

Madison Backgammon News



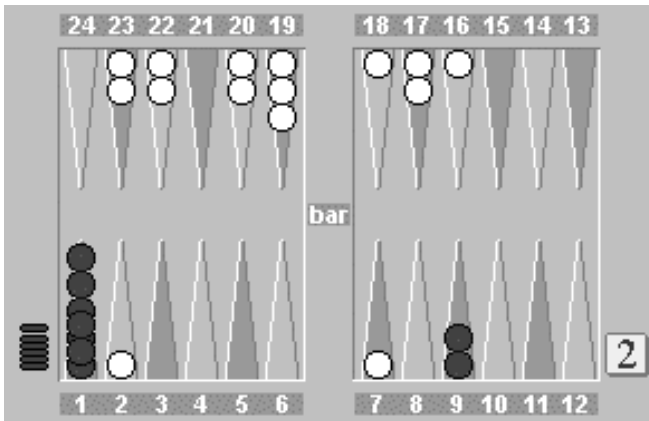
Number 40

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Answers to Quiz Problems

By Sam Pottle

Problem 19



Money game, Black owns the cube, Black on roll.

- (a) Should Black redouble? (2 points)
 (b) If doubled, should White take? (2 points)

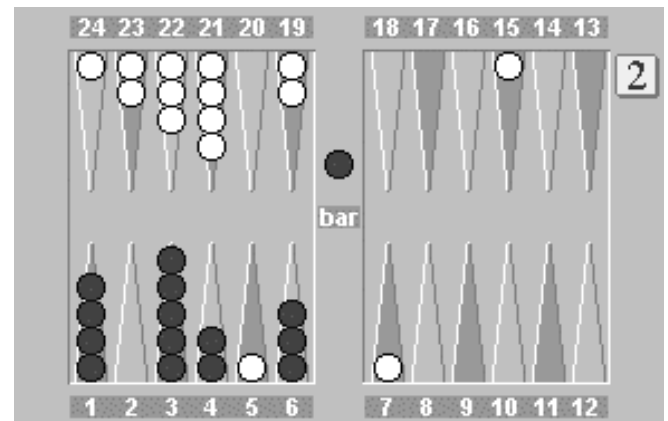
The keys to this problem are the six checkers Black has already taken off, and the gap on White's 4 point. White is likely to get a direct shot at Black, but a hit is a long way from a win. White needs to fill in his four point, close out a Black checker, and begin bearing off before has enough of an advantage to redouble. And what if he misses? Black has eleven crossovers; she will likely be off in six rolls if not hit. White needs at least 39 pips to get off the gammon, so he should expect to need five or six rolls, more if that checker on the bar point gets hit. So it looks like White is perhaps a slight underdog to save the gammon in the variations where he misses Black, and still has a lot of work left if he hits. This adds up to a big pass.

What about the double? If White has a clear pass, maybe Black should play on for a gammon. The problem is that Black gets hit pretty often

from this position, and she's no longer a doubling favorite when that happens. If Black's shot exposure were not so large, or if White were less likely to run off the gammon, Black might give it a try. As it is, however, Black should simply cash the game.

Score two points each for double and pass.

Problem 20



Money game, White owns the cube.
 Black to play 51. (4 points)

Black has only three reasonable tries in this tactical endgame: he can enter quietly (bar/20 3/2) and hope to run around the board safely, or he can take his pick of hitting plays (bar/20 6/5* or bar/24* 6/1). We can discard the 6/5* hit almost immediately. Black has a healthy racing lead; the last thing he wants to do is expose a second checker and risk losing that lead by having it sent back. In addition, Black won't be able to make the 5 point -- there aren't any checkers to cover with.

Hitting on the 24 point does several good things. It puts a man on the bar, which is always useful

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Answers

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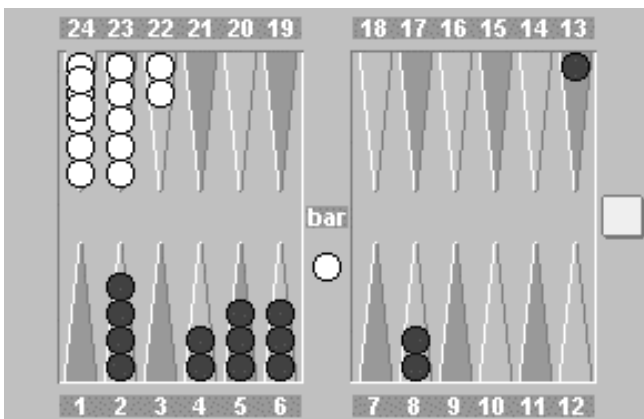
when you have a strong board. It gains a good chunk in the race. And it hinders White's efforts to strengthen her board. Against that, it wastes Black's last spare to the ace point, and leaves his back man partially blocked. Black's position becomes very fragile. He will need to roll a four or a six immediately or risk tearing his board apart. This is serious, so perhaps the other play will be better.

Entering quietly with bar/20 3/2 looks pretty comfortable. Black's plan is simply to run home and win the race. He may even be able to make a fifth point in his board, which could be useful in an exchange of hits. The problem with this play is that it leaves White with a free hand. White gets a direct shot immediately, and has many other numbers that make a five point board. Even if Black gets past the man on the 15 point, he's likely to walk into a double shot on his way home. This is just too much exposure. Black should hit. There is a risk of getting stuck on the 24 point, but Black will just have to live with that. The hitting play does so many good things that it must be worth the risk.

Score four points for bar/24* 6/1.

New Quiz Problems

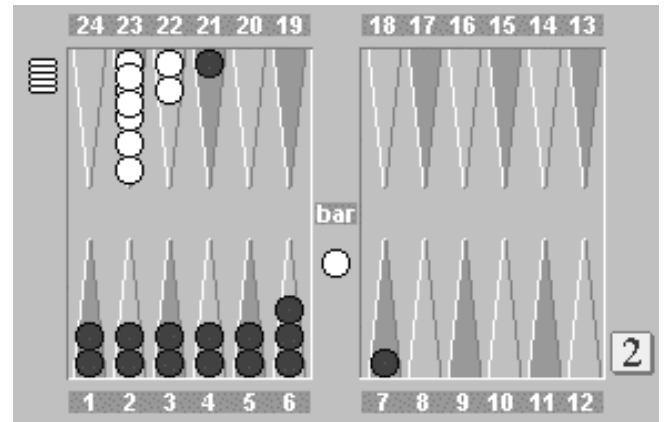
Problem 21



Money game, center cube, Black on roll.

- (a) Should Black double? (2 points)
- (b) If doubled, should White take? (2 points)

Problem 22



Money game, Black owns the cube, Black on roll.

- (a) Should Black redouble? (2 points)
- (b) If doubled, should White take? (2 points)

Tremayne Captures Last Chance At The Midwest BG Championships

Mark Tremayne won the Last Chance prize in the Advanced Division at the 2001 Midwest Backgammon Championships held over the weekend of March 23-25, 2001 at the Radisson Hotel Lisle-Naperville in suburban Chicago. Mark fought his way through 58 contenders competing for the one remaining prize on Sunday afternoon in the main tournament. Congratulations, Mark!

Tight Race In 2001 Club Standings

After completing a little more than a quarter of the year, there are three new leaders in the club standings with Bill Minser, Sam Pottle, and Charlie Walter, replacing the top three finishers from 2000, Mark Tremayne, Stan Livingston, and Tom Machaj, respectively. The point differential between the top and bottom of the top half of players in the standings is as tight as I have ever seen, with only 2.85 points separating them. A single tournament could easily change the line-up. Of course, anyone could end this year in first place—ever someone who hasn't played yet this year!

That opens the possibility that someone new joins the club and starts kicking butt, or someone old makes a re-appearance...?

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Recent Club Tournament Results

Feb. 6 – (6 players) 1st Ilia Guzei, 2nd Bill Minser.

Feb. 20 – (8 players) 1st Sam Pottle,
2nd Steve Mayer, Cons. Stan Livingston.

Mar. 6 – (9 players) 1st Bill Minser,
2nd Stan Livingston, Cons. Sonja Peacock.

Mar. 20 – (4 players) 1st (tie) Ilia Guzei and
Mark Tremayne.

Apr. 3 – (6 players) 1st Mark Tremayne,
2nd Charlie Walter.

Club Standings As Of 4/03/01

Bill Minser	9.86
Sam Pottle	9.55
Charlie Walter	8.89
Mark Tremayne	8.27
Stan Livingston	7.01
Ilia Guzei	5.90
Tom Machaj	4.56
Tim Helms	3.90
Sonja Peacock	2.05
Lee Pflugrad	1.00

Upcoming Events

Apr. 17– Club Tournament. JT Whitney's Pub & Brewery,
674 S Whitney Way, Madison, WI. (608) 274-1776. 6:30
p.m. Registration. 7:00 p.m. Play begins. \$6/Entry, \$4/1st
Side pool, \$5/2nd Side pool.

Apr. 22 – Milwaukee BG Club, Sunday Monthly
Tournament. John Hawks Pub, 100 E Wisconsin Ave,
Milwaukee, WI. (414) 272-3199. 12:00 p.m. Registration.
1:00 p.m. Play begins. \$40 Entry with \$10 side pool.
\$20 Limited. Free parking in ramp, Water St. entrance.

May 1 – Club Tournament. JT Whitney's Pub & Brewery,
674 S Whitney Way, Madison, WI. (608) 274-1776. 6:30
p.m. Registration. 7:00 p.m. Play begins. \$6/Entry, \$4/1st
Side pool, \$5/2nd Side pool.

May 15 – Club Tournament. JT Whitney's Pub & Brewery,
674 S Whitney Way, Madison, WI. (608) 274-1776. 6:30
p.m. Registration. 7:00 p.m. Play begins. \$6/Entry, \$4/1st
Side pool, \$5/2nd Side pool.

May 20 – Milwaukee BG Club, Sunday Monthly
Tournament. John Hawks Pub, 100 E Wisconsin Ave,
Milwaukee, WI. (414) 272-3199. 12:00 p.m. Registration.
1:00 p.m. Play begins. \$40 Entry with \$10 side pool.
\$20 Limited. Free parking in ramp, Water St. entrance.

May 25-28 – The 22nd Annual Chicago Open. Wyndham
Hamilton Northwest Chicago, 400 Park Blvd., Itasca, IL.
(630) 773-4000. 4 p.m. Friday registration opens. 10:00-
11:00 a.m. Saturday final registration. 11:00 a.m. Calcutta
auction. 1:00 p.m. Play begins. \$300/Championship,
\$150/Intermediate, \$50/Beginner. Several other events.

Jun. 5 – Club Tournament. JT Whitney's Pub & Brewery,
674 S Whitney Way, Madison, WI. (608) 274-1776. 6:30
p.m. Registration. 7:00 p.m. Play begins. \$6/Entry, \$4/1st
Side pool, \$5/2nd Side pool.

Jun. 10 – Chicago Bar Point Sunday Tournament.
Anyway's Chicago Grill & Bar, 5 E Roosevelt Rd,
Oakbrook Terrace, IL (630) 932-9323. 11:30 a.m.
Registration. 12 Noon Play begins. \$40/Open,
\$20/Intermediate. Entry includes \$5 food & drink coupon.

Madison Backgammon News is published every month or so to
promote the fine art of backgammon in south central Wisconsin.
Madison Backgammon Club meets every Tuesday evening at
6:30 p.m. at J.T. Whitney's Pub & Brewery. Club tournaments
are held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month. Chouettes
and one-on-one play are conducted on all other Tuesdays and
after players have completed their tournament matches. For
further information, contact Tom Machaj at (608) 276-8144 or
by e-mail at machaj@charter.net