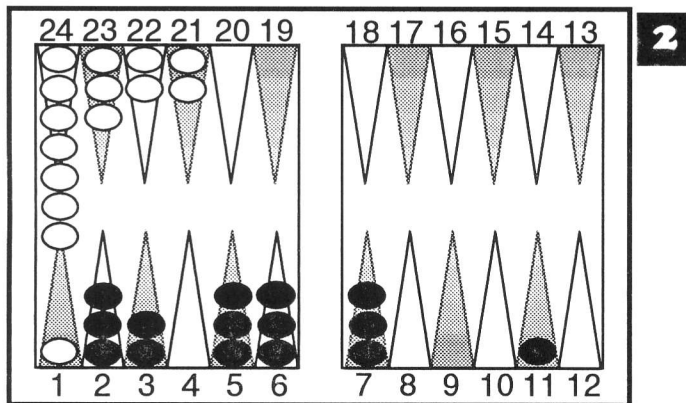




Repeated Threats by Chuck Bower



Money Game, Black to Play 5-2?

Backgammon is more than just memorizing opening rolls and counting shots. Among many skills, a player needs to know how to drive to the finish line. I had the Black checkers in the illustrated position, battling HBC points leader Jim Curtis. How should I have played this less than ideal roll?

Note that White is far ahead in the race. After this roll, White will be ahead by 18 or 19 pips. If merely a straight race (with no blocking and no wastage), White would be a prohibitive favorite with about 93% game winning chances. Ignoring Black's blocking power but accounting for White's inefficient homeboard, the Strommen Backgammon Position Analyzer still gives White better than 70% game winning chances.

Here Black's broken prime makes him a favorite, but the key fact is that Black must maintain his blocking power. Every time White is on roll, he becomes a favorite with six rolls: 6-3, 5-3 and 4-3. How does Black keep the advantage?

Over the table, I played 11/9, 6/1x. My (flawed) thinking went like this: I want to keep a checker outside to hunt down White's fleeing checker. Furthermore, if I get hit back on my acepoint,

White will still be blocked. I may even get shots at a second checker if White enters with a 1-2. If White cooperates and stays on the bar, I gain in the race. Sounds convincing, but unfortunately these three reasons just don't add up.

Another approach is to leave White's blot alone, letting him crash his board further. Three plays compete for this gameplan: 11/9, 7/2; 11/6, 7/5; and 11/6, 5/3. Yet the problems with these moves are shared with 11/9, 6/1x: White repeatedly threatens to escape.

The best plan is to attempt to squelch White's chances ASAP. 11/4 looks risky, but in fact the downside isn't any worse than the other plays: White escapes (by hitting) with the same six rolls. The upside is huge, however. If White misses, Black covers with 27 numbers, nearly locking up the win. Even when Black fails to cover, White may not roll a 3. And if White rolls 3-2 after Black starts the 4-point, Black gets an immediate shot in White's homeboard. Even when the worst happens and White hits and jumps into the outfield, Black has some chances of picking off that blot as it comes around.

...continues Page 2...

HBC Summer Tournament Sunday - July 29th, 2001

Arni's Restaurant (875-7034)
3443 West 86th Street
(west of WalMart)

Registration: 12:00 PM
Play Begins: 1:00 PM

Open Div: \$20 with \$10 Op SPool
Limited Division: \$8
Format: Main-Consolation
Pre-register: 255-8902 or
meese@worldnet.att.net

Snowie rollouts indicate that 11/4 wins at least 4% more games than its nearest competitors. Even if Black's spare on the 2-point were back on the 3-point, allowing White to point-on-head, 11/4 is STILL the correct play by about 2% game winning chances.

Only if Black were much closer in the race or if White's board stronger would slotting become inferior, risking more than it would gain. But in the illustrated position, White will repeatedly threaten to snatch the lead, and Black's best approach is to go for the sure win immediately by slotting the only missing point in his prime.

Free Lecture
 at **49th Indiana Open** by
World Champion and Author
Bill Robertie
 Friday, August 31st, 3:00 PM

Important News: Weekly Play

There will *no* backgammon on
 Thursday, June 28.

Most players are heading to **Michigan**
 for the **Summer Championships**.
 Hope to see you there.

Starting July 11, HBC will play
 on **Wednesday evenings**.
 We will remain at **Neon Johnny's**.

Butch and Mary Ann will celebrate
 20 years of marriage on June 13.
 And some said it wouldn't last!!!

2001 Hoosier Backgammon Club
 The **Player of the Month** for **May** was
Butch Meese with **152** gammon points.

- 1 Jim Curtis..... 764
- 2 Sean Garber.....673
- 3 Butch Meese..... 637
- 4 Mary Ann Meese..... 482
- 5 Larry Strommen.....365
- 6 Woody Woodworth..... 345
- 7 Chuck Stimming..... 324
- 8 Gabe Stiasny.....313
- 9 Scott Day.....247
- 10 Rick Steele.....229
- Al Gomez..... 220
- Dave Groner.....212
- Terry Bateman..... 183
- Jeff Flowers..... 142
- Ron Black..... 122
- David Schwind.....80
- Chuck Bower..... 80
- Frank Scott..... 48
- Alan Tavel.....30
- Robb Zeigler..... 20
- Jeff Arnold..... 20
- Brian Nelson..... 20
- Luke Clippinger.....18
- John Perkins..... 16



	<u>May 3rd</u>	<u>May 10th</u>	<u>May 17th</u>	<u>May 24th</u>	<u>May 31st</u>
1st	<i>Butch Meese</i>	<i>Chuck Stimming</i>	<i>Woody Woodworth</i>	<i>Mary Ann Meese</i>	<i>Chuck Bower</i>
2nd	<i>Mary Ann Meese</i>	<i>Scott Day</i>	<i>Gabe Stiasny</i>	<i>Butch Meese</i>	<i>Sean Garber</i>
2nd	<i>Rick Steele</i>	<i>Dave Groner</i>	<i>Rick Steele</i>	<i>Jim Curtis</i>	...

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