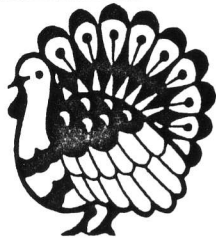




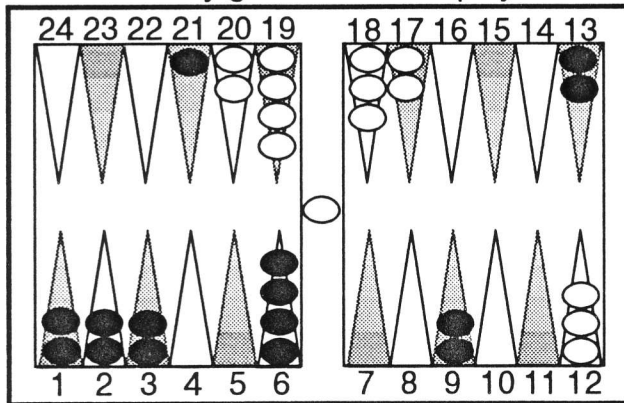
**Hoosier
Backgammon
Club**

November 2001



Two Lessons For The Price Of One by Chuck Bower

Money game. Black to play 5-4?



The above illustration provides two lessons to the backgammon student. It takes three positions to learn the two lessons. Before proceeding, find the best three candidate plays. Besides simply winning the game, Black would really like to win a gammon here. As it turns out, the play which leads to the most gammon wins isn't even among the top three candidates! 13/8, 9/5 wins the most gammons, but gives White too many winning chances. Maximizing equity often requires one to balance gammon wins against losing chances.

The three best candidate plays are 1) 13/8, 13/9; 2) 21/16, 13/9; and 3) 21/16, 6/2. Snowie says the equity of the three plays are cleanly separated. The best play beats second best by 0.09 cubeless equity units. Third best is 0.15 units worse than best. Care to rank the three candidates now before reading further? Moving 13/8, 13/9 comes in 3rd best according to Snowie. This play wins only 66% of all games compared to 73% for Snowie's favorite move. Leaving the last checker behind for even one roll is a big mistake. If White enters next turn, that checker is going to have quite a gauntlet to run and even when White fails to enter for several rolls, Black can stumble by not rolling a 5 or 6 and crunching in the homeboard. Lesson #1 says that getting a trapped checker loose, even

when only blocked by a 4-prime gets top priority. Of the two remaining plays, both which correctly run the back checker 21/16, best by far is 13/9. This result may seem surprising since the checker brought off the midpoint isn't yet a new builder as it stacks a third checker on the 9-point. Throw in the fact that White gets a total of seven immediate shots (4-1, 5-1, 4-4, 5-4) instead of three with the safe 6/2.

There are actually three things which make 13/9 better than 6/2. First is that one less checker is left on White's side of the board. As soon as White enters he'll be aiming at Black's outfield and the more checkers which must cross that minefield, the more trouble Black will have. Lesson two is even more valuable than lesson one because it can be used in many backgammon situations: take advantage of an opponent on the bar by moving your checkers to better positions in relative safety. This opportunity comes up during all parts of the game.

The second advantage of 13/9 over 6/2 is that it doesn't waste a builder. The two spares on the 6-point can be used to build either or both of the remaining inner board openings. Rolls 1-1 and 2-2 are good examples but so are combination rolls like 5-2 followed by 4-1.

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HBCs Fall Tournament

Sunday - December 9th, 2001

Arni's Restaurant (875-7034)

3443 West 86th Street
(west of WalMart)

Registration: 12:00 PM

Play Begins: 12:30 PM

Open Div: \$20 with \$10 Op SPool

Limited Division: \$8

Format: Main-Consolation

**Pre-register: 255-8902 or
meese@worldnet.att.net**



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

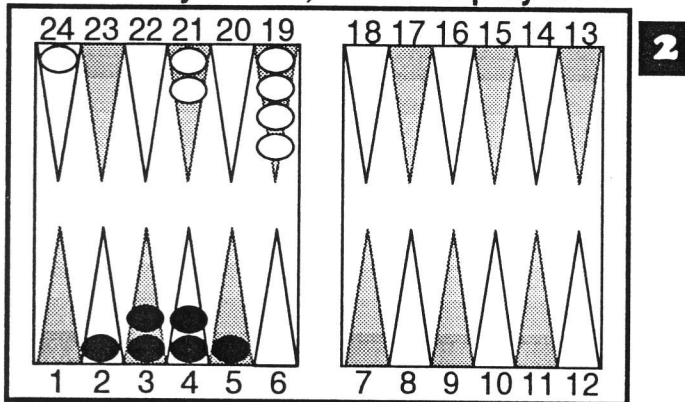
Butch & Mary Ann Meese
1008 Tuckahoe, Indianapolis, IN 46260-2215
(317) 255-8902

Two Lesson for the Price of One

The third advantage to 13/9 is that it doesn't put a checker on an inefficient spot in the homeboard. Spares on low points take longer to bear off. If White stays on the bar for a couple more rolls, Black may be able to win a gammon without making both remaining homeboard points, but especially when he does complete the board he wants a clean bearoff to maximize gammon chances. White has a lot of rolling to do to get off the gammon and one poorly placed Black checker can mean the difference. 21/16, 13/9 wins 73% total including 28% gammons. 21/16, 6/2 wins 70.5% total and only 24% gammons. The combination of an extra builder and avoiding the inefficient stacking of the low points reaps a big reward of 4% more gammon wins for Black.

Hoosier Pips: HBC will play on Wednesday evenings throughout the holiday season. HBC welcomes new players John Maddox and Don Miller.

Money Game, White to play 2-2?



In most bearoff situations, it is right to bear off two checkers if possible. But in this position, White needs doubles to win...big doubles. Playing 6/0, 6/4 is best because it makes double 5s and 4s good increasing White's winning chances from 15.6 to 17.5%.

2001 Hoosier Backgammon Club The Player of the Month for October was Sean Garber with 206 gammon points.

- 1 Jim Curtis..... 1294
- 2 Sean Garber..... 1275
- 3 Butch Meese..... 1179
- 4 Mary Ann Meese..... 836
- 5 Woody Woodworth..... 740
- 6 Gabe Stiasny..... 703
- 7 Chuck Stimming..... 701
- 8 Larry Strommen..... 556
- 9 Dave Groner..... 546
- 10 Scott Day..... 421
- Terry Bateman..... 396
- Rick Steele..... 387
- Al Gomez..... 336
- Jeff Flowers..... 291
- Kevin Heacox..... 136
- Ron Black..... 122
- Steve Brown..... 100
- David Schwind..... 80
- Chuck Bower..... 80
- Charley Haley..... 79
- Timothy Jaxon..... 69
- Karen Davis..... 61
- Frank Scott..... 48
- Jack Kissane..... 36
- Ray Kershaw..... 34
- Alan Tavel..... 30
- Russ Haley..... 28
- Bill Benneth..... 24
- Bob Zavoral..... 24
- Robb Zeigler..... 20
- Jeff Arnold..... 20
- Brian Nelson..... 20
- Jake Jacobs..... 20
- Jeremy Bagai..... 20
- Carter Mattig..... 20
- Luke Clippinger..... 18
- Jim Roston..... 18
- Chris Sellick..... 18
- John Perkins..... 16

	<u>October 3rd</u>	<u>October 10th</u>	<u>October 17th</u>	<u>October 24th</u>	<u>October 31st</u>
1st	Sean Garber	Jim Curtis	Butch Meese	Terry Bateman	Sean Garber
2nd	Terry Bateman	Sean Garber	Chuck Stimming	Mary Ann Meese	Jim Curtis

Nov 23-25.....	7th Ohio State Championships , Radisson Cleveland, Middleburg Hts, OH.....	(330) 966-2811
Jan 16-21.....	1st Boston Open & Masters' Jackpot , Hyatt Harborside Hotel, Boston, MA.....	(781) 641-2091
Jan 18-21.....	2002 Carolina Invitational , Holiday Inn, Charlotte, North Carolina.....	(704) 398-8480
Feb 15-17.....	24th Pittsburgh Champs/ABT Awards , Greentree Radisson, Pittsburgh, PA.....	(412) 823-7500
Mar 22-24.....	2002 Midwest Championships , Wyndham Lisle, Lisle, IL.....	(773) 583-6464

Wednesdays.. 7:00 PM at **Neon Johnny's**, 86th & Township Line Rd (Cellular 442-4065)..... HBC 255-8902