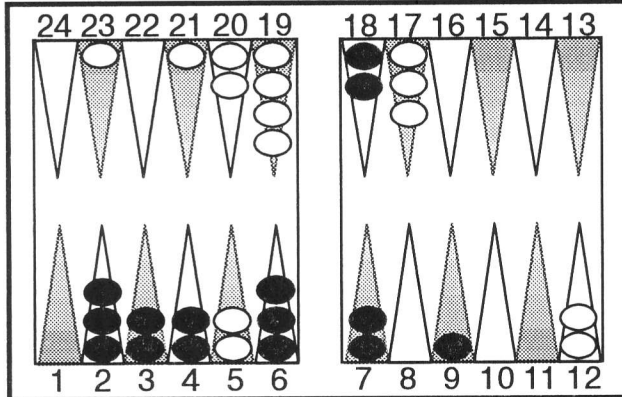


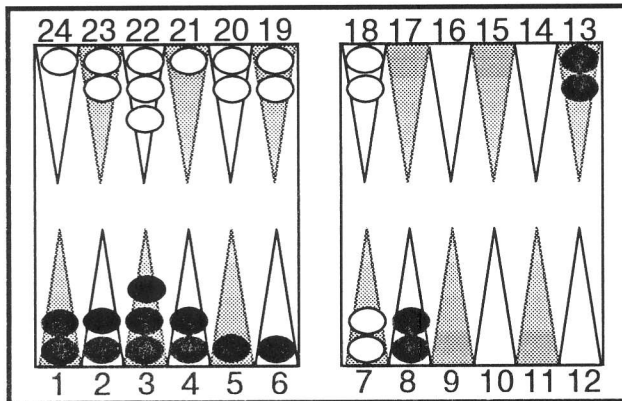
A Tale Of Two 6-5's

by Chuck Bower



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Position 1: Money Game, Black to Play 6-5?



2

Position 2: Money Game. Black to Play 6-5?

The two positions have a lot in common besides the roll. In each case Black has a significant race lead. White has two homeboard blots in each position. Should Black make a run for it or sit tight? Could it be right to run in one but not the other?

These two positions fit under the general category titled *pay me now, or pay me later*. Kit Woolsey is credited with taking this 1970's Fram Oil Filter TV commercial line and applying it to backgammon. Kit also identified three conditions to look for.

- 1) Is Black's position deteriorating?
- 2) Is White's position improving?
- 3) If Black makes a break for it and survives is he home free?

Free Lecture at 49th Indiana Open by World Champion and Author Bill Robertie

Friday, August 31st, 3:00 PM

The general rule says that if at least two of these questions is answered **yes**, then **pay now** and run. Otherwise **pay later** and sit tight. Jellyfish and Snowie rollouts have shown that, in general, it is better to pay later. But the key is knowing when to hot-foot it. The Fram rules are usually right, but not always.

In Position 1, Black is deteriorating, and White is improving. That's two yes votes, meaning running is probably right. The fact that Black will be leaving two blots and many shots should not deter him from taking off. A Snowie rollout says keeping the 18-point and playing 9/3, 6/1 costs about 0.16 units of cubeless equity, a very costly misplay. Best is 18/7. Second best, 18/13, 9/3, only costs 0.04 in equity. Better to get one efficiently home and a second checker close to safety. Leaving White 1's, 4's, and 6's but an easier followup is better than duplicating 1's.

If Position 1 is a **pay now** situation, surely Position 2 is also, right? Not so, says Snowie. Here the rules seem to break down. Black's position is crumbling while White's stands to improve. In addition, if the blot is missed after 13/2, Black safeties with 27/36 rolls, and is unlikely to leave a shot after that. It looks like 2 solid **yes** answers and another **almost yes**.

The key here is the elusive backgammon property known as **timing**. In Position 1, White has lots of numbers to play in the next several rolls that allow him/her to keep both the 20- and 13-points. He just covers the homeboard blots and then sits in ambush. White has a huge timing advantage and Black's waiting only plays into White's strengths.

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HBC Website of the Month: Gammon Village <http://www.gammonvillage.com>

Gammon Village theme is *Serving The Online Backgammon Community*. The site is rich in features: News & Info, Latest News, Guest Columnists such as Jake Jacobs and Bill Robertie, and resources including software, books, magazines and websites. You can sign-up for the GammonVillage Newsletter delivered by email. Among the many other features is a rating list of the 25 OnLine Backgammon Servers. So surf right over and give it a look.

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In Position 2, White doesn't have nearly as much time as in Position 1. After Black clears the 8-point, White will have at most two sixes to play before being forced to break. Furthermore, if Black is required to blot from the midpoint, he is unlikely to leave any more shots than if he runs voluntarily now. Snowie rollouts indicate that staying put on the 13-point is better than bolting by 0.07 cubeless equity units.

One final subtly of these two positions is that the player with his 18-point is the one under pressure. Holding the opponent's barpoint is a two-edged sword. With plenty of timing, it's a great place to wait for a shot. Short on timing, it's a hard point to race from. Being so far from home with poor timing, it is more likely to lead to a blot of one's own than one for the opponent.



2001 Hoosier Backgammon Club
The Player of the Month for April
 was **Jim Curtis** with **155** gammon points.

- 1 Jim Curtis..... 651
- 2 Sean Garber.....581
- 3 Butch Meese..... 485
- 4 Mary Ann Meese..... 340
- 5 Larry Strommen.....309
- 6 Gabe Stiasny.....277
- 7 Chuck Stimming..... 236
- 8 Scott Day.....211
- 9 Woody Woodworth.....199
- 10 Dave Groner.....166
- Al Gomez..... 164
- Terry Bateman..... 163
- Rick Steele..... 154
- Jeff Flowers..... 132
- Ron Black.....122
- David Schwind.....80
- Frank Scott..... 48
- Alan Tavel.....30
- Robb Zeigler..... 20
- Luke Clippinger.....18
- John Perkins..... 16

HBC welcomes new players **Jeff Arnold** and **Russ Eberhart**. The internet is making it easier for players to find real backgammon. Look for a one-day HBC tournament in July.

	<u>April 5th</u>	<u>April 12th</u>	<u>April 19th</u>	<u>April 26th</u>
1st	Dave Groner	Jim Curtis	Dave Schwind	Jeff Flowers
2nd	Sean Garber	Larry Strommen	Gabe Stiasny	Dave Groner
2nd	Jim Curtis	Butch Meese	Chuck Stimming	Jim Curtis

May 25-28.....	22nd Chicago Open , Wyndham NW Chicago Hotel, Itasca, IL.....	(702) 893-6025
Jun 8-10.....	Carolina Invitational , Comfort Suits, Gastonia, NC.....	(704) 398-8480
Jun 12-17.....	8th Worldwide Twin Championships , Treasure Island, Las Vegas, NV.....	(702) 893-6025
Jun 28-Jul 1.....	Michigan Summer Championships , Novi Hiton, Novi, MI.....	(810) 232-9731
Aug 9-12.....	Georgia State Championships & Peach Cup , Hilton Garden Inn, Atlanta, GA....	(770) 333-1876
Aug 31-Sep 3...	49th Indiana Open , Sheraton Hotel & Suite, Indianapolis, IN.....	(317) 255-8902
Sep 21-23.....	Florida State Championships , Sheraton Suites, Ft. Lauderdale, FL.....	(954) 564-0340
Thursdays.....	7:00 PM at Neon Johnny's , 86th & Township Line Rd (Cellular 442-4065).....	HBC 255-8902