

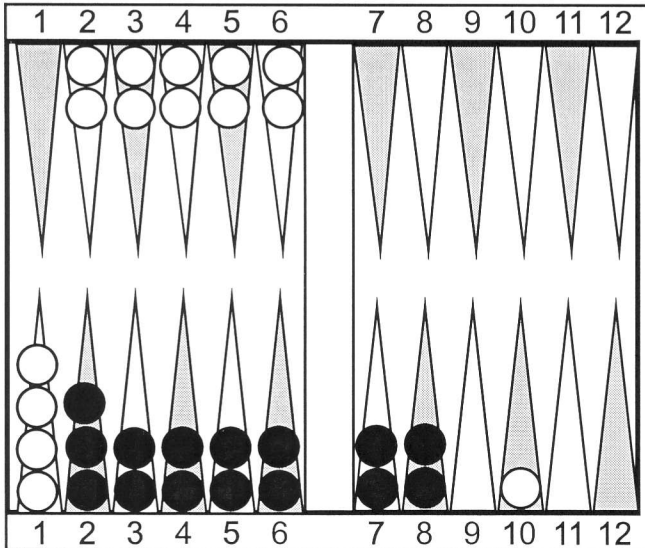


# Hoosier Backgammon Club

August 2004

## Time To Release The Stranglehold?

by Chuck Bower



Position One. 7 Point Match.  
Black leads 6 to 3. Black to play 5-4?

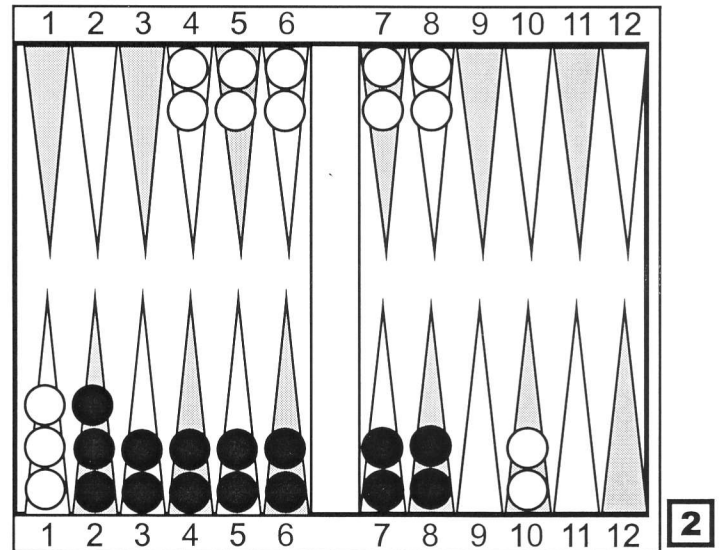
Finishing off a match when leading can be a tough task. Black has had the better dice in the match and his luck continues into this game. Which outfield point should he clear?

At this score, Black wants to win any kind of game and at worst to avoid losing a gammon. In Position One, the gammon loss is remote but the win is far from assured. Black has three competing concerns here: holding the prime, bearing in safely and distributing the checkers for the safest bear-off.

Of the two reasonable plays, clearing the 8-point centers to two of the above concerns: holding the prime and optimizing bear-off distribution while clearing the 7-point is the safest for the bear-in. To understand the latter, consider Black's 6-3, 6-4, and 6-5 roll next turn. Is the near term safety enough to offset the other two issues?

A GNU-bg rollout says **no way!** Clearing the 8-point

wins 4% more games while losing only 0.4% more gammons than clearing the 7-point. In cubeless equity units this corresponds to a difference of 0.07. Not even close. The combination of holding the prime and distributing the checkers for the bear-off clearly takes precedence.



Position Two. 7 Point Match.  
Black leads 6 to 3. Black to play 5-4?

How much timing does White need to have before Black can afford to break the prime prematurely? Position Two is a tossup between the two plays. Note that White's 5-prime has been moved back two spaces and a checker has been moved from White's 24-point into the outfield (15-point). It took a huge change (roughly 34 pips of timing improvement) before breaking the 7-point became viable for Black.

### Hoosier Pips...

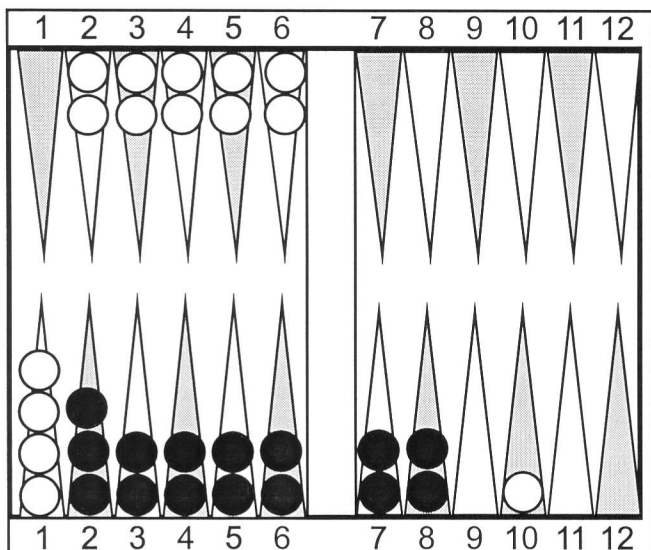
HBC welcomes new players **Scott Johnson**, **John Hill** and **Eric Luecking**. HBC wishes **Gabe Stiasny** a speedy recovery from an extended illness.

### 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!!!

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Position One.  
7 Point Match  
Black leads 6-3/7.  
Black to play 2-1?

What if we change Black's roll in Position One to something considerably smaller? In Position 3, Black has a 2-1 roll instead of the 5-4 in Position One. Here breaking the 8-point with 8/6, 8/7 is correct by even more, nearly 0.1 cubeless equity units (and 2% more wins). I couldn't find a single roll for position One where giving up the 7-point was even close to being as good as giving up the 8-point. Even the ugly 5-1 should be played 8/3, 8/7. Apparently distribution is a minor issue compared to the importance of holding the prime. Once you have your opponent in a strangle hold, be very reluctant to release him.

Labor Day Weekend

**52nd Indiana Open  
Backgammon  
Tournament  
September 3-6 2004  
See You In September**

HBC Standings As of July 2004	
Butch Meese	900
Jim Curtis	717
Sean Garber	694
Larry Strommen	674
Woody Woodworth	535
Rick Steele	529
Mary Ann Meese	489
Chuck Stimming	464
Scott Day	378
Dan Moore	284
Terry Bateman	265
Gabe Stiasny	128
Scott Johnson	120
Frank Scott	109
Josh Riddell	94
Merle Feldman	85
Mark King	54
Jeff Flowers	46
Al Gomez	36
Mark Swanson	30
Peter Kalba	24
Randy Foster	20
John Hill	18
Derrick Swanson	12
Jack Scofield	12
Kevin Heacox	10
Chuck Bower	8

Player of the Month of July was <b>Woody Woodworth</b> with 182 gammon				
	July 7	July 14	July 21	July 28
<b>1st</b>	Dan Moore	Mary Ann Meese	Scott Johnson	Woody Woodworth
<b>2nd</b>	Woody Woodworth	Sean Garber	Larry Strommen	Butch Meese
<b>2nd</b>	Sean Garber	Dan Moore	Butch Meese	Mary Ann Meese

Regional Tournament Schedule	
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
Oct 8-10	Illinois State Championships Pere Marquette Hotel, Peoria, Ill.....(217) 528-0117
Oct 15-17	Florida State Championships Sheraton Suites, Fort Lauderdale, FL .....(954) 564-0340
Weekly 7PM	Neon Johnny's (86th & Township Rd)..... (Cells) 317.442.4065 or 317.430.7862