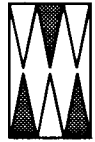


HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Hoosier
Backgammon
Club

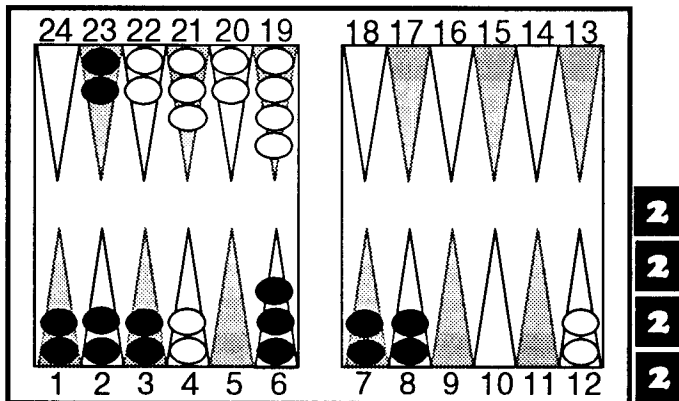
December 1999



HAPPY
NEW YEAR
& NEW
CENTURY

A Light in the Darkness

by Chuck Bower



Chouette (White is the box).
Black to play 6-5?

As a crew member, find the four best plays, rank them, and decide whether to take or pass after each.

The chouette is a blend of money and social backgammon and has become a popular form of the game. In a chouette, a player (The **Box**) plays against a number of players (The **Crew**). The crew is headed by a captain who does the rolling and moving of the checkers and also has the final say on which move is played. Each crew member has control of a cube called **individual cube**.

With one player against many, the score can change quickly, making chouette technically a volatile competition. In addition, the differences of opinion among the crew members can lead to heated discussions; another form of volatility! Diplomacy and salesmanship can be a big asset when you are a crew member. To speed play, some chouettes require that a crew member's

cube be turned before s/he is allowed to discuss potential moves.

As a non-captain member of the crew, you may get stuck with a play you feel is inferior. Sometimes being able to argue for a compromise (for example, the play you feel is second best) will be your best hope. In addition, recognizing when to take or pass is a critical part of this form of backgammon as well, and even holds a few subtle tactics not available in other contests. The illustrated position would likely lead to a lot of discussion.

Of the four candidate plays, two hold the anchor: either 8/2, 8/3 or 7/1, 7/2. Running one back checker is worth a look: 23/17, 6/1. Finally, Black can bring BOTH back checkers out: 23/17, 23/18. Being able to rank the candidate plays is valuable when playing alone, but even more so when playing with partners since a compromise might develop.

Snowie and Jellyfish rollouts are in agreement that the **tweener** play, 23/17, 6/1 is a big loser with a cubeless equity of -0.72. White can attack with 2's, 4's, and 5's plus 11's for 28/36 hitting numbers. And if missed, Black still has a long road to victory. Black should definitely pass the impending cube if this play is chosen.

Sitting tight by clearing either the 8- or 7-point is next best with these two plays being about equal. This tactic is safe for now, but short-sighted. Snowie rollouts say the cubeless equity for Black is -0.59. The double can either be taken or passed; the decision is that close. If captain passes, then the next crew member should consider taking, especially since s/he no longer has a deadhead vetoing his/her calls! Also, the relative strengths of the box and captain can help decide the cube decision.

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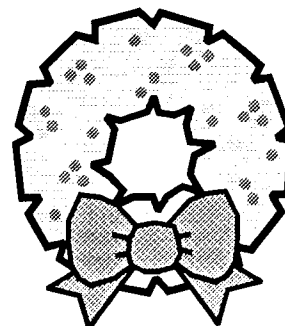
1999 Hoosier Backgammon Club Gammon Point Standings as of Nvember 1999.
 HBC Player of the Month for November was **Don Woods** with 110 gammon points.

1) Butch Meese..... 1200	Fred Kalantari..... 80	Jim Roston..... 20
2) Chuck Stimming..... 1118	Mogens Knudsen.... 80	Carla Johnson..... 20
3) Don Woods..... 1116	Cathie Benneth..... 70	Paul Franks..... 20
4) Jim Curtis..... 1096	Butch Bates..... 64	Julian Haley..... 20
5) Sean Garber..... 992	Chuck Bower..... 60	John Peek..... 20
6) Mary Ann Meese..... 914	David Smith..... 60	Roman Karbiak..... 20
7) Larry Strommen..... 848	David Schwind..... 48	Mike Pratt..... 10
8) Dave Groner..... 672	Terry Haffner..... 40	Reggie Porter..... 10
9) Gino Agresti..... 564	Paul Spens..... 40	Bob Neumann..... 10
10) Woody Woodworth..... 398	Jon Vietor..... 40	Andy Liebenthal..... 10
Al Gomez..... 380	Mary Franks..... 30	John Henn..... 10
Terry Bateman..... 140	Randy Foster..... 30	Brian Nelson..... 10
Peter Kalba..... 128	Joe Miller..... 30	Jack Kissane..... 10
Alan Tavel..... 128	Jake Jacobs..... 30	Bill Yancey..... 10
Bill Julian..... 120	Philip Degen..... 30	Jon Sinder..... 10
John Brussel..... 100	Luke Clippinger..... 30	Rick Reahard..... 10
Jan Gurvitz..... 98	Kevin Ward..... 20	Stan Gurvitz..... 10
Per Sorensen..... 90	Michael O'Cain..... 20	
Gabe Stiasny..... 80	Julia Boyle..... 20	

The best play by far is the double leap 23/17, 23/18. Although White still gets oodles of shots (28, same as the tweener play), if missed Black has much better chances of pulling off a complete escape. Snowie says Black's has a clear take with cubeless equity is -0.48.

HBC Sunday Tournament
December 5 1999
 1st...Luke Clippinger
 2nd...Don Woods

Laying it all on the line is a courageous decision. And uncontrolled courage isn't necessarily an advantage at backgammon. But when you're lost in the forest, darkness has set in, and the temperature is falling, sometimes searching for (and then following) a dim light is better than sitting tight and freezing to death.



	<u>November 4th</u>	<u>November 11th</u>	<u>November 18th</u>	<u>November 25th</u>
1st	Don Woods	Larry Strommen	Chuck Stimming	Happy
2nd	Phil Degen	Butch Meese	Mary Ann Meese	Thanksgiving
2nd	Woody Woodworth	---	---	Day

Feb 18-20...	22nd Pittsburgh Championship/ABT Awards , Greentree Radisson, Pittsburgh, PA. (412) 823-7500
Mar 17-19...	2000 Midwest Backgammon Championships , Radisson Hotel, Lisle, IL..... (773) 583-6464
May 26-29..	21st Chicago Open , Wyndham NW Chicago Hotel, Itasca, IL..... (847) 674-0120
Jun30-Jul3.	Michigan Summer Championships , Novi Hilton, Novi, MI..... (810) 232-9731

Thursdays..... 7:00 PM at **Bench Warmers (Holiday Inn North)** (871-5655) 255-8902