

BIBAFAX

No. 86 2007

January

February

Magazine of the British Isles Backgammon Association

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

Office/Fax: 01522 888676, Mobile: 07900 916468

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



FINEST TOURNAMENTS WITH BEST PLAYERS

WORLD BACKGAMMON ASSOCIATION

BIGGEST PRIZES



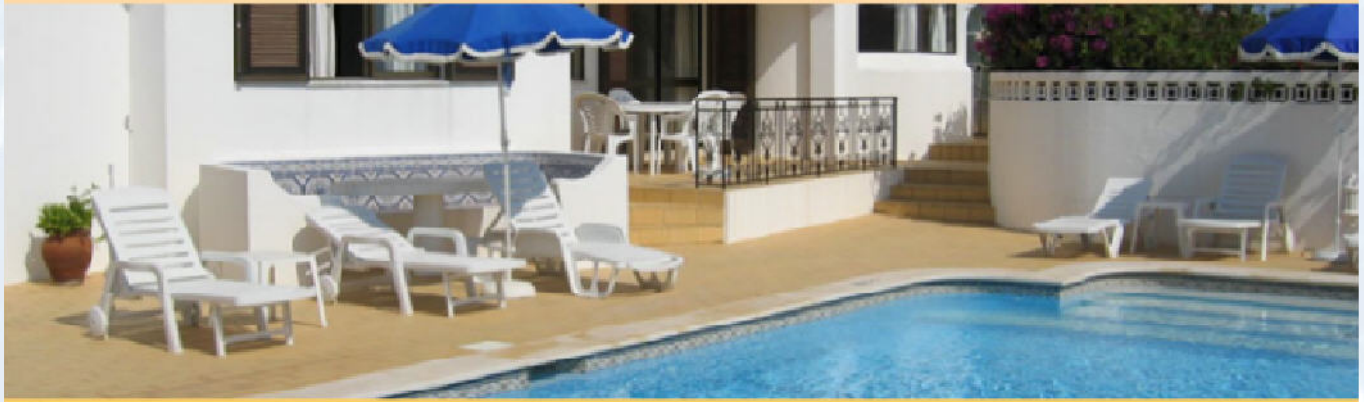
**Dedicated To
Backgammon**

John Hurst

**XcitingGames 10th Bright 'n' Breezy
Champion 2007**



casa mundial *Carvoeiro - The Algarve*



Carvoeiro is a lively fishing village which has become popular during recent years, but still retains its local charm. The fishing boats come and go and fresh fish and locally produced fruit and vegetables can be purchased from the market.



There are four lovely sandy beaches for swimming or lazing in the sun around Carvoeiro, and other beautiful unspoilt beaches such as Benagil and Marinha are also close by. There are ample shops, a pharmacy, banks, doctors clinic, butchers, bakers and newsagent, everything you are likely to need, and good restaurants abound, for all tastes and pockets and plenty of friendly bars.



The villa is detached, spacious, sleeps 6 and has 3 bedrooms, (1 double with ensuite bathroom and 2 twin bedrooms that share a large separate bathroom) There are some beautiful views from the pool area and the roof of the villa towards the sea and the mountains to the rear. There is a large lounge and dining room, which leads to a spacious kitchen. There is satellite TV, CD/radio, DVD, and video with about 40 films. The villa is fully equipped, just take your own beach towels. There is a welcome pack provided to keep you going until you visit the supermarket and a maid service 5 days a week except bank holidays.



The lounge and the double bedroom both have exits to the pool area, which is totally private, and the pool itself measures 35ft by 15ft. There is a barbecue and outside shower plus the usual loungers and sunshades.

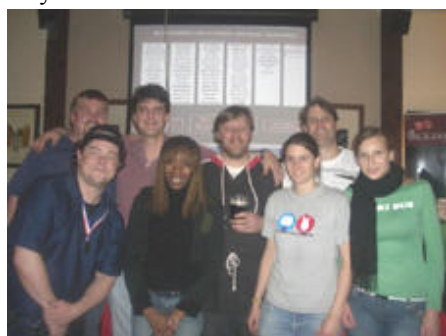
Between mid-April and mid-October our changeover day is Wednesday which avoids the expensive flights on Thursdays and the weekend. Changeover days can be flexible outside of this period to accommodate 3, 4, and 7 night breaks. Bookings for Biba members available for February, March, October & November.

There are daily flights to Faro (Carvoeiro is just 45 minutes from Faro Airport) throughout the year from Gatwick via BA, Monarch scheduled (recommended) and Easyjet. From Heathrow via TAP, Stansted via Easyjet, Luton via Monarch scheduled and Easyjet and Manchester via Monarch scheduled. Journey time about 2hrs 30mins. Car hire from the airport is easy and inexpensive. Taxis can be arranged if necessary.



For further details email casamondial@backgammon-biba.co.uk or call +44 (0)1522 829649

Registration for Backgammon Live in London 2006 opened in mid September. By mid October the Olympiad Tournament was fully registered, by late October the Singles Knockout was fully booked and by early November the Backgammon Boat Trip to see the Fireworks was also fully booked. We went into the weekend with 116 people booked and I'm sorry to say a number of people who wanted to attend but we couldn't squeeze in when they wanted to be with us.



The Crew (some of) 2006

The Crew and some early birds arrived at 1.00 o'clock on Friday to set up. And what a team effort it was. Danny and Crispin made tables that I had bought along because the Spice Island didn't have quite as many as we were going to need, Richard moved tables around as we were going to want them, Phil Salts and Steve Grundy were roped in to move chairs around, Adam showed an artistic side and laid out all the presents and BackgammonMasters.com freebies, Natalie and Isabelle arranged the trophies and Matte climbed a ladder to plug a cable into the overhead projector. By 6.00 pm we had the upstairs of the pub just as I wanted it.

Players were arriving by a number of means possible; tube, cabs and GLH free sponsored cabs from mainline stations. They checked into the YHA and made their way to The Spice Island.

I'd intended to have drinks at 7.00 o'clock downstairs in the pub but that area was busy with locals so we had drinks upstairs followed by dinner. I like this part of the weekend because by starting without playing backgammon it says to folk that this is a social occasion first.

At 9.30 the Weekend Long Knockout kicked off with 35 players. That's up from last year which was 28. So there would be 3 matches in the Round of 64. I happened

to be one of those 6 players, Richard was on a bye so he helped the Weekend Knockout T.D. Danny just make sure everybody was playing and had a drink.

After an hour or so we had a good number of players knocked out and ready for more so registration of the first Tric Trac Tourno of the weekend was opened. Michelle was to be the TTT T.D. but she was busy playing in the Weekend so I stepped in to kick off a TTT. I'd set up for a 10 player TTT but had 20 players in front of me. Ok - so that will be 2 x 10 player TTTS!

This year we'd arranged an extension in the pub until 1.00 am. so there was no hurry to leave which made for a far better evening and meant that most of the Weekend Tournament got to a Round ahead of schedule. At 1.30 we retired to the YHA not to go to bed but to finish off the last 2 or 3 matches in the TTTS and to have our first 8 player Jackpot of the weekend. But we had 16 players interested. Ok - so that will be 2 x 8 player Jackpots!

Friday evening winners were Fanika and Matte in the TTTS

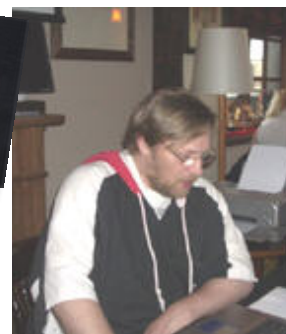


TTT Winner - Fanika



TTT Winner - Matte

and in the Jackpots Mike Bailey (aka Stan) who has attended every BG Live in London and Jörg Schwiemann who was back having missed the last two years. They all won Champ 'o' Champ points and were awarded their trophies the fol-



Report by Mike Main

lowing morning. Bedtime for the insomniacs was about 4.00 am.



**Jackpot 1 Winner
Mike Bailey**



Jackpot 2 Winner - Jörg

At 9.45 Saturday morning the doors of The Spice Island opened proper with tea, coffee and biscuits available on the bar. At 10.00 Mr Adam Tansley gave his seminar "Have a Cigar!" The seminar was well received by the 35 or so players that attended and seeing that I was to hear constant references to it over the weekend I'm sure players found it of benefit.



**"Have a Cigar!" Seminar
by Adam Tansley**

At 11.30 Mr Richard Biddle took the

floor and did the Singles Group Auction. Irving jumped in quick and bought the first two groups at a knock down price. The Group headed by John Broomfield went for £100 and Andrew Sarjeant bought the Jon Kinsley Group for a bargain £30. Syndicates of players were now forming and the bidding was going higher and higher. I'd written the Auction sheet to go up to £100 per Group but what with Richard's excellent Auctioneering skills I had to do a quick bit of re-programming to accommodate the Paul Lamford Group which went for £110. A total of £505 was raised - £45 up from last year.

Main pool entries had mostly been taken before 11.30 but there were a few more who wanted in so their money was quickly taken before I called out a few registered names that I hadn't seen yet. I'd stated on the website and in the programme for the event that if any of the 64 registered players were not in situ at 12.00 o'clock and that if I had reserve players in situ I would replace those registered but not present with the reserves. In the interest of getting the Tournament started on time I stuck to my word and 3 players were removed and replaced by 3 reserves. I did the computerized draw and flashed up Main Round 1 page on the large screen. By 12.10 we had 32 matches in progress and players were bought their pre-ordered drinks.



Paul Lamford & Tobias

I was suppose to run a TTT for the remaining reserve players and various members of my family that were with us this year to see what on earth I get up to in my life. But I found myself a little short of time and before I could do so found that I had match reports to fill in. So I'm sorry to report that the TTT didn't happen but the players had something to eat instead.

I'd shaved down the Singles Knockout this year from a total of 172 matches to play to 156. This is because we have a Boat Trip to see a Fireworks Display right in the middle of the Tournament.

Players love it but it causes me a headache every year. I'd dropped the traditional Progressive Consolation, Last Chance and Suicide in favour of 3 Plate Tournaments with players being paired as soon as they are ready to play. I'd also increased the Plate 1 Tournament to 5 pointers instead of 3 pointers. This according to the dummy tournaments I had run over the months preceding this event would mean that we would be down to the last 16 players in the 4 brackets before most of the players left for the Boat Trip. That was the theory - I can't say the practice matched the theory and there were still 32 players involved by the time they needed to leave for the boat. But I can't say it caused anybody to complain - in fact it just added to the fun of the day - a little bit of organised chaos makes for a lot of fun.



Alexander Polden & Danny Gallagher

Next up was the Boat Trip. We had a larger boat this year and 85 passengers instead of 47 as we had last year. The Pier the boat leaves from is a good 500 yards away - just too far to ask players to walk given the time constraint. So we have a fleet of sponsored cabs to transfer passengers from The Spice Island to the Hilton Pier. Cabs pulls up, in jump 4 passenger, off goes the cab, drops off, comes back and does another run. 82 passengers moved inside of 30 minutes. That was everybody except one group of 3 who were running late. I jumped into the last cab to go pick them up at Rotherhithe Station at 3.40.



Chrissi Williams

I told them that if the boat was still at the Hilton Pier they could get on it but if it had pulled away it was their own fault for getting here late and they would miss the boat trip. The cab dropped me near The Spice and zoomed of.



Suzy Crabb v Dorothy Lee

A few minutes later I heard that the boat had in fact left on time at 3.45 but turned around for the late passengers. I was livid. If the boat missed getting through Blackfriars Bridge before the Port of London Authority closed the river to all traffic 15 minutes before the Fireworks Display everybody would not get the best possible view of the fireworks. I stood outside on the upstairs balcony to calm down and watch the boat go past. I stood there for ages. Then I had to nip inside to sort something or other out. I returned to my balcony look out and still couldn't see the boat. I decided it must have passed by while I was inside and that the phone call I was expecting letting me know of its approach had been forgotten about probably because of the backgammon matches happening on board.



Chris Purchase & Martha Littlehailes

But at 4.40 the phone call came - they were now nearing The Spice en route to Temple Pier. Where on earth or river had they been? They should be passing though Blackfriars Bridge at this time. I was told that upon leaving the Hilton Pier the Captain had taken them down river to Greenwich for a little sight seeing tour. This was never part of the booking - the boat was booked to go from the Hilton Pier direct to Temple Pier.



I really wasn't confident that the boat would make Temple Pier in time. It didn't. I got a phone call letting me know they had moored this side of Blackfriars Bridge and that, as I knew it would be from there, the view of the fireworks display was obstructed.. But I'm told the fireworks were as good as ever even if the passengers couldn't see the lower ones.

Michael Crane of Biba was with us again this year to run the On Board Tournaments. 1 pointers, 8 player brackets, Optional Pools. He far out-did himself this year and ran 12 tournaments. All the winners got a plaque and 1 Champ 'o' Champs points each. Meanwhile Danny Gallagher ran the On Shore Tournaments - there was less demand for these this year so there were only 2 On Shores though they were longer point matches. Bedstefar and Clan wanted a TTT so a TTT happened for them. Pernille, a first time TTT player, achieved a staggering average of 1.75.



TTT Winner - Pernille

I've already spoken to the boat company and am waiting for them to come back to me as to why the Captain went the wrong way. We were missing chairs on board last year and this year the boat went the wrong way. It seems no matter how much I plan the weekend something is not going to work as it should - but 2 blunders in 2 years by the boat company is not good.

Back to the Singles Knockout which was due to complete. I knew full well that it wouldn't do so quickly because players had now had a dose of fresh air and would be hungry. The carvery was laid out and was the first thing players saw. Had the Singles progress to the last 16 players I could have sat them down to play but there were still about 30 players involved and I wasn't about to come between 30 empty stomachs and the carvery. So we had an overrun. *Ce la vie*, a party is never supposed to go like clockwork.

Soon the famished had eaten, Singles players were back at the tables and Michelle stepped forward to hand out the players presents. Everybody that came

had been asked to bring a small present for another person. Michelle had handed out raffle tickets to those that had bought and now it was time to hand out the presents. Michelle asked that my Mother (who was there with a number of other Mains) help with the handing out of presents. Well done Michelle, my Mum went all gooey legged and chuffed to bits to be doing something. A small friendly riot ensued with a good deal of laughter around. I later saw people wearing silly hats that I'm sure were presents.

Semi-Finalist in the Main were Dave Treacy, Martha Littlehailes, Monica Beckerson and Adam Tansley. Dave beat Martha to make this his second Main Final is as many years and Monica beat Adam in a battle of the olde hand versus the new hand. In the Final it was Monica who won leaving Dave as the bridesmaid again.



**Singles Main Winner
Monica Beckerson**

So experience over the board seems to have paid - Monica was featured in a film on backgammon some years ago and it seems perfect timing that she has won again just when backgammon on the television is becoming fashionable again.

In Plate 1 John Broomfield triumphed over Carol Lems with Elaine Bretherton and Neil Foston as Semi-Finalists.



**Singles Plate 1 Winner
John Broomfield**



**Singles Plate 1 R-up
Carol Lems**

In Plate 2 Paul Lamford won over Jon Samuel



**Singles Plate 2 Winner
Paul Lamford**



**Singles Plate 2 R-up
Jon Samuel**

And in Plate 3 Dorothy Lee beat Fergus Cooney.



**Singles Plate 3 Winner
Dorothy Lee**

All those mentioned (except Fergus) won Champ 'o' Champ points. In the Auction Simon Morecroft had bought Dave Treacy so won 30% of the Auction and Andrew Sarjeant had invested £30 in Group

D which included Monica and gave Andrew an 11/1 return.



**John Ingamells &
Shona & Philippa Main**

Next tournament up was The Doubles. 20 teams took part this year (slightly up from last year which was 18.) Richard was to TD this one but he was busy in the Weekend Knockout so I jumped in to get it started. Registrations and Pools taken the draw was made and off they went to play. They want more, they want more! I rang the bell and announced another TTT was starting. 20 players surrounded my desk and hence another 2 TTTs started. But there were still players left standing and still more backgammon was required. Ok - no problem - we'll run a Jackpot too. Michael and Sharen Crane handed out the On Board plaques.

Having got myself ahead of all the players I thought I'd keep ahead of them so the Saturday Quiz was handed out. At the monthly Backgammon in Camden Phil Simborg provides a Quiz. However I had, through some miscommunication on my behalf, missed having it in place in October and though my sheer lack of time missed having it in place in November. I'd spoken to Phil again this week and we had got our act together and I had the two Quizzes (Sat & Sun) to hand and ready so they were presented here at BG Live in London.



Jon Kinsey v Natalie Favre

I took a wander around the pub. There were Doubles matches in progress, TTTs all over the place, Jackpots here and there, Weekend Knockout matches were

keeping to their timetable, people were chatting, silly present games were being played, my nieces had found the chewy sweets on the TD desk and took over the entry of results (running tournaments via computer really is child's play) my mother, who loves food, was having another meal and the place was buzzing. I told myself "Mission accomplished!"

The Mermen (St Albans players who play in The Mermaid Pub) Uldis Lapikens and John Ingamells won the Doubles over The Lucky Devils Jon Kinsey and Adam Tansley. Jörg Schwiemann and Mike Bailey (who had won the Friday Jackpots) now won the two Saturday evening TTTs.



TTT Winner - Jörg



**TTT Winner - MikeB
& Director Michelle**



**Jackie Griffiths &
Simon Morecroft**

Simon Morecroft won the Jackpot.

At 1.30 we left the pub and headed to the YHA for our last Jackpot of the day. Manchester player Steve Grundy took this one and a walloping £8 Prize Fund to go with his trophy and Champ 'o' Champ point. I hit the sack at about 4.00 am.



**Jackpot 4 Winner
Steve Grundy**

A quick morning shower, some breakfast and it was time to set up in the Spice Island all over again. Doors opened at 9.45, tea, coffee and biscuits were laid on and about 30 attended the Chris Bray Seminar "The Doubling Cube Explained."



Chris Bray

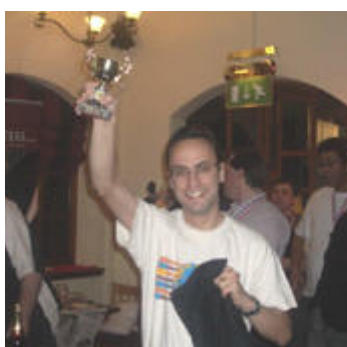
It was excellent. Chris also provided some copies of his book "An Independent View" as prizes and will be bringing out another two books in 2007.

And so onto the Olympiad. A 32 player event with 7 brackets, Optional Pools throughout and an Auction to start. We had a few players drop out in the last hour but those seats were taken by the reserves. Richard raised £510 in the Auction, monies were paid, the draw done and 16 tables of play were before my eyes. But so were other players so a TTT and a Jackpot were started as well. By 12.30 we had 46 active players.

Phil Salts had been coming close to a trophy all weekend but hadn't actually managed it. He had a cab booked at 3.00 pm. so this TTT was his last chance. He played quickly and found he got into a TTT style groove - the best way to play a TTT in my opinion. But he couldn't get them all played by 3.00 so he had to leave it, in accordance to TTT rules, to a replacement player of equivalent rating to play his last two matches. But Martin Birkhahn wanted a trophy too and was not to be outdone. Phil, you'll just have to



come back next year to which you are most welcome. Phil had been drawn against my niece Isabelle Farve earlier on in the Weekend Knockout. Isabelle loves the game but had as yet not bothered to play with the doubling cube. I'd explained the very basics of it to Isabelle but I knew if she was drawn against a player who knew how to use it she would stand little chance in a 7 pointer. Phil, who had announced he wanted to go home with a trophy when he saw them being laid out on Friday, was good enough to explain Isabelle's errors not only after their match but during their match in a way that Isabelle told me was totally understandable and logical. Hence Phil had risked his chances in order to educate another player. Uncalled for but the help was most welcome.



TTT Winner - Martin

The Weekend Knockout also drew to a close. Once again Adam Tansley was a Semi-Finalist but Steve Grundy was the finalist from the upper part of the draw and Crispin saw off Hanke to be the other finalist. Steve won the final and thus the winners trophy and 5 Champ 'o' Champ points but he hadn't entered the £5 Pool and Crispin had so Crispin won his second Pool of the weekend. Bet you enter the Pool next year Steve.



**Weekend Knockout Winner
Steve Grundy - R-up Crispin Duke**

In the Sunday afternoon Jackpot it was, on his second entry, Eric Maillebiau who came away the winner.

The Olympiad is designed to keep 80% of the players active at all times. This would work fine if players had not been playing and drinking all weekend. But under such circumstances stomachs need to be filled so players were stopping for meals. This of course sent the timing out of the window. But players were all happy and that's the idea so no worries there.



**Jackpot 5 Winner
Eric Maillebiau**

Satellite 1 was the first bracket to complete with Matte Juggler winning a gold, Crispin Duke taking the silver and Prize Fund and Sue Keeble taking the bronze.



**Olympiad Sat 1
Crispin, Matte & Sue**

In Satellite 2 it was my other Swiss niece Natalie Favre who took gold, Sue took the silver and Michelle the bronze and Prize Fund.



**Olympiad Sat 2
Sue, Natalie & Michelle**

In the TTT for those knocked out of the 1/4 Finals of the Conso Paul Lamford took a gold. The Suicide went to Tom Duignan, Last Chance to Danny Gallagher, The Conso to George Hall and the Main gold to John Broomfield with silver

to George Miltiadou and bronze to Stef Rohan. John and George had bought themselves in the Auction and thus had a handsome return. Before the event Irving had been telling other Manchester players that if they didn't win at least a medal at BG Live in London they were s*t. I'm please to report Irv didn't have to eat his words and won the Last Chance bronze.



**Olympiad TTT
Mike, Paul & Dorothy**



**Olympiad Main
Stef, John B, George M**



**Olympiad Cons
Carol, George, Robert**



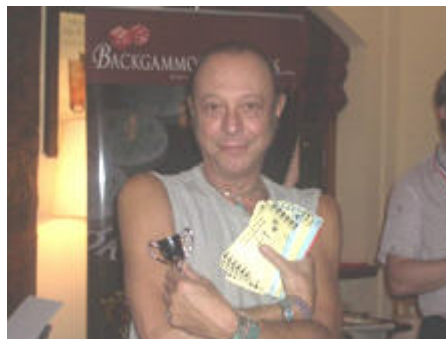
**Olympiad Last Chance
Alex, Danny & Irving**



**Olympiad Suicide
Martin Blatman & Tom**



The Olympiad completed at nearly 7.00 pm so we moved straight to the Prize Giving Ceremony. Players came forward and were awarded their medals and presents by the Backgammon Bunnies Chrissi, Isabelle and Natalie. Also to award was the Hustler's Haven. It was Jon Samuel who showed me the largest wedge of bucks so it was he who took the trophy.



**Hustler's Haven Winner
Jon Samuel**

The big question was who had won the Champ 'o' Champs. Dave Treacy was certainly in contention having picked up points in various tournaments, as was Steve Grundy who had won the Weekend and picked up points in various others and Matte Juggler wasn't far off either. But John Broomfield had won the Plate 1, an On Board and had just won 5 points in the Olympiad which gave him more Champ 'o' Champ points than any other player and thus the title and Champ 'o' Champs trophy as he was in 2002. Congrats John.



**Champ 'o' Champs 2006
John Broomfield**

Thanks was given to our Main Sponsor BackgammonMasters.com. The operational costs of running a weekend such as this are considerable and it's with the support of sponsorship that these can be met. The alternative is to charge players a lot more than they were charged which would reduce the number of players probably dramatically.

But we hadn't finished yet. There were still more trophies to play for. Not least of

all we had The Gang Tournament to play. The concept is simple: put all players names into a hat and draw them out into two teams. First names out of the hat a Team Leaders. A 3 point match is played between the two teams. The winning team is split again and another 3 pointer is played. This goes on until just 1 player wins. The first round in particular gets very noisy and is the closest thing to a backgammon riot or rugby scrum. I wish I could lay claim to the invention of this format but I can't - that honour goes to Zoe Cunningham who thought it up inside of 10 minutes at Bg Live in London 2004.



Tom Duignan v George Miltiadou

The word has spread about how much fun this tournament is and we had 22 players up for it this year. 11 a side backgammon! Can I do it justice in a report? No. It was, as per usual, a load of fun with lots of debate over moves and jeering from the other team while decisions were made. There was however a moment when it could have got a little too fractious. One of the team leaders was an online player who was attending his first ever live event. His team was taking an age to decide upon 3 possible moves with the checkers moved to one of the three desirable moves. At this moment the team leader moved his dice to a more convenient location on his side of the board. This would have been fine if the team leader had slid the dice across the board maintaining contact with the playing surface. But he didn't. He picked them up off the board by an inch or two and replaced them on the board. Team B cried "move made - move over - our roll!" They had Team A bang to rights. But not everybody had seen the dice being moved. I let the debate carry on for a while and when it was starting to subside I stepped in to explain to the Team Leader what he had actually done. He remembered moving the dice but didn't recall if he had lifted them or not. A classic case of an online player not knowing or understanding the ramifications of correct live play. This entire event is designed to show players how live backgammon is played. The

Team Leader learnt a valuable lesson that I'm sure he'll, and others, will never forget.



Adam Tansley v Fergus Cooney

It was Fergus's team that won the match but the time was nearing 10.30 and there was not time to start another at least hour long 3 pointer so we started to pack up the things we needed and headed for the YHA bar. A number of players had to leave so the match became a 3 versus 3 players instead of a 6 versus 5 players. In Round 3 the winning 3 were split again into a 2 versus 1 and it was the 1 who won - the 1 was Irving.

While Round 2 was going on those knocked out of Round 1 and still with us played for the last TTT of the weekend. Richard, who had consistently had hard draws all weekend, had not won a trophy up until now and he was determined to do so. Now he did.



**Charlie, Spencer
and Nina Biddle**

While Round 3 of the Gang was going on the last Jackpot (Sunday Insomniac's Muffin Cup) of the weekend kicked off. Crispin added another trophy to his haul.

Summary:

This was the largest ever BGLIL. We raised our numbers from a highest ever before of 75 to an actual 103 over the weekend. That's about the limit the venue can handle. Was it the best ever? That's not for me to say but I was told by one player who attends a lot of backgammon tournaments around the globe that this is "the best weekend on the backgammon



calendar."

Being ever critical in the quest to get it as good as I can I tend to focus in on what went slightly wrong so I'm probably guilty of under selling the gig but be that as it may I was very annoyed with the boat going the wrong way down the Thames, the food and staffing level in The Spice Island could have been better and the breakfast in the YHA is not sufficient to set oneself for a day of backgammon.

The tournament spreadsheets worked very well and that combined with printed programmes players had little trouble understanding what was going on so I was free to move on to the next event rather than answering questions.

Many thanx to the Crew who did a wonderful job as ever. We all had designated roles but if one was busy elsewhere another simply stepped into their place and kept the show running.

Thanx also to our Main Sponsor BackgammonMasters.com and to our other sponsor GLH who provided cabs and computer equipment as and where needed.

Backgammon Live in London 2006 The Winners

Tric Trac Tournos:

Fanika Petkovska
Matte Juggler
Pernille
Jörg Schwiemann
Mike Bailey
Martin Birkhahn
Richard Biddle

Jackpots:

Mike Bailey
Jörg Schwiemann
Simon Morecroft
Steve Grundy
Eric Maillebiau
Crispin Duke

Weekend Knockout:

Steve Grundy
Crispin Duke
Hanke Amptmeyer
Adam Tansley

Singles Knockout:

Main: Monica Beckerson, Dave Treacy
Plate 1: John Broomfield, Carol Lems
Plate 2: Paul Lamford, Jon Samuel
Plate 3: Dorothy Lee, Fergus Cooney

On Board Knockouts:

Andrew Sarjeant
Fanika Petkovska
Caroline Stafford
Suzy Crabb
Jon Samuel
Martha Littlehailes
John Broomfield
Steve Grundy
Vicky Gilbert
Vanessa Broomfield
Matte Juggler
Nicky Check

On Shore Knockouts:

Neil Foston
Dave Treacy

Doubles Knockout:

Merman (Uldis Lapikens & John Ingamells)
Lucky Devils (Jon Kinsey & Adam Tansley)
The Pustules (Howard Furr-Barton & Jackie Griffiths)
Can't be serious (Nicky Check & Jon Samuel)

Olympiad Knockout: Main

Gold: John Broomfield
Silver: George Miltiadou
Bronze: Stef Rohan

Consolation

Gold: George Hall
Silver: Carol Lems
Bronze: Robert Fuller

Last Chance

Gold: Danny Gallagher
Silver: Alexander Polden
Bronze: Irving Czechowicz

Suicide

Gold: Tom Duignan
Silver: Alan Beckerson
Bronze: Martin Blatman

Tric Trac Tourno

Gold: Paul Lamford
Silver: Dorothy Lee
Bronze: Mike Bailey

Satellite 1

Gold: Matte Juggler
Silver: Crispin Duke
Bronze: Sue Keeble

Satellite 2

Gold: Natalie Favre
Silver: Sue Keeble
Bronze: Michelle Fisher

The Hustler's Haven:

Jon Samuel

The Quizzes:

Sat: Martin Birkhahn
Sun: Martin Birkhahn

The Gang Tournament:

Irving Czechowicz

The Champ 'o' Champs:

John Broomfield



John and Vanessa Broomfield



DGers



Crispin Duke & Sue Keeble

	BACKGAMMON LIVE IN LONDON Fri 10th, Sat 11th Sun 12th November 2006	
---	--	---

Sponsored by BackgammonMasters.com - Report by Mike Main - Photos courtesy of Stef Rohan

How Good Is Your Backgammon?

Asks Michael Crane & Snowie Pro4

This article is based on the 1981 2nd Holiday Tournament, Las Vegas, between Kent Goulding and Mike Maxakuli.

In this series I have slightly changed the format, instead of you deciding on a particular move I have listed the options.. When you come to ??? the position is shown along with five candidate moves (if five are available). Cover up the text below the moves and decide which of the moves is your choice. Keep a record and at the end see how you scored. The match is to 15 points, Kent is playing Black and Mike, White.

Game 1

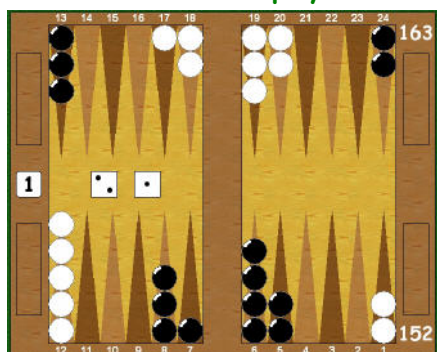
Kent Goulding : 0 Mike Maxakuli : 0

01) 31: 8/5 6/5 11: 8/7(2) 6/5(2)

A great reply to black's opening 31. It neatly blocks black's next roll.

02) 65: 13/7 13/8

??? White to play 21



13/10
24/21
13/11 8/7
13/11 6/5
13/11 24/23

The strategy here is to concentrate on making another outer or inner board point, therefore running 24/21 is wrong. Even moving a runner 24/23 is very poor. The best move is the simple 13/10. Black will be wanting to make his bar-point with a 6 so he'd have to choose what to do with one if it came with a 3 or 1 - and the 1 is better used 8/7.

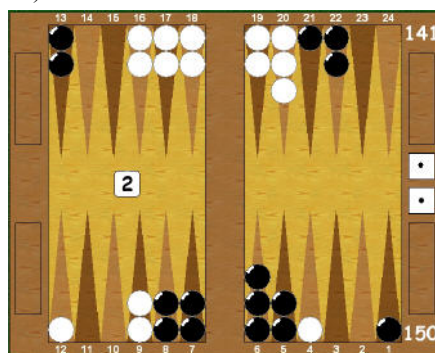
Quite close is 13/11 6/5; white is still hit with 7s (61, 52, 43), but the 11-point checker is out of reach. Moving 13/11 8/7 makes things safe all round but safeties a useful builder.

13/10 5
13/11 6/5 4
13/11 8/7 2
13/11 24/23 1
24/21 1 A

21: 24/21
03) 52: 24/17* 41: 25/21 6/5
04) 21: 24/22 8/7 53: 13/8* 13/10
05) 43: 25/22 13/9 52: 21/16* 10/8
06) 65: Dances 53: 21/16 24/21
07) 55: Dances 22: 13/11(2) 11/9 (2)

White makes a 5-prime and prepares to cube.

08) 54: 25/21 6/1 Doubles to 2



09) Drops Wins 1 point

Correct cubing decision by both players.

Double, pass 1.000
No double 0.959 (-0.041)
Double, take 1.158 (+0.158)

Game 2

Kent Goulding : 0 Mike Maxakuli : 1

01) 65: 24/13

The once derided 8/2 6/2 isn't too bad at -0.011

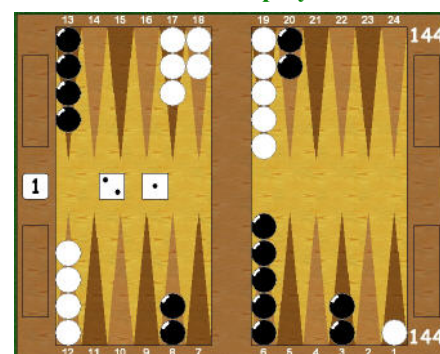
02) 64: 24/18 13/9 63: 13/7* 13/10
03) 54: 25/20 24/20 21: 10/7

Black's 54 off the bar making his 20-point has proven to be a good move now that black has a 3-prime straddling his own bar-point.

04) 65: 9/3 8/3

Not much of a choice for black. However, white has a few choices with this roll . . .

??? White to play 21



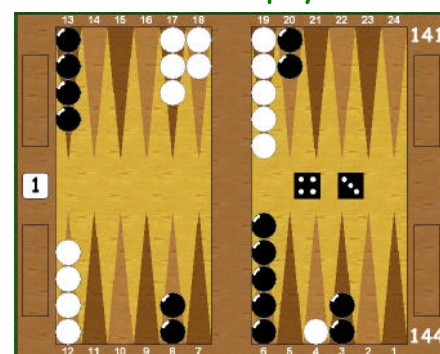
6/3
24/21
13/10
8/7 6/4
24/23 6/4

So, white has another 21 to play. Will he get it right this time? No, he doesn't, he moves 24/21 (again) letting black play over him if he chooses with 3s, 4s and 5s. The only move with the runner is 24/23 6/4; and it's the 6/4 that's the important bit. White should be concentrating on making another home board point and the best way to do this is by moving 8/7 6/4.

8/7 6/4 5
6/3 4
24/23 6/4 4
24/21 2 A
13/10 1

21: 24/21

??? Black to play 43



13/6
6/2 6/3
8/4* 6/3
13/10 6/2
13/10 8/4*

As wimpish as it may seem, 13/6 is the best move according to Snowie! I prefer the actual move of 13/10 8/4* which isn't too far off @ -0.014. OK, it leaves a few blots/builders but while black holds the white 5-point it represents little risk. Playing two off the 6-point isn't a good idea - it's hardly ever good to move past



your opponent's runner(s); but when you combine playing behind, 6/2 with leaving a direct blot 6 away, 13/10, it's really a bad idea. Mind you, it's not as bad as 8/4* 6/3 (but it's close)!

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

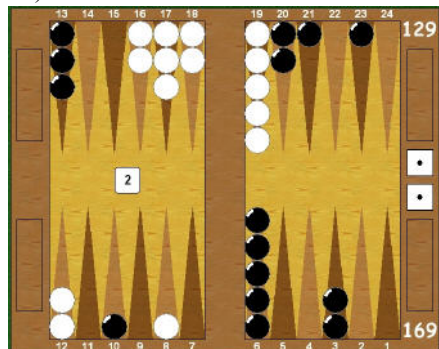
05) 43: 8/4* 13/10

If white hadn't played 24/21 he'd have not been on the bar now, black would have played either two from his mid-point or one from the mid- and the other 6/3. However . . .

44: 25/21*(2) 13/9(2)

What a roll! Two on the bar and a 4-prime!

06) 42: 25/21 25/23 Doubles to 2



07) Drops Wins 1 point

The double was correct but it should have been a take:

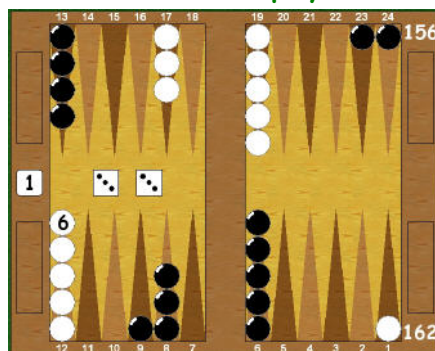
Double, take	0.986
No double	0.881 (-0.105)
Double, pass	1.000 (+0.014)

Game 3

Kent Goulding : 0 Mike Maxakuli : 2
01) 65: 24/13
02) 41: 13/9 24/23

Black plays the correct response with a roll of 41.

??? White to play 33



13/7(2)
13/10(4)
8/5(2) 6/3(2)
24/21 13/10(3)
13/10(2) 6/3(2)

If you made two home board points, 8/5(2) 6/3(2), then you'll be getting minimum points. Leaving a blot on your 8-point is almost a blunder and black will surely hit with most 6s - even 61 or 62 might well be used to send back a second checker. Certainly 6/3(2) is favourite, and coupled with 13/10(2) it nicely makes two good points and makes full use of builder-laden points. Making the bar-point 13/7(2) is fair, and is certainly much better than the remaining three moves.

13/10(2) 6/3(2)	5 A
13/7(2)	4
24/21 13/10(3)	1
13/10(4)	0
8/5(2) 6/3(2)	0
33: 13/10(2) 6/3(2)	
03) 43: 24/20 23/20	42: 8/4 6/4

Black's 43 was a great roll and move. Thankfully for white his previous play of 13/10(2) is bearing down on the black anchor.

04) 64: 8/2 6/2	51: 13/7
05) 61: 13/7 8/7	55: 13/8(3) 7/2

White's move now isolates the runner and black's next roll makes his valuable 5-point.

06) 43: 9/5 8/5 32: 24/21 8/6

White is obliged to move up and is now looking for escaping rolls.

07) 62: 13/7 6/4* 53: 25/17

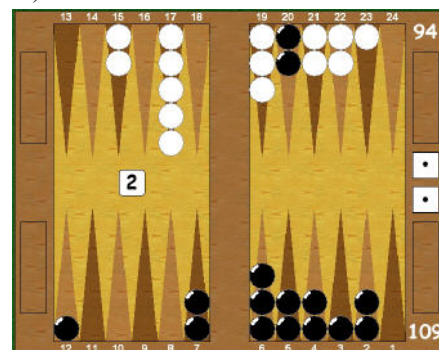
White is hit and then re-enters and moves closer to safety.

08) 43: 7/3 7/4

63: 17/8

White is now safe and is almost 74% favourite to win the game.

09) 61: 13/7 13/12 Doubles to 2



10) Takes

Correct cube play by both players:

Double, take	0.853
No double	0.822 (-0.032)
Double, pass	1.000 (+0.147)

65: 8/2 8/3

11) 21: 6/3

44: 10/6(2) 8/4 6/2

Black is moving very slowly whilst black hurtles along thus helping black's timing.

12) 41: 12/8 7/6

61: 8/2 8/7

Black leaves a shot . . . but white misses.

13) 61: 8/1

43: 7/3 3/0

14) 22: 20/18(2) 18/14

Black isn't yet in danger of losing the gammon and could wait for another roll at least before escaping both checkers. However, on his next roll white rolls Snake Eyes, and if black had left behind a lone checker on white's 5-point, white's gammon chances would have gone up with the 11 roll!

11: 2/1(2) 1/0(2)

15) 32: 14/11 7/5

22: 4/2 2/0(3)

16) 51: 11/6 18/17

61: 6/0 6/5

17) 51: 17/11

64: 6/0 4/0

18) 51: 11/6 1/0

54: 5/0 4/0

19) 41: 4/0 2/1

61: 6/0 3/2

Wins 2 points

Game 4

Kent Goulding : 0 Mike Maxakuli : 4

01) 53: 8/3 6/3

66: 24/18(2) 13/7(2)

02) 63: 24/15

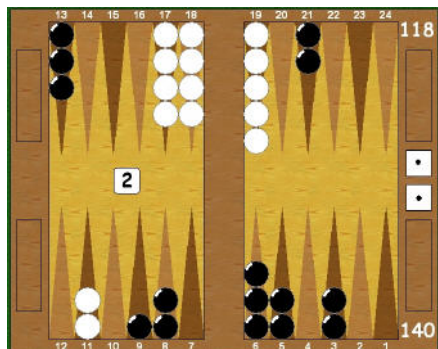
63: 13/7 13/10*

Black pokes his neck out with 63 and white pokes it back in again with his own



63. White comes out on top though when he rolls 43 and anchors.

03) 43: 25/21 24/21 62: 13/7 10/8
 04) 62: 13/5 22: 18/16(2) 16/14(2)
 05) 41: 13/9 6/5 Doubles to 2



06) Takes

Correct cubing by both players:

Double, take 0.779
 No double 0.752 (-0.026)
 Double, pass 1.000 (+0.221)

42: 6/2 8/6
 07) 43: 8/4 13/10 32: 8/5
 08) 52: 10/5 6/4 42: 6/2 7/5
 09) 21: 5/2 61: 7/1 7/6
 10) 65: 8/2 9/4 44: 14/10(2) 10/6(2)

Black was hoping for 61 or 64 . . . and still is.

11) 51: 13/7 65: 8/2 8/3
 12) 63: 21/12 32: 3/0 2/0
 13) 65: 12/6 13/8 32: 6/3 2/0
 14) 31: 8/5 7/6 51: 6/1 1/0
 15) 32: 6/1 61: 6/0 1/0
 16) 53: 21/13 66: 6/0(4)

This 66 from white makes the previous move of 21/13 a good gammon saver.

17) 21: 13/10 62: 5/0 2/0
 18) 65: 10/5 6/0 52: 5/0 3/1
 Wins 2 points

Game 5

Kent Goulding : 0 Mike Maxakuli : 6
 01) 51: 13/8 6/5

This is a very aggressive 51 from white. Leading 6-0 I don't think it necessary.

02) 52: 13/8 13/11 55: 13/3(2)
 03) 41: 24/20* 11/10

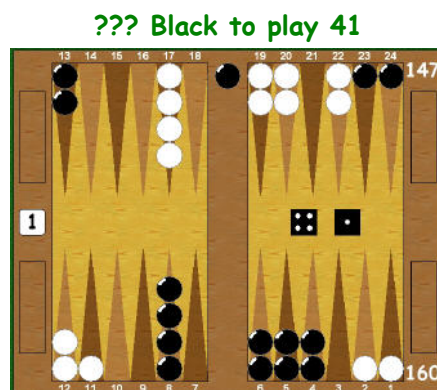
Given the choice of bar-point or hitting 24/20*, black chooses the correct play.

41: 25/21 6/5*
 04) 22: 25/23 13/11 6/4*(2)
 21: 25/23 6/5

White's 5-point is finally covered.

05) 51: 10/5 6/5 64: 24/14*

White picks off the blot with a good 64.

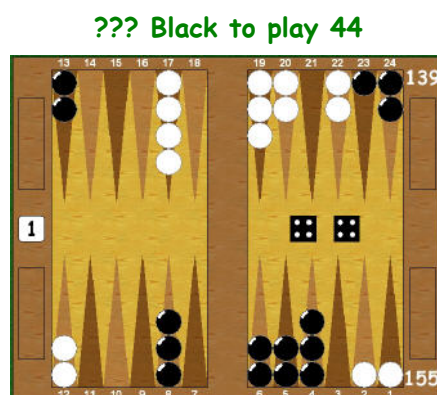


25/21 8/7
 25/21 5/4
 25/24 8/4
 25/24 13/9
 25/21 24/23

Realistically there are only two moves here. If you didn't choose one of them then expect nil points! Black will have to get his back checkers out soon and the best way to do this is to come forward by moving 25/21 24/23 hoping to make an advanced anchor as soon as possible. The actual move of 25/24 8/4 leaves all three runners too far back and in danger of becoming completely trapped.

25/21 24/23 5
 25/24 8/4 3 A
 25/21 8/7 0
 25/24 13/9 0
 25/21 5/4 0

06) 41: 25/24 8/4 53: 14/6

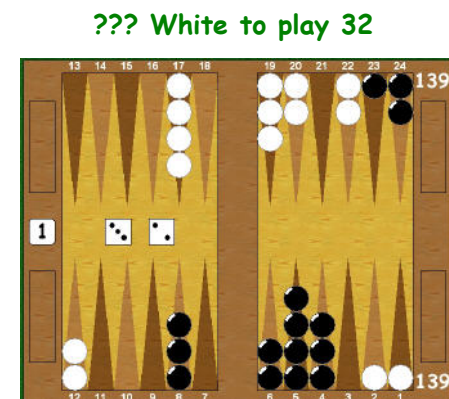


13/5(2)
 13/1* 8/4
 13/9(2) 9/1*
 13/9(2) 5/1*(2)
 13/9(2) 6/2*(2)

Sixteen pips for black makes the race even; but we are far from a racing game at the moment; he'd happily trade one of the 4s for a 3 right now. Snowie's top two moves involve hitting, with 13/9(2) 9/1* well ahead of 13/9(2) 5/1*(2). The latter doesn't leave any return shots off the bar but it does this at the expense of losing the 5-point. Moving the 'usual' 13/5(2) isn't nearly as good as the best move and only a tad worse than the 2nd, but it is streets ahead of the remaining moves: 13/1* 8/4 is very short on covering rolls next time and the final move, 13/9(2) 6/2*(2) gives up the 6-point!

13/9(2) 9/1* 5
 13/9(2) 5/1*(2) 3
 13/5(2) 3 A
 13/1* 8/4 1
 13/9(2) 6/2*(2) 0

07) 44: 13/9(2) 9/5(2)



8/3
 8/5 8/6
 24/22 6/3
 24/22 8/5
 24/22 13/10

It might be Snowie 3rd but the actual play of 8/3 is well down in equity @ -0.151. Playing a builder past a gap in your prime is wrong (at least it is here). Moving 8/5 is far better; and if you play it with 24/22 you'll gain maximum points. It looks a bit 'under the gun' but it offers the most gammon chances (19.5%) and the most game winning chances (50.9%). Playing two off the 8-point isn't too bad; but the remaining two are very poor.

24/22 8/5 5
 8/5 8/6 4
 8/3 0 A
 24/22 6/3 0
 24/22 13/10 0

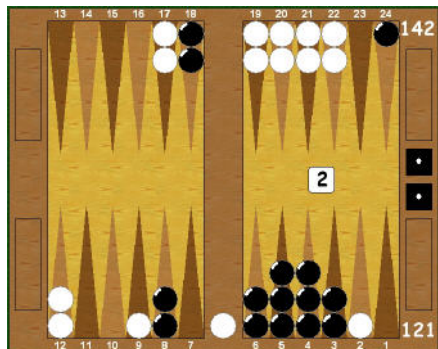
08) 65: 24/18 23/18 32: 8/5 5/3
 62: 24/16



09) 21: 5/3 4/3 22: 8/6 6/4(2) 3/1*

White constructs a home board 5-prime and leaves black just twenty re-entry rolls of which eleven hit on the 1-point - which he does with 41. Moving the 22, 16/14 8/6 6/4(2) would have been just as good as the hitting play without the direct hit off the bar. The hit and then dance with 55 enables black to ship across a 2-cube.

10) 41: 25/24* 8/4 55: Dances
11) Doubles to 2



Drops

12) Wins 1 point

Correct cubing decision by both players.

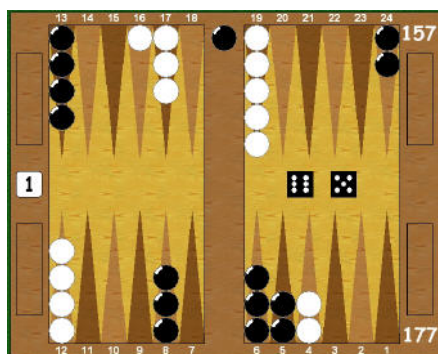
Double, pass 1.000
No double 0.943 (-0.057)
Double, take 1.588 (+0.588)

Game 6

Kent Goulding : 1 Mike Maxakuli : 6

01) 31: 8/5 6/5 43: 13/9 24/21
02) 52: 13/8 6/4* 43: 25/21* 24/21

??? Black to play 65



25/14
25/20 8/2
25/20 13/7
25/20 24/18

Only four moves this time . . . and the actual play comes in 3rd @ -0.091. Snowie reckons it's better to remain on the 20-point (in the hope of anchoring soon?) and to move 13/7. Midway between these moves lies 25/20 24/18, slotting the white bar-point - a little under the gun perhaps, but with the potential to make the 20- or 18-points.

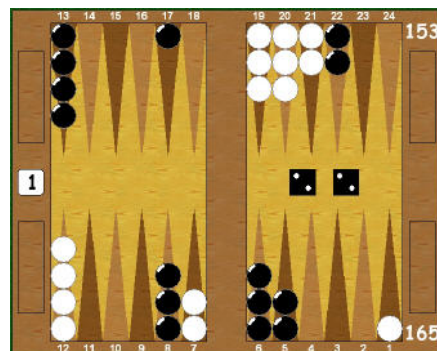
25/20 13/7 5
25/20 24/18 4
25/14 2 A
25/20 8/2 0

03) 65: 25/14 43: 9/5 8/5

If black had played Snowie's 1st move he'd be on the bar now! Mind you, this doesn't mean that staying there was the wrong play; unless hindsight is used!

04) 21: 24/22 14/13 42: 8/4 6/4
05) 62: 13/7 24/22 31: 21/18* 6/5
06) 53: 25/17* 31: 25/24 21/18

??? Black to play 22



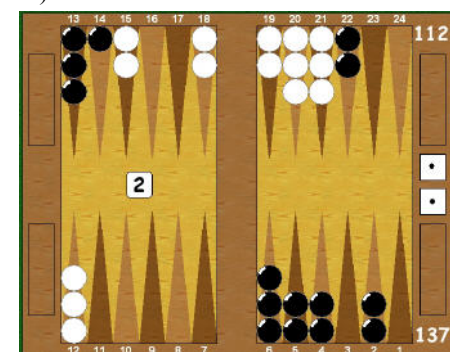
17/9
13/9(2)
17/13 13/11(2)
17/15 8/6 6/4(2)
13/11 8/6 6/4(2)

Making another 'holding point' by playing 17/13 13/11(2) is better by 0.041 than the actual play of making the 4-point with 17/15 8/6 6/4(2). Now that black occupies his 11-point he's got somewhere to land his checkers and at the same time the point inhibits white from moving off the black bar-point. Making the 4-point looks good to me but I suppose it doesn't do much to stop white's progress, hence 2nd

place. Making the 9-point doesn't inhibit white's checkers as much as the 11-point does and is therefore weaker; and 13/11 8/6 6/4(2), although making the 4-point as with the actual move, leaves an extra blot on for black. Wasting a double-two by playing 17/9 will gain you just one measly point . . . and I'm being generous at that!

17/13 13/11(2) 5
17/15 8/6 6/4(2) 4 A
13/9(2) 3
13/11 8/6 6/4(2) 2
17/9 1

07) 22: 17/15 8/6 6/4(2) 62: 24/18 6/4
08) 62: 13/5 53: 18/10*
09) 33: 25/22 8/5 5/2(2) 63: 13/7 10/7
10) 52: 22/17 8/6 44: 18/14(2) 14/10(2)
11) 21: 17/14 Doubles to 2



12) Drops

Wins 1 point

The correct cube decision by both players brings us to the end for this issue:

Double, pass 1.000
No double 0.973 (-0.027)
Double, take 1.100 (+0.100)

Kent Goulding : 1 Mike Maxakuli : 7

So, how good is your backgammon?

45	You are Mike Maxakuli
40-44	You are Kent Goulding
30-39	You are not too bad
20-29	You are just about fair
10-19	You are quite poor!
09-0	Take up gardening

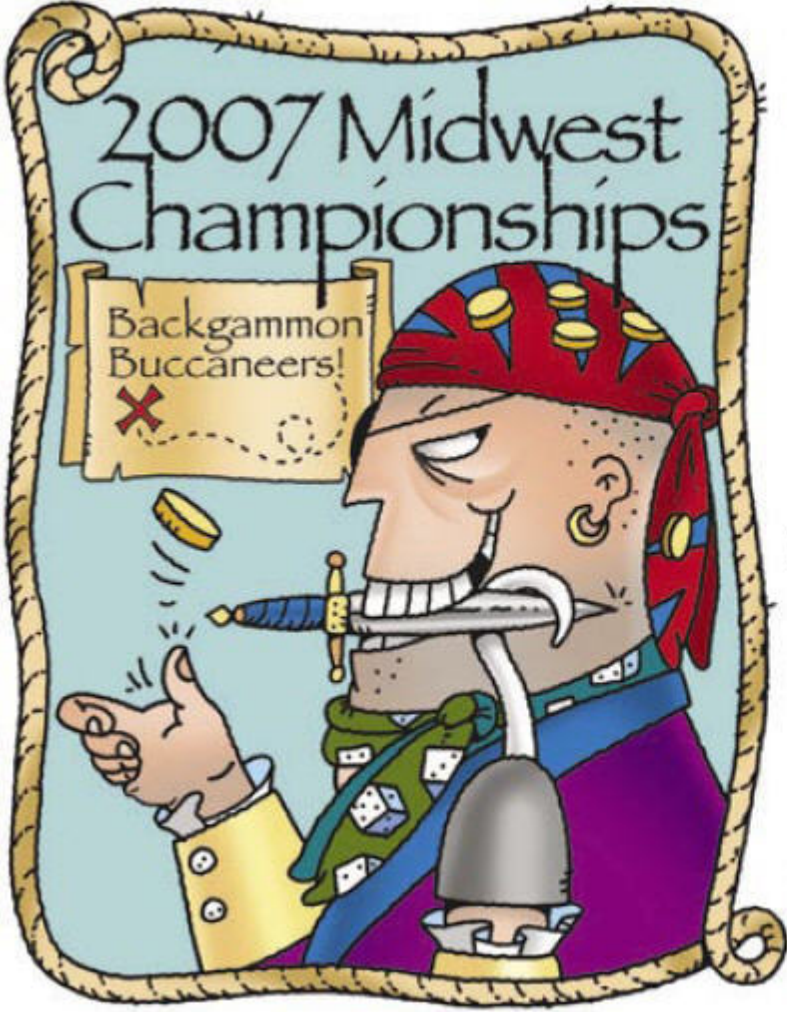
You want it?

THE backgammon SHOP



We've got it!

www.bgshop.com





March 23-25, 2007
Wyndham Lisle, Illinois

100%
RETURN - Main Events

chicagopoint.com/2007mbc.html



Gilbertson UK Finals

Report by Michael Crane

What a weekend! Those Gilbertsons know how to party! It all began on Friday night when we had two things at once going on - which should have been a warning to me about the multiple goings-on to come over the next two days.

First there was the **Freeze Out Poker** which was a complete mystery to me - so I asked what freeze out meant. It simply meant, no re-entries; when you're out, your out. Duh! One player was very much in, newcomer, Paul Learmount. He out bluffed them all and was the happy recipient of a lovely set of engraved glasses, bottle of wine and a PKR tee-shirt. This, however was not the end of Paul's prizes; not content with the glasses and the wine and the tee-shirt; he also won the raffle for a beautiful new Hattrick backgammon board kindly donated by John Slattery. John wasn't present this weekend, he was in Thailand sunning himself - it's a hard job, but someone's got to do it!



Rosey and Paul handout the goodies to Paul Learmount

Secondly we had a **Jackpot (10)** from which Tim Line emerged victorious after beating Julian Fetterlein in the final.

Then we moved on to the Saturday and the **Double Knockout Qualifier (32)** - and then the fun started. Up for grabs were umpteen bottles of wine which went to several losers throughout the weekend; we had Rosey's Rollout for a bottle of champagne and two glasses; and we had a hairy beaver - which was to be played for with each



'owner' passing it on to the winner each time they lost.

As the hopeful non-qualifiers went about their double-knockout, the seven (Brian Barber absent) pre-qualifiers sat down to contest the **Champion of Champions**; an encounter from which one of the event sponsors, Paul Gilbertson came as the CoC leaving Martin Hemming the Runner-up.

For the first time ever no-one actually was confused by the format - it was simple; win 3 consecutive 7-pointers and you were in Sunday's Main; win one out of two 7-pointers and then win 2 x 5-pointers and you were in; lose two out of two 7-pointers and you went into the Snowball. Easy, isn't it?

In the **Snowball (8)** Bob Bruce got the better of Jeff Barber in the Final thus becoming the weekend's first winner. Out of the rest of them, the qualifying eight were: Julian Fetterlein, Ron Havenhand, Mick Butterfield, Myke Wignall, Richard Biddle, Ed Turner, Paul Van Dyke and Rogier Van Gemert. Before I go any



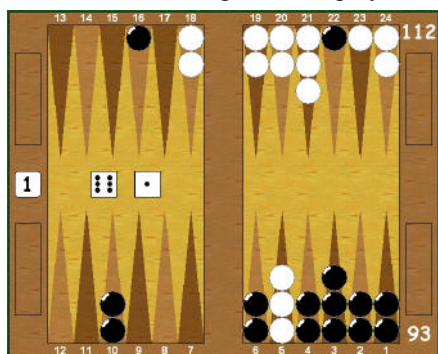


Snowball: Jeff - Rosey - Bob

further I'd like to express my gratitude to the last two. Both from The Netherlands, they had to drive almost 500 miles to attend the event; thank you for turning out; especially since only one Brummie player could be arsed - Julian Minwalla.

These eight were joined by Paul Watts who was drawn out of the hat to make up sixteen Main entries after Brian Barber couldn't attend. The draw for the Main was thus (the first mentioned being the pre-qualifier): Tim Line vs Julian Fetterlein, Paul Watts vs Ron Havenhand, Mike Grabsky vs Mick Butterfield, Mark Dixon vs Myke Wignall, Nigel Merrigan vs Richard Biddle, Julian Minwalla vs Ed Turner, Paul Gilbertson vs Paul Van Dyke, and Martin Hemming vs Rogier Van Gemert. Only three pre-qualifiers made it to the 2nd Round: Julian Fetterlein vs Ron Havenhand, Mick Butterfield vs Mark Dixon, Nigel Merrigan vs Ed Turner, and Paul Gilbertson vs Rogier Van Gemert. Not a single prequalifier made it into the semi-finals; here we had two great matches: Ron Havenhand vs Mick Butterfield, and Ed Turner vs Rogier from which Mick and Rogier made it to the Final.

It was a game in which Mick seemed to be on top most of the time. Here (black) he leads 6-5 and Rogier has to play 61:

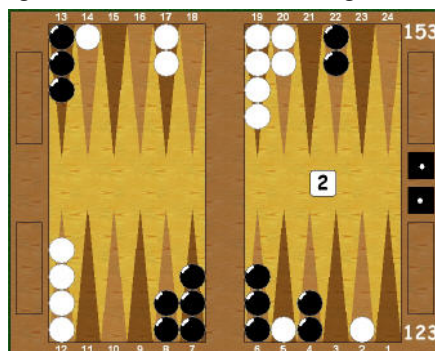


**11 point match
White to play 61**

Rogier made only two checker-play blunders (Mick made 13) and this was the

biggest at -0.379. What's needed here is aggression - or to put it another way - what's needed here is a *Butterfield*! Rogier cleared his 7-point when he should have been playing 20/14, getting his spare checker out, and then hitting 4/3*. According to Snowie this play increased his game winning chances (gwc) from 33.4% to 44.4% and his gammon chances (gc) from a measly 4% to a whopping 18.1%. However, there is a downside to this play - the blot and return shots. Mick's gwc drops from 66.6% to 55.6% but his gc soars from 8% to 29.6%! As it turned out, Mick's next roll was 43 and he'd have bounced back off the bar and ended up with 75.1% gwc including 41% gammons! Mick went on to win this game but failed to get a gammon.

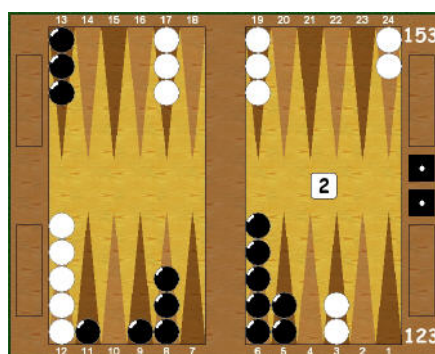
Mick is known as *The Cube Boss* a nickname he gave himself but one he probably might be entitled to - he made just one cube error when the score was at 4-5 against him, he doubled and Rogier took:



Black cube action?

Snowie says: no double/take
 No double 0.471
 No double/take 0.428 -0.042

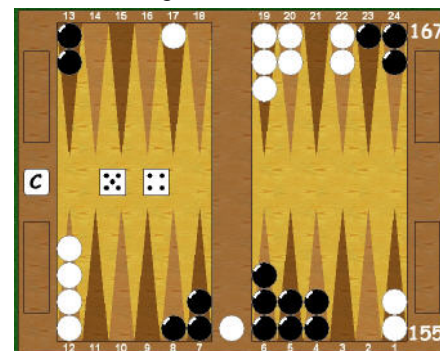
It's just an error and one that didn't harm him for he went on to win the game for two points. Rogier's cube error was more of a blunder when he took this cube:



Black cube action?

Snowie says: double/pass
 Double/pass 1.000
 No double 0.969 -0.031
 Double/take 1.123 +0.123

Mick's gwc were very high at 76.7% including 9.2% gammons; and therefore it would have been wise to drop. Although the gammon losses aren't that bad at the moment they could worsen later and the match would be lost. But, as it turned out 9.2% was the highest it got and Mick had to content himself with two points and Crawford. The Crawford began with a blot-hitting contest as Rogier went all out to make his 5-point. This he achieved - as did Mick soon after - and then from this position . . .



White dances

. . . Rogier never had a chance and Mick Butterfield joined some of the UK's top players to become the latest UK Champion. Well done, Mick.



Main: Mick & Rogier

In the **Consolation (38)** Uldis Lapikens beat Chris Ternel in the non-prog semi, and Paul Watts beat Paul Van Dijke to meet Uldis in the Final - an encounter from which Paul emerged not only as the winner, but also the proud owner of a very hairy beaver!

For those not playing in the latter rounds of the Main or Consolation we had the **Last Chance (32)** - which really was the last chance, this time. Here, Ian Tarr beat Tony Lee to join fellow Bristol player, Paul Watts, in the winner's enclosure. Ed

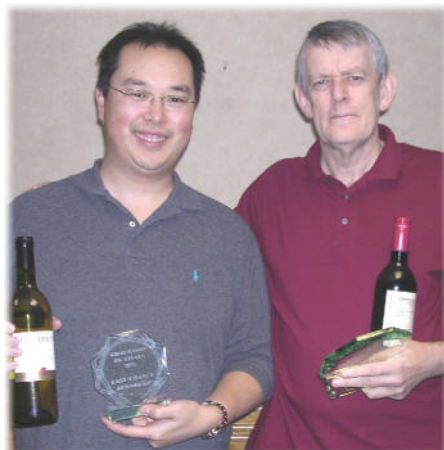


Match detailed statistics		
Player	Butterfield	Gemert
Rating	intermediate	expert
Overall	9.443/27.499	4.929/15.261
Errors(blunders)	32(13)	13(3)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	9.109/26.809	4.359/13.685
Errors(blunders)	30(13)	11(2)
Double errors		
Overall	0.334/0.690	0.254/0.677
Missed double	0.201/0.385	0.254/0.677
Wrong double	0.134/0.304	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	2(0)	1(0)
Take errors		
Overall	0.000/0.000	0.316/0.899
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.316/0.899
Wrong pass	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	0(0)	1(1)
Favourite: Rogier Van Gemert, 62.24%		

Turner pointed out to me that if Rogier hadn't beaten him in the Semi-final of the Main there might have been three Bristol players taking home trophies . . . yawn! yawn! yawn!



Consolation: Uldis & Paul



Last Chance: Tony & Ian

Tony was very short-stacked and looked likely to go out next, but he managed to cling on, watching Martin go out before him, finishing 6th on the night and 4th in the GP rankings. Tony, having nothing to discard having played fewer tournaments, overtook Paul with his 6 points for 5th place on the night. Myke then knew had had only to finish 3rd on the night to win the Grand Prix outright, but he did it in style, winning the whole tournament. Ally Lee took second place, Nigel 'Mr Consistent' Merrigan took 3rd.

The Poker GP will resume at Brighton in January, perhaps with a few tweaks to the format to take account of lessons learned in this inaugural year. Poker GP Final Standings: Champion Myke Wignall, Runner-up Tony Lee, 3rd Place Paul Gilbertson.



During the Saturday evening we had the Poker (16) run by Martin Hemming; and this weekend's results were crucial to the 2006 Poker Grand Prix. Here's Martin's report: Sixteen players sat down to contest the final GP event of the season, and 4 of them were in with a chance to win the inaugural BIBA Poker Grand Prix Championship. Leader going into the event was Paul Gilbertson, but he crashed out in a disappointing 8th place on the night, adding just a single point to his GP score after discards. That left him having to rely on quick exits for all three of Martin Hemming, Tony Lee and Myke Wignall to win the competition.

It was during the poker that Paul once again slipped into his alter ego, 'Paula' (see Bibafax No.82, page 16) and showed us his Bristols! Wow, wot a lovely pair! Sister, Rosey, tried to compete but it was no contest.



Richard Biddle & Caroline Stafford are watched by Caroline's daughter, Cassie.

Whilst that lot were engaged in poker and flashing, the Team Event (11) was underway. The photo here shows what a civilised turnout we had - black ties for the men and nice frocks for the ladies - such eveningwear is a 'trademark' of the UK Finals. The last pairing saw Brian Lever on his own pitted against another pair of Bristols, Ian Tarr and Ed Turner; an encounter from which Brian prevailed and pocketed all the prize money. f

The winner of Rosey's Rollout was Deena Fawcett who clinched it by out-rolling everyone else to not only equal Rosey's roll of sixteen, but then to roll it yet again in the play-offs. No doubt husband, Tony, saw the champagne as compensation for having to endure Mick Butterfield's move-by-move account of how he became the UK Champion for 2006!

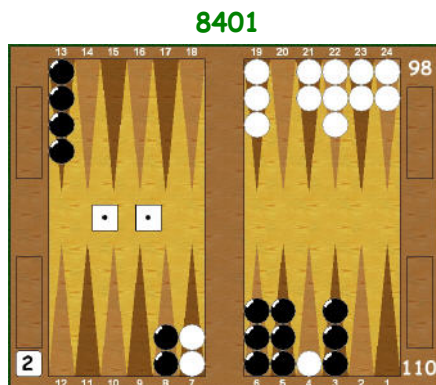


Finally I'd like to say a big thank you to Rosey, Paul and John. Their generosity in providing such beautiful trophies is appreciated by everyone and long may they provide us with a fantastic December tournament.

Competition 2006 No3. 8406 Answers

By Michael Crane

Welcome to the final answers in the 2006 series.



11 point match
Black 10 White 8
White to play 11

For the final one in this season we have a record entry of eight! One new-comer is our first analyst and he shares his move with one of our regular entrants.

Cedric Lytton: 6/4 3/1

This keeps a 5-point board (hence better than clearing the 4-point or 2-point), leaves a couple of 5s in case of need (hence better than 6/5(3), 3/2) and also leaves one 3 in the remote possibility of being hit on Black's 4-point and re-entering with 32 (hence slightly better than 6/2). White is ahead in the race, so he doesn't need to aim for miracles with 6/5(2), 3/1.

Rodney Lighton: 6/4 3/1

Keeping the 6-point rather than the 5-point seems better on general principles. Then the spare on the 4-point (rather than 6/2) allows us to play a 63 reasonably next roll.

The key to this move is whether or not to keep your options open to make a 6-prime or not. Snowie has decided that this option is the best one, but the two moves above lose that option, as does Bob's move, below.

Bob Young : 6/2

Might as well get my big error out the way, I would never have played anything other than three checkers off the 6-point in a match as a reflex move, but as it is a competition, and I should look into it further, I have surprised myself, and the rest of the world no doubt, by electing to

save 5s to play next roll. In the worst case, after being pointed on, and then rolling 51, I need to re enter and prevent self destruction by having a 5 to play other than from the bar-point. That leaves the choice of vacating the 4-point or playing the single checker from the 6-point, and as this leaves a stronger home board for the moment, this is my elected play.

The next three are in agreement; but they too decide to lose the 6-prime option.

Brian Lever: 6/5(3) 3/2

White would like to win a gammon and the match in this game but Black's flexible structure makes that unlikely; so the next best thing is to win the game, and a decent-sized roll would have helped to preserve his racing lead. Shame about the 11 then. As it happens, the roll does solve one potentially awkward bear-off situation – the open 5-point – so shifting 6/5(2) is a must for half the move. As for the remaining half, it appears to boil down to a choice between 6/4, 3/1 or 6/5 3/2. I don't like 3/1, because it puts another man on the one point; never a good idea to have too many chaps there, wasting your pips when you throw higher numbers to bear them off, and I'm ruling out 6/4 for the sole reason that White will have to break a point on a roll of 41 or 54 next turn. So 6/5(3) 3/2, and hope for better next go.

Steve Hallett: 6/5(3) 3/2

As White is unable to move his back men he must play all moves in the home board. The question is whether to fill in the gap on the 5-point with 6/5(2) or leave it open. With White being ahead in the race and for future safety if White manages to hit a Black checker I think he should close the gap so the first two ones play 6/5(2). We now have three choices: 3/1, 6/5 3/2, 6/4.

Being ahead in the race White doesn't need to take the risk of keeping the 6-point slotted so we can reject 3/1. The choice of 6/5, 3/2 and 6/4 doesn't seem to matter but I prefer to keep three men on the 5-point in case I need to play an awkward 4 or less sometime down the road, which I will be able to do without exposing another checker.

So far none of them have looked at preserving the prime. How does our next

new-comer fare?

Peter Christmas: 6/5(3) 3/2

As we can't move the back men yet we are going to have to waste more pips in our home board and we are unlikely to build more than the five points we have now while there is contact left so we need to preserve as much of it as we can. With all his men in play for some time to come Black is going to attack the stragglers as much as he can even if he has to leave a blot to do it. So for White it is time to compact the board with 6/5(3) we don't want another blot here, but leave the spare on the end for a spare 4 and move the last one from 3/2. If Black does get a man sent back he will come in behind us rather than the last ditch effort of being on the 5-point while we have to clear the 6-point, so do it now.

Peter thinks it unlikely to improve on the current five points and so decides to abandon any hope of actually improving it at all. At last one of our entrants sees the potential of re-making the 6-point and the full prime; unfortunately though, he is alone with only Snowie for company.

Richard Biddle : 6/5(2) 3/1

White is uncomfortably behind in the race and his main winning chances are going to come from hitting and using his strong five-point home board. However, White's back checkers are stuck and one is in danger of being hit. White must focus on making it unattractive for Black to hit loose. White must maintain a five point board at the same time as getting it ready for a speedy bear off. The six point can be sacrificed now by moving 6/5(2). The choice is whether to clear it completely or use up some null timing with 3/1. I prefer the option of maintaining a five and a half point board, we may make the six-point again later or require the five to delay running the back checkers.

Now, before you start thinking Richard has a copy of Snowie at home and is using it to 'aid' his decisions, I'd like to point out he doesn't. He's just got the brain of a computer!

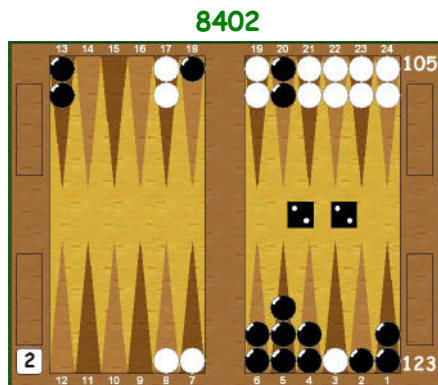
Snowie: 6/5(2) 3/1

This is all about positioning the men in the home board. There are two considerations: keeping good distribution for the race (which White is winning) and the strength of the board. Moves like 6/2, leaving a home board gap, are not the right idea. All the best moves involve 6/5(2). Then it's a question whether White leaves the 6-point slotted so he can



potentially remake it later or play 6/5, 3/2 with the last two aces.

Both of these moves are equally good for the race. It turns out that preserving the option of remaking the home board is slightly the better move, so 6/5(2), 3/1 it is. No criticism of anyone choosing 6/5(3), 3/2, which is a reasonable try.



11 point match
Black 0 White 2
Black to play 22

Putting White onto the bar is quite obvious here, but not if it puts Black under any risk of a return shot.

Peter Christmas: 13/7* 5/3*

If I was just looking for an answer to this problem I would say the safe play is 20/18(2) 13/11(2) as it does not leave any shots and White has three blots to make safe next time. The other safe play 5/3*, 3/1, 4/2(2) bar the blot on the 18-point but puts two men out of play and I think there is too much left in the game to be wasting men right now. The flaw with the safe play is giving up the anchor in White's strong 5 point board and how to get five men home without leaving a whole host of shots without a string of doubles. Holding the cube can be a major asset in swingy games and this could swing either way very quickly indeed.

Any other play is going to leave the man on the 18- point open to an indirect at least and continue to leave shots so I think it calls for the very bold play. Once you decide to hit and bite the bullet, 13/7 is the start which leaves many blots around which could get hovered up if Black dances at all, so it has to be put two in the air. White will be slight favourite to get one in but Black could re-enter to save the other one or hit back, if White gets both in a gammon defeat is on the cards but at least with the anchor there is some chance to stave this off. The big swing and advantage of the roll is the

16/36 dancing numbers from White which would give Black a cash or the chance to go for a gammon himself, with some risk of not being able to cover both blots next roll, I don't think White could take with the risk of losing eight points.

Peter actually mentions 'safe' plays and then goes for the boldest he can find! Hitting is correct, but not by leaving return shots off the bar. The next two agree ... but they have the wrong idea.

Brian Lever: 20/18(2) 13/11(2)

Just as well it's early in the match – could be gammons for either side here. There are loads of permutations, far too many for a one-finger typist like me to set out (would take me hours!!). Instead I'll concentrate on the two distinct approaches – play safe or commit possible suicide. If playing safe, one move stands out- 20/18(2), 13/11(2). Black is behind in the race, but this move doesn't advance him too much, controls both outer boards, picks up a vulnerable blot and puts a spare in a decent place. White then has the 3-blot clean-up problem.

That's the chalk. The cheese – hitting – could be almost anything. Black has the cube, and a hit, followed by a White dance might give him a proper re-cube. The two "obvious" plays here are 13/7*, 5/3*, or the less blotty, fewer shots, 13/7* 7/5. Oddly, perhaps, the double hit play may have the greater merit - the ability to play on for a gammon, or certainly double out, after a dance; and the "life after death" scenario if one White checker enters and hits, but Black re-enters before the 2nd White checker does or after it does but before a further hit. Anyway, I don't have to decide because (unlike my fellow contributors?) I've decided to wimp out with the safe play. Slow and steady, and all that.

Ah, but what if White does clean up his 3-blot problem? It could leave Black in trouble if he did. Is this a new Brian Lever? The old one was never for wimping out!

Cedric Lytton: 20/18(2) 13/11(2)

Well, I'm a real hitman, but 13/7* and 5/3* (either or both) look far too risky. Either would leave return shots 25/2* and 5/3* would leave 25/22* as well (unless Black puts that man right out of play with 3/1), while even if Black picks and passes with 13/7* 7/5 White still has return hits with 53 and 31 as well, after which White can Hoover up the blots while Black is struggling to come in. And White would

be favourite to do so. Far better to make the bar-point anchor with 20/18(2), 13/11(2), leaving White a lot of blots to tidy up and then get home, particularly if Black gets a 3 or 2/1 to cover his 2-point. The position is still volatile, but on balance I'd rather be playing Black.

At least the 'hitman' didn't go for the double-hit, it's too risky even for him! But he decides to take no risks at all and then goes for one that doesn't hit and put White under pressure. This is what the majority decided to do.

Bob Young : 5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)

With three White blots around, Black should take the opportunity to put White on the bar with no home board blots of his own, and hope to pick up a second blot while White is on the back foot struggling to stabilise his position. Black could hit one or two blots, leaving direct return shots, but needs to respect White's strong home board. Also the other play of not hitting anywhere 20/18(2), 13/11(2) gives White the luxury of playing the next roll with no hands tied, so I rejected it.

Respect to 'Hand Grenade' as he looks across at White's home board and keeps the pin firmly in.

Richard Biddle : 5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)

This time, we are facing our opponent's five-point home board causing us to exercise caution. But at least we have an anchor. My first reaction is to play safe (20/18)2 (13/11)2 and see what happens as there should still be plenty of contact. But we are still very behind in the race and hitting later may leave some return hits in the outfield such is the position of White's checkers. No, I think this move is too passive.

Time to be bold and hit. Do we hit once or twice? Hitting twice, would give us more gammons. This move carries a risk as it leaves two blots in our home board. Hitting once, "smushes" our home board and may give us problems bringing our men home but should give us more single wins. We will still be looking to pick up another White checker on our way home but without the risk, maybe allowing us to cash in. We have the cube so we are in the game until we decide.

Richard decides to make up his own backgammon terms now and decides to 'smush' his home board – but at least he doesn't leave two blots for he has actually looked across the boards and clocked



Whites five closed points; as does Rodney...

Rodney Lighton: 5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)

White has a 5 point board, so leaving a direct shot would be very dangerous. However, Black is behind in the race so needs to hit.

Short and simple . . . the answer not the entrant! Our final entrant stands alone with Snowie's 2nd best move; but that's not saying much for it loses -0.146 in equity!

Steve Hallett: 18/16 5/3*(3)

Black is ten pips behind after playing and with White having a strong 5-point board. Should Black play super aggressive with 13/7*, 5/3* leaving five blots strewn around the board, super-safe (for this go) with 20/18(2), 13/11(2) or 20/18(2), 4/2(2) or something in-between?

As usual double two's is one of the hardest doubles to play and this is no exception. Because Black is behind in the race keeping the anchor is a must. Hitting with 13/7*, 5/3* is great when it works but the twenty shots and five blots leads to many gammons. Even hitting with 13/7* 7/5 I think is way too loose with White's strong home board and three loose blots - so I reject hitting on the 7-point. With White having three blots hitting one of them I think is a must, just for the chance of picking up one or more of the other two blots if White dances, and the safest way to do this is 5/3*(3) and I play 18/16 with the last two to reduce the number of return shots for white.

As usual, Steve goes through nearly all the combinations before making a decision. However, the drawback with this play is the return shot - Black can't afford to be hit. Let's let Snowie explain:

Snowie: 5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)

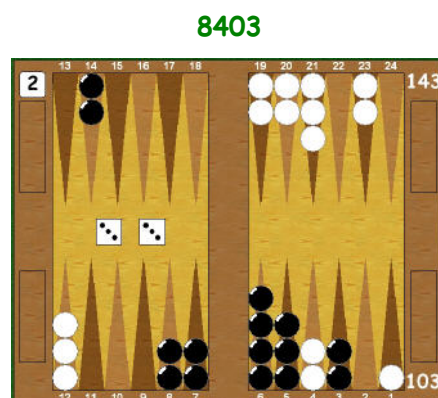
This one is quite simple once you understand the logic of the position. With White having a five point home board any hit by White is potentially devastating. Also White has three exposed blots so Black's plan should be to put White on the bar with minimum risk involved. If White stays there for even one roll he will be in dire gammon danger.

Once you have the plan there is only one move that meets its requirements and that is 5/3*/1, 4/2(2). Any other move is a blunder of fairly significant proportions.

The move is not intuitive and it is quite

difficult to find over the board. A lot of good players would go wrong here. My silicon circuits spotted the right move instantly of course, but I can understand carbon based life forms looking at moves such as 13/7*, 5/3* or 20/18(2), 5/3*/1. Sadly they are not contenders.

Well, how to score this one? 1st is obvious, but the remainder aren't that clear cut. Although Brian and Cedric shared the same play it was a big blunder and gave away -0.234 thus getting them fewer points than Steve but more than Peter's massive give-away of -0.308.



11 point match
Black 8 White 5
White to play 33

Blimey, we've got five entrants who have all made the same error! They all chose Snowie's 3rd best (-0.028) and for their contribution they all gain top points!

Brian Lever: 24/21 13/7 4/1

This one's much easier for me. Black has a few awkward rolls if White stays on the 1-point this turn e.g. by playing something like 13/1, but if he survives then White will have to weaken his outside position next roll. Besides, as I know to my cost, staying on the 1-point often leads to being pointed on and gammoned. So I'd move 24/21, and 13/7 with three 3s, and then probably preserve a 6 with 4/1. No rush - I'm well behind in the race, and I should be able to hold my position for a few more rolls, springing the 3rd checker on the 21-point without breaking my mid-point. The timing is also in my favour, and Black may soon find himself awkwardly dismantling his outside points.

Peter Christmas: 24/21 13/7 4/1

Although White is behind in the race, I think the back man has to come up to the anchor, it is going to remain at risk where it is and should there be a shot in the outfield White would prefer not to break

his only anchor and risk the match losing gammon. It does allow Black to play over him now but it gives more timing to White to jump another man out and hold his mid-point which he must do to keep the pressure on the 14-point, so with the other 3s I prefer 13/7, 4/1 to either the inflexible 13/4 or 13/10 4/1(2) for holding the man if we are lucky enough to get a hit. White may keep some race chances if Black piles men up the front end to avoid leaving a shot and White will be ready to run if he rolls big doubles.

Richard Biddle: 24/21 13/7 4/1

White is in danger of getting gammoned here and losing the match so a little insurance is required here by moving 24/21, so that the back checker does not get blitzed using up valuable throws for us as we attempt to re-enter. Ordinarily, being behind, we would like to keep the back checker but I believe it may become a hindrance. Using this as a runner off the opponent's five-point will maintain our anchor and mid-point which will become essential as the game progresses if we are to hit Black's back checkers. I think the other moves play themselves as we attempt to maintain all our key points.

Rodney Lighton: 24/21 13/7 4/1

Stepping up with 24/21 looks right for future timing, then we need to keep our mid-point. So either 13/4 or 13/7, 4/1. I chose the latter because it saves a six, but I doubt there's much in it.

Steve Hallett: 24/21 13/7 4/1

With White being so far behind in the race he must hit to win, so two checkers must remain on the mid-point to keep pressure on Black's back men - So the first two three's play 13/7. We now have a decision to make; do we leave the checker on the 24-point or bring him up with 24/21 so that he can jump into the outfield? With two more three's to play White is running out of spares so unless he crashes his board with 6/3(2) or 4/1(2) he'll be playing 7/1 with those last two three's and if Black manages to play safe on his next roll White will be forced off his mid-point just when he doesn't want to go. So even though staying back on the 24-point will generate more shots, White's timing or lack of it makes 24/21 a must. So we have a choice of 7/4 or 4/1 with the last three. 4/1 has it as it keeps a spare six to play if needed further down the road.

It looks as if having a spare 6 is of some value - but no-one has seen the value of building your points in order (whenever



possible); and the gap on the 3-point is the next in line. Slotting the 1-point won't help this happen. Our next entrant also misses this but he does take Snowie 2nd with -0.011.

Bob Young : 13/1

White has three points of contact that Black has to negotiate, and to abandon either or both the blot on the 24-point or the owning of the mid-point will be playing into Black's hands. White will only win by hitting, so he needs to maintain maximum contact by using the spare mid-point checker. Moving two checkers from the mid-point, leaving a phantom bar-point will not work here, as Black has other ways of playing poor rolls other than breaking the 14-point.

Cedric has it 'right' inasmuch as he chooses No.1 but only Snowie agrees with him – which is a pity.

Cedric Lytton: 24/21 13/4

One of the 3s should be 24/21; otherwise Black has a lot of pointing numbers, White's holding prospects from the back are not so good now Black has his 3-point, White may need to escape this man to keep his timing, and White is less likely to lose a gammon which would cost him the match. For the other 3s, White should keep his mid-point for communication and to pressurise Black's last two men, so the choice is 13/4 or 13/7, 4/1. The latter duplicates own 6s as White can always use these to escape the aforementioned spare anchorman, while the former will enable White to make his 3-point should he pop a couple of 1s (no use on the other side of the board), so I play 24/21, 13/4.

At last, someone who sees the bigger picture – build your points in order. Snowie says so, too.

Snowie: 24/21 13/4

Should that man on Black's ace-point stay there for harassment value or not? Conventional wisdom says that whilst there is still an open point in front of it, it should stay but there are other considerations. White wants to hold his mid-point as long as possible to keep pressure on Black's checkers on the 14-point. If he plays 13/1 he may have to give up something next turn. He will have more chance of keeping his mid-point if he plays 24/21, 13/4 or 24/21, 13/7, 4/1

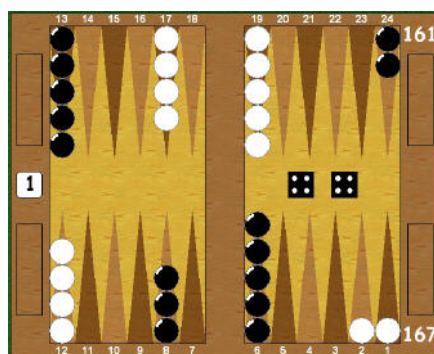
As ever in backgammon this is a question of risk and reward and this time its very close with the three top plays very close

to each other. 24/21, 13/4 comes first., 13/1 second and 24/21, 13/7, 4/1 third. In a chouette I wouldn't argue with a partner who wanted to play any of these moves. However in a competition we must have a winner and that is 24/21, 13/4.

In case you are wondering why this is superior to 24/21, 13/7, 4/1 it is because it keeps two builders for White's 3-point which is the next point he wants to make. Slotting the 1-point is OK but White really wants the 3-point so any subsequent hit is an outright winner.

The equity in difference between the choices is just -0.028 and this is reflected in the points awarded.

8404



11 point match
Black 0 White 0
Black to play 44

Is hitting on the 2-point so early in the game worth it? Or is it better to build strong points for the future? Here's a few that go with the former.

Rodney Lightton: 8/4(2) 6/2*(2)

If we choose to hit, then 8/4(2) is fairly obvious, 25% of the time White dances, then he's in real danger of being gammoned. Even if White enters, unless he gets an anchor it's fairly scary for him. The alternative plays of 24/20(2), 13/9(2) or 13/5(2) may be more solid and win more games, but I think the increase in gammons makes the hit play better.

Brian Lever: 8/4(2) 6/2*(2)

Standard opening with double 4s - making the 20- and 9-points - is less attractive where there's a blot to hit, the more so where the hit also makes an inside point. So I'd certainly play 8/4(2), 6/2(2)*, unless perhaps the match score and/or gammons counting for White only, dictated otherwise. That isn't the case here. There are tactical considerations as well; three inner board points to one allows for the possibility of a dance, and if

White enters without anchoring, Black can continue an attack with most numbers. This looks the best way to win the game, with a blitz or, threatening one, with the cube.

Steve Hallett: 8/4*(2) 6/2*(2)

Start of match, second roll, play pure with 24/20(2), 13/9(2) or all out attack with 8/4*(2), 6/2*(2) and go for the gammon? Other plays 13/9(2), 6/2*(2), or 24/20(2), 6/2*(2) or making the five point with 13/5(2). Short and sweet, me being me, I hit.

Gammon chances are indeed increased with this play but what value is an uncubed gammon with the match score at 0-0 to 11 worth? Not a lot in the long run. Granted White may dance but it is very early in the game and it could have a long way to go.

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

At different match scores this may not be the right move (the back men have not moved and may get trapped and primed), but on Black's first roll of the match he should show his determination and aggression, as immediately White fails to re-enter with a quarter of his rolls, Black develops a dominant home board and White may be off to a poor start.

Bob is correct, at a different match score the move might well be different – but this means nothing for we are at 0-0 and this is the score to base the move upon. Cedric is a bit behind the times with his reply to an opening 51, 13/8 24/23 . . .

Cedric Lytton: 13/5(2)

White having split his back men, the Golden Point will be the more difficult point to make, so we take the opportunity to make it now, incidentally giving us the advantage of a better board should things come to a blot-fight. Only slightly worse would be 24/20 (2), 13/9(2), establishing the golden anchor and hopefully aiming to prime White's back men. Not so good would be 6/2*(2) making too deep a point; a blitz is unlikely to succeed, and if White pops 32, 43 or 54 in reply she gets a good game.

Making the 5-point is often the correct play but not in this instance; if you want a 5-point at this time, make your opponent's. Our next two have Snowie batting for them as they go for the pure play . . .

Peter Christmas: 24/20(2) 13/9(2)

Bit horses for courses this early on, if a



gammon was needed, 8/4(2), 6/2(2)* is good, if you are up, 10-1 Crawford may be 24/16(2) or down, 1-10 Crawford try mixing it up with 13/5(2) but 0-0 in a 11 point match the reliable and dependable 24/20(2) 13/9(2) seems to offer the best all round game. Take the opponent's Golden Point to stop any primes being formed against you and start a good block of your own.

Good, well reasoned response. Gammons aren't necessary and the match score calls for the reliable and dependable play.

Richard Biddle: 24/20(2) 13/9(2)

Before watching Gammon Night Live (GNT) on TV with John Clarke's helpful tuition I would have happily played the blitzing 8/4(2) 6/2*(2), making two extra points in my home board and putting my opponent on the bar. This could be justified if I needed a gammon to win the match. However, now post-GNT, at this match-score, I would now play the sensible 24/20(2) 13/9(2), making my opponent's Golden Point and making the valuable nine-point which bears in on my home board. This makes for a better long term game strategy rather than relying on a blitz.

Bloody hell! Someone is actually listening to John Clark!!! At least he's talking sense. Even Snowie agrees with JC.

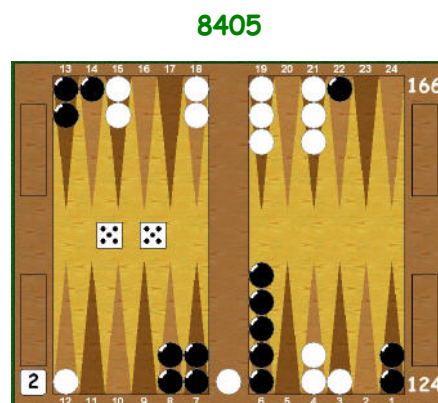
Snowie: 24/20(2) 13/9(2)

We need Nack Ballard and Paul Weaver's new book on openings to answer this. Again it's a question of game plans. If White desperately needs a gammon then 8/4(2), 6/2(2)* would be clearly correct.

However, the pure play 24/20(2), 13/9(2) is immensely powerful and gives Black a good position and White may have a difficult drop/take decision in the not too distant future. As Magriel says, "put the men where they want to go". After 24/20(2), 13/9(2) he would be every enthusiastic about the connectivity of the men!

8/4(2), 6/2(2) is classified as an error, albeit only just. The short-term advantages of the hit are more than offset by the

loss of structure. 24/20(2), 13/9(2) is clear.



11 point match
Black 9 White 5
White to play 55

Another problem in which the favourite move is very wrong (-0.104) and the points awarded are reflected in this joint decision to play at Snowie's 4th. Before we get to them here's the only one to get it right, Snowie, The Lone Ranger starts us off for a change.

Snowie: 25/20 21/11* 21/16

Trailing by 42 pips before the roll, three of the fives are clear. 25/20, 21/11*.

For the final five White could safety the man with 11/6 but with Black on the bar he needs to do more. Let's hark back to Magriel's words again – put them where they want to go. If you add in Robertie's theory on connectivity then playing the final five becomes clear – it should be played 21/16. It might seem like a lot of blots but to some extent they protect themselves and after any hit by Black, White will get a lot of return shots.

It's surprising that 20/15 is bad enough to be virtually a blunder! Once you look at the two positions side by side the connectivity of the first play stands out and just looks better. My silicon circuits arrive at the answers via my neural nets – humans have to do it by positional judgement, experience and their lesser calculating abilities.

Robertie and Magriel would have found the right play based on their general theories – how did you do?

So, connectivity is the name of the game. . . . and hitting is clear to everyone; but they don't all agree on what point to hit on: the 3- or the 11-point! Here's a couple that opted for the 3-point and ended up with the least points!

Bob Young: 25/15 13/3*

Losing the race and hence the match, White has a good opportunity to prevent Black from stabilising his position by putting him on the bar. White re-enters, hits the blot in White's home board, and White moves out to threaten the second blot. White could give up his anchor to create greater hits and use diversification to make different numbers work on different sides of the board, but now joker doubles could completely swing the momentum back Black's way, so keep the anchor. White could have hit the outer board blot as opposed to the inner board one, but this gives Black opportunities to re-establish an anchor and re-group. This looks like one of those positions where naturally making the 5-point is not good enough, as Black can still leap with a five or six. Hitting maximises all aspects of White's game. Return hits from the bar are no problem, White, with his anchor simply re-enters and tries again.

Cedric Lytton: 25/15 13/3*

Even after this roll White is still behind in the race, so the plan is to attack Black's back man with a 4-point holding game in reserve should this fail. So after entering 25/20, two of the 5s must be 13/3*, which has the advantage of reducing the firepower on this Black man from a double shot to a single. In order not to break any points the last 5 should be 20/15, which happens also to duplicate Black's 3s.

Bob and Cedric seem to have missed the plot a bit here: If you're going to hit, leave indirect shots off the bar. If Black anchors he won't be staying too long. Our next two hit, but, as 'advised' by Snowie, they hit on the 11-point.

Brian Lever: 25/20 21/11* 13/8

Black's in a bit of a pickle, position-wise, plus he's been doubled and has to play the game to a conclusion. This gives more of a free hand to White, who need not fear a gammon but who could well use one, or better still an unlikely backgammon.

I'd consider two distinctly different plans here. The quieter, purer 25/15, 10/5(2) makes a 4-prime and guarantees a warm welcome for any later hit checkers. I like the purity of that play, and would make it



Official sponsors of several Biba tournaments during 2007



if I were fairly certain of getting that later hit. Trouble is, I'm not. Black can hit with small numbers and escape with large, and if my plan doesn't work I can't simply shrug and get on with the next game – there won't be one. So, a trifle reluctantly, because I like the neatness of the blocking play, I feel I've got to go for the hit – 25/20, 21/11* and 13/8 also gives me the best chance of continuing an attack. Black won't want to return hit loose in his own board; he has only eleven return hits off the bar at the outside White checkers, plus three low doubles which allow him to point in his own board and are good for him anyway. The other twenty-two rolls leave the initiative firmly with White.

The 'pure play' of 25/15 10/5(2) is a massive blunder – so it's a good job Brian discounted it!

Peter Christmas: 25/20 21/11* 13/8

Holding the cube, Black just needs to win the game for the match but with the 1-point made he is ill equipped for a long tactical game and will just want to run for home. I think this gives us our first three moves, 25/20 forced and 21/11* as something like 10/5(2) looks good but it is just not mixing it up enough at this stage, nor is 13/3*. The last 5 could go 20/15 or 21/16 but now Black has two men back

White could use a good block as the stripped mid-point and stacked 6-point leaves Black hoping for a small double already. 13/8 gives some return shots from the bar but it is going to suit White to trade blows around his outfield rather than Black's and there are some bad rolls this time for Black. If White gets away with it most of his next rolls are going to play really well, either pointing, building or anchoring is going to leave White well placed to win and even offer some much needed gammons.

This is well reasoned, and this move is Snowie's second choice. However, coming in at Snowie 4th with an equity of -0.104 are the 'winners' for this position.

Richard Biddle: 25/15 21/11*

Behind in the race with a man at the bar we should go on all out attack at this match score, playing to stay in the game. Gammons do not hurt us so we can get a little lively and get in our opponent's face. So like a Saturday night lager lout, we need to leave the bar and go windmilling into a street brawl looking to take out as many as we can with total disregard for anyone's safety. So 25/20 21/11* sees us leave the bar and take one man out. Now for the "kick in the head when they're down" manoeuvre. Duplicate threes by playing 20/15. Black now needs three to anchor and three to hit on the 15-point. Come and have a go if you think you're 'ard enough?

Well 'ard, Richard. But, if you're gonna to get stuck in you'd be better off keeping in touch wiv yer mates, as Snowie says, just in case you need to pair up quickly.

Rodney Lighton: 25/15 21/11*

Entering and hitting uses up three of our fives. The last five could be played 20/15, 21/16, 13/8 or 11/6. 11/6 is stacking too much and 13/8 splits our checkers. 20/15 is better than 21/16 on duplication grounds.

The duplication isn't as good as the connection; by about 2%.

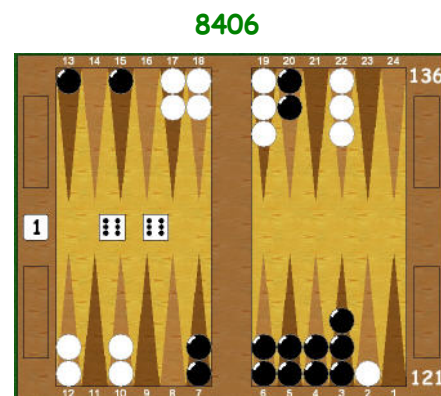
Steve Hallett: 25/15 21/11*

White is 22 points behind after this roll so he must hit to slow Black down and to gain a few pips in the race. So the question is where to hit, the blot on the 11-point or the blot on the 3-point? With the first 5 taken care of 25/20, I think White must hit the blot on the 11-point so 21/11 is the next two 5s leaving us with a choice

of 21/16, 20/15 or 13/8 for the last 5. 13/8 breaks connectivity between White's back checkers so can be rejected, so we have a choice of 20/15 or 21/16. Not much to choose between the two but I'd rather be hit on the 4-point than the 5-point so 20/15 has it.

Poor Steve, he goes on about not making a play because it "breaks connectivity" and then he makes a play that breaks connectivity!

As I said earlier, three wrongs don't make a right; and therefore the points awarded reflect that the majority of entrants picked the 4th best move.



11 point match
Black 9 White 7
White to play 66

Oops! I've done it again; everyone gets it correct!

Bob Young : 23/11 15/9(2)

About even in the race now, but White is under great threats, gammon wins for Black looking very attractive. White could make an equally strong (in number only) four point board, but Black owns the Golden Point, so not a strong option. White needs to minimise Black's hitting numbers. The play chosen gives Black twenty hits, the least that White can

gammon
VILLAGE



Serving The Online Backgammon Community Since 1999

www.GAMMONVILLAGE.com



achieve. Playing 23/17 is the second safest place, twenty-one hits, assuming White combines it with abandoning the mid-point, but by running as far as it can go, White keeps all checkers in contact with each other and should be in good shape if still above water next roll. Life is too short to work out all the return shots from the bar if hit, but I guess I should have spent another weekend working it all out!!!, but as Black has the advanced anchor, it's probably a wasted weekend anyway.

Brian Lever: 23/11 15/9(2)

Bit of Hobson's Choice here for White; like it or not, can he really afford to stick around behind a 5-prime in Black's board? If he could, I'd play 15/9(2), 8/2(2), leaving Black to clean up his blots – but actually the clean-up's quite easy and White still has the problem of escape. So escape now, with 23/11, 15/9(2) and pray Black doesn't roll a 6 (or a 1) of his own. Even if hit, White still has a 4-prime in front of one or two Black pieces.

Cedric Lytton: 23/11 15/9(2)

This roll puts White ahead in the race, so racing is a viable strategy. Also, playing 15/9 (2) with two of these 6s creates a 4-point prime in front of Black's golden anchor, giving a prime v. prime situation in which escaping from behind the enemy prime is a priority – and 6s don't grow on trees. If White stops on Black's 8-point he has to mess up elsewhere, so 23/11 is the play. True, Black is favourite to hit, with 6s and 1s, but hitting with a 6 would be very risky, losing the golden anchor and leaving a lot of blots around. Also, after some Black rolls like 5/3, White has a strong double.

Peter Christmas: 23/11 15/9(2)

A tricky roll for White but one that is going to leave him nine pips ahead in the race and they say you should do the hardest things first when you have the choice and that means getting the back man out with a 6. Black won't want to double unless he virtually has a cash and with a strong board, he is likely to attack the blot on the 23-point for a gammon win or a cash anyhow. Leaving it on the 17-point is encouraging Black towards forming a prime with his blots and leaves White 3 x 6's to play so only 13/1 and 13/7 is going to be reasonable and is not putting any pressure on Black at all. Playing the blot to the 11-point is open to 6 and 1 but at least it is not going to help build the prime. With 15/9(2) it cuts down the 42 shot and it leaves White virtually safe from future blots if he escapes this time.

White hasn't time to build up his board and being ahead in the race he has to be time to run and try to avoid the gammons.

Richard Biddle: 23/11 15/9(2)

No violence in this play. Just run for home before we get hit and trapped. (15/9)2 gives us a safe landing point and extends our prime. We need to extricate our back checker from behind Black's foreboding five-point prime and ideally use just one six to do this but we do not have any other good sixes. So if we move onto the 11-point we are giving twenty hitting shots next turn. The other option, we leave nineteen shots if we strip the mid-point and run a checker onto the ace-point but this may create problems for ourselves later. The former play is in total alignment with our non-violent Saturday night strategy of getting home without getting a smack from a lager lout. (See answer to 8405)

Your last statement's a bit rich, coming from a real ale drinker!

Rodney Lighton: 23/11 15/9(2)

The first question is do we run our back checker out? If we don't then 13/7(2), 15/9(2) seems obvious, the main disadvantage is that the back checker is stranded. But sixes don't grow on trees and we have rolled four of them (all at once), so there is a good case for escaping our back checker even if it means leaving a blot. Everything leaves a double shot I think, but 13/11, 15/9(2) gives us a claim with the cube if missed and means White is hitting half the time from the anchor. I'll vote for the scary, running play.

Steve Hallett: 23/11 15/9(2)

White slightly ahead after this roll and as he can't play completely safely he must minimise shots:

23/11, 8/2(2) leaves 23 shots

23/11, 13/7(2) leaves 22 shots

23/17, 13/7(2), 7/1 leaves 21 shots

23/11, 15/9(2) leaves 20 shots

So the safest is 23/11, 15/9(2) it is also the purest bringing White's checkers round from the back and if missed should play fairly easily after this.

Snowie: 23/11 15/9(2)

A gift from the Gods but even after playing his 66 White will only be 40% to win the game and when he does lose he will lose a gammon 33% of the time.

Leap that prime! 23/17. After that the other three sixes more or less play themselves –17/11 and 15/9(2). After that Black will have 24 hitting numbers but on

his misses White will be well placed and probably marginally ahead in the race.

You might be tempted to try 23/17, 13/7(2), 7/1 which only leaves 21 (all 5's, 32, 23, 41, 14, 61, 16, 43, 34, 66 and 44) shots immediately. However, when missed White has a lot more work to do to bring his men home safely. Better to bite the bullet immediately with 23/11, 15/9(2).

Well, that leaves us in a mess now – we have three on 54 points each. So it's time to employ my tie-breaker: Who came higher on a 'head-to-head' basis? Using this, Richard gets 1st place and the twenty-five quid for having a score of, three 10s and three 8s. So, who came 1st over the year? This went to Steve Hallett with a very worthy 164 points. Well done, Steve. You win the seventy-five quid which should be in this Bibafax – if it's not . . . you've lost it!

I'd like to thank all the entrants for their efforts and to wish you all a successful 2007 season. Which starts on page 25.

	Move	Score
8401	6/5(3) 3/2	10
	6/5(2) 3/1	8
	6/4 3/1	6
	6/2	5
8402	5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)	10
	18/16 5/3*(3)	6
	20/18(2) 13/11(2)	4
	13/7* 5/3*	2
8403	24/21 13/7 4/1	10
	24/21 13/4	8
	13/1	8
8404	8/4(2) 6/2*(2)	10
	24/20(2) 13/9(2)	8
	13/5(2)	5
8405	25/15 21/11*	10
	25/20 21/11* 13/8	8
	25/20 21/16(2) 16/11*	8
	25/15 13/3*	5
8406	23/11 15/9(2)	10



Name	8401	8402	8403	8404	8405	8406	Tot
Richard Biddle	6/5(2) 3/1	5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)	24/21 13/7 4/1	24/20(2) 13/9(2)	25/15 21/11*	23/11 15/9(2)	54
Rodney Lighton	6/4 3/1	5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)	24/21 13/7 4/1	8/4(2) 6/2*(2)	25/15 21/11*	23/11 15/9(2)	54
Steve Hallett	6/5(3) 3/2	18/16 5/3*(3)	24/21 13/7 4/1	8/4(2) 6/2*(2)	25/15 21/11*	23/11 15/9(2)	54
Brian Lever	6/5(3) 3/2	20/18(2) 13/11(2)	24/21 13/7 4/1	8/4(2) 6/2*(2)	25/20 21/11* 13/8	23/11 15/9(2)	52
Snowie	6/5(2) 3/1	5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)	24/21 13/4	24/20(2) 13/9(2)	25/20 21/16(2) 16/11*	23/11 15/9(2)	52
Bob Young	6/2	5/3* 3/1 4/2(2)	13/1	8/4(2) 6/2*(2)	25/15 13/3*	23/11 15/9(2)	48
Peter Christmas	6/5(3) 3/2	13/7* 5/3*	24/21 13/7 4/1	24/20(2) 13/9(2)	25/20 21/11* 13/8	23/11 15/9(2)	48
Cedric Lytton	6/4 3/1	20/18(2) 13/11(2)	24/21 13/4	13/5(2)	25/15 13/3*	23/11 15/9(2)	38

Name	Scores			Pts
Steve Hallett	59	55	54	168
Richard Biddle	57	53	54	164
Brian Lever	54	56	52	162
Snowie	55	54	52	161
Rodney Lighton	56	50	54	160
Bob Young	53	49	48	150
Peter Christmas		48		48
Mark Oram	43			43
Cedric Lytton		38		38
ZX81	33			33

Fax	Month	Questions	Answers
86	Jan	8601-06	8401-06
88	May	8801-06	8601-06
90	Sep	9001-06	8801-06
92	Jan	9201-06	9001-06

The new season starts on the next page

Hatrick Boards

A new design of bespoke leather backgammon board.



Hatrick Boards

now available from biba

*for prices see our website at www.hatrickboards.co.uk
or contact hatrick@backgammon-biba.co.uk*

Competition 2007 No1. 8601-06 Positions

By Michael Crane

Welcome to the first of the three Competitions that make up the 2007 season.

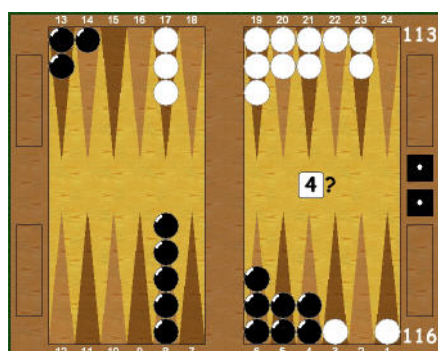
- The winner will win half price Saturday accommodation at any one tournament of their choice.
- The member with the highest points total at the end of the year will win £75.

Entries to be in by April 15th. 2007 - Answers published 14 May, Bibafax 88.

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

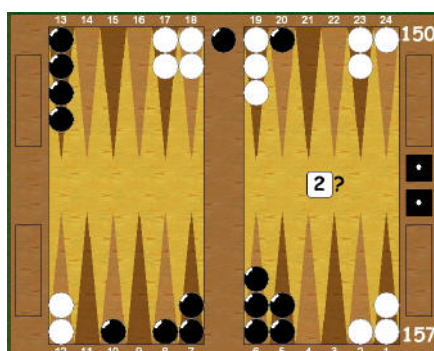
This season we are going to concentrate on the doubling cube; and the points awarded will not be based on the number of votes each position gets, as in the past, but on the correct solution as decided by our silicone pal, Snowie. I am going to trust all entrants not to use any artificial aids in coming to their decisions - so: **No Bloody Cheating!**

8601



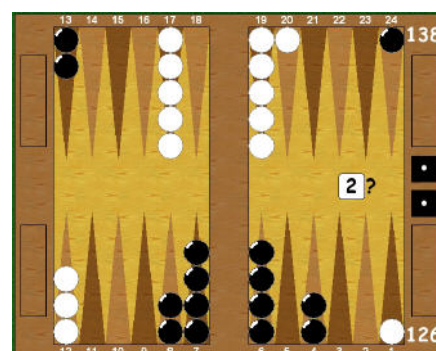
11 point match
Black 2 White 1
Black cube action

8603



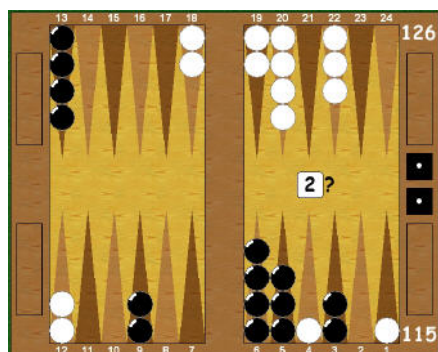
11 point match
Black 0 White 2
Black cube action

8605



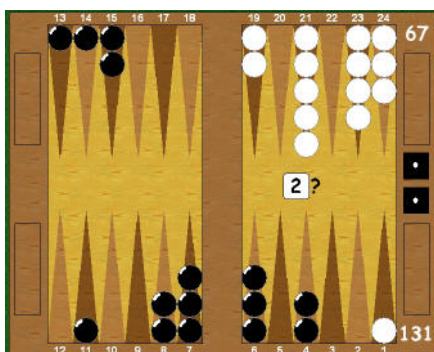
11 point match
Black 1 White 2
Black cube action

8602



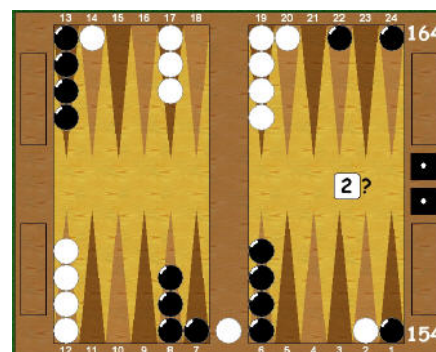
11 point match
Black 7 White 1
Black cube action

8604



11 point match
Black 6 White 1
Black cube action

8606



11 point match
Black 1 White 6
Black cube action

XcitingGames 10th Bright 'n' Breezy



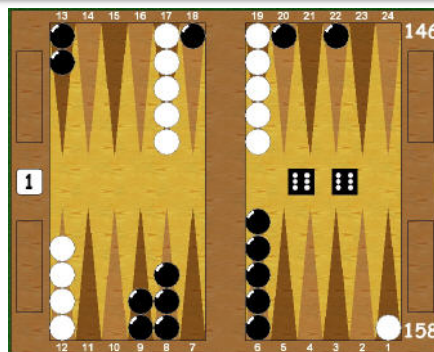
What a great start to the New Year. Eighty players in the **Main (80)** sat down to battle it out for the year's first event. Two of the world's best players were present, current world champion, Philip Vischjager and Kazuhiro Shino. They met in the semi-finals of the world championships last July, an encounter in which Philip prevailed - and then he went on to win the title. So, how unlucky were they to be drawn together in the 1st Round? Here we have two very strong players and only one of them can progress to the 2nd Round. For Kazuhiro is was *deja vu* all over again as he went out yet again to Philip.

Andy Bell, TV producer with *9mm Productions* (responsible for *Ernie's Game* and the recent backgammon on EuroSport) was Philip's next opponent. In a marathon battle it was Andy that came out on top and Philip was propelled into the Consolation. Andy got no further than Tony Lee, and he in turn couldn't get past Julian Fetterlein, likewise Julian couldn't get past Mike Heard . . . and he couldn't get past Stuart Mann as he played himself into the final from the top half.

From the bottom half, defending champion, John Hurst, cleaved his way through for a second shot at the title. Because of the time the match started it was decided to play the final using clocks - something that Stuart is all too familiar with! Each player was given 12 seconds and a time of 22 minutes in reserve.

Stuart took an early lead but John pulled it back to 6-4 in his favour. At this score John (black) he had a 66 to play in the position in the next column.

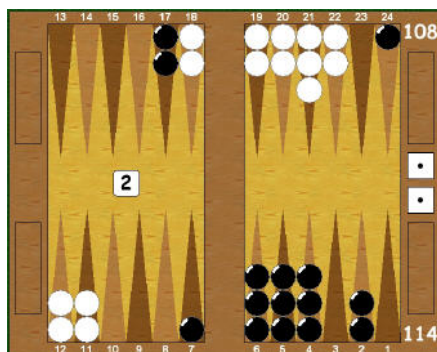
A few of the onlookers thought he should at least make the bar-point, 13/7(2) and then safety one of his runners, 22/10 or 20/8. However, John didn't make the bar-point, instead he played his two runners, 22/10 20/8. This was the better play; white's runner could



John to play 66

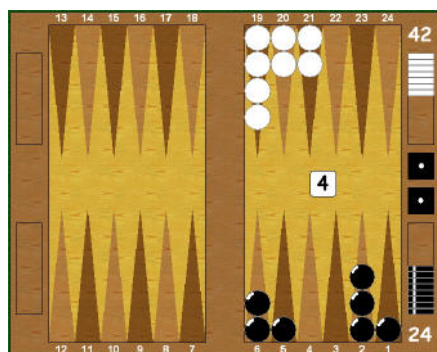
still be contained and it left only one checker exposed - which Stuart hit with a 21, 13/11 8/7*, but a 65 off the bar hit on white's 11-point blot and it was a long time before white got another shot at a black blot ... which he missed and John went on to win the game moving the score to 8-4.

With the score on 8-5 to John, Stuart ships across a 2-cube:



Stuart doubles to 2

Although black is blocking 6s and 5s with his 17-point anchor, his runner on the white ace-point might have difficulty getting out. Snowie says this is a Double/Pass - but John takes. A double-six two rolls later puts John into the lead by 12 pips in a no-contact position; and a little later he's able to re-cube to 4:



John re-cubes to 4

Stuart, quite rightly, drops and John



Main: John & Stuart



Main S/F: Rachel & Mike



Consolation: Julian & Uldis



Last Chance: Adrian & Fanika



Tidal Wave: John & Mark

moves into the Crawford, 10-5. Stuart starts the Crawford with 7m:12s on the clock, a game which he wins, but one which costs him a lot of valuable clock time - he starts the next game with just 2m:20s; too little time to realistically win the match from 5-away, 1-away. As it turned out, Stuart lost the match with only 1m:4s left on his clock. The video recording clearly shows where Stuart is let down - he takes too much time over some of the obvious plays. He moves his fingers to the point(s) to which he wants to play and then looks elsewhere for something else. It all takes time, and, being a slow player, Stuart can't afford to waste a second. The word, procrastinate, springs to mind!

So, John Hurst became the first player to win the title twice. Well done, John. It's just a pity (for him) that he wasn't in the prize fund - it is now rolled over to the Jarvis Trophy to the sum of £630! Rachel Rhodes and Mike Heard were the semi-finalists.

I think I have now cracked the **Progressive Consolation (76)**. Main 1st Round losers have a maximum of eight rounds to play; and Uldis Lapikens did just that. He played all the way through to meet Julian Fetterlein - who won the Consolation last year - who emerged from the Progressive side from the Main last eight. The match went to DMP and Julian did a 'Hurst' and held onto his Consolation crown.

Whenever I get my camera out, if Fanika Petkovska is anywhere near she'll con-

trive to get her picture taken. However, this time it was OK for she was the Runner-up in the **Last Chance (64)** after losing to Adrian Jones in the Final. The open draw of sixty-four enabled Fanika to have a couple of tries to progress past the 1st Round and she finally did it. Adrian managed it to do it on the one entry, clever bugger!

In the **Tidal Wave (64)**, Mark Heidenfeld was soon in the final in the top half of the draw - the problem was, being an open sixty-four draw it was going to be a while before he had an opponent. There was some doubt that we'd get a full entry and it was mooted that Mark might be allowed to enter the bottom half and let him have a stab at being in the final against himself. Mind you this didn't occur for we did get a full entry. John Slattery made it to play off against Mark but he couldn't finish him off and he left Mark as the winner. Strangely, both players took advantage of the open draw by going in twice because they were both knocked out in the 1st Round by the same player, Mick Vacarey.

It looks as if the **Friday 500 (38)** might catch on. We had a good turnout for the first one and Mardi Ohannessian now leads the field with 15 points. Mind you, knowing how little of the Bibafax Mardi actually reads, it's a good bet he's not even aware of his position! There are ten more to come and plenty of time to rack up those points for a shot at the £500. If you fancy your chances get yourself booked into the hotel for Friday nights

and see if you can qualify for the UK Finals.

We had a small **Doubles (8)** knockout this weekend. *Anchors* sank without trace to a pair that had *No Idea*; and *No Idea* then went through *Foxy Wall* and *MC's Secret Lovers* to win the event. I can't think how they did for they really had *No Idea*!

The **Poker (25)** had a good turnout and five players came out on top: Andy Bell, Matthew Franklin, Ann Pocknell, Rosey Bensley and Eamon Keogh all got plenty of Grand Prix points. I wonder, did organiser, Martin Hemming, stretch the points to five so that a 'Gilbertson' (Rosey) could once again feature in the points?

Finally

It was another successful tournament. This year the weather was dry and bright and nobody was taken ill - unlike last year! We were well looked after by 'Magic' who seemed to be doing everything all at once, for which I thank him. Sharen and Julie did some serious shopping and Tim and I did some drinking.



Thank you, XcitingGames for the trophies.

Friday 500

Exciting news! At 9 o'clock on Friday nights during 2007 there will be a new free entry tournament for all members stopping at the hotel (non-residents will pay £20 to enter). It is a 5-point Knockout based over 11 tournaments, the final winner of which will take home from the December, Gilbertson UK Finals, the princely sum of £500. Here are the contenders so far:

15	Mardi Ohannessian	2	Brian Lever	2	Luke Christmas	2	Ron Havenhand
12	Rogier Van Gemert	2	Cedric Lytton	2	Michel Lamote	2	Rosey Bensley
9	Jeremy Limb	2	Chris Ternel	2	Mike Greenleaf	2	Shino Kazuhiro
9	Matthew Franklin	2	David Hale	2	Myke Wignall	2	Tim Line
6	Paul Christmas	2	David Nathan	2	Nicky Check	2	Tim Mooring
6	Paul Learmount	2	Edwin Turner	2	Paul Gilbertson	2	Tony Lee
6	Paul Watts	2	Fanika Petkovska	2	Paul Van Dijke	2	Tony Walters
6	Stuart Mann	2	Gerry Enslin	2	Peter Bennet		
2	Adrian Jones	2	Jeff Barber	2	Peter Christmas		
2	Ann Pocknell	2	John Slattery	2	Rachel Rhodes		

The Townharbour Trophy in November will be the last Friday 500 after which the top 16 highest players will battle it out at the December UK Finals for the £500 prize. Be in it to win it!

NB: Each knockout starts at 21.00 prompt! Late-comers are liable to be denied entry.

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 - Last Tuesdays of the month
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
Middx - Starting up at Hatch End - 07989 751717, claudiatops@yahoo.co.uk - Mondays or days to suit
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

February 3/4, Jarvis Trophy:

The first Swiss of the year and your chance to rack up the Ranking and Grand Prix points towards the annual payout! Also, don't forget ... **it's a rollover of £630!**

March 10/11, Slattery Scottish Open

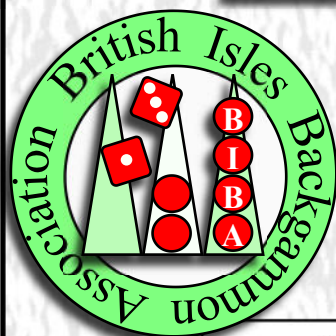
This is one of the most popular events in the calendar, sponsored by John 'Slats' Slattery. It features the four established elements of all Biba KOs: Main, Consolation, Last Chance & The Haggis; plus extras to be announced over the weekend. The demand for accommodation is sure to be high so please book early.



Official sponsors of the British Open, March 31 & April 1

This premier UK British event is the highlight of the year. Now in its 16th year this event has been the one to win. Will this be the year that Nigel Merrigan ('93 & '06) or Rachel Rhodes ('00 & '05) wins it for a third time? Or will one of the other previous winners join them on two wins? Or will there be a new name on the trophy? One thing is certain - a Biba member will be going home with the most prestigious title in British Backgammon. Offering the four usual elements: Main, Consolation, Last Chance and Open Sesame, this will be a **BIGGIE** and if you want to reserve your accommodation - Do It Now!

2007 Details, Deals and Dates



Registration: Saturday 1030 to 1230

Play Starts: Friday 2100, 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 500, 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

2100: Friday 500
+ 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 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.*

2007 XcitingGames.com Backgammon Calendar

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	16th British Open	GP	UK	Coventry	Knockout
Apr 22	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 ??	11th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 11-12	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Aug ??	11th Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	-	tba	Swiss
Sep 01-02	Backpacker Trophy	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct 06-07	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct ??	15th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 03-04	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Dec 01-02	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	Coventry	Double KO

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.



IMPORTANT: I must repeat, there are a limited number of rooms available for each event. To avoid disappointment you are advised to book as early as you can - you can always cancel or pass on your reservation to someone else. Note: Hilton are operating a non-smoking policy in the playing-rooms.

Tournament Results

Gilbertson UK Finals, 2 & 3 December 2006

Main (16/39)

- 1 Mick Butterfield
- 2 Rogier Van Gemert
- 3/4 Ron Havenhand
- 3/4 Ed Turner
- 5/8 Julian Fetterlein
- 5/8 Mark Dixon
- 5/8 Nigel Merrigan
- 5/8 Paul Gilbertson

Last Chance (32)

- 1 Ian Tarr
- 2 Tony Lee
- 3/4 Bob Bruce
- 3/4 Tim Line
- 5/8 Peter Christmas
- 5/8 Cynthia Roberts
- 5/8 Gerry Enslin
- 5/8 Brian Lever

Friday KO (10)

- 1 Tim Line
- 2 Julian Fetterlein
- 3/4 Martin Hemming
- 3/4 Paul Watts

Team (11)

- 1 Brian Lever
- 2 Ed Turner & Ian Tarr

Consolation (38)

- 1 Paul Watts
- 2 Uldis Lapikens
- 3/4 Paul Van Dyke
- 3/4 Chris Ternel
- 5/8 Paul Barwick
- 5/8 Vicky Chandler
- 5/8 Mike Grabsky
- 5/8 Richard Biddle

Snowball (8)

- 1 Bob Bruce
- 2 Jeff Barber
- 3/4 Chris Gibbins
- 3/4 Arthur Wright

Champion of Champions (7)

- 1 Paul Gilbertson
- 2 Martin Hemming

Poker (16)

- 1 Myke Wignall
- 2 Alison Lee
- 3 Nigel Merrigan

	<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Played</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Win%</u>
Richard Biddle	1492	28	11	39.29
Mick Butterfield	1707	119	76	63.87
Mark Dixon	1566	12	8	66.67
Julian Fetterlein	1993	104	75	72.12
Paul Gilbertson	1763	208	107	51.44
Mike Grabsky	1738	190	114	60.00
Ron Havenhand	1681	100	56	56.00
Martin Hemming	1634	106	52	49.06
Tim Line	1610	23	14	60.87
Nigel Merrigan	1814	56	39	69.64
Julian Minwalla	1554	103	54	52.43
Edwin Turner	1616	50	31	62.00
Paul Van Dijke	1519	5	1	20.00
Rogier Van Gemert	1622	13	8	61.54
Paul Watts	1397	31	11	35.48
Myke Wignall	1399	192	78	40.63

Gilbertson UK Finals

Changes to Database: Ranking & Win%

See
you there next
year.



XcitingGames 10th Bright 'n' Breezy, 13 & 14 January 2007

Main (80)

- 1 John Hurst
- 2 Stuart Mann
- 3&4 Mike Heard
- 3&4 Rachel Rhodes
- 5to8 Julian Fetterlein
- 5to8 Peter Christmas
- 5to8 Simon Morecroft
- 5to8 Eamon Keogh

Last Chance (64)

- 1 Adrian Jones
- 2 Fanika Petkovska
- 3&4 Tim Line
- 3&4 Ian Davidson
- 5to8 John Slattery
- 5to8 Tim Wilkins
- 5to8 Tim Mooring
- 5to8 Paul Learmount

Friday 500 (38)

- 1 Mardi Ohannessian
- 2 Rogier Van Gemert
- 3&4 Jerry Limb
- 3&4 Matthew Franklin
- 5to8 Paul Learmount
- 5to8 Paul Watts
- 5to8 Stuart Mann
- 5to8 Paul Christmas

Consolation (76)

- 1 Julian Fetterlein
- 2 Uldis Lapikens
- 3&4 Ann Pocknell
- 3&4 George Miltiadou
- 5to8 Paul Van Dijke
- 5to8 Neil Davidson
- 5to8 Simon Morecroft
- 5to8 Tony Lee

Tidal Wave (64)

- 1 Mark Heidenfeld
- 2 John Slattery
- 3&4 Nick Valley
- 3&4 Mike Main
- 5to8 Cliff Connick
- 5to8 Tony Walters
- 5to8 Brian Lever
- 5to8 Ed Turner

Poker (25)

- 1 Andy Bell
- 2 Matthew Franklin
- 3 Ann Pocknell
- 4 Rosey Bensley
- 5 Eamon Keogh

Doubles (4)

- 1 No Idea
- 2 MC's Secret Lovers

Grand Prix @ Bright 'n' Breezy & Latest Grand Prix Championship

24.77	John Hurst	6.19	Andy Bell	4.12	Pat O'Connor
24.76	Uldis Lapikens	6.19	Gerry Enslin	4.12	Rogier Van Gemert
18.58	Stuart Mann	6.19	George Miltiadou	4.11	Tim Wilkins
18.58	Mike Heard	6.18	Neil Davidson	4.11	Paul Learmount
13.42	Rachel Rhodes	6.18	Philip Virschjager	4.10	Mike Main
13.42	Julian Fetterlein	6.18	Miles Farren	2.58	Mike Greenleaf
13.41	Ann Pocknell	6.17	Tim Line	2.58	Geoff Conn
13.41	Paul Van Dijke	6.17	Ian Davidson	2.58	Myke Wignall
13.40	Adrian Jones	6.16	John Slattery	2.58	Tim Brown
9.29	Peter Christmas	4.13	Jeff Barber	2.58	Tony Walters
9.29	Tony Lee	4.13	Chris Bray	2.58	Ray Fard
9.29	Simon Morecroft	4.13	Tim Mooring	2.58	Michel Lamote
9.29	Eamon Keogh	4.13	Nicky Check	2.58	Margo De Santis
9.29	Sue Keeble	4.13	Lawrence Powell	2.57	Jon Barnes
9.28	Paul Watts	4.13	Arthur Musgrove	2.56	Cliff Connick
9.28	Bob Bruce	4.13	Raj Jansari	2.56	Brian Lever
9.27	Fanika Petkovska	4.13	Cedric Lytton	2.06	David Nathan
9.26	Mark Heidenfeld	4.13	Paul Gilbertson	2.06	Chris Ternel
6.19	Mike Grabsky	4.13	Edwin Turner	2.06	Jon Samuel
6.19	Paul Christmas	4.13	John Ingamells	2.06	David Horner
6.19	David Hale	4.13	Nick Valley	2.06	Mick Vacarey
6.19	Andrew Sarjeant	4.13	Karolina Michalak	2.06	Matthew Franklin
6.19	Rosey Bensley	4.13	Chris Johnson	2.05	Rutger Beijderwellen
6.19	Peter Bennet	4.12	Grahame Powell		
6.19	Wayne Felton	4.12	Neil Webb		



Official sponsors of several Biba tournaments during 2007

Ranking Championship January 2007

(played - average - name)

6	2229.17	Mike Heard	2	1622.50	Chris Bray	1	1238.00	John Slattery
6	2089.33	John Hurst	2	1615.50	Tim Mooring	1	1238.00	Ron Havenhand
6	1984.33	Stuart Mann	2	1615.00	John Ingamells	1	1209.00	Michel Lamote
5	1906.20	Julian Fetterlein	2	1608.00	Karolina Michalak	1	1200.00	Shino Kazuhiro
5	1881.20	Rachel Rhodes	2	1593.50	Ian Davidson	1	1196.00	Matthew Franklin
4	1910.75	Tony Lee	2	1577.00	Philip Virschjager	1	1117.00	Luke Christmas
4	1904.50	Eamon Keogh	2	1576.00	Cedric Lytton	1	1116.00	Brian Lever
4	1828.50	Peter Christmas	2	1563.50	Lawrence Powell	1	1116.00	Grahame Powell
4	1809.50	Simon Morecroft	2	1531.00	Adrian Jones	1	1102.00	Mike Main
4	1804.50	Sue Keeble	2	1512.00	Neil Webb	1	1065.00	Tim Line
3	2127.67	George Miltiadou	2	1503.00	Arthur Musgrove	1	1064.00	Ray Fard
3	1906.00	David Hale	2	1501.00	Raj Jansari	1	1062.00	Mark Heidenfeld
3	1905.67	Paul Christmas	2	1459.50	Paul Gilbertson	1	1041.00	Mike Greenleaf
3	1845.33	Mike Grabsky	1	1667.00	Fanika Petkovska	1	1028.00	Paul Watts
3	1841.00	Wayne Felton	1	1493.00	Margo De Santis	1	1022.00	Geoff Conn
3	1811.33	Andy Bell	1	1389.00	Rutger Beijderwellen	1	1019.00	Mick Vacarey
3	1806.00	Rosey Bensley	1	1380.00	Tim Brown	1	1016.00	Miles Farren
3	1756.00	Peter Bennet	1	1336.00	Tony Walters	1	1010.00	Tim Wilkins
3	1747.67	Gerry Enslin	1	1335.00	Jon Samuel	1	1000.00	Mardi Ohannessian
3	1663.33	Andrew Sarjeant	1	1315.00	Rogier Van Gemert	1	1000.00	Pat O'Connor
2	1910.50	Ed Turner	1	1274.00	Crispin Duke	1	985.00	Chris Ternel
2	1832.00	Ann Pocknell	1	1263.00	Bob Bruce	1	962.00	David Nathan
2	1746.00	Chris Johnson	1	1260.00	Jerry Limb	1	956.00	David Horner
2	1685.00	Nick Valley	1	1256.00	Paul Van Dijke	1	954.00	Myke Wignall
2	1677.00	Jeff Barber	1	1254.00	Paul Learmount	1	912.00	Jon Barnes
2	1668.00	Nicky Check	1	1249.00	Cliff Connick	1	864.00	Uldis Lapikens
2	1659.50	Neil Davidson	1	1240.00	Miles Illott			



N°1 BACKGAMMON EVENTS PROMOTION

This page is reserved for Eze Games, the promoters that brought you:

SELECT

RIVIERA *NATIONS* *CUP* 4

BACKGAMMON FESTIVAL
CANNES
july 18th - 23rd 2006



ADDED PRIZE € 50,000

Ezegames Events Promotion - Tel : +336 6246 7001 - info@ezegames.com - www.ezegames.com

Machines à sous - Jeux Traditionnels - Restaurants - Lounge Bar - Parking gratuit
Pointe Croisette - 06400 Cannes - Tel : 04.97.06.36.90 - www.lepalmbeach.com

