



Backgammon Replies

Mini-quiz: Decide how you would play the rolls indicated in the three positions diagrammed above. For the answers, consult the chart on the the next page, which is a summary of all the best backgammon “replies” (second roll plays).

How to read the chart: To save (a huge amount of) space, Nactation is used. You can read about it by googling “Nactation” or go to <http://www.nackbg.com/nactation.pdf> (recommended) and/or read the Nactation key underneath the chart.

Each three-character entry on the far left (and repeated on the far right) of a row is an opening roll and play. Each two-number entry at the top (and repeated at the bottom) of a column is the reply roll. For example, in the **31P** row, the first player rolled an opening 31 and played “P” (made her 5pt). In the **21** column, the second player rolls 21. In the intersection box (of 31P and 21), the best move with 21 is listed as “S,” which means “split” – a play that would be traditionally notated 24/23 13/11.

When more than one letter/character is listed in a box, two or more best plays are effectively tied. For example, In the intersection of the **32D** row and **51** column, the box reads “\$S.” This means that with opening 32D (13/10 13/11) played and 51 rolled in reply, \$ (i.e., slotting with 13/8 6/5) and S (i.e., splitting with 24/23 13/8) are both best/tied. By tied, I mean that the plays with the highest and second highest equities in the GnuBG rollout are within .01 of each other (or occasionally that the Snowie rollout favors a different best play), for money.

Source: The collection of rollouts posted by Stick Rice as of September, 2009 (and GnuBG 4-ply evaluation when there is no rollout.) You can access these rollouts by using Nactation to navigate. For example, to see the comprehensive rollout data for the position mentioned in my previous paragraph, go to Stick’s site at <http://www.bgonline.org> and click on the “2nd Roll” tab, then “Opening 32 replies, then “32D 51.”

	11	21	31	41	51	61	22	32	42	52	62	33	43	53	63	44	54	64	55	65	66	
21\$	N	\$S	H	U	S	P	e	S	S	S	ZNS	C	US	P	R	B	SR	K	P	R	B	21\$
21S	e	US	P	K	S	P	N	S	P	S	S	B	XZ	PS	SR	B	S	H	A	R	B	21S
31P	eN	S	P	S	S	P	E	ZS	P	S	S	B	S	P	S	P	D	R	P	R	B	31P
41\$	HN	\$	H	U	\$	P	e	S	S	S	H	CE	U	H	RS	4	S	R	P	R	B	41\$
41S	e	S	P	K	S	P	EN	ZS	P	S	H	B	X	H	SR	K	XSR	P	A	R	B	41S
51\$	N	\$	H	U	\$	P	e	\$	S	\$S	R	C	S	P	R	B	S	R	P	R	B	51\$
51S	e	\$U	P	K	S	P	N	DS	P	S	R	B	UDSX	P	R	B	S	P	A	R	B	51S
61P	N	\$	P	S	S	P	N	ZS	P	S	R	B	UZ	P	R	B	RS	R	P	D	O	61P
32D	N	\$	P	\$	\$S	P	EUN	ZD	P	S	S	C	D	P	H	B	H	H	P	R	B	32D
32S	P	X	P	X	S	P	N	H	P	H	HX	B	H	P	H	C	H	H	A	R	B	32S
32Z	e	HS	P	USH	SR	P	N	KXH	P	SK	S	A	XH	P	H	B	H	H	A	RS	B	32Z
42P	N	S	P	S	S	P	E	S	P	S	S	A	SD	P	SR	B	S	PR	P	R	B	42P
52D	N	\$	P	\$	\$	P	N	D	P	D	S	A	D	P	SR	B	D	H	P	R	B	52D
52S	e	SH	P	D	S	P	N	H	P	DS	SR	A	H	P	R	B	S	H	A	R	B	52S
62R	eN	U	H	X	S	P	4	US	DX	S	\$Z	A	XD	P	Z	BP	D	X	A	R	B	62R
62\$	N	\$	H	U	\$S	P	e	\$D	S	\$	\$S	AC	S	P	\$	B	S	R	P	R	B	62\$
62S	N	H	P	H	H	P	N	WSU	H	X	X	P	ZU	P	X	B	X	H	A	K	B	62S
43D	N	\$	P	\$	\$	P	E	ZD	P	S	H	C	D	H	H	B	H	RS	P	R	B	43D
43S	e	H	P	HX	H	X	N	H	P	S	H	A	XH	H	H	P	H	P	A	R	B	43S
43Z	P	X	P	X	SX	P	N	HX	P	H	H	B	HX	H	H	K	H	R	A	R	B	43Z
43U	P	K	P	K	H	H	N	K	P	H	H	A	X	H	4	K	HS	P	P	S	B	43U
53P	N	S\$	P	S	S	P	N	S	P	D	S\$	B	DZ	P	S	B	SD	P	P	R	B	53P
63R	eN	H	X	S\$	S\$	P	N	X	P	S	\$S	N	XD	D	X	B	SX	S	A	R	B	63R
63S	N	H	P	HX	H	P	N	WZSU	H	XS	X	P	Z	P	H	B	H	X	A	K	B	63S
54D	N	\$	P	\$	\$	P	E	D	P	D	H	EB	D	H	RS	D	DR	R	P	R	B	54D
54S	e	H	P	H	H	P	N	H	P	S	H	A	H	H	H	P	S	P	A	R	B	54S
64P	N	\$	P	\$	\$	P	EN	DZ	P	SD	\$S	BA	D	P	S	B	D	P	P	R	B	64P
64R	N	X	P	\$	\$	P	N	XD	X	D	X	A	S	P	S	B	S	SP	A	R	B	64R
64S	N	XH	PX	XH	H	P	H	S	H	X	H	P	Z	H	X	RD	X	X	A	K	B	64S
65R	N	\$	P	\$S	\$S	P	N	S	P	D	S	B	Z	P	S	B	S	PS	A	R	B	65R
	11	21	31	41	51	61	22	32	42	52	62	33	43	53	63	44	54	64	55	65	66	

Nactation Key:

D = Down (from the midpoint, usually with two checkers).

H = Hit on highest point possible. If H describes only half the roll, the other half comes down (e.g., for 32S-43, H means 13/10 8/4*).

K = Kill: hit twice.

P = Point on head if possible, or make the strongest offensive point available.

R = Run (to the outfield) with one checker. Exception: for 64S-44, R means run both checkers (i.e., 24/16(2)).

\$ = Slot. Move one checker down from the midpoint and use it or another checker to slot the 5pt or 4pt (unstacking the 6pt when possible).

S = Split the back checkers and bring one checker down from the midpoint. S sometimes hits incidentally.

Z = Reverse split. When more than one splitting play is possible, Z splits with the small number and comes down with the large number.

U = Up with two back checkers. Exception: with a roll of 21, U brings up only one checker (i.e., 24/21).

W = Wild. Split with the large number and slot the 5pt or 4pt with the small number.

X = Hit and Split.

4 = Make the 4pt, or (in the case of 43U-63) hit on the 4pt.

Mostly for Doublets:

A = Attack. Make two inside points. Example: for 41S-55, A means 8/3(2) 6/1*(2)).

B = Both. Move up *and* down, making an anchor and an outer point. Example: for 32D-44, B means 24/20(2) 13/9(2).

C = Cross. Cross the bar — making an offensive point, and make an anchor. Example: for 51\$-33, C means 24/21(2) 8/5(2).

E = Each. Make a point in each inner board. Example: for 54D-22, E means 24/22(2) 6/4(2).

e = each (variant). Split and make an inside point. Example: For 21S-11, “e” means 24/22 6/5(2).

N = Near. Move half the roll to/within each near-side quadrant (inner board, outer board). Example: for 62S-11, N means 8/7*(2) 6/5(2).

O = Outer. Half of play *into* the outer board and half *out of* the outer board. Example: for 61P-66, O means 13/7(2) 8/2(2).

Notes: Hits and highly obvious portions of a move are occasionally assumed. Examples: For 62R-22 and 41\$-44, the “4” refers to hitting (once or twice) and making the 4pt. For 54D-44 and 64S-44, “D” means hitting and coming down with 24/16* 13/9(2). For more on assumptive Nactation, go to <http://www.nackbg.com/nactation.pdf> and read Section 6.