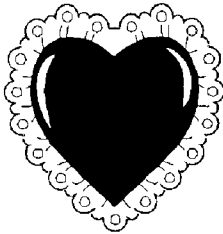




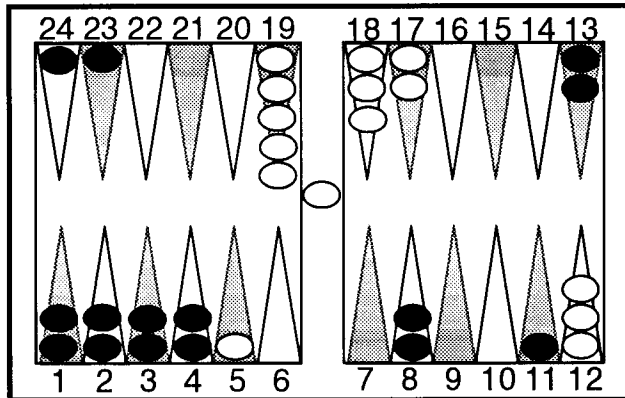
**Hoosier
Backgammon
Club**

February 1999



Winter Blitz

64



7 Point Match Black-0 White-0
Black to play 2-2?

This is a classic blitz type game. Black has shifted points at least once. What makes this position so interesting is the number of possible plays. The first reaction may be to continue to blitz. Most good players take each turn as a new problem to analyze with it's new conditions. This position was given to a number of national known players to analyze.

Doug Roberts (MA)

Howdy...my gut feeling is just to go 8/6[2], 13/11 and 23/21.

Kit Woolsey (CA)

I would play 23/21, 13/11, 8/6(2). When you are short on attack material, you have to make sure all your checkers go where they belong. Black would need more firepower in range to justify hitting loose. For the other two 2's, 13/11 locks up the big 11 point in case White gets in and brings another builder to bear on the blot if White flunks. 23/21 prepares to spring a back checker.

Rob Maier (IN)

I make the 6-point with the first two 2's. For the other two 2's, either 13/9, or 24/20. Ok, I like 8/6(2), 24/20. If no one else likes this play or gives an explanation, let me know, and I'll come up with something. :)

Howard Markowitz (NV)

I play 13/9 and make the 6-point.

Jake Jacobs (A World Traveler)

It is tempting to hit, simply because if things go wrong I can (and should, I think) cash all entering 5s and 6s except 5-5, 6-6, and 6-5. Are you sure this was too good before the roll? Maybe it is, and if so I guess it would still be too good after 8 of his 6s. However, I would make the 6-point and then play 13/9 with my other two 2s. Twenty-five times I am definitely too good and when he enters with a five I still have a game.

Chuck Bower (IN)

This position would NEVER have come up for me. I would have doubled several rolls ago! ;) I play 8/6(2), 13/11 and 23/21. If there were no checker on the bar I would be more tempted to hit this roll. With one up already I'll **gamble** that White won't roll a five this turn and hope that I roll any kind of six or 53, 44 next turn. If White does roll a five s/he will certainly have a take and I should probably wait on doubling but I will have a strong game.

Ray Fogerlund coolrey (CA)

I would simply make the 6-point and bring a builder to the 9-point... 8/6(2), 13/9. White can't really come in and break anchor to hit, he could not take a double. In fact, Black would probably be too good to double even if he did. Leaving a blot on the midpoint is the only flaw in the position, and if hit with 51 this is Black's only real worry, but with access to the cube Black should still end up winning this game. I would not make the 11-point because in the event that White makes the 5-point, this is not a point I want to have and to break later after White builds up a better position.

In these kind of positions I just like to try to cater to the most likely sequence, which is a fan by White. If he clears that hurdle, then I worry about that later! Knock him out while his pants are down. Seems this position must have been reached after Black rolled 55 or something and chose to switch points. Black seems to have been too good to double before he rolled the 22. Making the 6-point beats hitting loose, in my opinion. It increases White's disaster shakes by 9 rolls! Blots provide as good a coverage as points when White must use the half of his roll to enter. Any direct shot White leaves, even after making the 5 anchor will get the cube from me. That may be a mistake, because it might actually still be too good. But some people would take it!

Alan Steffen (NY)

This position should have been doubled and passed. In either case (no double or double/take) I believe it is correct to play 13 to 5 hitting! If they make the anchor it is no longer a double, so the game plan has to be anchor prevention.

Malcolm Davis (TX)

I move 8/6(2), 23/21, 13/11.

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HBC Backgammon Sunday & 1998 Awards

Sunday, February 21st
Registration 12:00-12:45PM
Awards 12:45PM Play Begins 1:00PM

Wildcat Brewing Company
92nd & North Michigan Road
Sunday Brunch 11AM-4PM

Open Div \$20...\$10 Optional Sidepool
Limited Division \$10
Double Gammon Points
Format: Main (9pts) Consolation (7pts)

Pre-register and save the \$5 Late Fee
255-8902 or meese@worldnet.att.net

Mike Fujita (HI)

I start with 8/6(2). I think that is clear. I've seen few exceptions to making a 5th point in this sort of position. After that I play 13/11 and think about the last deuce. I think continuing the attack with 11/9 is more important than 23/21.

Hitting with three of the deuces and playing 13/11 for the 4th is not likely to be as successful as making the 5th point.

Why is the cube still centered?

Alex Caraplis (NJ) (ABT 1998 Player of the Year)

I definitely play 8-6(2) and then look for the other twos. I prefer 13-11 and 23-21 for many reasons. The 11-point blocks White if he enters and only leaves 5-1 joker and advancing to the 21 yields direct shots on all other 5s. I also get 3-3 and 6-6 as jokers to close the 5-point and get pick and pass 6s if he doesn't enter. Spreading plays like 13-9 or 11-9 combined with a rear checker shuffle increase the joker risk a lot without a big upside in offense if those plays work and also don't get as many return shots when he immediately anchors. Slot plays are bad here because Black is a bit short on ammo and a return hit off bar costs a lot of tempo and increases White's chances to anchor and salvage the game. I feel the main choices are between my play and 24-20. I feel my play is better than 24-20 because of the blocking and hitting potential and less

joker risk. If White rolls 6-5 he would love to hit on the 14-point rather than play 13-7 because it begins the escape and 13-7 stacks points and leaves few numbers to make points on next roll. I look forward to your write up and thanks for the problem. I would play the same play of 8-6(2) and 23-21, 13-11 at DMP also. Thanks for sending the problem.

Arthur Benjamin (CA) ABT '97 Player of the Year
I play 8/6(2), 13/9. The reason is if he rolls a 5 after a hitting play, the blitz will probably not succeed. This gives the best blitzing/cubing chance if he does not roll a 6 (which occurs 25/36 time).

• This position was fed thought the two robots with the following results:

Rank	Play	Eval Level 7	Rank	Rollout Level 6
1)	8/6(2) 24/20	0.888	1)	0.963
2)	8/6(2) 23/21 13/11	0.885	2)	0.958
3)	8/6(2) 24/22 23/21	0.871	4)	0.942
4)	8/6(2) 23/21 11/9	0.867	5)	0.936
5)	8/6(2) 13/9	0.849	6)	0.914
6)	8/6(2) 24/22 13/11	0.840	8)	0.883
7)	8/6(2) 24/22 11/9	0.827	9)	0.868
8)	13/5x	0.808	3)	0.957
9)	8/6(2) 13/11(2)	0.801	7)	0.892

Of eight of the top nine plays, making the 6-point was part of the move. Although no one of the panel picked the top play, most picked the very close second.

1999 Hoosier Backgammon Club Gammon Point Standings.	
The HBC Player of the Month for January was Don Woods with 164 gammon points.	
1)	Don Woods..... 164
2)	Larry Strommen..... 134
3)	Chuck Stimming..... 100
4)	Sean Garber..... 80
5)	Alan Tavel..... 64
6)	Butch Meese..... 52
T7)	Jim Curtis..... 50
T7)	Mary Ann Meese..... 50
9)	Gino Agresti..... 30
10)	Dave Groner..... 20
	Rick Reahard..... 10

	January 7th	January 14th	January 21st	January 28th
1st	Don Woods	Larry Stromman	Chuck Stimming	Jim Curtis
2nd	Larry Stromman	Don Woods	Alan Tavel	Butch Meese

Tournament Schedule

Feb 12-14... **21st Pittsburgh Backgammon Championships**, Greentree Marriott, Pittsburgh, PA (412) 823-7500
 Mar 19-21... **1999 Midwest Backgammon Championships**, Radisson Hotel, Lisle, IL..... (773) 583-6464
 Apr 20-25... **International Twin Championships**, Four Queens, Las Vegas, NV..... (702) 893-6025
 Thursdays..... 7:00 PM at **Wildcat Brewing Company** (872-3446) 92nd & North Michigan Road 255-8902