



Hoosier  
Backgammon  
Club

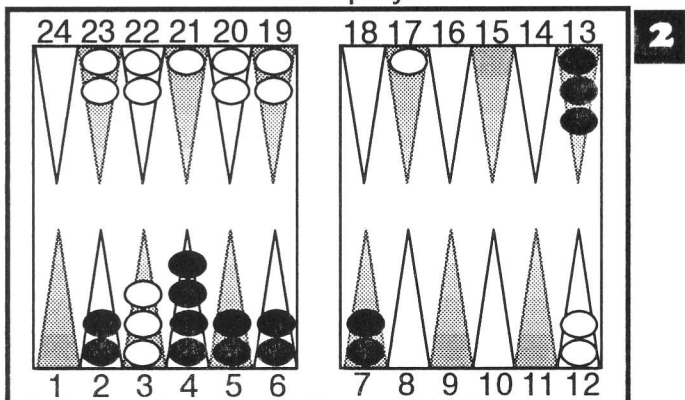
February 2002



## ....Do I Keep My Board?

by Chuck Bower

Money Game  
Black to play 6-4?



Things were going along pretty well until this horror roll arrived. What now? There are two approaches with a total of three plays to consider, but the key decision is: **do I keep my board?**

Unfortunately, this is not the kind of position that can be figured out over the board. Experience has to be your final decision maker. For this position, even Snowie has trouble choosing the right play at its highest skill level: 3-ply, huge search space, 100% speed. Still, there is a valuable lesson available here which is not strongly dependent upon the actual position.

Snowie rollouts say that preserving the homeboard strength is worth giving White 21 immediate shots (compared to 11 shots after the board disturbing plays of 6/2 or 5/1). The error from making the wrong choice is measured as a 0.03 to 0.05 cubeless equity sacrifice in the illustrated position.

If White's outfield checker were already covering his/her blot on the 4-point (giving White a perfect five point homeboard), risking the extra 10 shots

to maintain the homeboard strength is wrong by 0.20 in equity! So, is it the 5-point board that makes 13/9 wrong? That may be part of the reason. But with ANY 4-point board that doesn't contain a blot, Snowie rollouts indicate minimizing shots is still correct.

The lesson is apparent: White's homeboard blot is the key. With it, the extra risk of maintaining the pure board and giving White 10 extra shots is correct. Without the blot to shoot at if hit, safer is better. If White's homeboard blot in this position with an otherwise powerful structure gives Black the green light, imagine how right it must be in other close decisions. However, as with any general rule, there are exceptions.

If White has five homeboard points plus a blot, Black should go conservative and minimize shots. Even with the carrot of a blot to shoot at, White's board is just too strong to take the risk. 20/36 rolls enter on a 4-point board but only 11/36 enter on a 5-point board. So the dual possibility of hitting a direct shot or otherwise entering make the risky play worthwhile in the illustrated position. Take away either the shots or the extra entering numbers and safe is much better.

Finally, when minimizing shots is right, which play (6/2 or 5/1) is better. The difference is small (0.02 in cubeless equity) but in a close call, 6/2 comes out the winner. This play is easier to clean up (leaving only 5/36 shots if missed, compared to 9/36 including a double shot after 5/1). In addition, a higher gap is easier to clear when bearing in against an opponent's anchor.

## HBC's Awards Tournament

Sunday - February 24th, 2002

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

Registration: 12 noon

Awards: 12:45 PM

Play: 1:00 PM

Open Div: \$20 with \$10 Optional Sidepool

Limited Division: \$8

Format: Main-Consolation

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

**HBC 2002 Standings**

The **Player of the Month for January** was **Larry Strommen** with **214** gammon points.

- 1 Larry Strommen..... 214
- 2 Butch Meese..... 157
- 3 Rick Steele..... 120
- 4 Mary Ann Meese..... 113
- 5 Sean Garber..... 100
- 6 Jim Curtis..... 95
- 7 Terry Bateman..... 89
- 8 Woody Woodworth..... 73
- 9 Gabe Stiasny..... 70
- 10 Al Gomez..... 60
- Alan Tavel..... 39
- David Schwind..... 36
- Stan Denski..... 26
- Scott Day..... 16
- Frank Scott..... 8
- Bob Weeks..... 8

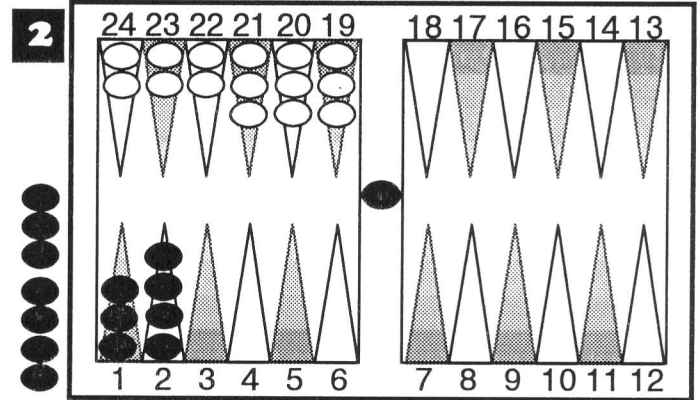
Previous position with the extra checker on the 5-point now moved to the ace, creating a closed board.

Proper cube action: Double, Pass.

White: 67.7% wins

Black: 32.3% wins 1.1% gammons 0.0% backgammon

**7-Point Match, 3 to 3**



Proper cube action: No double, take.

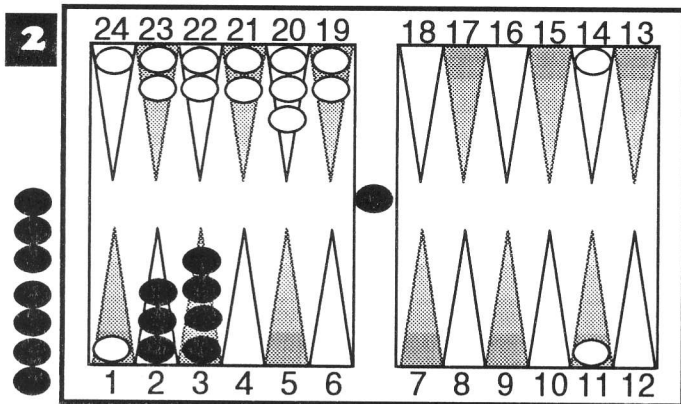
White: 58.4% wins

Black: 41.6% wins

**Variations on Theme**

7-Point Match, 3 to 3

White on roll. Proper cube action?  
(This one came from weekly play.)

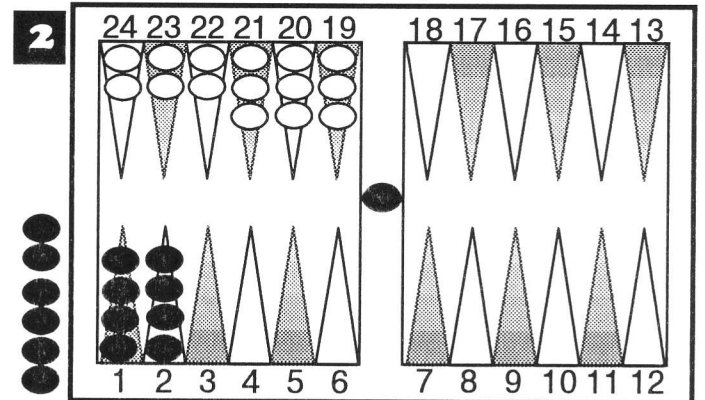


Proper cube action: No double, take.

White: 63.4% wins

Black: 36.6% wins 4.2% gammons 0.2% backgammon

**7-Point Match, 3 to 3**



Proper cube action: Double, Pass.

White: 69.0% wins

Black: 31.0% wins

	<u>January 2nd</u>	<u>January 9th</u>	<u>January 16th</u>	<u>January 23rd</u>	<u>January 30th</u>
1st	Rick Steele	Larry Strommen	Butch Meese	Larry Strommen	Al Gomez
2nd	Sean Garber	Mary Ann Meese	Alan Tavel	Jim Curtis	Jim Curtis
2nd	Terry Bateman	Woody Woodworth	Dave Schwind	Mary Ann Meese	Butch Meese

Mar 22-24.....	<b>2002 Midwest Championships</b> , Wyndham Lisle, Lisle, IL.....	(773) 583-6464
Apr 12-14.....	<b>8th Ohio State Championships</b> , Radison Cleveland, Middleburgh Hts, OH.....	(330) 966-2811
May 24-27.....	<b>23rd Chicago Open</b> , Oakbrook Hills Resort, Oakland, IL.....	(702) 893-6025
July 4-7.....	<b>Michigan Summer Championship</b> , Novi Hilton, Novi, MI.....	(810) 232-9731
Wednesdays..	7:00 PM at <b>Neon Johnny's</b> , 86th & Township Line Rd (Cellular 442-4065).....	HBC 255-8902