

Hoosier
Backgammon
Club

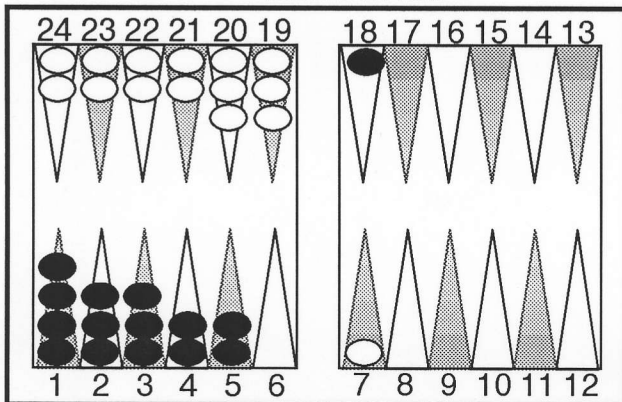
July 2003



Rush Home *Now* or NOT!!

by Chuck Bower

Money game. (Black owns 2-cube.)
Black on roll.



2

- A) Should Black double?
If Black doubles, should White take?
- B) Black double and White takes.
Black to play 4-3?
- C) Black does not double.
Black to play 4-3?

Black has a nice lead in the race, although not as good as the pipcount indicates. Those extra checkers on the low points combined with the open 6-point mean Black will likely waste quite a few pips in the bearoff. Still, with the 55-71 pip lead (you did count it, didn't you?) the wastage only makes up part of this. There are some sophisticated methods to figure the straight race here, but let's just use a simple (less accurate) shortcut. An average roll is 8 pips. Typically there is wastage, even in the most efficient bearoff checker locations. Assume you use only 7 of the 8 pips, on average, for each roll. Then bearing off the four extra checkers on the low points (counted as $3+2+1+1=7$ pips) takes two rolls (typically 14 pips used) and thus wastes $14-7=7$ pips. Add that to Black's pipcount giving a 62-71 pipcount lead.

A good race doubling method for money play is to take 10% of roller's pipcount. Two pips less than this is an initial double, one pip less is a redouble. Two pips more is a borderline take/pass. Here 10% of 62 is 6. Adding 2 says that Black can take if he is within 8 pips. That's not the case so Black would have a pass IF there were no contact. Who does the the contact favor? Note that White only hits with a 6-5 (two numbers) but leaves a blot with any 6 or 5 that doesn't hit or run past Black's sentinel. There are 20 numbers which contain a 6 or 5 and only four of them (6-6, 5-5, 6-5) play safely. Sixteen of 36 times White gets a direct shot. If Black remains behind on the 18-point, at most eight 6's (all except 6-5 and 6-6) force White to leave a direct shot. You can roughly see that Black leaves a direct shot about twice as often as White. In addition, Black wastes more in the race by further crunching in the homeboard instead of bringing that last checker home, compared to White. This contact advantage for White should easily turn a pure race pass into a take.

A Snowie rollout indicates that Black would not even have an initial double here. Cubeless Black wins this position only 62% of the time, not nearly enough to redouble in a gammonless position. Interestingly, if the cube were centered this would almost be a double, due to the volatility of the position and Black's ability to use the cube. It's a big advantage to own the cube here, keeping your opponent from being able to turn it in the future.

How about the best plays? Voluntarily further crashing the homeboard with 5/1, 5/2 is not close to being the correct action. This only worsens Black's position (contactwise and racewise) and gives White an extra roll to hit a flyshot. The race favors White so he should capitalize on that. Leaving a direct shot (18/11) would way overdo this by giving White too many hitting chances. Black should use half the roll to move up and waste the other half in the homeboard.

In a chouette, you might hear some crew members arguing for 18/15 over 18/14. Both plays leave 6 immediate return shots, but note that 4-4 is a good roll for Black anyway so there is a bit of duplication: one of the hitting numbers after 18/15 was already a good racing number while none of the hitting numbers after 18/14 would be good, otherwise.

The general principle that makes 18/14 better is that if White misses this turn, Black will have an easier time converting this to a race with only 7 pips to get past, not 8. Further, he wastes one pip less in the homeboard (5/2 is better than 5/1 for the upcoming bearoff) and is more likely to be able to begin the bearoff earlier, being only 8 pips from the homeboard instead of 9.

And what about the difference in plays depending upon cube location? Moving 18/14, 5/2 is best, regardless. However, the penalty (in Snowie's money equity units) is higher for not finding the correct play with Black owning the cube because there are a few very efficient cube turns after 18/14, 5/2 that aren't there after the alternatives. Cubeless, moving 18/14, 5/2 is only 0.03 better than 5/1, 5/2 and 0.05 better than 18/15, 5/1. With cube access, it is better by over 0.10 than either other option. If White already owns the cube, Black will have to continue the game, which makes the cubeless figures closer to the actual situation than when Black has access to the cube and a quick shutout. (Thanks to Neil Kazaross for providing this educational position.)

51st



HBCs 1st Full Day Of Summer Tournament

Sunday - June 22nd, 2003

1st...Jim Curtis

2nd...Mary Ann Meese

2nd...Terry Bateman

HBC 2003 Gammon Standing

The **June Player of the Month**

was **Jim Curtis** with **249** points.

- 1 Sean Garber..... 715
- 2 Jim Curtis..... 712
- 3 Rick Steele..... 619
- 4 Chuck Stimming..... 578
- 5 Larry Strommen..... 478
- 6 Butch Meese..... 468
- 7 Terry Bateman..... 439
- 8 Mary Ann Meese..... 412
- 9 Woody Woodworth..... 330
- 10 Scott Day..... 313
- Gabe Stiasny..... 286
- Josh Riddell..... 262
- Dan Moore..... 146
- Jon Vietor..... 76
- Katya Beshparova..... 58
- Mark Swanson..... 34
- Kevin Heacox..... 30
- Al Gomez..... 24
- Peter Kalba..... 24
- Jack Scofield..... 22
- Dave Groner..... 20
- Brian Nelson..... 18
- Bill Gheen..... 12
- Alan Tavel..... 12
- Charlie Haley..... 10
- Larry Buckingham..... 10
- Kirk Holmes..... 8

	<u>June 5th</u>	<u>June 12th</u>	<u>June 19th</u>	<u>June 26th</u>
1st	Terry Bateman	Chuck Stimming	Sean Garber	Mary Ann Meese
2nd	Jim Curtis	Rick Steele	Terry Bateman	Jim Curtis
2nd	Gabe Stiasny	Jim Curtis	Woody Woodworth	Rick Steele

Jul 25-27..... **1st Wisconsin State Championships**, Radisson Inn, Madison, WI.....(608) 516-9109
 Aug29-Sep1.. **51st Indiana Open Backgammon Tournament**, Sheraton Hotel, Indianapolis, IN...(317) 255-8902
 Sept 19-21.... **Florida State Championships**, Sheraton Suites Hotel, Ft Lauderdale, FL.....(945) 564-0430
 Oct 10-12..... **Illinois State Championships**, Springfield Hilton, Springfield, IL..... (217) 528-0117
 Wednesdays.. 7:00 PM at **Neon Johnny's**, 86th & Township Line Rd (Cellular 442-4065)..... HBC 255-8902