

BIBAFAX

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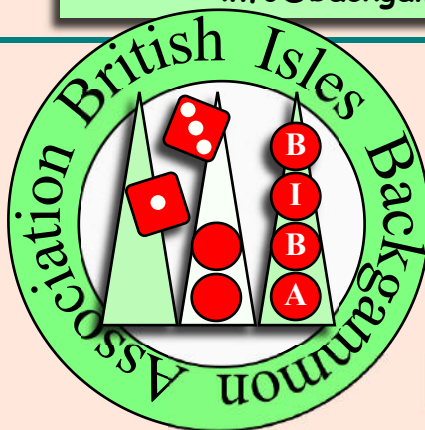
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**2nd Portuguese Open
& Grand Prix d'Estoril**

16-20 May 2007

Estoril (Lisbon), Portugal

Dedicated To Backgammon



**Brian Lever
British Champion
2007**



It has started, the Partouche Gammon Tour! It got off to a rousing start in the fantastic "salon Président" of the Le Lutetia hotel, Paris, from April 18 to 22, 2007. Sixty-nine backgammon players came and competed for a share of the minimum guaranteed prize pool of €50000. A total of €25000 went to the winner of the Main in this first stop on the PGT and his opponent walked away with €6000.

In the Main it was Germany that took top place and a new name appears on the trophy, that of Götz Hildsberg; his opponent, from the home country, France, was Marc Santo-Roman. Marc scored just two points losing the match 21/2, a resounding victory for Götz. France managed to have a semi-finalist in the form of Philippe Lecomte, and sharing semi-finalist with him was the popular Danish player, Karsten Nielsen.

In the Consolation it was another Dane, Sander Lylloff, that prevailed over Germany's Volker Sonnabend. Israeli player, the ubiquitous, Matvey 'Falafel' Natanzon shared the semi-finalist position with a third French placing, Jacques Elbilila. We ended with a Dane in the Main - and began with one in the Consolation. We ended with France in the Consolation . . . and we now begin with France in the Last Chance! Thierry Manouk got the better of fellow Frenchman, Franck Stepler (who has written a personal and comprehensive report on the event. If you understand French, then you can read it in its entirety at: <http://partouchegammon.fr/Sarko-Se-go-mais-pas-Santo/0248.html>)

OK, now there seems to be a pattern emerging, so you may have already guessed that it was France 1st in the Intermediate Main, thanks to Alain Defoucher who defeated Nadia Marinova of Bulgaria in the final. But, just as you're into the pattern it makes a dramatic change for the Intermediate Consolation when another Dane, Peter Bosse, takes the trophy. Then it all goes wrong pattern-wise when it shifts to Vietnam and Bao Ha for the winner of the Intermediate, Last Chance.

France wrestled back the 'lead' with Charles Lecomte (his father, Philippe was semi-finalist in the Main), who defeated fellow Frenchwoman, Julie Bensaïd in the final.

In the Masters, Denmark made it 1st and 2nd with Sander Lylloff and Karsten Niesen (both of whom have already been mentioned) respectively taking the top two positions. France returned with semi-



finalist, Didier Asaraf; and the USA got its first showing with Ed O'Laughlin. Denmark had a good pairing in the Consultation Doubles No.1, with Morten Holm and Sander Lylloff (again!) beating Frenchmen Olivier(s) Lafon and Decultot; but France triumphed well in the Consultation Doubles No.2, when Cyrill Fauquet and Christian Faure beat their compatriots, Bernard Chetrit and Claude Zekri.

The inaugural Partouche Gammon Tour event was a great success and its Director, Eric Guedj, the CEO of Partouche Gammon, is looking forward to the remaining events that make up this exciting overall event. The remaining venues and dates, all in France, are:

May 10-13, 2007
Le Lyon Vert Casino, Lyon

June 7-10, 2007
Saint Amand Pasino, Saint Amand les Eaux. Nr. Lille

July 17-22, 2007
Palm Beach Casino, Cannes

The Grand Finale for the best 24 players of the Tour : Sept. 6-9, 2007
Grand Domaine de Divonne-Les-Bains

It is fortunate for British players that



Götz Hildsberg



Santo Roman & Ed O'Laughlin



Falafel



The Action

there are no clashes with Biba events for the PGT's first year, giving you all no excuse not to attend!

See the back page . . .



Adrian

Sometimes, Winners End Up Losers

By Michael Crane



Gerry

The more perceptive among will notice that the title for this article is a bit, 'Paul Magri-lish', remi-

niscient of his New York Times columns. It is based upon the final game in the battle between Gerry Enslin and Adrian Jones in the 2007 Slattery Scottish Open.

The final between Gerry (black) and Adrian (white) was an exciting one to watch. By the 6th game Gerry was 9-1 down and Adrian was hanging on to a 2-cube. In the bearoff, Gerry was on the bar facing a closed-board, but, as soon as Adrian opens his 6-point, Gerry rolls 65 and hurtles round to save the gammon and at that stage, the match, thanks to two double-fours and a double-one!

The match then progressed with Gerry catching up, but Adrian took it to 10-5 Crawford, a game that Gerry won. It then went in the end to double match point. And this is where Gerry lost it from a winning position when he made a basic error in strategy.

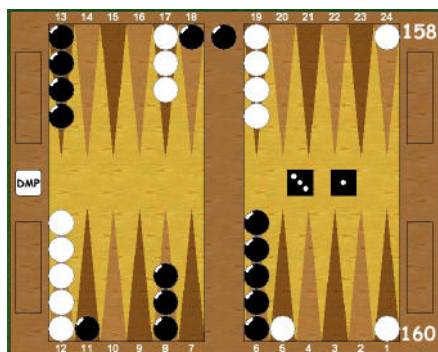
Double Match Point

Gerry (b) : 10

Adrian (w) : 10

01) 62: 24/18 13/11 54: 6/1* 24/20

The game starts well as both players make the correct opening moves; however, Gerry's next move is where it starts to go a bit pear-shaped for him.



Black to play 31

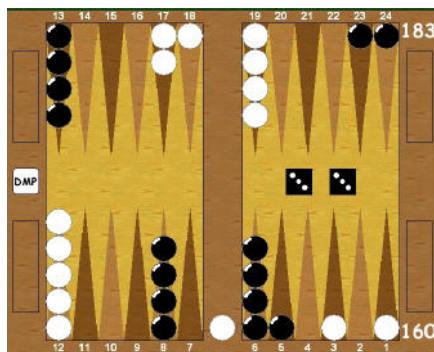
Hitting off the bar, 25/24* is plainly the correct move for the 1, but what about the 3? Well Gerry plays 11/8, safetying his blot on his 11-point which he sees as under threat of 6s from Adrian's checker on his 5-point. However, this threat isn't too real, there's a greater threat that white poses - that of establishing an advanced

anchor on black's 5-point. By far the best move here is the double hit, 25/24* 8/5*. Black's return shots are fewer than half (41.67%) and black then has 8s, 6s, 3s and 1s to cover his blot and make the very important 5-point, a total of 86.1%. Gerry's refusal to hit the blot is Snowie's 4th @ -0.101

02) 31: 25/24* 11/8 31: 25/22 8/7*

03) 21: 25/23 6/5* 66: Dances

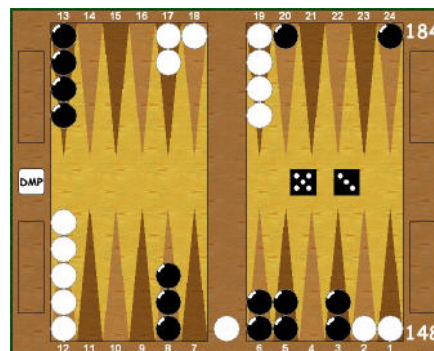
Correct play so far, but now Gerry is faced with a double-three.



Black to play 33

As expected, Gerry rolls a covering number, and he correctly plays 3/4 of his move; 8/5, 6/3*(2). It is the remaining 3 that could have been played better than his play of 23/20. At the moment his back checkers aren't under any danger (even if white makes his bar-point) and should have little difficulty escaping. Priority at the moment lies with containing white's runners; and to do this it is better to shift a checker off the heavy mid-point, 13/10. Although at Snowie 4th @ -0.029, Gerry's move is not an error, it is very close to being one by just 0.001. Snowie's play would give Gerry slightly better chances of making his bar- or 4-point to construct a strong prime.

04) 33: 23/20 8/5 6/3*(2) 52: 25/23

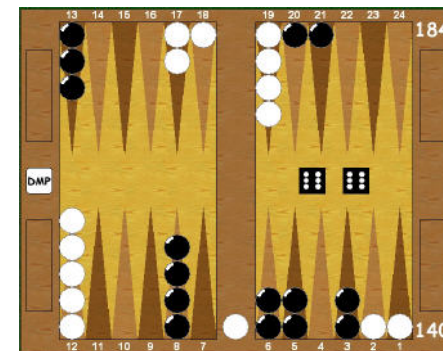


Black to play 53

Adrian manages to get only one checker in and then Gerry makes a basic error with his 5 which he plays to his 8-point, 13/8. This point is already laden and one more on top of it isn't very constructive. He plays the 3 24/21, which, according to Snowie is wrong, it is better to move off the 20-point, 20/15 and then ship one across from the mid-, 13/10 (for the same reason as above). The more builders Gerry can bring to bear into his side of the board, the better off he'll become. Adrian is now desperate to make an anchor - any anchor! Gerry's move is not a Snowie error, but it is a positional error; at Snowie 5th @ -0.018 it isn't that bad a move, but the extra checker on the his 8-point is of no real use to him - unless he rolls 11 or 44 or 66; none of which warrants stacking on the 8-point just in case they come out of the cup.

05) 53: 13/8 24/21

55: Dances



Black to play 66

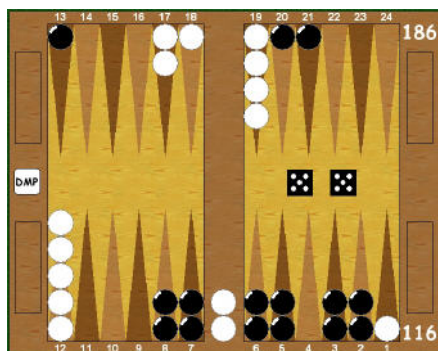
'The Girls' (double-fives) keep Adrian dancing and now Gerry rolls a magnificent double-six. This is an great opportunity to put two in the air by hitting loose 13/1* and the pointing play, 8/3*(2). The 1-point blot's not under any pressure from white, he only has a 30.55% chance of hitting it; his main concern is coming in with two checkers against a 4-board; one checker will enter 55.55% of the time, but two at once only happens 11.11% of the time. Gerry would be well placed for a total close-out . . . if he only made the correct play! Gerry hit on the 2-point, 8/2*(2) but then, rather than put the pressure on white by hitting 13/1*, he made his bar-point, 13/7(2). It looks good, but it allows Adrian to anchor with a 1; and



that is something he'd love to do. Gerry has not yet read the situation - he must stop white getting an anchor, especially on his 1-point. The actual move is Snowie 2nd, but @ -0.039 it is an error.

06) 66: 13/72) 8/2*(2) 53: Dances

Once again, white dances; and once again, Gerry rolls another magnificent number - one which he squanders, unfortunately.

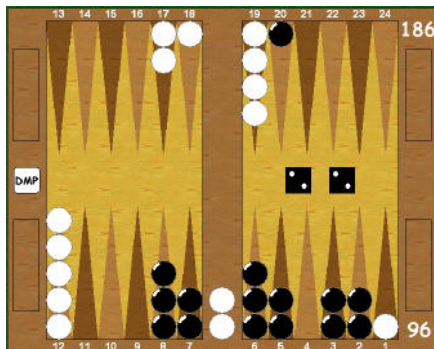


Black to play 55

It is now vital that white is denied an anchor and therefore it is imperative that the blot on the 1-point is placed onto the bar. The best way to do this is to shift points. Too few backgammon players see the merit in shifting points, but in this instance, 6/1*(2) is essential. White is going to have three on the bar and black, if he moves with it, 20/10 (or even 21/11), will have good point-making rolls or pick-&-pass rolls; plus white can now only anchor with double-six or four.

Gerry's move here is so far down Snowie's list that it is in danger of falling of the bottom! With an equity of -0.137 it is a blunder in all senses of the word. Adrian is praying for a 1-point anchor, and Gerry keeps giving him minimum 30% chances to do it. Gerry's game winning chances (gwc) with this roll are quite high at 83.7%, but they could have been much better at 90.5%. Gerry should employ a trick I advise players to try - look at the board from your opponent's perspective. If Gerry was white would he prefer to have a chance of making an anchor or have three checkers on the bar? No one is going to pick three checkers on the bar!

07) 55: 21/11 13/8 11/6 63: Dances



Black to play 22

Adrian lets Gerry of the hook by refusing to roll a 1; and stubbornly remains on the bar with all three checkers. Gerry rolls a third consecutive double; and this time he has a second chance to shift points to prevent Adrian from anchoring. Although it looks to be the perfect roll, playing 20/18* 8/6 6/4(2), is a mistake; and this is what Gerry did. At the moment Adrian is looking at the Runner-up trophy with an approx 12.0% chance of winning the match. He needs to anchor to keep his hopes alive and therefore Gerry's priority should be to avoid that happening. To this end, he has to shift points and hit on his 1-point. There are a few ways this is done, but the better one (according to Snowie) is 20/18* 18/16 3/1*(2). I prefer to play off my 7-point, 20/18* 7/5 3/1*(2) to give me 1s, but I'm not fussed. The important thing is - don't let him anchor! Seeing that Gerry didn't shift points before, it is hardly surprising he didn't do it this time - it's something you know when to do, or you don't know when to do.

A 7-prime looks fantastic, but four on the bar looks even better. Even if white re-enters with 33 or 44, black is massive favourite to win; all he has to do is get his checkers in and off without leaving white the shot he needs. Again I can't tell you the Snowie position, suffice to say, it's very, very low, and @ -0.071 it isn't even a blunder, merely an error.

08) 22: 20/18* 8/6 6/4(2) 61: 25/24

The inevitable has happened, Adrian has anchored and he is now content and back in the game. All he needs to do now is sit tight and wait for a hit. He can sit there for as long as he likes, at dmp, gammons and backgammons aren't going to concern him; Adrian, as Bob Watchel wrote, is 'In the Game Until the End', and that's where he is right now. Prior to this anchor being formed Adrian's gwc were low at 11.7%, but now they have been elevated to 22.8%.

09) 32: 18/15 15/13 42: Dances

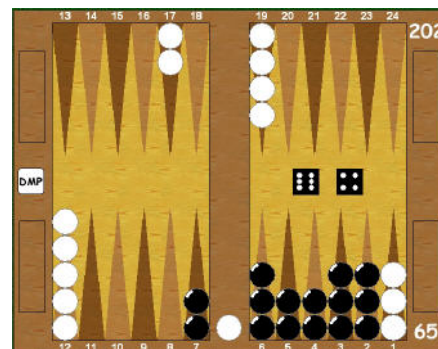
Moving to the 13-point doesn't do much. It is better to start getting checkers in onto the top three points (if you don't have any spares on these points during the bearoff against an opponent's anchor you could well leave a blot with small numbers). Snowie likes 18/15 7/5 (18/16 7/4 & 7/4 7/5 & 8/6 7/4 are all OK moves) but Gerry's move is Snowie 6th @ 0-0.18, an error.

10) 62: 13/7 8/6

61: 25/24

11) 64: 8/2 7/3

32: Dances

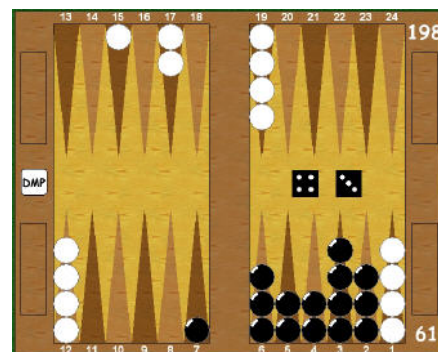


Black rolls 64, leaving a shot

12) 64: 7/3 31:

25/24 13/10

Black gets a remote chance of a hit, 6/1, 5.55% but he misses, although he did roll half the number he wanted! He can now start to make a board and position his checkers on points that will make it difficult for black to get back around the board should he get hit.



Black rolls 43

Taking a checker off. 7/0 is an error according to Snowie, @ -0.044 it is Snowie 3rd. Snowie prefers 7/4 6/2 or 7/3 6/3. It all comes down to how many rolls next time will black leave a blot with? With Snowie's 1st it is the fewest with five, then we have six and finally ten with the actual move. If saving the gammon was crucial then perhaps taking off 7/0 might have been correct but gammons don't matter at dmp.

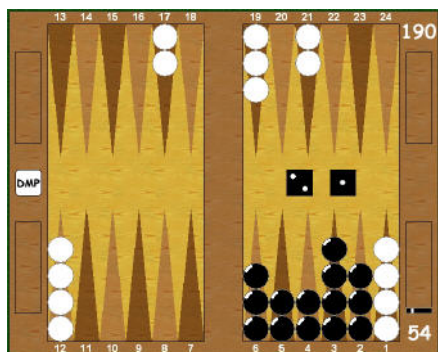
13) 43: 7/3 3/0

62: 10/4 6/4

Adrian starts to make his home board a little stronger and Gerry hasn't done his



sums again . . .

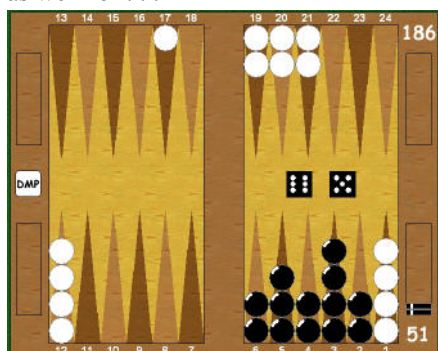


Black to play 21

When bearing off against an anchor (and even more so when it's on your 1-point) you have to look into the future and assess what effect your present move will have on your next possible roll. Here Gerry drops to Snowie 4th @ -0.045, an error; but this move could prove costly on his next roll. Snowie's 1st of 5/3 5/4 looks to leave an ugly gap, but it is in fact, beautiful for it leaves not a single blot next roll. The actual play leaves five (13.89%), odds that Adrian is more than happy to accept.

14) 21: 2/0 6/5 11: 8/6 6/5(2)

Adrian makes a good strong point and has now constructed a 3-prime; which is just as well for . . .

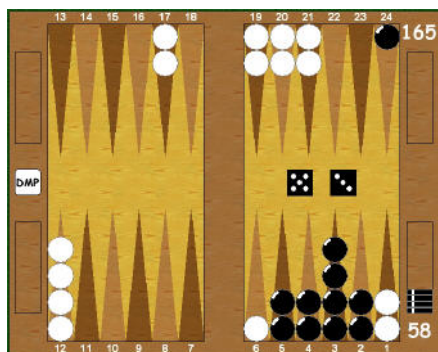


Black rolls 65

Gerry is forced into leaving a shot.

15) 65: 6/0 5/0 65: 24/18 24/19*

16) 51: 25/24 64: 18/12 12/8



Black rolls 53

17) 53: 5/2

31: 13/10 13/12

Gerry re-enters on his first roll but then rolls a bad 53 and is forced to leave another blot on for Adrian to have a go at. Adrian does roll a 4, but it is 31 and can't hit the second blot back!

18) 52: 5/3

22: 13/9(2)

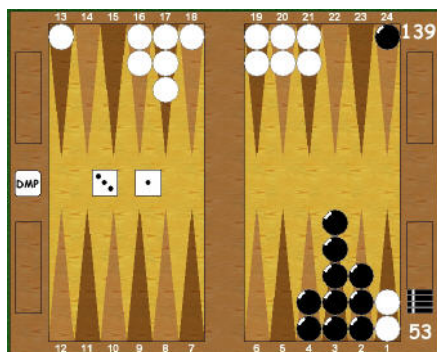
19) 53: No move

41: 19/15 15/14

20) 43: No move

63: 14/8 10/7

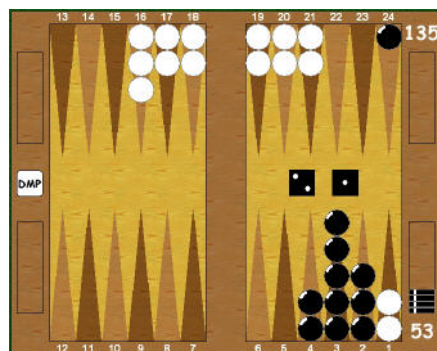
21) 33: No move



White to play 31

After failing to roll a six and along with it the possibility of winning the game, Gerry is closed out as Adrian makes a 6-prime; a move that gives him 82.6% gwc; a far cry from the time it stood at just 11.7%.

31: 12/9 8/7



Black to play 21

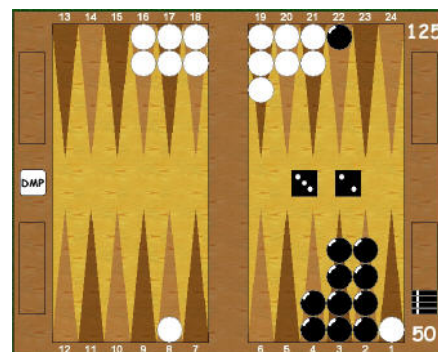
Although there's nothing in it equity-wise, Gerry's move of 24/22 3/2 @ -0.009 is risky if he next rolls a 2, for then he'll be forced to play 4/2 and leave Adrian that much wanted second checker. Clearing his 4-point, 4/2 4/3 is much safer and will force white to move off his anchor to have a chance of a hit. White is never going to let black out until he's good and ready, so moving closer to the front of the prime doesn't really do anything.

22) 21: 24/22 3/2 51: 24/19 19/18

As expected, white moves a runner allowing black to move 3s. In fact 44.44% of black's rolls now leave a blot, with six rolls leaving two blots!

23) 64: No move

11: 18/17 9/6



Black rolls 32

Black is forced into leaving a blot - again; and Adrian has 30.55% chances to hit it . . .

24) 32: 4/1* 3/1

22: Dances

25) 32: 4/1 3/1

31: Dances

26) 41: 2/1

31: Dances

27) 54: No move

65: 25/20 17/11

Adrian misses the blot, and then dances until he rolls 65 and re-enters; and his chances of getting a second checker back look slim, especially after black rolls 21.

28) 21: 3/1 3/2

54: 20/15 11/7

29) 32: No move

54: 15/10 7/3*

30) 52: 25/23

55: 9/4 8/3 7/2*(2)

31) 22: Dances

42: 9/5 8/6

32) 32: Dances

42: 10/6 6/4

33) 63: Dances

54: 5/0 4/0

34) 62: Dances

53: 6/1 4/1

35) 66: Closed board

42: 6/2 2/0

36) 66: Closed board 22: 4/2(2) 2/0(2)

Adrian opens up his 4-point, but Gerry just misses out with double-fives.

37) 55: Dances

65: 6/0 6/1

38) 32: Dances

42: 5/1 5/3

39) 51: 25/20 20/19

Gerry finally re-enters but now needs to roll three doubles starting with double-six, but with just 0.1% gwc he can only manage double-three and he concedes the match.

65: 3/0(2)

40) 33: 19/7

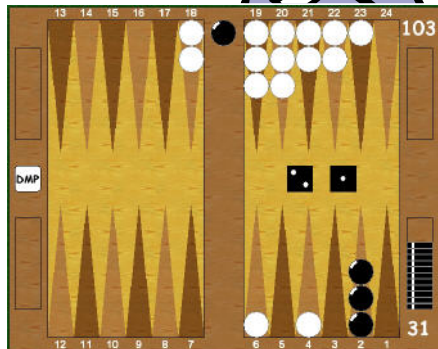
53: 3/0 2/0

Adrian wins 1 point and the match.

I'd like to thank both players for their participation in this article. MC.

Ask The Ruleinator

Dear Ruleinator, could I have a ruling, please, on this position shown below?



**Double match point
Black to play 21**

Black played his 2, hitting, then I rolled prematurely, before he picked up his dice, in an exciting post-backgame.

As the dice rolled, my opponent said, "Hey! I haven't picked up yet," and I scooped the dice away unseen by either player. Black then deliberately did not play the 1, which would have given me the opportunity to hit the second man, picked up his dice, and said, "Well, you rolled, so that's my move!"

I accepted that I wasn't supposed to roll prematurely, but deliberately to insist I condoned a misplay seems wrong. I mean, what's to stop him merely taking off ALL his men illegally, then saying, "you condoned it" and claiming the game? At this rate one could claim the game for ANY premature roll! What is your verdict?

Yours, Premature Roller

Dear Premature Roller, firstly let me say that your opponent needs a good spanking! How very dare he play illegally and then expect you to accept it? You are, of course, partly to blame for the premature evacuation of your dice cup; and for that you should be punished; however, subjecting you to a deliberate misplay is not the way to do it.

According to **Rule 4.6 Premature Action:** All premature actions, (dice rolls or cube action), shall stand if otherwise valid. An opponent, who has yet to complete his turn or act upon the cube, may then do so with the foreknowledge of the premature roller's dice throw or cube action. So, all premature rolls stand, and then your opponent can redo their move with the full knowledge of your roll; however, because you picked them up unseen, this wasn't the case. Technically, one could argue that you had rolled and played your move and that it was now over - and had your opponent been a nicer person, he might have had a good argument for it; but he isn't nice at all. Instead, he then sets out to cheat you by not completing his own move. This is wrong.

His actions tell me that he expects you to now roll the dice after his illegal play - and that expectation brings me to my decision: He plays his move legally, and you then get to roll; but with only one die. He is punished for cheating and you are punished for rolling too soon and then picking up your dice.

I can't categorically say that this is the correct solution, but I am steered towards it by way of making you both aware that we have rules to play by and that you should both abide by them. When one of you - here it is your opponent - sets out to use those rules to his advantage; then they have stepped out of line. Rules are in place to protect players, not to offer one an advantage. If you had not picked up your dice unseen it might have worked

out more to your advantage for you would have had two dice aiming at his blot. I have estimated that you have approx. 30% chance of winning from the illegal position he wanted to leave you in as opposed to about 48% if he'd played it legally. You haven't said who won the game - I hope it was you!

Dear Ruleinator, I was playing with a friend in an 11-point match, with the score at 9-7 to him; when he reached across the board and picked up the cube. I immediately said, "Take!" to which he replied, "I haven't offered it to you yet.

Nor am I going to," and with that he put it back down and started rolling his dice. I

protested and said he can't do that . . . and he said, yes I can! Reluctantly I continued the game and I won a gammon - which by rights should have been four points and the match. Who is correct?

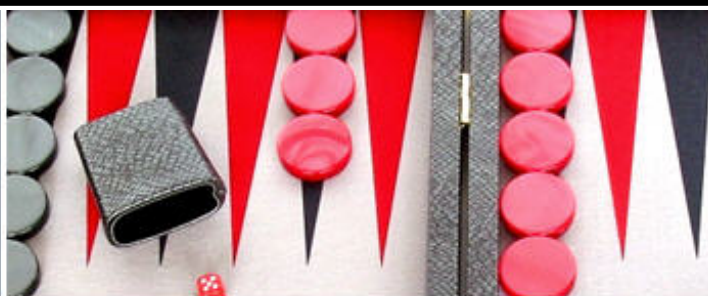
Double Depressed

Dear Double Depressed, your opponent has obviously not read the rules pertaining to the cube. **Rule 5.4 Cube Handling** clearly says "Care should be exercised when handling the cube as either verbal or physical acts might be interpreted as cube actions by an opponent".

If you're not going to use the cube, then don't move toward it or pick it up; if you do so, your opponent can claim 'cube-action' and act accordingly. Some players think it OK to test your reaction by doing exactly what your opponent did - and then deciding on their own action based upon your response. In short, you were correct.



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Small (compared to other years), but perfectly formed, that describes well the **Main** entry of sixty-four players. It would have been 65 but one player informed me of their forthcoming arrival after close of Registration and after the auction. If I start making exceptions for one then others will expect it too and before long everyone will turn up when they feel like it . . . and that isn't going to happen!

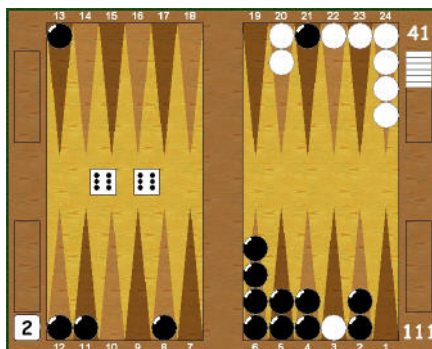
The perfect entry meant a nice smooth ride for me, and it got off to a smooth start for the eventual winner, Brian Lever as he knocked out Ian Shaw, the 2003 winner. Rachel Rhodes was hoping to be the first to win it three times when she learned that Nigel Merrigan (two-times winner) wasn't entering; however she was thwarted by David Motley, who made it into the semi only to be beaten by Brian. Other past winners, Steve Hallett (2001) and Mike Greenleaf (2004) didn't get past the 1st Round, so Brian was going to be a new name on the trophy.

In the semi-finals Brian's opponent, was as mentioned above, David Motley; and David almost made it when he was looking to win a gammon when Brian turned the game around and won it himself. Ian Tarr had to fight off Gerry Enslin, fresh from his Runner-up slot in the Scottish Open in March. It was a tough match but Ian prevailed in the end and it was into the final to battle against Brian.

They might not both agree, but each of the finalists has a reputation for slow(ish) play and because of this I issued a clock to ensure it didn't overrun the allotted 2.25 hours; and I think this action lost Ian the title. He didn't seem to get into his stride at all and he only managed to win one point throughout the entire match. Brian breezed through with a combination of good dice and good play (you need both to win!) and emerged a worthy British Open champion. I have annotated and analysed the match and it part of it appears after this report.

Here's the *Joker of the Weekend* for you to mull over. A player came to be bemoaning his bad luck and he began to relate to me the circumstances in which he was unlucky to lose this particular

game and eventually the match . . . yawn! yawn! yawn! I told him I'd heard and seen all the hard luck stories but he urged me to take a look at this one - so I did.

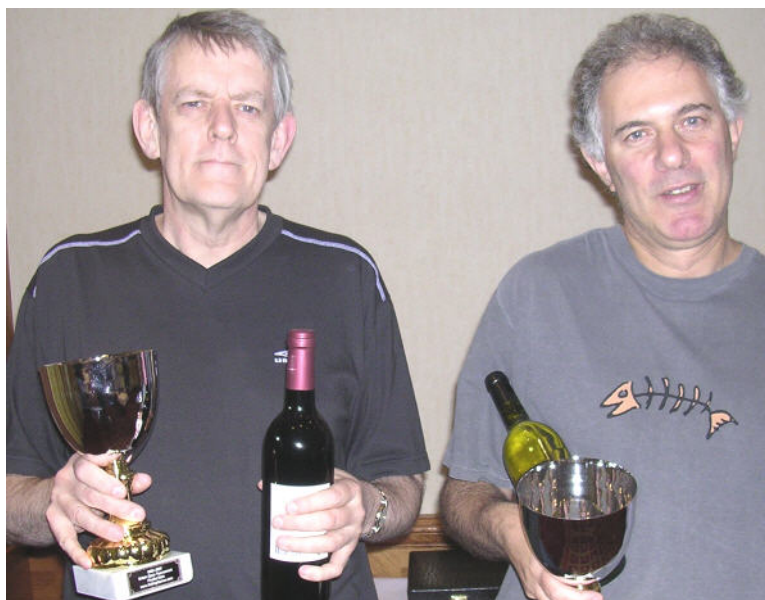


White rolls 66

Yep, that's bad luck! Especially after black hits and then cubes you out a roll later!

In the **Consolation (60)**, John Slattery made it into the final after beating some of the toughest players around: Jon Barnes, Mardi Ohannessian, Sean Casey, Mark Dixon, Paul Gilbertson and Tom Duggan. The only player he couldn't beat was one as tough as himself (but a lot quieter), Lawrence Powell who emerged from the Progressive side. Lawrence took a good lead, 7-1, but Slats, ever the fighter, took it to DMP but just couldn't manage that final point.

Main
Ian & Brian



Consolation
Lawrence & John



The **Last Chance (64)** open draw was a long hard slog for the finalist that entered into the bottom half of the draw, but Giorgio Castellano was hungry for a another trophy to add to his consecutive list of Jarvis Main, Scottish Open Consolation; the British Open Last Chance would give him three out of three. Hoping to stop him was Stephen Drake - but the lure of 3-out of-3 was too much and Giorgio happily made the hat-trick.

With everyone tied up in the previous three elements I decided the make the **Open Sesame** a thirty-two draw. Mark Heidenfeld was looking to add another 3-pointer trophy to his Bright 'n' Breezy 2007 one and he set his sights on the final. He made it only to face Rachel Rhodes - but he came out on top with the Open Sesame trophy and a big smile!

Going back in time to the **Friday 500 (22)**, it was a good start to the weekend for Ed Turner when he beat Ray Tannen in the final. This win placed him at the top of the list, toppling Mardi from 1st Position. The 500 looks to be a success and I'm sure the competition will hot up when players are trying to make the last sixteen and a shot at the £500 first prize. With seven more Fridays to come there's still plenty of time for others to qualify - and even win the £100 cash for being Number One. The latest listing is on page 26.

The **£50 Jackpot (8)** was shared between old hand, Mardi and the 'returning' Ramsey Jamil. Organiser, Nicky Check fell at the first fence after losing to Sean Casey.

In the **Doubles (4)** we went for quality rather than quantity! *A Cake of Cheese* saw off *Mann & Buoy* after going down 4-0 - a great bit of team effort to pull that one off, I can tell you! Their next encounter was the sinking of *A Pair of Christmas Anchors* - and what a pair of anchors they were. Finally, they made easy meat of *Blind Squirrels* who had beaten off *Chemo Savvy*. It seems that *A Cake of Cheese* are making a habit of cashing in the doubles . . . thank God!

We had a decent turnout for the **Poker (20)**, and I'd like to thank Mark Dixon for organising it and presenting me with a very comprehensive set of results - of which he'd placed himself at Number One! Perks of the job, Mark? I have now been able to complete the Poker Grand Prix to date and it can be seen on page 30. It would appear that you have a better chance of topping the list if your name is Paul! Before we leave the poker I have to report on the lovely trophy that Myke Wignall presented to Martin Hemming in recognition of his Biba poker efforts. I'm not too sure what the trophy says about Martin as the recipient - or that of its creator, Myke! I think it's best left well alone!!

Finally

I'd like to thank all the entrants for turning up and a special one to those that flew in from Eire and Holland - it's good to see you and I appreciate the effort you make to attend. The weekend went along smoothly and without incident - or so I thought! Following the match analysis I have reproduced some comments to & from Ian Tarr regarding the clock issue.



**Last Chance
Giorgio & Stephen**



**Open Sesame
Rachel & Mark**



During their finals match at the 2007 XcitingGames British Open, Brian Lever (left) and Ian Tarr (right) made several errors between them including a few blunders. This article looks at these and provides some analysis explaining the rights and wrongs of the best move from Snowie rollouts and the actual move played. The match is to 11 points and in each position, Brian is black and Ian is white.



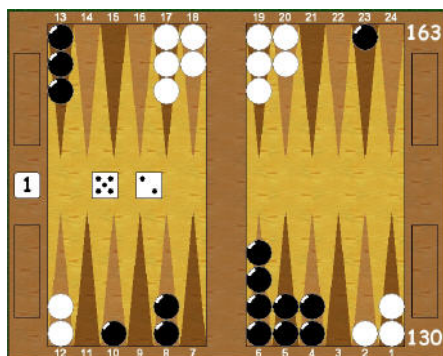
The Error of Their Ways

By Michael Crane

Assisted by Snowie Pro 4



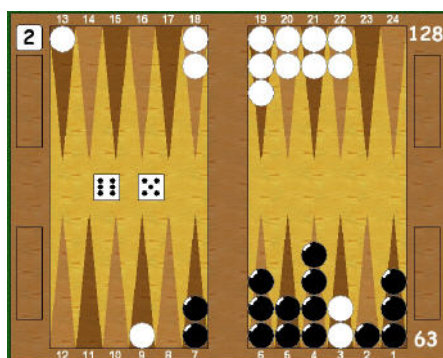
Game 1 - Pos 4: 2nd @ 0-090



Black 0 White 0
White to play 52

The actual move of 23/18 8/6 puts a runner under the gun and stacks another checker onto the 6-point, this checker is best left where it is, an active builder on the 8-point. The best play here is to run out, 23/16. Leaving a blot on black's bar-point is asking for it to be knocked onto the bar - and in the process, loose half a roll.

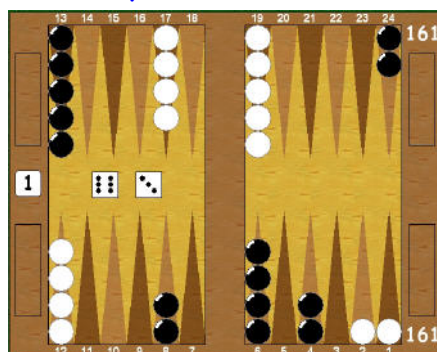
Game 1, Pos 13: 9th @ -0.038



Black 0 White 0
White to play 65

Although right down in 9th place the actual move of 7/1 is barely an error; but a crucial one. Making the 1-point isn't going to stop black escaping should white get the hit; it is better to keep a continuous prime. This is achieved by getting in two crossovers, 16/11 12/6. This anticipates the possibility of a race and a hit.

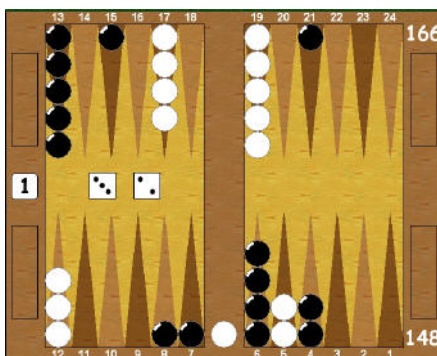
Game 3, Pos 2: 3rd @ -0.066



Black 3 White 0
White to play 63

Running to the 18-point, 23/18 with 13/10 is sacrificing the runner for no good gain. Black will have a double-shot at the blot and is favourite to hit it. Here the best move is the standard reply to a 42 opening move played making the 4-point, 23/14, giving minimum shots (2s, not counting double-one).

Game 3, Pos 4: 4th @ -0.119

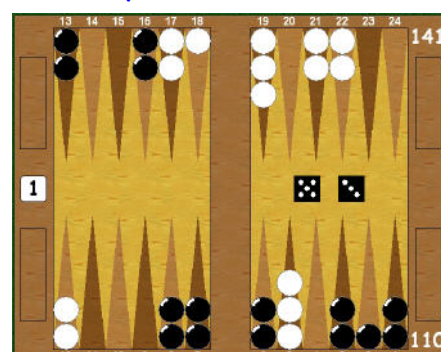


Black 3 White 0
White to play 32

Clearly hitting (something) is correct in this position, but the actual play of 25/22 20/18* is a blunder. It leaves white with three blots and at best is a 'spoiler' for black who will have to waste half his roll re-entering.

Unless you have a distinct advantage elsewhere, vacating a 20-point anchor isn't a good move. The best play is to keep the valuable anchor and to play 25/23 13/10*. Black will still waste half a roll and white is likely to have another shot at a blot without having to break off his anchor.

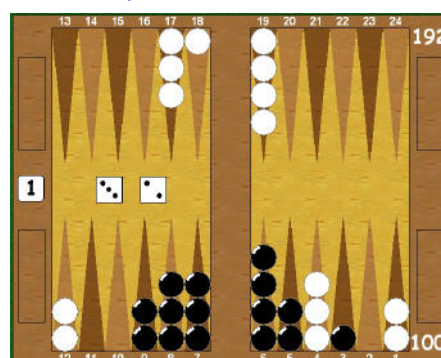
Game 3, Pos 11: 2nd @ -0.094



Black 3 White 0
Black to play 53

Black's first error and it's a biggish one. When coming round from the white outer-board to his own outer/home-board, black needs as many safe landing points as he can get; therefore, clearing the 7-point with 7/2 7/4 is wrong. Although it's a bit risky from 6s (all but 33 and 22) moving the two runners now, 16/11 16/13, is the best move. If white does hit, black will possibly have return shots depending upon white's hitting roll. As it turned out, white rolled a 6, but it was 33 and the blot would not have been hit.

Game 4, Pos 7: 18th @ -0.465



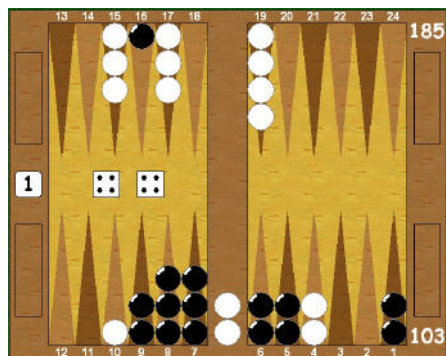
Black 4 White 0
White to play 32

We have to drop down Snowie's list a long way to find the actual play of 24/22* 13/10; and when we do we see it's a huge blunder. Black has a nice 5-prime straddling the bar and white is playing a 1-4 backgame with the 'luxury' of a spare checker. Hitting black now is not going to win white the match - in fact hitting now lessens white's gwc (game winning chances) by 5%. It is probable that black,



during bearing in, could leave a shot a bit later and therefore white needs to have a few home-board points to keep him dancing. With this in mind the best play us 8/5 6/4, slotting two points - the two most needed. Playing 8/5 7/5 is an error and doesn't make full use of white's next roll(s).

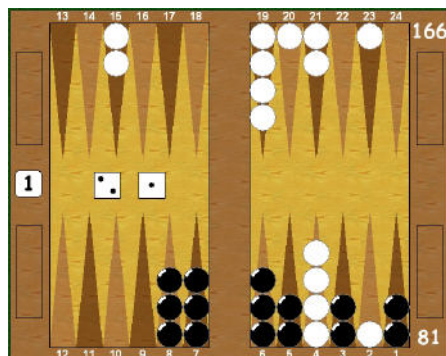
Game 4, Pos 11: 5th @ -0.094



**Black 4 White 0
White to play 44**

I must admit, the actual play, 25/21(2) 8/4(2), looks OK, but it does give black a 6-shot; and white really needs to be making his points in order, giving priority to the 5-point first. To do this, Snowie goes for 25/21(2) 15/7. The next 'best' move (and those that follow) are all errors including the actual move.

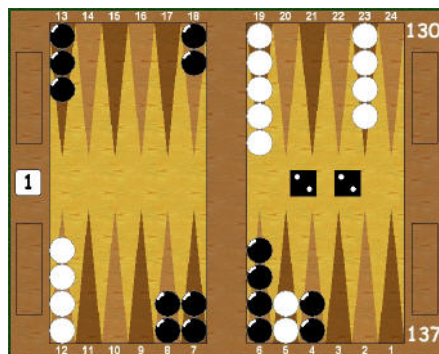
Game 4, Pos 14: 5th @ -0.103



**Black 4 White 0
White to play 21**

Obviously making the 5-point, 6/5, is correct, but what about the 2? The actual play of 10/8 looks good but Snowie rates it a biggish error. White needs to be making new points, but, if he's on the bar he cannot do this, so 23/21 the best move with the 2. Equally good with the 23/21 are 10/9 or 2/1.

Game 5, Pos 4: 19th @ -0.204

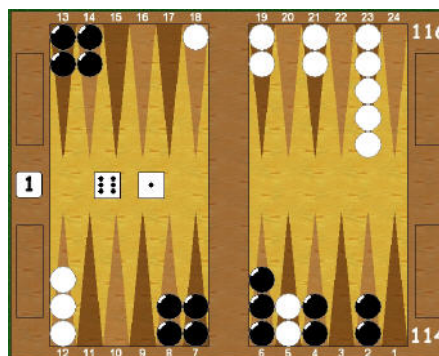


**Black 5 White 0
Black to play 22**

This blunder for black is a wimpish move, both runners, 18/14(2); what can he possibly be afraid of? White has a 2-point board and nothing else except his very useful advanced anchor. Almost any other move is better than the actual one.

Snowie only gives 20 moves and the 20th is 18/16(2) 8/4. The best move (only by 0.005) is 13/11(3) 11/9, leaving a provocative shot to entice white off his anchor. Just as good is 13/11(3) 6/4, playing totally safe. Black's ultra-safe play reduces his gwc by 6%; and that's a lot of chances to be giving away. Normally Brian is more aggressive than this and I would imagine that after the match he'd have played it differently.

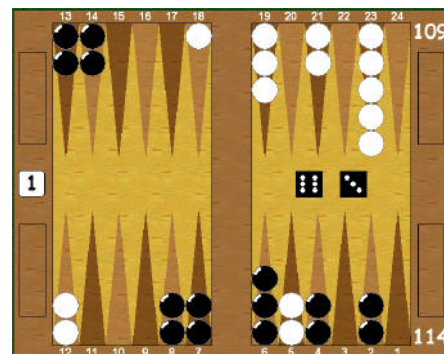
Game 5, Pos 6: 3rd @ -0.050



**Black 5 White 0
White to play 61**

Playing 13/6, white wastes a good point-making play. Making the 7-point, 13/7 with 2/1 was better. Black is very flat in the outer-boards and might soon be leaving a shot, therefore making a point with this 61 is more important than running it safe.

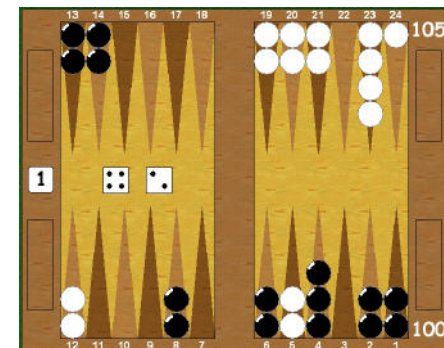
Game 5, Pos 7: 5th @ -0.111



**Black 5 White 0
Black to play 63**

This is the very next roll - and white rolls a 6, and plays it safe, 7/1 7/4; and creeps into the blunder category (albeit by 0.001). White has yet to construct a board that could worry black so now is the time to shift some of the back checkers. This is best achieved by playing 13/7 13/10, leaving black with 5s to hit. Playing off the 14-point instead would have been an error; not just because it gave white extra shots (6s instead of 5s), but because if white missed and black was 'forced' into making his 11-point next, it could prove very difficult to shift them later being 6-away from white's anchor.

Game 5, Pos 8: 2nd @ -0.173



**Black 5 White 0
White to play 42**

Just two rolls later and white makes a blunder when moving 13/7. This game could well rest on who gets the first hit; and white has just handed that possibility to black. As 'bad' as it looks, 5/1 5/3 is by far the best move and by a wide margin. Black's next roll is 41 and he picks-&-passes, 13/12* 12/8; a roll that he would have been unable to have played safe . . . and white's dancing roll of 21 would have most likely have given him the first hit. White wasn't to know it, but his move of 13/7 a little earlier that led to him now being on the bar (instead of perhaps his opponent being there,) was for him to dance for twelve consecutive rolls and

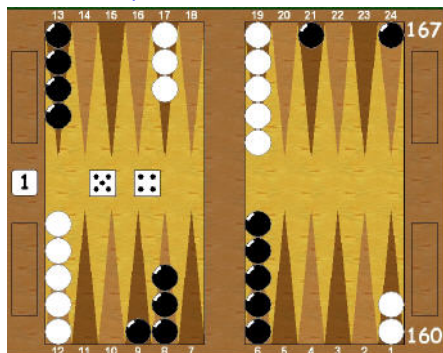


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only re-enter when black opened up his 4-point on his way to a gammon.

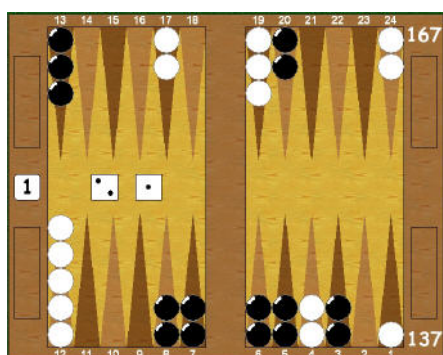
Game 6, Pos 1: 5th @ -0.102



**Black 7 White 0
White to play 54**

Double hits on the opening roll are normally confined to rolls with doubles, playing 8/4* 6/1* in this position to leave two blots on is almost a blunder. Certainly hitting is correct, but it is with 13/4*, leaving just one blot on.

Game 6, Pos 7: 4th @ -0.219

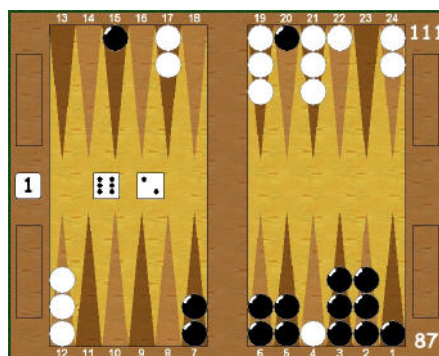


**Black 7 White 0
White to play 21**

Teasing black into a hit by playing 13/10 is a big blunder. The only realistic play here is the runner, 24/21. Black has only one spare checker (on his mid-point) and could soon be leaving blots of his own; therefore white should look towards that happening instead of offering himself up first.

**The Snowie
stats for this
match are on
page 15**

Game 6, Pos 15: 6th @ -0.269

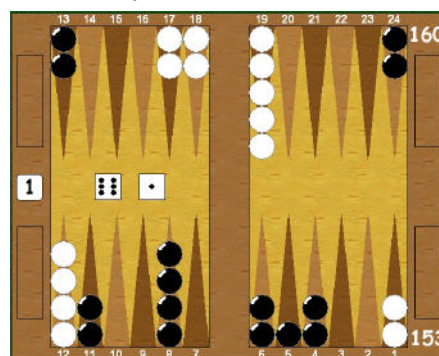


**Black 7 White 0
White to play 62**

Snowie's 2nd best move, 8/2 4/2 returns -0.217 equity, a big blunder; the actual move, playing the safe, 21/13 is even higher. Black's most likely way to win this game is to get a hit, and the most likely checker to do that currently resides on black's 4-point; so moving it to 'safety' won't increase white's gwc. In fact they drop from 40.0% with the best move of 13/5*, to 29.9% with the actual move! Even with two blots on white has better chances to win from this position than if he leaves black alone. A

As it turned out, blacked rolled 61 and anchored on his 14-point. Ironically it was this action that eventually lost back the point and gave white his first. Black was unable to move both 14-point checkers past white's mid-point and white hit, and a little later, doubled for the game.

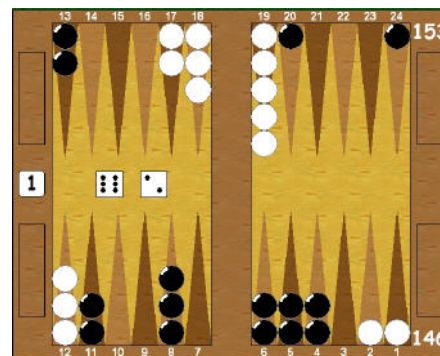
Game 7, Pos 2: 2nd @ -0.037



**Black 7 White 1
White to play 61**

Part of the correct move here is 13/7, the 1 then becomes the deciding move. Snowie goes with the slot, 6/5, leaving black with 4s to hit with 6s, 3s and 44 to cover his 5-point blot. The actual play, 24/23 doesn't threaten a great deal and leaves white's runner on separate points and no anchor. Slotting when your opponent has a home-board blot should always be considered.

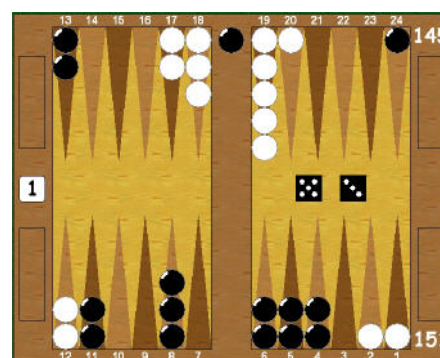
Game 7, Pos 3: 3rd @ -0.046



**Black 7 White 1
White to play 62**

On white's next roll another error. Playing 13/5*, now that black has made his 5-point, is wrong. This time it's better to move 13/7 24/22. Hitting this time would only serve to send back a white checker with no return shots (except those in his own home-board).

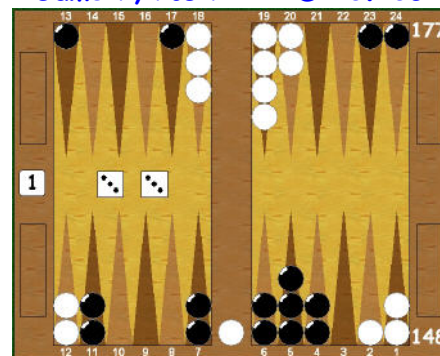
Game 7, Posi 4: 3rd @ -0.044



**Black 7 White 1
Black to play 53**

On the very next roll it's black's turn to make an error; this time playing 25/20* 8/5. Although 8/5 does give a builder for the 2- and 3-points, it does play past an important point, the bar-point; but, more than that, it ignores the escaping chances of black's last checker.

Game 7, Pos 7: 2nd @ -0.106

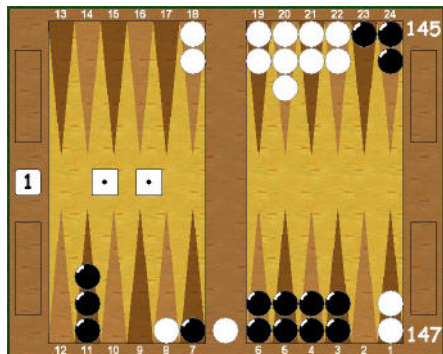


**Black 7 White 1
White to play 33**



There are only two real moves here: 25/22 with either 7/4(3) or 7/4 6/3(2). The latter (the actual play) is the big error for although it makes a point it leaves an unnecessary shot; therefore the former is the correct play. White doesn't want to have any more checkers back; he's doing alright(ish) as he is.

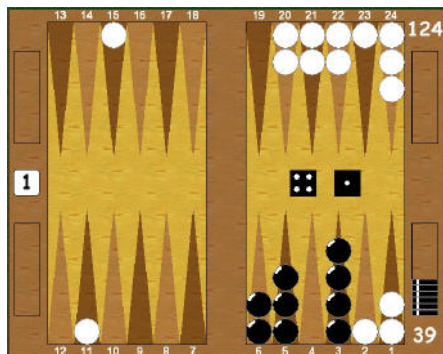
Game 7, Pos 11: 3rd @ -0.127



**Black 7 White 1
White to play 11**

By playing passively, 25/24 24/23(3) and anchoring on the 23-point, white is letting black off the hook. He should have shifted points, 25/23 3/2*(2) and put pressure on black's 7-point blot. The actual play not only lets black have a free shot at the blot on his 8-point, but the chance to (perhaps also) make his bar-point. Too few players ever see the potential for shifting points - and not doing so can prove costly, especially in this instance when black rolls 31, 11/8* 8/7! Immediately white re-enters with 42 and leaves a blot, which black hits. White is forced into leaving another blot which is hit and then white's board starts to disintegrate.

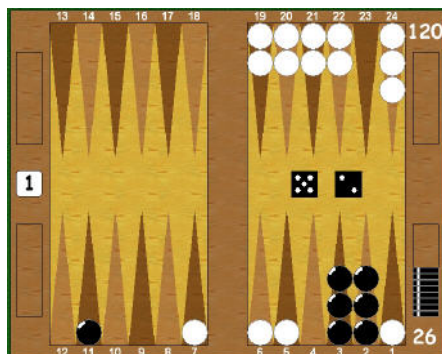
Game 7, Pos 23: 2nd @ -0.180



**Black 7 White 1
Black to play 41**

Black is in a spot of bother with this one; should he take off, 5/0? Or hit and cover, 6/2* 3/2? He decides to take off, but he is still facing leaving blots next roll whereas with the hit and cover move. However, his blunder turned out OK because white rolled 32 and would have hit the blot had black played correctly!

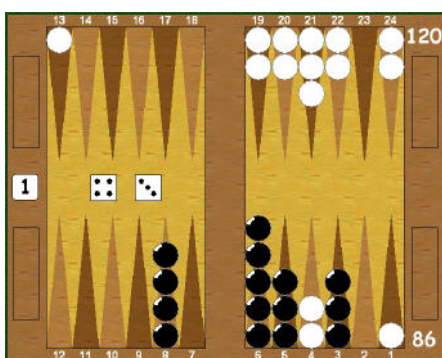
Game 7, Pos 31: 2nd @ -0.219



**Black 7 White 1
White to play 52**

This is a move that black played over and over again - to hit or not to hit? He finally chose to hit, 11/6* 6/4. It was a big blunder, the better play was 11/4 - no hit. Hitting gave white a lot more chances to hit the blot but he didn't and black rolled out for the gammon.

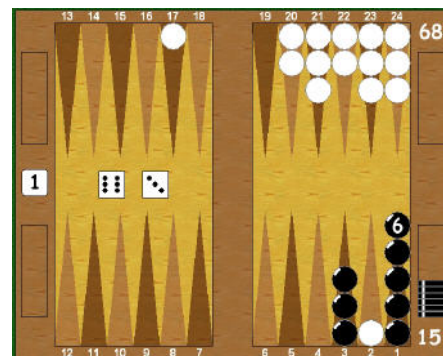
Game 8, Pos 13: 6th @ -0.075



**Black 9 White 1
White to play 43**

With only one gap in his home-board, white decides to play past his open point with 12/8 4/1. His best chance of winning is to construct a closed board and hope for a hit. Three moves (all equalish) avoid playing past the open point: 12/9 6/2, 12/5 and 12/8 5/2; all with the potential for a closed board.

Game 8, Pos 21: 6th @ -0.081



**Black 9 White 1
White to play 63**

White now makes an error that loses him the match. In his attempt to get a last minute hit he refuses to run to save the gammon. He plays 8/2 4/1 and hopes that he'll get a hit! Any move that ran the last checker out would have saved the gammon; but, black rolled 33 and now white needs to save the gammon. Unfortunately for him black rolled 11 to get the gammon before white had the chance to roll to save it.

The 2007 XcitingGames British Open final was a hard one for Ian to win, Brian had all the luck @ +27.132; and some very good rolls; and when a player of Brian's ability gets good rolls he makes (more often than not), good moves - a combination that's hard to beat. A clock was assigned to this match (many of Brian's opponent's ask to play with one!) and this appeared to have some bearing on Ian's playing.

However, the video recording doesn't show him playing rashly or quickly; the vast majority of his moves being thought out and played without losing too much time. He took a long time to get to grips with hitting the clock instead of picking up his dice; and it was this action that he seemed to be focused on instead of just playing his normal game. Brian can be heard telling him to relax and just hit the clock instead of picking up the dice - which was very sporting of him.

The clock issue led to some correspondence between Ian and I that I include on the following pages. Further comments are welcomed: 



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Clock Issues @ The British Open 2007

Correspondence Between Ian Tarr and Michael Crane

Dear Michael, I'm shocked. I wish you'd mentioned it to me earlier, rather than reporting to the whole world that I am a slow player. I have been playing the game for nearly 30 years now, and in all that time I cannot recall being accused of being a slow player. Backgammon players in general must be terribly two-faced if that is the general perception. You'd have thought that one or two of them might have mentioned it to me over the years, so I might try and remedy this defect!

In all honesty I see this part of your report as a lame attempt to justify putting the match – the showpiece match of your showpiece tournament – on a clock. In fifteen years of fairly regular Biba attendance (I would estimate around 60 tournaments) you have never previously asked me to play with a clock, apart from one occasion many years ago, when my opponent riled you by coming down late to the playing room on the Sunday morning. If I am so darned slow, why have you never put me on a clock before?

As for the assertion in your report that "I think this action lost Ian the title. He didn't seem to get into his stride at all", you certainly have a point. There's no doubt in my mind that I was put at a disadvantage. I have virtually no experience of playing with clocks, while Brian is asked to play with them all the time. It took me quite a while to get my head together, so much so that I called for a break at 0-5 to try and gather myself.

When Brian – gentleman that he is (and incidentally a truly worthy British Open champion) – learned of my disquiet, he offered to get the clock ditched, but I felt I had lost my opportunity to object by not pressing the point before the match had started.

So having achieved my best ever Biba performance, and relishing playing in a big final (such opportunities don't come along too often for moderate players like myself), I now find myself greatly disappointed, not because I got thrashed -- that was always a likely outcome -- but because (a) I was found incapable of overcoming the unsettling clock scenario, and (b) I was left feeling that staging an important match in a proper manner was a secondary consideration to you, com-

pared with the importance of getting back to Lincoln as soon as you could manage it.

As I'm sure you know, I have every respect for what you have done for British backgammon over the years, but I do feel you sometimes let yourself down with the haphazard nature of some of your rulings.

Dear Ian, even if you were the fastest player in the world it wouldn't have made any difference regarding clocks. As you say, "Brian is asked to play with them all the time" and the final was no exception. If left to his own devices Brian will take 2½ to 3 hours over a match and think nothing of it. If you cast your mind back to the British Open a couple of years ago he was in time difficulties over his long match with Ken Gibson . . . an incident Ken 'resigned' over because despite repeated warnings to both players, he ignored me - and then objected to my ruling.

You insult me if you think I assigned a clock because of "the importance of getting back to Lincoln as soon as you could manage it".

OK. I retract this, although I have heard members of your staff alluding to this in the past. And things like that tend to stick in the mind.

Whatever my staff might allude to is up to them. I assign clocks on a timing criteria - if that also coincides with getting back to Lincoln then that is exactly what it is: coincidental.

I assign clocks when I, as TD, think them necessary. If you attended more regularly you'd know that clocks are issued at every tournament to ensure that matches finish at a time expected. If I didn't do this then players would take as long as they liked. Brian is the first to admit he's slower than most players, most of his opponents request a clock; and this is the reason you started your match with him with the full amount of time allowed to finish it. I decide on when clocks should be issued and I never grant one to a player who is seeking an advantage - they are issued by me for timing purposes only.

That seems like a bit of a contradiction to me. If most of Brian's opponents request

a clock (and I'd be very surprised if that was actually the case), why are they doing it, if not to gain an advantage? I have certainly been aware of instances in the past, where players have requested a clock specifically because they thought it would give them an advantage.

I admit that if any player hasn't played with a clock before and their opponent has, then the opponent does have an advantage; but this cannot be a reason not to assign a clock. If that were so then clocks would hardly ever be assigned.

Prepare to be surprised - a lot of Brian's opponents ask for a clock - even those that have never played with one before. He and Stuart Mann are more likely to play with a clock than any other players; not because they ask for them but because their opponents usually do. However, 9/10 times it is I that assigns them a clock because of their reputations for slow play. You might be aware of clocks being requested to gain an advantage - but I can assure you they aren't assigned on that basis. I have declined several requests from players seeking an advantage.

On the Sunday we had to vacate the playing room by 5.30 (sometimes a bit earlier) and three matches, starting at 10.30, 12.45 and 3.00 should finish at 5.15; and a clock on any match will ensure that we finish on time. It is a pity that the clock affected your playing but I did explain that you have as much time with it as you would have without it if you played at a reasonable rate. It is not unreasonable to expect any competent player to finish an 11 point match in 2¼ hours; this time allowance is universal and some TDs even think it too generous.

I completely accept that you may have time constraints. But if that is the case, applying a clock to just one quarter-final, for example, is a bit of a risk. Surely all main flight matches on the Sunday should be subject to clocks? Everyone would know in advance exactly where they stood, and could have no complaints. It would also give the benefit of more and more players becoming accustomed to clocks. Admittedly the problems wouldn't end there. As we know, the progressive consolation flight continued after the end of the main flight, so



there's an argument for clocks to be applied to even more matches on the last day. And if you haven't got enough clocks, then get some. This is Biba, and Biba is not supposed to be some tinpot organisation. Bite the bullet, and get as many clocks as you need. In the long run, this would be a wise investment, and you would be seen to be leading the way forward instead of just dabbling on the fringes of things.

Why is it a bit of a risk? The vast majority of players will finish well within the time allowed, the few that won't are known to me and they are the ones assigned clocks. I don't want to give out clocks to all and sundry; I would much rather see the slower players upping their pace. If I were to make clocks mandatory for all then I would expect to see a significant drop in entries. You mention the Consolation: clocks were assigned during the Consolation, and it was this that ensured it finished in the time allowed. I have six clocks and don't anticipate needing more when it is only a handful of players that merit them.

The only difference when playing with a clock is that instead of picking up your dice to conclude a move you start your opponent's clock. Most clock-virgins get to grips with the concept after about five minutes and thereafter it becomes part of the match.

Five minutes -- this is a laughable assertion. You totally underestimate the effect on us clock-virgins (although I've lost my virginity now!). I've spoken to many players about their initial experiences with clocks, and I can assure you that most have been unsettled far more than you would have us believe. Perhaps you should ask your fellow Lincoln player, Jeff Ellis, about his match at the Open with another player accustomed to playing with clocks -- your friend and mine, Stuart Mann. I think you'll find that Jeff was considerably unsettled, although I stand to be corrected.

OK, then double it to 10 minutes; in a match that goes on for two hours, ten minutes is more than enough to get to grips with hitting a button instead of picking up your dice that is the only difference between with and without clocks. However, clocks stop players wasting valuable playing time prattling about with a myriad of moves until they are eventually happy with one play - usually the obvious play and often the first one considered. Jeff Ellis requested a clock be-

cause he was playing a slow player. Jeff took a few minutes to get into hitting the button but overall it wasn't a bad experience for him, he had played with (the old) clocks before and was OK with it.

You say, "I was left feeling that staging an important match in a proper manner was a secondary consideration to you". That is unfair, the event was staged as professionally as any other in the world.

The fact is, whether you agree or not, that Brian had an advantage because of your ruling. I accept that this was not your intention, but it was a by-product of your decision. The irony of this situation is that those perceived as slow players -- whether or not that perception is correct -- gain such an advantage because they play with clocks so much that it becomes second nature to them, and they don't have to devote too many precious brain cells (and some of us don't have too many to spread around) to either the mechanics of the situation or the concept of time management.

Are the Monte Carlo world championships any different? Not too long ago the world championship was decided on a time penalty; and major tournaments around the world - including those in Monte Carlo - use them on a regular basis as a matter of course: whereas I only employ them in matches that known slow(er) players are involved. The sad truth is that clocks are here because (some) players can't play at a reasonable pace. Clocks will remain in backgammon until such time as the slower players start to catch up with their peers and show us TDs that they are no longer needed. . . . I won't be holding my breath!

I don't happen to think it's sad at all. I think clocks will become more prevalent in backgammon, and this has to be a good thing. If players genuinely are slow, they will pay the penalty. But if they do, and if clocks are applied more consistently, they will have no argument because the clocks aren't subjective. And if more of us can get comfortable playing with them, that also has to be beneficial.

So to summarise, I am not at all against clocks -- just the way they are sometimes applied. In fact I believe they are likely to be the way forward. I am determined that no Bristol player should ever need to be inconvenienced like I was, so much so that we are getting in a supply of clocks, so that people can -- on a purely voluntary basis, at first anyway -- get comfortable

with all aspects of clock play. Thanks to the generosity of certain players, we have either bought, or are about to buy, at least six clocks for general use. And I'm sure that we will be getting some more in.

I think you ought to take the lead, as befits a "national" organisation, and do the same.

I don't want to be giving out clocks to everyone. Handing out 40 clocks to the 80 Brighton entrants isn't the way forward, it's a big step backward and one that would reduce attendance levels considerably. Happily slow players are a minority and, thanks to the possibility of playing with a clock, the not-so-slow players make sure they steer well clear of them.

I hope you don't take my actions personally and decide to 'resign' over a 'ruling' that you disagree with. It clearly states in the Clock Rules, "At the discretion of the Director, clocks that allocate a set time per move and time in reserve will be issued purely as a means to complete a match within the time allowed. Opponents who suspect slow play can request a clock only for timing purposes and not to gain an advantage." All players accept these rules when they enter a Biba tournament. I have always had the greatest respect for you, both as an individual and as a backgammon organiser and TD; and I would hate that this incident should sour our relationship.

This is not personal -- this is about a specific instance. As I said before, I've been to (I estimate) 60 Biba tournaments, and this is the first time I've felt remotely hard done by, so all in all that's not a bad record on your part. I like to think I've supported Biba pretty well over the years, and I don't see that ending after one slightly unfortunate experience.

I'm pleased you aren't taking it personally.

Finally, could you explain what you mean by my "haphazard nature of some of your rulings"? What is haphazard about issuing clocks to a slow player? To date not one single ruling decision has been reversed by a committee on appeal by a 'wronged' player. I rule as honestly and as fairly as I can; even if at times my decisions (based purely on backgammon criteria) are against players I deem as friends. Roy Hollands lost on appeal and still fell out with me even though the final decision on the ruling was not of my



direct doing! I have long resigned myself to accepting that players only like the rules when they favour them.

I certainly don't doubt your honesty, please be assured of that, and haphazard

may be the wrong word. But I do believe you sometimes fall into the trap of excessive subjectivity. The whole point of having rules is to cover all the angles, to enable a TD to do his/her job as effectively as possible, with the minimum of fuss.

Obviously there are times when the unexpected occurs, and difficult decisions have to be made – that's why we will always need TDs, but it's also why rules sometimes need to be reviewed. The clock rules, in my opinion, contribute to this subjectivity by giving you *carte blanche* to impose clocks whenever you dictate. Players like Brian and Stuart have a reputation, but I wouldn't mind betting that if it were possible to time all matches, you might find that other players you might not have suspected of particularly slow play would actually come out slower in any given weekend. And if,

say, Stuart suddenly became the fastest player in Britain, I also wouldn't mind betting it would still take him several years to shake off the stigma of his reputation.

TDs need '*carte blanche*' when dealing with rule infringements or the application of them. It is impossible to have a set of rules that would cover everything; and in each situation there will always be at least one aggrieved player. A TD has to make decisions that often result in an appeal; and one TD I will not mention has even given '*rulings*' they've known were incorrect but would be righted by a committee – and that is just weak and unacceptable. I do '*time*' other players. I do it all the time; this is how I know who should get clocks! You're correct, once a slow player – always a slow player! Stuart is the only player I know who doesn't notably speed up when given a clock!

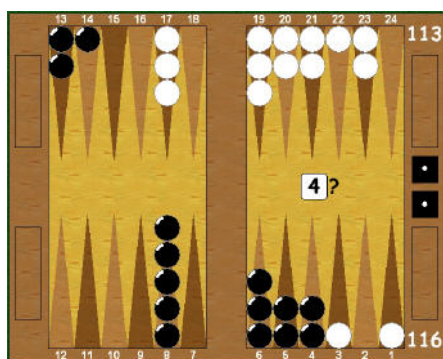
And finally: If anyone has anything new to add to this debate, please feel free to do so.

Match detailed statistics		
Player	Brian Lever	Ian Tarr
Rating	intermediate	intermediate
Overall	9.642/12.846	9.349/12.797
Errors(blunders)	25(12)	24(6)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	3.440/4.754	9.233/12.625
Errors(blunders)	6(4)	23(6)
Double errors		
Overall	6.202/8.092	0.000/0.000
Missed double	5.526/7.104	0.000/0.000
Wrong double	0.676/0.988	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	19(8)	0(0)
Take errors		
Overall	0.000/0.000	0.116/0.172
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Wrong pass	0.000/0.000	0.116/0.172
Errors(blunders)	0(0)	1(0)
Ian Tarr was 50.05%, favorite		

Competition 2007 No1. 8601-06 Answers

By Michael Crane

8601



11 Point match
Black 2 White 1
Cube action

MC: Let's start this new competition off with an entrant who seems to have got off on the wrong foot.

Cedric Lytton: Double/Pass

Black has threats and many excellent

rolls, only 52 playing not particularly well (13/16 leaves two indirect shots, but then he has a return shot at white's 3-point blot). Black's timing is better, and he commands his outer board should white run out. White does have a reasonable board and for money he would have a narrow take; but at the score the redoubled gammons, likely even against a 3-point anchor, would get black straight to the Crawford game 1-away, 10-away.

MC: Cedric fails to realise this is an easy take for white. The drop costs Cedric dearly.

Bob Young: No Double

A gammon with a four-cube would be very attractive, but this is a possibility for both players. With no race advantage, no bar-point made, ugly stack on the 8-point, and only a few market losers, the cube should be kept for possible future use. The take for white is easy, with an even

race, a stronger home-board and fly-shots with a bad roll by black e.g.65, as well as some good rolls for white, e.g. 64 (forward anchor){ if not on the bar} looks like an easy take to me.

Rodney Lighton: No Double

Race is level, position slightly favourable with white stuck behind a partial prime. Black has some threats (all doubles and 53) but I would prefer to hold onto the cube here.

MC: Bob does at least acknowledge white's easy take, and Rodney would prefer to keep the cube a little longer, but both are wrong in not doubling, but it is by a narrow margin. Our remaining entrants get it correct.

Peter Christmas: Double/Take

Black has a good double here with his back checkers out and two white checkers back. Can white take? I think just, if



black had another spare checker on the 5- or 4-point he would have do drop but with only 66, 55 and 53 opening up the gammon chances; otherwise black may hit open or just play safe and white has some reasonable chances to grab an anchor and hold the position long enough or escape a back checker or even hit a fly-shot, just enough to take the big 4-cube as the race is still close.

MC: Peter thinks white can just take which is slightly wrong.. Brian thinks the take is easier decision.

Brian Lever: Double/Take

Firstly, I think white's decision easier than black's. He has a slight racing lead before the roll, and a better board, enough to take. Black wouldn't relish the cube coming back at 8 if white can get away or hit a stray blot. Also, black doesn't have many pointing numbers and won't hit loose. But it's close, because on the downside, white's completely lost out-field control, has no anchor and may not get one soon; he could get blitzed into losing a gammon if black rolls one of his few jokers as opposed to one of his slightly more numerous "lemons".

Black should double. His market losers may be few now, but next roll white may still not have an anchor and black is likely to have greater threats.

Richard Biddle: Double/Take

It is easier first to judge that white would take in this position. There is only a slim risk of gammon and white is still well placed in a race situation with his escape route not blocked off yet. White also has a strong home board with some blot hitting equity. So on the assumption that white will take, does black want to play with the cube on 4, with the chance that it may come back on 8 if white turns the game as one would expect at least 25% of the time.

Black has an awkward board, so in this position may not be strong enough to double, however, black has many market losers that include hits and most importantly unstacking all the builders on the 8-point. Black may well be in too good a position for white to accept next time; it would be wrong to wait a roll before doubling.

MC: Brian is spot on with his comments. The slim chance of a gammon Richard mentions is a tad over 10%. Finally, the Snowman tells it as it is.

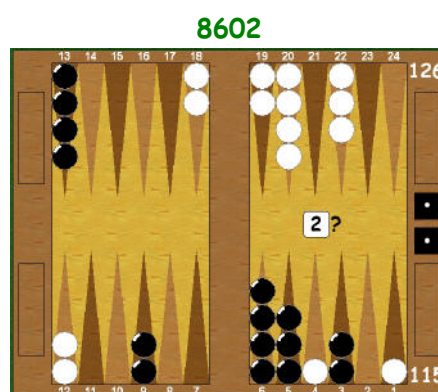
Snowie: Double/Take

An excellent set of doubling conundrums this time. Just what my neural circuits enjoy most. This first problem is right on the borderline. Black has the advantage because white still has two men trapped in black's board but white's home board is very strong. The match score is unlikely to affect the cube decisions.

The race is virtually equal. It should be apparent that white has a very easy take. Does black have enough to redouble? My first reaction was no but over the years I have learnt that when my opponent doesn't have an anchor and I have lots of builders then redoubling should certainly be considered and it is right more often than you would think.

Here most of black's numbers play very comfortably and he has a small number of crushing rolls that could lead to a gammon. My rollouts say marginal double, comfortable take.

Snowie stats 8601		
Redouble, take	0.806	
No redouble	0.804	-0.002
Redouble, pass	1.000	+0.194



11 point match
Black 7 White 1
Cube action

MC: Half the entrants get this one half right; the bit about the double.

Cedric Lytton: Double/Take

Black has nine hit-and-pointing numbers, so he must double now or risk losing his market. Unlike 8601, black hasn't many sanctuaries for his mid-point men, so his main plan will be to attack on his 4-point; but then white has 4s plus 31, 32, 22 to hit back, when his own board could turn things round; white could also get a well-timed ace-point game. This time a doubled gammon would exactly win the match but the position is volatile and the

take close.

MC: Cedric's final comment is the reason why it's a drop!

Richard Biddle: Double/Take

First thing to notice here is the score line. Black does not want to give over the cube too swiftly as white will be looser with taking the cube. However, black has some strong gammon chances and can win the match with a cube that has been shipped over. The risk is that the score will go to 7-3 or 7-5 if he loses. So with the increased gammon chances it is right to double and try and finish the match off. Does white want to put the match possibly on the line? White is just ahead in the race and has an equal board to black despite being under threat. White is more likely to take at this match score in this position than if the scores were level. I think at this match score it is probably right to take but not if the score line was closer.

MC: Richard mentions black's strong gammon chances – which should have led him to the drop.

Rodney Lighton: Double/Take

In some ways similar to the first problem, but now we have a good race lead along with some threats. Home boards are equal. White can take I think, since there are not too many threats and he may get a playable 21- or 24-point anchor game.

MC: The fact that black has very good gammon chances should stop white taking . . . as we shall learn. The remainder of the entrants got it correct.

Bob Young: Double/Drop

With more advantages, a race lead, and good market losing rolls (nine, as well as all big doubles for race advantage), as well as the match if a gammon could be achieved looks just about the right time to use the cube. White with the match at risk should be very pleased to lose the one point and play on at 3-away, 10-away, far more healthy than possible zero percent winning chances.

MC: Yep, white is very pleased to stay in the match.

Peter Christmas: Double/Drop

Here black is just shy of a 10% racing lead - more than the 8% required for a double and under the 12% rule white needs to take. But black has three builders trained at the blot on the 4-point and so has 25% chance of pointing on it and



with another three shots at the back checker; so he has 1 in 3 chance of pointing on a blot, (55 is a killer). As white is not favourite to anchor next go even if he survives this time, the gammon (match) could be on for awhile. White is trailing 7-1 so he may be tempted to take almost anything but his position is a little awkward in it is not easy to build the next point in his board without breaking the stripped mid-point and needing the 3 to anchor if he is not pointed on.

Tempting as it is for white to clutch at straws it is better to drop and live to fight another day then risk going to 9-1 or the match.

MC: Good advice in the last sentence.

Brian Lever: Double/Drop

The racing lead and the escaping of all his checkers, plus a few pointing numbers normally would add up to a double. Does it here, with the match score an influence? – white could use a few points and the opportunity to throw back at 4. I'm not so sure.

As with the last position, white has no anchor, but unlike the last position, black has more pointing numbers, only 65 as a blotting number, and a racing lead. The pointing numbers are very important – dance and white could lose a gammon and the match. Double and drop; though I'd guess the match score will tempt some takers, beware of the gammon.

MC: It is this gammon fear that Snowie latches onto, and he advocates letting the point go and staying in the match.

Snowie: Double/Drop

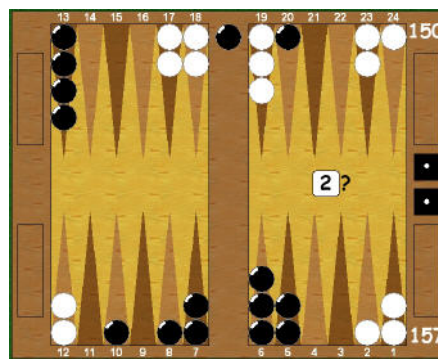
Despite trailing 7-1 white must pass black's double. Black needs exactly four points to win the match and a doubled gammon will do very nicely.

Black leads in the race, has some very powerful threats and again white does not have an anchor. Black's numbers are diversified and even on his poor rolls such as 53 he can just sit on the position and await developments, particularly as white is not favourite to anchor next turn.

Black wins a gammon a third of the time so white just has to let this one go and play from 8-1 down. Taking is a blunder.

Snowie stats 8602		
Redouble, pass	1.000	
No redouble	0.851	-0.149
Redouble, take	1.061	+0.061

8603



11 point match
Black 0 White 2
Cube action

MC: Another even split between the entrants, but this time, half of them get fewer points for not doubling in the first place.

Brian Lever: No Double

Though black has the better of things positionally, with as yet no men out of play the boards are technically of equal strength in terms of points and black is on the bar. White is also marginally ahead in the race and even a hit of his loose blot might actually benefit by recirculating it for better use. There might be gammons for black but I'd say it's too early to tell exactly how the game will go and unlikely that the next series of rolls will produce anything decisive.

Bob Young: No Double

On the bar, with a third of all rolls not good, (not hitting, anchoring or adding to the prime), most rolls with a six being poor, white would love to see the cube offered. Black should roll and see what the position looks like after the next pair of rolls.

MC: This is Brian and Bob being cautious. Black has two checkers back and could even, with a bit of luck, make an advanced anchor. If he waits a few rolls and has made the anchor he might no longer have a double.

Cedric Lytton: No Double

Black threatens to hit back with 1s, make a 4-prime with 2s or 5s, and make his golden anchor with 5s, but he can't do all these at once. If black fails to cover his 8-point, white will have 6s and 7s (or 8s from the bar) to hit there. The position is not particularly volatile, and though white's mid-point is stripped and his timing is in danger of collapsing, one of his runners might escape to avoid this, or if his ace-point blot is hit a viable backgame or holding game might develop.

MC: Surely with so much going for black it is a double? Our next entrant has grasped the situation well.

Peter Christmas: Double/Take

To double off the bar always has risks if you can dance (1/9 here) and being slightly behind in the race and in the match; but I can see the appeal. White has the blot and the advanced 2-point made and three checkers back already. For white, even if hit he will have good chances to make an advance anchor and recycle his checkers and be in the game until the end. If not hit he should still have time to bring the anchor up and be fairly even in the race so should not fear the awkwardness of his present position.

MC: The double is correct and, as Peter says, white is in the game until the end; which is the title of an excellent book by Bob Watchel and well worth reading if you fancy yourself winning ace-point endgames!

Richard Biddle: Double/Take

I think this is a much simpler decision for both sides early in the match. Black has three white checkers back with a possible fourth, so looking at gammon chances. White sees the positive side of this looking to build anchors in black's home board and play a back game. There is still plenty of play in this. I think it is a stronger take than it is a double, but the double is right as black wants to make the score level again.

MC: Good reasoning from Richard for the double and the take.

Rodney Lighton: Double/Take

Some threats here and white's position is poor with three checkers buried. Black is threatening to make a goodish prime and hit on the 24-point. White can take with plenty of opportunity to make an advanced anchor.

MC: Rodney also sees the 3-back Vs 2-back scenario and uses it to make the correct decision; the third white checker might prove useful later on.

Snowie also mentions a book in his analysis, this time by two-times world champion, Bill Robertie.

Snowie: Double/Take

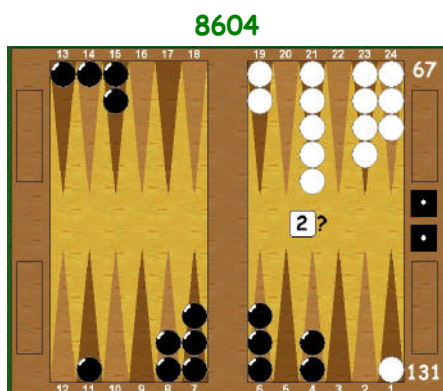
A complex position. Again the match score has little impact on the doubling decision.



The race is virtually equal and the home boards of equal strength, at least for the moment. Black's advantages lie in the facts that he has two men back to three, he is shooting at a blot and critically white's men are not well co-ordinated. If you study Bill Robertie's (not a bad player for a human) "Modern Backgammon" and his theories of connectivity you will understand how poor white's position is.

The position is volatile and by next turn white might be dropping so black must double now. Does white have enough chances to take? Surprisingly he has a comfortable take. Doubles from the bar have their risks (66, 22, 62) and white could mount his own blitz attack if things go well for him. At least this time he has an anchor so if things go badly for him he in the game until the end. Clear double and equally clear take.

Snowie stats 8603		
Redouble, take	0.764	
No redouble	0.687	-0.077
Redouble, pass	1.000	+0.236



11 point match
Black 6 White 1
Cube action

MC: Only one entrant gets this one correct! The first three back giving the cube over; but then they deem it a take – and they're wrong! Taking is a big mistake.

Peter Christmas: Double/Take

Black is way behind in the race but has almost complete control of the whole board with the white checker stranded back on the 1-point. White must be close to a pass even at 6-1 down but he does have a big racing lead and should get a few fly-shots and may get lucky. If black makes the 5-point or extends the back of the prime or white has to break the 6-point next go black has lost his market so it is a good double and a narrow take at this score before black closes the door.

MC: All white really has is a racing lead; but is it really good enough to take in this position?

Richard Biddle: Double/Take

This is another position where black has a good lead in this match and does not want to give the cube cheaply. This time gammon chances are virtually negligible so black has to consider what the straight winning chances in the game are. To win, black just needs to contain the white checker and avoid being hit. The strong spread of builders works very favourably towards this end. I am always twitchy about doubling at this match score, but I think black has just about got a double here and may well lose his market next turn. White may well lose his four-point home board next roll. White should take because by the time he does escape, he will have a speed board and all doubles will work for him. No gammon to worry about really and there is value in owning the cube at this score.

MC: Richard's reasoning for the take is based upon the assumption that white'll escape his last checker . . . but what if he doesn't – at least not until black is bearing off?

Rodney Lighton: Double/Take

White is in danger of being primed here and will have to throw a four quickly. The priming threats seem to be worth a double, White can take obviously, since if the back checker gets out he will win the race.

MC: Rodney also assumes an escape that might not materialise. Is the chance that it might happen good enough reason to take? Perhaps the answer is, not to double.

Brian Lever: No Double

I think white might quite like to get doubled here. Black has a potentially excellent position, with plenty of numbers to make either the 5-point or 9-point and still guard the outfield if white is lucky enough to leap – but it's precisely that lucky leap he ought to be wary of. White has a huge racing lead and at the moment a stronger board. His score disadvantage allows him to take more freely. Look at it this way: suppose black rolls one of his best, 21, and white rolls the same number – black now has his 5-point and a 5-prime, but white is at the edge of it, ready to escape with a lucky roll. Even that dramatic improvement for black wouldn't make the position a double, and he's far less likely to make a 5-prime this

roll than is white to step up to the 2- or 5-points. Black has to realise that potential first before he can consider a double and gives white an easy take.

MC: Is it an easy take for white? He's got one checker facing the entire board and all fifteen of black's checkers to get past!

Bob Young: No Double

Bad things go in threes, (for black), bad for the race, bad with the 5-point open, bad with white having only one checker to race around, black may make the prime this roll, but he is not favourite to do so, so roll and see what comes out. White, with such a race lead, even against a five-prime will be able to try to get to the edge of the prime, and then leap it often enough to justify a take, the chances of being gammoned are very low.

MC: Bob, did you stop to think that if white can't get to the front of the black prime his home board is going to crumble? When it does crumble it'll allow black to hit with the full knowledge that he'll have very good re-entry numbers if hit back off the bar.

Our final entrant nicely sums up the racing lead that white currently enjoys and for his trouble takes top points..

Cedric Lytton: Double/Pass

White's racing lead translates into an almost-crashed board, so his only real hope is that black will roll 63, 53 or 43 and be unable to make his 5-point, 9-point or mid-point and then white can escape with, say, 44. Otherwise black can close up and attack white's runner every time it tries to escape.

MC: Cedric identifies the crux of the position – if white can't get past all of black's checkers he's probably going to lose.

Snowie: Double/Pass

This type of position (known as a scramble) is not always well understood. Black trails by 64 pips and has a two-point home board versus white's four-point board. Can he possibly have a double?

Indeed he can and actually white's position is so poor he must drop the double. Let's see why:

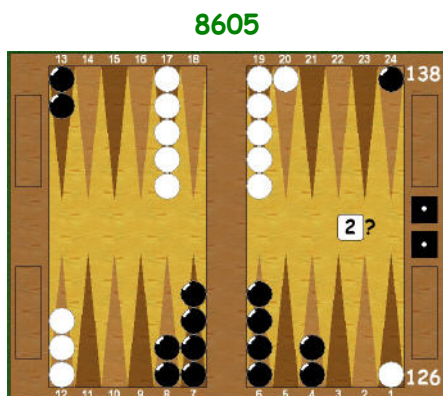
Black is threatening to make his 5-point. Once he does that white is all but dead. All fifteen of his men are working well together (the principle of connectivity again) and he can flood the outfield



with builders and/or make the 9-point. On white's next roll his board will begin to self-destruct and once that happens black can take more risks in attacking white's rear checker should that become necessary.

Occasionally white will escape with a lucky hit but it doesn't happen often enough for him to take black's double. Black wins 80% of the time so double/pass is the correct cube action.

Snowie stats 8604		
Redouble, pass	1.000	
No redouble	0.865	0.135
Redouble, take	1.163	+0.163



11 point match
Black 1 White 2
Cube action

MC: From being the only one to get it correct last time, Cedric is once again out on his own . . . but not in a good way!

Cedric Lytton: Double/Take

At this early stage in the match the score matters little. Black has the better position with his broken 4-point prime, he is ahead in the race, and has threats to hit 24/20*, to make his golden point, and to start a blitz while white has no board – all three PRATs in his favour.

On the other hand, his position is a little inflexible with loaded 6- and 7-points and stripped mid-point, and he is not actually favourite to carry out any of his threats. Even if white does end up defending an ace-point game, the slender nature of black's advantages convert the PRATs pass into a narrow take.

MC: According to Snowie only the biggest optimist would see this as a take! Cedric doesn't appear to take into consideration how poor white's position actually is. Everyone else does:

Bob Young: Double/Drop

Lots of things going for black here, fours to hit, better home board, chances to make a serious prime, while white has not developed anything yet, suggests to me a natural time to double, and with nothing good for white, he may get trapped, may get hit, may lose the race that he is already behind in, suggests to give in on this one and start the next game at evens.

Peter Christmas: Double/Drop

Black again just shy of a 10% lead in the race but also has the better board, the threat of sending another checker back (15 hitting numbers) while escaping his last checker. Also all black's doubles play well and big doubles would start a blitz and running the back checker leaves white needing to hit and cover to keep some chances going. White has no structural faults but needs to unstack and make something in his home board very quickly. Although it is early in the game and the match, I could be persuaded if my partner in a doubles wanted to take, but here I think the correct decision is a narrow drop go to 2-2 and move on to the next game.

MC: I hope I meet you (again) in the doubles, Peter – I need the money ☺

Brian Lever: Double/Drop

By contrast, black has a good double here – racing lead, better board, shooting at blots. Every number does something, whether hitting a blot or making an inside point. If he doesn't double, there are some sequences, particularly the 15 hits on the white 5-point which will make him too good to double next roll. White's only immediate hope is survival. Best to give this up or face serious risk of losing a gammon.

Richard Biddle: Double/Drop

In pure backgammon terms, black has almost a perfect position early in the game, so it would be correct to double. Black is ahead in the race with a promising board and a blot hitting threat. All three cube decision-making criteria are met. I think white would dearly love to take this as it is still so early in the game and it does not feel natural to drop early doubles. However, I notice all my previous answers have been takes, so I figure I can afford one drop. Gammon chances are quite high, as white can be closed out and still has many crossovers to bring all his checkers home.

MC: Blimey! Richard's decision to drop is based upon the fact he's not dropped a

cube yet. Very scientific!

Rodney Lighton: Double/Drop

Black has everything in his favour here. Race is better, position is much better, with more of a home board and the bar-point. Threats to hit another checker and/or extend the prime make this a clear double/drop.

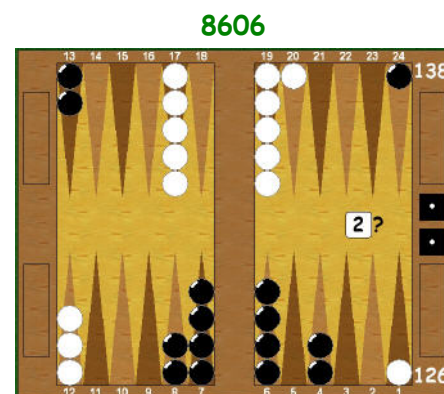
MC: Succinct and to the point. Rodney's style is, why use 25 lines when you can say it all in half a dozen?

Snowie: Double/Drop

The easiest problem in the set. This is an absolute rock-crusher of a double. Black leads in the three key elements of doubling: the race, position and threat.

Only the biggest optimist could find an excuse to take this as white and even he would be giving up 0.34 points of equity – a triple blunder! White loses a lot of gammons because of his lack of an anchor (a recurring theme in these positions). Just give this up and go on to the next game.

Snowie stats 8605		
Redouble, pass	1.000	
No redouble	0.987	-0.013
Redouble, take	1.346	+0.346



11 point match
Black 1 White 6
Cube action

MC: Our last position has Bob out all on his own.

Bob Young: Double/Drop

This is probably too good except for the fact that black has only a one-point board, and if he tries to cover the blot in his home-board, he will have two checkers out of play early in the game. So cash now, as white would be happy to concede, rather than risk a four-pointer with his match advantage. Even a sniff of a



gammon would encourage white to drop immediately.

MC: Why should white drop immediately? There's a lot of play in this game still. It's the drop that lets Bob down and relegates him to the lowest points. Coming 2nd are the next pair.

Cedric Lytton: No Double

Black is a massive favourite to hit a second and even a third white man, but black has no board and, barring a useful double like 22 or 44, won't be making one quickly. White has plenty of defensive prospects and has an easy take. Finally, at the score each point is worth more in match equity to white than to black, so the close double for money becomes a no-double here, even though a doubled gammon would help black to catch up.

MC: If white is such a massive favourite and white has an easy take why not double? It seems as if Cedric is talking himself out of the correct solution!

Peter Christmas: No Double

When you are down 1-6 you can look to double early and with a checker on the bar, double shot at the blot on the 5-point or a double hit with 62 and 64 and 44 there are some serious threats. But there is the black blot on the 1-point and white should have plenty of time to anchor and regroup. Does black have any market losers that mean white won't take next roll? Maybe a couple, but if black's best is followed by white's worst, it would be a point in the bag. So I would be tempted to wait another roll to make the hit(s) or make a home board point at least before shipping the cube over.

MC: The danger of waiting is that you might well roll a market loser. The next three get it right.

Richard Biddle: Double/Take

This time white is well ahead in the match and black needs to think about doubling early in order to get back on level terms. Black should think about doubling if there is any sniff of a gammon. Both have very loose positions however, black is well placed to start a blitz, so it would definitely be right to double before the blitz has started and the market losers have happened. Black's position being so loose, means that white should be able to comfortably take this; he still has many winning chances in this game and the opportunity to return the cube on 4.

MC: Good thinking.

Rodney Lighton: Double/Take

Black has loads of threats here, fours and twos hit, five and sixes cover the blot on the 1-point. Other rolls make points in black's home board. I think white can take, there is plenty of counter play in this position.

MC: As Rodney points out, this game has a long way to go.

Brian Lever: Double/Take

These positions can be very deceptive. A 1-point board and with a blot in it at that may not look like a double but it's got "blitz" written all over it. The most likely scenario from black's next roll is a 2nd white checker on the bar – but covering the loose black checker or taking away white's blot in black's board are not usually part of that scenario. Result – on white's next roll he could well have an anchor or hit black back on his 1-point, largely neutralising black's initial advantage. But there are some lurking jokers (double 4s and 6s amongst them) and the match score means that the cube won't often be coming back at 4. In purely unemotional, backgammon terms, it's probably no double & take and that's what I'd expect Snowie to say. – but in practical, human, emotional terms, there will be many who as black will double at this score and hope to get lucky with a gammon. So double. White must of course take. His plays are much easier than black's at least to start with – after all he'll just be bringing men in off the bar. Black will have all the thinking to do, and may over-play his moves in the effort to get an almost match-levelling gammon. He'll need to be lucky to succeed in this. Here is a problem where I'm pretty sure of the right answer but am going with the wrong one!

MC: Good job you chose the 'wrong' one, Brian. I thought for a moment you were going to talk yourself out of it. And why do you think Snowie is unemotional? I'll have you know he (or is it she?) can be very emotional sometimes . . . it's due to all that silicone!

Snowie: Double/Take

Black has quite a number of threats here: he is attacking the blot on white's 5-point, he has a potential blitz and he could also improve his position by making his bar-point.

Unfortunately for him he can't do them all at once and his position is relatively

undeveloped as the game is only a few moves old. White has been caught cold but there is nothing fundamentally wrong with his position and one good roll could see him significantly improve it.

The position is volatile and white's lack of anchor (where have I heard that before?) means that occasionally he will get blitzed. In a money game black should take a roll before doubling but for the first time in this set of problems the match score comes into play.

Trailing 6-1 black can't afford to miss his market – he needs to win 2-points and 4-points games to catch up, not just single games. That turns a money no double into a match score double. White has a trivial take.

Snowie stats 8601		
Double, take	0.688	
No double	0.567	-0.111
Double, pass	1.000	+0.312

Well, that's the end of the first doubling competition and I am pleased with the way it's gone. Now, to the marking. I have awarded top marks to the correct solution as agreed by Snowie.

Subsequent points have been awarded based upon the equity of the decision made. Some might not fully agree with this method but it does look to me to be the fairest. I trust that all entrants don't resort to using any of the bots to assist them in their decision making.

So, top marks this time go to Brian Lever with an amazing 51 points, well done, Brian. Close behind him is Peter Christmas, just two points short of Brian. It looks as if the entire competition is going to be a close one. The next set of positions can be found on page 23.

Name	Pts
Brian Lever	51
Peter Christmas	49
Richard Biddle	47
Rodney Lighton	45
Bob Young	41
Cedric Lytton	30

The full stats are on the following page



Name	8801	8802	8803	8804	8805	8806	Tot
Brian Lever	Double/Take	Double/Drop	No Double	No Double	Double/Drop	Double/Take	51
Peter Christmas	Double/Take	Double/Drop	Double/Take	Double/Take	Double/Drop	No Double	49
Richard Biddle	Double/Take	Double/Take	Double/Take	Double/Take	Double/Drop	Double/Take	47
Rodney Lighton	No Double	Double/Take	Double/Take	Double/Take	Double/Drop	Double/Take	45
Bob Young	No Double	Double/Drop	No Double	No Double	Double/Drop	Double/Drop	41
Cedric Lytton	Double/Drop	Double/Take	No Double	Double/Drop	Double/Take	No Double	30

	Action	Score
8601	Double/Take	10
	No Double	8
	Double/Drop	3
8602	Double/Drop	10
	No Double	5
	Double/Take	4
8603	Double/Take	10
	No Double	6
	Double/Drop	2
8604	Double/Drop	10
	No Double	5
	Double/Take	3
8605	Double/Drop	10
	No Double	7
	Double/Take	1
8606	Double/Take	10
	No Double	6
	Double/Drop	2

Manchester One-Day Tournament

Report by Rodney Lighton, Organiser

I would have described this as the Manchester International One Day, but our two international entrants failed to turn up, preferring instead to stay in the the South of France rather than experience Manchester's famous rain (the first for several weeks). Still, as Tony Fawcett pointed out, we had several folk from Yorkshire playing, so it was practically an international event. A day of food, drink and backgammon was enjoyed by the participants.

48 entrants sat down to play five rounds of five point matches (Swiss format) to qualify 16 for the main final and 32 for the consolation final.

This year we had our first ever repeat winner in five years of running the event, when Simon Jones of Liverpool reprised his 2004 win, beating David Wallbank of Preston in the final.

In the consolation Manchester's Len Nixey was surprised to beat Birmingham's David Motley in the final - not the result, but the fact that it was the final. Len thought he had only reached the semi-final at that point!

The last chance three point event was a 64 entrant knock out with lots of buy backs. This meant that it was the most lucrative event of the day and the most exhausting, finishing 11 hours after we had started in the morning. Liverpool's Adrian Jones triumphed over Manchester's American import Jon Williams in an exciting match. ▶

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Main
David Wallbank & Simon K Jones



Consolation
Dave Motley & Len Nixey



Last Chance
Adrian Jones & Jon Williams



1-Pointer
Dave Motley & Rodney Lighton



Ellie Lighton preparing to throw six doubles in seven rolls to win a forlorn race against British Open champion Brian Lever



Lorraine Lighton's wonderful buffet lunch

Full results and Grand Prix on page 27.

Competition 2007 No2. 8801-06 Positions

By Michael Crane

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

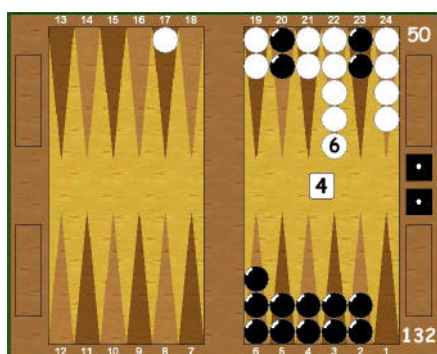
- The winner will win half price Saturday accommodation at any one tournament of their choice.
- The member with the highest points total at the end of the year will win £75.

Entries to be in by August 15th. 2007 - Answers published 10 September, Bibafax 90.

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

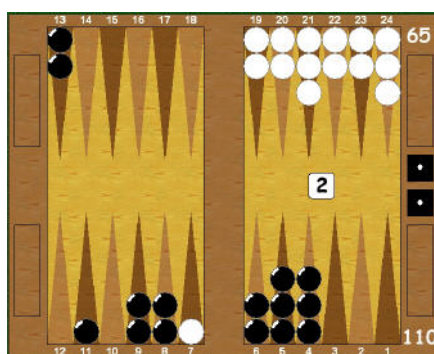
We continue to concentrate on the doubling cube; and the points awarded will not be based on the number of votes each position gets, as in the past, but on the correct solution as decided by our silicone pal, Snowie. I am going to trust all entrants not to use any artificial aids in coming to their decisions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

8801



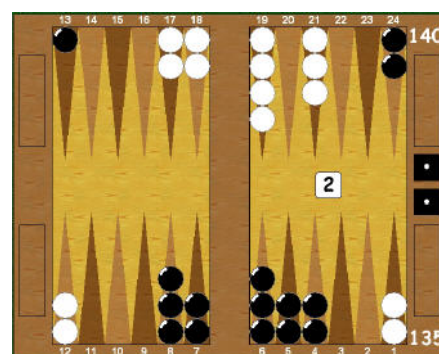
11 point match
Black 1 White 1
Cube action

8803



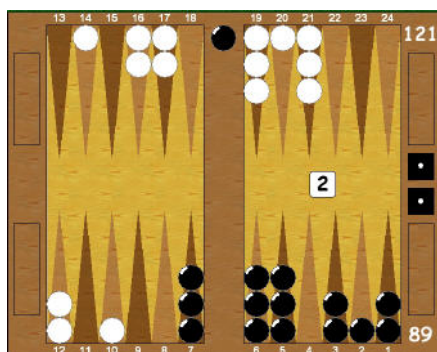
11 point match
Black 1 White 5
Cube action

8805



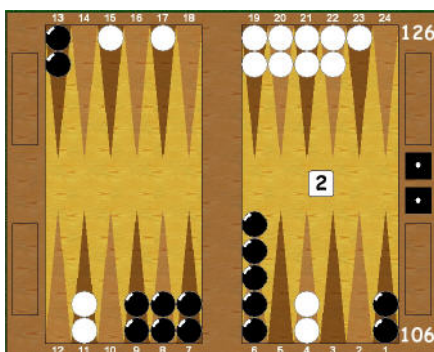
11 point match
Black 2 White 7
Cube action

8802



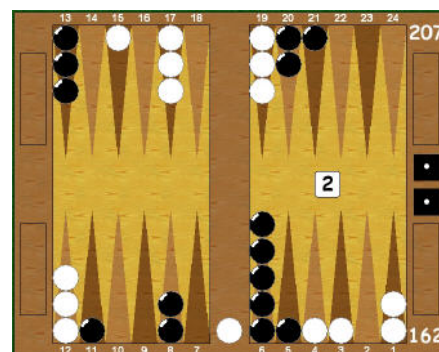
11 point match
Black 5 White 1
Cube action

8804



11 point match
Black 4 White 1
Cube action

8806



11 point match
Black 5 White 1
Cube action

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

Birmingham - Dave Motley - 0121 476 4099 - davemotley@blueyonder.co.uk - Monday.
Brighton - <http://eiloart.com/bbc/> - Tuesday 8pm until closing.
Bristol - Ian Tarr 0117-9756349 brigsammon@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 07774 512 902 - 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

- 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

Local Clubs

Forthcoming Events

Where - Who - When

June 2/3, XcitingGames Hilton Trophy:

Once again, we're back to knockouts and as usual this one features the four established elements of all Biba KOs: Main, Consolation, Last Chance & The Triangle; plus extras to be announced over the weekend.



June 30/1 July, Keren Di Bona Memorial Trophy:

This is the warm-up for the Monte Carlo World Championship (unofficially) and features the usual elements: Main, Consolation, Last Chance & The Bona of Contention. So, if you're going to Monte, get some practice in here . . . and if your not going to Monte, then this is the next best thing!

July 28/29, 12th Liverpool Open:

If this tournament isn't on your list to enter, change your mind and get there, you won't be disappointed. Main Tournament, Consolation, Last Chance, One Point Shoot-Out, Sweeps, Cash Prizes, Bar. Huge free buffet. What more could you ask for?

August 11/12, SAC Trophy:

The third of our four Swiss format events and another UK Finals Qualifier. If you like playing 6 x 11 point matches over the weekend, then this is the event for you. Swiss events offer great opportunities to rack up championship points, Grand Prix and Ranking.



Biba is pleased to announce a change of venue for 2008. The January, Bright 'n' Breezy tournament will be held at Brighton's oldest and most established hotel, the Paramount, Old Ship.



For a world famous pier, glorious beaches and a great promenade, you've definitely going to the right spot. The Paramount Old Ship Hotel is the most historic place in town to stay, and in a fabulous location for getting to all the local attractions, like the Royal Pavilion and its distinctive Indian architecture. The designer boutiques and shops in the Lanes area are also great for picking up presents, so non-playing partners won't get bored while you're playing backgammon!

For the remainder of the year we return to the Paramount, Daventry Hotel. The hotel has undergone extensive refurbishment since our last visit, and over £2,000,000 has been spent to turn it into a superb venue.



Situated just off the M1 and close to the M40. It's spacious, modern and friendly and is well-situated for getting to Silverstone, Rockingham Speedway, and

many stately homes. Surrounded by quaint, pretty villages, non-playing partners will find plenty to occupy themselves while you play backgammon.

As part of our deal with Paramount Daventry, Biba has negotiated complimentary wi-fi in the playing rooms, plus the welcome return of the weekend prize for the Friday evening. In 2008, Friday nights will become 'must attend' nights: The Friday 500, plus the weekend free for the 500 winner!

The good deal continues. Accommodation at both hotels has been kept at the 2007 rate.

The rates for Dinner, Bed & Breakfast are:

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

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

(booking details will be in the next issue and online shortly)

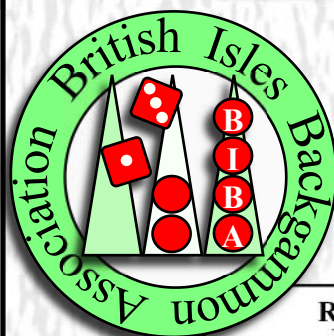


British Isles Backgammon Association
Paramount Hotels

Bringing You Backgammon



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

Jun 02-03	Hilton Trophy	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Jun 30-Jul 01	Keren Di Bona Memorial	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Jul 28-29	12 th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 11-12	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Aug ??	12 th Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	-	tba	Swiss
Sep 01-02	Backpacker Trophy	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct 06-07	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Coventry	Knockout
Oct 20/21	15 th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 03-04	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Coventry	Swiss
Dec 01-02	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	Coventry	Double KO

2008 Backgammon Calendar

Jan 11-13	Bright 'n' Breezy	GP	UK	Brighton	Knockout
Jan ??	6 th Cotswold Tournament	GP	-	Nr. Stroud	Knockout
Feb 1-3	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss
Mar 7-9	Slattery Scottish Open	GP	UK	Daventry	Knockout
Mar 31-Apr 01	British Open	GP	UK	Daventry	Knockout
Apr ??	Manchester 1-Day	GP	-	Manchester	Combination
May 3/4	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss
Jun 7/8	Hilton Trophy	GP	-	Daventry	Knockout
Jul 5/6	Keren Di Bona Memorial	GP	-	Daventry	Knockout
Jul ??	13 th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool	Combination
Aug 2/3	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss
Aug ??	12 th Mind Sports Olympiad	GP	-	tba	Swiss
Sep 6/7	Backpacker Trophy	GP	-	Daventry	Knockout
Oct 4/5	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Daventry	Knockout
Oct ??	16 th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin	Combination
Nov 1/2	Townharbour Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry	Swiss
Dec 6/7	Gilbertson UK Finals	-	-	Daventry	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.

County Cups Trophy

Report by Michael Crane

Main (12/24)

When there's just a few entries, Swiss formats offer the best opportunities to win the tournament, it is possible to lose one round and still come out the champ. This was the case in the 6th Round of the Main. We had one player on 5/5, Nicky Check and three on 4/5. Rachel Rhodes and Dorothy Lee were drawn together, and David Startin was drawn against Nicky.

In the Nicky vs David match it was David that went into the lead and for a time it looked as if he was going to pull it off; he led 6-1 before Nicky began getting a few points of his own. David took it to 9-5 and it was there that he remained. It went to DMP (a double was offered at 2-away, 2-away) and it went Nicky's way, leaving David (on tie-breaks) in 3rd position.

In the Dorothy vs Rachel match, Dorothy, trailing Crawford-8 left an unforced blot on her 4-point during her bearoff with Rachel on the bar. Dorothy asked, rhetorically, "Will you roll a four, now or not?" The answer was, Yes! Rachel rolled the four, and prevailed to take 2nd place.

Consolation (12/24)

Ever since its first entry into the Swiss format, the Consolation has proved a great incentive to carry on playing even though the Main cannot be won. Three players were on 2/2 and the pairings of Peter Christmas vs Phil Tutching and Vicky Chandler vs Fak Laight (a 1/2 elevated to play Vicky) returned two on 3/3: Peter and Vicky. On the tie-break (average ranking score of opponents) it

was Peter who came 1st and Vicky the Runner-up.

Friday 500 (8)

With only eight entries the least amount of points awarded was six; which pleased those that went out in the 1st Round! Richard Biddle made it into the final after he finished off the directing staff of myself and then Caroline Stafford. In the final he met - and was stopped by - Gerry Enslin. Richard's wins put him straight into the Last 16 @ 16th (he'll need to better that if he wants to play for the £500 in December); and Gerry moved into a safer 7th place. There's still six more to come and no one's position is safe; not even Mardi at the top.

Team (7)

For a change we played a Team event (an invention of Mike Main); wherein all the entrants are divided into two teams and they battle it out in a 5-point match. The winning team is then split into two teams and so on. It was my pleasure, aided by team-mate, Richard Biddle, in beating Fak Laight in the 'semi'; and I took even greater pleasure in beating Richard in the final - my revenge for Friday night!



Main: Nicky & Rachel



Consolation: Peter & Vicky

Finally

I suppose you're thinking I've forgotten the poker; well I haven't. There wasn't any. No one wanted to play. Obviously it's not the same without the Gilbertsons and Wiggers! The County Cups was a smaller entry than I had anticipated but that was a good thing for those that did enter - it made it a little bit easier to win a place in the UK Finals, and Nicky Check is grateful to those that didn't turn out.

Friday 500 Positions, May 2007

34 Mardi Ohannessian	12 Ray Tannen	4 Mike Greenleaf	2 Tim Line
32 Ed Turner	12 Richard Biddle	2 Adrian Jones	2 Tim Mooring
29 Giorgio Castellano	9 Matthew Franklin	2 Ann Pocknell	2 Tony Lee
21 Jerry Limb	9 Chris Gibbins	2 Cedric Lytton	2 Tony Walters
20 Paul Watts	9 Miles Farren	2 Chris Ternel	2 Jonathan Powell
19 Rosey Bensley	9 Liz Perry	2 David Hale	2 Eamon Keogh
19 Gerry Enslin	8 Peter Christmas	2 Fanika Petkovska	2 Mark Dixon
18 Caroline Stafford	8 Brian Lever	2 Luke Christmas	2 Sean Casey
16 David Nathan	6 Stuart Mann	2 Michel Lamote	2 Graham Powell
14 Paul Learmount	6 Myke Wignall	2 Paul Van Dijke	2 Martin Barkwill
14 Jeff Barber	6 Paul Gilbertson	2 Peter Bennet	2 Felix Vink
13 John Slattery	6 Nicky Check	2 Rachel Rhodes	2 Ramsey Jamil
12 Rogier Van Gemert	6 Brendan Burgess	2 Ron Havenhand	2 Mark Heidenfeld
12 Paul Christmas	6 Anderson Whamond	2 Shino Kazuhiro	

Tournament Results

XcitingGames British Open, 31 March & 1 April, 2007

Main (64)

1	Brian Lever
2	Ian Tarr
3&4	Gerry Enslin
3&4	Dave Motley
5to8	Lawrence Powell
5to8	Paul Christmas
5to8	Eamon Keogh
5to8	Alan Greenwood

Last Chance (64)

1	Giorgio Castellano
2	Stephen Drake
3&4	Tony Lee
3&4	Tim Line
5to8	Adrian Jones
5to8	Simon Morecroft
5to8	Dorothy Lee
5to8	Ian Shaw

Friday 500 (22)

1	Ed Turner
2	Ray Tannen
3&4	Miles Farren
3&4	Liz Perry
5to8	Brian Lever
5to8	Brendan Burgess
5to8	Anderson Whamond
5to8	Giorgio Castellano

Poker (20)

1	Mark Dixon
2	Paul Watts
3	Myke Wignall

Doubles (4)

1	A Cake of Cheese
2	Blind Squirrels

£50 Jackpot (8)

Joint 1st Mardi Ohannessian
& Ramsey Jamil

Grand Prix @ British Open ...

24.77	Brian Lever
18.58	Ian Tarr
18.57	John Slattery
13.42	Dave Motley
13.42	Gerry Enslin
13.4	Giorgio Castellano
9.29	Alan Greenwood
9.29	Paul Christmas
9.29	Lawrence Powell
9.29	Eamon Keogh
9.28	Tom Duggan
9.27	Stephen Drake
6.19	Grahame Powell
6.19	Ray Tannen
6.19	Jeff Barber
6.19	Martin Barkwill
6.19	Stavros Elia
6.19	Tony Fawcett
6.19	Anderson Whamond
6.19	Dorothy Lee

6.18	Jeff Ellis
6.18	Mark Dixon
6.18	Paul Gilbertson
6.18	Mark Heidenfeld
6.17	Tony Lee
6.17	Tim Line
4.13	Brendan Burgess
4.13	Peter Christmas
4.13	Tim Mooring
4.13	Mardi Ohannessian
4.13	Stuart Mann
4.13	Rosey Bensley
4.13	Liz Perry
4.13	Edwin Turner
4.13	Ramsay Jamil
4.13	David Startin
4.13	Arthur Wright
4.13	Philip Virschjager
4.13	Phil Tutchings
4.12	Kevin White
4.12	Sean Casey

4.12	David Nathan
4.12	Chris Ternel
4.12	Myke Wignall
4.11	Ian Shaw
4.11	Adrian Jones
4.10	Rachel Rhodes
2.58	Paul Barwick
2.58	Peter Chan
2.58	Nicky Check
2.58	Felix Vink
2.58	Miles Farren
2.57	Steve Hallet
2.57	Peter Bennet
2.57	Paul Watts
2.57	Simon Morecroft
2.57	Martin Hemming
2.06	Lionel Mann
2.06	Uldis Lapikens
2.06	Alison Lee
2.06	Paul Learmount

Manchester 1-Day, 22 April, 2007

Main (16/48)

1	Simon Jones
2	David Wallbank
3&4	Richard Johnson
3&4	Peter Snape

Consolation (32)

1	Len Nixey
2	David Motley
3&4	Tim Brown
3&4	Steve Grundy

Last Chance (64)

1	Adrian Jones
2	Jon Williams
3&4	Ralph Eskinazi
3&4	Brian Lever

Intermediate Prize Winners

Dorothy Lee, Geraldine Mitchell
Kevin Martin

Grand Prix @ Manchester ...

13.40	Simon K Jones
9.27	David Wallbank
9.26	Adrian Jones
6.17	Dave Motley
6.17	Peter Snape
4.11	Dorothy Lee
4.11	Ian Shimwell
4.11	Paul Barwick
4.11	Tim Brown
4.10	Brian Lever
4.10	Ralph Eskinazi

2.57	Carl Dell
2.57	Kevin Stebbing
2.57	Peter Chan
2.57	Tony Fawcett
2.57	Uldis Lapikens
2.56	George Hall
2.06	Alan Greenwood
2.06	Angela Dell
2.06	Colin Laight
2.05	Rodney Lighton
1.55	Ron Havenhand

XcitingGames County Cups Trophy, 5 & 6 May, 2007

Main (12/24)

1	Nicky Check	6	24.77
2	Rachel Rhodes	5	13.42
3	David Startin	4	9.29
4	Chris Ternel	4	9.29
5	Dorothy Lee	4	9.29
6	David Nathan	4	9.29
7	Peter Chan	4	9.29
8	David Motley	3	6.19
9	Adrian Jones	3	6.19
10	Gerry Enslin	3	6.19
11	Ramsay Jamil	3	6.19
12	Ann Pocknell	2	4.13

Consolation (12/24)

1	Peter Christmas	3	4	9.29
2	Vicky Chandler	3	4	9.29
3	Phil Tutchings	2	3	6.19
4	Uldis Lapikens	2	3	6.19
5	Jeff Barber	2	3	6.19
5	Richard Biddle	2	3	6.19
7	Giorgio Castellano	1	2	4.13
8	Fak Laight	1	1	2.58
9	Rodney Lighton	1	2	4.13
10	Mardi Ohannessian	1	1	2.58
11	Mervyn Bleach	0	0	0.00
12	Ron Havenhand	0	1	2.58

Friday 500 (8)

1	Gerry Enslin
2	Richard Biddle
3&4	Caroline Stafford
3&4	Mardi Ohannessian
5to8	Giorgio Castellano
5to8	Michael Crane
5to8	Sharen Crane
5to8	Jeff Barber

Team (7)

1	Michael Crane
2	Richard Biddle
3	Fak Laight

Grand Prix Championship May 2007

71.15	Adrian Jones	16.00	Arthur Wright	6.19	Wayne Felton
55.71	Giorgio Castellano	15.98	Fanika Petkovska	6.19	Martin Hemming
49.00	Uldis Lapikens	15.47	Jon Samuel	6.19	George Miltiadou
48.46	John Slattery	15.47	Vicky Chandler	6.19	Anderson Whamond
41.79	Nicky Check	15.44	Mark Heidenfeld	6.18	Roland Herrera
41.26	Rachel Rhodes	14.95	Martin Barkwill	6.17	Peter Snape
39.22	Gerry Enslin	14.94	Jeff Ellis	4.13	Brendan Burgess
38.13	Brian Lever	14.44	Philip Virschjager	4.13	Arthur Musgrove
36.13	Stuart Mann	14.43	Grahame Powell	4.13	Raymond Kershaw
36.10	David Motley	13.93	Fak Laight	4.13	Liz Perry
35.07	Paul Gilbertson	13.42	Sue Keeble	4.13	Cedric Lytton
35.06	Chris Ternel	13.42	Chris Gibbins	4.13	Jo Curl
34.04	Jeff Barber	13.41	Bob Bruce	4.13	Vicky Gilbert
33.02	Peter Christmas	13.41	Paul Van Dijke	4.13	John Ingamells
31.99	Mike Heard	13.40	Simon K Jones	4.13	Jonathan Powell
30.96	Paul Christmas	13.39	Ralph Eskinazi	4.13	Nick Valley
30.44	Peter Chan	12.38	Mick Butterfield	4.13	Karolina Michalak
28.90	John Hurst	12.37	Andy Bell	4.13	Chris Johnson
28.90	Raj Jansari	12.36	Ian Davidson	4.12	Neil Webb
28.89	David Nathan	11.86	Jon Barnes	4.12	Sean Casey
28.37	Tony Fawcett	11.35	Alan Greenwood	4.12	Julian Minwalla
27.32	Simon Morecroft	10.79	Paul Barwick	4.12	Pat O'Connor
25.80	Rosey Bensley	10.32	Andrew Sarjeant	4.12	Rogier Van Gemert
25.29	Julian Fetterlein	10.32	Ramsay Jamil	4.11	Tim Wilkins
24.77	Richard Biddle	10.31	Kevin White	4.11	Ian Shimwell
24.22	Paul Watts	10.31	Mark Dixon	4.11	Ian Shaw
23.73	Ann Pocknell	9.29	John Broomfield	2.58	Kamal Verma
23.59	Rodney Lighton	9.29	Nigel Merrigan	2.58	Caroline Stafford
23.21	Peter Bennet	9.29	Barry McAdam	2.58	Felix Vink
22.71	Ian Tarr	9.29	Blaine Buchanan	2.58	Geoff Conn
22.70	Chris Bray	9.29	Simonetta Barone	2.58	David Fall
22.69	Stephen Drake	9.27	David Wallbank	2.58	Mike Bailey
22.16	Dorothy Lee	8.77	Mike Greenleaf	2.58	Tony Walters
21.68	Edwin Turner	8.74	Paul Learmount	2.58	Ray Fard
21.67	Lawrence Powell	8.24	Mick Vacarey	2.58	Michel Lamote
19.60	Myke Wignall	8.23	Mike Main	2.58	George Hall
19.60	Neil Davidson	6.71	Ron Havenhand	2.58	Michelle Fisher
19.09	Mardi Ohannessian	6.70	Steve Bak	2.58	Margo De Santis
18.58	Eamon Keogh	6.69	Tim Brown	2.57	Steve Hallet
18.57	Phil Tutchings	6.19	Mike Grabsky	2.57	Carl Dell
18.55	Tom Duggan	6.19	Matthew Fisher	2.57	Kevin Stebbing
18.52	Tim Line	6.19	Bob Young	2.56	Cliff Connick
18.04	Tony Lee	6.19	Malcolm Robertson	2.56	Geoff Hall
17.55	Tim Mooring	6.19	David Hale	2.06	Lionel Mann
17.55	David Startin	6.19	Stavros Elia	2.06	Angela Dell
17.02	Miles Farren	6.19	Jeremy Limb	2.06	David Horner
16.51	Ray Tannen	6.19	Alison Lee	2.06	Matthew Franklin

Ranking Championship May 2007

played / points / player

14	2119.29	Adrian Jones	7	1437.57	Steve Bak	2	1619.00	Brendan Burgess
14	2027.43	Gerry Enslin	7	1106.57	Paul Barwick	2	1615.00	John Ingamells
14	1913.43	Peter Christmas	6	2089.33	John Hurst	2	1608.00	Karolina Michalak
14	1839.57	David Motley	6	1962.17	Ian Tarr	2	1576.00	Cedric Lytton
14	1831.00	Rachel Rhodes	6	1932.83	Ray Tannen	2	1512.00	Neil Webb
14	1801.86	Peter Chan	6	1711.83	Philip Virschjager	2	1503.00	Arthur Musgrove
14	1799.29	David Nathan	6	1636.67	Martin Hemming	2	1501.00	Raj Jansari
14	1771.93	Giorgio Castellano	6	1633.50	Bob Young	2	1360.50	Liz Perry
14	1658.21	Uldis Lapikens	6	1595.67	Matthew Fisher	2	1274.50	Fanika Petkovska
14	1643.00	Phil Tutchings	6	1575.83	Richard Biddle	2	1025.50	Mark Heidenfeld
14	1609.36	Jeff Barber	6	1285.83	Fak Laight	2	973.00	Mike Greenleaf
14	1538.57	Chris Ternel	6	1103.17	Mervyn Bleach	1	1493.00	Margo De Santis
14	1470.07	Mardi Ohannessian	5	2038.00	Chris Gibbins	1	1396.00	Ian Shaw
13	1709.92	Paul Christmas	5	1706.00	Tony Lee	1	1389.00	Rutger Beijderwellen
13	1703.15	Paul Gilbertson	5	1683.80	Jon Samuel	1	1380.00	Tim Brown
13	1431.92	Rodney Lighton	5	1666.80	Tom Duggan	1	1336.00	Tony Walters
13	1365.23	Ron Havenhand	5	1256.20	George Hall	1	1315.00	Rogier Van Gemert
12	1825.08	Ed Turner	4	1897.25	Alan Greenwood	1	1274.00	Crispin Duke
12	1797.75	Julian Fetterlein	4	1894.00	Simonetta Herrera	1	1267.00	Roland Herrera
12	1679.17	Simon Morecroft	4	1804.50	Sue Keeble	1	1266.00	Kevin White
12	1550.00	Rosey Bensley	4	1678.50	Grahame Powell	1	1256.00	Paul Van Dijke
11	1815.09	Tony Fawcett	4	1664.50	Jerry Limb	1	1249.00	Cliff Connick
11	1738.82	John Slattery	4	1301.75	Miles Farren	1	1240.00	Miles Ilott
11	1510.18	Peter Bennet	3	2127.67	George Miltiadou	1	1226.00	Lionel Mann
10	1867.30	Nicky Check	3	1956.67	Stavros Elia	1	1209.00	Michel Lamote
10	1748.90	Tim Mooring	3	1906.00	David Hale	1	1208.00	Felix Vink
9	1926.11	Dorothy Lee	3	1854.67	Mick Butterfield	1	1200.00	Shino Kazuhiro
9	1612.00	Stephen Drake	3	1845.33	Mike Grabsky	1	1196.00	Matthew Franklin
9	1564.00	Paul Watts	3	1841.00	Wayne Felton	1	1189.00	Michelle Fisher
9	1442.11	Myke Wignall	3	1811.33	Andy Bell	1	1138.00	Sean Casey
8	1881.13	Stuart Mann	3	1735.33	Anderson Whamond	1	1122.00	Steve Hallett
8	1867.88	Brian Lever	3	1730.67	Martin Barkwill	1	1117.00	Luke Christmas
8	1808.75	David Startin	3	1663.33	Andrew Sarjeant	1	1102.00	Mike Main
8	1780.13	Eamon Keogh	3	1565.67	Caroline Stafford	1	1064.00	Ray Fard
8	1642.13	Ian Davidson	3	1539.33	Arthur Wright	1	1022.00	Geoff Conn
8	1638.38	Ramsey Jamil	3	1482.00	Bob Bruce	1	1019.00	Mick Vacarey
8	1590.13	Jon Barnes	3	1471.33	Tim Line	1	1010.00	Tim Wilkins
8	1589.00	Jeff Ellis	3	1466.67	Kam Verma	1	1000.00	Pat O'Connor
8	1551.63	Ann Pocknell	3	1148.67	Paul Learmount	1	1000.00	Simon Sully
8	1292.63	Jonathan Powell	2	1746.00	Chris Johnson	1	995.00	Julian Minwalla
7	2037.86	Mike Heard	2	1685.00	Nick Valley	1	982.00	Mark Dixon
7	1760.86	Lawrence Powell	2	1659.50	Neil Davidson	1	956.00	David Horner
7	1701.86	Vicky Chandler	2	1622.50	Chris Bray	1	912.00	Alison Lee

Ranking Changes of County Cups Entrants

1907	1869	Rachel Rhodes	1723	1765	Ann Pocknell	1566	1607	Mardi Ohannessian
1837	1748	Nicky Check	1703	1734	Giorgio Castellano	1555	1598	Ron Havenhand
1822	1830	Adrian Jones	1690	1690	David Motley	1538	1495	Dorothy Lee
1810	1783	David Startin	1686	1690	Uldis Lapikens	1500	1489	Ramsay Jamil
1784	1759	David Nathan	1669	1670	Gerry Enslin	1497	1492	Richard Biddle
1776	1753	Peter Christmas	1632	1601	Peter Chan	1483	1468	Phil Tutchings
1767	1739	Chris Ternel	1625	1593	Vicky Chandler	1416	1500	Mervyn Bleach
1728	1741	Jeff Barber	1575	1603	Rodney Lighton	1356	1396	Fak Laight



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LIVERPOOL BACKGAMMON CLUB presents THE 12th LIVERPOOL OPEN

Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th July 2007

Registration- Saturday: 1000-1045 for 1100 start. Estimated finish, 1930 on both days

Main Tournament, Consolation, Last Chance, One Point Shoot-Out, Sweeps, Cash Prizes, Bar

Fee: £25.00 includes Saturday Buffet (under 18 - £15)

Venue: Liverpool Bridge Club, 7 Croxteth Road, Liverpool L8 3SE

Pre-entry required. Cheques payable to Simon Jones, 3 The Vineries, Liverpool, L25 6EU to be in by Saturday 21st July 2007. 0151 428 3082 / 07788 443123, vineries@btinternet.com

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Mobile _____

Grand Prix	Prize	Ranking
Adrian Jones	£178	Adrian Jones
Giorgio Castellano	£127	Gerry Enslin
Uldis Lapikens	£102	Peter Christmas
John Slattery	£76	David Motley
Nicky Check	£51	Rachel Rhodes
Rachel Rhodes	£38	Peter Chan
Gerry Enslin	£25	David Nathan
Brian Lever	£13	Giorgio Castellano
Stuart Mann	£13	Uldis Lapikens
David Motley	£13	Phil Tutchings

Adrian Jones looks to be heading for a double payday at the 2008 Bright 'n' Breezy. Can anyone topple him from the heady heights of both championships? I think so . . . If they play well enough!

Unfortunately it won't be Giorgio, sadly he is returning to Italy and is unlikely to take part in any any further events this year (except the UK Finals). I will be sorry to see Giorgio go, he's a great ambassador for his country and for backgammon in general.

Bright 'n' Breezy	John Hurst	Stuart Mann
Jarvis Trophy	Giorgio Castellano	Adrian Jones
Slattery Scottish Open	Adrian Jones	Gerry Enslin
British Open	Brian Lever	Ian Tarr
County Cups	Nicky Check	Rachel Rhodes
S.A.C Trophy	tba	tba
Irish Open	tba	tba
Townharbour Trophy	tba	tba

UK Qualifiers

This is a list of the qualifiers and the 'reserves'. There are still three places vacant. Will your name be on the list before December?

Poker Grand Prix Top 20	30	Andy Bell	21	Michelle Fisher
70 Paul Watts	29	Paul Christmas	19	Shino
61 Paul Gilbertson	29	Paul Learmount	17	Philip Vischjager
41 Myke Wignall	27	Ann Pocknell		
39 Tony Fawcett	26	Matty Gilbertson		
36 Lawrence Powell	25	Mark Dixon		The prize fund is currently @ £368.
35 Rosey Bensley	24	Tony Lee		Nothing was added at the County Cups
35 Eamon Keogh	23	John Slattery		but it is expected to added to at the
30 Matthew Franklin	22	Mick Vacarey		Hilton Trophy and other events.

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