

Hoosier
Backgammon
Club



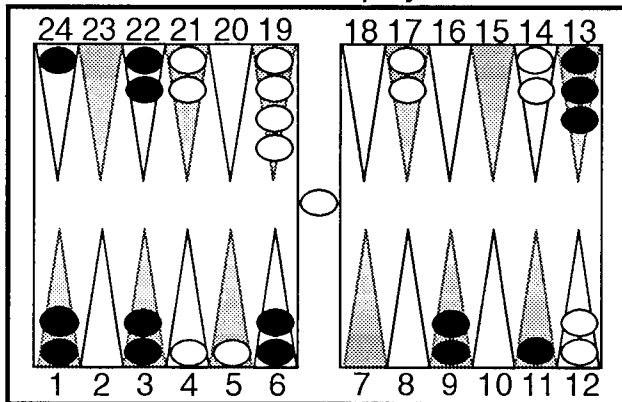
June 2003

Just One Word: *Gameplan*

by Chuck Bower

Money game. (White owns 2-cube.)

Black to play 6-6.



A key component for a player's improvement from intermediate to higher levels is awareness of the **gameplan**. It is true that the dice ultimately dictate one's play, but the current board setup is important input. For example, if you're life-or-death to get off the gammon with little hope of winning, building a pretty homeboard is a waste. The gameplan is to save the gammon. Make your plays accordingly. Another illustration of playing according to a gameplan is the axiom: *when ahead in the race, race!* The corollary is also true: *behind in the race? Don't race.*

Simply having a gameplan is necessary, but insufficient for playing winning backgammon. You must have the **right** gameplan, and finally you must know how to move your checkers to best carry out your goals. In the illustrated position, the (unnamed regular contributor to this newsletter) author tripped over these latter requirements. How would you play this excellent roll?

After moving, Black will have at least a 32-pip lead in the race, and more if he hits. One gameplan is to simply race. The pure racing play is 22/10(2), getting two checkers from the wrong

side to the right side of the board. If this was your play, you are in fair company. Unfortunately that play is wrong by nearly a double whopper -- 0.19 units of cubeless equity. Simply racing is the wrong gameplan.

HBCs 1st Full Day Of Summer Tournament

Sunday - June 22nd, 2003

Registration: 12 noon

Play Begins: 12:30 PM

Arni's Restaurant (875-7034)

3443 West 86th Street (west of Walmart)

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

Limited Div: \$8

Format: Main-Consolation

To understand why, ask yourself what White is likely to be doing with her upcoming roll. Any 4 or 5, plus 2-2 and 3-2 (24 numbers) will anchor. Then the game will be nearly a tossup, even accounting for Black's big race lead. First Black's back checker must traverse a minefield. Then Black's checkers on the midpoint and in the outfield will have to make it home safely, tiptoeing past White's anchor. White has a lot of timing (meaning she can sit on the anchor for a very long time, awaiting shots). White's board has no flaws and should be easy to build. About the time she gets her shot, the homeboard should be perfect.

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Club Champion: *Jim Curtis*

Jim Curtis completes the clean sweep of all the awards for 2002 by winning the Club Championship. It was not easy after being down 10-5 to 13 against **Mary Ann Meese**. At that point, Jim turned it on and did not lose another game to win 13-10 in 15 games.

No Backgammon

Wednesday July 2nd

Most Players Will Be Attending

The Michigan Summer Championships

Hoosier Backgammon Club
Home Page: <http://www.hoosierbgclub.org>
E-Mail: indybg@comcast.net

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

HBC 2003 Gammon Standing

The **Player of the Month for May** was **Sean Garber** with 126 points.

1	Sean Garber.....	613
2	Chuck Stimming.....	502
3	Rick Steele.....	499
4	Jim Curtis.....	463
5	Larry Strommen.....	450
6	Butch Meese.....	418
7	Woody Woodworth.....	268
8	Scott Day.....	263
9	Josh Riddell.....	262
10	Terry Bateman.....	258
	Mary Ann Meese.....	249
	Gabe Stiasny.....	219
	Dan Moore.....	130
	Jon Vietor.....	76
	Katya Beshparova.....	58
	Jack Scofield.....	22
	Dave Groner.....	20
	Kevin Heacox.....	20
	Brian Nelson.....	18
	Bill Gheen.....	12
	Alan Tavel.....	12

Another, possibly even bigger factor is gammons. If White can anchor soon, Black's chances of winning a gammon will go down considerably. Leaving White alone just isn't part of the winning gameplan here.

Knowing this, which blot should Black hit? At first it looks like a question of which point Black most wants to prevent White from making. If White is able to anchor, White's 20-point (Black's 5-point) is usually better since it better covers Black's outfield. Another factor is the better distribution of covering (or hitting) checkers which results from playing 11/5x. Note that the checker on the 11-point is out of touch with the 4-

point whereas almost any other move puts checkers in position to advance to either the 5-point or 4-point next turn.

Moving 22/4x, 13/7 is the best of the plays which hit loose on the wrong point but is still a whopper, giving up 0.12 in cubeless equity. Moving 11/5x, 13/7, 22/10 brings in the most builders/covers, but is only third best and down by 0.07 units. The second best play doesn't concentrate on the third builder but gets two out of White's board: 11/5x, 13/7, 22/16(2). This move actually wins the most games and would be best at a match score where gammons don't count.

Best by more than 0.04 units of cubeless equity is the double hit: 22/4x, 11/5x. This play wins 3% more gammons than any other play, and nearly as many total games. Don't give White a chance to anchor on **either** homeboard point! Black has some combination of 4's, 5's, and aces to cover or hit next turn, depending upon White's roll. The gameplan is to keep White from anchoring. Hitting both blots, even though it is likely to lead to one getting sent back, is consistent with the gameplan and the right play by a significant margin.

51st



	<u>May 7th</u>	<u>May 14th</u>	<u>May 21st</u>	<u>May 28th</u>
1st	Terry Bateman	Sean Garber	Woody Woodworth	Butch Meese
2nd	Jim Curtis	Chuck Stimming	Rick Steele	Mary Ann Meese
2nd	---	---	Sean Garber	Chuck Stimming

Jul 3-6.....	Michigan Summer Championships , Hilton, Novi, MI.....	(810) 232-9731
Jul 25-27.....	1st Wisconsin State Championships , Radisson Inn, Madison, WI.....	(608) 267-8144
Aug29-Sep1..	51st Indiana Open Backgammon Tournament , Sheraton Hotel, Indianapolis, IN...	(317) 255-8902
Wednesdays..	7:00 PM at Neon Johnny's , 86th & Township Line Rd (Cellular 442-4065).....	HBC 255-8902