



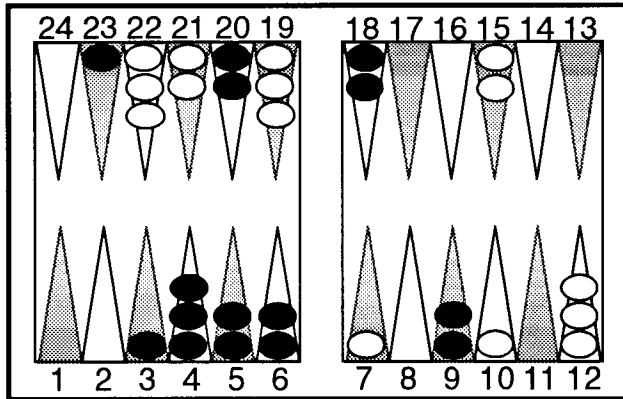
Hoosier
Backgammon
Club

March 1999



Pressure by Chuck Bower

64



Money Game. Black to play 6-6?

In a middle game, if double sixes play at all they are usually a good roll. Here the robots say Black actually **LOSES** equity. The eight rolls that hit and cover were Black's best. Only five of Black's checkers can even move a six. Does this make the best play easy to find?

White is trying to get his/her back checkers home. One way to do that is to put Black on the bar, keeping him/her occupied while White sneaks around. Therefore, leaving shots isn't a wise plan for Black. However, there is no way to clean up all blots with this roll. Three 6's would be needed to get the back checker to safety and then the fourth 6 would require Black to open up one of his/her remaining outfield points. 23/5, 9/3 would be the choice if you really needed to get that back checker home. The problem is that one of the defensive points would have to be sacrificed soon, and it will be difficult to do that without leaving White a lot of targets.

The safest place for the back checker is right where it is--on the 23-point. White doesn't have much ammo to attack it, yet. Seeing this, Black's plays now seem to narrow down to two: 20/8(2) and 20/14(2), 9/3(2). Both moves give Black a

decent holding game. How do we decide which one is better?

If Black plays 20/8(2), his/her game plan is to stay on the 18-point and wait for blots to appear. Best chances are when White has to clear the midpoint. That will probably take a while. 20/14(2), 9/3(2) keeps the pressure on White. Black is trying to get his/her shot sooner rather than later. As a bonus, the blot in the home board is covered, putting even more pressure on white to get safe. It may look like Black's position is inflexible after this move, but 1's, and 2's move inside the board and 3's, 5's, and 6's can be played by the back checker.

Snowie and Jellyfish agree that 20/14(2), 9/3(2) beats out 20/8(2) by a bit in cubeless equity. (JF level-6 rollouts say the difference is around 0.04.) In addition, a Snowie cubeFUL rollout says the difference is magnified. The best play wins about 1% more cubeless games, meaning Black is closer to being able to win the game by turning the cube. The cubeful (1-ply play, 1-ply cube) Snowie rollout has 20/14(2), 9/3(2) better by about 0.06 equity with a centered cube. Keep the pressure on White NOW!

HBC Awards Tournament

Jim Curtis was a great presenter as the 1998 Top Ten finishers were awarded engraved doubling cubes and prizes. It was good to see our friend, David Smith, who has been studying at the University of Illinois for the last 3/4 years. David brought three new players to compete in this annual event.

1st...Don Woods
2nd...Dave Groner

Cluster Counting now on the web by Jack Kissane

Jack Kissane (NY) is known in many chouette circles as the fastest pip counter in the world. He claims he can count almost any backgammon position within 5 seconds. An article about Jack's talent was first published in the **Chicago Point, Issue #52, November 1992**. The article with diagrams is now available on the web with the author's permission. Check it out, the location is below:

<http://www.northcoast.com/~mccool/cluster.html>

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HBC Welcomes Aboard New Players

HBC has always welcomed new players. This year we have experienced a higher than normal number of new players. Backgammon is a lot of fun but for some new players, jumping in with our regular group can cause culture shock. But the good news is we now can offer an event every week for new players only. There will be no entry fee, but an optional \$5 sidepool for those who want to compete for cash prizes. There will be backgammon prizes awarded to the winners each week.

You will also be eligible for the **Best New Player of 1999!!** This award was started in 1998. HBC has awarded the **TOP TEN Players** and the **Player of the Year** for the past 15 years. The winner is determined by the player with the highest gammon points for the full year. Players are eligible through their first full calendar year with the club and must be a member of HBC \$10 per year membership. All members receive the monthly HBC newsletter.

No forms to fill out...just come out and enjoy the game we all love. We play every Thursday, 7:00 PM at **Wildcat Brewing Company** (872-3446) 92nd & North Michigan Road.

Special bonus: once a new player plays four times with HBC, (s)he will receive free entry (\$20 value) into the Novice Division of the **Indiana Open Backgammon Tournament** held during the Labor Day Weekend. What a deal!!

Backgammon sets and books: HBC currently has a limited number of beginner backgammon sets and books. Contact us if you are interested. We can also point you in the right direction if you are hunting for a nice full-size set.

1999 Hoosier Backgammon Club

Gammon Point Standings.

The HBC **Player of the Month** for February was **Dave Groner** with 196 gammon points.

Don Woods was a close second with 190 gammon points.

- 1) Don Woods..... 354
 - 2) Larry Strommen..... 254
 - 3) Dave Groner..... 216
 - 4) Chuck Stimming..... 208
 - 5) Mary Ann Meese..... 194
 - 6) Sean Garber..... 188
 - 7) Gino Agresti..... 140
 - 8) Butch Meese..... 132
 - 9) Jim Curtis..... 110
 - 10) Alan Tavel..... 64
- David Smith..... 60
 Al Gomez..... 30
 Randy Foster..... 30
 Kevin Ward..... 20
 John Peek..... 20
 John Henn..... 10
 Rick Reahard..... 10
 Kathy Benneth..... 10



	<u>February 4th</u>	<u>February 11th</u>	<u>February 18th</u>	<u>February 25th</u>
1st	Don Woods	Chuck Stimming	Larry Strommen	Gino Agresti
2nd	Chuck Stimming	Mary Ann Meese	Dave Groner	Sean Garber

Tournament Schedule

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
May 28-31..	20th Chicago Open, Wyndham NW Chicago Hotel, Itasca, IL.....	(847) 674-0120
July 2-5.....	Michigan Summer Championships, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI.....	(810) 232-9731
Sept 3-6.....	47th Indiana Open, Sheraton-Westin Indianapolis North, Indianapolis, IN.....	(317) 255-8902

Thursdays..... 7:00 PM at **Wildcat Brewing Company** (872-3446) 92nd & North Michigan Road 255-8902