



HOOSIER BACKGAMMON CLUB



November 1989
Volume VI No. 11

38th INDIANA OPEN returns to downtown Indy

The 38th Indiana Open is scheduled for April 7-9, 1990 downtown at the Omni Severin Hotel. The Omni Severin is the former Atkinson Hotel with \$40 million in improvements. The main entrance is facing the popular Union Station. The hotel has all the modern amenities including an indoor pool, exercise room, 24-hour room service and much more. The restaurant list downtown makes it difficult to choose only one. For the players who almost started a petition because we moved away from downtown - we're back. And for those who have really enjoyed the Radisson Hotel/Keystone Crossing location, we plan to return for a future tournament. We feel lucky to have two great locations in Indy to hold tournaments, each with its' own great atmosphere. The format again will be the double-elimination with progressive consolation. Featured events will include two World Cup Qualifiers and the MicroBlitz. When you receive the flyer/entry form in January, be sure to read the fine print.

HBC October Weekly Results				
	Oct 5th	Oct 12th	Oct 19th	Oct 26th
1st	Kevin McLeaster	Brian Nelson	Howard Givel	Wendy Kaplan
2nd	Jim Curtis	Butch Meese	Gino Agresti	Chuck Stimming
3rd	Brian Nelson	Frank Scott	Don Woods	Woody Woodworth

New Players - Do your part

HBC receives calls weekly from people interested in backgammon. Very few can jump in with our group of experienced players and feel comfortable. It's everyone's job to make them feel welcome by helping to explain the fundamentals and playing through a game with them. So far, Woody Woodworth, Ken Bruck, Howard Givel and Marty Lindenmayer have extended a warm welcome to new players. We will be running a round-robin event with no entry fee on Thursdays. We will also be scheduling special classes for novice players. Wendy Kaplan has volunteered her time as an instructor. Only through a combined effort will we be able to grow. HBC welcomes new players Wade Bageman, Patricia Bennett, Jackie Flynn, Larry Lesniak, Phil Paxton, Randy Wilson and Linda Wilson.

1989 HOOSIER BACKGAMMON CLUB Gammon Point Standings as of October 31st.						
1)	Butch Meese	16.02	Mike Norman	2.08	Jim Mieske	0.16
2)	Woody Woodworth	15.16	Don Woods	2.00	Mark Mikolon	0.16
3)	Chuck Stimming	15.01	Bob Goodlett	1.77	Rick Bianiak	0.16
4)	Howard Givel	13.32	Don Burton	1.66	Larry Lesniak	0.16
5)	Larry Strommen	13.07	Bill Gheen	1.40	Jim Smythe	0.16
6)	Mick Dobratz	10.01	Ralph Roberts	1.02	Ron Becker	0.14
7)	Brian Nelson	9.28	Herb Roman	0.98	Bob Calhoun	0.14
8)	Mary Ann Meese	7.79	Michael Shanas	0.80	Scott Richardson	0.14
9)	Frank Scott	7.45	Ellis Bray	0.78	R. C. Robbins	0.12
10)	David Smith	7.14	Bill Julian	0.76	John Cinato	0.12
	Cyrus Mobed	6.86	Catfish Bryan	0.72	Tom Hendryx	0.10
	Eric George	6.66	Cassie Curtis	0.64	Jay Nelson	0.10
	Jim Curtis	6.22	Fred Badagnani	0.60	Dan Batts	0.10
	Ken Bruck	5.44	Mervin Berger	0.60	John Ritzert	0.08
	Kevin McLeaster	5.20	Ves Johnson	0.50	John Leusing	0.08
	Glenn Theobald	4.96	Ron Black	0.48	Walter Trice	0.08
	Wendy Kaplan	4.57	Jamie Curtis	0.40	Mike Hellmer	0.08
	Kay Beck	4.00	Bill Hodes	0.36	Scott Arche	0.08
	Jeff Baker	3.30	Don Trapp	0.32	Scott Musser	0.06
	George Crawford	3.12	John Brussel	0.32	Jim Wilson	0.02
	Marty Lindenmayer	2.94	Dick Nelson	0.24	Bob Kemerly	0.02
	Rick Reahard	2.36	Donna Susens	0.24	George Barr	0.02
	Gino Agresti	2.26	Cassidy Dobratz	0.18	Bev Nelson	0.02
	Jim Knauer	2.20	Amber Wiesler	0.16	Stu Whitcomb	0.02
	Greg Varbinov	2.12	Larry Buckingham	0.16	Linc Bedell	0.02

HBC's monthly newsletter for active HBC members and subscribers.

Subscription rate: \$6/year (Canada \$7 & overseas \$10). Let us know if your address changes.

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One checker left?

Last month's newsletter involved a position with a single checker on the 17 point against 5 checkers in the home board. I was intrigued on calculating the average rolls needed to remove the single checker. First going to paper and a sharp pencil, it was easy to figure what happens with one and two rolls on the lower points. As the points increased and the pencil ran out of lead, the problem became more complex. Having a PC (personal computer) handy, the solution came by way of a C program "checker1" after 50-60 minutes of trial and error. The program accounts for all rolls to remove the checker. The table below is the output of that program. The far right column shows the average rolls needed to remove a single checker (assuming no blockage).

The data in the 'roll' columns are the percentages showing the distribution on what roll a checker will be removed. The 0.00% entries in the table indicate data smaller than 0.01%. One interesting point is that a checker on the 16 point is not favored to get off in two rolls (44.83%) even though the average roll is 8.16.

One way to use the table is to remember some key points and the average number of rolls needed to remove a single checker: examples 8 point (1.5 rolls), 12 point (2.0 rolls), 16 point (2.5 rolls), 20 point (3.0 rolls) and 24 point (3.5 rolls). Or you could use this general formula of average rolls = $1 + ((pt-4) \times 1/8)$ for points greater than 3. Butch Meese

Point	1 roll	2 rolls	3 rolls	4 rolls	5 rolls	6 rolls	Average
1-3	100.00%						1.00
4	94.44%	5.56%					1.06
5	86.11%	13.89%					1.14
6	75.00%	25.00%					1.25
7	63.89%	35.80%	0.31%				1.36
8	47.22%	51.54%	1.23%				1.54
9	33.33%	63.50%	3.16%				1.70
10	22.22%	71.53%	6.23%	0.02%			1.84
11	16.67%	72.15%	11.09%	0.09%			1.95
12	11.11%	70.91%	17.67%	0.31%			2.07
13	8.33%	65.20%	25.68%	0.78%	0.00%		2.19
14	8.33%	55.94%	34.04%	1.68%	0.01%		2.29
15	8.33%	46.06%	42.38%	3.20%	0.03%		2.41
16	8.33%	36.50%	49.53%	5.56%	0.08%	0.00%	2.53
17	5.56%	30.71%	54.67%	8.86%	0.21%	0.00%	2.67
18	5.56%	23.92%	56.91%	13.16%	0.46%	0.00%	2.79
19	5.56%	18.67%	56.50%	18.35%	0.92%	0.01%	2.90
20	5.56%	14.66%	53.90%	24.18%	1.68%	0.02%	3.02
21	2.78%	14.66%	49.45%	30.18%	2.87%	0.06%	3.16
22	2.78%	12.81%	43.82%	35.87%	4.59%	0.13%	3.27
23	2.78%	11.57%	37.70%	40.75%	6.94%	0.26%	3.38
24	2.78%	10.03%	32.36%	44.38%	9.94%	0.50%	3.50

Another View...October Problem

I'm afraid I don't agree with the analysis of the fine problem (see diagram) presented in your October '89 newsletter. My initial reaction was that Black should not redouble yet and that White should snatch the cube before Black has a chance to change his mind. After some study, I present the following:

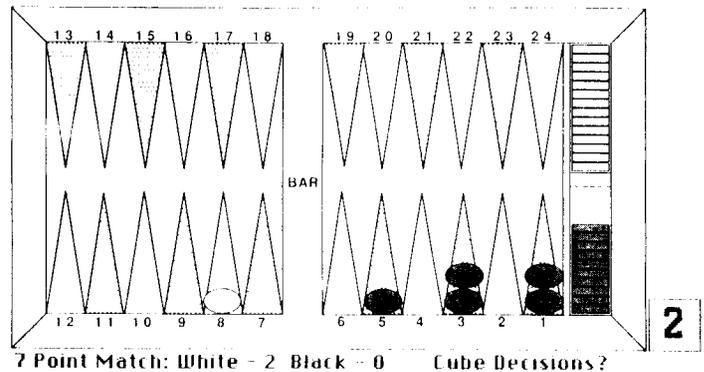
First of all, Black's match equity when not redoubling to 4 is actually 42.4% (not 40.8%), assuming that the cubeless probability of winning is indeed 68.1%. This is calculated below, based on current match equity charts:

X wins: $68.2\% \times 50\%$ (Black=2, White=2) = 34.1%

X loses: $31.8\% \times 26\%$ (Black=0, White=4) = 8.3%

Match equity by not redoubling = 42.4%

The **cubeless** match equity increases to 46.1% for Black when he redoubles, but this does not count the change in equity when White subsequently redoubles to 8. Actually, it can be demonstrated that match equity **always** increases by doubling or redoubling whenever favored in a given position with the exception in some cases when a player would not be able to use the full value of the cube. Black should **always** double with **any** advantage, provided the cube **cannot be returned** due to score or positional conditions.



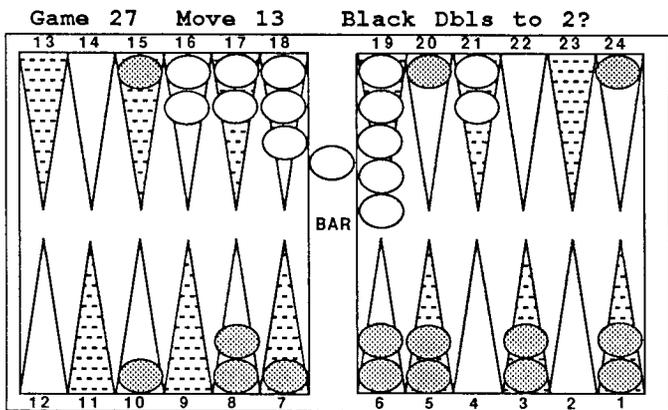
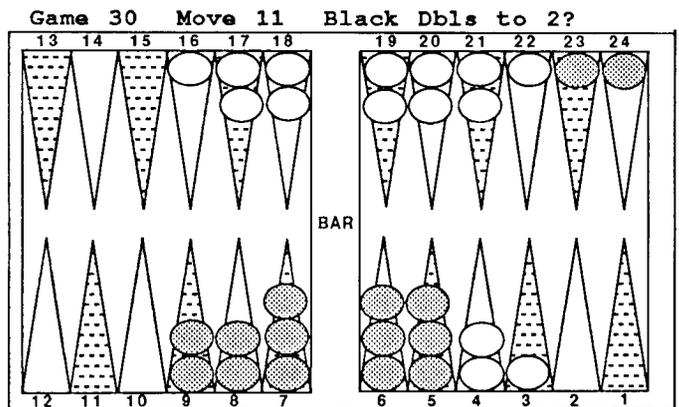
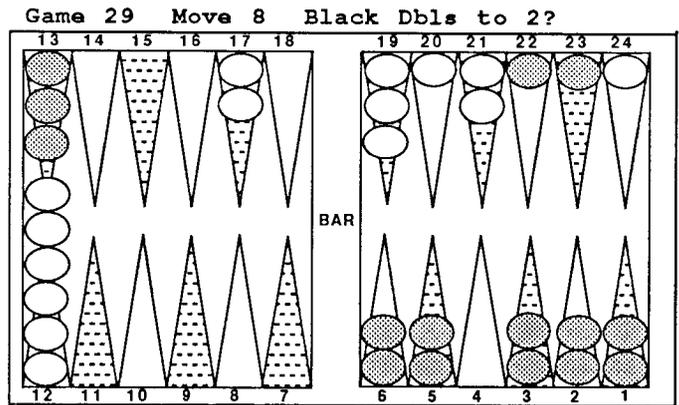
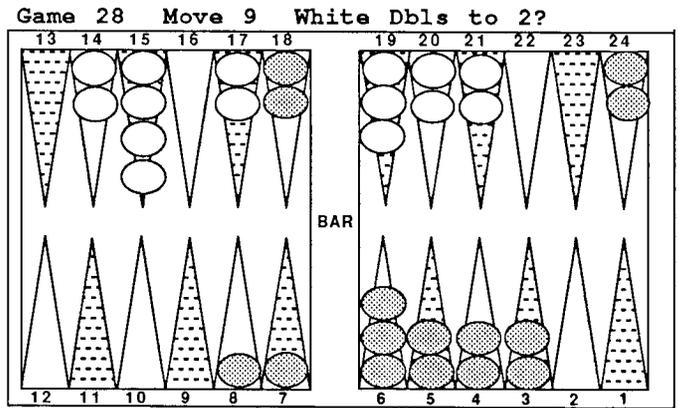
Secondly, I'm not convinced that it is all that **obvious** that Black is heavily favored to bear off in three rolls. Possibly with a dead cube, but with the resulting totally alive cube conditions after Black redoubles, Black may find himself redoubled out by then. According to my calculations, nearly 10% of the time a parlay involving initial 1's and 2's will require Black to roll doubles to still get off in three rolls, and even the chart in the article indicates that over 28% of the time Black doesn't even **get** a third shake. It certainly isn't difficult to visualize White redoubling to 8 for the match in a position where Black has far **less** odds than the 42.4% he has now by keeping the cube. continued Page 4

WORLD CUP Match
Joe Sylvester vs Alan Steffen
37 Point SemiFinal

During 1989, this match is being presented in this newsletter, 1 to 4 games each month and this month games 27 thru 30 are presented. Along with the 34 games, all the doubling positions will be included. There are some both interesting and exciting games in this match between two of the best.

Instructions: You will need a backgammon board to follow along. The board is numbered 1 to 24 with all points numbered based on the view of the player on roll. The home portion of the board is numbered 1-6. Bearing off is denoted as moving to the 0 'zero' point. Each player will always be moving from a higher to lower point with only the point(s) moved to be used. To make it easier to follow, the larger number rolled is denoted 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 52 with the 5-point made and the 2-point open.

Abbreviations used are CB - Closed Board, EF - Entry Failure, NP - No Play Possible, x - opponents piece was hit, 5² - superscribe denotes 2 or more pieces moving to the same point; this example has 2 pieces moving to the 5 point. In the doubling positions, Joe will be dark checkers and Alan the light and are shown from Joe Sylvester's side of the board. Study those first before going through the games.



Schedule of BACKGAMMON Events (Information and entry forms available thru HBC)		
Nov 10-12	Backgammon Co-op Fall Championships - Highland, NJ	(201) 833-2915
Nov 17-19	Children's Hospital Benefit - Sheraton-Commander Hotel, Boston	(617) 547-4800
Dec 10th	HBC Fall One-Day - Dooley O'Toole's	HBC Hotline
Jan 17-21, 1990	7th Nevada State - Peppermill Hotel, Reno	(702) 852-1221
Mar 23-25	Midwest Backgammon Championships	(312) 338-6380
Apr 07-09	38th Indiana Open - Omni Severin Hotel	HBC Hotline
June 30-July 01	Michigan Summer Championships (Tentative)	(313) 232-9731
Aug 07-12	WORLD CUP II - Sheraton-Commander Hotel, Boston	(301) 299-8264
Sep 01-04	National Labor Day Backgammon Tournament - Louisville	HBC Hotline
THURSDAYS	7PM at Dooley O'Toole's - Backside of Castleton Sq on 86th St	849-7355



World Cup

SemiFinal

37 Point Match

Game 27

Joe Sylvester (29)		Alan Steffen (33)	
Roll	Played	Roll	Played
1)	65	13	32
2)	32	4x-1x	21 11
3)	62	16	32
4)	61	24 7	22 23
5)	11	24 7x 5 ²	62
6)	22	23 ² 11 ²	16 9x
7)	64	7x 20	51
8)	66	8 7 ²	18x 15
9)	33	20 ² 3x ²	61
10)	52	6 ²	24x-18x
11)	33	1x ²	61
12)	51	15 10x	7 ²
13)		dbl to 2?	32
			22 13
			61
			7 8
			24 8
			9 ² 4 ²
			15
			EF
			pass

Game 28

Joe Sylvester (30)		Alan Steffen (33)	
Roll	Played	Roll	Played
1)	21	11 5	42
2)	61	24 5x	20x 11
3)	63	22 18	65
4)	32	3x 20	20x-14
5)	62	7 18	32
6)	52	3 11	11 ^{F14} 22
7)	62	5 ²	54
8)	33	4 5	16
9)	61	7 ² 4	62
10)		pass	10 11
			5 ²
			33
			10 ³ 8
			4 ²
			dbl to 2?

In addition, there isn't a overwhelming number of market losing sequences - Black's large numbers followed by small numbers for White - so it appears better for Black to wait a roll before redoubling. The pressure on White will likely be much greater at that time - unless, of course, White has rolled big, in which case Black will be glad he didn't relinquish control of the cube.

Now, should White take the redouble as a 31.8% cubeless underdog? We need to determine White's minimum take point at this match score:

Match Equity

Passing the cube: P = 50% (Black=2, White=2)
 Taking and Winning: W = 90% (Black=0, White=6)
 Taking and Losing: L = 37% (Black=4, White=2)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Take point} &= (P-L)/(W-L) \\ &= (50-37)/(90-37) \\ &= 13/53 = 24.5\% \end{aligned}$$

By taking at this score, White risks 13% to gain 40% in the match equity (almost 3:1 odds), making her minimum take point nearly 25%. Certainly with the cube at her exclusive disposal, White's match equity will **increase** by taking with 31.8% cubeless game winning chances. White's **cubeless** match equity by taking is 53.9% vs 50% when passing, making it a clear take when owning the cube is taken into consideration.

Game 29

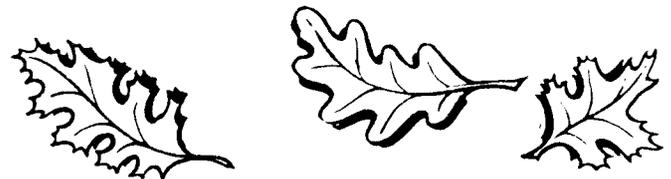
Joe Sylvester (30)		Alan Steffen (34)	
Roll	Played	Roll	Played
1)	--	---	65
2)	54	8 20	13
3)	55	3 ² 1x ²	42
4)	21	10x	64
5)	62	23 2x	21
6)	43	22 2	23 5x
7)	53	5 ²	54
8)		dbl to 2?	61
			13
			5
			pass

Game 30

Joe Sylvester (31)		Alan Steffen (34)	
Roll	Played	Roll	Played
1)	--	---	42
2)	65	13	4 ²
3)	61	7 ²	11
4)	52	8 22	7 ² 5 ²
5)	51	7 ^{F13}	31
6)	21	5 ²	10 23
7)	44	5 9 ²	32
8)	21	3 ^{F6}	21 ²
9)	31	22x 7	32
10)	21	23 24	32
11)		dbl to 2?	10 11
12)	64	1 ²	21
13)	65	2 3	9 ²
14)	65	19 EF	32
15)	61	19 2	61
16)	22	15 ²	3x 8
17)	61	9 14	61
18)	31	5 ^{F9}	43
19)	66	13 3 ²	22x 3x
20)	31	3 12x	43
21)	31	4 ²	9 7
22)	41	8 6	take
23)	22	2 ^{F8} 4	3 21
24)	43	0 ²	2x ² 1x ²
25)	52	0 3	31
26)	44	game	65
			15 3
			9
			1 ²
			11x
			13
			EF
			CB
			20 5

JS - 33

AS - 34



I am wondering why White did not redouble to 8 for the match when she came down to a single checker on the 5-point vs one or two of Black's checkers. With 31 winning rolls, match equity shows it to be a clear redouble for White (82.6% by not doubling, 86.1% by doubling if Black takes and 90% if Black passes). Of course, Black must take (grudgingly) since it increases his match equity to 13.9% vs only 10% if he passes.

Dave Cardwell, Atlanta