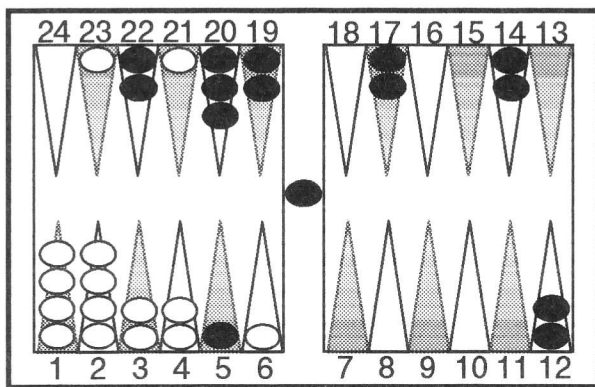


White to play 6-5?

**Situation #1) Money Game;
Black owns 2-cube.
Situation #2) Double Match Point**



Play Quickly and Take Your Time!

by Chuck Bower

One of the most frustrating conditions of tournament backgammon is slow play. Yet, playing quickly doesn't mean you can't think about positions! The key to fast play is EFFICIENCY. When your opponent is considering his/her play, you should be formulating your next move or cube decision. Make a game plan. Do a pip count. Look for your hitting numbers, pointmaking numbers, and running numbers. Then, when your dice settle, if they show one of your anticipated good rolls, ZOOM! Make your play and snatch up the dice!!

By practicing the above procedure, you will find that when you really do have a tough choice, you can take a while (15-30 seconds or so) to decide. Take a look at the illustrated position. White was in blitz mode and got an uncomfortable 4-4 roll, causing him/her to break the closed home board. Many players, disgusted by the bad turn of luck will quickly toss the checkers around, resigned to the ultimate loss of the game (and maybe the match). But White has a real choice here.

The six is forced--21/15. There are now three legal 5's: 23/18, 15/10, and 6/1. 23/18 is part of the game plan "get your checkers home!" 15/10 is a diverse play. It accomplishes two things: getting a checker closer to home AND creating a cover checker for the blot on the 6-point. On the surface, 6/1 is the **safe** play. Clean up the most vulnerable checker, and THEN worry about getting the other two around. I must admit that not only wasn't I sure which play was correct here, but I actually chose the wrong move. Fortunately for me, this wasn't my decision. I was playing the Black checkers!

Jellyfish v3.0 level-6 rollouts find that the best play at double match point is 23/18, better than 15/10 by 1.2% game winning chances and 6/1 by 2.1% (joint standard deviation 0.5%). Apparently Black doesn't have the time to wait for another five (or two and six and ... sequence) to extricate the back checker. Concede Black all those enter and hit shots to lock this game up. But if Black fans, White will be looking pretty good. For money, with gammons counting twice simple wins, the plays are even closer. The order is the same, but the difference in cubeless money equity is 0.011 and 0.027 respectively. (At this form the joint standard deviation is 0.013 meaning that the plays are so close that statistically speaking they are equal.)

How does one find the correct play in a position like this? I don't know. But, Kent Goulding has a saying which goes like: "it's hard to make the BEST play if you don't even consider it." Thinking ahead, White should realize that getting the two trapped checkers around is a high priority. When the 6-5 roll appears, the **correct** play according to JF should at least appear as a candidate. Seeing all the options is a necessary, although insufficient condition to playing at the championship level.

<u>February 5th</u>	<u>February 12th</u>	<u>February 19th</u>	<u>February 26th</u>
1st Jim Mieske	Butch Meese	Chuck Stimming	Dave Groner
2nd Jim Curtis	Don Woods	Butch Meese	Larry Strommen
2nd Butch Meese	Jim Curtis	Sean Garber	Butch Meese

Hoosier Backgammon Club's Newsletter

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Gammon Points Reviewed

Gammon points are used to determine the **Player of the Month** and **Player of the Year**.

The winner for each match won receives 10 points. When a player wins first place, the match points won are multiplied by 2. When a player wins second place, the match points are multiplied by 1.6. No points are awarded for getting a bye.

Sample: If a player wins three matches and finishes first, then he/she would receive 60 points for the event. If a player wins four matches and finishes first, then he/she would receive 80 gammon points.

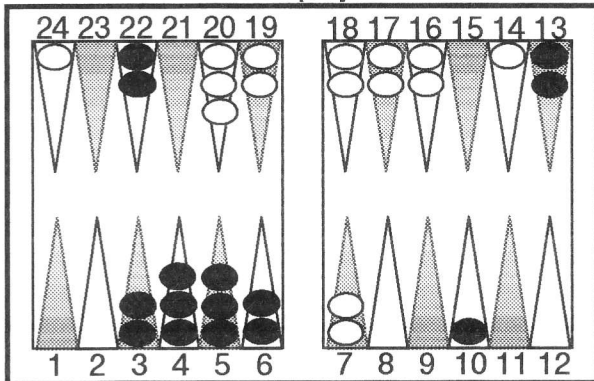
When there is more than one division, i.e. one-day tournament, the Open players receive 10 points for each match won, the Advanced 8 points, Intermediate 5 points and Novice 3 points. Some events will award double gammon points which will be pre-announced in the notice or newsletter. No gammon points are awarded for the **Indiana Open**.

1998 Hoosier Backgammon Club
Gammon Point Standings as of February 28, 1998
The HBC **Player of the Month** for **January** was **Butch Meese** with 270 gammon points.

- 1) Butch Meese..... 354
- 2) Don Woods..... 348
- 3) Al Gomez..... 244
- 4) Jim Curtis..... 218
- 5) Dave Groner..... 204
- 6) Mary Ann Meese..... 188
- 7) Sean Garber..... 182
- 8) Chuck Stimming..... 160
- 9) Jim Mieske..... 130
- 10) Larry Strommen..... 108
- Luke Clippinger..... 100
- Chuck Bower..... 68
- Jan Gurvitz..... 60
- Gino Agresti..... 20
- Frank Scott..... 20
- Kevin McLeaster..... 20
- Dave Fey..... 10

Best Play #1

5-Point Match, Black-4 (Crawford), White-0
Black to play 2-1?

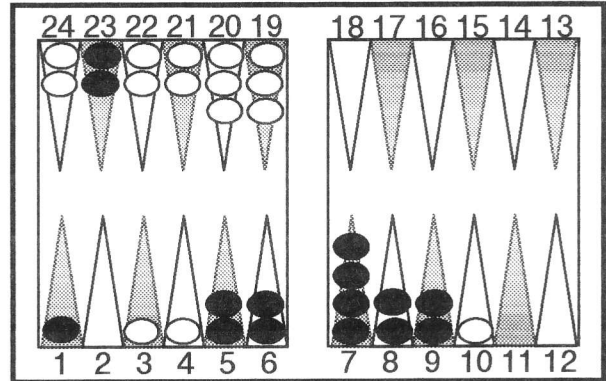


Best Plays (JF Level 7)

- 1) 10/8 22/21 -0.335
- 2) 4/2 22/21 -0.336
- 3) 5/2 -0.338
- 4) 4/2 3/2 -0.347
- 5) 4/2 10/9 -0.349

Best Play #2

7-Point Match, Black-5, White-0, Black to 5-4?



Best Plays (JF Level 7)

- 1) 23/14 -0.345
- 2) 8/3x 7/3 -0.373
- 3) 7/2 7/3x -0.440
- 4) 9/4x 8/4 -0.483
- 5) 6/1 6/2 -0.497

2

Tournament Schedule

Mar 20-22.....	1998 Midwest Championships , Radisson Hotel, Lisle, IL.....	(770) 583-6464
Apr 14-19.....	5th Worldwide Twin Backgammon Championships , Four Queens, Las Vegas....	(702) 893-6025
May 8-10.....	41st Gammon Associates Invitational , A.R. Private Club, Los Angeles.....	(818) 901-0464
May 22-25.....	19th Chicago Open , Wyndham, Itasca, IL.....	(847) 674-0120
Jun 12-14.....	1998 Georgia Championship & Peach Cup , Atlanta, GA.....	(770) 333-1876
Jul 2-5.....	Michigan Summer Backgammon Championships , Novi Hilton, Novi, MI.....	(810) 232-9731
Aug 1-9.....	World Cup VI/Texas Open/US Open , Harvey's Hotel Addison, Dallas, TX.....	(301) 299-8265
Sep 4-7.....	46th INDIANA Open , Raddison Hotel, Indianapolis, IN.....	(317) 255-8902
Thursdays.....	7:00 PM at Wildcat Brewing Company (872-3446) 92nd & North Michigan Road	255-8902