

# Brighton Backgammon Chouette Rules

## With Variations



These particular rules have been adopted over time based on various other sets with slight variations. We are constantly modifying the rules and alternative suggestions will be considered.

### The Game:

A Chouette is money game of backgammon for more than two players, and is thus a more social form of the game and great fun to play as long as you are happy to gamble a bit. The ideal number for a Chouette is five players but any number up to 8 is practical (with a partner). Don't moan about the dice!

At the start of the session all players roll 4 Dice to find the initial starting order. The Highest total is first, the lowest is last. If two or more players roll the same total they each roll again to find their position.

The participants have the following status names:

- The Box** (the man in the box) Usually a single player, who rolled the highest total.
- The Captain** (of the team) The player who rolled second Highest total.
- The Team** The remaining players in order of dice total.
  
- The Partner** (of the Box) When more than 5 players the box can choose to take a partner. Initially the player rolling lowest total. Subsequently the losing Captain.

The game played is a standard money game with doubling cubes. If there are 5 players there will be 4 cubes in use (number of cubes equates to the total of Captain + Team players).

Play commences with Box and Captain playing the game in normal way rolling one dice each first highest roll playing the two dice for opening move.

There are two ways of playing with regard to the Team players.

Non-Consulting (standard rule)	The normal way we play and how majority of Chouette's are played is that the team players cannot be involved in discussion on moves until their cube is in play ( <b>Pay to play</b> ).
Consulting (Optional rule)	In this version of the game the team players are involved in the game from start and can consult with Captain on the best move. (The original method adopted by Jacoby and Crawford). The Captain has the final decision on moves.

There is, **No consultation on cube decisions**, these are individual choices and reasons cannot be discussed with any other player.

## Stake.

The stake is the monetary value being played for per point. We normally play for £2 per point however the amount can be agreed between all players from a minimum of 50p (any less produces un-realistic cube actions).

## Order of Succession.

Throughout a session the players maintain a defined order which is listed on the score-sheet. The winner of each game always remains or becomes the box (as long as was original Captain). We do not play "Last man standing".

If the Box loses he/she goes to the foot of the list and joins the team, The Captain becomes box and the next player of the team on the list becomes the new Captain.

If the box wins and keeps the box, the losing captain goes to the foot of the list and the next player on team becomes new captain.

If additional players join in the session they are added to the foot of the list as they arrive.

Chouette Sheet								Order
Tim	Mick M	Mike G	Ergin	Karl	Steve	Jude	Harry	
6	-2	2	-2	-4				MM
2	-1	3	-1	-3				MG
0	-3	11	-3	-5				E
8	1	-5	-7	3				K
6	-1	-7	-9	11				MM
10	3	-3	-7	-3	0			T
14	-1	-11	1	-5	2			E
6	1	-7	3	-3	0			S
								K
								E
								J
								H

## Scoring.

The scoring in each game is dependent on the cube values (see Doubling) as well as Gammons and Backgammons.

The winnings (positive) and losses (Negatives) of all players in each line of the score sheet must always total ZERO. Each row should be checked for balance before the next game is scored.

## Jacoby rule.

The Jacoby rule is played in all money games and means that a game is only worth 1 point unless there is a cube action. Where there are no cubes, there are no Gammons or Backgammons available.

## **Doubling.**

In scoring of the game, the Box plays against each of his opponents separately. If he/she wins a one-point game, each of the opponents loses one point to him/her. If he/she loses, he/she loses one point to each of them.

Any cube action multiplies the winning / losing points for each player.

If the Captain wishes to send over a cube he and Box must wait to see if others follow. If only the Captain or Captain and a couple of team player choose to cube and the Box chooses to drop, the game continues however at the end of the game the Captain becomes Box.

Each player is responsible for their own cube decisions and can use the cube on turn as in normal games. If a team player wishes to send over their cube, they must ask the Captain to wait on roll. This can be a verbal communication or a pat on the back. If the player wishes to cube the Captain and other team members can choose to do so at same time or wait. The Box must wait on decision until all team players have decided.

Initially the Box must take or drop all cubes sent at same time, and treat those cubes equally if deciding to Beaver or redoubling later.

If the box decides to send over the cubes he/she must cube each of the Captain and team at same time (as long as on same value). The Captain and each team member then decide individually on take / drop. If Captain drops and other players take, then game continues with next player (who took) taking the seat for remainder of game.

Anyone that drops a cube has no further interaction with that game.

**Beavers** – Whenever a cube is accepted it may also be Beavered, doubled again and kept on that side of the board. Beavered cubes may be dropped at the original value.

**Racoons / Aardvarks** – We don't currently allow Racoons or Aardvarks however these can be included on initial agreement between all players starting the session. These redouble each other if applicable.

## **Special Conditions (Optional).**

If the Box sends an initial cube it can be annoying if only one person wishes to accept, leaving the rest of the team sitting waiting, especially if the game goes on for ages and only one player wishes to take, that lone player must therefore choose either to;

- Take all the cubes and accept all subsequent wins / losses.
- Pay each of the other team members, Inc captain the original value of the dropped cubes.
- Drop the cube as well and start a new game.

## **Consultation.**

Consultation only if cubes are in play, unless playing optional rule.

The Captain should not always stop to consult with his team about all plays. When there is an obvious automatic; or nearly automatic play it just wastes time asking "what should I do?"

In more complicated situations the Captain might move the checkers but leave dice on the board to give team a chance to speak up. If a really tough decision the captain may simply ask for alternative suggestions.

Too much argument in Chouette is silly! If Captains choice of move is about as good as another suggestion, a short discussion is acceptable, however Captains decision is final and play should flow.

## **Box Partner.**

If there are more than 5 players in the Chouette, the Box may choose to take a partner. This is done to share the possible high losses as well as sharing any potential winnings).

Unless splitting into two Chouette's the Maximum allowed is 4 against 1 or 6 against 2

The Box does not have to have a partner but once the choice has been made it cannot be changed during that time in the Box. The same player can however choose differently when next in the Box.

A partner cannot refuse to join the Box.

At the start of the session the player who rolled the lowest total will be partner (if required).

The Partner plays only one game and does not lose position on list.

If the Box continues to win, the losing Captains join the Box for one game.

The Box and Partner cannot consult on moves until at least one cube is in play.

If the partner wants to cube he must stop the box rolling and agree to wait or send cubes without discussion on reason. The Partner cannot cube without the Box agreeing.

If the Box wants to cube he must ask the Partner. If the partner doesn't want to cube the Box can choose to take on all the cubes and pay the Partner half the number to drop out.

If the Captain and or team players send cubes the Box and Partner have to agree on the take / drop. If only one of Box / Partner want to take the cube(s) they can choose to accept full value paying half to the other.

## **Leaving Temporarily.**

If a player wishes to leave the table during the progress of the game, they should ask one of the team to act on their behalf. If they fail to do so, any decisions go with the captains moves including cube decisions.

A player may ask to leave a game before it starts and rejoin at the start of a later game. If they do not announce this, they will be included in every game as team player following Captains decisions. That player will move up the list and remain at top until return.

If a player does not return after a long period the remaining players may choose to drop them out of games entirely. If that player returns they will be treated as a new player joining at foot of list.

## **Settlements.**

The Box or any other player may offer a settlement on a game at any point especially when Cubes get to 8 or above. If the game is in the balance a player holding or facing an 8 cube may offer the opponent any number of points to get out of the game.

If facing a potential gammon this offer could be more or less than the cube value.

The opponent may accept, decline or make a counter offer.

If the Box is holding a number of large cubes he may offer a proposition to a specific number of opponents. If more than that number wants to accept, the Box is not bound to do business with the extra accepters. In such case the first ones to accept the offer are accommodated. Snooze you lose!

**Most important of all, play fair, have fun, and don't gamble for what you can't afford to settle!**