PROBLEM OF THE WEEK – DECEMBER 18, 2020

This week and next, we will tackle some decisions that you might be confronted with on the very second roll of the game. I have broken these into two parts, with 4 positions being covered this week, and the other 5 to be covered next week.

These 9 problem positions come up with some frequency, since there are only a limited number of possibilities for the first two rolls of a game. Also, these examples have broader application, since the relevant themes and considerations will apply in a host of other, similar positions.

I've chosen these particular problems because, in my experience, they are often misplayed. While it is sometimes the case that an alternative play is acceptable, and that the choice of play is "a matter of taste," I assure you that this is not the case with any of the problem positions that are presented below. A failure to make the correct play in these cases **will** cost you over time – misplays in these spots are real mistakes that will impact your overall long-term results. As opening positions come up frequently (*i.e.*, in every single game you play), these are the kinds of plays you should strive to get right.

For all of the problem positions below, you are playing in a standard money game with the Jacoby Rule in effect. However, the correct plays will generally be the same in match play for most match scores.

Note that we will follow the rule that has been adopted in trivia contests that are currently played in the era of widespread internet access at your fingertips. The use of electronic devices of any kind (including, in this case, assistance from any silicon-based life forms) is not permitted. The solutions to these problems, including an explanatory analysis accompanied by Extreme Gammon rollouts, will be circulated on Sunday afternoon or evening (12/20).
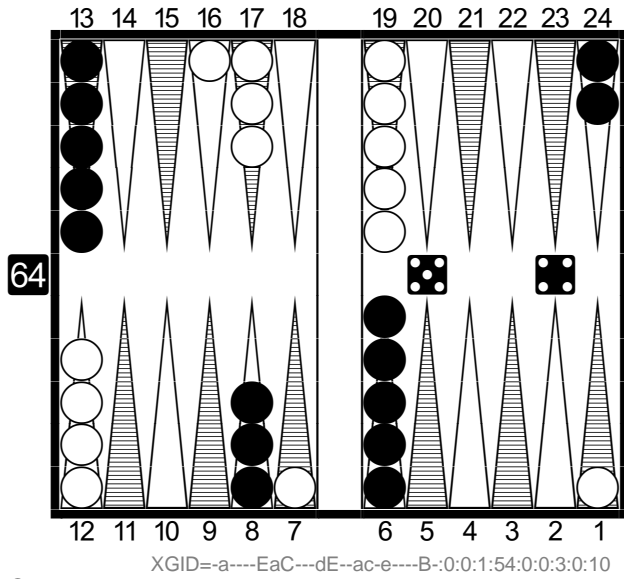
THE PROBLEM POSITIONS

Problem A

XGID=-a---aE-C---dE-a-c-e----B-:0:0:1:53:0:0:3:0:10

● to play 53

White opened with a 43 roll, and played 24/20 13/10 (43S). Black to play 53.

Problem B

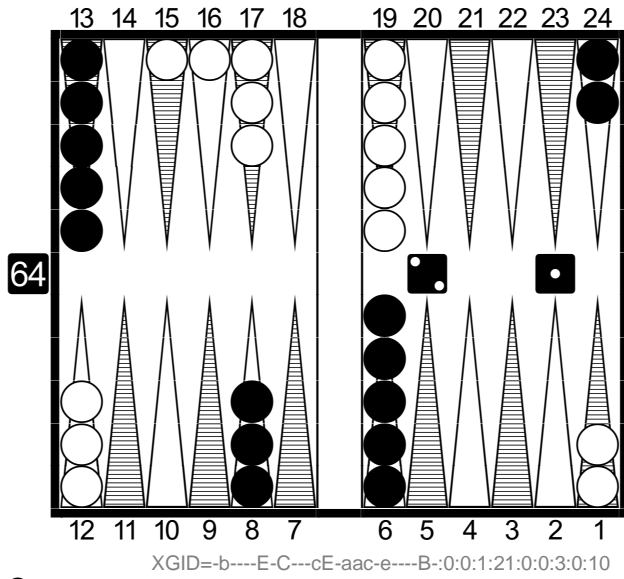○ is Opponent

score: 0
pip: 157

Unlimited Game
Jacoby Beaver

pip: 167
score: 0

● is Player

XGID=-a----EaC---dE--ac-e----B-:0:0:1:54:0:0:3:0:10

● to play 54

White opened with a 64 roll, and played 24/18 13/9 (64S). Black to play 54.

Problem C

○ is Opponent
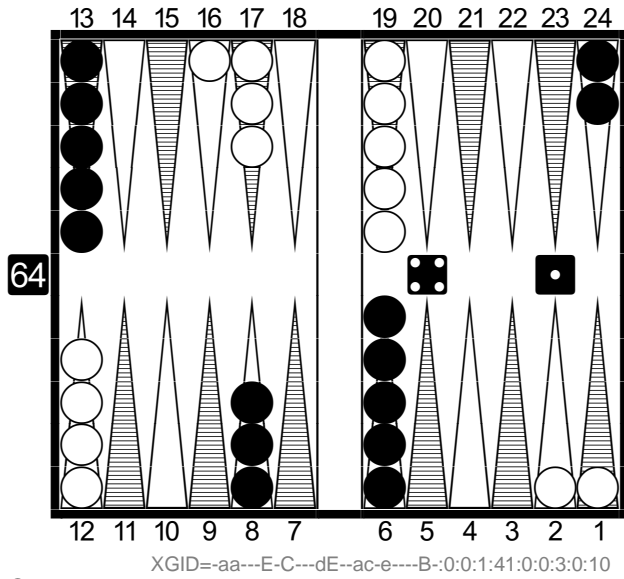
score: 0
pip: 160

Unlimited Game
Jacoby Beaver

pip: 167
score: 0

● is Player

XGID=-b----E-C---cE-aac-e----B-:0:0:1:21:0:0:3:0:10

● to play 21

White opened with a 43 roll, and played 13/10 13/9 (43D). Black to play 21.

Problem D

○ is Opponent

score: 0
pip: 162

Unlimited Game
Jacoby Beaver

pip: 167
score: 0

● is Player

XGID=-aa---E-C---dE--ac-e----B-:0:0:1:41:0:0:3:0:10

● to play 41

White opened with a 41 roll, and played 24/23 13/9 (41S). Black to play 41.

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