

The End Game

Shuffleboard has an end game phase. It's the most exciting part of the game. One player or team is closing in on 75 and a victory while the other is hanging on for dear life. Tactics change. There are more gambles and more risk taking.

Here is a situation where both teams were close to the magic 75. In fact, the score was tied at 68. That created excitement and stress, mental brain twisters and execution pressure.

Here's how the game went. With the score 68 to 68, play was at the head of the board with yellow having the next two hammers in a doubles match. It was yellow's strategy to clear the board and score on hammer. It was black's job to try to prevent this – twice, once at each end of the court.

Black, at the head, knew the chances of preventing yellow from scoring hammers at both ends were fairly possible.... but unlikely.

On the other hand, with 68, black could possibly reach 75 and maybe get a win or a tie. Black needed to prevent the hammer score by yellow, but also have to look for a chance to score.

Black shot the first disc of the frame to the opponent's seven as kitchen bait. Yellow tried to clear and stuck. Black then kitched the yellow disc and held a seven. The fun had begun. End game tactics were in order.

Yellow had a choice of removing the 10-off directly or trying a reverse. Since the black seven would reach game point for black, yellow tried a reverse, replacing the seven but he missed the 10-off. The board then looked like the first diagram. Black studied what to do with the fifth shot of the frame.

Black chose to try and score an eight over removing seven . A better choice would have been to snuggle the seven and maybe line it. After the game black said "My snuggling always backfires," so black didn't use that tactic. The eight attempt stopped short on the 10/8 line.

Yellow then made a smart choice and using the 10/8 liner as a Tampa, hid a second seven behind it and beside the first seven. Yellow now had four good points on the board. The second diagram shows this.

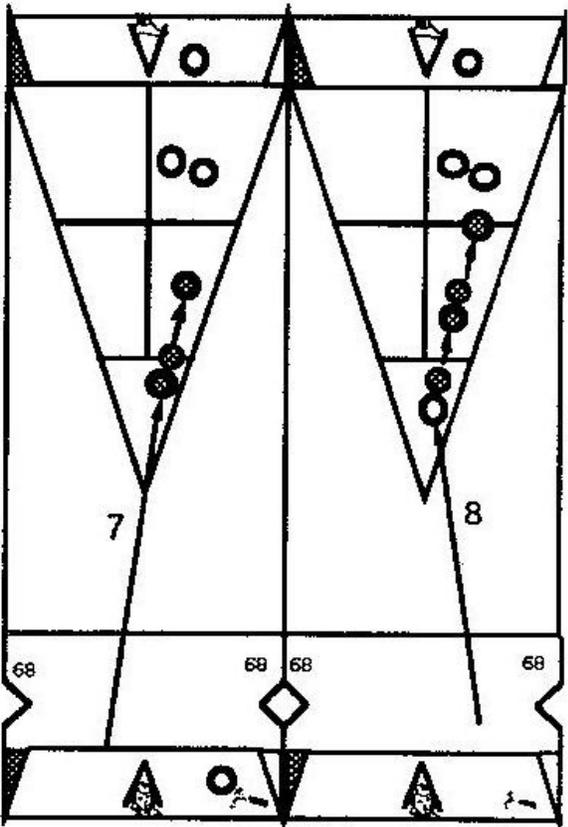
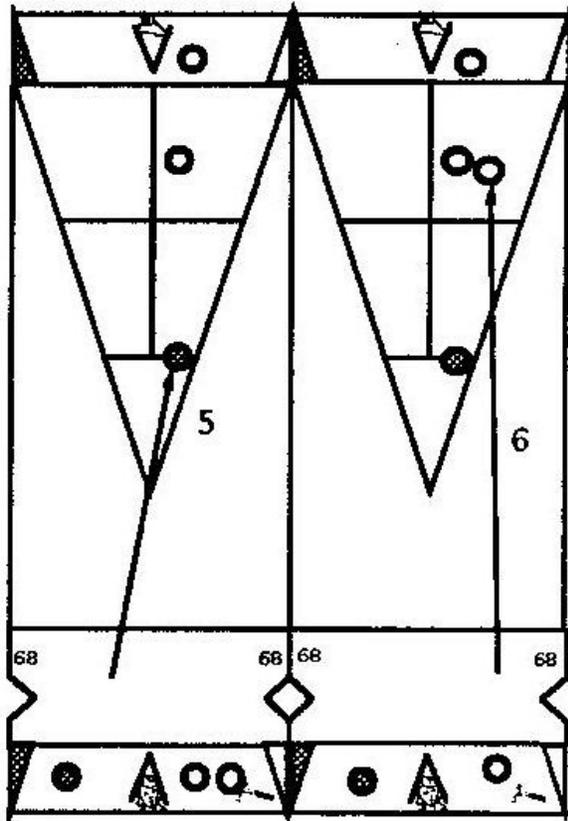
Now as you help black decide what to do with the seventh shot, get out your calculators. Black can try to clip out one or both sevens or he can try to double using the 10/8 liner, or he can simply score, perhaps in the left eight near the center line.

What would you do?

Black doubled the 10/8 liner for 18. It was a fine shot. Now yellow needed to execute. Yellow didn't have to think much. Yellow needed to remove both blacks and save the game for his partner's hammer or to score himself and remove at least one black.

Yellow chose to score off the ten but the ten pushed the black ten into the eight. This new black eight went through and pushed the older black eight into the 7/8 line where it stopped. Black had 76 points, but yellow had a ten, two sevens, and a 10-off for fourteen points, for a total of 82 points and the win.

Shuffleboard can produce great end games. What a finish.



END GAME IN DOUBLES MATCH

