



HOOSIER BACKGAMMON CLUB



October 1990
Volume VII No. 9

Backgammon HORROR Stories

"You wouldn't believe how I lost that match! How many times have you heard that line? If you work a tournament, you hear it at least a dozen times each day. October is a good time for some backgammon horror stories. The first two situations occurred during the 1990 National Labor Day Backgammon Tournament and the third in Louisville, March 1982.

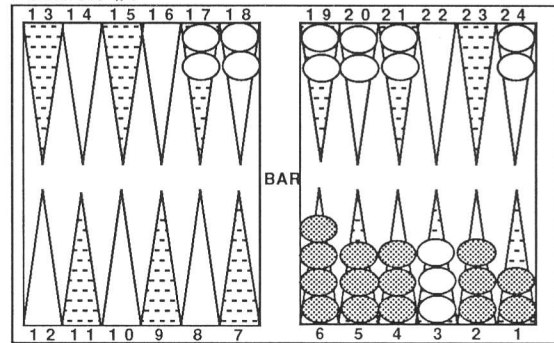
Position #1 occurred in the Intermediate Division with black leading 8 to 6 (Crawford Game) in a 9-point match. All black has to do to win the match is not leave a shot; most of the time that is true. White was on roll in this position and rolled double 6s followed by a series of doubles that left black feeling like he was using a Ford Pinto to drag race one the top funny cars. It was not even close at the end; black had 5 or 6 pieces left when white cleared his board. White also was able to win the next game and the match.

The second situation (Position #2) occurred in the Open Division, one round away from the money. This was black's first tournament in some time and he was doing very well, including this match, until this game. Black was up 10 to 9 (post Crawford) holding the cube on 2 and had reached this favorable position with white on roll. Let's calculate white's winning chances: white needs double 6s, 5s or 4s on his roll followed by black not rolling doubles and any doubles on his last roll (540/46656) or double 1s followed by black not rolling doubles and double 6s, 5s or 4s (90/46656) for (630/46656) 1.3%. White rolled double 6s with black's non-doubles followed by white's double 4s.

The third situation (Position #3) happened in the Open Division of the Bluegrass Regional. Black, trailing in the 9-point match 4 to 5, had doubled earlier in this game and had a good chance to send the match to Crawford. You should set this position up on a board to get the real feel for what happened. With black on roll he rolled double 2s moving 24-20, 10-6. White rolled 4-3 dancing. Black's next roll was double 2s moving 13-11(2) and 6-2. White rolled 4-1 coming in on the 24-point and moving 6-2 with the 4. Black again rolled double 2s collapsing his 5-point board 6-4(2) and 5-3(2). White moved 24-13 with a roll of 6-5. Black for the fourth time in a row rolled double 2s to completely destroy a potential gammon position to a hopeless position. Black was able to get one of the four checkers to safety but the other three checkers got trapped on the 24-point behind a 6-point prime. Black was gammoned and lost the match.

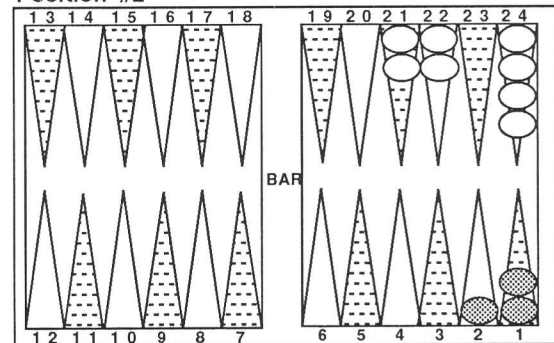
So the next time something like this happens to you, just remember you are not alone.

Position #1



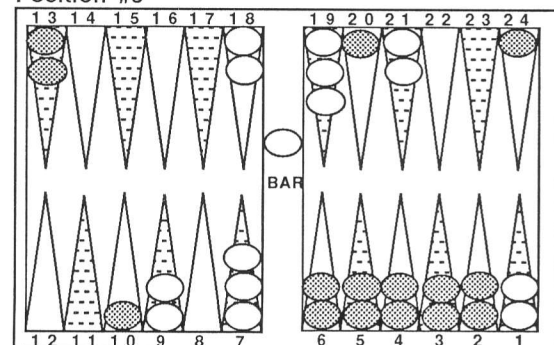
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Position #2



2

Position #3



2

| Weekly Results | Sept 6th | Sept 13th | Sept 20th | Sept 27th |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Open 1st | Mary Ann Meese | Gabe Stiasny | Ken Bruck | Dave Smith |
| 2nd | Butch Meese | Wendy Kaplan | Butch Meese | Larry Strommen |
| 2nd | Cyrus Mobed | Dave Cardwell | Kevin McLeaster | Don Woods |

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

Subscription rate: \$7/year (Canada \$8 & overseas \$12). Let us know if your address changes.

HBC Hotline: Butch & Mary Ann Meese: (317) 845-8435. 7620 Kilmer Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46256-1634

Hoosier Pips: Visitors for September included Dave Cardwell (Atlanta), Ed King (Ohio), John Stryker (Ohio) and Jay Ward (Chicago)...Congrats to David Smith for his first-1st place win on September 27th....Bill Julian's family helped him celebrate his 70th birthday, October 3rd, with a big surprise party.

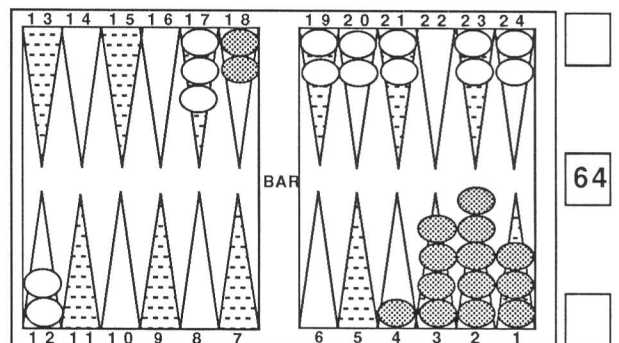
| 1990 HOOSIER BACKGAMMON CLUB Gammon Point Standings as of September 30th. | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| 1) | Chuck Stimming | 14.42 | Jim Gatesman | 1.25 | Randall Witt | 0.24 |
| 2) | Butch Meese | 13.16 | Scott Richardson | 1.10 | Rick Reahard | 0.24 |
| 3) | Ken Bruck | 11.66 | Bob Goodlett | 1.08 | Bev Nelson | 0.20 |
| 4) | Don Woods | 11.05 | Pete Ryder | 1.00 | Amber Wiesler | 0.20 |
| 5) | Wendy Kaplan | 10.68 | Bill Hodes | 1.00 | Mark Mikolon | 0.20 |
| 6) | Larry Strommen | 9.38 | Chuck Winters | 0.92 | Christopher White | 0.20 |
| 7) | Mary Ann Meese | 8.78 | Bill Gheen | 0.84 | Ben Elliott | 0.16 |
| 8) | John Cinatl | 7.69 | John Brussel | 0.80 | Dave Fey | 0.16 |
| 9) | Woody Woodworth | 7.67 | Howard Givel | 0.76 | Marc Gray | 0.16 |
| 10) | David Smith | 7.52 | Ralph Roberts | 0.72 | Doug Johnson | 0.16 |
| | Cyrus Mobed | 6.08 | Christine Riha | 0.72 | Don Watkins | 0.12 |
| | Frank Scott | 5.84 | Ellis Bray | 0.64 | Tom Hendryx | 0.12 |
| | Kevin McLeaster | 5.70 | Preston Breunig | 0.60 | Gloria White | 0.10 |
| | Mick Dobratz | 5.13 | Rick Bieniak | 0.60 | Teri Ivey Long | 0.10 |
| | Gabe Stiasny | 5.09 | Scott Roberts | 0.60 | Jeane Eggenberger | 0.08 |
| | Sharon Lennon | 4.06 | Linc Bedell | 0.60 | Mark King | 0.08 |
| | Brian Nelson | 3.82 | Carolyn Doyle | 0.58 | John O'Hagan | 0.08 |
| | Kay Beck | 3.68 | Larry Buckingham | 0.56 | John Stryker | 0.08 |
| | Jim Curtis | 3.64 | Bill Julian | 0.56 | Ed King | 0.08 |
| | Philip Degan | 2.77 | Bob Burkhalter | 0.48 | Greg Tomlin | 0.08 |
| | Jeff Baker | 2.76 | Jay Ward | 0.42 | Jack Esselman | 0.08 |
| | June Werner | 2.72 | Jay Mershon | 0.40 | Kevin Garrison | 0.06 |
| | Glenn Theobald | 2.65 | Margaret Roberts | 0.40 | Jim Smyth | 0.04 |
| | Peg Simsic | 2.15 | Doug Roberts | 0.32 | Ismet Demirel | 0.04 |
| | Cyndi White | 1.99 | Bob Zavoral | 0.32 | Scott Arche | 0.04 |
| | Fred Brooks | 1.73 | Lara Simsic | 0.30 | George Crawford | 0.04 |
| | Dave Cardwell | 1.60 | Cassie Curtis | 0.28 | Eric George | 0.04 |
| | Gino Agresti | 1.42 | Jamie Curtis | 0.28 | Jim Knauer | 0.04 |
| | Marty Lindenmayer | 1.28 | Dennis Schulte | 0.28 | Lou Ramer | 0.02 |
| | Terry Kuchenbrod | 1.26 | Stu Whitcomb | 0.26 | | |

Where are the positional problems?

Doing a monthly newsletter takes a lot of time and it is not always easy to find material to fill the available space. Players comment from time to time, "You need backgammon problems!". I agree but I usually do not feel qualified to do problems and very few have volunteered their write-ups. Well qualified or not, I will try one and you are welcomed to comment.

This situation happened to me a couple of months back. My opponent was leading in a 7-point match 5 to 4 and doubled me. As I looked at the score and the position, I considered it a gift and grabbed the cube before my opponent could change his mind. White rolled 5-1 and made his 3-point. I refound the cube and redoubled to 4 with my opponent taking. Were my actions correct? Let's take a closer look.

First **pip count**: White has 86 and black 60, so black has a 26 pip lead. Second **position**: White has a 5-point home board and has the potential for a closed board. Black has a collapsed 3-point home board with a blot. Third **vigorish (the ability to roll something that turns the position in one's favor)**: White has nothing on this roll, but may have something in future rolls. Black on the other hand now has double 5s, 4s, 3s and 2s which could seal the game without leaving a shot. According to one of Joe Sylvester's **Concepts in Action #2** presented in the January, 1988 Flint Area Newsletter, to double you need 2 of 3 of either pip count, position or vigorish and to take, you need 1 of the 3. This is a general rule and should be used as such. In this situation, white has only position, so not a double yet, but black has pip count and some vigorish so it is a take.



Let's look it from another point of view. If Black drops, he will be down 4 to 6 (Crawford) in a 7-point match or 25% to win the match. This position was played out 20 times with both side winning 10 games, so it is an easy take for black. How about the redouble? With black in possession of a 2 cube, White can win the match when he wins this game but black can not. When black wins this game, he should also want to win the match. Proper cube action - redouble before he loses his market.

As for white, there is a good chance that he will get shots. But before he can double, he has to hit and still have a position to contain black so he can catch-up in the race.

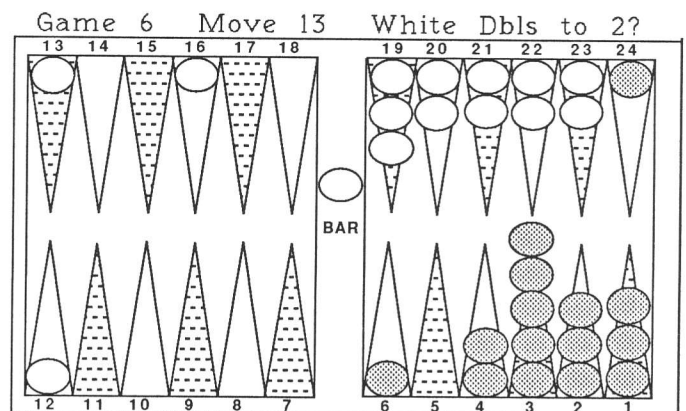
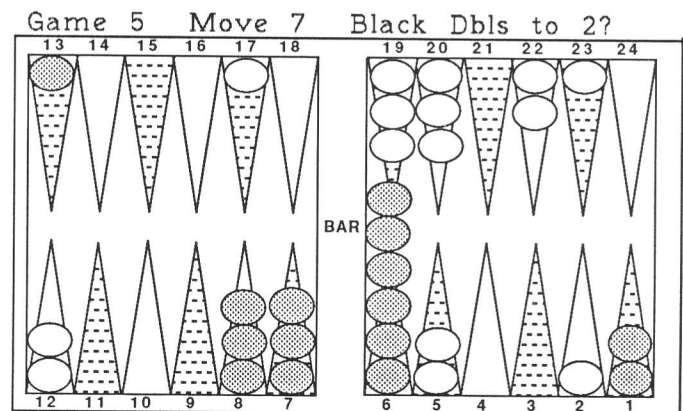
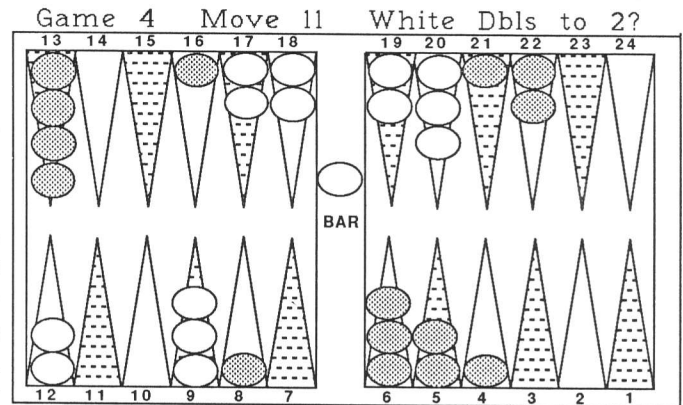
Reno Masters Tournament
Joe Sylvester vs Ed O'Laughlin
21 Point Match

The **HBC Newsletter** presents games 4, 5 and 5 of a match from the Masters Event at the Reno Tournament between Joe Sylvester and Ed O'Laughlin.

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 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 is the dark checkers and Ed the light checkers and are shown from Joe's side of the board. Study the doubling positions first before going through the games.



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 (317) 842-8323

| Schedule of BACKGAMMON Events (Information and entry forms available thru HBC) | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Oct 13th | Springfield Fall Open Tournament, Springfield IL | (217) 789-6275 |
| Oct 19-21 | 8th New Hampshire Fall Classic & New England Doubles | (603) 863-4711 |
| Oct 20th | 1990 Fall Open Backgammon Tournament - Bethesda, MD | (301) 530-0604 |
| Oct 24-28 | Caesars Tahoe Backgammon Tournament - South Lake Tahoe | (702) 851-1452 |
| Nov 09-11 | BG Co-op Fall Championships - Rocking Horse Ranch, NY | (516) 334-4833 |
| Nov 09-11 | Children's Hospital Benefit - Cambridge, MA | (617) 641-2091 |
| Nov 18th | 12th Annual Flint Area Club Championships - Flint, MI | (313) 232-9731 |
| Dec 5-9th | 1st International Championship of the Middle East - Egypt | 972 3/720683 |
| 1/30-2/03 | 8th Nevada State Championship - Nugget, Reno | (702) 826-1984 |
| THURSDAYS | 7:00 PM at Grisanti's - Northside of Castleton Square on 86th St | 842-8323 |

| Game 4 | | | |
|----------------------|------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Joe Sylvester - 2/21 | | Ed O'Laughlin - 5/21 | |
| Roll | Play | Roll | Play |
| 1) | -- | --- | 65 13 |
| 2) | 31 | 5 ² | 54 8 9 |
| 3) | 62 | 16x | 43 22 9x |
| 4) | 61 | 18 | 32 10 7x |
| 5) | 32 | 23 3x | 32 22x ² |
| 6) | 52 | 18x | 41 21 7x |
| 7) | 51 | 24 18x | 43 21 7x |
| 8) | 32 | 22 ² | 11 5 ³ 7 |
| 9) | 42 | 9 22 | 54 16x 18 |
| 10) | 54 | 16 | 62 16 ² |
| 11) | 41 | 4x 21 | dbl to 2? |
| 12) | | take | 43 21x 4x |
| 13) | 41 | 21x 24 | 43 21 4x |
| 14) | 43 | 21x ² | 22 21 14 ² |
| 15) | 52 | 9x | 64 15 ^F Bar |
| 16) | 64 | 7 9 | 64 17x-11 |
| 17) | 62 | 23 1 | 65 9 ² |
| 18) | 52 | 18 11x | 55 EF |
| 19) | 21 | 11 21 | 44 21 7x-3x 9 |
| 20) | 52 | 23 EF | 61 2x ² |
| 21) | 52 | EF | 62 3 ² |
| 22) | 33 | EF | 51 7 ^{F13} |
| 23) | 63 | EF | 66 9 15 ² |
| 24) | 51 | 24 EF | 65 1x ² |
| 25) | 31 | EF | 61 8 ^{F15} |
| 26) | 11 | EF | 53 10 6 |
| 27) | 61 | EF | 32 5 6 |
| 28) | 31 | EF | 64 3 5 |
| 29) | 52 | EF | 63 1 |
| 30) | 55 | EF | 43 2 ^{F6} 0 |
| 31) | 66 | EF | 53 1 3 |
| 32) | 61 | 19 EF | 32 2 3 |
| 33) | 62 | 17 ^F Bar | 32 2 3 |
| 34) | 63 | 15 6 | 53 0 ² |
| 35) | 65 | 15 6 | 65 0 ² |
| 36) | 42 | 17 ² | 41 0 ² |
| 37) | 42 | 11 | 51 0 ² |
| 38) | 21 | gammon | |

| Game 5 | | | | |
|----------------------|------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Joe Sylvester - 2/21 | | | Ed O'Laughlin - 9/21 | |
| Move | Roll | Play | Roll | Play |
| 1) | -- | --- | 41 | 9 5 |
| 2) | 66 | 18 ² 7 ² | 21 | 22 5 |
| 3) | 52 | 13 16x | 55 | 20 3 ² F13,8 |
| 4) | 32 | 13 6 | 21 | 20 5 |
| 5) | 65 | 7 8 | 52 | 6 ^{F13} |
| 6) | 66 | 1x ² F13(2) | 62 | 23 2 |
| 7) | | dbl to 2? | | take |
| 8) | 55 | 8 2x ³ | 64 | 21 2 |
| 9) | 42 | 4x ² | 43 | 22 9 |
| 10) | 64 | 2 ² | 42 | 9 4 |
| 11) | 43 | 4 3x | 53 | 22x 4 |
| 12) | 62 | EF | 63 | 3 17x |
| 13) | 43 | EF | 52 | 12 20 |
| 14) | 61 | 24 EF | 43 | 1x 9 |
| 15) | 44 | EF | 62 | 14 1 |
| 16) | -- | CB | 41 | 5 13 |
| 17) | -- | CB | 54 | 11 |
| 18) | -- | CB | 21 | 10 ^{F13} |
| 19) | -- | CB | 41 | 6 4 |
| 20) | -- | CB | 55 | 6 0 ² 1 |
| 21) | 64 | EF | 31 | 3 ^{F6} 0 |
| 22) | 42 | EF | 22 | 0 ^{F6} 4 |
| 23) | 44 | EF | 52 | 0 2 |
| 24) | 42 | EF | 53 | 0 1 |
| 25) | 53 | 20 EF | 64 | 0 ² |
| 26) | 42 | 21 18 | 61 | 0 ² |
| 27) | 63 | 12 ^{F21} | 62 | 0 ² |
| 28) | 42 | 14 10 | 11 | gammon |

| Game 6 | | | | |
|----------------------|------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Joe Sylvester - 2/21 | | | Ed O'Laughlin - 13/21 | |
| | Roll | Play | Roll | Play |
| 1) | 43 | 9 10 | 43 | 9 10 |
| 2) | 65 | 13 | 31 | 5 ² |
| 3) | 62 | 4 ² | 64 | 18 9 |
| 4) | 53 | 3 ² | 64 | 18 5 |
| 5) | 53 | 16x | 31 | 24 7 |
| 6) | 43 | 9 ^{F16} | 44 | 4 ² 2 ² |
| 7) | 43 | 6 ^{F13} | 53 | 8 10 |
| 8) | 65 | 2 ^{F13} | 42 | 3 ² |
| 9) | 65 | 2 3 | 21 | 6 9 |
| 10) | 64 | 3 | 65 | 12x 13 |
| 11) | 51 | 24 1x | 32 | EF |
| 12) | 44 | 1 ² | 61 | EF |
| 13) | 43 | 2 3 | | dbl to 2? |
| 14) | | pass | | |

