

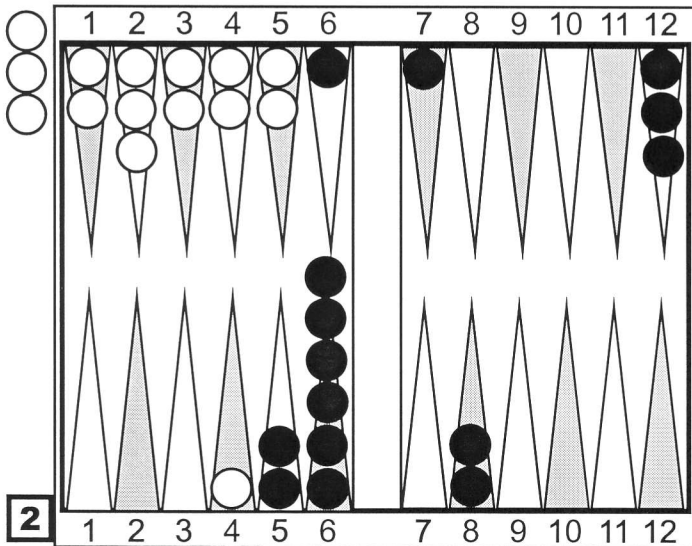


Hoosier Backgammon Club

June 2004

Let It Happen or Make It Happen?

by Chuck Bower



Position One. Money Game.
Black to play 5-2?

Backgammon often is about getting unlucky after building up an almost insurmountable lead. It's nice to have the shoe on the other foot, as in Position One. However, it does no good to get lucky if you don't know how to follow through.

The big question here is **can Black afford to hit loose?** White's board can't be taken lightly and gammons are still very much still in the picture. Alternate to hitting, Black can position his outfield checkers for maximum coverage.

Notice that if Black can't contain White's back checker, he could get gammoned anyway, with White owning a near speed board and already having three checkers off. Still, being on the bar makes it tough to scramble off the gammon, let alone win.

Beat The Pro...

Beat the Pro and win a drink. Starting at 6 PM any Wednesday. Come in and challenge **Jim Curtis** (Club Champion) or **Sean Garber** (2003 Player of the Year) to a game. If you win, you win a drink. This is open to all takers. Good luck!!!

No Backgammon, Wednesday, June 30

Say **Yes** to
Michigan Summer Championships

Looking at the optimistic side of hitting, note that Black's meager broken three point prime (5-, 6-, and 8-points) carries some weight, particularly because White has next to no flexibility on the home side. If White's back checker can't play, his/her board breaks. This is true even with White on Black's 4-point but an even stronger case is made if White is pushed back from the edge, making escaping more difficult.

If Black is to win this game, he'll need the 4-point, soon. The best way to build a point (short of rolling two dice that make it this turn) is to start it now and cover it later. This further argues for the hit. Finally, with that stack on the 6-point and few other builders in position, waiting for better distribution before starting the 4-point gives White too much time to make a clean escape.

A GNU-backgammon rollout of this position says that hitting (6/4x) and bringing down a needed builder (13/8) is tops by 0.05 units of cubeful equity. In fact, the second best play is to hit and bring a back checker up to cover Black's outfield: 6/4x, 19/14. Non-hitting plays are at least 0.07 behind with 13/8, 18/16 and 13/8, 19/17 very close to each other in equity. As expected, hitting loses more gammons (cubeless, 35% compared to 25% for the non-hitting plays), but makes up the difference with 8% more wins combined with better chances to use the doubling cube to advantage.

Hoosier Backgammon Club

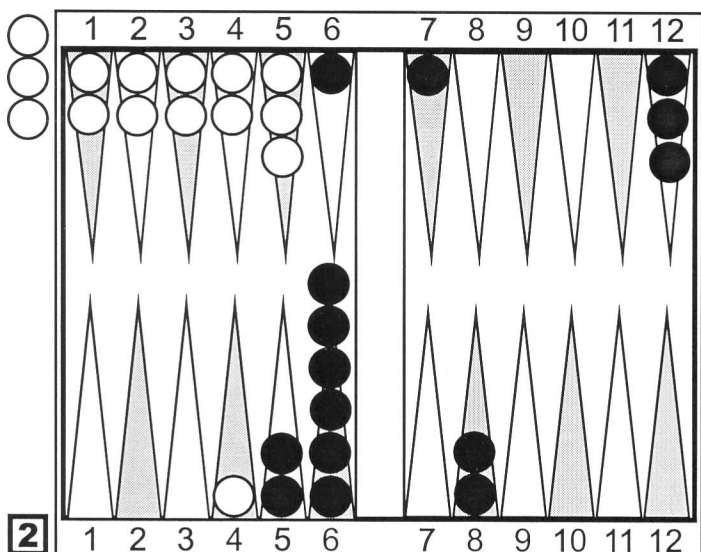
Butch & Mary Ann Meese

1008 Tuckahoe, Indianapolis, In 46260-2215

Home Page: <http://www.hoosierbgclub.org>

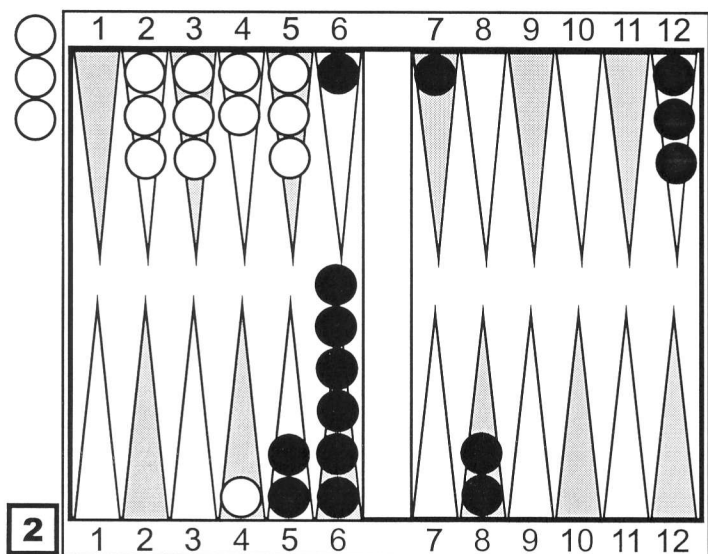
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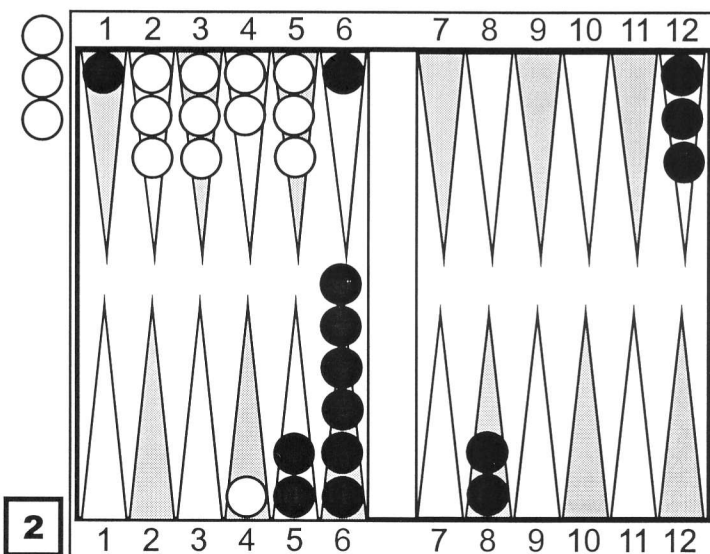
Position Two. Money game.
Black to play 5-2?

Let's move the checkers around a bit and see how things change. In Position Two, White's spare on the 2-point in Position One has been moved back three spaces. Now White has a few extra pips to play in the homeboard before being forced to break when the back checker gets stuck. Here it's very close, with the difference between the hitting ($13/8$, $6/4x$) and hanging back ($13/8$, $18/16$) just too close to call in a moderately long rollout.



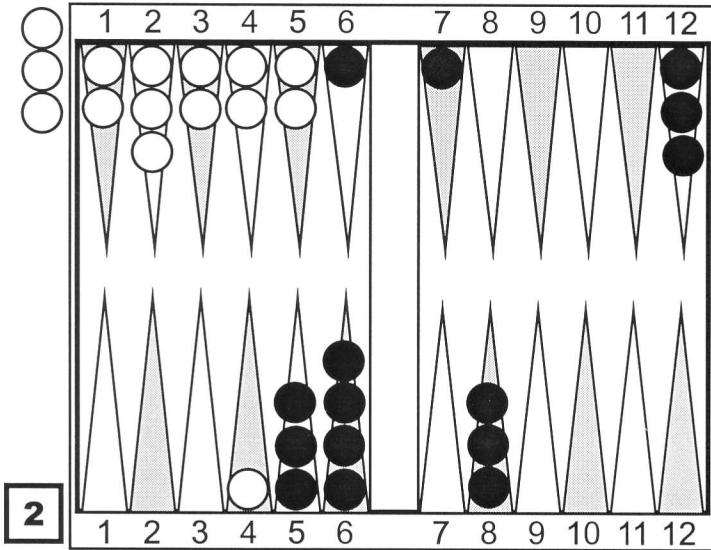
Position Three. Money game.
Black to play 5-2?

Comparing Position Three with Position One, White now has an open acepoint. If hit, Black may enter on the 24-point and hang around for a late return hit. This is enough to make hitting even stronger than in Position One, by 0.09 over any non-hitting play.



Position Four. Money game.
Black to play 5-2?

To get Position Four, I've taken Position Three and moved Black's checker on the 18-point back to the 24-point. Seeing the value of a potential safety valve checker on the 24-point in Position Three, one might be tempted to stay back in Position Four with $6/4x$, $13/8$. In fact that would be an 0.06 error compared to the best play of hitting and escaping ($6/4x$, $24/19$). Second best is the non-hitting escape move of $24/17$. Notice that in Position Four, White can point-on-head with 4-1 (a completely blocked roll for the back checker) as well as 1-1, 3-1, and 4-3. Black only wants a loose checker on White's acepoint when a last-gasp chance is required to win.



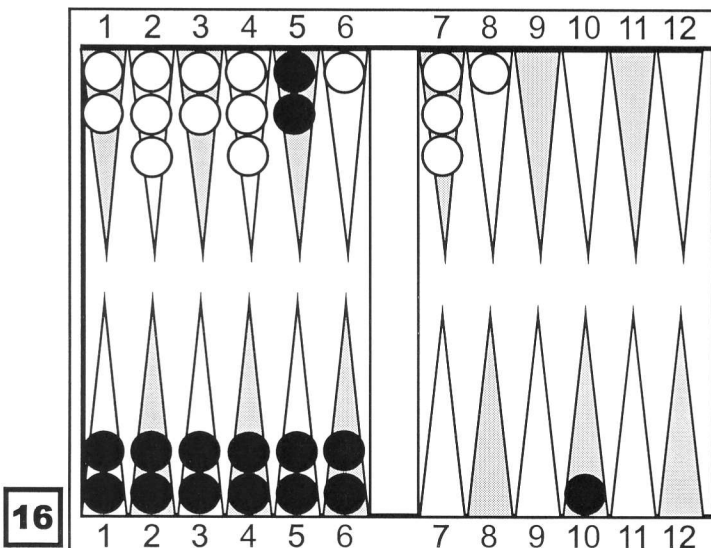
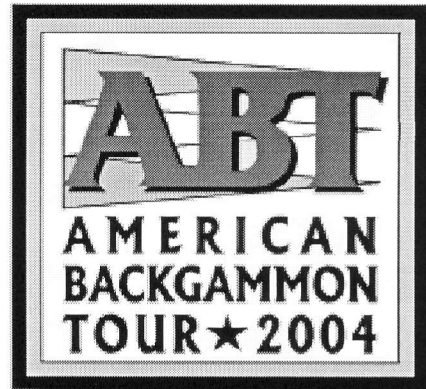
Position Five. Money game.
Black to play 5-2?

52nd Indiana Open
Backgammon Tournament
September 3-9 2004
See You In September

Indy Swiss Format, JB Memorial Jackpot,
Indy300 Jackpot, Amateur Jackpot,
Labor Day Jackpots, Directors' Cup and
Blitz Events.

Finally, let's leave White's checkers the same as Position One but make Black's homeboard more flexible. In Position Five, Black isn't as desperate to make the 4-point since he's reasonably placed to make it in the next roll or two. A **new kid on the block** play, simply making the 3-point (8/3, 6/3), is best by at least 0.03 over hitting or rearranging the outfield checkers.

Bonus Position: Money Game.
Question #1: Black on roll, cube action?
Question #2: Black to play 6-6?
Answer next month.



Play in both the Jackpot
and the Doubles With Ease!!!!
Early Starting Times for the
Indy300 Jackpot,
The Amateur Jackpot and
The Doubles: Friday 2 PM.

2004 Michigan Summer Backgammon Championships

100% Return of Open Entry Fees

July 1-July 4, 2004
(Thursday-Sunday)

Wednesday Warm-Up - June 30

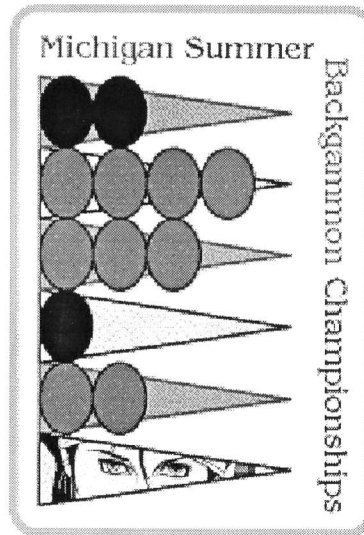
Michigan Masters

Thursday, July 1

First Prize - \$10,000

(based on 32 Master players)

Over 200 players expected in all events!



| HBC Standings As of May 2004 | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Butch Meese | 743 |
| Jim Curtis | 551 |
| Sean Garber | 515 |
| Larry Strommen | 427 |
| Rick Steele | 413 |
| Chuck Stimming | 376 |
| Scott Day | 324 |
| Woody Woodworth | 317 |
| Mary Ann Meese | 309 |
| Terry Bateman | 213 |
| Gabe Stiasny | 128 |
| Frank Scott | 109 |
| Dan Moore | 97 |
| Josh Riddell | 94 |
| Mark King | 54 |
| Jeff Flowers | 46 |
| Al Gomez | 36 |
| Mark Swanson | 30 |
| Peter Kalba | 24 |
| Randy Foster | 20 |
| Merle Feldman | 20 |
| Derrick Swanson | 12 |
| Jack Scofield | 12 |
| Kevin Heacox | 10 |
| Scott Johnston | 8 |

GAMESGRID BONUS BLITZ \$1000 in Added Prizes + Special Trophy

SHERATON DETROIT-NOVI HOTEL
Novi, Michigan
800-325-3535

| | |
|---|--|
| HBC Sunday Tournament, May 23rd 2004 | |
| 1) Larry Strommen | |
| 2) Gabe Stiasny | |
| 2) Rick Steele | |

Player of the Month of May was Butch Meese with 185 gammon points.

| | May 5 | May 12 | May 19 | May 26 |
|------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1st | Rick Steele | Butch Meese | Mary Ann Meese | Chuck Stimming |
| 2nd | Sean Garber | Chuck Stimming | Butch Meese | Sean Garber |
| 2nd | ... | Jim Curtis | ... | ... |

| Regional Tournament Schedule | |
|------------------------------|---|
| July 1-4 | Michigan Summer Championships Novi, MI Carol Joy Cole 810.232.9731 |
| Jul 30-Aug 1 | Wisconsin State Championships Madison, WI Tom Machaj 608.516.9109 |
| Aug 12-15 | Georgia Championships Atlanta, GA Dave Cardwell 770.333.1876 |
| Sep 3-6 | 52nd Indiana Open Indianapolis, IN Butch & Mary Ann Meese 317.255.8902 |
| Weekly 7PM | Neon Johnny's (86th & Township Rd) (Cells) 317.442.4065 or 317.430.7862 |