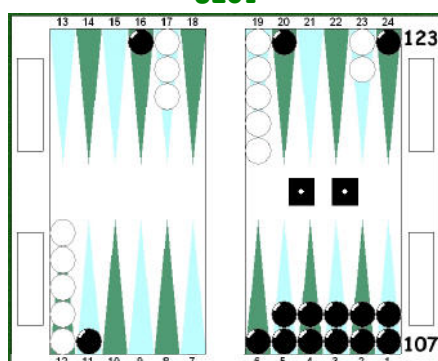
Tony & Myke

Snowie Match Stats ▶

Competition 2006 No2, 8201-06 Answers

By Michael Crane

8201



11 point match
DMP
Black to play 11

Well the first one splits the field in half, with just one newcomer out on his own. Lets hear what the first half have to say.

Richard Biddle: 16/13 11/10

We are ahead in the race and have a very strong home board, but we have thrown lousy dice of little value that has slowed the race down. We just want to get home quickly and safely but our back checkers are blocked. We also want to maintain our own home board to deter White from hitting loose. At the same time we would

like to maximise our chances of making our six-point which we can do by leaving ourselves a four and a seven that cover next roll. This also duplicates ones for White next roll.

Brian Lever: 16/13 11/10

Closing out White while he's still in the starting position is usually a sure recipe for a gammon win. No gammons necessary here, but sensible nonetheless to aim for a close-out. Lifting the blot on the 6-point while still having four men to bring round might cause problems; a White re-entry threatens the Black stragglers. So what best to complete the board? All the available plays must be fairly close – but I reckon 16/13,11/10 gives the most covers.

Rodney Lighton: 16/13 11/10

An easy one to start with – duplication provides the answer. We could duplicate 3s with 16/15, 11/8 but that would make 33 a horror roll next time if we are not hit.

An easy one, eh? Well the next three didn't agree with your choice!

Steve Hallett: 16/15 11/8

Black is ahead in race with a five and a

half point board but unable to safety three of his four blots. White is safe at the moment but will have to throw well not to leave blots further down the line. Black's game plan is to reduce the chance of having two men on the bar as well as keeping connection between his players to allow return shots if he is hit. Duplication comes into play here as Black reduces White's good numbers. On this theme possible plays are: 16/15, 11/8 and 16/13, 11/10. Both plays only give White ones and threes to hit.

The safest play 16/13, 11/10 stops the double hit with a 53 from

White but also reduces return shots from the bar for Black. 16/15, 11/8 keeps connectivity between Black's back checkers and also gives Black a good two(a non-entry number) if he gets hit and can't hit back immediately by playing 8/6 locking up his six point board. So play 16/15 11/8.

Steve rejects the 'correct' play on return shots off the bar.

Mark Oram: 16/15 11/8

Since we need only to win, and gammons are irrelevant to us and we have a good racing lead, it seems all we need to do is avoid being hit as we come home. This is not easy, however. Firstly, only the back man on the 16-point can improve his position this time, so where is the safest point for him to aim for? White has a lot of hitting numbers, no matter what we do. (In fact, by my reckoning, 64 and 42 miss with our man left on the 13- or 15-points, and only 64 misses when he is left on the 14-point. Everything else seems to hit us somewhere!)

This is not quite as dire as it sounds, however. A lot of the time White will have to hit loose, and usually this would leave at least one blot in his inner board. Since we have a 5-point board ourselves I'm guessing he'll be very reluctant to do this. With this in mind, only a few numbers are truly safe for White. In fact, my (quick) calculations give 7, 10, 9 or 8 safe hits for White, when our man is left on the 13-, 14-, 15- or 16-points respectively. (31 and all his doubles except 22 work well, while 22 hits a man on the 14- or 16-point. In addition 32 hits a man on the 14- or 15-points).

The 14-point may then be the most dangerous place to leave the 16-point blot, although I don't see a particularly large difference between any of the other three options. How then can we improve our side of the board? I'm very tempted to leave the 6-point slotted for the close-out. In addition, we should not duplicate any numbers our back men need to form an anchor. Another small consideration here is that if we are hit, we cannot re-enter with a 6 or 2, so these can also be saved (if needed) for covering numbers. All this points to 16/15 for the back man, coupled with 11/8 for the man in our outer board. Now we have avoided the 14-point; can re-enter if needed with a 1, 3, 4 or 5,

Match detailed statistics		
Player	Lee	Julian
Rating	intermediate	world class
Overall	12.061/37.214	3.411/10.853
Errors(blunders)	34(15)	12(0)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	9.693/30.780	2.841/9.018
Errors(blunders)	28(11)	9(0)
Double errors		
Overall	0.769/1.569	0.388/1.536
Missed double	0.000/0.000	0.388/1.536
Wrong double	0.769/1.569	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	3(1)	2(0)
Take errors		
Overall	1.599/4.866	0.182/0.299
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.182/0.299
Wrong pass	1.599/4.866	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	3(3)	1(0)
Favorite: Julian Minwalla 76.36% - 23.64%		



leaving 2s for a possible close-out. If we are not hit, however, we still have 2s to close the board, and 4s and 5s to form an anchor.

A good argument, as usual, from Mark.

Bob Young: 16/15 11/8

Trying to get home safely with a race advantage means minimising White's hitting rolls, and that means duplication. Playing only to the White 9-point, duplicating threes, ensures nine returns from the bar if White does hit, as opposed to nil if Black is hit on the mid point. This also has the merit of giving Black different numbers to achieve his many goals, fours or fives to anchor, and twos to make a closed board. Black could lift the blot in his home board, but I think it is the best way to stifle any future resistance by White by having a closed board if possible.

Bob gets there via the duplication route. Our last contender is a newcomer to the competition and he hasn't got off to as very good start.

ZX81: 16/14 11/9

I think this one is a bit too restrictive and won't offer much to stretch the entrants. I opt to move to the 14-point in order to get a return shot off the bar with a 6 if I hit with a 2 and white doesn't make it safe. The 11/9 is just to use up the remaining 1s.

Just using up the remaining 1s? Perhaps you were blinkered by the 16/14 and left nothing else. Nevertheless, it's good to see a new face, even if it is (old) carbon-based!

So, it's drawn 3-3 at the moment and it now falls to our resident expert to decide the outcome.

Snowie: 16/13 11/10

More Double Match Point (DMP) positions: firstly, a reminder that human beings are generally very poor at making the adjustments that such positions require. The only thing that matters is finding the move that wins the most games. You can't win a gammon, lose a gammon or be doubled out. Therefore you must maximise the usefulness of the men and put them to work efficiently.

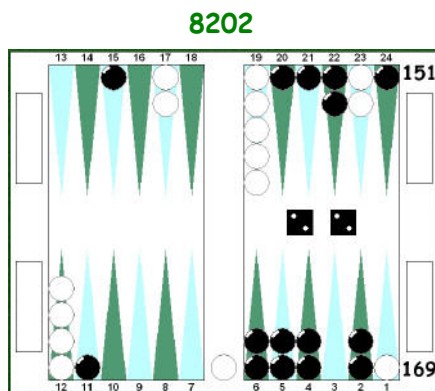
Small doubles are always difficult to play because there are normally a myriad of choices and that is true in this first position. As Black is ahead in the race he can win by just running for home but in addi-

tion he has a very strong home board and if he gets a shot and hits it that home board should give him an easy win.

Should he leave his 6-pointt slotted and try to make a closed home board or should he lift the blot so it can't be hit by white from the bar which can happen in some sequences? The answer is that it is too close to call. Whatever Black does he can, and will, duplicate either 1s or 3s as White's hitting numbers. He should then couple that duplication with lifting the blot (or not). It is virtually a dead heat between 16/13, 11/10; 16/13, 6/5 and 16/15, 11/9, 6/5.

My rollouts have 16/13, 11/10 as fractionally ahead and so that is my answer but either of the other moves is just as good for all practical purposes.

Well that's conclusive. Not even a mention of the other two choices.



**11 point match
DMP
Black to play 22**

Blimey! Seven entrants and seven answers! This move has split them completely. Luckily for one entrant he chose the same move as Snowie and therefore gets top points. I'll leave him until last. Instead let's start at the bottom; and we have three - chosen because in Snowie's Top 20 their plays don't actually feature at all!

ZX81: 5/1*(2)

Once white anchors he's going to get back into this game and therefore to stop him I'd shift points 5/1*(2) and bung two in the air. My checker on the 11-point is covering the 5-point with 6s and the timing I (might) gain from him dancing could enable me to remake my 5-point.

The only other to mention this move is the top scorer . . . and he discounted it.

Mark Oram: 24/18 20/18

How can we win this game? We need to gain in the race, and we can do this by blocking White and/or preventing him from entering. We have a strong board already, which is our biggest asset, but it is not too apparent how we can quickly improve on this. I first looked at 15/9 11/9 (with a view to constraining a possible White anchor on our 3-point). But then this would leave the rest of our men isolated, and White could easily control the outfield with the surplus of men on his mid-point. This then leads to another aim for us, which is that we need to stop White from (a) playing smoothly from his stacked points and (b) building primes of his own. We hold one anchor in his inner board, and adding to this White's bar-point should easily thwart White's priming ambitions. It also starts to bring our fifteen men together as a single unit, challenges the outfield and tidies up two blots. Of the three remaining blots the two in the outer board are safe enough for the immediate roll, and the 21-point blot would have an anchor to aim at if hit and needed to re-enter.

Mark actually looked at the winning move and then changed his mind because it left the remainder isolated. His choice of making the 18-point is in his favour, but not exactly in the manner he uses. It would have been better to have remained on the 24-point; however because he made the 18-point he does get a few more points for doing so.

Bob Young: 22/20 15/13 11/7

Two on the bar doesn't work here, with no close attackers and open high points. Far too many possibilities to discuss and eliminate, Black's objective must be to make the next point in the prime, while not playing too loose, and slotting the bar-point with seventeen covering rolls while White is on the bar is the main objective. All these objectives can be achieved with my chosen play.

Bob also forget to mention the nightmare Snake Eyes, double-one! Bob is slightly redeemed by making the 20-point, but only just.

OK, so lets look at some plays that were on Snowie's list:

Rodney Lighton: 24/20 15/11

This is difficult. We could make the defensive bar-point with 22/18, 20/18 but then can't get the checker on the 15-point safe. There can't be much wrong with making the defensive 5-point and getting



our blot to safety, so 24/20, 15/11.

It is Rodney's making of the 11-point that lets him down here. 15/13, 11/9 would have been better with making the 20-point. This was chosen by Richard:

Richard Biddle: 24/20 15/13 11/9

It is lot harder to estimate the best move here as there are so many playable options based around making the opponent's five- or bar-points or making our own nine-point to bear on our three-point. We are still behind in the race after this roll, with many blots on the board, so I would tend to the defensive by making the opponent's bar-point so that we have two points made in White's home board. This puts us in a strong position and allows us to be cavalier with our other two twos. So we can play 11/9 which allows us to bear on the three-point and with the last two, play 15/13 which bears on our bar-point. Correct move 24/20 15/13 11/9.

More flexible than Rodney's move but it's not as good as Brian's:

Brian Lever: 22/20(2) 15/11

A real exercise in priorities here. Black's got the game under control, but at a price of five men back and little outfield presence. White will enter long before Black gets everyone round. The main aims are to avoid jokers; keep pressure on White's blots; have a strong outpost somewhere in/around White's board in case of accident; get the back men moving.

First priority is the 20-point anchor - negating the joker double 1s and 3s. I'd move 22/20(2), putting a spare there for flexibility. I'd leave the back marker where he is on the 24-point and move 15/11 with the remaining part of the move, creating a sort of surrogate mid-point. Better than 13/11, 11/9 which leaves an unnecessary fly-shot on the 9-point and double 1s. Added bonus is that this tidies the Black position so only two blots - instead of five - are left lying around, and both in White's weaker home board where it's presently dangerous to attack. White's ahead in the race and could still win this if he can hit a shot or two, particularly in the outfield, so button up with 22/20(2) and 15/11.

Snowie mentions this play as a defensive one and I think that is what Brian is trying to say in a round about way. But, to get top points you had top go with Steve Hallett:

Steve Hallett: 15/9 11/9

Black is behind in the race but with a much stronger board than White. Of all the doubles, double two's is always difficult to play and this is no exception. Should Black put two men on the bar with 5/1*(2) shore up his defences with 24/20 and possibly carry on with 20/18(2) or do something completely different?

5/1*(2) can be ruled out as the rest of Black's checkers are so far away and

White would have to dance forever to allow reinforcements to arrive to effect a close out. 24/20 with two of the two's does stop White getting an attack under way with 33 or 11 as does 22/20(2) or does Black carry on the attack by making a point six pips away from the open three point in his board with 15/9, 11/9?

For me being an attacking player I would play 15/9, 11/9 making a good blocking point if White does anchor on the three-point and also giving the chances of carrying on the attack if White doesn't anchor or dances.

Attack is the keyword here, as Snowie explains:

Snowie: 15/9 11/9

Another complex problem that is made more so because this is DMP. Again there are a lot of possible moves and because Black has so many men back maybe he should concentrate on defence rather than attack?

So should it be attack with 15/9, 11/9 or defence with something like 22/20(2), 15/11? Again this is difficult to solve over the board but the guiding principle at DMP is to attack if in doubt and because 15/9, 11/9 makes such a vital point (6 points away from the open 3-point) it is the clear winner in this position. For money (assuming White owns the cube) 15/9, 11/9 is even better because it wins many more gammons.



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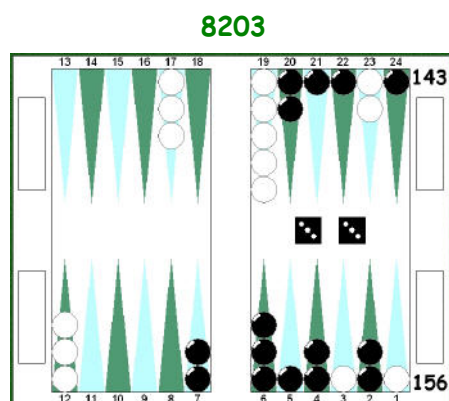
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This was a hard one for everyone and marking it was even harder. I have to say sorry to ZX81 but I feel only able to give you 1 point.



11 point match
DMP
Black to play 33

Another position that has divided the entrants.

Rodney Lighton: 24/15 6/3*

Hitting with 6/3* seems thematic, down in the race and with a better board as well as utilising the spare on the 6-point. After that we could make the 18-point or run out with 24/15. The latter diversifies better, while duplicating White's 3s. It also gets a builder nearer for the 5- or 3-point.

The only one to agree with Rodney is our silicone pal, which is one more than Richard had on his side.

Richard Biddle: 24/18 21/18 6/3*

Again, because of the doubles thrown there are many choices here. We are behind after this throw with lots of blots around the board. The best form of defence is attack, so I feel like hitting. 7/1*(2) hits and makes a four and a half point board, but leaves us with little connectivity between our home board and our back checkers. We also have minimal builders to finish our blitz. The time is to be bold, be prepared to recycle; place blots where we want to make points and make a valuable-point for us and one our opponent would like to make. Holding the opponent's bar gives us a strong defence with a scope to make more points in the opponent's home board if hit; again allowing us to be cavalier with our other moves.

Not usually aggressive but this time he's going for it. Richard's move is a bit better than that of our next two entrants, but at least they do agree.

ZX81: 24/18 21/18 5/2

Not sure what the others thought of this but I struggled. I wanted to hit but I just couldn't see what good it would do me. In the end I settled on making the 18-point, 24/18 21/18 and then lifting my 5-point blot 5/2. If White does anchor he won't be stopping for long and with me holding his bar-point I should get a shot at him sooner or later.

Mark Oram: 24/18 21/18 5/2

Ouch! A position very similar to the previous one (are they from the same game?) and so it would appear that many of the arguments given above would apply. That said, it is far harder to play this one smoothly. We can (for the reasons above) take White's bar-point again with 24/18 21/18, but this leaves a very ugly single 3 to play. 6/3* does seem to be the least destructive to the points we now hold, but in every other way seems too open. 5/2 makes a little more concession to sanity, but leaves a mess all the same. I do think I would be tempted enough to play 6/3* if we had a second inner board anchor however. Since we don't, I err (just) on the side of caution, and play 5/2. It is ugly, but at least holding the bar- and golden-point anchors are I think the deciding factors for us here.

Yes, they are all from the same game, Mark. It's a pity you didn't go for 6/3 for that was a better move. Top marks go to the last three entrants.*

Brian Lever: 7/1*(2)

That's the trouble with doubles ; so many ways to play them, so little time to write. As with the previous position, Black has five men back, but this time not nearly as strong frontal position. Plus White's about to send a 6th man back. Desperate measures are called for, so hit 6/3*, 4/1*. Hey, it puts two White checkers on the bar and backgames aren't too bad at DMP. OK, forget that - but do put one White checker up with 7/1(2)*. With a bit of luck, Black might have a 5-point board next time, and all other plays basically leave White with a free hand.

I thought for a minute that 6/3(2) 4/1*(2) was a serious candidate; but Brian was only joshing!*

Bob Young: 7/1*(2)

Putting White in the air, closing a fourth point, and a slot on the fifth, with a covering twelve rolls will give Black time to bring the men around the board if White doesn't roll a three or five immediately. Even if he does, Black will always be

attacking where possible with his superior home board. Combination plays on the other side of the board won't achieve enough gains for Black to the extent that my chosen play does. The option of two in the air will mean two blots, and is not a strong enough play.

Steve Hallett: 7/1*(2)

The race is fairly even but Black has no way of covering his blot on the five-point but he does have the advantage of a stronger home board. So does Black play safe with 24/21, 21/18(2), 5/2, attack with 7/1*(2) or a bit of both with 24/21, 21/18(2), 6/3*?

With the rest of Black's checkers so far away Black must make the best of what he's got and work with his only advantage which is a stronger board. Playing 7/1*(2) puts White on the bar, increases his board strength to four points over White's two points and hopes to keep White out whilst bringing his men around, its not pretty but those four home board points should be there for the rest of the game making White think twice before hitting loose.

I also liked the idea of four home board points . . . but what do I know? Snowie tells us what he considers to be the best move – 'though he is a little unsure and hedges his bets!'

Snowie: 24/15 6/3*

A fantastically complex position with a multitude of possibilities – very, very difficult over the board. Black should probably hit somewhere to keep White off balance but should he make the ace point with 7/1(2)* which is very committal or hit loose with 6/3* and play the other three 3's on the other side of the board?

The answer, and again it is very close, is that Black should keep all his options open and all his men in play (another good theme for DMP). 6/3* is correct and then either 24/15 or 24/18, 21/18 is OK. My rollouts have 24/15, 6/3* as best but statistically it is very close. Note that because the race is so close even 24/18, 21/18, 5/2 is worthy of consideration.

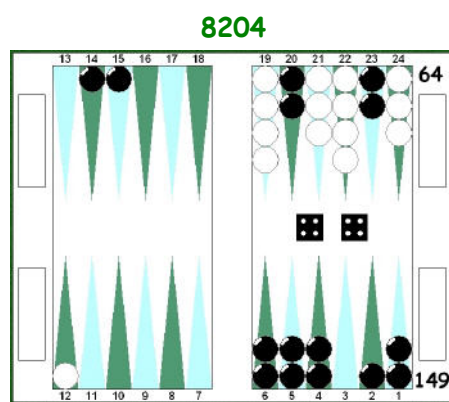
Over the board I would be guided by the principle of keeping all my men in play and recognise that 7/1(2)* won't lead to a successful blitz because Black's spare men are so far away from the scene of the battle.



Being silicon and gifted with better analytic capabilities than you carbon-based life forms I would want the play to be as complex as possible to give my opponent more chances to go wrong. This is another guiding principle for DMP – if you think you are the better player then seek complexity.

So, keeping all your checkers in play is a good idea when at DMP. Snowie is giving valuable advice throughout this article – I hope it's taken on board.

As you know, scoring is based upon popularity of a move (mostly) and for this reason I have awarded top points to 7/1(2). Nobody chose an outrageous move (except Brain's joker!) and therefore the points spread is not too great.*



**11 point match
DMP
Black to play 44**

Everyone picks hitting on the 12-point; which is as expected. The difference then lies in the remainder of the move. For the first time (and probably the last) ZX81 actually picks Snowie's best roll . . . but he is alone with that choice!

ZXZ81 : 20/12* 12/8 14/10

Well I am certain I'll be in good company by playing 20/12*; and then I suppose I've got to maximise the chances of covering the blot on my 2-point. If I continue with the same checker, 12/8 that'll give me all 6s (17 rolls) plus 51 42 33 and 22. Playing the last 4, 14/10 will give me two more rolls, 53 and 44 making twenty-six in total; which is one fewer than if I played 15/11 with the final 4.

Good reasoning and because of the number of good rolls next time it is the 'best' move; but to score top points here you need as few supporters of your move. Rodney almost agrees and he in fact chose Snowie's 2nd move.

Rodney Lighton: 20/12* 12/8 15/11

We have to hit with 20/12* as we are well down in the race (though only 149 to 64 not 194 to 64 as printed). Then 12/8 to get a direct builder for our blot on the 2-point. Finally 15/11 or 20/16? I prefer the former as it gets a builder nearer and, if hit back on our 2-point we may get to remake the 20-point.

Yes. The pip-count was a typo, sorry! The board above has been corrected.

Mark is also on his own, but not too far off the top move.

Mark Oram: 20/12* 14/6

With 130 pips to make up [MC: actually it is 85] we could roll no less than five 66's and still be behind! Given the chances (or lack thereof) of this happening, we must clearly hit White to stand any chance. We would dearly love to retain the two anchors, but the only way to hit at all is to break the golden point. So 20/12* accounts for two of the 4's. What to do with the others? 6/2 is the 'clever' switch to give us a direct 6 to cover: the main problem here is that when White enters and hits he is also free of our 3-prime. This is not much, but it is all we have up front, and to make maximum use of it we need to keep the 6-point intact. So instead, we should then maximize builders for the 2-point blot, to further improve our board. We could do this directly with 14/6, or indirectly with something like 15/11 14/10. This second option initially looks attractive if White pops out on 34, 35 or 36, but if he rolls any 2 we may not enter for a couple of rolls: then all these builders are vulnerable to White's fleeing back man. Since we have had to give up one of the anchors in any case, re-entry is suddenly an issue for any man that gets hit, so the 14/6 move seems a far less dangerous approach.

I rather liked this move, it was the cover playing to 6-point that I liked; however usually if I like something it is like giving it the kiss of death! On reflection, though, having the cover 6-away instead of 4-away would give more covering rolls. Our next two agree on the same move . . . and get second best points.

Bob Young: 20/12* 20/16 15/11

Must hit somewhere to win, and now is at least a guaranteed hit, the wait and see play may never provide the necessary hit. So two fours to hit seem mandatory. The choice of moving from the Golden Point is vital to prevent White from either putting two in the air from the bar or one

with the lifeline 31 roll. The remaining 4 is best played from the White 15-point, which gives the most hits if White enters and runs from the bar, and diversifies Black's numbers if hit on his 2-point, enter on Whites 2-point and hit with threes or fours, or fours and fives dependant on what is rolled.

Richard Biddle: 20/12* 20/16 15/11

First things first, hit on the 12-point. Not much we can do with the blot in our home board if we hit. I don't like 6/2 because it is generally not good to give up the six-point. The next major decision is to take the blot out of the opponent's home board with 20/16, to avoid the double hit. The final decision is what to do with the last 4. Any in the outer board can be moved. We do not want to move from the 16-point as this stacks our checkers. Moving from the 12-point would be too risky. Not much to choose between from the 14- or 15-point. I think it has to be 15/11 because this is currently out of range of our home board blot. The builder on the 14-point can reach with double sixes and fours (threes are not relevant).

The next two also agree and for their collaboration they pick up top points . . . but their move, and that of the two above, are not as good (after rollouts) as those above them!

Steve Hallett: 20/12*(2)

Black is way behind in the race and needs to hit to win. The question is does he hit now or wait until his board is stronger? Locking up the fifth point in his board with 14/2, 13/9 looks nice but is just a nice way of losing.

In these positions you have to take what you are given and **hit** so the first two fours are 20/12*. With White's strong four point board having loads of blots strewn around the place if White enters with a hit and Black dances could be terminal so tidying up two of the blots with 20/12 appears to be the most sensible.

Brian Lever: 20/12*(2)

Is now the time to hit? You bet! Black might not get another chance. Though not as bad as the 1-5 game, the 2-5 game suffers from a similar weakness - too much of a gap between the points. If White gets his baby home, he's got sufficiently well-organised spares to be able to take several men off before leaving any shot and he may successfully clear the 6-point so any shot will be



single rather than double. So 20/12 with the first two 4s. Now I reckon it's important to minimise return shots (nothing we can do about the 2-point blot, but other returns from the bar are to be avoided) and maximise our own (be ready if White runs into the outfield). Building an outside point might also act as a useful restraint. Either 20/16, 15/11 or 20/12(2) would meet the case - the nod probably going to the latter, since all four outfield checkers are then bearing on the 8- and 9-points.

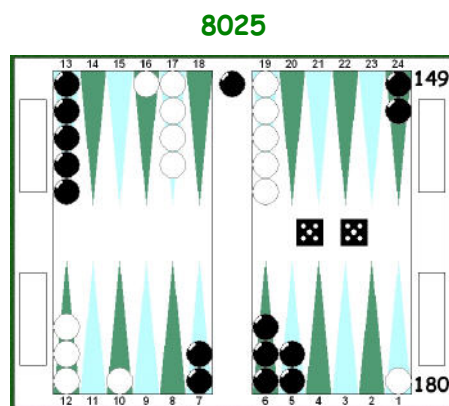
And so Snowie has the final word.

Snowie: 20/12* 12/8 20/16

Yet another tough position where the top five plays are all within 0.20 of each other. At least this time two of the 4s are mandatory – 20/12*. The question then is how to position the remaining spare men and with what objectives?

The objectives are clear: cover the home board blot and create good outfield coverage in case White does manage to escape. Ideally Black wants a direct cover for his slotted 2-point (he has to assume White won't hit from the bar). One option is 14/6. The other is 12/8 and then find something to do with the other 4. If 12/8 is played then the best final four is 20/16, taking the blot away from being hit by White's 1's in some variations.

Over the board I wouldn't criticise anyone for getting the final two 4's wrong as the rollouts are so close. Another guiding principle for DMP play is that sometimes you have to assume that your opponent won't roll well and then position your men to take advantage of that fact. Here Black must assume White won't hit the blot on the 2-point and plan accordingly. His best move is 20/12*/8, 20/16.



**11 point match
DMP**

Black to play 55

I'll let Snowie start this one off because

everyone except ZX81 chose the same move

Snowie: 25/10* 13/8

At last, a trivial problem. Three of the fives are virtually forced – 25/10* and then we must decide how to play the last one. 6/1* is too ambitious and completely the wrong plan. 10/5 is legal but again the wrong plan.

Black should seek to extend his prime from the back and those five men on the mid-point are crying out for development. This makes finding 13/8 trivial and it is the correct play by a long way.

Richard Biddle: 25/10* 13/8

Without doubt the first part of the move is to come in and go all the way round to the 10-point to hit. One more 5 to play. Hit again on the ace-point or release one of the builders stacked up on the mid-point. Some may even prefer to play round to the five-point. I prefer the playing from the mid-point because we need to unload the stack and create an extra builder for a possible blitz. Hitting on the ace-point should only be done as a last resort when there is nothing else to play. This is not the case and we would rather keep the spare on the six-point to bear on our three and four-point.

Richard see 6/1 as "a last resort".*

Steve Hallett: 25/10* 13/8

Well the first three fives seem automatic, in and hit with 25/10. I suppose Black could be sidetracked into making a four-prime with 13/8(2) but playing this way will leave White with multiple shots at Black's incoming checker either on white's ten- or five-point and with Black being already slightly behind in the race we can reject this play. So back to basics in and hit with 25/10* leaving us with a choice for the last five of 13/8, 10/5 or 6/1*.

6/1* overruns the position and at DMP is not the right approach. 10/5 is safe but with White on the bar and with only a one point board Black can afford to play more freely with 13/8 bringing another builder into play threatening to extend his prime either at the front or the back, so play 25/10*, 13/8.

Steve sees 6/1 as "not the right approach".*

Brian Lever: 25/10* 13/8

Black must use three of his 5s to hit on his 10-point, after which there are three rea-

sonable choices for the last one. I'd discount 6/1*, loose hits on the ace being a gammon or tempo play depending on the circumstances - neither of which are applicable here. 10/5 is safe but nothing else, and not very constructive. Which leaves 13/8, unstacking the mid-point and providing the beginnings of a structure at little risk, which is my choice.

Brian sees 6/1 as not being "applicable".*

Rodney Lighton: 25/10* 13/8

Again we have to hit with 25/10*. The only question is what to do with the final 5. 10/5 is ultra safe, but 13/8 does lots more to building a prime or making another inner board point at the cost of a few (hardly fatal) indirect shots.

Rodney doesn't even give it the time of day!

Mark Oram: 25/10* 13/8

We are significantly behind, White is poised to develop and block our back men, and so we need to act quickly. Hitting seems mandatory: while 25/20, 13/8(3) or 25/15 13/8(2) gives us the valuable fourth point in our prime it does not hit White and so gives him too much scope to improve. The blot on left on the 8-point with 13/8 is certainly a little vulnerable, but if missed can readily be covered next roll. In other words it seems like this is a risk worth taking.

Mark follows Rodney's cold-shoulder approach..

Bob Young: 25/10* 13/8

The option of two on the bar is a reasonable play, and maybe best if gammons counted for anything, but striving for a solid four point prime by slotting from the back while White is on the bar is a low risk, high reward plan. Black could also achieve a similar position with a certain four point prime by entering, making the 8-point, and hitting on the ace-point, but this play still only has one checker trapped behind the prime, whilst the chosen play will trap two checkers if achieved. Seven shots from the bar looks a fair gamble to achieve a significant positional gain.

Bob thinks is "a reasonable play" but doesn't consider using it. Which brings us to our final, and very lonely last entrant:

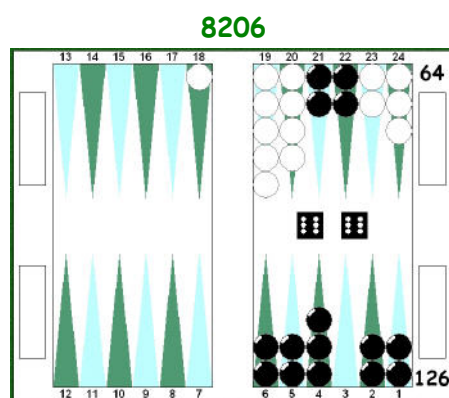
ZX81: 25/20 13/8(2) 6/1*

I don't want White to anchor in my



home-board so in order to stop him I have decided on 25/20 13/8(2) and finally the hit, 6/1*. I don't mind being hit loose on his 5-point; I prefer to make a 4-prime that'll help retain his runner and any more that might end up behind it later.

When played it actually looks OK; a good 4-prime straddling the bar, but it is the wrong idea at the moment. ZX81 might be an ancestor of Snowie, but so far all he's shown us is why he is defunct and Snowie reigns! ZX81's efforts are sent to me via email and their true identity is unknown to me. Before publishing this issue of Bibafax I emailed him and told him about his 'poor' performance and offered to exclude them from the entrants. He replied that he is an enthusiastic 'beginner' who is hoping to improve – and that seeing where he's going wrong will help. Time will tell.



**11 point match
DMP
Black to play 66**

I am finding that the bigger the double the easier it is to find the correct move. Everyone (even ZX81) got it right, and once again I'll let Snowie start.

Snowie: 21/3 21/15

Another fairly easy one. Black must keep his rearmost anchor as this will generate the most shots and he must hit to win. Therefore he must give up the 21-point. He has only two real choices 21/9(2) or 21/3, 21/15.

Because he will need the 3-point to win in most variations where he does hit a shot, then it is correct to slot it now, although the two plays are very close and 21/9(2) is by no means an error.

The last two problems demonstrate the fact that as the doubles get bigger the choices get more limited and therefore finding the right play becomes easier. The first four problems were very difficult

indeed and because humans don't have the processing powers that we bots have it is vital to learn some guiding principles that can help you make (or at least get close to) the right decisions more often than not.

Richard Biddle: 21/3 21/15

I think we have to come off our opponent's four-point here with both men here. This is preferable to running off the three-point or leaving two blots in our opponent's home board. The decision is then to proceed all the way round to slot our three-point or not. I would choose to because in the event that we do get a hit, we want to have our home board closed off.

Steve Hallett: 21/3 21/15

Black is o far behind in the race that he needs to hit to win and with the made one- and two-points in his home board, no way of making a prime to trap any hit checkers, so he needs to slot and then cover the last open point in his board. So the first three sixes are 21/3 slotting that last key point.

We now have a choice of 22/16 & 21/15. 22/16 just gives White too many chances to make another home point board and even close Black out, so the last six must be 21/15.

Brian Lever: 21/3 21/15

This is a straightforward exercise in anchor choice; when holding in a losing race, the further back the anchor the better. So Black has to leave from the 21-point, with 21/15(2) then constructively slotting the 3-point. Can't see there's any other realistic play which offers decent winning chances.

Rodney Lighton: 21/3 21/15

Sometimes it is correct to leave two blots when an opponent is bearing in to maximise shots, but here White has too many builders and no stripped points. With no chance of winning the race it is correct to stay on the lowest point to maximise shot potential. 21/3, 21/15 looks better than 21/9(2). We are not getting a shot next turn unless White rolls 44, so the quickest way to complete our board is to slot the 3-point.

Mark Oram: 21/3 21/15

If both anchors leave White's board the game is over (to our detriment!) so what should we leave behind? One anchor, or two blots? (Sadly we cannot even leave one anchor and one blot either). I think that if we leave two blots we

get closed out, or hit and passed, very easily. We want to be as big a thorn as we can in White's side, and an anchor seems the best way to do this. So which one to leave behind? By clearing a point in his board, then (unless he rolls several small numbers quickly to fill it in) White may well be forced to play a blot there. If so, clearly we want to retain his 3-point to capitalize on this scenario. In addition if we leave the 4-point open White soon runs out of 2s to play safely. So 21/15(2) is half our play.

It still seems remote enough that we will ever get to hit a blot, but if we do, how best to proceed? We don't need to get a second man sent back if we can close out the first, and in any case this may also prove hard to accomplish. Since we want to close our board as quickly as possible if we do get the hit, we should take the opportunity we have with this roll to slot our 3-point (with 15/3), leaving us fourteen rolls (1s and 12s) to cover. This also leaves White, with possible gaps on his 3- and 4-points, at a disadvantage in the ultimate bear-off.

ZX81: 21/3 21/15

I am well behind in the race here and twenty-four pips won't help. I have to get a hit to win the match. After a while looking at the position I decided to leave double-four as my only chance and therefore played 21/3 21/15. I chose 4s over 3s because 44 will enable me to hit back and cover with 44 or 41.

Well. There it is, 100% agreement. I think I'll need to take a longer look at the next six positions and try to see if I can't make the bigger rolls harder to solve. Congrats to Brian Lever for piping Steve into 2nd place to take the £25 towards accommodation.. Going into the last 'round' Steve leads by just four points from Richard and Brian, and just eight from Rodney.

Name	Scores	Pts
Steve Hallett	59 55	114
Richard Biddle	57 53	110
Brian Lever	54 56	110
Snowie	55 54	109
Rodney Lighton	56 50	106
Bob Young	53 49	102
Mark Oram	43	43
ZX81	33	33

Final positions on the next page..



Name	8001	8002	8003	8004	8005	8006	Tot
Brian Lever	16/13 11/10	22/20(2) 15/11	7/1*(2)	20/12*(2)	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	56
Steve Hallett	16/15 11/8	15/9 11/9	7/1*(2)	20/12*(2)	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	55
Snowie	16/13 11/10	15/9 11/9	24/15 6/3*	20/12* 12/8 20/16	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	54
Richard Biddle	16/13 11/10	24/20 15/13 11/9	24/18 21/18 6/3*	20/12* 20/16 15/11	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	53
Rodney Lighton	16/13 11/10	24/20 15/11	24/15 6/3*	20/12* 12/8 15/11	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	50
Bob Young	16/15 11/8	22/20 15/13 11/7	7/1*(2)	20/12* 20/16 15/11	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	49
Mark Oram	16/15 11/8	24/18 20/18	24/18 21/18 5/2	20/12* 14/6	25/10* 13/8	21/3 21/15	43
ZX81	16/14 11/9	5/1*(2)	24/18 21/18 5/2	20/12* 12/8 14/10	25/20 13/8(2) 6/1*	21/3 21/15	33

	Move	Score
8201	16/13 11/10	10
	16/15 11/8	6
	16/14 11/9	2
8202	15/9 11/9	10
	22/20(2) 15/11	7
	24/20 15/13 11/9	6
	24/20 15/11	5
	22/20 15/13 11/7	3
	24/18 20/18	2
8203	5/1*(2)	1
	7/1*(2)	10
	24/18 21/18 5/2	8
	24/15 6/3*	7
8204	24/18 21/18 6/3*	7
	20/12* 20/16 15/11	10
	20/12*(2)	9
	20/12* 12/8 14/10	8
	20/12* 12/8 15/11	8
8205	20/12* 12/8 20/16	7
	20/12* 14/6	7
	25/10* 13/8	10
8206	25/20 13/8(2) 6/1*	4
	21/3 21/15	10

Fax	Month	Questions	Answers
84	Sep	8401-06	8201-06
86	Jan	8601-06	8401-06
88	Mar	8801-06	8601-06

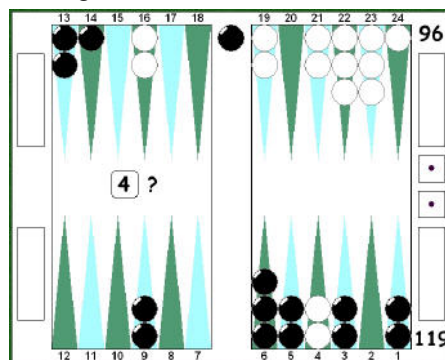
Backgammon in July - By Brian Lever

Featuring, Karen Di Bona, Cannes, Liverpool

July is my favourite Backgammon tournament month. The UK usually has at least a couple, and Europe provides many others, including a trio in or around the South of France - the week-long annual World Championship in Monte Carlo, preceded by a WBF event (this year in Menton) and followed by the now well-established Nations Cup/Riviera Challenge in Cannes. One of these years - as soon as that pig stops flying - I'm going to take the month off and play in everything going. This year I had to content myself with just 3.

Coventry, July 8 & 9

First up was Biba's Keren Di Bona Memorial, at Coventry Hilton. No disrespect, but when non-playing friends ask me where I've been playing, I usually choose to say "in the Midlands". Backgammon is often associated with glamour and sophistication; Coventry isn't. Michael has already reported on the tournament in the latest Bibafax, so I'll spare you. Suffice to say it was a successful weekend for me in that I won the Consolation, though it didn't start well. Here's how I got into the Consolation:



11 point match
Black 0 White 1
White cube action?

David Nathan (white) re-cubed, I took. At home later I fed the position to Jellyfish, which burped out "No redouble/take" - very comforting, as I was gammoned and lost the match a game later. All this in 30 minutes - I might be a slow player (allegedly), but I'm a bloody quick loser.

MC: Snowie says, Re-double/Take.

And while we're on the subject of losing, I saw on the Bibafax front cover the happy smiling faces of Nigel Merrigan and Paul Gilbertson, the latest winners of the "1000-1" accolade for 10 successive 11 point victories. If there was a similar accolade for 10 successive losses, I'd be well on the way - 6 so far this year.

Cannes, July 19 -23

A week or so later and I found myself in the definitely glamorous and sophisticated resort of Cannes for the **Riviera Challenge**. Quick travelogue bit: Cannes is famous for its film festival but also boasts one of the most attractive coastlines in the world, the crescent-shaped boulevard *La Croisette*, bounded on the one side by the Med and the other by some of the world's most prestigious (and expensive - both arms and legs) hotels. They don't do Biba rates!

It's not all swank though; At one end of the *Croisette* are the narrow winding streets of the old town, genuinely charming and full of reasonably priced restaurants. Behind the front line hotels is other accommodation, also reasonably priced, including the hotel/apartment combination recommended in the tournament brochure, *All Suites Residence*, where I



stayed.



Of course the weather is pretty glorious at this time of year, and there's plenty of beach space available for sunbathing and swimming, including a vast stretch right next to the tournament venue, the *Palm Beach Casino*.



Palm Beach is at the opposite end of the *Croisette* to the old town; if you didn't want to stray too far from the Casino for your meals, a short stroll took you to *Place de l'Etang* and its several restaurants bordering the local *boulé* park (bowls to you).

An added bonus was the Friday night fireworks display, part of the annual International Fireworks Festival. This international event has been held on the French Riviera for donkeys years. It may not be the most spectacular, but there's something quite magical about standing in the crowds on the *Croisette* when all the lights are switched off – street, hotel, café – and the fireworks shoot off from their pontoons 100 yards out to sea.

Anyway, the tournament - or rather tournaments, 2 of them, running side by side. Tuesday saw the start of the Nations Cup, the nearest thing Backgammon has to an inter-nation world cup. This year there were over 30 teams competing, including last year's finalists, Israel and Bulgaria, USA, Denmark, Japan, Russia, Ukraine and UK. The Nations is run along world cup lines – group stages first then the knock-out phase. Each match initially comprises two single 7 point matches, with a 9 point doubles decider if the singles are tied. National flags helpfully identify the individual teams. Chris Ter-

nel and Rachel Rhodes represented the UK, and unfortunately failed to get through the group stages. Rachel, however, was to enjoy other success here, and later in the month. The final, concluded on Sunday, was won by the USA team of Ray Fogelrund, Perry Gartner and Howard Markowitz in the deciding doubles. Read Ray's article on gammonvillage.com for a more detailed account.

The Riviera Cup knockout commenced Thursday afternoon. The format, fairly standard at international events, comprised 3 divisions, (Open, Advanced and Intermediate), with Main, Consolation and Last Chance in each.

The Open division was heavily subscribed, 99 players initially with buy-backs taking the number to 128. Quite a rarity, I think, for European tournaments other than Monte-Carlo and the Nordic, to have so many entrants. Obviously, the glorious weather and exclusive setting were the principal attractions –and the small matter of 35000 Euros added prize money. Several of the entrants were well-known international names and characters – Mike Svobodny, Antoinette Williams, Peter JesThomsen, Morten Holm, Maria Krancheva, Andreas Humke, Falafel Natanzon, and so on. Also involved were Carter Mattig and Nodar Gagua, both of whom have played at British tourneys.

Simonetta Herrera and Rachel entered the Advanced, Chris Ternel and I the Open, as did one of the last players to arrive, Dublin's finest, Sean Casey. Why hadn't he brought another player to represent Ireland in the Nations Cup? "Well, we had a chat about it, and decided we only needed to send one" was his reply. And as it turned out, he wasn't wrong.

The Open was another example of gallant British failure. I lost yet another first round match, at DMP to Perry Gartner (closing in on that 1000-1) and did b*****r all in Consolation and Last Chance. Chris made it as far as the last 16, beaten in a tight contest by Nodar Gagua. There was success elsewhere, though. Simonetta reached the semi-final of the Advanced and Rachel the final of a strong 32 player, Ladies Only, event.

What of Sean Casey? Like me, he lost in the first round of the Main. Unlike me, he bought back, a very wise investment as he cleaved his way through the field defeating more experienced opponents with

ease. In the last 8 he faced American, Ed O' Laughlin (voted in the world's top 50 players by the recent Backgammon Giants poll) and won 13-6. Sean's semi-final, against the highly-rated Bulgarian Atanas Georgiev, was over in a flash, 13-1.

When Sean sat down to play the final, against Nodar, ([MC: An all-Biba Final](#)) I was already on the plane home. However I do know that he won it in dramatic fashion, converting a 0-5 deficit into a 12-6 lead before Nodar won the next 6 points to take the match to DMP. In that last game Sean found himself with 5 men on Nodar's 2-point and behind a 6-prime. Nodar had borne off 5 men before leaving a single ace shot, which Sean had to hit or lose. He did hit, and somehow built his own prime to detain the prisoner. By the time Nodar escaped, Sean had already removed several checkers himself - but even then the match went down to the last roll. Any double would have won for Nodar; he didn't roll one, and Sean had the victory plus his biggest BG payday by some distance. Well done that man! Sean is directing rather than playing in this year's Irish Open – 21/22 October, great fun, and always lots of chilled Guinness.

Some random comments about the tournament and its setting.

- Clocks were mandatory for the Nations Cup and for all later rounds of the KO. Not the type of clock BIBA occasionally employs, which simply counts down your time from, say 50 minutes to zero, so you lose seconds however quickly you play, but ones which allow you free seconds (9 in this case) to make your move without losing any time at all. In theory, you could avoid losing any time at all if you made every move within your 9 free seconds. **MC*
- Palm Beach is an excellent venue. Want a break from playing? Step outside and you're a few yards from the beach and sea. Restaurants and cafes are just down the road. Then you can return to the cool of the playing room – or not cool. The air conditioning malfunctioned far too often for comfort, testing everyone's deodorants to the full.
- Once we got started, Eric Guedj and Natalie Guez kept the tournament running smoothly, though Eric had another distraction which I'll come to below. They were helped in no small measure by some disarmingly attractive assistants, who kept everything

neat by continually tidying tables, chairs, checkers and boards

- I was disappointed that there weren't more jackpots to while away the time. I won an 8 player 50 Euro jackpot on Saturday night – but I'd entered it on Thursday. On the other hand, less action meant more watching and chatting, and I got to put faces to some Backgammon names.

**MC: Brian is mistaken, Biba has been using this type of clock for some time now. On our clocks you get 15 seconds per move and 20 minutes to play with should you exceed the 15 seconds.*

Eric's other distraction was that the whole event was being filmed for television later this year. Under the banner "The World Series of Backgammon", 8 one hour programmes featuring matches from the Riviera and Nations Cups will be shown on Eurosport, hosted by Kara Scott. Remember her from last year's televising of the World Championship on Pokerzone? Even if you don't, you'll definitely recognise John Clark, who'll be providing the commentary – very dapper in his best white suit! *MC: More on this on the back page.*

I must say something about the filming, because the (20 strong?) largely French crew and Backgammon playing film director Andy Bell put enormous effort into getting everything just right. The playing

room at the Palm Beach had a large stage, on which were set up a special playing area, with appropriate chairs, table, board, large digital clock, lighting and rather more cameras than we're used to when Michael records the Biba finals.

Individual matches in Nations and Riviera Cups were selected for filming on the stage playing area, and relayed on strategically placed screens. These matches always started and finished later than the others, and were often interrupted in the strive for perfection – right checkers, no lighting glare on the dice, even the colour of the players' shirts – but no-one so far as I'm aware complained. The bigger picture, if you'll forgive the pun, is that TV exposure could do for Backgammon what it's done for Poker. I suspect that the appeal will be to the gambler rather than the casual player, at least initially, but any raising of Backgammon's profile should be welcomed. Increased profile = more sponsorship = more players - hopefully.

I'll leave you with one image which both educated and amused me. Ray Fogerlund was interviewed in the "interview corner" after his Nations Cup final match victory over Morten Holm. If they show this on TV you'll see him looking smart, calm, clean and cool. You won't see the moments earlier when the make up girl was wiping the perspiration off his forehead, powdering his face, combing his hair and helping him adjust his clothes. Attention

to detail is everything.

Liverpool, July 29/30

Back home, there was one more event to look forward to. The last weekend in July saw the ever-popular annual Liverpool tournament, held in the local bridge club. This 2 day event, now in its 11th year features a Swiss (5 x 9 point) qualifier on the Saturday, with an 11 point KO for the top 16 plus Consolation and Last Chance for all the rest on Sunday. When the tournament first started, all this action used to be crammed into the Saturday-but out-of-towners complained it finished too late, and scousers complained there wasn't enough time to nick hubcaps (did I really say that!?).

This year there were 52 entrants, mostly local but with sizeable contingents from Manchester, Bristol, the Midlands and further south. As usual, there was an excellent all day buffet – less ham this year I'm pleased to say – and the ubiquitous presence of Peter "David Bailey" Chan's camera. All held together by Tournament Director Simon Jones, with lots of help from wife Lucy. At least, I think he was Director, he was that unobtrusive.

When the dust had settled on Saturday evening, 11 players had qualified automatically for the last 16 by winning 4 or 5 out of 5; 12 more on 3 wins went into

Liverpool Results and Grand Prix Points

Main 52/16

- 1 Rachel Rhodes
- 2 David Startin
- 3/4 Vicky Chandler
- 3/4 Steve Simkin
- 5/8 Martin Barkwill
- 5/8 John Slattery
- 5/8 Peter Snape
- 5/8 David Wallbank

Consolation 38

- 1 Brian Lever
- 2 Jim Davis
- 3/4 Steve Hallett
- 3/4 Tony Fawcett
- 5/8 Carl Dell
- 5/8 Rodney Lighton
- 5/8 Nigel Merrigan
- 5/8 David Smith

Last Chance 64

- 1 John Wright
- 2 Rodney Lighton
- 3/4 John Broomfield
- 3/4 Connor Dickinson

1-Point Shootout

- 1 Peter Snape
- 2 Lee Wood
- 3/4 Uldis Lapikens
- 3/4 Steve Rimmer

Grand Prix @ Liverpool

- 18.58 Rachel Rhodes
- 13.42 David Startin
- 9.29 Steve Simkin
- 9.29 Vicky Chandler
- 9.28 Brian Lever
- 9.27 John Wright
- 6.19 Peter Snape
- 6.19 John Slattery
- 6.18 Steve Hallett
- 6.18 Tony Fawcett
- 6.17 John Broomfield
- 6.17 Rodney Lighton
- 4.13 Uldis Lapikens
- 4.13 Martin Barkwill
- 4.13 Connor Dickinson
- 4.13 Ron Havenhand
- 4.13 Adrian Jones

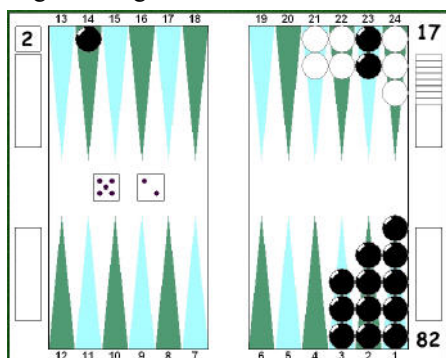
- 4.13 George Hall
- 4.12 Carl Dell
- 4.12 Dave Motley
- 4.11 David Wallbank
- 4.11 Peter Chan
- 4.11 Myke Wignall
- 2.58 Jimmi Wong
- 2.58 Nigel Merrigan
- 2.58 Rosey Bensley
- 2.58 Colin Laight
- 2.58 Joe Dooley
- 2.58 Paul Gilbertson
- 2.57 Angela Dell
- 2.06 Jeff Barber
- 2.06 Steve Rimmer
- 2.06 Tim Brown
- 2.06 Adam Stocks
- 2.06 Fanika Petkovska
- 2.06 Tim Line

the hat for the remaining places. A pretty strong field resulted, including previous winners John Slattery and Martin Barkwill, two-time British Open winner Rachel Rhodes, and current grand prix leader David Startin.

It looked as if Slatts was on the way to another final when he disposed of John Broomfield, but Vicky Chandler fought him all the way to DMP in the quarters, and then calmly took the last point. Any dreams of glory were short-lived, however, as David Startin continued his successful streak by seeing her off, to reach the final. Waiting for him there was Rachel, recently returned from Cannes.

Competing in international tournaments, playing and watching strong players, sharpens you up for the domestic game. So it proved here, as Rachel always appeared in control winning 11-6. Congratulations to her, but well done also David, who's on an excellent run.

The international experience didn't immediately help me, as I found myself in the Consolation after Saturday's events, but perhaps it helped me to keep calm when faced with this seemingly hopeless position at DMP in the last eight against Nigel Merrigan:



7 point match
DMP
White rolls 52

Nigel (white) has already borne off 8 checkers but obligingly rolled 5-2, leaving 2 blots. I picked up both with 1-1. Many twists and turns later, I scraped home on the last roll, and topped off the day with wins over Tony Fawcett and Jim

Davis in the semis and final to complete a 2nd Consolation win in the month. John Wright gave some cheer to the home crowd by beating Rodney Lighton in the final of the Last Chance, and Peter Snape won the 1 point shoot out.

Just a word on the trophies:

Liverpool have moved away from the traditional cups, and provided the Main finalists with rather more elegant glass pieces (see picture on Biba website), the sort you might be able to display in your lounge without your mates taking the piss.

I'm not sure I can say the same for the Consolation trophies. Jim as runner up received a miniature statue of the Liver Bird – very useful as a paperweight – and I received a replica of the *SuperlambBanna*. For the uninitiated – ie everyone outside Liverpool – this piece looks exactly like its name: a bright yellow porcelain sheep with a 5 inch banana shaped tail. Nicky was very excited when I brought it home until I told her it didn't come with batteries.

What did I learn from this exercise? Two things certainly

- Serious BG players don't have 2 infant school children!
- In order to improve, and achieve the sort of status enjoyed by, for example, the Danes, more of us need to play in international tournaments.

British players have scored some fine achievements in the last few years, but it's the usual suspects. As Count Dracula might say "new blood please."



Pictures top to bottom

Rachel & David

Brian & Jim

John & Rodney

Lee & Peter



NO.1 BACKGAMMON EVENTS PROMOTION

EZE GAMES

For the full results from Cannes, log onto

www.ezegames.com/site/index

Competition 2006 No.3, 8401-06 Questions

By Michael Crane

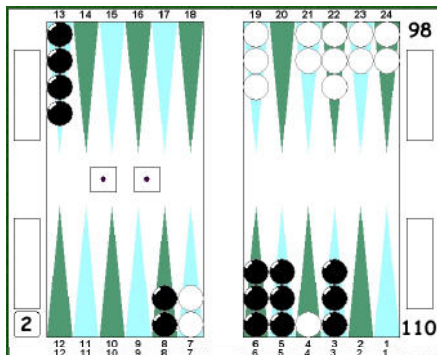
Welcome to the final element of the three Competitions that make up the 2006 season.

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

Entries to be in by November 21st. 2006

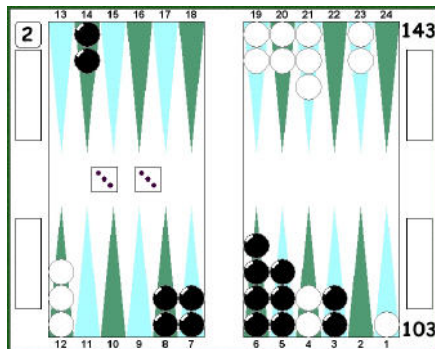
Email: to comps@backgammon-biba.co.uk
and all 'hard copy' to Biba HQ via Royal Mail.

8401



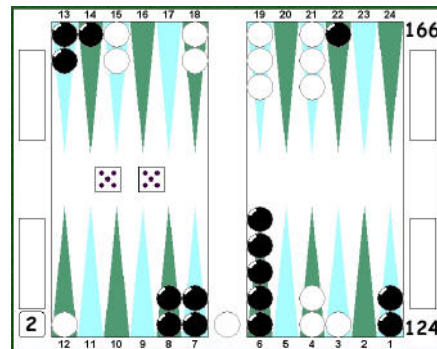
11 point match
Black 10 White 8
White to play 11

8403



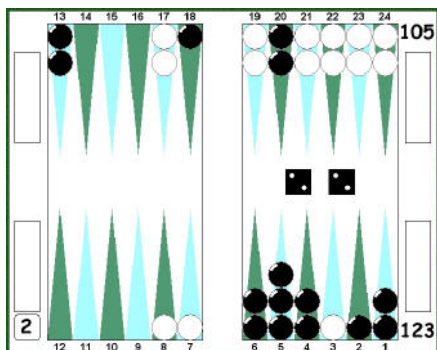
11 point match
Black 8 White 5
White to play 33

8405



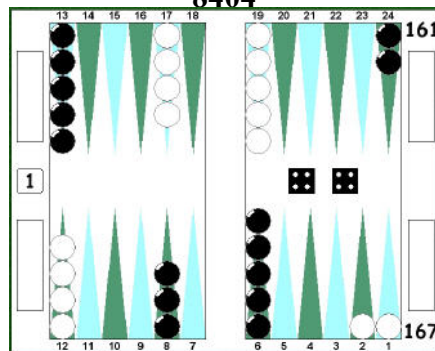
11 point match
Black 9 White 5
White to play 55

8402



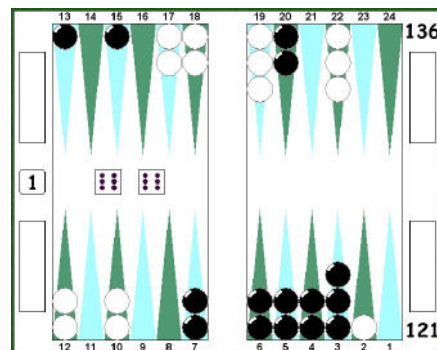
11 point match
Black 0 White 2
Black to play 22

8404



11 point match
Black 0 White 0
Black to play 44

8406



11 point match
Black 9 White 7
White to play 66



10th Mind Sports Olympiad 2006
August 26th to September 3rd



**Due to lack of space the reports and results from the
MSO will be published in the next issue of Bibafax.
In the meantime, look on the Biba web site for details.**

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

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

Birmingham - Dave Motley - 0121 476 4099 - davemotley@blueyonder.co.uk - Monday.
Brighton - <http://eiloart.com/bbc/> - Tuesday 8pm until closing.
Bristol - Ian Tarr 0117-9756349 brismgammon@blueyonder.co.uk 2nd Thurs of the month.
Dublin - Brendan Burgess - 603 0891 - wildlife@indigo.ie - 2nd Monday of every month.
Dunfermline - Graeme Campbell, 01383 738968 - graeme.campbell@tiscali.co.uk - tba
Eastbourne & Bexhill - John Thomas - 01424 219415 - Mondays 19.30.
Glasgow, Renfrew - John Paul Vass 0141 587 0255 - 1st Tuesday of month @ 7:00
Herne Bay/Broomfield - Bob Bruce - 01227 362181 or mobile 07754 549 576 - Monday
Herefordshire - Andy Robertson, 07989 345494 / 01981 240016 - Saturday, 6pm
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 - Croydon - 07737 735556 Danny Gallagher - croydonbackgammonclub@yahoo.co.uk - Thursdays + Sundays (phone)
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
Newcastle - Looking to start a club Cal Pearson calpearson2000@yahoo.co.uk
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 - Nigel Merrigan 01772 517672 acumen1@blueyonder.co.uk - 2nd & 4th Tuesdays
Reading - Kevin Carter - kevin@profundus.com - 0118-971 2948 - Alternate Wednesdays.
St. Albans - John Ingamells - john.ingamells@ntlworld.com - Every Tuesday
York - Kevin Stebbing 01904 611172 - Kevin@stebbing1900.fslife.co.uk - 3rd Wednesday

Local Clubs

Where - Who - When

Forthcoming Events

October 7/8: Sandy Osborne Trophy: The usual mix of four elements, Main, Consolation, Last Chance and The Sandwich!

October 21/22:: 11th Irish Open: See page 26 for full details.

November 4/5: Townharbour Trophy: The final Swiss of the year and your last chance to crank up the GP and Ranking Championship scores; and to qualify for the UK Finals. It is hoped that the sponsor, Tim Cross, will put in an appearance; failing that, perhaps he'll send a cheque for prize-money!

December 2/3: Gilbertson UK Finals: Sponsored by Rosey, Paul & John, this event is already underway ... we already have six 'qualifiers': John Hurst, Martin Hemming, Tim Line, Nigel Merigan, Paul Gilbertson and Julian Minwalla. Two more will be decided at the Irish Open and the Townharbour. Whenever a member wins one of the eight events that make up the GP Finals circuit, they automatically qualify for the Last 16 of the UK Finals. Part of their prize is free accommodation (dinner, b&b) for the Friday night of the UK weekend. If they want to stay for the Saturday night they can do so for the special rate of £30.

Saturday Main Qualifier: Entrants will play 2 x 7pt matches of Swiss Format

All players that win 2/2 will go into a 7pt Knockout to playoff for 4 players

All players that win 1/2 will go into a 5pt Knockout to playoff for 4 players

The 8 from the playoffs will play against the 8 Pre-Qualifiers from the UK circuit on Sunday

All players that win 0/2 will go into the 3pt Final Challenge

In addition to the above there is a Consolation and Last Chance starting Sunday. Also, Rosey's Rollout and other goodies. It's a fun tournament (fiercely fought) and should be well attended. Book your accommodation immediately!



2006/2007 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 £tba

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

All tournaments feature a Friday night Warm-up, Saturday night Knockout,

Poker Grand Prix and Jackpots subject to demand.

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

FRIDAY

2130: Warm-up Knockout & Jackpots (on demand)

SATURDAY

Registration 1030 / 1230
Play starts 1300 prompt

SUNDAY

Play resumes 1030
(penalty points apply 1035)

Dinner, bed and breakfast @ Hilton Coventry 2006

Single room: 1 night £59, two nights £104

Double or twin room: 1 night £94, two nights £180

Reservations: 02476 603000 ask for 'Group Reservations' and quote 'backgammon'

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

*** * Dinner, bed and breakfast @ Hilton Coventry 2007 * ***

Single room: 1 night £61, two nights £106

Double or twin room: 1 night £98, two nights £188

Reservations: 02476 603000 ask for 'Group Reservations' and quote 'backgammon'

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

Bright 'n' Breezy, 13/14 January 2007

Holiday Inn Brighton-Seafront

The rates for Dinner, Bed & Breakfast per room are:

Single room 1 night @ £75 -- Single room 2 nights @ £144

Double/Twin room 1 night @ £111 -- Double/Twin room 2 nights @ £214

The contact numbers are:

Tournament information 01522 888676 or info@backgammon-biba.co.uk

Accommodation 01273 828280 and quote 'backgammon'

It should be noted that the hotel have blocked off an allocation of 50 rooms and they will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis. To be certain of a room book as soon as you can and avoid being disappointed. The hotel has their own car park the cost of which is £12 per day. However, there is a NCP carpark nearby which guests can use if preferred.

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

2006 Tournament Calendar

Oct 07-08	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct 21-22	14 th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 04-05	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Dec 02-03	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	Coventry	Double KO

2007 Tournament Calendar (all confirmed)

Jan 13-14	Bright 'n' Breezy	GP	UK	Brighton	Knockout
Jan 26-28	5th Cotswold Tournament	GP	-	Nr. Stroud	Knockout
Feb 03-04	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Mar 10-11	Slattery Scottish Open	GP	UK	Coventry	Knockout
Mar 31-Apr 01	Play65 British Open	GP	UK	Coventry	Knockout
Apr ??	Manchester 1-Day	GP	-	Manchester	Combination
May 05-06	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Jun 02-03	Hilton Trophy	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Jun 30-Jul 01	Keren Di Bona Memorial	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Jul ??	11 th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 11-12	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Aug ??	11 th Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	-	tba	Swiss
Sep 01-02	Backpacker Trophy	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct 06-07	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct ??	15 th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 03-04	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Dec 01-02	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	Coventry	Double KO

The 14th Irish Backgammon Open

Wynn's Hotel, Dublin

21st and 22nd October 2006

Tournament Director: Sean Casey

Saturday 21st Registration opens 11.00 am.

Play starts promptly at 12.00 noon

(If you are arriving late or your flight is delayed, call Sean on 086 2596419)

Sunday 22nd

Playoffs for last 16: 9.00 am (Unless they can be fitted in on Saturday evening)

Last 16 10.00 am

Consolation 10.30 am

Team Event 12.00 noon

Scheduled finishing time: 6.00pm

Format: Combined Swiss and Knockout

Six rounds of 7 point matches will be played on Saturday. Winners of 6 matches out of 6 will go into the last 8 on Sunday. Winners of 5 matches out of 6 will go into the last 16. Winners of 4 matches out of 6 will go into a playoff for any remaining places in the last 16. The Swiss format on Saturday means that there are a lot of matches to be played and slow play can be very disruptive to the running of the tournament. For that reason, there will be time controls in place. Any player can insist on playing with a chess clock, subject to availability.

Entry Fee €30 There will be an optional €100 side-pool

Friday Night €200 Jackpot Starts 7.30 pm

Further Information

Sean Casey

seanandpaula@eircom.net

00353 1 2781287

Wynn's Hotel 35 Lower Abbey Street

00353 1 8745131

BACKPACKER BACKGAMMON AT BIBA

Fri 8th Sat 9th Sun 10th September 2006



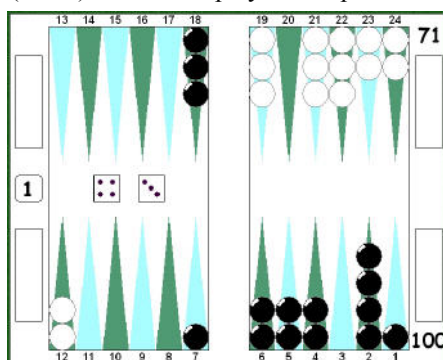
Michael Crane reports: Live, head-to-head backgammon is streets ahead of its online cousin in the enjoyment stakes. In the solitude of your own bedroom you can play anyone, anywhere at anytime online - but what you don't get is fun with a capital F. There's no atmosphere online. It's just you, the PC and the modem. When it's head-to-head you've got banter, laughter, and an atmosphere that online servers just can't emulate, no matter how many sound files they add to their interface.

One prime example (pardon the pun) of head-to-head playing took place on Saturday night, the Gang event. The Gang is simply a bunch of players split into two teams, each with a captain and they all consult and confer on the moves. It is great fun, especially if you've had a bottle or two over dinner first. My team's captain was Tim Mooring - and we played against Peter Chan's team. Straight away it is obvious that the captains are picked at random! Peter is the opposite of a shrinking violet when it comes to backgammon. He is LOUD with capital L O U D! Strictly teetotal, Peter doesn't need drink to get him going.

At one stage of the match his team couldn't decide upon a move. Peter was adamant on moving what we (and a few of his team-mates) thought to be a big error. They couldn't all agree and so one of them pulls a coin out of his pocket and tells Peter, "we'll toss for it. If it's tails we play our move if it's heads we play your move." Peter accepted, tossed the coin and it fell on tails. Peter concurred and played the alternative move; upon picking up the dice it was pointed out to him that it was in fact a double-tailed coin! Everyone burst into fits of laughter, tears running down our cheeks! You won't get that playing online! Eventually the Gang finished and Peter's team prevailed (lucky buggers!). However, Peter himself did not, and the final two to face each other were Mike Main and Jackie Griffiths - an encounter from which Mike emerged the victor.

This wasn't Mike's first victory of the

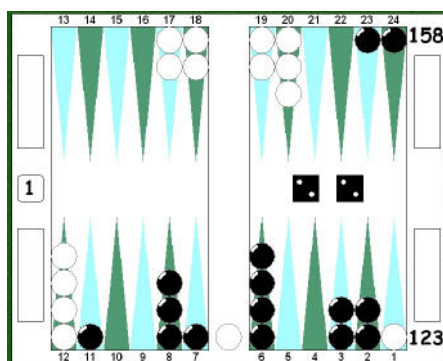
weekend, he was also the winner of the Friday KO. Peter also had a success on the Friday night when he won the Warm-up . . . which he used as a 'warm-up' for the Main. Here he got into the final to face last year's Runner-up, David Nathan. It was a scrappy match at times but one in which Peter took a good lead. Having scrabbled his way back into the match to 9-9 after being 9-4 down, David then proceeds to throw the match away! He (white) has a 43 to play in this position:



David to play 43

After thinking about the play for over two minutes he plays 13/6 leaving Peter exactly what he's looking for - a hit. Better plays were 6/2 4/1 or 6/3 6/2 and wait and see. David's 'logic' was he'd probably have to leave a blot sooner or later and he'd rather do it now before Peter's board got better! Peter rolled 51 and hit and from thereon it's downhill for David all the way as Peter rolls out to win the match on a (late) 2-cube.

Snowie rated them thus: Peter - Beginner, David - Intermediate. Just to illustrate Peter's Beginner rating, here's a move he made that lost him 1/2 a point in equity.



Black 9 White 5
Peter (black) to play 22



Main, David-Peter. Consolation, Ray-Peter.
Last Chance, Dave-Howard. Mad Monkey, Chris-Michelle

How many of you also fell into the Beginner's trap and played 11/7 6/4(2)? The better play by a load was 6/4(2) 3/1*(2). Hopefully this match will appear on www.gammonvillage.com or on the new, www.gammonlife.com very soon.

The Consolation was a little different to the Biba format, but nonetheless, it went well and in the final we saw Ray Tannen and Peter Bennet battling it out. Peter came out on top. Peter was knocked out of the Main 1st Round by Jackie Griffiths; and although she failed to get much further, her partner, Howard Furr-Barton faired very well in the Last Chance. He beat Dave Motely in the final to win his first ever Biba element.

In the 3-pointer, Mad Monkey, Michelle Fisher had to beat Jeff Barber in the semi, and Chris Ternel in the final; she did both and was thrilled to bits to win a Backpacker trophy. Not to be out-done, Chris Gibbins, Michelle's partner won himself a trophy by winning the Sunday jackpot. Now the mantelpiece will be evenly balanced.

I really should give up drinking! I was glowing nicely in the Gang thanks to bottle or two of wine and then I had to beat Peter Bennet in the Jackpot. I didn't have any trouble doing so - that time . . . it was after he re-entered that I met him again in the final; by which time the wine

had truly kicked in and I was not at my best, whereas Peter was! He won, I lost.

The poker was down a bit on entries - Rosey and Slat's were in Thailand and Paul G and Myke (with Paul Barwick) were in Antwerp - which was good for Tony Lee for he came out on top leaving Alison Lee in 2nd place. He is sitting nicely at the top of the Poker Grand Prix, but he isn't yet safe, so watch this space for future developments.

Finally I'd like to thank Mike Main for sponsoring the event and to say that despite the low turnout it was great fun - and that's exactly what backgammon should be.



The event was ran using Mike's Excel spreadsheet that he and Sean Williams have developed - and apart from one small hiccup it worked very well indeed.



Gang & Friday Jackpot: Mike
Poker: Tony
Sunday Jackpot: Chris

<u>Match detailed statistics</u>		
Player	Peter	David
Rating	beginner	intermediate
Overall	13.315/53.269	9.905/46.888
Errors(blunders)	43(13)	27(11)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	11.045/48.280	5.698/23.340
Errors(blunders)	37(11)	14(5)
Double errors		
Overall	2.270/4.989	4.207/23.548
Missed double	1.417/3.371	4.132/23.216
Wrong double	0.852/1.618	0.075/0.332
Errors(blunders)	6(2)	13(6)
Take errors		
Overall	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Wrong pass	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	0(0)	0(0)
Favorite: David Nathan 56.38% - 43.62%		

Tournament Results

SAC Trophy, 5 & 6 August 2006

Main (17/34)

Pos	Player	Wins	GP
1	Julian Minwalla	6	24.77
2	Uldis Lapikens	5	13.42
3	Lawrence Powell	5	13.42
4	John Slattery	4	9.29
5	Mark Heidenfeld	4	9.29
6	Jeff Barber	4	9.29
7	Paul Gilbertson	4	9.29
8	Rosey Bensley	4	9.29
9	Lee Wood	4	9.29
10	Ron Havenhand	4	9.29
11	Arthur Wright	4	9.29
12	Tony Lee	3	6.19
13	Chris Ternel	3	6.19
14	Eamon Keogh	3	6.19
15	Tim Line	3	6.19
16	David Horner	2	4.13
17	Nicky Check	2	4.13

Consolation (17/34)

Pos	Player	Con	Wins	GP
1	Tony Fawcett	3	4	9.29
2	Myke Wignall	3	3	6.19
3	David Naylor	2	3	6.19
4	Adrian Jones	2	3	6.19
5	Steve Rimmer	2	2	4.13
6	Christopher Baxter	2	3	6.19
7	Peter Christmas	2	3	6.19
8	David Startin	2	3	6.19
9	Richard Wenban	1	1	2.58
10	Stephen Drake	1	2	4.13
11	Peter Chan	1	2	4.13
12	Roy Hollands	1	1	2.58
13	Martin Hemming	1	2	4.13
14	Rodney Lighton	1	2	4.13
15	Jonathan Powell	1	2	4.13
16	John Thomas	0	1	2.58
17	John Gilbertson	0	1	2.58

Friday Warm-up (12)

1	John Slattery
2	Richard Wenban

Poker (13)

1	Tony Lee
2	Tim Line
3	Paul Gilbertson

£50 Jackpot (4)

1	Eamon Keogh
2	Julian Minwalla

Backpacker Trophy, 9 & 10 September 2006

Main (21)

1	Peter Chan
2	David Nathan
3/4	Tim Mooring
3/4	Chris Ternel
5/8	Rodney Lighton
5/8	Dave Motley
5/8	Ray Tannen
5/8	Mick Vacarey

Consolation (17)

01-Jan	Peter Bennet
2	Ray Tannen
3/4	Jeff Barber
3/4	Jackie Griffiths

Last Chance (32)

1	Howard Furr-Barton
2	Dave Motley
3/4	Michelle Fisher
3/4	George Hall

Mad Monkey (16)

1	Michelle Fisher
2	Chris Ternel
3/4	Rodney Lighton
3/4	Jeff Barber

Friday Warm-up (5)

1	Peter Chan
2	Jeff Barber

Friday Jackpot (5)

1	Mike Main
2	Jeff Conn

Saturday Jackpot (8)

1	Peter Bennet
2	Michael Crane

Sunday Jackpot (4)

1	Chris Gibbins
2	Geoff Conn

Gang (11)

1	Mike Main
2	Jackie Griffiths

Poker (7)

1	Tony Lee
2	Alison Lee

Grand Prix @ Backpacker

13.42	Peter Chan
13.41	Peter Bennet
9.29	Tim Mooring
9.29	David Nathan
9.273	Howard Furr-Barton
6.19	Dave Motley
6.19	Rodney Lighton
6.19	Chris Ternel
6.19	Mick Vacarey
4.13	Ray Tannen
4.13	Uldis Lapikens
4.13	Jackie Griffiths
4.12	Jeff Barber
4.12	Tony Lee
4.11	George Hall
4.11	Michelle Fisher
2.58	Chris Gibbins
2.57	Martin Hemming
1.55	David Startin

Grand Prix Championship September 2006 (Top 100)

70.17	David Startin	45.37	Peter Bennet	37.13	Rodney Lighton
65.02	John Slattery	45.36	Nicky Check	36.11	Mardi Ohannessian
64.00	Jeff Barber	44.37	Ron Havenhand	35.59	David Nathan
63.47	Paul Gilbertson	44.36	Stephen Drake	35.09	John Samuel
60.37	Nigel Merrigan	42.29	Brian Lever	35.07	Rachel Rhodes
55.72	Chris Ternel	41.28	John Hurst	34.58	Gerry Enslin
53.67	Uldis Lapikens	41.24	Myke Wignall	34.05	Mick Vacarey
53.09	Martin Hemming	39.21	Rosey Bensley	34.03	Stuart Mann
48.51	Mark Heidenfeld	39.20	Adrian Jones	33.02	Tony Lee
48.48	Tim Line	38.16	Dave Motley	33.00	Lawrence Powell

31.97	Ian Tarr	18.58	Mike Grabsky	9.29	Barry McAdam
30.93	Peter Chan	18.56	Ann Pocknell	9.29	Michel Lamote
30.42	Tony Fawcett	17.54	Dod Davies	9.29	Lee Wood
28.90	Ray Tannen	17.52	Vicky Chandler	9.28	Felix Vink
28.88	Tim Mooring	16.00	Mick Butterfield	9.28	John Harrison
28.88	Julian Fetterlein	15.98	David Fall	9.28	Carter Mattig
28.85	George Hall	15.46	Peter Snape	9.27	John Wright
26.84	Jason Champion	15.45	Roland Herrera	9.27	Howard Furr-Barton
26.83	Julian Minwalla	14.95	Mike Heard	8.26	Edwin Turner
25.28	Peter Christmas	14.45	Mahmoud Jahanbani	8.25	Mark Dixon
24.25	Eamon Keogh	13.93	Roy Hollands	8.25	Tim Brown
23.71	Kevin White	13.42	Andrew Sarjeant	8.25	Fanika Petkovska
22.19	Chris Gibbins	13.42	Simon Morecroft	8.22	David Wallbank
22.19	Arthur Wright	13.40	Michelle Fisher	6.71	Wayne Felton
22.18	John Gilbertson	12.39	Richard Biddle	6.70	Geoff Conn
21.67	Steve Rimmer	12.39	Jon Barnes	6.68	Alan Greenwood
21.15	Jimmi Wong	12.38	Mike Main	6.19	Lionel Mann
20.64	Stephen Cole	10.84	Paul Christmas	6.19	Alan Beckerson
20.62	Simonetta Barone	10.32	Cliff Connick	6.19	Neil Webb
19.61	Mike Greenleaf	10.32	David Edwards	6.19	Chris Bray
19.59	Tony Walters	10.32	Christopher Baxter	6.19	Marc Steyvers
19.58	Kevin Stebbing	10.29	Matthew Fisher	6.19	David Naylor
19.57	Martin Barkwill	10.29	Steve Hallet		
19.06	Paul Barwick	9.29	Steve Simkin		

Ranking Championship September 2006 (Top 99)
played - average-name)

14	2193.64	John Slattery	13	1813.77	Jason Champion	5	1828.80	Mike Greenleaf
14	2188.29	Uldis Lapikens	12	1883.08	Tim Mooring	5	1752.80	Kevin Stebbing
14	2152.50	Paul Gilbertson	12	1790.83	Ray Tannen	5	1743.40	Dave Edwards
14	2147.00	Nigel Merrigan	12	1464.75	John Gilbertson	5	1637.40	Simon Morecroft
14	2140.79	Jeff Barber	11	1436.55	Roy Hollands	4	1823.75	Michel Lamote
14	2055.57	Tim Line	10	1631.60	Steve Rimmer	4	1818.25	Barry McAdam
14	2052.14	Martin Hemming	10	1328.90	Peter Bennet	4	1546.75	Ann Pocknell
14	2043.43	Gerry Enslin	9	1364.11	Paul Christmas	4	1423.75	Geoff Conn
14	1991.71	Rodney Lighton	9	1198.56	Fanika Petkovska	4	1167.25	Brian Lever
14	1971.21	Stephen Drake	8	1703.25	Jon Barnes	3	1894.67	Andy Bell
14	1964.07	Adrian Jones	8	1623.50	Chris Baxter	3	1882.67	Sean Williams
14	1952.86	John Samuel	8	1446.75	Paul Barwick	3	1857.67	Andrew Darby
14	1940.57	Nicky Check	7	2073.57	John Jurst	3	1832.00	Darryl Kirk
14	1937.71	David Startin	7	2000.00	Julian Minwalla	3	1830.67	Mike Main
14	1923.79	Lawrence Powell	7	1748.57	Mark Heindenfeld	3	1795.00	Sean Casey
14	1897.07	Rosey Bensley	7	1711.71	Rachel Rhodes	3	1765.67	Ray Fard
14	1894.57	Ron Havenhand	7	1625.57	David Horner	3	1763.67	Paul Watts
14	1877.57	Tony Lee	7	1591.86	Michelle Fisher	3	1760.33	Neil Webb
14	1876.93	Dave Motley	7	1586.29	Mike Heard	3	1722.00	Sue Keeble
14	1871.50	Eamon Keogh	7	1515.71	Tony Walters	3	1712.67	George Miltiadou
14	1847.36	Mardi Ohannessian	7	1306.86	John Thomas	3	1704.33	David Dunkley
14	1826.14	David Nathan	6	1924.83	Mike Grabsky	3	1700.00	Chris Bray
14	1787.43	Myke Wignall	6	1773.83	Lee Wood	3	1683.33	Roland Herrera
14	1765.93	Peter Christmas	6	1754.00	Julian Fetterlein	3	1642.67	Marc Steyvers
14	1742.57	Tony Fawcett	6	1732.17	David Naylor	3	1537.33	Wayne Felton
14	1739.50	Peter Chan	6	1656.83	Mick Butterfield	3	1384.67	Vicky Chandler
14	1713.00	Stephen Cole	6	1640.33	Lionel Mann	2	1846.00	Andrew Sarjeant
14	1700.57	George Hall	6	1420.83	Matthew Fisher	2	1809.50	Paul Van Dyke
14	1670.86	Mick Vacarey	6	1375.17	Bob Bruce	2	1748.00	Jackie Griffiths
14	1637.00	Arthur Wright	6	1353.33	Richard Wenban	2	1721.50	Tim Brown
14	1612.14	Chris Gibbins	6	1285.50	Jeff Ellis	2	1711.00	George Sulimirski
14	1496.79	Kevin White	6	1178.50	Richard Granville	2	1702.50	Steven Crowden
14	1397.79	Jonathan Powell	5	1846.40	Ian Tarr	2	1655.50	Mark Dixon

With three more events to come: Sandy, Irish and Townharbour, it is possible that any of these 100 players could win the championship. So, get yourself booked in and have a go!

Active Rankings September 2006 (new-old-name)

2005	2005	Julian Fetterlein	1688	1688	Mike Greenleaf	1516	1516	Andrew Sarjeant
1964	1964	John Slattery	1682	1682	Ron Havenhand	1512	1512	Felix Vink
1939	1939	Brian Lever	1672	1672	Ian Tarr	1501	1501	Arthur Wright
1913	1913	Lawrence Powell	1669	1669	Jason Champion	1495	1495	Cliff Connick
1860	1867	Tony Lee	1662	1662	Connor Dickinson	1494	1494	Matthew Fisher
1853	1853	Rachel Rhodes	1659	1659	Steve Rimmer	1484	1484	Tony Walters
1836	1836	Stuart Mann	1657	1657	Roy Hollands	1483	1483	Miles Ilott
1831	1856	David Startin	1652	1652	Barry McAdam	1483	1483	Richard Biddle
1826	1812	David Nathan	1650	1650	Brian Busfield	1483	1483	David Sanders
1824	1824	Nigel Merrigan	1650	1634	Rodney Lighton	1478	1478	David Horner
1820	1817	Chris Ternel	1647	1647	Mick Butterfield	1465	1465	Rebecca Bell
1815	1815	John Hurst	1638	1638	Martin Barkwill	1460	1460	Simonetta Barone
1812	1817	Ray Tannen	1630	1630	Jeff Ellis	1459	1459	Mike Main
1802	1802	Dave McNair	1619	1619	Tim Line	1456	1456	Wayne Felton
1788	1788	Dod Davies	1617	1617	Mike Heard	1454	1454	Rosey Bensley
1785	1769	Peter Bennet	1616	1583	Dave Motley	1454	1454	Andy Bell
1776	1776	Steve Hallet	1611	1611	John Thomas	1444	1444	Malcolm Wilson
1774	1774	Nicky Check	1609	1609	Ian Shaw	1440	1440	John Samuel
1773	1773	Paul Gilbertson	1609	1609	Ian Gwynne	1440	1440	David Markwick
1772	1772	Richard Granville	1604	1604	Edwin Turner	1431	1435	Chris Gibbins
1770	1772	Uldis Lapikens	1600	1600	Ken Gibson	1430	1430	Jane Oxley
1762	1762	Mardi Ohannessian	1591	1591	Eddie Barker	1428	1428	David Naylor
1756	1756	Steve Pickard	1588	1588	John Gilbertson	1423	1423	Leslie Singleton
1754	1754	Mike Grabsky	1587	1604	Martin Hemming	1419	1419	Myke Wignall
1752	1752	Ann Pocknell	1583	1583	John Wright	1417	1426	Kevin White
1749	1727	Tim Mooring	1575	1575	Paul Statter	1415	1415	Lionel Mann
1748	1748	Danny Cohen	1569	1569	Julian Minwalla	1415	1415	Tony Fawcett
1740	1740	Raj Jansari	1568	1568	Grahame Powell	1414	1406	Mick Vacarey
1733	1733	Peter Christmas	1561	1489	Peter Chan	1408	1408	Paul Watts
1723	1723	Kevin Stebbing	1561	1561	Jon Barnes	1405	1405	Alan Greenwood
1722	1722	Simon K Jones	1561	1561	Roland Herrera	1395	1395	Catherine Oldfield
1721	1721	Stephen Drake	1559	1559	Eamon Keogh	1395	1395	Jonathan Powell
1715	1715	Sean Casey	1556	1556	Andrew Darby	1391	1391	Tim Brown
1709	1709	Arthur Musgrove	1555	1570	Geoff Conn	1390	1390	Stephen Cole
1708	1708	Brendan Burgess	1546	1546	Gerry Enslin	1382	1382	Jo Curl
1706	1706	Mark Heidenfeld	1539	1539	Vicky Chandler	1375	1375	Bob Bruce
1698	1707	Jeff Barber	1537	1537	Darryl Kirk	1366	1366	Paul Fox
1697	1697	Emmanuel Di Bona	1535	1535	Stavros Elia	1364	1364	Cedric Lytton
1696	1696	Dale Taylor	1523	1523	Paul Barwick	1322	1322	Jon Sharpe
1696	1696	Adrian Jones	1522	1522	Paul Christmas	1252	1252	Fanika Petkovska
1692	1692	Bob Young	1517	1514	George Hall	1248	1248	Alison Lee

Grand Prix 01	£264	Ranking 01
Grand Prix 02	£189	Ranking 02
Grand Prix 03	£151	Ranking 03
Grand Prix 04	£113	Ranking 04
Grand Prix 05	£75	Ranking 05
Grand Prix 06	£57	Ranking 06
Grand Prix 07	£38	Ranking 07
Grand Prix 08	£19	Ranking 08
Grand Prix 09	£19	Ranking 09
Grand Prix 10	£19	Ranking 10

The Championship prize fund is growing well and plenty of the top players will be taking home a few bob at the end of the year - some of them taking a slice from both elements!

If you need a reason to keep attending - here it is!

The best way of bumping up your Ranking and Grand Prix 'winnings' is via the Swiss events - you get to play six matches, and losing a couple won't

mean you being knocked out as in Knockout formats wherein half the entries are out after Round 1. Also, look out for non-Biba events that are Grand Prix rated . . . They could make the difference between £264 or £19!

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20 minutes to finish a 13 point
match or you're out.
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