



**1992 Michigan Summer Backgammon Championships**

The Flint Holidome was the pleasant new site of the ever popular Michigan Summer Championships that drew 180 players. Judy McHale, Butch Meese and Larry Strommen competed for part of the \$38,000+ prize pool. HBC members on staff included Dave Cardwell, Mary Ann Meese and Woody Woodworth. Congrats to all the winners.

**Open Division (64)**

- 1st... Stu Hosen (TX)
- 2nd... Bill Davis (IL)
- 3rd... Gary Kay (IL)
- C1st... Ed Pavilonis (NY)
- C2nd... Fred Kalantari (MN)
- C3/4... Dann DeRoche (MI)
- C3/4... Gary Margosian (MI)

**Intermediate Division (64)**

- 1st... Judy Field (MI)
- 2nd... Alice Kay (IL)
- 3rd... Oscar Schon (CAN)
- C1st... Ed Simms (CAN)
- C2nd... Fred Ishac (MI)
- C3/4... Dan Neilson (MI)
- C3/4... Richard Armbruster (CA)

**Beginners Division (20)**

- 1st... Circe Neilson (MI)
- 2nd... Nayan Shah (PA)
- C1st... Jerry Wlosinski (MI)
- C2nd... Donna Fisher (OH)

**World Cup Qualifier (16)**

- 1st... Ami Tennenbaum (NJ)
- 2nd... Jeff Acierno (NY)

**Overflow Event (8)**

- 1st... Carol Falk (MI)
- 2nd... Gerry Sprenger (CAN)

**Oasis Jackpot**

- 1st... Frank Talbot (MI)
- 2nd... Abbas Zaltash (PA)

**Early Bird \$50 Jackpot (16)**

- 1st... Ed Pavilonis (NY)
- 2nd... Basil Farah (CAN)

**Early Bird \$25 Jackpot (16)**

- 1st... George Farah (CAN)
- 2nd... Alex Caraplis (IL)

**Summer \$50 Jackpot**

- 1st... John O'Hagan (IN)
- 2nd... Jan Carlstrom (PA)

**Summer \$25 Jackpot**

- 1st... Al Branham (MI)
- 2nd... Ben Elliott (NC)

**Doubles (32)**

- 1st... Basil Farah & George Farah (CAN/MI)
- 2nd... Marcy Sloan & Howard Markowitz (IL)
- 3/4... Bill Davis & Mario Madrigal (IL/CR)
- 3/4... Sandy Kaplan & Carol Starr (MI/NV)

**Summer Freeze-Out (32)**

- 1st... Howard Levine (MI)
- 2nd... Mike Rezai (OH)
- 3/4... Bob Zavoral (IL)
- 3/4... Ira Hoffberg (IL)

**Limited Doubles (32)**

- 1st... Alice Gerard/Jim Bowman (FL)
- 2nd... Valerie Wong/Alina Carr (HI/MI)

**Blitz (128)**

- 1st... Carl Severino (IL)

**Sold Out**

**Special Notice: The Radisson Hotel (317) 846-2700 predicts that they will sell out during the National Labor Day Backgammon Tournament. To insure room availability and the reduced backgammon rate of \$62, please call ASAP. Be sure to tell them that you are with the backgammon group. Please call us if you have any problems (317) 845-8435.**

**National Labor Day Backgammon Tournament**



featuring  
Swiss Movement Format,  
Fast Break Events,  
Master Jackpot  
and Amateur Jackpot

Main Playing Room Non-Smoking

**Radisson Suite Hotels**  
(317) 846-2700

**Sept 4-7, 1992 - Indianapolis**

**Hoosier Backgammon Club's Newsletter** for active HBC members and subscribers.

Subscription rate: \$10/year (Canada \$12 and overseas \$14). Let us know if your address changes.  
Butch & Mary Ann Meese: (317) 845-8435. 7620 Kilmer Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46256-1634

**1992 HOOSIER BACKGAMMON CLUB Gammon Point Standings as of July 31st.**  
**HBC Player of the Month for July is Gabe Stiasny with 144 gammon points.**

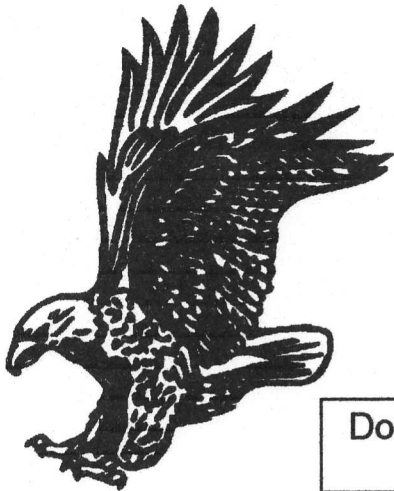
1) Chuck Stimming... 1082	Dave Cardwell.... 222	Ralph Dietz..... 90	Dick Nelson..... 22
2) Don Woods..... 884	Wendy Kaplan.... 220	Walter Trice..... 87	David Smith..... 20
3) Ken Bruck..... 846	Jan Gurvitz..... 215	Ed Koolish..... 70	Rick Reahard..... 20
4) Jim Curtis..... 802	Jeff Baker..... 206	Bob Zavoral..... 60	Mike Marr..... 20
5) Gabe Stiasny..... 764	Brian Nelson..... 203	Bill Julian..... 50	Kevin Garrison..... 20
6) Holly Stowe..... 696	Peg Simsic..... 195	Joe Miller..... 48	Jill F.-Brussel..... 20
7) Larry Strommen..... 688	Gino Agresti..... 168	Randall Witt..... 46	Cassie Curtis..... 15
8) Butch Meese..... 586	Larry Deckel..... 160	Jon Stephens..... 40	Shimi Dadon..... 10
9) Woody Woodworth. 544	Eric George..... 160	Tom Helt..... 38	Stu Whitcomb..... 10
10) Kevin McLeaster.... 474	Judy McHale..... 144	Bill Hodes..... 36	June Werner..... 10
Mary Ann Meese... 460	Don Desmond.... 140	Marge Lewandowski. 34	Donna Susens..... 10
Terry Kuchenbrod.. 396	John Brussel..... 138	Greg Varbanov..... 32	Stan Gurvitz..... 10
Cyrus Mobed..... 325	Frank Frigo..... 128	Dave Fey..... 30	Lara Simsic..... 5
John O'Hagan..... 288	Scott Richardson. 128	Dennis Schulte..... 30	
Stu Sherman..... 264	Dean Adamian.... 120	Philip Degen..... 30	
Mick Dobratz..... 262	Reggie Porter..... 112	Ellis Bray..... 24	

	<u>July 2nd</u>	<u>July 9th</u>	<u>July 16th</u>	<u>July 30th</u>
1st	<i>Don Woods</i>	<i>Jan Gurvitz</i>	<i>Chuck Stimming</i>	<i>Gabe Stiasny</i>
2nd	<i>Gabe Stiasny</i>	<i>Cyrus Mobed</i>	<i>Butch Meese</i>	<i>Cyrus Mobed</i>
2nd	<i>Jim Curtis</i>	<i>Jim Curtis</i>		<i>Gino Agresti</i>

**Join the Party!**

**2nd illinois state  
backgammon  
championships  
and  
america cup**

September 30  
to  
October 4, 1992



**Hyatt Deerfield Hotel**  
 1750 Lake Cook Rd  
 Deerfield, IL  
 (800) 233-1234  
 (708) 945-3400

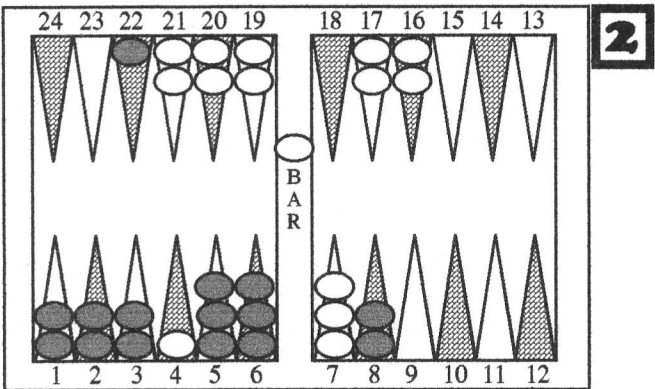
For Info Call or Write:  
**Yamin Yamin**  
 1145 N. Waukegan Rd  
 Deerfield, IL 60015  
 (708) 945-7801

**Don't miss the Battle of the States  
or the Parlay from Hell!**

**BACKGAMMON Schedule**

Aug 3-9..... World Cup III & U.S. Open, Dallas, TX.....	(617) 641-2091
Aug 10-16... 19th Green Mountain Festival of Backgammon, Stratton Mt., VT.....	(305) 527-4033
August 16... 1992 Summer Sizzler, Sly Fox Pub, Lacon, IL.....	(309) 692-6909
<b>Sept 4-7..... National Labor Day Backgammon Tournament, Radisson Hotel, Indpls.....</b>	<b>HBC Hotline</b>
Oct 1-4..... Illinois State Backgammon Championships, Hyatt Deerfield, Deerfield, IL.....	(708) 945-7801
Oc 30-No 1... 11th Annual Granite State Open Backgammon Championships, NH.....	(603) 863-4711
Thursdays..... 7:00 PM at <b>SPATS</b> -Castleton Square between J.C.Penneys & L.S.Ayres.....	842-3465

**Money Game, Black to Play 4-2?**



*This is one of backgammon's classic positions that seems to reappear from time to time in one form or another. The main question is "How to play the precious 4?" As an experiment, this question was asked to the local HBC players and to players in all divisions attending the Michigan Summer Championships in Flint, Michigan.*

Play	Number (Percent)
22-18, 5-3	7 (7.3%)
22-18, 6-4x	50 (52.6%)
22-18, 8-6	3 (3.2%)
8-4x, 6-4	35 (36.8%)

*The replies among respected players were also split. Players choosing to close White out were Roy Friedman, Perry Gardner, Howard Markowitz, Emil Mortuk, Wilcox Snellings and Joe Sylvester. Players escaping with the 4 and hitting with the 2 were Don Desmond, Stu Hosen, Joe Monro, Frank Talbot, Ami Tennenbaum and Yamin Yamin.*

**Analysis by Danny Kleinman.**

Black has three plausible moves: (a) peaceful escape, 22-18, 5-3; (b) hit loose while escaping, 22-18, 6-4x; and (c) closing, 8-4x, 6-4.

Move (a), the seemingly safe play, lets White hit with 4-2 or 4-1 from the bar, ameliorated by Black's 8 or 10 return shots at White's outfield blots. But it also lets White anchor on other 4's, either now or later, creating shot danger as Black brings his laggard around, bears in, and starts to bear off, and reducing Black's gammon chances. I can't quantify the danger and gammon-chance risk. This is where roll-outs could prove helpful.

Move (b), the bold play, risks disaster when White rolls a 4 to hit before Black can roll a 1 (other than 1-1) or 4 (including 2-2) to cover. But when Black does cover, he's virtually guaranteed a gammon. What is Black's success-versus-failure ratio? This is fairly easy to calculate. Multiply the roller's hits (11) by the full 36. Multiply the non-rollers's covers (20) by the roller's misses (25). Black is therefore a 500 to 396 favorite to cover before getting hit. This still does not answer the question of how badly Black stands when White does hit, however.

Move (c) may seem safe immediately, but risks crashing, for Black will soon need a 4 to escape. But like (b), it virtually guarantee's a gammon when successful. It risks immediate blotting on 6-5 next, as well as subsequent failure to escape before crashing. Here is where insight enters. You should notice that Black's 2 blotting rolls are not 2/11 as dangerous as White's 11 hits after play (b). For they require a parlay to be costly: White must then roll a hitting 6. They are  $2(11/36)/11 = 2/36$  as dangerous. Next you should notice that Black's next roll (except for 1-1) will either escape or kill 6's. After Black has killed 6's, only his 5's (except for 5-4) force him to break his 6-point. Then Black still has a five point board, and his 5's are killed. Further crashing is unlikely because Black's highest live number, 4's, is the number he can use to escape. Finally, you should notice that even when Black suffers unusual delay in escaping, White has two men to bring in from the bar against Black's remaining five point board. That often gives Black lots of time to escape after crashing. Even when Black is late, and White has entered both men on Black's 6-point by the time Black escapes, White must still "perform"---e.g. hit a double shot---in order to turn the game around. In many situations, a double shot with extra combinations permits a powerful redouble. But here Black need not fear White's cube. For if White hits, Black still has chances to enter and escape; while White's misses leave Black with a powerful gammon threat. White's redouble will come only after he hits, when he has already lost his market.

There was a time when I would have estimated probabilities of crashing, escaping, getting hit and winning gammons. You may still want to do a bunch of rollouts (do you have any idea how many rollouts you'd need?) to derive empirical estimates. But you cannot do the rollouts at the table, nor have you the time, and benchmarks, and the brain-power to make estimates and calculation at the table without doing rollouts. All you have at your disposal while actually playing the game is insight, and it is insight upon which I rely to choose (c), the close-out play, 8-4x, 6-4. I invite rollout and estimate artists to prove this play wrong.



### Special Thursday at the Radisson Hotel September 3rd.

To accommodate the early arrivals for the **National Labor Day Backgammon Tournament**, HBC is holding weekly play at the **Radisson Hotel**. We will play at the south end of the second floor, in Suite 16 which is right next to the hotel entrance to the mall, **Keystone at the Crossing**. Play will be begin at our regular time of 7:00 PM. Two divisions will be offered; Open Division \$20 with optional sidepool and Intermediate \$10.



Granite State Backgammon Club  
presents

### 1st Halloween Costume Contest & 11th Annual Granite State Open Backgammon Championships & 8th Annual New England Double Backgammon Championships

October 30-31 and November 1st, 1992

Sheraton Tara Wayfarer Inn  
Bedford, New Hampshire  
(603) 622-3766

Information (603) 863-4711

**Hoosier Pips:** Joining HBC's winner's circle for the first time is Jan Gurvitz, who won first place on July 9th... Best wishes go out to Jack Kissane (NY) for a speedy recovery from elective surgery.

### Open Forum

This space is provided for the open discussion by the readers on any positions presented in this newsletter.

In the Hoosier Backgammon Club's July newsletter, an analyst "calculates" match-winning chances of 45.99% for the taker of a cube in a position I won't reproduce here, but 46.00% chances if he passes. The calculations combine the results of 200 rollouts with a match-equity chart supplied by the redoubtable Kit Woolsey. Of course Woolsey does not give "46.00%" for the chances of a player down 0-1 in a 15-point match: he gives "46%"---which, assuming Woolsey is correct, represents anywhere from 45.50% to 46.49%. Likewise, each multiplicand in the "calculations" is an imprecise percentage. If the "42%" used by the analyst is really 41.59%, then "45.99%" is just as unreliable as the "46.00%". The percentages of plain-game wins, gammons and backgammons obtained from the rollouts are equally imprecise, even if roughly representative of the underlying probabilities. For in a sample of 200 games, these are necessarily whole of half percents, a result impossible to obtain if you perform just one extra rollout.

Top experts often make estimates without doing rollouts. They break down the rolls in the position they are studying into rough classes, e.g. rolls that point, rolls that hit, rolls that escape, rolls that crash, rolls that blot, rolls that bring loose men to safety, and so forth. Then for each class of rolls they estimate how many wins and losses, gammons and backgammons that class will produce. Multiplying the number of rolls in each class by the estimated expectation for each class, adding, then dividing by 36 yields the effective winning chances from the play or cube decision in question. This procedure, though even more fallible than rollouts, is often the best available over the board.

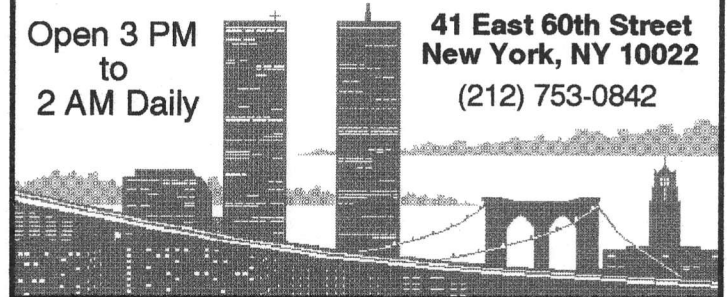
*Danny Kleinman, Los Angeles.*

### Ace Point Backgammon Club

Director: Michael Valentine

Open 3 PM  
to  
2 AM Daily

41 East 60th Street  
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**Masters' Invitational  
Nack Ballard vs Bill Robertie  
21 Point Match**

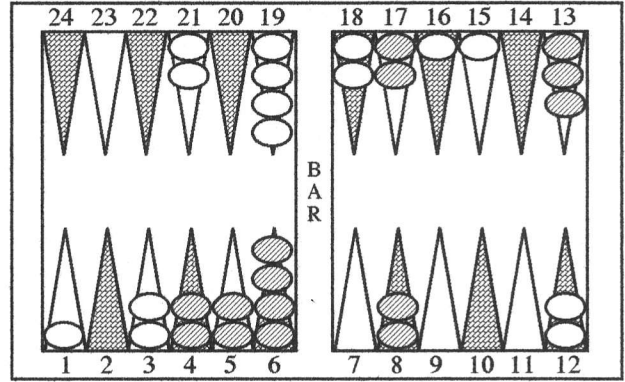
The HBC Newsletter presents a 21-point match between **Nack Ballard** and **Bill Robertie** from the **Masters' Invitational, 4th Nevada State Championships, June 1987.**

Instructions: You will need a backgammon board to follow along. The board is numbered 1 to 24 based on the view of the player on roll. Each player will always be moving from a higher to lower point with only the point(s) moved to be used. The home portion of the board is numbered 1 thru 6. Bearing off is noted as moving to the zero (0) point. To make it easier to follow, the larger number rolled is noted first. In some situations where the smaller number rolled is forced, it will be presented first. An example: being on the BAR with a roll of 5-2 with the 5-point made and the 2-point open.

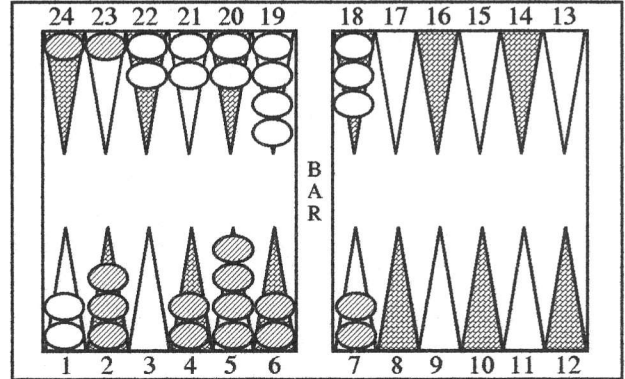
Abbreviations used: Closed Board(CB), Entry Failure(EF), Misplay(MP), No Play Possible(NP), opponent's piece was hit (x), superscript(5<sup>2</sup>) denotes 2 or more pieces moving to a point; this example has 2 pieces moving to the 5 point.

In the doubling positions, Nack is the dark checkers and Bill the light. The positions are shown from Nack's side of the board; study them first before going through the games.

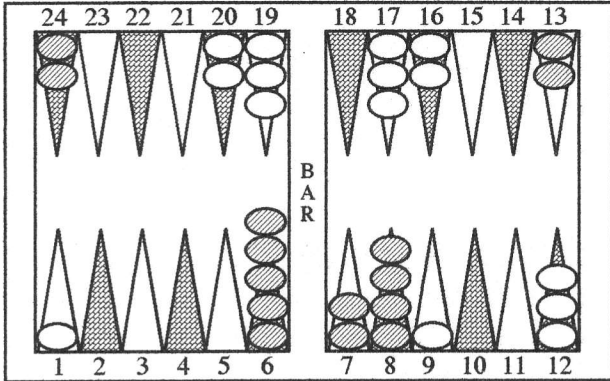
Black-14 White-13 Black doubles to 2?



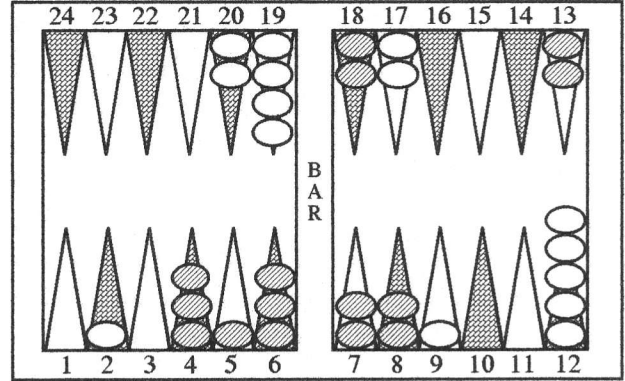
Black-15 White-13 Black doubles to 2?



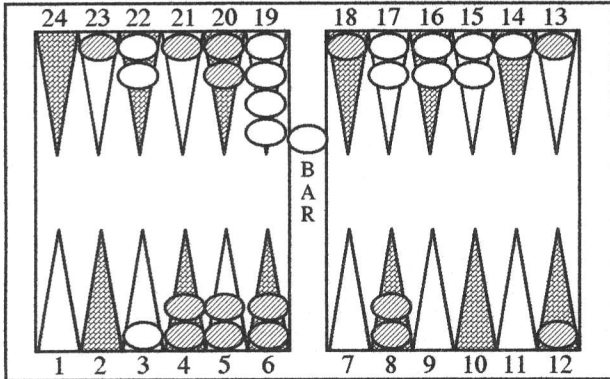
Black-13 White-11 White doubles to 2?



Black-15 White-15 Black doubles to 2?



Black-13 White-13 Black doubles to 2?



**Custom Wooden Dice Cups**



**Robert A. Neumann  
Craftsman**

**(313) 733-2406**

**Masters' Invitational**  
**Nack Ballard vs Bill Robertie**  
 21 Point Match

Game 17

Nack Ballard - 13		Bill Robertie - 11	
roll	played	roll	played
1)	..	41	9 5
2)	65	61	18 5
3)	51	42	23 9
4)	64	52	16x
5)	51		dbl to 2?
6)		61	7 <sup>2</sup>
7)	61	31	13 23x
8)	61	33	22 10 <sup>3</sup>
9)	63	42	16
10)	33	64	6 <sup>F16</sup>
11)	64	31	7 5
12)	65	21	2x
13)	11	64	1x 2
14)	64	41	6 9
15)	32	55	3 <sup>2</sup> 2 <sup>2</sup>
16)	65	63	3 <sup>2</sup>
17)	63	66	3 <sup>2</sup> 0 <sup>2</sup>
18)	52	61	0 <sup>2</sup>
19)	53	63	0 <sup>2</sup>
20)	33	52	0 <sup>2</sup>
21)	41	51	0 1
22)	65	54	0 <sup>2</sup>
23)	65		game

Game 18

Nack Ballard - 13		Bill Robertie - 13	
roll	played	roll	played
1)	..	32	10 11
2)	42	21	10 <sup>F13</sup>
3)	22	53	3 <sup>F11</sup>
4)	51	54	3 20x
5)	53	43	22 20x
6)	51	62	23 16
7)	43	33	22 10 <sup>2</sup> 3
8)	31	11	22 9 <sup>2</sup> 2
9)	61	65	16x-11x
10)	42	55	EF
11)	21	64	EF
12)			pass

Game 19

Nack Ballard - 14		Bill Robertie - 13	
roll	played	roll	played
1)	31	61	7 <sup>2</sup>
2)	54	42	4 <sup>2</sup>
3)	54	43	9 10
4)	61	64	EF
5)	43	32	22 <sup>2</sup>
6)			pass

Game 20

Nack Ballard - 15		Bill Robertie - 13	
roll	played	roll	played
1)	..	43	20 10
2)	42	53	5 <sup>2</sup>
3)	51	61	24 7
4)	51	31	10 7
5)	66	64	4 <sup>2</sup>
6)	33	64	7 9
7)	66	63	3 <sup>2</sup>
8)	51		dbl to 2?
9)		32	3 22
10)	65	65	11
11)	63	21	22 10
12)	51	41	2x <sup>2</sup>
13)	21	32	5 <sup>F10</sup>
14)	52	41	18x 6
15)	21	52	13 4
16)	61	65	2
17)	65	52	2 5
18)	41	63	0 3
19)	43	65	0 <sup>2</sup>
20)	54	22	1x <sup>2</sup>
21)	11	42	0 <sup>2</sup>
22)	63	53	0 <sup>2</sup>
23)	54	21	0 <sup>2</sup>
24)	31	53	0 <sup>2</sup>
25)	32	53	game

Game 21

Nack Ballard - 15		Bill Robertie - 15	
roll	played	roll	played
1)	42	31	5 <sup>2</sup>
2)	66	64	14
3)	32	52	20 22
4)	41	62	23 16
5)			Pass