

# BOOM BABY

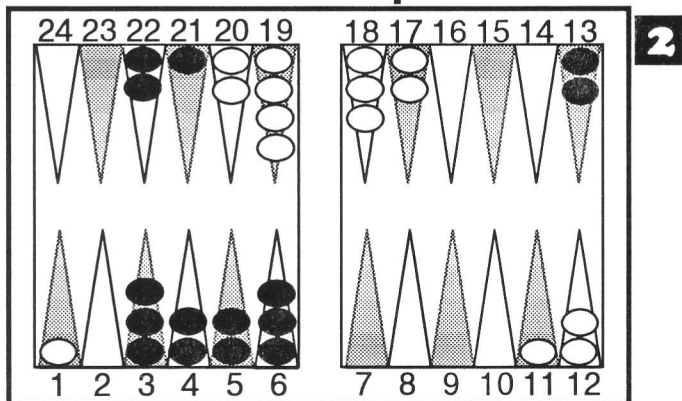


Hoosier  
Backgammon  
Club

June 2000



## Dual Purpose



Money Game  
Black to play 6-2?

White just moved 1-11 with 6-4 in hopes of escaping one checker. Holding the cube, White did not have any other good choices. Black has a home board advantage. One of Black's goals is to jump White's 4-prime with the 3 back checkers. Black has rolled 6-2 and can hit either on the 11-point or the 1-point. The 6 can be used to escape or try to make a 5-point prime. The robot found 7 different plays all included a hit. A panel of experts were asked for their play across the board without the aid of a robot.

### Arthur Benjamin

I play 13/11x, 22/16. As Black, I eagerly welcome a blot hitting contest.

### Jake Jacobs

What are two things we were hoping to accomplish this roll? Hitting, or coming out would both make my list. Hmm, here's a roll that lets me...hit and come out! Snowie probably likes the really big play, 13/11x, 22/16, but I'll...no, I won't either. I make the same play. If it's too big, oh well, I was shot down in glorious flames, and took the rest of the chouette down with me.

### Elliott Winslow

I think I'd lean to 13/11x, 21/15.

### Harald Johanni

I prefer out and hit. Two good things with one roll. To leap the prime is the best now when the opponent is on the bar!

### Ray Fogerlund

In this position, Black's biggest worries are how to maintain the initiative, and escape his back checkers without cracking. With that in mind it looks trivial to exit with a 6, (they don't grow on trees), from the 22 point while putting White on the bar. Since Black can hit with the 2, this seems the perfect roll to accomplish both objectives. Black will not like it if White rolls 2-2, of course; but if he holds the anchor and runs the other back checker from the 21 point he will still have two checker stuck behind a 5 prime. Slotting the bar point with the 6 is out because even if it works, and doesn't get hit, then it leaves 3 checker behind White's 4 prime. If you do that very often, you find out just how hard it can be to get a 6 or a 5 when you need it!

### Doug Mayfield

Hit and out. True, I may get gammoned but I have the better board. Also my opponent holds the cube so I can't double him out. I want to try to turn the game around before his game gets any stronger.

### Doug Roberts

I play 13/11x/5. The hit is mandatory but slotting the bar is premature.

### Walter Trice

I play 13/11x 22/16. I've been wrecked by 4-primed too many times in these positions not to start my escape now. Sticking another checker in the outfield also gives you better board control. You can afford to play somewhat big because you have a 4-2 home board advantage.

### Summary

Chuck Bower ran the position with Snowie and Jellyfish. The top four plays involve hitting on the 11-point. The bottom three plays include hitting on the 1-point. The top two plays bring a back checker out with 22/16 better than 21/15.

| Plays         | Snowie v3.0           | Snowie v3.0                              | Jellyfish v3.0          |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|
|               | 3-ply eval (cubeless) | 3-ply 'live cube' rollout (40,000 games) | level-7 eval (cubeless) |
| 22/16, 13/11x | 0.435                 | 0.684                                    | 0.419                   |
| 21/15, 13/11x | 0.377                 | 0.560                                    | 0.333                   |
| 13/11x/5      | 0.320                 | 0.474                                    | 0.274                   |
| 13/7, 13/11x  | 0.223                 | 0.148                                    | 0.166                   |
| 22/16, 3/1x   | 0.196                 | 0.126                                    | 0.223                   |
| 21/15, 3/1x   | 0.193                 | 0.118                                    | 0.197                   |
| 13/7, 3/1x    | 0.024                 | -0.314                                   | 0.033                   |

Hoosier Backgammon Club  
Home Page: <http://home.att.net/~meese>  
E-Mail: [meese@worldnet.att.net](mailto:meese@worldnet.att.net)

Butch & Mary Ann Meese  
1008 Tuckahoe, Indianapolis, IN 46260-2215  
(317) 255-8902

**2-Away, 2-Away Cube Strategy**

This topic has surfaced during weekly play in the last few months. This subject is not new and the following article was found archived on the **Backgammon Galore!** website at [www.bkgm.com](http://www.bkgm.com). The article was written on [rec.games.backgammon](http://rec.games.backgammon) by **Darse Billings** in February 1995 and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

Question: I understand that, when 2-away, 2-away, one ought to double as soon as one has an advantage. If this is to be taken literally, should the cube always be turned on the 3rd or 4th move?

Answer: The short answer is **yes**. This has been discussed at length previously, so I will try to be brief.

It can be shown that it is always theoretically correct to double at 2-away 2-away (assuming the two players are of comparable strength). It can be proven mathematically, and is almost immediately obvious to those familiar with game theory.

In practice, one need not double if there are no market losers (sequences leading to a correct double/drop). If there is even one sequence (of the 21\*21 roll combinations) where your advantage could grow to the point where your opponent has a valid drop, then you must double, or risk a "mathematical disaster".

Strong players will often delay doubling in the hope that the weaker opponent will incorrectly drop when doubled in a position that is difficult to assess. This is a valid tactic, in practice.

There is also some theoretical justification for the stronger player to delay doubling until her advantage is somewhat greater than a 50% chance; but in that case, the weaker side should be doubling sooner (even when at a slight disadvantage). So it could be argued that other factors may warrant not doubling, even if there are a few market losers, but this is usually a specious way of thinking.

Doubling at 2-away 2-away is almost never wrong, whereas not doubling could be an enormous error. So unless you have no respect at all for your opponent, just turn the cube and concentrate on more important things, like correct checker play.

For example, if I start with 3-1 and my opponent follows up with a mediocre roll like 5-1, should I double?

Absolutely. If you roll 66, for example, your opponent could have a legitimate drop next turn. This would constitute a potentially large loss in terms of expected

value. That risk is much higher than any possible gain from waiting, so you must double immediately.



**Hoosier Pips....**HBC will not meet on June 29th due to the **2000 Michigan Backgammon Championships**. This annual event draws the largest crowd east of the Mississippi River including a number of players from Indianapolis.

**2000 Hoosier Backgammon Club  
Gammon Point Standings as of May 2000.  
The Player of the Month for May was  
Jim Curtis with 193 gammon points.**

- 1) Larry Strommen.....594
- 2) Butch Meese.....528
- 3) Gino Agresti..... 418
- 4) Mary Ann Meese..... 395
- 5) Dave Groner.....374
- 6) Sean Garber.....368
- 7) Don Woods.....303
- 8) Chuck Stimming..... 289
- 9) Jim Curtis.....250
- 10) Terry Bateman.....183
- Gabe Stiasny..... 159
- Al Gomez.....156
- Ron Black..... 150
- Woody Woodworth..... 115
- Richard Larsen..... 52
- David Smith..... 45
- Philip Degen..... 38
- Luke Clippinger.....36
- David Schwind.....26
- Ross Ratzov..... 16
- Jan Gurvitz..... 10
- Lance Jenkins.....10
- Frank Hanley..... 8

|     | May 4th            | May 11th           | May 18th              | May 25th            |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1st | <i>Butch Meese</i> | <i>Sean Garber</i> | <i>Mary Ann Meese</i> | <i>Al Gomez</i>     |
| 2nd | <i>Jim Curtis</i>  | <i>Al Gomez</i>    | <i>Gabe Stiasny</i>   | <i>Jim Curtis</i>   |
| 2nd | ...                | ...                | <i>Chuck Stimming</i> | <i>Gino Agresti</i> |

Jun30-Jul3..... **Michigan Summer Championships**, Novi Hilton, Novi, MI..... (810) 232-9731  
 Sept 1-4..... **48th Indiana Open**, Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suite..... (317) 255-8902

Thursdays..... 7:00 PM at **Wildcat Brewing Company** (872-3446) ..... HBC 255-8902