

BUMPER TENS

“Why didn’t you shoot the ten?” A spectator asked. “Because I have a partner”, was the players quick answer.

He was playing yellow at the head of the court in a doubles game and the score was 66 to 49, in his favor. It was yellow’s hammer and on the board was a black disc on the 8/10 line.

Yellow thought about using the black disc as a bumper for a game winning 10, but didn’t think about it for very long and simply went ahead and shot for an eight. Unfortunately, as things often go, the shot was a little long and it caught the 8/7 line.

Now play went to the foot of the court and exactly the same situation came up again. Yellow had the hammer and the score was still 66 to 49, and again black put the seventh disc on the 10/8 line.

From the foot yellow stepped up and shot toward the bumper on the 10/8 line. He hit it squarely and held a winning ten with the black disc stopping harmlessly in the seven. He had won the game for them.

Yellow won the game with the ten.

Yet was yellow’s shot selection the best?

The key here is the opponents score. Black had 49 and that’s a big 26 points from 75. While 49 is a lot of points, it’s not game threatening.

At the head of the board the decision to shoot for an eight rather than use the 10/8 bumper for a game winning 10 is clearly sound with a partner at the foot also having a hammer, the need for a risky 10 shot isn’t warranted. An eight would have made 74 points and even the miss still left black at 49.

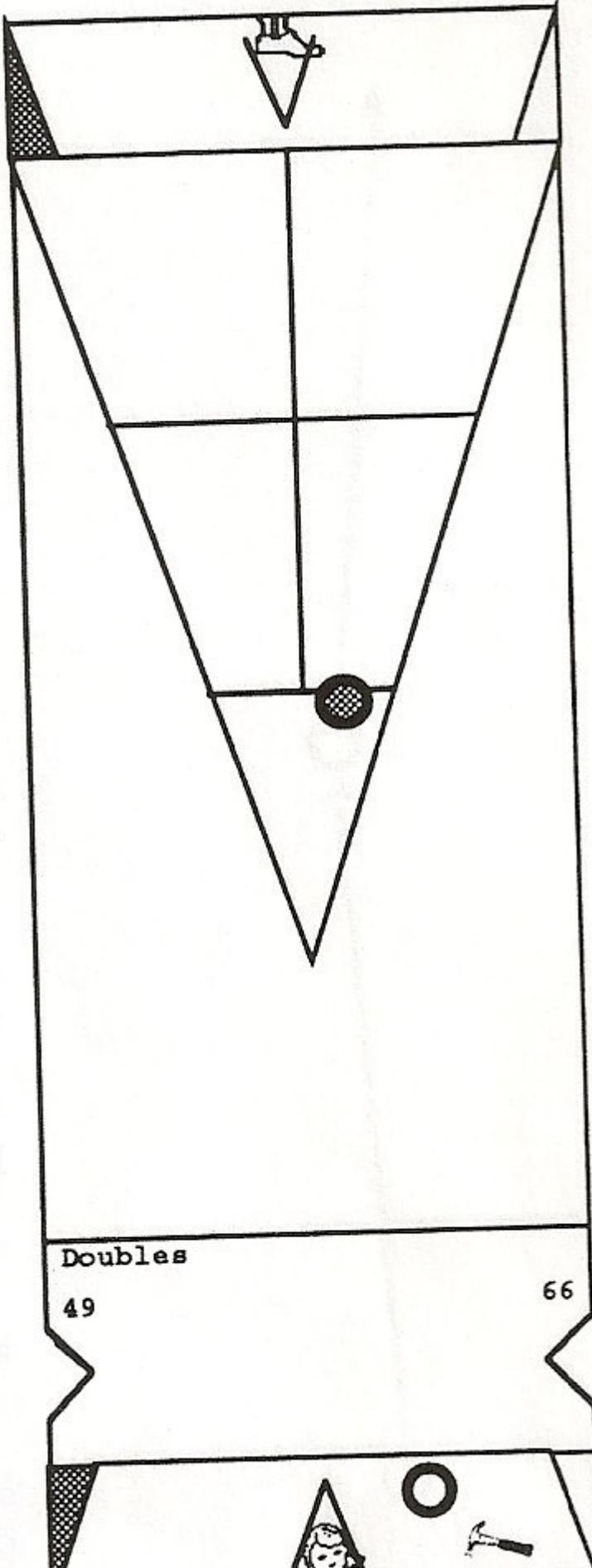
Now the shot selection from the foot is a little different even though the scores are the same. Some would shoot for a 10; others would go for the eight.

The 10 shot isn’t always as easy as it looks. A soft shot to snuggle or bump the black disc on the 10/8 line may pick up more drift than expected because of the slow speed. The disc may drift away to the side and as a result may give the black 10/8 bumper a life in the eight, while the shooter rolls onto the outside line or simply stop too short on a line.

Thus, consider the ten a risky one and maybe try for the open eight. A score of 74 to 49, even with the opponent’s hammers coming, is a good score. It’s certainly better to have the game won but a bad shot makes it 66 to 57 and that’s not attractive.

Debates and discussions on tens versus eights will likely go on as long as there’s a game of shuffleboard being played. This is a part of our sport’s charm and attraction. Players constantly weigh risks and possibilities and come to their own conclusions.

What shot would you have taken?



Doubles

49

66

