

BIBAFAX

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PGT 2008 Grand Finale - the 32 qualified players

We now know who are the 32 lucky qualifiers players for the Grand Finale which will take place at the Palm Beach Casino in Cannes from the 11th to 15th February 2009.

They will be challengers of the best European backgammon tournaments and will be competing for a guaranteed 150,000 euros prize pool, of which €100,000 is for the winner.

Attention, there is only one chance left for players who have not yet qualified to join these 32 privileged players by participating in satellites which will be available soon online at www.partouche-game.com.

Here are the Top Five:



Mario Sequeira - Edward O'Laughlin - Thierry Manouck
Minh NGuyen - Chris Ternel (Biba)

Also in the Top 32 there are two more Biba members:

Giorgio Castellano
Raj Jansari

Good luck to the three Biba members, let's hope one of them walks off with the BIG prize of €100,000!



1	Mario Sequeira (Por)	560
2	Edward O'Laughlin (USA)	554
3	Thierry Manouck (Fra)	476
4	Minh NGuyen (Fra)	432
5	Chris Ternel (UK)	424
6	Volker Sonnabend (Ger)	422
7	Jan Jacobowitz (Ger)	418
8	Alain Babillon (Fra)	411
9	Gotz Hildsberg (Ger)	404
10	Giorgio Castellano (Ita)	399
11	Pia Jeppesen (Den)	392
12	Frank Brinkmann (Ger)	383
13	Jurgen Orlowski (Ger)	379
14	Jean Philippe Rohr (Fra)	377
15	Olivier Croisille (Fra)	376
16	Uli Koch (Ger)	363
17	Raj Jansari (UK)	362
18	Zoran Maric (Fra)	360
19	PierGirogio D'Ancona (Ita)	360
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21	Miki Suzuki (Fra)	352
22	Olivier Decultot (Fra)	351
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24	Fernando Braconi (Ita)	340
25	kakhaber Natchkebia (Geo)	340
26	Rassoul Rasti (Swi)	338
27	Athanasios Lagopatis (Ger)	330
28	Fabrizio Lo Surdo (Ita)	327
29	Tassilo Rzymann (Aus)	326
30	Andreas Humke (Ger)	326
31	Marc Santo Roman (Fra)	324
32	Frédéric Andrieu	322

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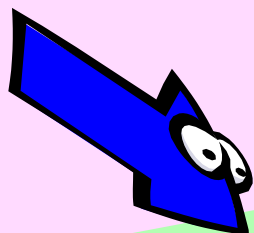
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However, the CD-ROM version is also in full colour, but it is also fully indexed, fully searchable - and as a bonus, on the CD itself are the matches and games featured in the reports and articles, they are in three formats, Snowie & JellyFish plus html for those of you who don't yet own one of the bots.

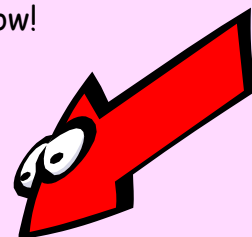
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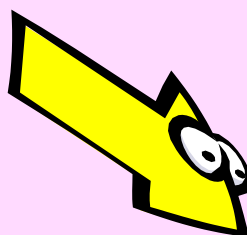


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- 14.30 playoff circuito nazionale backgammon
- 15.00 kick off starts / inizia
- 15.00 double tournament starts / inizia
- 21.00 public draw / sorteggio
- 22.00 tournaments start / iniziano i tornei

saturday, 29th november

- 14.30 progressive consolation
- 16.00 tournament continues / il torneo continua
- 22.00 superjackpot
- 23.00 "swinging in the night" tournament

sunday, 30th november

- 13.00 last chance
- 15.00 finals
- 19.00 prize-giving & cocktail / premiazioni & cocktail



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It is the last occasion to score points for the rankings



How Good Is Your Backgammon?

Asks Michael Crane & Snowie

This continuing article is based on the 1981 2nd Holiday Tournament, Las Vegas, between Kent Goulding and Mike Maxakuli. In this series I have slightly changed the format, instead of you deciding on a particular move I have listed the options. When you come to ??? the position is shown along with five candidate moves (if five are available). Cover up the text below the moves and decide which of the moves is your choice. Keep a record and at the end see how you scored. The match is to 15 points, Kent is playing black and Mike, white.

We continue coverage in Game 13 with just one point (again) separating the two players.

Game 13

Kent Goulding: 10 Mike Maxakuli: 9

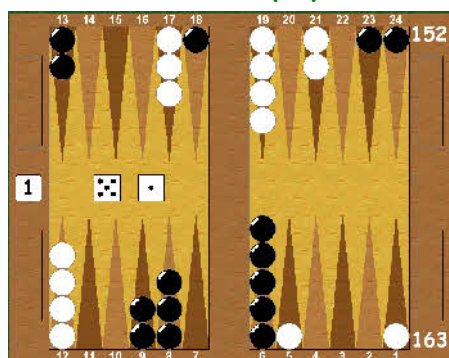
01) 43: 24/20 13/10

02) 62: 13/5* 51: 25/20* 10/9

03) 42: 25/23 13/9 52: 9/4 6/4

04) 64: 24/18 13/9

??? White to play 51



20/15 8/7*

8/7* 7*2*

8/7* 6/1*

20/14

13/7*

Well quite clearly hitting is correct, so if you picked 20/14 you're already on zero points! Also, usually, when presented with a double hit it's correct to do so - and in this position a double hit is best. If you only hit with 8/7* or 13/7* you let black have more chances of establishing an anchor, therefore it has to be the double hit. So, do you hit on the 1-point or the 2-point? The difference in equity isn't enough to make much difference; Snowie favours 8/7* 7/2* which leaves 6s and 4s (27 rolls) to cover the blot plus 51 to make the 1-point. The actual move was

8/7* 6/1* which left 6s, 5s, 7s and 44 (31 rolls) to cover. It is this extra four rolls that place it into 1st place and gains it the extra point

8/7* 6/1* 5A

8/7* 7*2* 4

13/7* 3

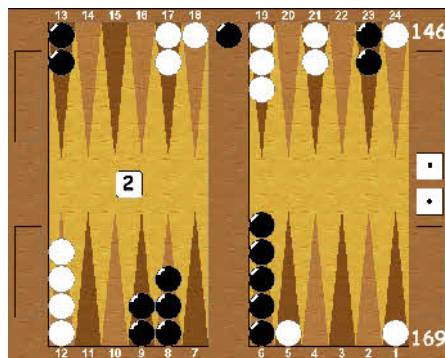
20/15 8/7* 1

20/14 0

51: 6/1* 8/7*

05) 42: 25/23

Black re-enters with one checker, but it's an important one for it anchors on the white 2-point. This prompts white into offering a 2-cube:



Snowie doesn't rate this cube at all and it screams out, No double/take.

No double -0.487

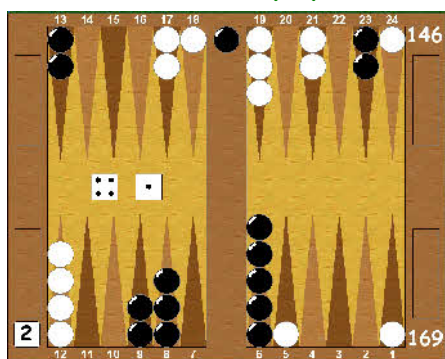
Double, take -1.257 -0.770

Double, pass 1.000 +1.487

Doubles to 2

06) Takes

??? White to play 41



24/20 8/7

24/20 7/6

13/9 7/6

8/4 8/7

6/1

White rolls the perfect number to cover his 1-point blot . . . but is it correct to do so? Now that black has anchored it could be more important to make an advanced anchor with 24/20. As above there's little equity difference between Snowie's 24/20 7/6 and the actual move of 6/1. Even with the 1-point covered, black is going to re-enter 75% of the time but making the 1-point will pitch fewer checkers against black; however, because the actual play of 6/1 leaves only nine hitting rolls it is top points.

Playing 24/20 7/6 puts some pressure upon black's mid-point checkers and makes playing 6s a little awkward for him. Playing 24/20 8/7 isn't as good as 7/6, the 8/7 gives black 32 re-entry rolls, of which 18 will hit one blot and one, 61, will hit two. By contrast only eleven rolls will hit the 1-point blot with the 7/6 play, Snowie's play.

6/1 5A

24/20 7/6 4

24/20 8/7 3

13/9 7/6 2

8/4 8/7 1

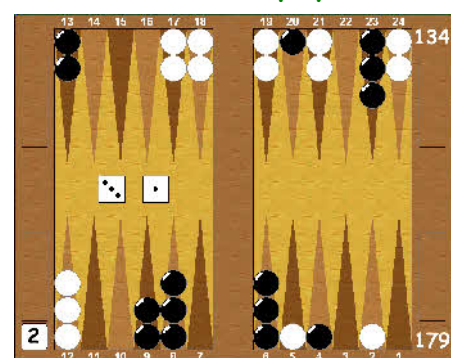
41: 6/1

07) 42: 25/23 6/2

61: 13/7 24/23*

08) 52: 25/20 6/4

??? White to play 31



8/5* 8/7

8/5* 5/4

23/20 8/7

23/20 7/6

23/22 8/5*

Once again, white can make the advanced anchor with 23/20 7/6 or 23/20 8/7, but is making it the best move? Black is poised to make his own Golden Point with all 3s except double-one, so perhaps stopping him might be a better move? This move is all about the Golden Point, the 20-point for each player.

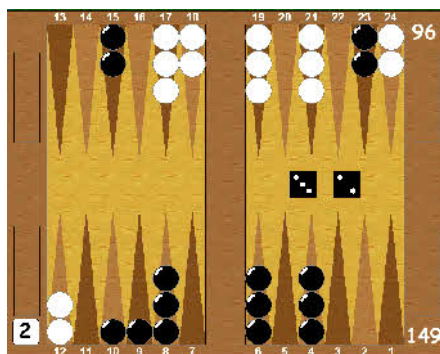
Well as it turns out the advanced

anchor is (slightly) better: But, 7/6 is far superior to 8/7; 7/6 produces fewer hitting rolls and better game winning chances (gwc) and gammon chances (gc). The actual play of 8/5* 5/4, and 8/5* 8/7 and 23/22 8/5* are all very close together but 8/5* 5/4 sneaks ahead due to fewer blot-hitting rolls, and the remaining two go down in the order they're written, although they aren't that good in their own right.

23/20 7/6	5
8/5* 5/4	4A
8/5* 8/7	3
23/22 8/5*	2
23/20 8/7	1

	31: 8/5* 5/4
09) 55: 25/15 9/4	54: 13/8 20/16
10) 53: 23/15	41: 16/15 15/11
11) 43: 13/9 13/10	55: 23/8 11/6

??? Black to play 32



10/7 9/7
8/5 8/6
8/5 9/7
8/5 4/2
10/5

Although it looks good, making the bar-point with this roll is a bit of a waste, what's needed first is the 5-point, and the best way to do this is to slot it and then leave as many covering rolls as possible next roll.

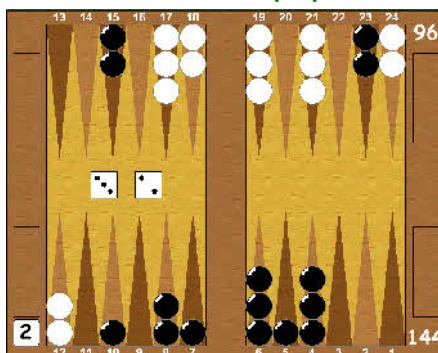
The best way to achieve this is to play 8/5 9/7 leaving plenty of builders to finish off the job (34 rolls). 10/5 comes in a very close 2nd according to Snowie and for this reason it shares top points even though its covering rolls for the 5-point were fewer than the remaining 5-point slots: 8/5 4/2 goes one point to far - the 2-point is just too deep at the moment, and 8/5 8/6 'wastes' a checker on the 6-point.

Making the bar-point is deemed by Snowie to be better than the last rolls mentioned, no doubt because of the 2-point slot and the 6-point loading.

8/5 9/7	5A
10/5 `	5
10/7 9/7	4
8/5 4/2	3
8/5 8/6	2

12) 32: 8/5 9/7

??? White to play 32



8/5 7/5
8/6 7/4
8/6 4/1
13/8
8/3

It's the next roll and it's white's turn to move 32. The actual move of 13/8 is poorly received by Snowie and it is relegated to 3rd place and gains just 2 points,

although it does have the merit of duplicating 3s (they hit and cover) and it is this reason that it gets 2 points.

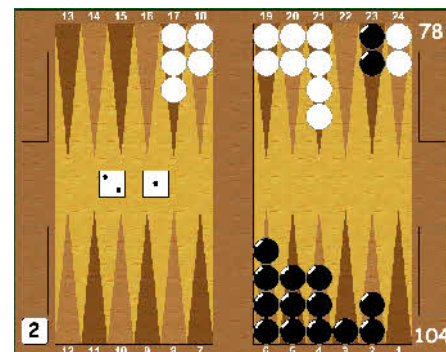
Top marks goes to 8/5 7/5, it leaves direct 5s and 41 (13 rolls) but it would mean that black would have to leave the anchor and might even end up with a few more checkers on the bar. Getting near to blunder territory, 8/3 leaves just eleven shots and it can be covered by 3s and 1s next roll, but sooner or later white will have to vacate his mid-point and now, with three blots on black's side of the board, might be the time to do it.

The remaining three moves aren't worth consideration: 8/4 6/1 stacks and wastes a checker and 8/6 7/4 gives up the bar-point and leaves a shot!

8/5 7/5	5
8/3	3
13/8	2A
8/6 4/1	0
8/6 7/4	0

32: 13/18	
13) 42: 10/6 7/5	64: 13/7 8/4
14) 64: 15/9 15/11	21: 7/5 6/5
15) 66: 11/5 9/3 8/2 8/2	

??? White to play 21



7/5 7/6
8/6 4/3
8/5
4/1

Just four candidates this time - although to be fair, only one of them isn't a blunder, and it is this move that's the correct one: 7/5 7/6 clearing the 7-point and killing 6s and ensuring no bad rolls next turn. Another benefit is that if black rolls 65 he'll have to run off his 23-point . . . and black did roll 65, but he didn't have to run! Why? Because the actual move of 8/6 4/3 didn't open up the 7-point; although it leaves just 1s (11 rolls), it drops from 82.5% gwc to 75.6%, a big drop. Black is wishing for a hit and it's just been offered to him on a plate. The ►

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two remaining moves, 8/5 and 4/1, although safe now, each leave blots next time: 8/5 = 8, 4/1 = 12, and it is for this reason they don't get any points.

7/5 7/6 5
8/6 4/3 3A
8/5 0
4/1 0

16) 54: 6/1 5/1 21: 8/6 4/3
17) 65: 23/12 41: 7/3 7/6
18) 43: 12/8 6/3 51: 6/1 6/5
19) 21: Dances 32: 5/2* 4/2
20) 21: Dances 53: 8/3 8/5
 54: 6/1 6/2

On his next roll black re-enters but it's too late and he loses the bearoff.

21) 63: 25/16 31: 3/0 1/0
22) 42: 16/12 8/6 63: 5/0 3/0
23) 44: 12/4 4/0 4/0 42: 4/0 2/0
24) 21: 2/0 1/0 32: 3/0 2/0
25) 44: 6/2(2) 4/0 4/0 54: 5/0 4/0
26) 11: 5/4 2/1 1/0 1/0 63: 5/0 2/0
27) 53: 5/0 3/0 21: 1/0 1/0

Wins 2 points

And yet again the scores are just one point apart.

Kent Goulding : 10 Mike Maxakuli : 11

So, how good is your backgammon?

30	You are Top Dog
25-21	You are Top Cat
20-16	You are Double Top
15-11	You are Tree Top
10-6	You are Topo Gigio!
5-0	You are a Wooden Top!

This article will continue in a later issue of Bibafax.

Look Before You Leap

By Michael Crane

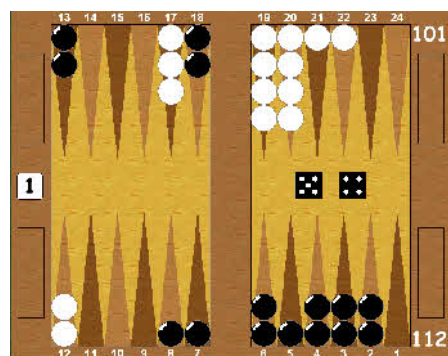


I have, over the past few months, noticed that many players seem to lack the concepts of backgammon. They appear to go from move to move without a game-plan or clear idea of what they are trying to achieve and how to go about it. Quite a few of you have failed to grasp some of these concepts and it is these that this article concentrates upon. Hopefully it'll prove helpful to those who have yet to fully appreciate the nuances of positions and the effect checkerplay can have on the outcome of a game or match. All positions are money-play, with the actual move shown first followed by Snowie's choice.

Clearing a Holding Point

Holding points can be very useful in restricting an opponent's movement. They should not be abandoned lightly.

Black to play 54



18/13 18/14 . . . 13/8 13/9

At the moment each player has a couple of holding points, each blocking the other's free movement of some checkers in the outer boards. Black's play breaks off the wrong holding point. Not only does it

leave a blot but it allows white to crossover from his mid-point with relative safety.

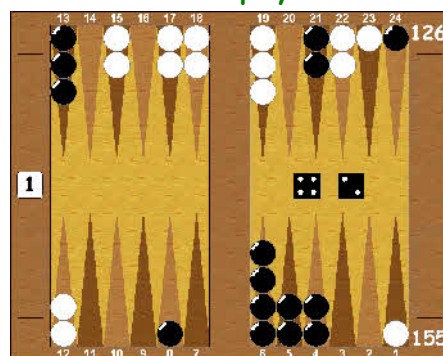
By moving 13/8 13/9 black still keeps his best holding point and gives himself more chances to make his 5-point and thus construct a home-board prime that white would rather not face. White can only play one 6 before a second one will either vacate a point or leave a shot; whereas black can play four of them.

After this move the pip-count will be very close, just two between them. This is not the time to offer up a blot and give your opponent the chance to take the lead.

Under The Gun & Stacking

Placing a checker 'under the gun' means it's in the firing line of multiple shots - a bad thing if you don't want to be hit! Stacking is the 'art' of placing more and more checkers onto a single point - OK in the bearoff, perhaps, but not so OK when not.

Black to play 42



24/20 8/6 . . . 13/9 6/4

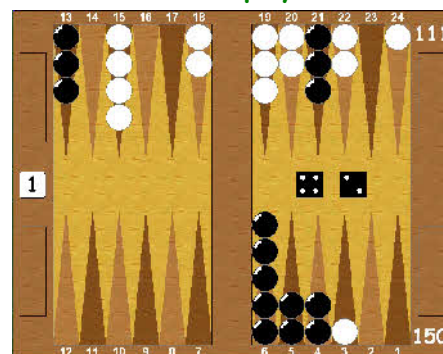
Playing 8/6 here is so wrong, there are already more checkers than needed on the 6-point, and stacking another one just makes it far too heavy. Coupled with the back checker slotting the 20-point makes this move even worse. The 20-point blot is now well and truly under the gun. Even though many of white's checkers are points, depending upon the dice roll, they will be used to hit.

Much better is to unstack a checker off the laden 6-point, 6/4 and bring down the spare checker from the mid-point, 13/9. Both blots (9- and 8-points) are only susceptible to an indirect hit and this means that white's 2-point blot cannot be made safe if white decides to hit one of the blots.

Unstacking & Running

Unstacking is to move checkers off heavily laden points and place them somewhere where they might be more effective. Running is to (usually) move a back checker (often referred to as a runner) out of an opponent's home board. Sometimes, 'runs' don't go too far!

Black to play 42



6/2 6/4 . . . 21/17 6/4

Black decides to unstack his 6-point but in doing so he leaves a blot on his 2-point with half his move. Playing 6/2 might prove a tad difficult for black ▷

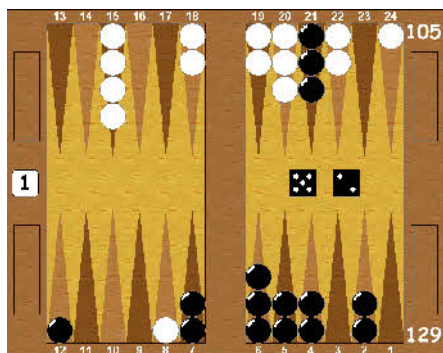
should he get a shot at white and be unable to cover it.

Black has unstacked too much and he is missing a much better move here: 6/4 (unstacking and providing another builder without leaving a blot is the better half of black's move) and 21/17, running out the spare checker and thus covering the top half of his outer board should white try to run out his vulnerable lone checker from black's 3-point.

Duplication

Duplication is something that crops up more often than most players appreciate, hence we have three examples here. Many miss the chance to duplicate an opponent's good or bad roll by placing their checkers in positions that leave their opponent a choice of one or the other - but not both!

Black to play 52



12/5 . . . 21/14

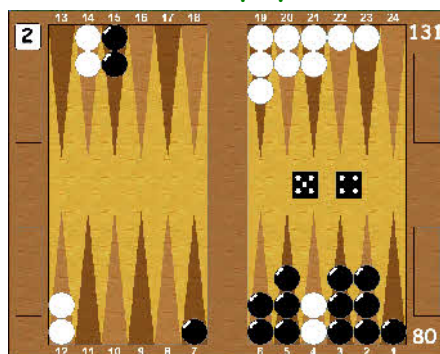
If black were to initially move a checker 21/14 instead of playing 'safe' by playing to his 5-point, he'd probably spot that 4s and 6s are duplicated, they both hit ... and they both cover! Unless white rolls 64 he can't do both. Black's home board is very strong so white will want to hit and cover if at all possible - which is unlikely.

Playing 12/5 is just one more stacking move brought about by black's worry about being hit on his 12-point.

Sometimes duplications can look very dangerous. This next position is a prime

example of what looks like a very risky play.

Black to play 54



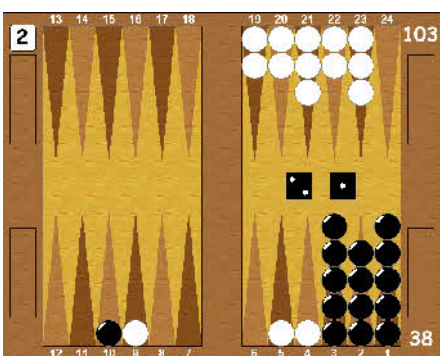
7/2 5/1 . . . 15/6

By playing 7/2 5/1 white has missed a great opportunity to duplicate 3s and 1s by moving a back checker in, 15/6. With two blots on in his home board white needs 3s or 1s to cover and 3s and 1s to hit - which is another way to say duplication!

Black's home board is now very strong and the last thing white wants to do is expose a blot. He might still hit for he is currently 51 pips behind in the race and a few more pips won't hurt, but without 3s and 1s the altercation could vastly favour black.

Sometimes the duplication isn't obvious. This last example of duplication has to consider the checker placed onto the bar as well as its peers in black's home board.

Black to play 21



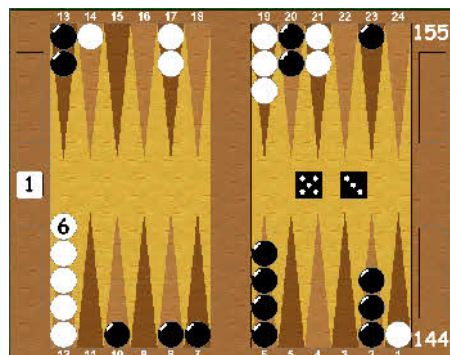
10/9* 9/7 . . . 10/9* 3/1

By moving on 9/7 black has given white more hitting-off-the-bar rolls than remaining on the 9-point and playing 3/1. If he remained on the 9-point he duplicates 4s and 5s to enter and hit giving a total of ten rolls that will hit whereas the actual play returns two more. It's only a small difference but in backgammon it takes just one roll out of thirty-six to turn a game around.

5-point vs Bar-point

For many players knowing which of the two points, bar- or 5-, is the better one to make, is a struggle. They often think that the bar-point is better because it stops an opponent's escape - and in a lot of positions it does. However, in this position the 5-point is by far the better move.

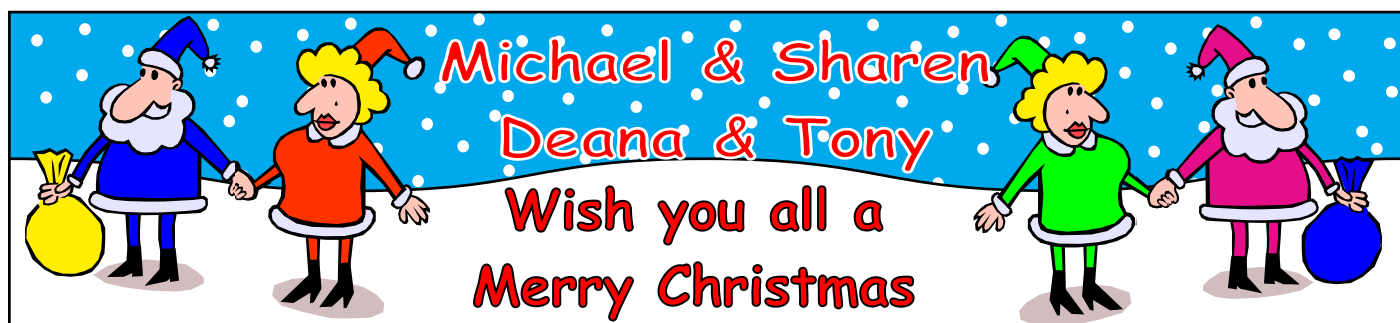
Black to play 53



13/8 10/7 . . . 10/5 8/5

Making two very good points with 13/8 10/7 looks a strong move - it blocks white escaping with 6s and makes a 3-prime straddling the bar; however, in this position it is much better to make the 5-point, 10/5 8/5. Even though this play leaves direct 6s it isn't the end of the world if white hits. At the moment he has plenty of timing with a fully laden mid-point whereas black's timing is poor and can be improved by being hit.

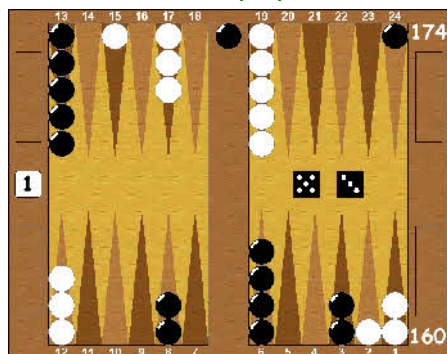
Quite often when given the choice of the bar- or 5-point, it is the 5-point that prevails. It is a point you'll (most likely) hold until the bearoff whereas the bar-point will have to be vacated at some point in the game.



Playing past a point

Making home board points in descending order is preferable to having gaps, so it is bad practice to play past points you need when there are alternative plays available.

Black to play 53



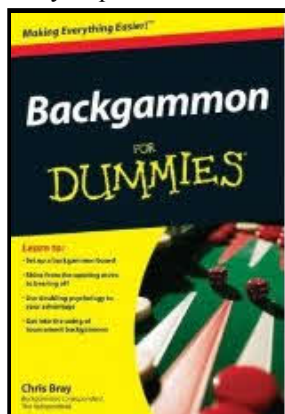
25/20 6/3 . . . 25/22 13/8

When making points in the home board it's always beneficial to make them in descending order. Already black has made his 3-point with an opening 53; but that's as far as he should go for the moment. Therefore, playing 6/3 goes past two of the points he needs to make and is 'wasted' now with just the 2- and 1-points in its sights.

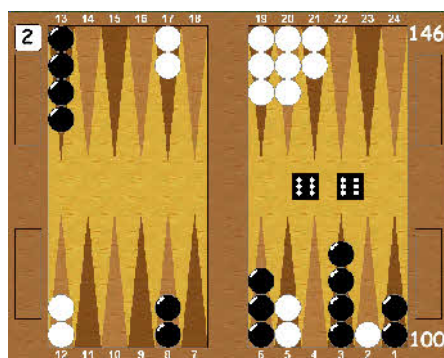
It would appear that the first play off the bar, 25/20 caused the 6/3 play, although 25/20 13/10 would have been acceptable. But, a much better play would have been 25/22 13/8. Making points in descending order means that the next point white is aiming for is his 5- and 4-points and his 13/8 move gives another builder for the 7-, 5- and 4-points without any risk; and slotting with 25/20 puts white's 15-point blot under threat.

Crossing Over Safely

Crossovers, moving from one quadrant to another, is a skill that many players lack. Too often players fail to see the potential danger in not crossing over when the opportunity presents itself. When there's still a chance of contact, crossing over safely is very important.



Black to play 66



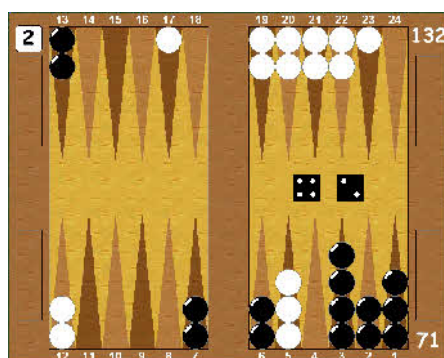
13/7(2) 8/2*(2) . . . 13/7(4)

Double-six is a great roll for black, but not in the way in which he played it! It looks good putting white on the bar and making the bar-point but it still leaves two mid-point checkers that might have difficulty in getting round safely. The best way to do this is to crossover, 13/7(4). It looks messy and 'stacky' but it is quite safe and it puts the white blot on black's 2-point under pressure from 15 rolls (16 if you count 44).

Breaking Points

Deciding which points and when to break is difficult for many players. They often see short-term benefits and fail to see the long-term implications. In these next two positions black's checkers and white's block are identical.

Black to play 42



6/2 6/4 . . . 13/7

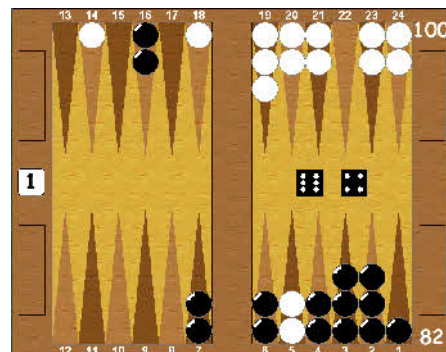
Torn between 13/7 and clearing the 6-point, black went for the clearance - which is wrong. Getting a checker safe onto the 7-point leaves a few shots, 1s and 8s (except 22), eleven direct and five indirect. So, if 16 shots hit, 20 miss! and it's this 20 missing shots that work in black's favour. All he needs next roll is 6, 7 or 9 or above and he's home and dry.

By clearing from the 6-point he's left fewer points on which his two back checkers can land safely and he's given white time to cover his 2-point blot. The

white, 2-point blot, is enough incentive to make the running play now rather than later.

Once again, the short-term benefit of clearing a point results in long-term problems of crossing over safely.

Black to play 64



7/1 7/3 . . . 16/6

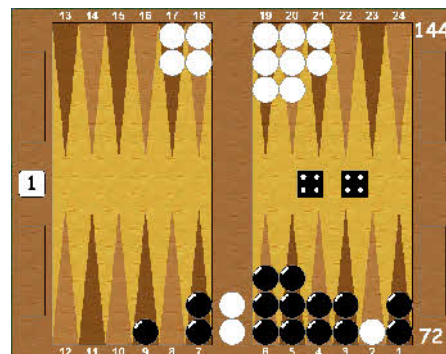
A similar position to above for black's checkers; if the 7-point is cleared there are fewer landing points for the two runners and now 6s will leave a shot. Better to run now 16/6 before white closes off his 3-point.

Leaving a blot in this position looks worse than in the previous *Breaking Points* position but in reality there are two fewer hitting rolls!

Shifting Points

Shifting points, more often than not, refers to changing points in your home table, usually to hit an opponent or the make things safer for yourself.

Black to play 44



9/1 7/3(2) . . . 9/5 6/2*(3)

If white anchors on the black 2-point he could well turn this game around; therefore the play here is to shift points, 6/2*(3) 9/5. It matters not that white can come in with 6s, he's very unlikely to get a shot from there and black will be able to bearoff without worrying about leaving shots.

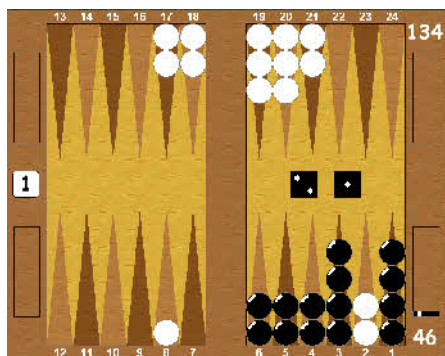


The actual play gives black eleven hopes of anchoring - eleven too many and totally unnecessary! The gammon is still on with shifting points, albeit reduced. Better a reduced gammon chance than not even winning the point.

Bearing Off Against Opposition

Looking ahead is the key to bearing off against opposition. With white squatting on his 2-point, and with another on the bar, black must look further ahead than taking off checkers now.

Black to play 21



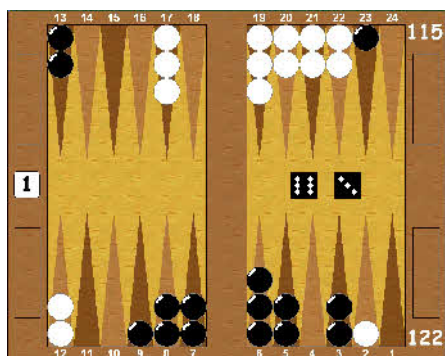
3/0 . . . 6/4 6/5

With three 'flat' points and an anchor before him and a white checker on the bar black needs to look to future rolls and not just the immediate benefit of removing one checker now. Moving 6/4 6/5 will keep it safer and easier to clear the top points.

Diversification

Diversifying, or placing checkers into positions that make maximum use of the dice rolls is something all backgammon players should be aware of. By diversifying and given yourself plenty of rolls that work well for you will lead a less knowledgeable opponent to think you are lucky!

Black to play 63



9/3 6/3 . . . 13/7 13/10

Stacking two more checkers onto the 3-point is missing a great opportunity for

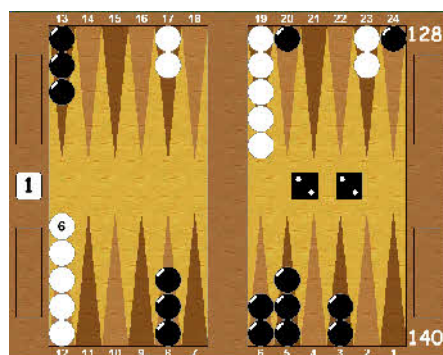
making a 6-prime by filling in the 4-point gap. By playing 13/7 13/10 instead of stacking black would have fourteen rolls that make the prime; seven rolls that point on the blot and fifteen rolls that play safe; in total all thirty-six rolls play well!

The pressure would then be on white and unless he can snatch the initiative away from black he's onto a loser with the diversification.

Looking For a Hit

Backgammon is a racing game, and the best way to win any race is to have an opponent behind you. In this position (and the next) white has escaped black's home board and unless black gets a hit he's unlikely to win this game.

Black to play 22



24/20 13/9 . . . 8/4(2)

White has escaped his two runners and the only ways black is going to win this game is by winning the race (it has a long way to go) or by hitting and containing one or more white checkers. By making the Golden Point with 24/20 white's chances of hitting are not so great as when his two blots are left as blots.

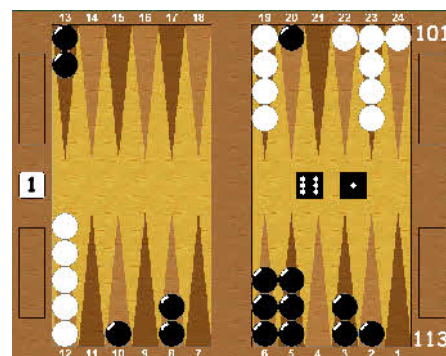
The actual play leaves white with 100% safety next roll, whereas if black's blots remain where they are 16 rolls by white next roll will leave a shot!

With this in mind the better play is to make the 4-point, 8/4(2) and strengthen the board hoping that one of white's 16 bad rolls pop out of the cup.

Once you give up on the hit you need, your opponent's rolls will all play well. Even with a slim hope of a hit (62 in the next position), it's worth waiting for a while longer.

If you can't win the race (although white's lead is only 12 pips - which equates to approx 1.5 rolls) you've nothing to lose by hanging on.

Black to play 61



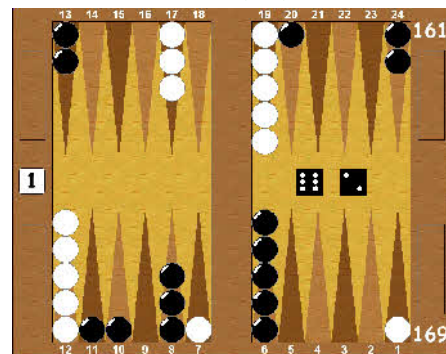
20/13 . . . 10/4 5/4

This is the previous *Looking For a Hit* position a little further on - and it is still in black's interest to stay where he is and hope for a hit. At the moment a hit isn't forthcoming, the odds being against rolling 62, but waiting is better than running. In the meantime, making the 4-point, 10/4 5/4 is correct . . . again!

Hit or Make a Point

Players often have to make choices about hitting or making a point. If you're going to hit you have to make sure it's worthwhile, especially if you waste the chance of making a good point.

Black to play 62



13/7* 13/11 . . . 10/4 6/4

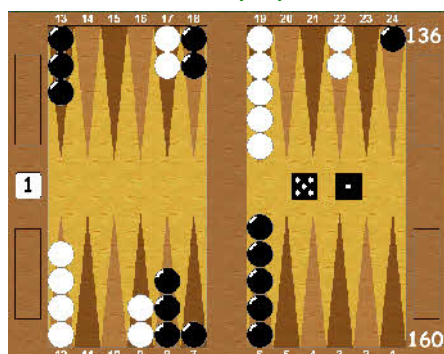
When hitting in a position after an opponent has ran a checker out to your bar-point, there are sixteen rolls that allow him to re-enter and hit (all 6s & 7s): in this position you can also add to them 55. Hitting here is an irritant for white and nothing more, and might even help him send another black checker back. In fact, it is likely that he poked his head out to do just that!

Our old favourite, making the 4-point, 10/4 6/4 is better. It's a worthwhile point to have and one you'll keep for ages and if your blot on the 11-point is hit, well not to worry; it'll help out with your timing - even if that was white's plan!

One Checker Back

Very often one checker back on your opponent's 1-point (and even their 3- or 2-points) can be as effective as holding the point. Hitting loose isn't always an option.

Black to play 51



24/18 . . . 8/3 6/5

Once black moves off the 24-point he is almost handing the game over to white. The 24-point blot is a real pain for white and he would love to see it moved off and onto his bar-point. One checker can be as effective as two when left on the opponent's 1-point - it stops them playing loose into their home board, and coupled with the 18-point anchor, black has a good chance of getting a hit.

White should now be concentrating on a good home board and now's the time to slot the 5- and 3-points with 8/3 8/5 and get ready for the hit; or even the simple 13/7 is acceptable.

Well, that brings me to end of this article. I hope it has been of use to some of you. Its content is the stuff of successful backgammon and its use in your games will

result in more games won - guaranteed!

A lot of the positions will occur again and again in games and, if you spot them before you leap into the 'wrong' move you're going in the right direction.

The match from which the positions were taken features on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax in Snowie, JellyFish and html formats. To open the bot files you'll need the bot, but the html files be read via your own web browser. For more details email info@backgammon-biba.co.uk or simply contact Biba HQ.

NB: The match mentioned below is also available.



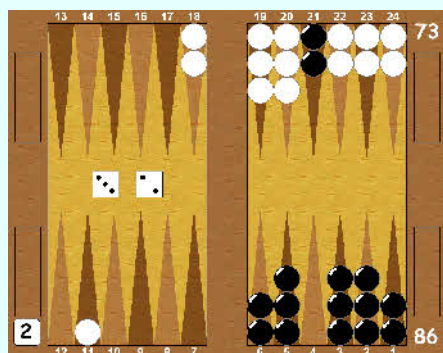
Just One - that's all it takes

By Michael Crane

During the finals match at the Backgammon in London @ Biba event, Chris Ternel and Andy Darby had a pretty intense match. Chris took a 3-0 lead, Andy then started, 3-1. Chris pulled away to 5-1 and then Andy pulled out another, 5-2.

This pattern went on for a while, Chris pulling away, Andy catching up until the score reached 9-7 and we come to this position with Chris holding a 2-cube and Andy on roll:

11 point match

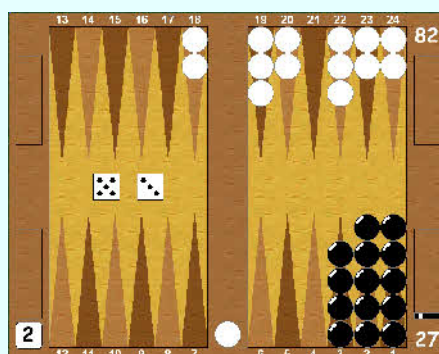


Black 9 White 7
White (Andy) to play 32

The beauty of recording matches on

video is that I can see (and hear) in real time what the two players are doing and saying. In this position Andy, who had given Chris an early - but accurate, cube - played 14/11 5/3. Chris then rolled 61 and hit him! Andy then danced for six rolls and entered with 53 in this position:

White to play 53



25/17

He then scampers home with little chance of winning the two points he so desperately needs as he tries saving the match; and this is what happens as

Chris rolls out to win the match 11-7.

After the match was over Chris pointed out to Andy that his 3, played 14/11, left six shots whereas he should have moved 14/12 and left one fewer. Although 7s and 8s both leave six shots, double-two was blocked, thus making 14/12 one roll safer. There then follows a five minute discussion where they debate the merits of each move until Andy, almost persuaded, says, "I'd like to see what Snowie says about it."

Snowie says that the play, 14/11 5/3 has an equity of -0.086 making it an error compared to its 'best' move of 6/1, leaving the 14-point blot only within the reach of ten pips, 55 or 64. Andy's next two rolls of 63, 63 would have been safe if he'd taken Chris's advice and played 14/12.

Just one - that's all it takes!

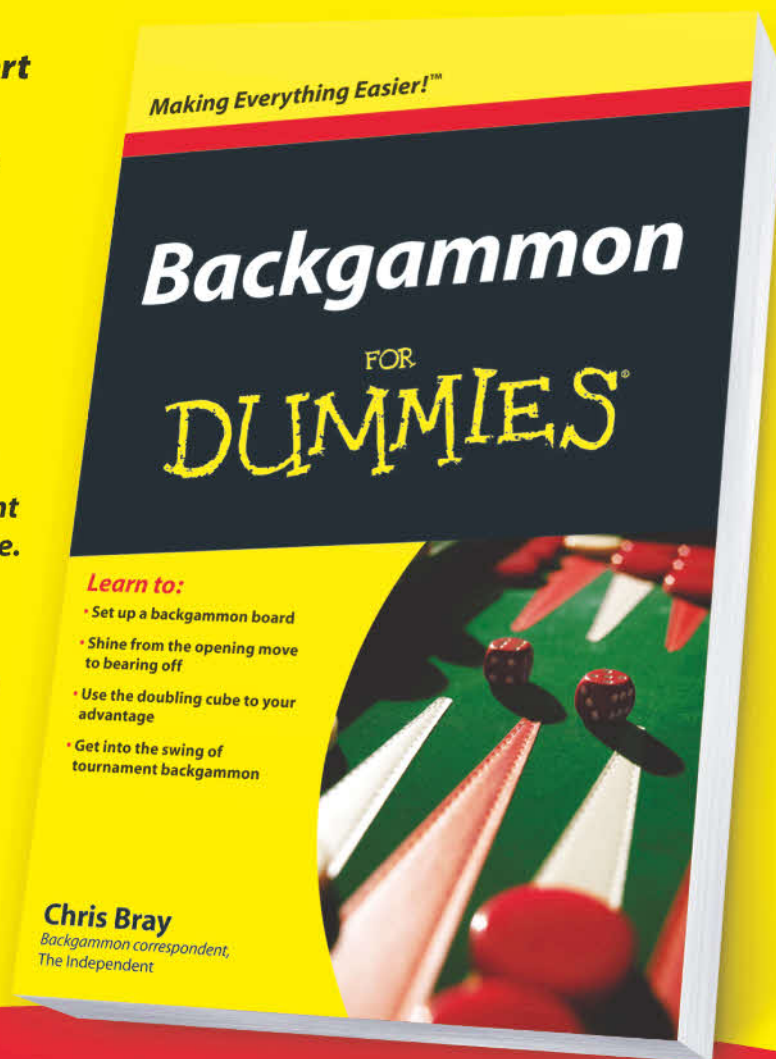
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Archive - Articles by Paul Magriel, New York Times

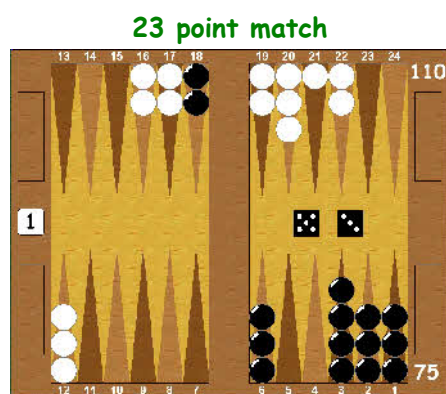
Reproduced by Michael Crane

The Race Is Hot and Heavy, So Run Hard, Don't Dawdle!

The Black and White Boston Classic in Cambridge Mass., was won by 22 year old Leslie Stone of New York. Miss Stone is not a newcomer to backgammon; indeed she won her first tournament, in Nassau when she was 11 years old. Her early training came from her father, Tobias Stone, the internationally recognised backgammon and bridge champion.

In the finals Miss Stone defeated a formidable opponent, Mel Drapkin. He is considered one of Boston's best all-round players, and has an impressive record in this annual event: he won it in 1978 and was a semi-finalist last year. In other results: Allen Hodis and Todd Van der Pluym were semi-finalists; William Bartholomay defeated Michael Senkiewicz in the consolation; and Robert Bishop won the last chance.

This position . . .



Black to play 53

. . . occurred in the second game of the 23-point finals match between Drapkin (black) and Miss Stone (white). Earlier, Drapkin had rolled 66, which put him ahead in terms of a possible running game. The position, however, is not a race because black has two men stranded on white's bar-point (the 18-point). In fact, the only way black can hope to move these men, without giving white shots, is to roll a medium-sized double (33, 44 or 55).

With the roll of 53, the obvious play for black is to continue waiting and play 6/1 6/3. This play, although temporarily safe, will only postpone the decision, for at

most one or two rolls. Soon black will be forced to give up the 18-point and be exposed to a double or triple shot. In the meantime, black's position will have deteriorated while white's will have improved.

Without his 6-point, black's home board will no longer be credible threat, at the same time white will have had the opportunity to fortify his home board by making the 21-point.

Drapkin realised that the time was against him, so he decided to make a run for it immediately and boldly played 18/15 18/13. This play is correct, even though it voluntary leaves black exposed to a double direct shot. White will now be able to hit black with a 1 or a 3 (20 chances out of 36 possible). Thus, white will only be a slight favourite to hit. Furthermore, a hit at this time is not a sure route to victory for white, because he may still have a man exposed on his 21-point. By contrast, if black stalls, he is likely to leave a much larger double or triple shot, with almost no chance to recover if hit.

In the actual game, white (Miss Stone) was surprised to see a double shot appear in front of her, and she impetuously doubled. Theoretically, without a closed board, it is hardly ever correct to double on such a 20-number shot. Drapkin accepted and white rolled a 54 missing both blots. Drapkin redoubled, Miss Stone passed and Drapkin gained 2 points in the match. Drapkin won the next two games and built up a 6-0 lead, but then the luck changed and Miss Stone eventually won 23-15.

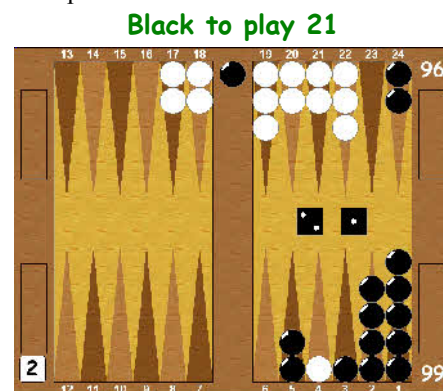
MC: Moving 6/1 6/3 is a classic beginner's mistake. Often afraid of leaving blots they fail to appreciate things could get a lot worse. Running both men out 18/13 18/15 is by far the better move. Clearing the 6-point returns -0.393 equity, a big blunder.

All The Signs Proved True: He Lost It and He Lost It Big

Outside of tournament play, the strongest backgammon games anywhere are likely to be found at New York's Mayfair Club. The Mayfair Club, at 220 East 57th Street, was established more than fifty years ago as a bridge club, but in recent

years the main focus of activity has been backgammon. Under the direction of Alvin Roth, it has become a training ground for new and improving players to sharpen their skills.

This position . . .



. . . appeared at the Mayfair last week in one of the regular Sunday afternoon Chouettes (partnership game). Earlier in the game, white had doubled and all the black team players except for the captain had wisely passed. Black realised that with three men stuck behind white's full prime (from the 22-point to the 17-point) he had little chance of winning. Nevertheless, black, who was not one to give up easily, searched for a winning method.

With the role [sic] of 21 he considered playing bar/23 5/4*, re-entering and hitting. By giving white a triple shot, black needs to play a back game - that is, black tries to have a fourth man sent back with the hope of establishing a second point in white's home board. Fortunately, however, black came to his senses before making this suicide play. Because black's home board had already collapsed, black would not realistic chance of winning, even if he did somehow manage to make both the 23- and 24-points. Indeed, the probable outcome of this play would be to lose a gammon (double game) as a direct result of having additional men sent back. Black is a strong favourite to save the gammon with three men back on an anchor in white's board; with four men back, black is likely to be gammoned.

In the actual game, black, resigned to losing, played bar/23 24/23, making the 23-point in front of white's prime. This natural and seemingly conservative play actually exposed him to just what he 

wished to avoid - losing a double game. Against less experienced opposition, the weakness of this play might well have gone unnoticed. White, however, had recently been gammoned himself in a similar position and knew how to exploit black's mistake.

White next rolled 32 and played 8/5 8/6, voluntarily breaking his prime in order to let black out with 6s. Black then rolled an inconsequential 43, with which he cleared his 5-point. On his subsequent turn he rolled 63 and was compelled to play 23/14 giving up his anchor on the 23-point. This left black totally defence-

less, with all three of his back men open. White ruthlessly attacked black, closed out all three men, and easily gammoned black.

Black could have avoided this sequence by correctly playing bar/24 3/1. Black must anticipate the possibility that white will attempt to 'trap' him off his anchor. By putting all three men firmly on the 24-point, black avoids any possibility of being closed out, and so minimises the chance of losing a gammon.

MC: Well, time has somewhat altered the content of this second article. Snowie

rollouts tell us that by playing 25/23 24/23 (the actual move) black's gammon losses are 34.5%; whereas if he moves 25/24 3/1 his gammon losses are greater at 38.2%. Certainly you can't get worse than the suicide play of 25/23 5/4*, it returns 62.3% gammons for white!

I would like to acknowledge Paul Magriel and the New York Times for their involvement in this article.



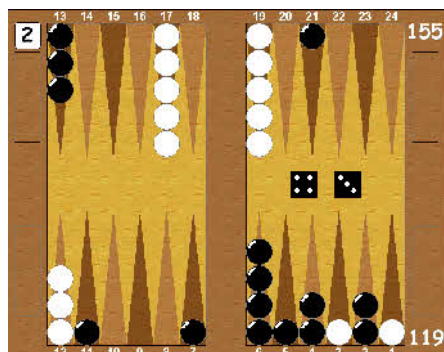
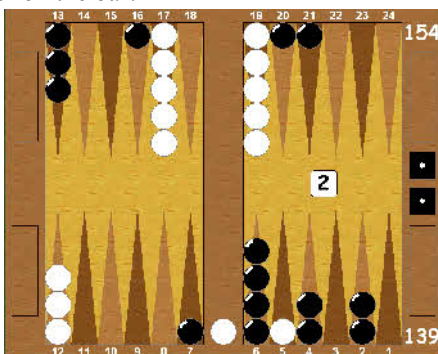
Sandy Osborne Trophy

Report by Michael Crane

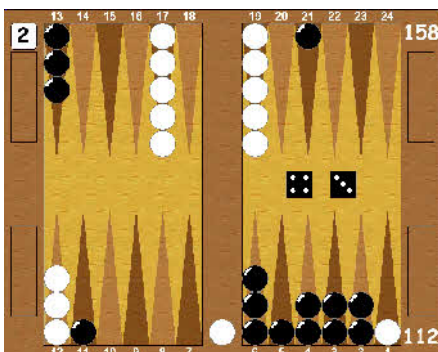
It's a brave man (or woman) that will take a 2-cube from Julian Fetterlein when trailing 4-away, 8-away, and with a checker on the bar!

Let me introduce you to a brave man: Paul Learmount! Paul, playing as white is offered a 2-cube in this position during the final. This is a double, pass... but no one told Paul! He took, and then for a long time he didn't do much else.

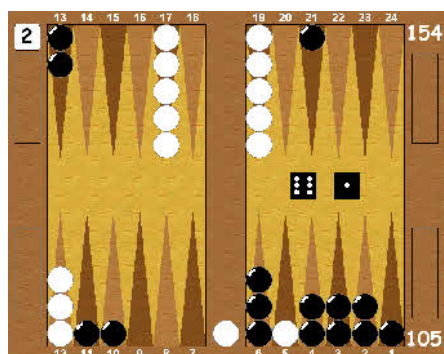
Julian rolled 'The Girls' (55 - reference to Paul Magriel) and played 20/5* 16/11. Paul replied with a re-entry roll of 31 and played 25/22 25/24.



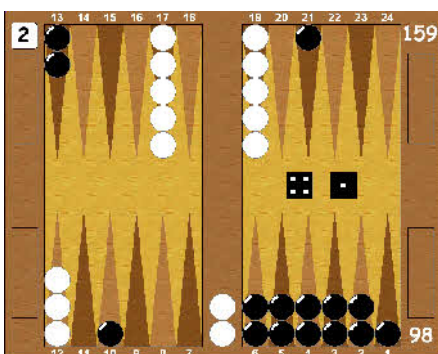
A nice pointing roll for black, 7/3* 6/3. Paul dances with 43.



Julian hits on the 1-point, 5/1* with 13/10. Paul dances with 54



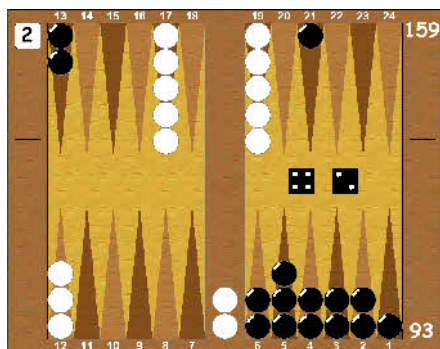
What a superb roll from black, pointing on the 5-point blot, 11/5* 6/5. Another dancing roll from Paul, 43.



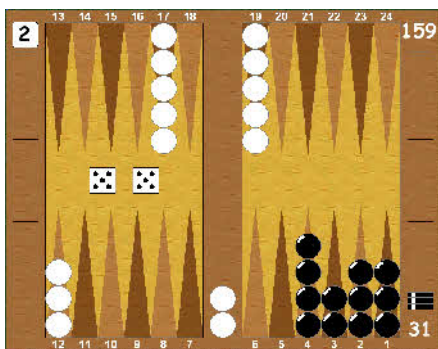
Julian brings the 10-point checker in with 10/5 to give him 4s next time for the close-out. Paul dances with 54. ▶



Top: Paul & Julian
Middle: David & Brian
Bottom: Lee & Lewis



Never mind the 2, the 4 is played 5/1 and the prime is complete. Nine rolls later and Paul re-enters behind Julian's bearoff



... and Julian rolls out for the gammon and the match, and for his second Sandy Osborne win, his first being in 1977.



John & Ed

The **Main (42)** was a draw of two halves. In the last eight, in the bottom half of the draw we had Julian vs Tony Lee, and Peter Bennet vs Rachel Rhodes! In the top half Paul faced Uldis Lapikens, and then Tom Duggan (defending champion: and was defeated 11-0!) to face Julian in the final. Despite what's said about John Clark being "arguably the best player in Britain" (or something like that), I would nominate Julian for that title - he is a formidable opponent and has now attained the highest ever Biba ranking @ 2051. In his semi-final against Rachel he led 10-3 and Rachel took it to DMP before he prevailed.

In the **Consolation (38)** Brian Lever (2nd Round entrant) battled it out with Arthur Musgrove (1st Round entrant) in the semi final, the prize being a match with David Nathan who despatched Uldis Lapikens in the prog semi final. David proved his mettle by beating Brian and thus winning his 11th Biba 1st place trophy, just one behind Brain.

Lewis Young proved beyond doubt that his dad, Neil Young, is a great teacher, for it was Lewis (taught by his dad) that sat down in the final of the **Last Chance (32)** to face Lee Wood. Neil obviously knows a thing or two for Lewis emerged the victor to win his first ever Biba element. Neil didn't fair so well, he was knocked out by Arthur Musgrove in the 1st Round - but Arthur then fell to Lewis. Justice!

So many players had gone home by the time the 3-pointer, **Sandwich (16)** started that its entry was a full sixteen short of ideal. Mind you, that didn't bother John Reddington, he ploughed through the field, beating Ed Turner in the final.

Although Jeff Barber was the night's winner, the battle in the **Friday 500 (18)** between Myke Wignall and Nicky Check is just one point apart. After squandering a good lead, Nicky is now trailing by 1 point and the £100 first prize. Perhaps he'll do it next month ... or not! Creeping up into the Top 16 we have Marcus Wrinch, John Hedge, Brian Lever, Paul Watts and Paul Barwick, so it's all going to happen next month.

The same goes for the **Poker (12)**. This saw another change at the top, and this time Tony Fawcett goes into 1st place knocking Paul Gilbertson into 2nd. Myke Wignall is threatening to knock them both off next month ... and so is Vicky Pemberton! It'll make for an exciting 'final' in November.

Despite my best efforts to drag players away from the poker and chouettes and head-to-heads, I could only muster a measly number of players into the **Team (4)** - and I was one of those four! John Broomfield (making a welcome return to Biba), came out the sole victor, after he beat John Hedge in the final.

Finally

On the whole the weekend went wellish. There was one dispute that I was called to that proved impossible to adjudicate satisfactorily; although it concerned the misreading/misplaying of the dice, it wasn't that which caused the problem. One player (A) moved a 56 (example) and his opponent (B) said it was a 54 (example). The issue was that (A) thought that (B) was too slow in calling out the misplay - he argued that (B) had plenty of time to call out before the dice were lifted, and that it should be a major consideration in deciding who was 'right' about the dice being 56 or 54.

He was wrong - it is not a consideration at all. No opponent is obliged to say anything at all until the move is completed by the dice being lifted, then they can take as long as they like to decide to accept the illegal play or have it re-rolled. It matters not how long your opponent takes - he has time to consider if the misplay favours him or not, and then he can act accordingly. Player (A), by stating that (B) should have mentioned the misplay before the dice were lifted is in essence depriving his opponent of the opportunity to decide on what to do with an illegal play. The two following rules 'protect' (B) are:

4.5 Lifting Dice. Players conclude their turn by lifting either or both dice. --- After the player has lifted both of the dice the move can only be changed upon an opponent's demand to replay an illegal move.

4.8 Illegal Moves. Upon drawing attention to an illegal move the player may condone it or demand that the full roll be played legally. An illegal move is condoned by the opponent rolling their own dice or turning the cube.



Andy's Analysis

Andy Darby's commentary on his match against Chris Ternel

Having spent four hours driving from Southampton I was sure I'd miss the

Friday night 500 tournament but I made it with 15 minutes to spare. In the second round (on Friday) I lost to Julian Fetterlain and as I ate my pizza at 1am Saturday morning (it took an hour and a half to arrive) I wondered if this was to be another 'bomb out' weekend at Biba for me.

I met Simonetta Herrera in my first match and then her husband, Roland in the second. I

remember their wedding day tournament very well but I'd never had the chance to play either of them. Not only are they a very nice couple but both were tough opponents too. I was relieved to have made it through the first day having had a 1st round bye.

Day 2 started with some beginner I've never heard of - Peter Bennet. Far from it, Peter's list of victories is longer than my list of tournaments. However, one of us was on for a hat trick. Peter could win his 3rd Biba entry in a row and I could win a 3rd 'beat Peter Bennet in a Main'. Despite Peter's 'lucky board' I squeezed out a win with some good rolling

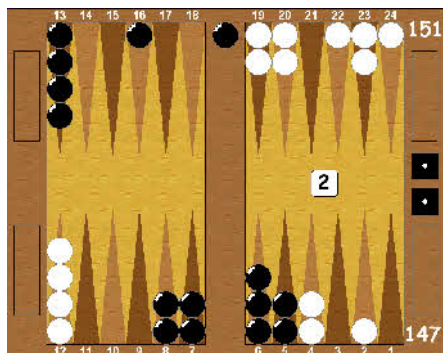
and I moved on to play . . in the semi final.

Having made the final I went for 20 Benson and Hedges . . ok that's exaggerating, it was only 19 . . and then I sat down for the final. I don't think I'd ever even spoken to my opponent, Chris Ternel, let alone played him. Camera rolling, lights, action.....

What follows are merely my thoughts throughout the match. I've tried to avoid dull mathematical analysis and on advice I've only really commented on my own plays. In all the positions I am playing as black, to 11-points.

Game 1 - Black 0 White 0

Position 5

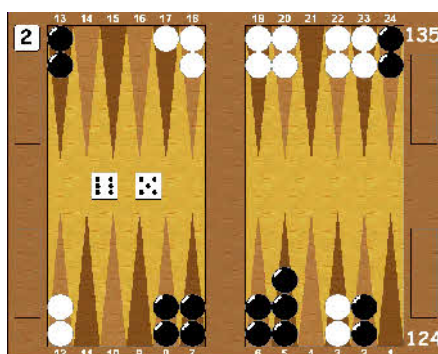


Black cube action

Cubing from the bar is never easy but I was sure this is a cube. Twenty shots to hit, potential for four or more behind a 4-prime and no real ammo for Chris to continue the attack if I fan. Even if I miss first time and Chris picks up the second blot I've got another go most of the time. . surely it's a cube?!

Unfortunately I underestimated the weakness of the second blot and a Snowie rollout shows it to clearly be a No double, take.

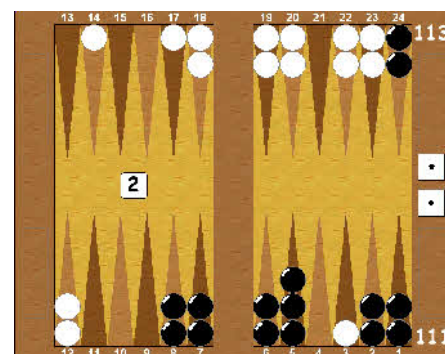
Position 12



White to play 65

I always find running from the anchor a tough choice and at first glance it looks scary to go now. However after 13/7 13/8, the illusionary safe play, you have to ask yourself "And then what?" Hats off to Chris here for playing 22/11, great play and anything else is a blunder.

Position 14



White cube action

With my 1- and 2-points made I'm effectively in a game of my 11 checkers vs Chris's 15 and that never makes for a fair contest. Chris's open 4-point will hinder him and generate shots (it's nearly as good as me having two checkers on there) however my timing will just cause my position to crumble before I get one. Good re-cube from Chris, and clear pass from me.

Continued ►

Biba & World Backgammon Association

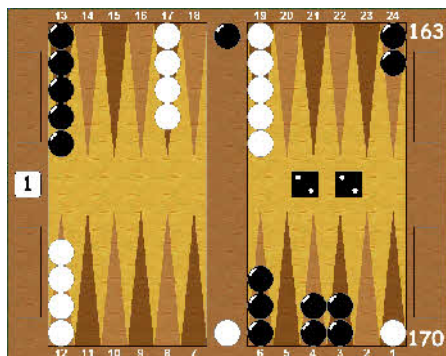
Dedicated To Backgammon

There isn't a BG club in Bournemouth but I am lucky enough to have one of the great Gentlemen of British Backgammon to play against, Brian Busfield. Brian quite often says that BG is just like life. It doesn't matter how lucky you are because you never know what's around the corner.

If BG is like life then this next game is me entering a dark room and looking for the light switch. By the time I find it I've wrecked the room.

Game 2 - Black 0 White 2

Position 4

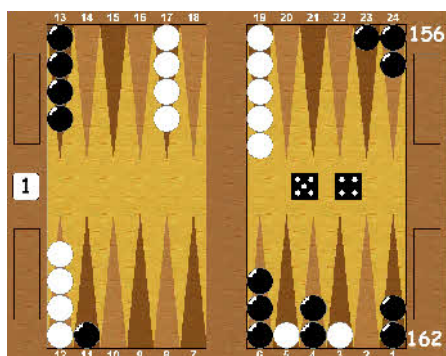


Black to play 22

When I looked at this in the comfort of home I found the right play straight away, 25/21 13/11(2). So what was going on in my head during the final when I played 25/23 13/11 3/1*(2)?

There are three main strategies in backgammon - race, attack or block. The first three moves of this game all play naturally and mentally I'm in attack mode so when the 22 comes along I continue the thread and attack. The resultant position is very 'Andy Darby', potentially useful but very ugly. I might be in attack mode but with no ammunition I'm doomed.

Position 5

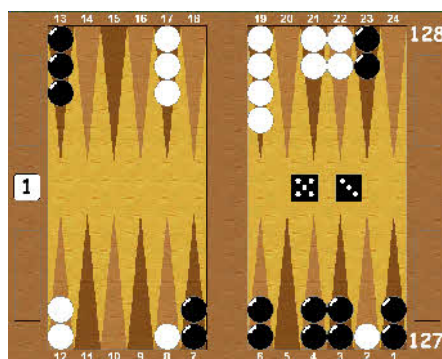


Black to play 54

I'm still looking for the light switch but having stubbed my toe on the previous play I make this 54 roll extra awkward by

playing 23/14. Even the correct play, 24/20 11/6 looks horrible with little chance of recreating a block in my out-field.

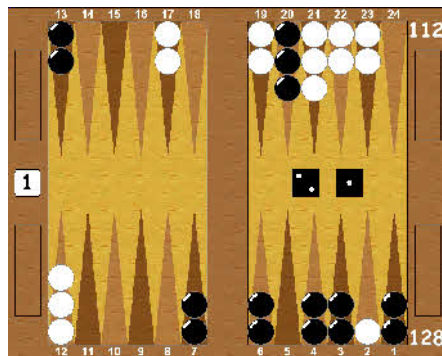
Position 10



Black to play 53

Having put Chris in the air with 13/8* I can seize the moment and move my back men forward 23/20. The wrong idea is to create builders for the 5-point with 13/8* 13/10. This just leaves a completely disjointed position.

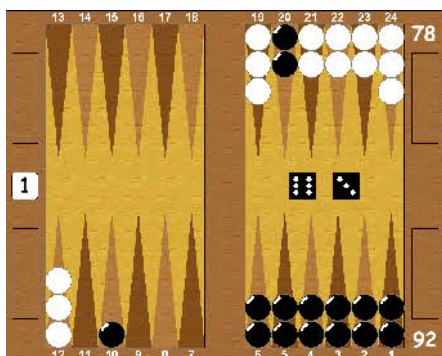
Position 12



Black to play 21

The correct play of 7/5 7/6 looks very clear now. Less shots to be hit with, less blots, starts the 5-point and when I'm missed I get more good numbers. Instead I moved 13/10.

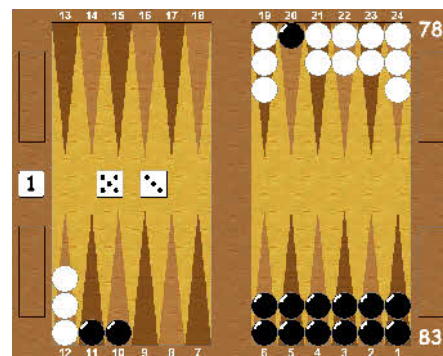
Position 18



Black to play 63

There's absolutely no reason to go from the anchor here with my 20/11. I can still play on my side and maintain my board. I effectively turn the rolls 62, 44, and 53 into good rolls for Chris. The rest of the time the position looks very much the same and so I should just wait and play 10/1 as Snowie suggests.

Position 18

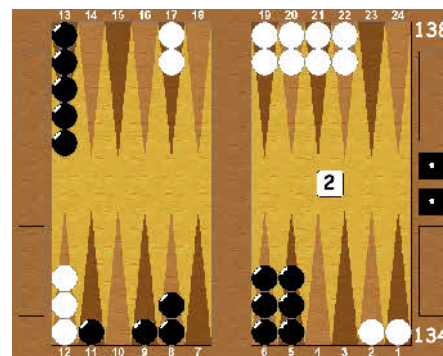


White to play 53

Oh look.....53. I hope that wasn't an expensive vase I just knocked over!! As you'll see later in the match, I have a knack for turning my opponent's bad rolls into good ones at crucial moments. Found the light switch now and all I can do is stand and look at the mess I'm in.

Game 4 - Black 1 White 3

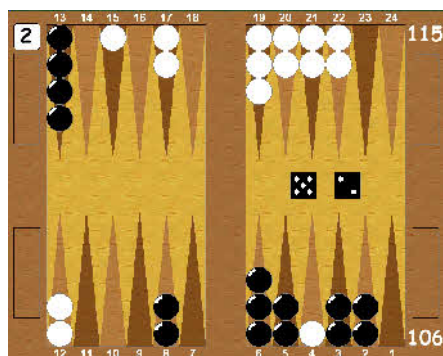
Position 6



Black cube action

Once you've got all of your checkers past the mid-point and your opponent still has two far back you should certainly think about cubing. The threats aren't quite strong enough yet to do so. ➡

Position 10

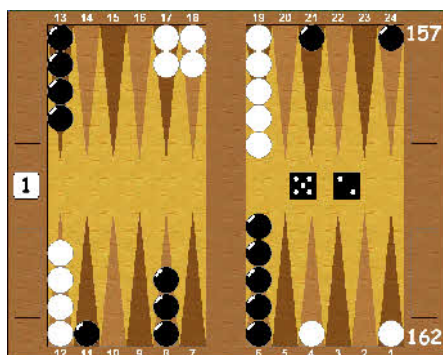


Black to play 52

I considered 13/8 6/4* which would have been a big blunder. Fortunately "Improve Your Backgammon" by Paul Lamford has an excellent rule of thumb for assessing whether you should hit or not. If the safe play leaves you more than 10% ahead in the race you should play safe. (For anybody with the book it's on page 20). I used Paul's rambling to come up with 13/6.

Game 5 - Black 1 White 5

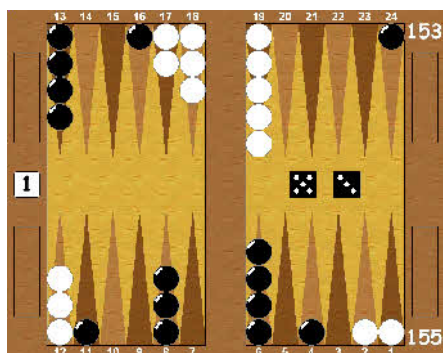
Position 3



Black to play 52

The best play is 21/16 13/11 playing with only two blots. I made my play of 21/16 6/4* to try and generate gammons or complexity. Duplicating 4s and leaving four blots is correct if the checker on my 11-point is instead on the 10-point.

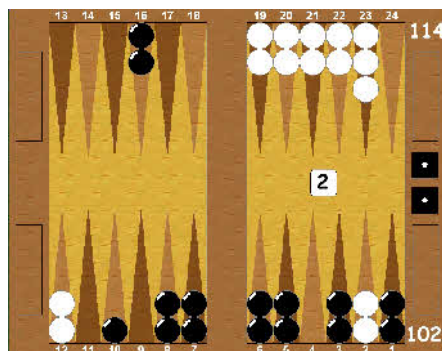
Position 4



Black to play 53

Although I make it with 6/1 4/1, I'm not sure making the ace is right but I need to clean up. I'm now playing with 13 checkers and life could get awkward for me later in the game. Thankfully I manage to run it round and my only concern becomes when to cube.

Position 11

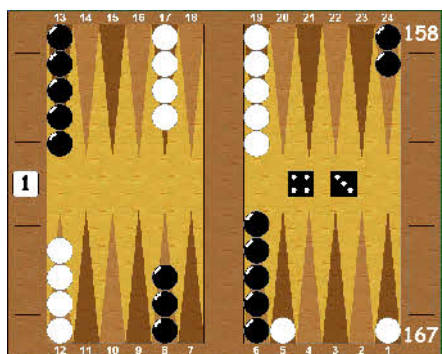


Black cube action

In this position it's important to visualise how the position looks after the next roll for both sides. Before I cubed I quickly went through every possible roll for me to check how they play. Nothing leaves a direct shot and a lot of the time Chris destroys his position.

Game 6 - Black 2 White 5

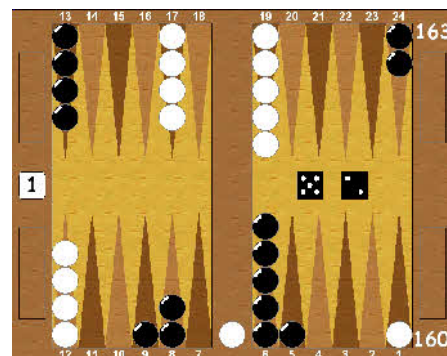
Position 2



Black to play 43

Lots of people hit twice here with 8/5* 5/1* but the checker on the ace-point and no builder on the 8- make the position awkward from the start. After my play of 13/9 8/5* the upside is far bigger and with a completely open board on white's side, being hit isn't terrible.

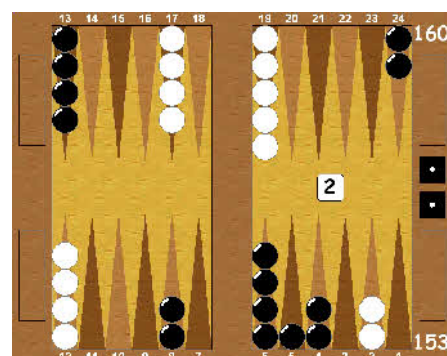
Position 3



Black to play 52

This is a good position for illustrating the power of the points and how bad blots are. After I play 9/4 6/4 there are 19 hits and after 8/3 5/3 there are seven shots of which double-four picks up two. It's a big difference but the 4-point is so powerful (not as good as the 5-) verses the 3-point and two blots, that the extra risk is worth it.

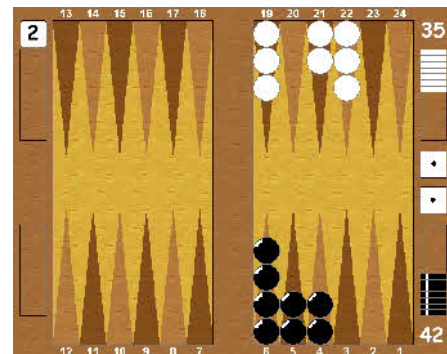
Position 4



Black cube action

Chris looks awkward and I'm sure it's a pass on enough sequences after the next two rolls. It's close but I should have waited.

Position 18



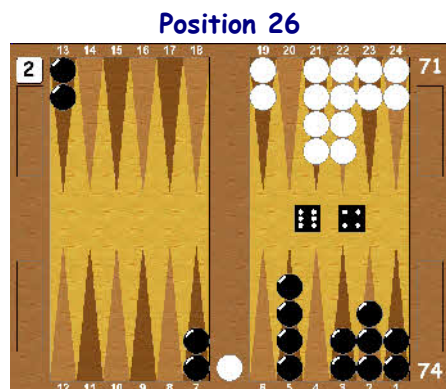
White on roll

Chris thought long and hard over cubing here and I used the time to work out the response. I use an adjusted pip-count and race formula to work out my win- ➡

ning chances. I remember coming up with 21%. I then did the laborious and nauseating take-point calculation. I worked out I had a take.

After the next roll and double pass Chris commented that I was taking when he first thought about it. Recubing is difficult at this score in any match let alone a final.

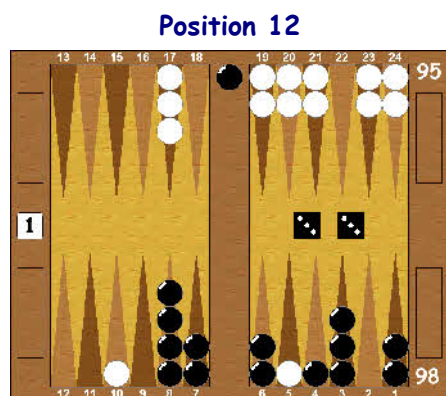
Game 8 - Black 3 White 7



Black to play 64

You know you're applying some principles incorrectly when you see the same one misplayed more than once in the match. In general leaving the minimum shots to a 5-point board is correct. I get away with 13/7 13/9 here but you'll see later on in the match how, to my cost I leave needless shots.

Game 9 Position 12 Black 3 White 9

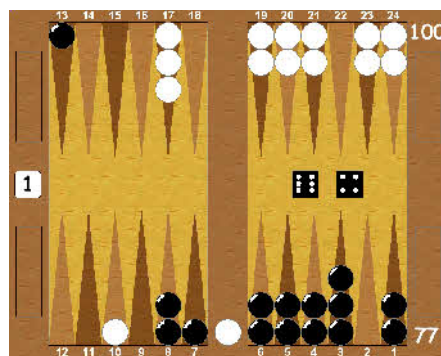


Black to play 33

Chris was right not to cube the roll before. Although I play 25/22 8/5*(2) 7/4, I'm still 8-away and I get maximum value from gammoning the 4-cube that's compulsory to send back. Sure the gammons I'll get if I fluke a win from here are small but they're enough to make it wrong to cube.

And here's why!! The 33 is massive for me now, completely turning the tables.

Position 14

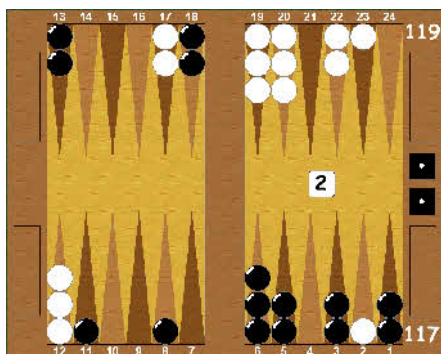


Black to play 64

With the theme tune to the great escape ringing in my ears I decide it would be really clever to leave a shot by playing 13/7 8/4, when I could leave none, against a 5-point board and just to make it a very special play I make the next roll 66 leave two blots instead of one! Definitely a 'did I really make that play' moment. Snowie decided to play 13/9 7/1.

Game 12 - Black 7 White 9

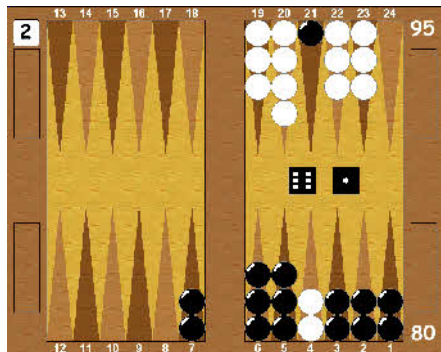
Position 6



Black cube action

With gammons being worth the match I only need a sniff of them to cube.

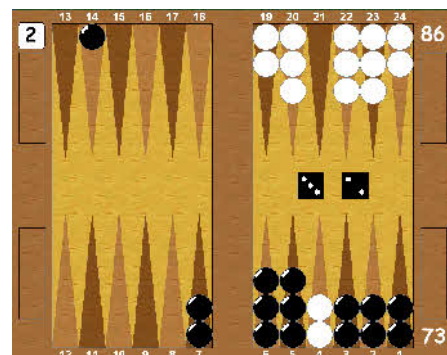
Position 15



Black to play 61

After a little bit of fisty-cuffs we end up in this position. The 6 looks clear, 21/15 and I look at 6/5. However, I decided that the extra shot I leave by playing to the 14-point with 21/14 is worth it for the extra attackers should Chris roll a 6 next turn.

Position 16



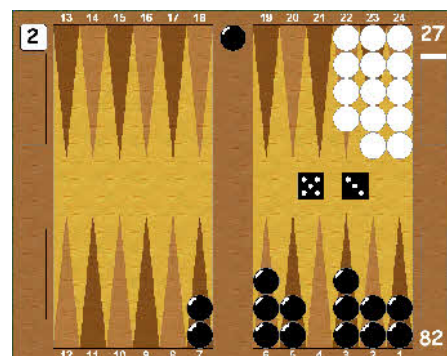
Black to play 32

So what am I supposed to do here? When in doubt run.....no, when in doubt stay put.....no, when in doubt.....

Obviously I knew Chris had to play 6s to leave a shot but that's only happening a third of the time next go. Meanwhile I'd like to get this blot home and incorrectly, both in strategy and correctness, that's what I attempted to do with 14/11 5/3.

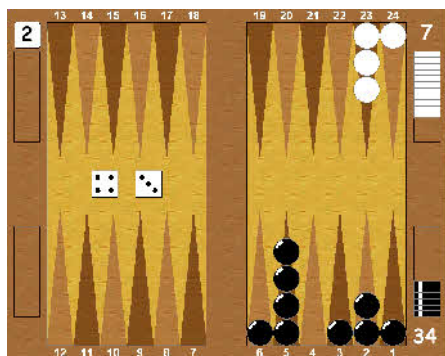
After the match Chris pointed out that if I'd played 14/12 and then a 3 from the 6- or 5-point I was giving two fewer shots and making 61 bad for him. He also suggested that staying back might be best - which of course it is.

As it turned out, Chris rolled the 61 I could have made awkward for him (I told you earlier I have a knack of making my opponent's bad rolls good!) and I ended up on the bar for ages. I didn't re-enter until he'd left no shots at all and had borne off a checker in this position:



I run round as fast as I can with 25/17 but it looks a bit late . . .

Position 27



White to play 43

... I fail to win the point, and I lose the match.

All in all a fun match and Chris was a pleasure to play against. The lesson for me was 'Don't make your opponents bad rolls good!!'

Isn't this game easy after the event? ☆

Here are the match stats from Snowie.

The Snowie match file is on the CD-ROM version of Bibafax or can be requested via Biba HQ.

It is also available in JellyFish format or plain text; and as an HTML file that can be opened using your web browser.

Match detailed statistics for BG in London

Player	Andy Darby	Chris Ternel
Rating	world class	advanced
Overall	3.365/10.226	6.335/20.342
Errors(blunders)	13(2)	19(8)
Checker play errors		
Checker play	2.955/9.470	5.259/17.482
Errors(blunders)	11(2)	15(6)
Double errors		
Overall	0.410/0.756	0.922/2.575
Missed double	0.046/0.090	0.922/2.575
Wrong double	0.364/0.666	0.000/0.000
Errors(blunders)	2(0)	3(2)
Take errors		
Overall	0.000/0.000	0.153/0.286
Wrong take	0.000/0.000	0.000/0.000
Wrong pass	0.000/0.000	0.153/0.286
Errors(blunders)	0(0)	1(0)
Andy Darby was 60.12% - 39.88% favourite		



Bright 'n' Breezy 2009

9, 10, 11 January

Sponsored by **casinorip.com**



The first tournament of the 2009 season, and without a doubt, the favourite of many backgammon players from around the world. The usual four elements are there for your enjoyment, including £200 online credit courtesy of online **casinorip.com**.



To launch the 2009 season there's a special added prize for the Friday 500 - the winner gets free accommodation and registration for the **casinorip.com** British Open in April.

To avoid disappointment all players are advised to book their accommodation now because Biba has a limited number of rooms. See page 22.



casinorip.com



* This is a Biba Grand Prix and UK Finals Event *

The Gilbertson UK Finals

5,6,7,December



This event is so much more than the UK Finals. In addition to the Saturday Qualifier, Snowball, the Sunday Main, Consolation and Last Chance we also have some extras to keep away the boredom!

Optional: Black-tie and posh frocks for Saturday night!

Rosey's Rollout

Win a bottle of champagne!



Wii Boxing Knockout



Ever wanted to 'have a go' at an opponent who got lucky dice and beat you? Well, enter '**Shazza's Slug-out**' and have a go!

Shoot 'em up 1-point Knockout

Are you quick on the draw? Enter the Shoot 'em up and see if you can walk away with the 1 point knockout 1st prize



Secret Santa

Bring a present for Santa's sack (value £5 to £10 value) and get a present in return. A free raffle ticket given for each present to win an extra surprise present!

2008 & 2009 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 backgammon,

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 @ all Barceló Hotels

Reservations on 0870 1610 797

(9am to 9pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm @ weekends) and quote 'backgammon'.

Single room: 1 night £61, two nights £106. (for 2009, see below)

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

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

2008 Backgammon Calendar				Note venue changes ◀		
Dec 5,6,7	Gilbertson UK Finals	-		Walton Hotel	◀	Double KO
2009 Backgammon Calendar						
Jan 9,10,11	Casino rip .com Bright 'n' Breezy	GP	UK	Brighton		Knockout
Feb 6,7,8	Jarvis Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry		Swiss
Mar 6,7,8	Biba International Championship	GP	-	Daventry		Knockout
Apr 3,4,5	Casino rip .com British Open	GP	UK	Daventry		Knockout
Apr ??	Manchester 1-Day	GP	-	Manchester		Combination
May 8,9,10	County Cups Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry		Swiss
Jun 5,6,7	The English Open	GP	-	Daventry		Knockout
Jul 3,4,5	Biba World Championship	GP	UK	Daventry		Knockout
Jul ??	14th Liverpool Open	GP	-	Liverpool		Combination
Jul 31, Aug 1,2	SAC Trophy	GP	UK	Daventry		Swiss
Aug ??	13th Mind Sports Olympiad	-	-	tba		Swiss
Sep 4,5,6	Backgammon in London @ Biba	GP	-	Daventry		Knockout
Oct 2,3,4	Sandy Osborne Memorial	GP	-	Daventry		Knockout
Oct ??	17th Irish Open	GP	UK	Dublin		Knockout
Oct 30,31, Nov 1	Arthur Wright's Big 70!	GP	UK	Daventry		Swiss
Dec 4,5,6	Gilbertson UK Finals	-		Daventry		Double KO

** 2009 Rates

Single: 1 night £63.50, two nights £110.50

Double/twin: 1 night £103, two nights £193

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.

6, 7, 8 February - Jarvis Trophy

The first of our four Swiss format events and the second event this year to be a UK Finals Qualifier event. If you like playing 6 x 11 point matches over the weekend, then this is the event for you. Make an early start and rack up championship points, both Grand Prix and Ranking - and could be the start of being in the money!

Townharbour Trophy - Report by Michael Crane

Friday 500 (15)

So, we have finally reached the last of the 500 events, and I know you're all wondering, did Myke or Nicky come out on top? I can't say here - you'll have to read about it in the results on page 28!

With a field of 15 we had an open 16 draw with one buyback, this went to Andy Darby, but it did him go good and he went out (twice) in Round 1. The final four were Tony Fawcett vs Jeff Barber and Paul Gilbertson vs Nicky Check (a clue there for the observant among you!), with Paul and Tony going through to the Final. Here, it was Paul that prevailed, taking home the bigger half of the pools and the free weekend - and it was only Friday!

Townharbour Trophy (31)

I was expecting a few more, but with a draw of 32 (my faithful assistant, Deana Fawcett and Pat Holly took it in turns to make up the numbers) I'm not going to complain. It gave me a chance to test-drive my latest toy, a Swiss Format Drawsheet. It's based upon an entry of 64 so half that is a good entry. I had played around with it at home and discovered it's far from perfect - it gets mucked about with odd fixtures. Hopefully, 32 should be 'odd' free and work well.

By the end of Round 3 on the Saturday it was clear that the new drawsheet would be OK until the 6th Round pairings, during that I'd have to 'fiddle' a few around depending upon the Round 5 results.

On the Sunday we had two clear halves of **Main (15)** and **Consolation (16)**. Leading the Main field on 3-3 were Peter Bennet vs Julian Fetterlein and David Motley vs Rosey Bensley. Because we were not guaranteed a 6-6 the remaining 11 players had a chance of getting 5-6 thus coming 1st or 2nd. In Round 4 David beat Rosey and Peter beat Julian, for Round 5 the two winners played off for 4-4 and the two losers were paired off. David beat Peter and Julian beat Rosey - leaving us with David being the only player on 5-5 going into the 6th Round.

In the 6th Round, David was pitched against Julian, and Rosey against Peter. David wasn't in the Winner-Takes-All pool, as we were guaranteed a Rollover whether he won 6-6 or not! As it turned out he didn't win 6-6, Julian beat him in the 6th Round thus leaving me with three players on 5-6: David, Julian and Chris

Ternel. Head-to-head encounters didn't reveal a winner; nor did any shared opponents so we resorted to the average score of opponents - which returned our 1st as David, with Julian 2nd and Chris 3rd. Sporting as ever, Julian remarked on hearing David was declared the winner, "That's only fair, he was the only one to win 5-5."

Meanwhile in the Consolation bracket we had eight on 1-1, that was whittled down to four on 2-2, giving us a final round pairing of Myke Wignall vs Paul Gilbertson and Jeff Barber vs Mike Heard. Jeff and Paul emerged as the only two on 3-3 and the final placing was determined by their shared opponent, Rachel Rhodes, whom Paul beat and Jeff didn't.

Poker (7)

Not a very big entry, but enough to get a table together and some exciting poker played. Ed Turner, who made a last-minute decision to enter was the first to leave, followed a bit later by Neil Young, and not long after, Mick Vacarey bowed out. This left the 'usual suspects' to battle it out: Rosey Bensley, Paul Gilbertson, Myke Wignall and Tony Fawcett. Clinging to a slender two points lead in the Grand Prix, it was Tony to exit next. Outflanked by the two men, Rosey couldn't remain in and she went out leaving it Myke and Paul. It wasn't too long before Myke 'Mad Mullah' Wignall went all-in (he does this a lot!), but this time he came unstuck and left Paul as the night's winner. To see how this affected the Grand Prix Championship, see page 29.

Staying with poker: I have been talking with a few of the established and potential poker players about when a player can actually enter the poker. Up to date the official view (mine) was that if you didn't register for the poker when you registered for the backgammon you couldn't play - however, it was left to the poker director's discretion whether or not to allow late entries. Because the director is also an entrant they can have a vested interest in who or how many players are entered, I have therefore decided that should any non-registered players want to enter the cut-off time will be

8.30pm. I have made it 8.30pm to allow those that were in two minds or not during backgammon registration to later decide to enter. No one, under any circumstances will be allowed to enter after 8.30pm.

Finally

It was a good weekend. The Swiss drawsheet worked very well until Round 6 (as expected) during which I 'hand-drew' opponents as best I could using the 6th round results to guide me. Overall the new random system worked very well in that it allowed players to know whom their next opponent was and that enabled fixtures to be played at a more fluid pace.

For reasons you'll read elsewhere it was a very good weekend for two players, Peter Bennet and Paul Gilbertson. Well done, both of you.

Regarding the WTA Rollover of £285. Because the UK Finals already has eight players into the last 16 (thus giving them an unfair advantage) the rollover will go to the next 'open' entry, the casinorip.com Bright 'n' Breezy in January.

Top: David & Julian
Bottom: Paul & Jeff



Tournament Results

Sandy Osborne Trophy, 3, 4 ,5 October 2008

Main (42)		Last Chance (32)		Poker (12)		Grand Prix @ Sandy:	
1	Julian Fetterlein	1	Lewis Young	1	Tony Fawcett	18.58	Julian Fetterlein
2	Paul Learmount	2	Lee Wood	2	Alison Lee	13.42	Paul Learmount
3&4	Tom Duggan	3&4	Tony Fawcett	3	Lee Wood	13.41	David Nathan
3&4	Rachel Rhodes	3&4	Mick Vacarey	4	Myke Wignall	9.29	Rachel Rhodes
5to8	Marcus Wrinch	5to8	Vicky Chandler	5	Paul Learmount	9.29	Tom Duggan
5to8	Uldis Lapikens	5to8	John Broomfield	6	Vicky Pemberton	9.29	Marcus Wrinch
5to8	Tony Lee	5to8	Andy Darby	7	Neil Young	9.28	Brian Lever
5to8	Peter Bennet	5to8	Myke Wignall	8	Paul Gilbertson	9.28	Arthur Musgrove
						9.27	Lewis Young
Consolation (38)		Friday 500 (18)		Sandwich (16)		6.19	Uldis Lapikens
1	David Nathan	1	Jeff Barber	1	John Reddington	6.19	Jeff Barber
2	Brian Lever	2	Andy Darby	2	Ed Turner	6.19	Tony Lee
3&4	Arthur Musgrove	3&4	Nicky Check	3&4	Gerry Enslin	6.19	Peter Bennet
3&4	Uldis Lapikens	3&4	Brian Lever	3&4	Nicky Check	6.19	John Hedge
5to8	Peter Christmas	5to8	Myke Wignall			6.18	Peter Christmas
5to8	Philip Tutchings	5to8	Marcus Wrinch	Team (4)		6.18	Phil Tutchings
5to8	Mike Heard	5to8	Lewis Young	1	John Broomfield	6.17	Lee Wood
5to8	Peter Bennet	5to8	John Broomfield			4.13	Ray Tannen
4.13	John Broomfield	4.13	Chris Ternel	4.11	Tony Fawcett	2.57	Vicky Chandler
4.13	Mike Heard	4.13	Edwin Turner	4.11	Mick Vacarey	2.06	Arthur Wright
4.13	Nicky Check	4.13	Gerry Enslin	2.58	Paul Barwick	2.06	Neil Everitt
4.13	Lawrence Powell	4.12	Andrew Darby	2.58	Myke Wignall	2.06	John Musgrove
4.13	Mardi Ohannessian	4.12	John Reddington	2.58	Vicky Pemberton		

Ranking Changes @ Sandy:

New	Old		1742	1735	Arthur Musgrove	1817	1839	John Reddington
2051	2002	Julian Fetterlein	1714	1728	Nicky Check	1528	1537	Lee Wood
1957	1941	Brian Lever	1700	1724	Paul Gilbertson	1501	1493	Lewis Young
1920	1928	Chris Ternel	1650	1595	Jeff Barber	1492	1484	Phil Tutchings
1919	1941	Lawrence Powell	1627	1630	Andrew Darby	1491	1494	Myke Wignall
1916	1910	Peter Bennet	1625	1629	John Broomfield	1486	1506	Gerry Enslin
1861	1855	Tony Lee	1612	1631	Stewart Pemberton	1460	1489	Neil Young
1848	1864	Ray Tannen	1606	1603	Edwin Turner	1460	1390	Paul Learmount
1834	1792	David Nathan	1599	1600	John Hedge	1420	1443	Neil Everitt
1829	1796	Rachel Rhodes	1587	1562	Marcus Wrinch	1417	1426	Mick Vacarey
1824	1811	Uldis Lapikens	1579	1577	Mardi Ohannessian	1406	1419	Arthur Wright
1807	1804	Peter Christmas	1560	1577	Jon Barnes	1338	1350	Paul Barwick
1778	1769	Mike Heard	1560	1574	Tony Fawcett	1316	1332	Vicky Pemberton
1756	1735	Tom Duggan	1548	1565	John Musgrove	1294	1321	Linda Taylor
			1547	1560	Vicky Chandler			

Irish Open, 24, 25, 26 October, 2008

Main (54)		Consolation (64)		Last Chance (32)		Friday Jackpot (14)	
1	Allen Christensen	1	Paul Gilbertson	1	Martin Barkwill	1	Cracker
2	Stuart Mann	2	Mike Heard	2	Mark Heidenfeld	2	Brendan Burgess
3/4	Ulrich Anderson	3/4	Juliet Fennel	3/4	Peter Bennet	<u>Grand Prix @ Irish:</u>	
3/4	Tony Fawcett	3/4	Frank Conway	3/4	Peter Chan		
5/8	Felix Vink	5/8	Brendan Gasparro	5/8	Liz Perry	21.96	Allen Christensen
5/8	? Herból	5/8	Bob Atkins	5/8	Rosey Bensley	21.96	Stuart Mann
5/8	Larry Bennet	5/8	Jeff Ellis	5/8	Steffen Lundstrom	18.57	Paul Gilbertson
5/8	Gary Sweeney	5/8	Arthur Cater	5/8	Malcolm Robertson	15.86	Tony Fawcett
15.86	Ulrich Anderson	9.28	Mike Heard	7.31	Ray Faughnan	4.89	Jeff Barber
10.98	Brian Herból	9.27	Martin Barkwill	6.18	Bob Atkins	4.89	John Reddington
10.98	Felix Vink	7.31	Brian Lever	6.18	Brendan Gasparro	4.89	Nicky Check
10.98	Larry Bennet	7.31	Gary Sweeney	6.17	Mark Heidenfeld	4.89	Padraic O'Naullain
9.28	Frank Conway	7.31	Jeff Ellis	4.89	Arthur Cater	4.89	Peter Bennet
9.28	Juliet Fennel	7.31	Joe Dooley	4.89	Brendan Burgess	4.89	Peter Chan

4.89	Rachel Rhodes	4.12	John Broomfield	2.58	Chris Ternel	2.57	Rosey Bensley
4.89	Sean Casey	4.12	Mick Vacarey	2.58	Jacob Anderson	2.06	Phil Tutchings
4.89	Steffen Lundstrom	4.12	Shay Mulhall	2.58	Malcolm Robertson		
4.89	Tage Mellgren	2.58	Billy Sharp	2.58	Mike Waid		
4.89	Uldis Lapikens	2.58	Aubrey Taplev	2.57	Liz Perry		

The Townharbour Trophy, 31 October, 1, 2, November, 2008

[illegible]

Ranking changes @ TT:

New	Old							
2068	2051	Julian Fetterlein	1623	1587	Marcus Wrinch	1531	1547	John Reddington
1939	1920	Chris Ternel	1610	1627	Andrew Darby	1530	1492	Paul Plumptre
1919	1916	Peter Bennet	1601	1579	Mardi Ohannessian	1508	1491	Myke Wignall
1839	1824	Uldis Lapikens	1600	1599	John Hedge	1501	1528	Lee Wood
1801	1829	Rachel Rhodes	1580	1606	Edwin Turner	1500	1460	Neil Young
1766	1778	Mike Heard	1564	1560	Tony Fawcett	1475	1482	Irving Czechowicz
1718	1700	Paul Gilbertson	1559	1612	Stewart Pemberton	1464	1488	Miles Farren
1710	1650	David Motley	1536	1565	Athanasia Petselis	1406	1406	Arthur Wright
1680	1714	Nicky Check	1535	1560	Jon Barnes	1401	1417	Mick Vacarey
1653	1650	Jeff Barber	1531	1492	Phil Tutchings	1387	1333	Rosey Bensley

Grand Prix Championship 2008 - 192 Entrants

Peter Bennet's battle with Chris Ternel (which continues in the Ranking Championship) has finally been resolved - and it's Peter who has come out on top. Congratulations, Peter, well done. Hard luck, Chris, it was a close thing right until the end of the year.

88.75	Peter Bennet	46.44	Tom Duggan	28.90	Paul Barwick	17.55	Paul Learmount
83.60	Chris Ternel	45.93	Phil Tutchings	26.32	Roy Hollands	17.55	Dave Moon
72.63	Tony Fawcett	44.89	Irving Czechowicz	25.94	Larry Bennet	17.54	Sean Williams
72.23	Mike Heard	43.84	Edwin Turner	25.76	Lee Wood	17.54	Rida Hassan
71.20	Uldis Lapikens	42.83	Steve Rimmer	25.29	Paul Plumptre	17.50	Angela Dell
66.80	John Reddington	42.29	Mark Heidenfeld	22.70	Arthur Musgrove	17.03	Mick Butterfield
64.49	Julian Fetterlein	42.04	Peter Chan	21.66	Mahmoud Jahanbani	17.03	Neil Everitt
61.86	Paul Gilbertson	41.78	Jeff Barber	19.61	Raymond Kershaw	16.52	Wayne Felton
59.85	Ray Tannen	40.24	Adrian Jones	19.61	Kevin Stebbing	16.49	Fak Laight
59.34	Stewart Pemberton	38.70	Andy Darby	19.61	Dave Treacy	15.48	Ralph Eskinazi
59.30	Rachel Rhodes	38.17	Jon Barnes	19.59	John Wright	15.48	Chris Purchase
57.80	Ann Pocknell	37.64	Gerry Enslin	19.59	Roland Herrera	15.48	Ian Davidson
56.29	Brian Lever	37.13	Arthur Wright	19.09	John Broomfield	15.48	Cecilia Sparke
56.25	John Hedge	37.13	Martin Barkwill	19.07	Vicky Chandler	15.47	Richard Holness
55.72	David Motley	36.59	Mardi Ohannessian	18.58	Mike Hanson	15.45	Michael Bennett
54.68	Peter Christmas	34.06	Raj Jansari	18.58	Zoe Cunningham	15.11	Felix Vink
53.66	Mick Vacarey	33.55	Vicky Pemberton	18.57	Stephen Drake	14.97	Neil Young
53.14	Nicky Check	32.28	Stuart Mann	18.57	Bill Young	14.44	David Horner
51.60	Myke Wignall	31.48	Lawrence Powell	18.56	Cynthia Roberts	14.18	Sean Casey
51.60	Marcus Wrinch	30.41	Rosey Bensley	18.56	Michel Lamote	13.42	Jimmi Wong
49.53	David Nathan	29.88	Dorothy Lee	18.04	Crispin Duke	13.42	David Barker

13.42	Neil Davidson	8.24	Jackie Griffiths	5.16	Mike Waid	2.58	Michael Maley
13.40	Philip Virschjager	7.74	Neil Webb	4.89	Brendan Burgess	2.58	Chris Bray
13.39	Lewis Young	7.74	Mike Barrett	4.13	Dale Taylor	2.58	Alistair Hogg
12.89	Daniel Tutchings	7.31	Jeff Ellis	4.13	Bob Parmley	2.58	Mike Main
12.38	Kevin Jones	7.31	Gary Sweeny	4.13	David Wallbank	2.58	Billy Sharp
12.37	Nigel Merrigan	6.71	Malcolm Robertson	4.13	Monica Beckerson	2.58	Aubrey Tapley
12.36	George Hall	6.71	Fanika Petkovska	4.13	Paul Ramsey	2.58	Tim Line
11.87	Howard Furr-Barton	6.71	Gaz Owen	4.13	Steve Taylor	2.58	Brian Metcalf
11.86	Paul Watts	6.70	Eddie Barker	4.13	Bob Young	2.58	Jacob Anderson
11.85	Simon K Jones	6.19	Geoff Oliver	4.13	David McNamara	2.58	Marc Turner
11.35	John Thomas	6.19	Peter Snape	4.13	Richard Biddle	2.58	John Sprague
10.84	Bill Spiers	6.19	Mark Dixon	4.13	John Hurst	2.58	Ian Trow
10.82	Linda Taylor	6.19	John Batty	4.13	George Suilimirski	2.58	Gary Brooker
10.31	Jonathan Powell	6.19	Walter Busato	4.13	Alastair Simpson	2.57	Jeremy Limb
10.31	Sue Keeble	6.19	Max Limb	4.13	Christopher Baxter	2.57	Eamon Keogh
10.30	George Miltiadou	6.18	Matthew Fisher	4.13	Ray Fard	2.56	Simon Morecroft
9.81	Miles Farren	6.18	Bob Atkins	4.13	Nick Valley	2.06	Jon Sharpe
9.29	Alan Beckerson	6.18	Brendan Gasparro	4.13	Carter Mattig	2.06	Blaine Buchanan
9.29	Ian Tarr	6.18	Andy Bell	4.13	Costas Costi	2.06	Julian Minwalla
9.29	Pat Holly	6.18	Mike Ireland	4.13	Steve Grundy	2.06	Paul White
9.28	Juliet Fennel	6.18	David Phillips	4.13	Andreas Vrhosek	2.06	Simon Heath
9.28	Frank Conway	6.18	Richard Owsley	4.13	Chrissi Williams	2.06	Chris Reeves
8.77	Tim Mooring	6.17	Tony Walters	4.13	Athanasia Petselis	2.06	Karen Lipyeat
8.77	Tony Lee	6.16	Peter Edwards	4.12	Cedric Lytton	2.06	John Musgrove
8.76	Liz Perry	5.68	Cliff Connick	4.12	Maurice Ekpenyong	1.55	Geoff Conn
8.74	Carl Dell	5.68	Eamon Keogh	4.12	Sam Goodwin		
8.25	Steve Hallet	5.67	Simonetta Barone	4.11	Simon Barget		
		5.16	Tim Brown	2.58	Andrew Pogson		

Ranking Championship, 2008 -170 entrants, 38 qualifiers

The battle for 1st & 2nd that had been raging between Peter Bennet and Chris Ternel came to a conclusion at the Townharbour Trophy. Peter managed to pull ahead - giving him the 2008 Double!

Q	2251.14	Peter Bennet	Q	1682.00	Brian Lever	8	1286.88	Vicky Chandler
Q	2235.43	Chris Ternel	Q	1671.50	Stephen Drake	8	1253.50	Fak Laight
Q	2204.50	Marcus Wrinch	Q	1537.07	Arthur Wright	8	1212.38	Mike Barrett
Q	2175.29	Uldis Lapikens	Q	1451.29	Larry Bennett	7	1909.14	Paul Learmount
Q	2160.71	Stewart Pemberton	Q	1443.71	Vicky Pemberton	7	1879.29	Dave Moon
Q	2159.07	Myke Wignall	Q	1430.71	Rosey Bensley	7	1739.86	Steve Rimmer
Q	2150.86	Tony Fawcett	Q	1247.57	Linda Taylor	7	1641.00	Johnathan Powell
Q	2142.71	Rachel Rhodes	13	1745.08	Lawrence Powell	7	1491.71	Dorothy Lee
Q	2140.21	Paul Gilbertson	13	1601.54	Roy Hollands	7	1434.86	Fanika Petkovska
Q	2117.50	Adrian Jones	12	1862.92	Ann Pocknell	6	1806.83	Sean Williams
Q	2108.36	Mike Heard	11	1746.00	Kevin Stebbing	6	1795.17	Neil Davidson
Q	2108.29	David Motley	11	1738.45	Dave Treacy	6	1793.67	John Thomas
Q	2088.57	David Nathan	11	1473.36	Irving Czechowicz	6	1766.50	William Spiers
Q	2079.07	Jeff Barber	11	1417.18	Richard Holness	6	1745.67	Rida Hassan
Q	2070.00	Nicky Check	10	1958.60	Raj Jansari	6	1685.50	Arthur Musgrove
Q	2068.43	Mick Vacarey	10	1428.80	Neil Everitt	6	1675.00	Neil Webb
Q	2059.57	Phil Tutchings	10	1387.40	Crispin Duke	6	1576.50	Max Limb
Q	2057.79	John Hedge	9	1792.78	Mick Butterfield	6	1414.00	Chris Purchase
Q	2047.64	Julian Fetterlein	9	1689.11	David Horner	6	1375.83	Athanasia Petselis
Q	2041.93	Ed Turner	9	1634.44	Neil Young	5	1979.40	David Barker
Q	2039.43	Peter Christmas	8	1941.63	Mark Heidenfeld	5	1977.20	Ralph Eskinazi
Q	2004.29	Gerry Enslin	8	1860.63	Cecilia Sparke	5	1842.40	Stuart Mann
Q	1966.93	Andy Darby	8	1852.50	Zoe Cunningham	5	1703.80	Howard Furr-Barton
Q	1955.79	Peter Chan	8	1815.00	Ray Kershaw	5	1447.60	Roland Herrera
Q	1949.21	Jon Barnes	8	1756.38	Martin Barkwill	5	1023.60	Jerry Limb
Q	1845.14	Mardi Ohannessian	8	1660.63	Ian Davidson	4	1989.25	Sean Casey
Q	1842.29	John Reddington	8	1502.13	Tim Mooring	4	1861.00	Tony Lee
Q	1841.57	Tom Duggan	8	1456.88	Miles Farren	4	1801.75	Ian Tarr
Q	1823.43	Ray Tannen	8	1361.25	Daniel Tutchings	3	1826.33	George Miltiadou
Q	1821.43	Paul Plumptre	8	1316.13	Paul Watts	3	1800.67	Liz Perry
Q	1742.00	Paul Barwick	8	1301.25	Lee Wood	3	1790.67	Mark Dixon

3	1779.00	John Batty	2	1409.00	Lewis Young	1	1207.00	Mike Ireland
3	1697.67	Walter Busato	2	1306.50	Eddie Barker	1	1144.00	Alexis Hogg
3	1546.67	Michael Bennett	2	1282.00	Jackie Griffiths	1	1138.00	Blaine Buchanan
3	1462.00	Gaz Owen	2	1185.50	Robert Tutchings	1	1136.00	Cliff Connick
3	1373.00	Sue Keeble	2	1128.00	Ian Trow	1	1129.00	Geoff Conn
3	1319.67	Nigel Merrigan	2	1072.50	Simonetta Herrera	1	1118.00	Marc Turner
2	1876.00	Chris Baxter	2	1008.50	George Hall	1	1084.00	Sidney Van Gelder
2	1745.50	George Sulimirski	2	919.00	Eamon Keogh	1	1058.00	Chris Bray
2	1719.50	Paul Ramsey	1	1497.00	Julian Minwalla	1	1032.00	David Phillips
2	1710.50	Costas Costi	1	1441.00	Simon Heath	1	1013.00	Al Hogg
2	1684.50	Andy Bell	1	1428.00	Mike Main	1	1010.00	Sam Goodwin
2	1678.50	Chrissi Howell-Williams	1	1409.00	Tony Walters	1	1002.00	Michel Lamote
2	1661.00	Nick Valley	1	1408.00	Peter Edwards	1	1000.00	Brendan Burgess
2	1612.50	Carter Mattig	1	1335.00	John Sprague	1	1000.00	Bill Young
2	1608.00	Steve Grundy	1	1303.00	Alan Greenwood	1	1000.00	Simon Morecroft
2	1601.50	Alastair Simpson	1	1297.00	Garry Smith	1	1000.00	Cynthia Roberts
2	1598.50	Andreas Vrhosek	1	1295.00	Tim Brown	1	1000.00	Philip Vischjager
2	1591.00	Felix Vink	1	1268.00	Jon Sharp	1	990.00	Tim Line
2	1568.50	John Broomfield	1	1268.00	Karen Lipyeat	1	985.00	Brian Metcalf
2	1557.50	Ray Fard	1	1245.00	Richard Owsley	1	985.00	Chris Reeves
2	1544.00	Bob Young	1	1233.00	Simon Barget	1	981.00	Paul White
2	1534.50	Dave McNamara	1	1229.00	Sue Metcalf	1	970.00	Jon Samuel
2	1529.00	John Hurst	1	1228.00	John Musgrove	1	961.00	Mo Vafaei
2	1499.50	Richard Biddle	1	1224.00	Mike Waid	1	957.00	Gary Brooker
2	1492.50	Malcolm Robertson	1	1223.00	Andrew Pogson	1	890.00	Steve Hallett
			1	1221.00	Cedric Lytton	1	789.00	Mahmoud Jahanbani

Active Rankings, November 2008

2068	Julian Fetterlein	1677	Martin Barkwill	1542	Dave Moon	1474	Marc Turner
1957	Brian Lever	1655	Roy Hollands	1535	Jon Barnes	1473	Ian Trow
1939	Chris Ternel	1653	Jeff Barber	1535	Cecilia Sparke	1471	Crispin Duke
1919	Lawrence Powell	1647	Peter Chan	1531	Phil Tutchings	1466	Tony Walters
1919	Peter Bennet	1640	John Thomas	1531	John Reddington	1464	Miles Farren
1880	Stuart Mann	1640	Bob Young	1530	Paul Plumptre	1460	Paul Learmount
1857	Mark Heidenfeld	1625	Eamon Keogh	1529	Sue Keeble	1459	Cynthia Roberts
1848	Ray Tannen	1623	Marcus Wrinch	1526	Simon Morecroft	1453	Robert Tutchings
1840	Adrian Jones	1619	Tim Line	1525	Neil Davidson	1450	Blaine Buchanan
1839	Uldis Lapikens	1610	Andrew Darby	1525	Ian Davidson	1449	Jeremy Limb
1834	David Nathan	1601	Mardi Ohannessian	1510	Mike Barrett	1442	Richard Holness
1816	Raj Jansari	1600	Bill Spiers	1508	Myke Wignall	1441	Paul Watts
1807	Peter Christmas	1600	John Hedge	1503	Felix Vink	1434	Alan Greenwood
1801	Stephen Drake	1597	Neil Webb	1503	Steve Grundy	1432	Mike Main
1801	Rachel Rhodes	1596	Carter Mattig	1502	Max Limb	1430	Larry Bennet
1793	Ann Pocknell	1593	Raymond Kershaw	1501	Julian Minwalla	1420	Neil Everitt
1789	Nigel Merrigan			1501	Lee Wood	1415	George Hall
1766	Mike Heard	1592	Roland Herrera	1501	Lewis Young	1406	Arthur Wright
1763	Steve Rimmer	1585	Rida Hassan	1500	Neil Young	1401	Mick Vacarey
1756	Steve Hallet	1582	Sean Williams	1494	Andreas Vrhosek	1400	Liz Perry
1756	Tom Duggan	1580	Edwin Turner	1489	David McNamara	1387	Rosey Bensley
1755	Kevin Stebbing	1573	George Miltiadou	1488	Mike Waid	1367	Cedric Lytton
1735	Ian Tarr	1570	Mark Dixon	1488	Sam Goodwin	1344	Fak Laight
1735	Mick Butterfield	1565	Eddie Barker	1486	Gerry Enslin	1342	Jonathan Powell
1718	Paul Gilbertson	1565	Dorothy Lee	1485	David Horner	1316	Vicky Pemberton
1717	Sean Casey	1564	Tony Fawcett	1484	John Sprague	1299	Jon Sharpe
1710	David Motley	1559	Stewart Pemberton	1479	Richard Biddle	1294	Linda Taylor
1682	Tim Mooring	1550	Dave Treacy	1477	Daniel Tutchings	1272	Paul Barwick
1680	Nicky Check	1547	Vicky Chandler	1475	Irving Czechowicz	1260	Fanika Petkovska
1678	Brendan Burgess	1546	Michael Bennett	1475	Gaz Owen		

These are the eight players who have pre-qualified for the Gilbertson UK Finals. Anyone not on this list can qualify via the Saturday Double Knockout, an event that will supply the remaining eight players.

Mark Heidenfeld
John Hedge
Ray Tannen
Ann Pocknell

John Reddington
Raj Jansari
Allan Christensen
David Motley

The battle of the year is finally over, and, after squandering - what he thought was a safe lead - Nicky Check was just one point ahead of Myke Wignall. In the first round they were each pitted against Rosey Bensley (Nicky) and Marcus Wrinch (Myke), encounters from which Nicky and Myke both came through . . . to face each other! Myke, (losing the will to live after being bored to death by Nicky's 'thoughtful' playing speed) when leading 3-2 decided to cube (in a position that was far from certain for him), Nicky took, recubed, and won! He then won the Crawford and ended up topping the 500 list and earning himself a hundred quid; Myke remained in 2nd place.

The Final 16 are now known (see above) and it is interesting to see that Stewart and Vicky Pemberton both scraped in at 15th & 16th with Marcus Wrinch just one point behind, and John Hedge four behind Marcus. I have it on good authority that two or three qualifiers might not make it to December's finals so Marcus and John, and perhaps Paul Barwick and Brian Lever will get a crack at the £500 winner's prize. All shall be revealed after the Gilbertson UK Finals.

Friday 500 Final Positions					
113	Nicky Check	16	Mike Main	7	Phil Tutchings
111	Myke Wignall	16	Rida Hassan	7	Tony Lee
95	Jeff Barber	13	Lewis Young	4	Adrian Jones
83	Paul Gilbertson	12	Mike Waid	4	Cecilia Sparke
72	David Nathan	12	Peter Christmas	4	Chris Ternel
69	Gerry Enslin	12	Ralph Eskinazi	4	Costas Costi
68	Tony Fawcett	12	William Spiers	4	David Motley
64	Ray Tannen	11	Paul Learmount	4	Garry Smith
61	Ed Turner	11	Arthur Wright	4	Geoff Conn
61	Mardi Ohannessian	11	Jerry Limb	4	John Hurst
58	Julian Fetterlein	11	Sue Keeble	4	Julian Minwalla
51	Andy Darby	9	John Broomfield	4	Linda Taylor
50	Tom Duggan	9	Ann Pocknell	4	Marc Turner
48	Rosey Bensley	9	Brian Metcalf	4	Mark Dixon
47	Stewart Pemberton	9	David McNamara	4	Matthew Fisher
46	Vicki Pemberton	9	Fanika Petkovska	4	Michel Lamote
<u>Top 16 players above here</u>		9	Max Limb	4	Peter Bennet
45	Marcus Wrinch	9	Neil Webb	4	Philip Vischjager
41	John Hedge	8	Dorothy Lee	4	Rachel Rhodes
33	Paul Barwick	8	Roland Herrera	4	Raj Jansari
30	Brian Lever	7	Miles Farren	4	Ray Kershaw
26	Paul Watts	7	Cedric Lytton	4	Richard Biddle
23	Irving Czechowicz	7	Cynthia Roberts	4	Robert Tutching
23	Nigel Merrigan	7	Daniel Tutching	4	Roy Hollands
20	John Reddington	7	Fak Laight	4	Simon Barget
17	Neil Young	7	Gaz Owen	4	Simonetta Herrera
16	Crispin Duke	7	George Hall	4	Stephen Drake
16	Martin Barkwill	7	Kevin Stebbing	4	Sue Metcalf
		7	Michael Crane	4	Tony Walters
		7	Mike Ireland		

The Friday 500 restarts in January at the casino.rip.com Bright 'n' Breezy. Because this is a very popular event players wishing to take part in the Friday 500 should book their accommodation as soon as they can. Biba's room allocation is going down on a daily basis, so don't delay!

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Poker Grand Prix 2008

Pts	Ents	Player	Pts	Ents	Player	Pts	Ents	Player
102	Q	Paul Gilbertson	30	3	Cecilia Sparke	12	1	Stephen Drake
101	Q	Tony Fawcett	28	2	Jerry Limb	11	4	Andy Darby
97	Q	Myke Wignall	28	2	Simonetta Herrera	11	1	Robert Tutchings
92	Q	Vicky Pemberton	26	1	John Batty	10	2	Eamon Keogh
75	Q	Lawrence Powell	25	2	Tony Lee	10	1	Ray Fard
50	Q	Mick Vacarey	24	2	Rida Hassan	7	1	Marc Turner
41	Q	Rosey Bensley	23	3	Neil Young	7	1	Steve Pettit
69	3	Kevin Stebbing	23	1	John Sprague	5	1	Andreas Vrhosek
66	3	Paul Watts	22	2	Nigel Merrigan	5	1	David Horner
53	3	Ann Pocknell	21	1	Dave Moon	5	1	Peter Bennet
50	3	Crispin Duke	20	1	Blaine Buchanan	5	1	Ed Turner
50	3	Roy Hollands	19	1	Mark Dixon	4	1	Max Limb
44	2	Alison Lee	18	2	Mick Butterfield	4	1	Michael Benett
42	2	Paul Learmount	17	2	Gaz Owen	4	1	Neil Davidson
42	1	Steve Hallett	17	1	Carter Mattig	3	1	John Hurst
40	1	Jon Sharp	15	1	John Hedge	3	1	Cora Gilbertson
35	2	Lee Wood	14	1	Mo Vafaei	2	1	Andy Bell
34	1	Felix Vink	13	1	Martin Barkwill	2	1	Costas Costi
32	1	Philip Vischjager	13	1	David McNamara	2	1	Phil Tutchings
31	3	Stewart Pemberton	13	1	Jacky Hamilton	1	1	Lewis Young
			12	1	Daniel Tutchings			
			12	1	Ralph Eskinazi			

Well, what a kerfuffle! Tony Fawcett's slender lead of just a couple of points above Paul Gilbertson proved to be two too little. Paul, with a 14 to discard replaced it with a 17 whereas Tony was unable to better his lowest of 18 therefore making Paul's 3 point gain enough to pinch the Number One slot away from Tony by a single point! What a kerfuffle!

This is Paul's first time in winning the Championship having been placed 3rd, then 2nd in previous years. Well done, Paul. Bet you won't do better than 1st next year!

Turn to the next page to see who won how much!

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PRIZE FUND PAYOUTS

Grand Prix	Prize	Ranking
Peter Bennet	£356.30	Peter Bennet
Chris Ternel	£254.50	Chris Ternel
Tony Fawcett	£203.60	Marcus Wrinch
Mike Heard	£152.70	Uldis Lapikens
Uldis Lapikens	£101.80	Stewart Pemberton
John Reddington	£76.35	Myke Wignall
Julian Fetterlein	£50.90	Tony Fawcett
Paul Gilbertson	£25.45	Rachel Rhodes
Ray Tannen	£25.45	Paul Gilbertson
Stewart Pemberton	£25.45	Adrian Jones

Well, here we are, at the end of the Grand Prix and Ranking Championships and it's time to divvy up the prize fund. On the left is the table following the Townharbour Trophy and therefore the final table from which the prize fund is divided.

As can be seen, several players are getting a double payout, and the biggest payout of all goes to Peter Bennet for topping the Grand Prix and Ranking Championships.

The table to the right shows what each player will collect in January at the casinorip.com Bright 'n' Breezy tournament.

The Poker Grand Prix was won by Paul Gilbertson after a very close finish that was decided at the November event.



Peter Bennet



Paul Gilbertson

Prize Fund Payout	
Peter Bennet	£712.16
Chris Ternel	£509.00
Tony Fawcett	£254.50
Uldis Lapikens	£254.50
Marcus Wrinch	£203.60
Mike Heard	£152.70
Stewart Pemberton	£127.25
John Reddington	£76.35
Myke Wignall	£76.35
Julian Fetterlein	£50.90
Paul Gilbertson	£50.90
Ray Tannen	£25.45
Rachel Rhodes	£25.45
Adrian Jones	£25.45

Poker Grand Prix Payout	
Paul Gilbertson	£345.60
Tony Fawcett	£216.00
Myke Wignall	£172.80
Vicky Pemberton	£86.40
Lawrence Powell	£43.20



Biba is proud to present a World Championship Knockout & Progressive Consolation, Last Chance and 3-pointer event that is open to all players (see below) who cannot afford the high Registration and Entry Fees that such events normally charge.

3,4,5 July 2009

Barceló Daventry Hotel

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£1000 minimum**

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Hatrick Backgammon Board

Backgammon To Win - by Chris Bray

52 Great Backgammon Tips - by Kit Woolsey & Patti Beadles

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*** Entrants must be subscribers to Bibafax and members of Biba. You can join on the day.**

Thank you

I'd like to thank Eric Guedj of Par-toucheGammon and Chiva K. Tafazzoli of the World Backgammon Association for their continued support of Biba throughout 2008. Tony & Deana Fawcett for their invaluable work with the poker (Tony) and being my assistant (Deana), without whom my job would be that much more difficult - and lonely! And finally to Nicky Check and Grahame Powell, both of whom allowed me to create a couple of unique tee-shirts. Grahame may no longer be with us, but I sure as hell won't forget him - who can?



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