



**Hoosier
Backgammon
Club**

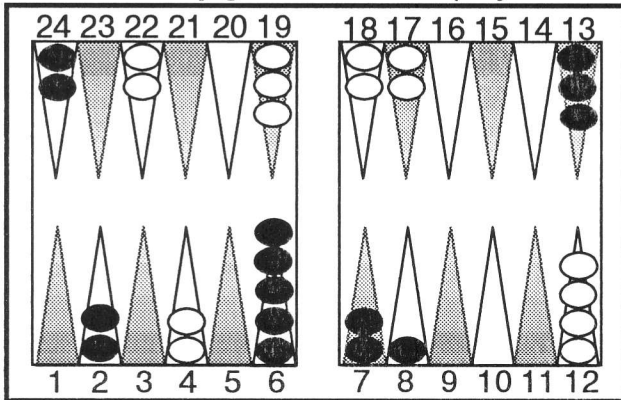
December 2001



Keep Your Focus On A Game Plan

by Chuck Bower

Money game. Black to play 3-2?



Unlike chess, backgammon is meant to be played quickly. A typical rate in a chess match might be 20 plays per hour per player. In a backgammon match, 200 plays per player per hour is more typical.

However, playing quickly does not mean playing mindlessly. Top players play quickly because they envision how to play the dice before they are thrown. This results from a game plan. With a race lead, they are looking at running. Opponent leaves blots?

Before the dice are thrown they already know which rolls hit. Behind in the race? Hold the backside points and build on the homeside.

In the illustrated position, I'd guess over 95% of players would quickly cover the 8-point and pick up the dice. How could this be wrong? The 8-point is good for blocking as well as a safe landing space when bearing in against White's advanced anchor. The fact that this position is worthy of an article has probably tipped off most readers that 13/8 is not the best play.

In fact, Snowie rollouts rank it fourth best, and a bonified whopper (cubeless error > 0.1 equity units).

Second best according to the rollouts is 8/5,

7/5. Although that move leaves a blot and breaks the valuable barpoint, the 5-point is so good in contact positions that making it overcomes these shortcomings. Still, it is an error of 0.05 units of cubeless equity.

The problem with both 13/8 and 8/5, 7/5 is that they don't address Black's best game plan. When the opponent makes an advanced anchor, you should be attempting to make an advanced anchor of your own.

Otherwise the opponent goes after a prime with little resistance. A partial prime against a deep anchor combined with an advanced anchor of one's own is a solid double. Don't make it easy for your opponent to prime you. Go for the advanced anchor.

The third best play here is the unnecessarily risky quadruple blot play: 24/21, 13/11. This shows the power of going for the advanced anchor. Even with all the vulnerability of this move, it is still a bit better than mindlessly covering 13/8.

Best by far according to Snowie rollouts is 24/21, 8/6. Stacking a sixth checker on the 5-point seems counterproductive, yet the advanced anchor is so important that Black should not leave distractions.

Go for the advanced anchor, and put some pressure on White's outfield in the process. Playing quickly and playing intelligently can go hand in hand.

HBCs Fall Tournament

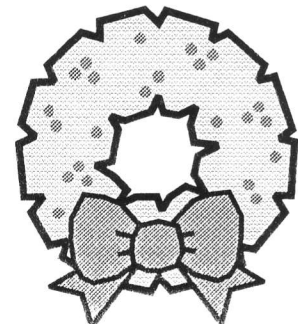
Sunday - December 9th, 2001

19 Players

- 1st...**Jeff Baker (Ft. Wayne)**
- 2nd...**Jim Curtis (Indianapolis)**
- 3rd...**Butch Meese (Indianapolis)**

Hoosier Pips: HBC will play on Wednesday evenings throughout the holiday season.

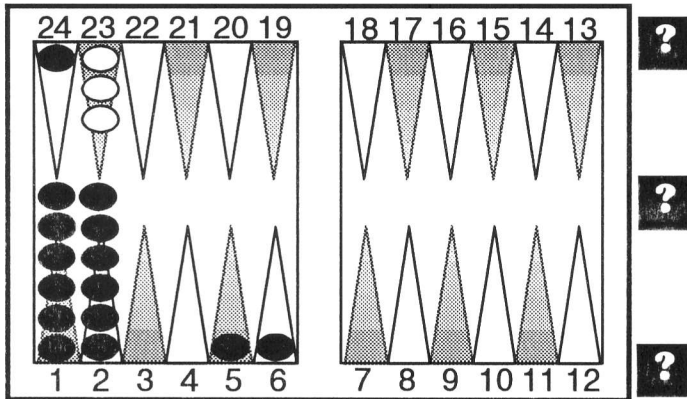
*Happy
Holidays*



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Black to play 4-2?



Do you run to insure you do not get backgammoned? Or do you stay put in hopes to get a single or double shot? If Black could save a gammon, staying put is easy. But in this position, Black is a long shot from saving a gammon even if he gets shot(s) and hits. So is it ever right to stay put in this position? Correct answer is **It depends on the situation.**

It is extremely close between running and staying for all tied scores between 3-away, 3-away and 9-away, 9-away (including even scores) with the cube centered or Black holding the 2-cube. In money play, it is correct to run when the cube has been turned. The exceptions are when losing a gammon will lose the match, in which case it is obvious to stay and try for the hit.

If the position is changed by moving one checker from each of the 1- and 2-points and making the 3-point. These results are also similar to above, with one big exception: it is now correct to stay at money play by 0.044 equity when the cube is on 2. What this says is that at match play, chancing a backgammon is a bigger risk than at money play. The reason is that with the finite length of a match, there just isn't enough time to make up for big (6-point) losses.

Thanks to Chuck Bower for his help.

2001 Hoosier Backgammon Club The Player of the Month for November was Scott Day with 146 gammon points.

1	Sean Garber.....	1377
2	Jim Curtis.....	1376
3	Butch Meese.....	1267
4	Woody Woodworth.....	870
5	Mary Ann Meese.....	864
6	Gabe Stiasny.....	792
7	Chuck Stimming.....	701
8	Scott Day.....	567
9	Larry Strommen.....	556
10	Dave Groner.....	546
	Terry Bateman.....	432
	Rick Steele.....	423
	Al Gomez.....	336
	Jeff Flowers.....	307
	Kevin Heacox.....	136
	Ron Black.....	122
	Steve Brown.....	100
	David Schwind.....	80
	Chuck Bower.....	80
	Charley Haley.....	79
	Timothy Jaxon.....	69
	Karen Davis.....	61
	John Brussel.....	60
	Frank Scott.....	48
	Jack Kissane.....	36
	John Maddox.....	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
	George Burroughs.....	10
	Jon Stephens.....	10
	Paul Franks.....	8
	Doug Roberts.....	8
	Dana Nazarian.....	8

	<u>November 7th</u>	<u>November 14th</u>	<u>November 21st</u>	<u>November 28th</u>
1st	<i>Butch Meese</i>	<i>Scott Day</i>	<i>Woody Woodworth</i>	<i>Scott Day</i>
2nd	<i>Jim Curtis</i>	<i>Sean Garber</i>	<i>Gabe Stiasny</i>	<i>Sean Garber</i>
2nd	<i>Rick Steele</i>

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