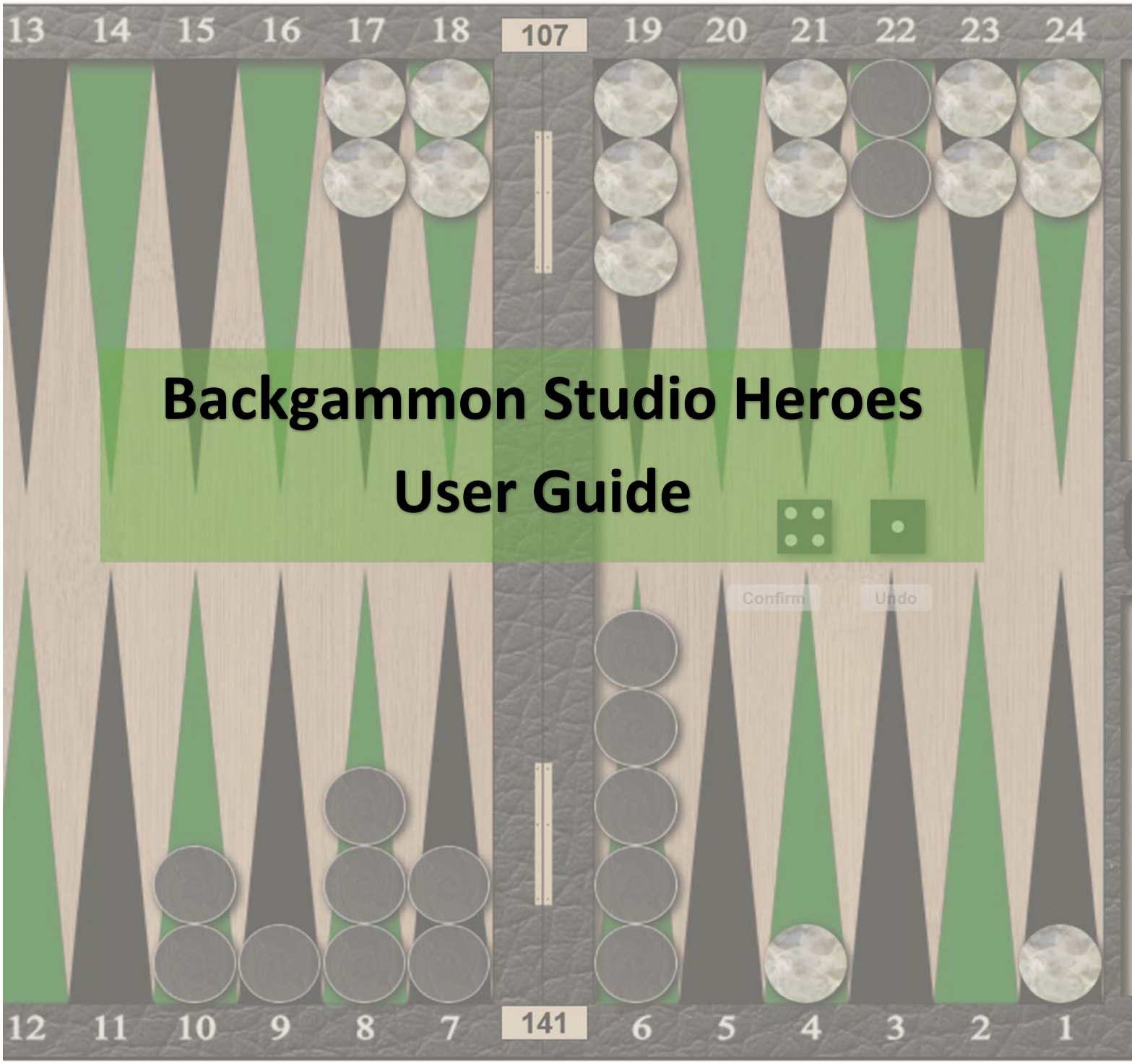
Worcester Backgammon Club



Backgammon Studio Heroes User Guide

Version 1.06

Stay at Home

Play Backgammon

Be a Hero!

Table of Contents

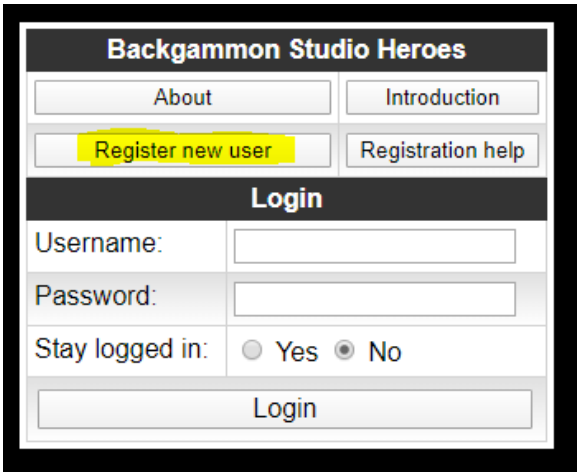
New User Registration 5
The Main Screen 6
  Live matches 6
  Tournaments 7
  Private DB 7
The Match Screen 7
  Board layout 9
Setting My Profile 11
Setting Features 12
Configuration Settings 13
Setting your Status 15
Finding and Viewing Live Matches 16
  Making Friends 17
Starting a new match 18
Knockout Tournaments 21
  Enrolling in a Tournament 21
  Setting your Status for Tournaments 22
  Playing the Tournament 22
Playing a Match 24
  Match Preferences 24
  Swapping the dice 24
  Using the target to move checkers 24
  Click to make a point 24
  Pausing the Clock 25
  Resigning the Game 25
External Tournaments and Private Rooms 26
  External Tournament Chat 27
Private DB 28
  Reviewing or download completed matches 31
Appendix 32
  Match types described 32
  Clock types described 32
  Board Settings Gallery 33

Administration tasks 34
Creating a Tournament 34
Manually Updating a Tournament 35

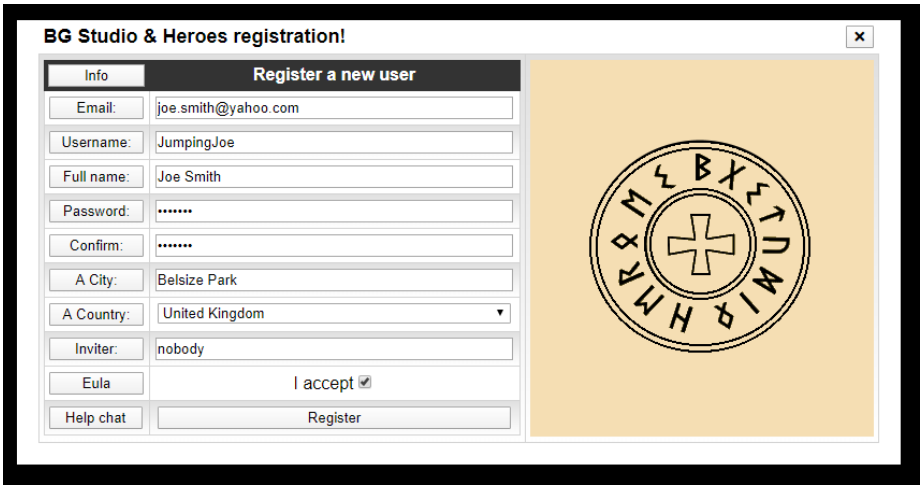
New User Registration

1. Go to https://heroes.backgammonstudio.com/ and click the Enter button:

2. On the following screen, click the Register New User button



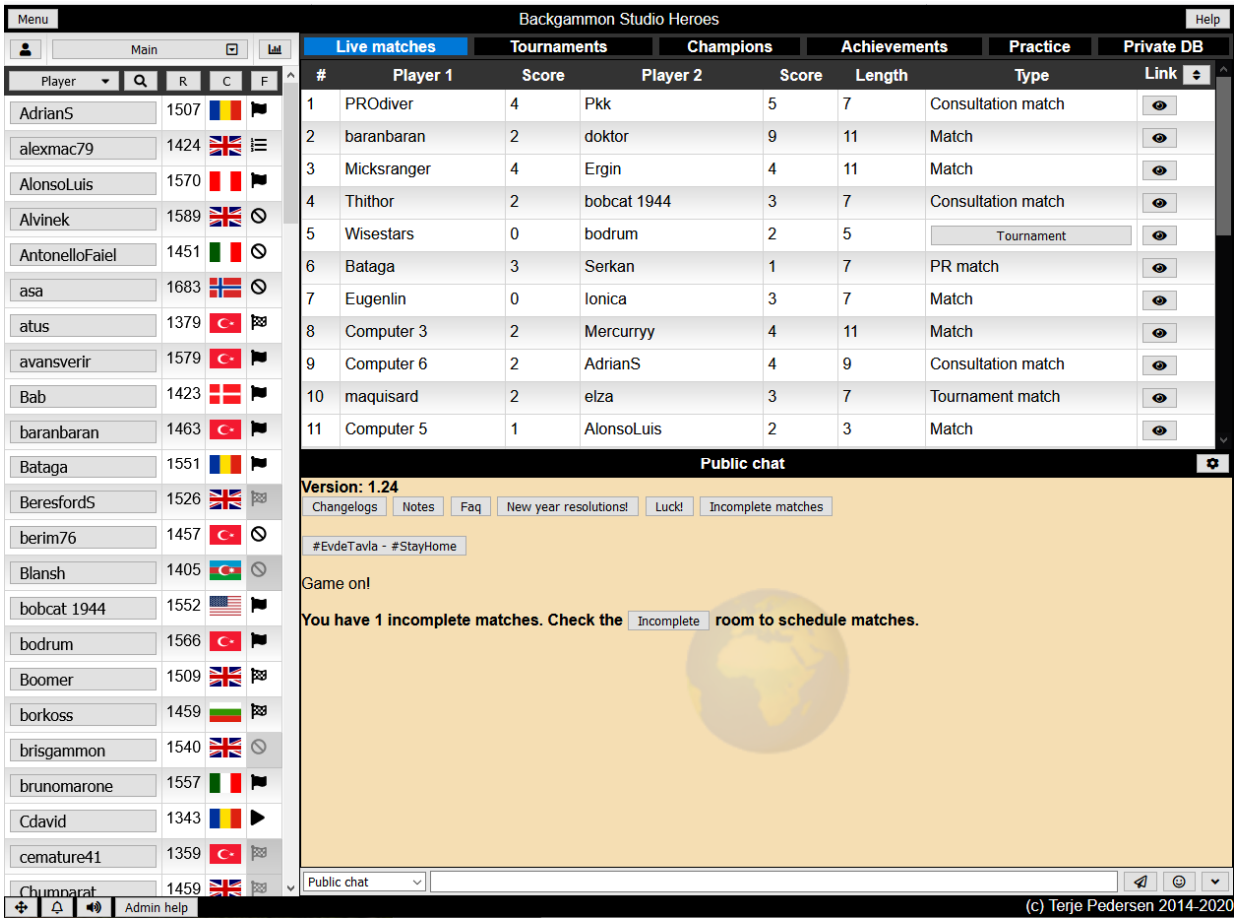
3. Complete the user details as in the example below, then click the Register button at the bottom:



You will need to wait for your account to be confirmed before you can access the site. This normally only takes a few minutes.

The Main Screen

After you have logged in to the system, you will be presented with the main screen:



The left-hand column is a list of the other players currently logged in with details of their current Rating, Country flag and Status. You can sort this list by clicking on the column headers. At the top of the list of players is a drop-down menu, set to Main by default which lists all players. Using this drop-down menu allows you to filter the list of players by your country, city, your friends, unfinished match opponents etc.

The main window is split into two parts. The lower part is the scrolling Chat window, set to Public chat by default. This will change to Country chat, or Match chat etc. as is appropriate when you use the system,

The top part of the main window is a series of tabs. Not all these tabs may be visible to you if you haven't yet enabled those features. The main tabs are:

Live matches – shows a list of all the matches currently being played on the system. You can sort on any of the columns by first enabling this by clicking on the small up-down arrows icon above the right-most column. Clicking on the eye icon in this right-hand column allows you to join a live match as an observer. (Note, if the system is currently under high load, you sometimes have to click on this eye icon more than once to open the match window. The connection progress is shown in the chat window – if it says you have connected but the match window doesn't open, try again.)

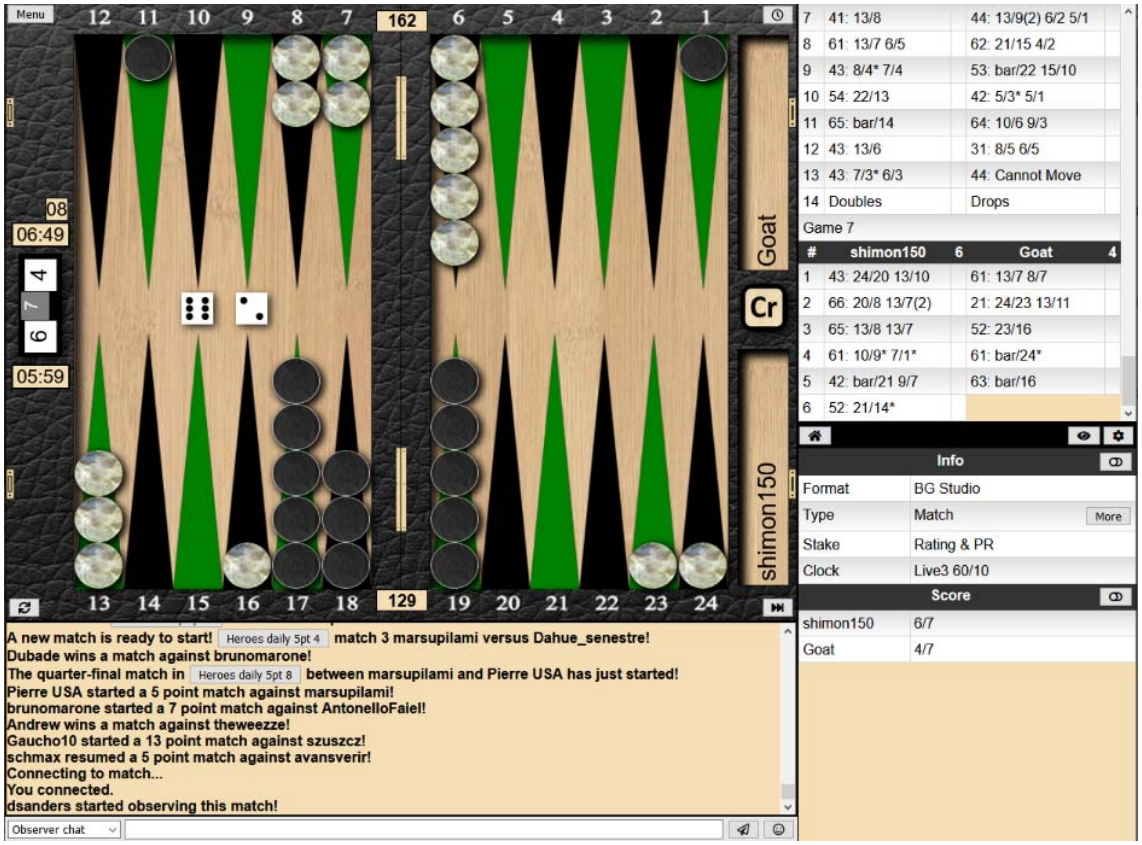
Tournaments – this tab gives access to current and planned tournaments, as well as completed tournaments. A Tournament in Studio Heroes is a knockout bracket competition. Some tournaments are open to all, while others are restricted to different countries and cities, or may be invitational tournaments. See the section later in this guide for more information.

Private DB – this tab may not be visible initially – you will need to enable it through your trial period as a premium member on the main menu. Here you will find lots of records about the matches you have played, such as PR and Rating analysis, error and blunder database for review etc.

The Practice tab takes you to the old Backgammon Studio server, while Champions and Achievements list players by achievements or ratings/tournament wins.

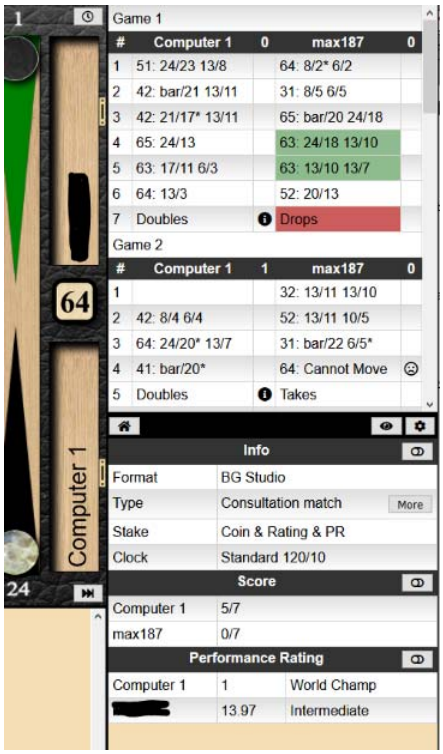
The Match Screen

When you are playing or observing a match, the screen layout changes to this:



The chat at the bottom will be Observer chat (if you are a watcher) or Match chat if you are one of the players. To return to the Main screen, use the Menu button at the top left and choose the option Exit match.

The column to the right of the board shows the history of moves in the match, and depending on how the match is configured, other information below, such as current PRs, Luck and Awesome streaks (an Awesome move is where you make the best possible move)



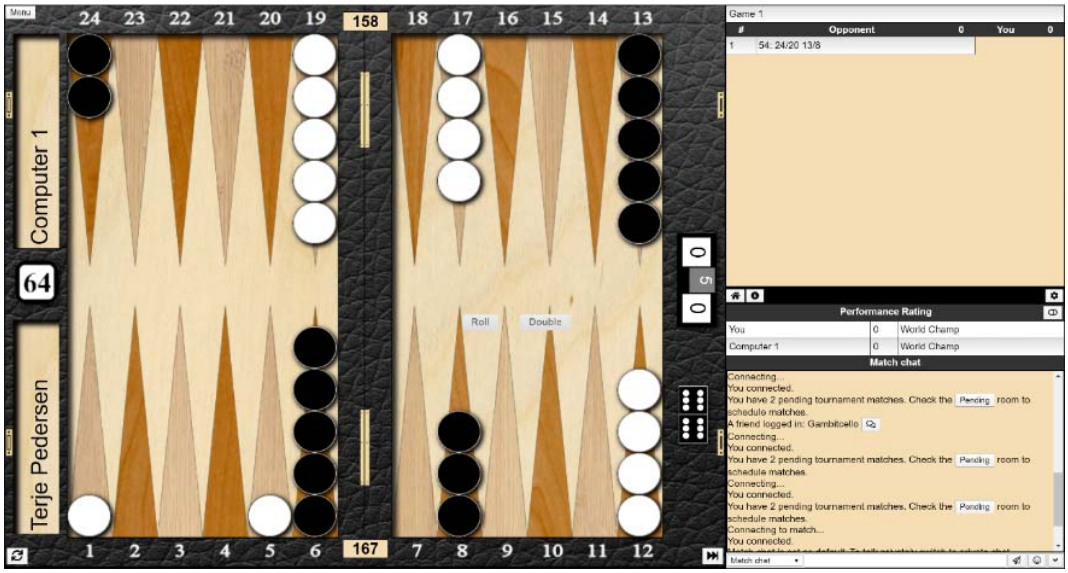
In certain configurations, such as Consultation matches, errors and blunders will be highlighted as shown. Clicking on one of these coloured cells will display an analysis of the blunder and the best moves that were possible.

The information icon ⓘ will display information about cube errors.

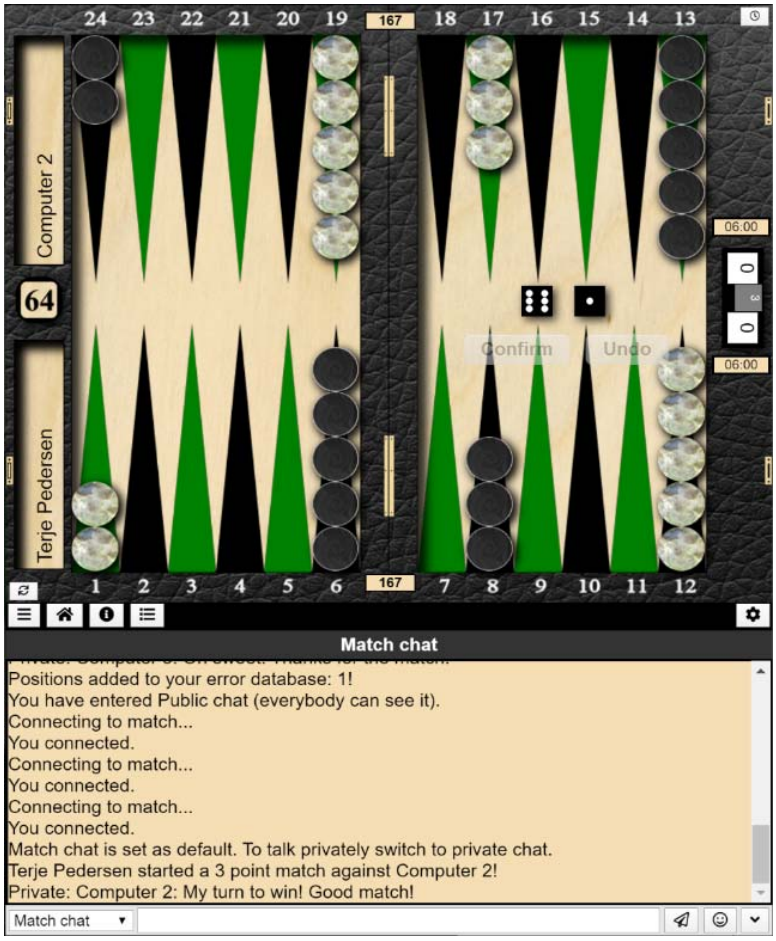
Even if the match is configured to not show instant analysis of each move, such as for the Tournament matchtype (where the players do not get feedback on their moves or PR), observers of the match will still see the highlighted errors/blunders and the pip count.

Board layout

The board can take many different shapes depending on the size of the screen. The most common is perhaps the wide screen version:

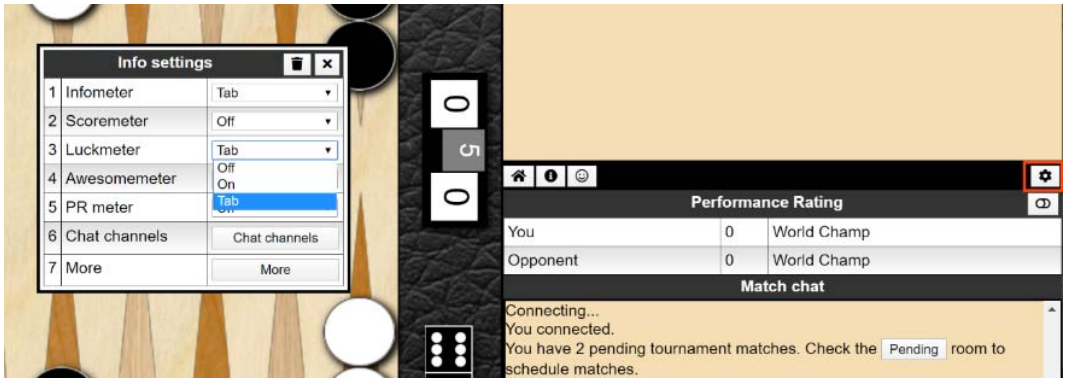


Mobile/tablet portrait could look like this:



Changing the aspect ratio of your browser window by dragging its size will automatically change the layout to the one most suitable for your browser size.

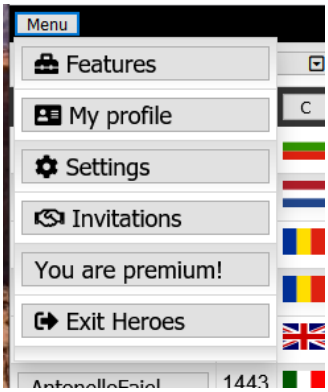
The small cogwheel on the middle of the right hand side reveals additional info that can be turned on. Either displayed directly or put in a tabs along the middle of the right hand side:



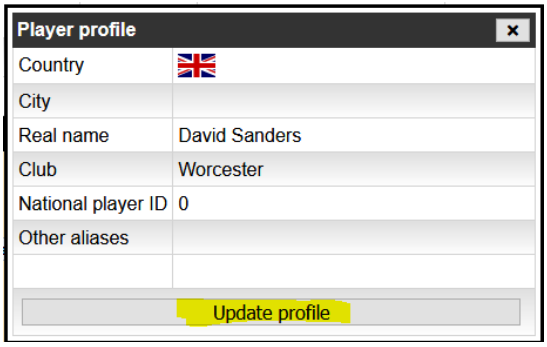
It is possible to drag &drop the headers into the header bar turning them into a tab or drag a button onto the home icon to turn them into visible entries. And the header bar can be dragged up/down to give this area more room.

Setting My Profile

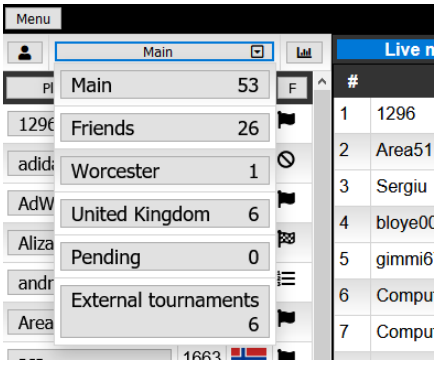
From the Menu (top left of the Main screen), select My profile.



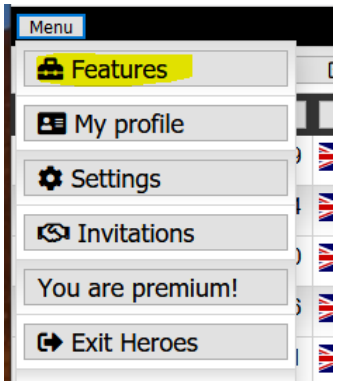
Click the Update profile button to enter or modify the data. Note that the City, if entered, will give you a menu option to list local players, for example for Worcester as show below.



From the main List of players, there is a drop-down menu where you can filter the players listed by Country or City or Friends which may make it easier to find a specific player you are looking for. If you have unfinished matches, they will also be listed under this menu.

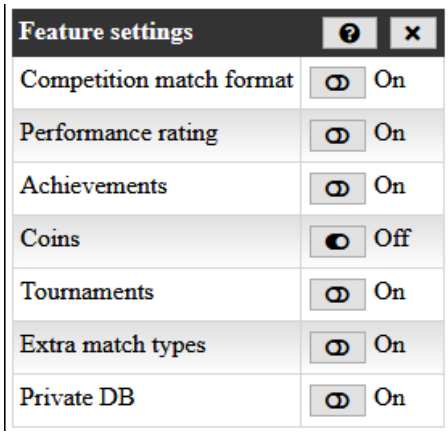


Setting Features



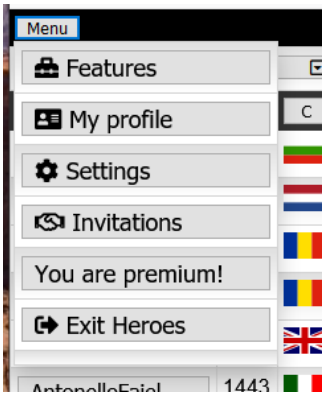
From the Menu button in the top left of the Main screen, choose **Features** to set the configuration.

Make sure the settings are as shown below. The Private DB setting will add the corresponding tab, and build up a history or your matches for download, a list of your errors and blunders, and your performance graphs, etc.

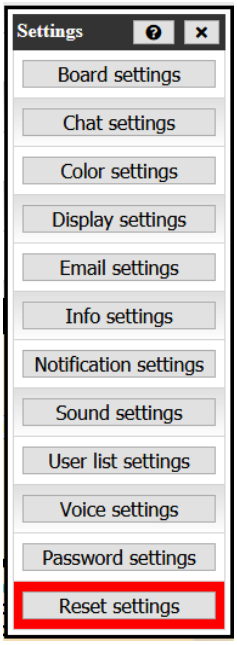


Configuration Settings

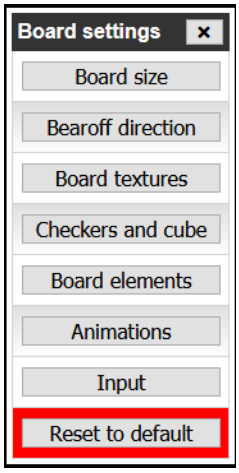
From the Menu (top left of the Main screen), select **Settings**.

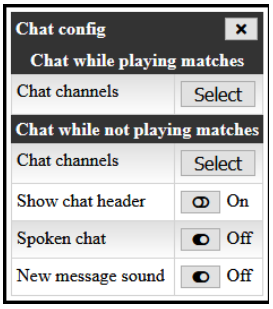


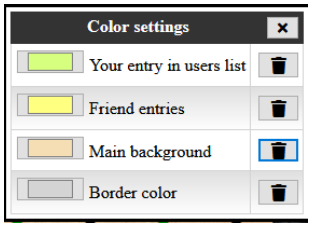
The following options will be displayed.

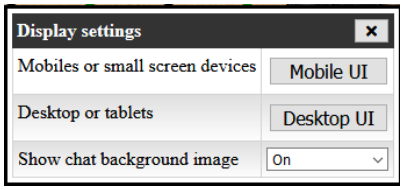


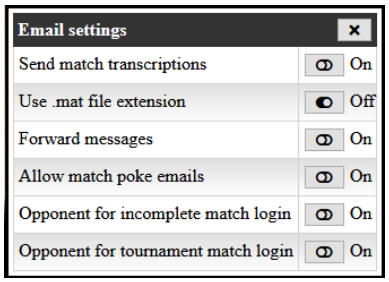
Many options affecting the appearance, layout and behaviour of the application can be set from here, some of which are as shown below.

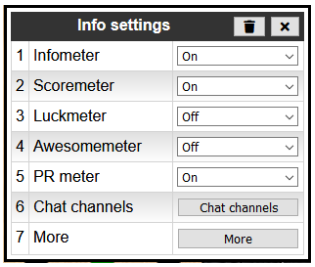


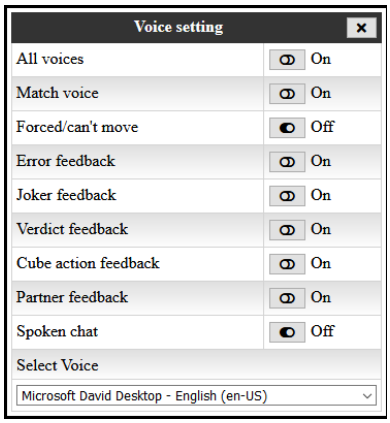


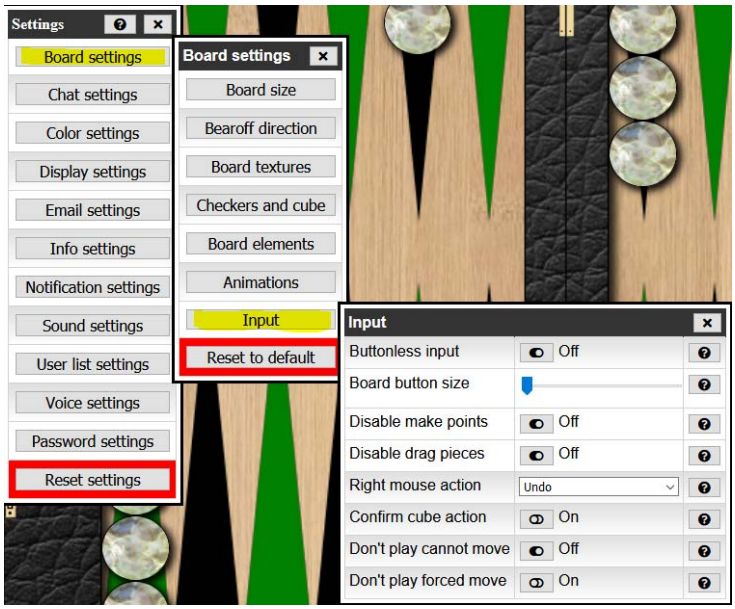










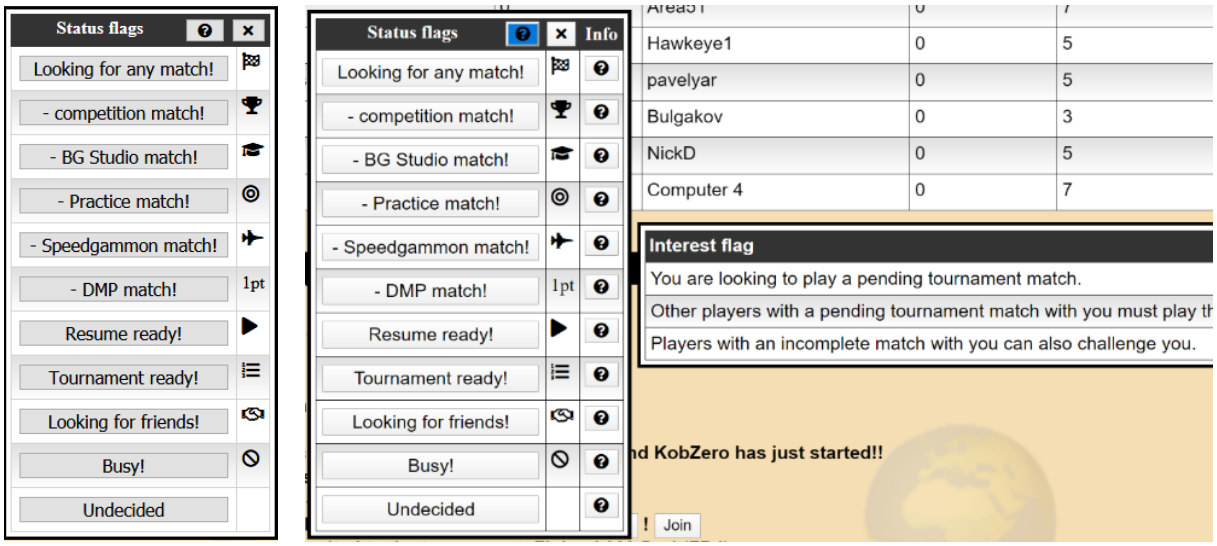


Several useful settings can be found under Board settings/Input where you can configure whether the system automatically plays forced moves for you or not, cannot move options and drag and drop.

Setting your Status

- ***IMPORTANT: Your Status affects whether people are able to challenge you to matches, and which types of matches they can choose. Make sure you always set your Status appropriately!***

From the list of players, click on your own name, or anywhere in the column listing player statuses, or on the person icon at the top of the list to set your own Status. Click the relevant status to set your own status in the list of players.



Clicking on the Question mark help button in the dialog header allows access to some extra information about each status.

Note that some statuses restrict who can challenge you to a match. For example:

- **Resume ready!** – only players with whom you have an unfinished match can challenge you
- **Tournament ready!** – only players in the same knockout bracket as you can challenge you to a match
- **Busy!** – No-one can challenge you to a match

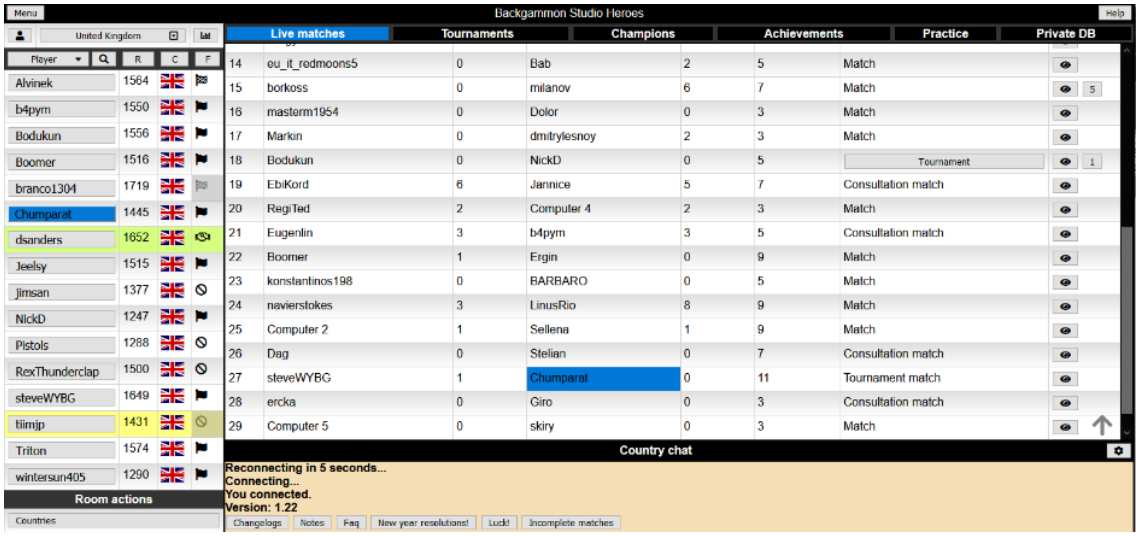
Please make sure that you set an appropriate Status whenever you are on the site, otherwise you may get far more or fewer challenges than you expect!

Finding and Viewing Live Matches

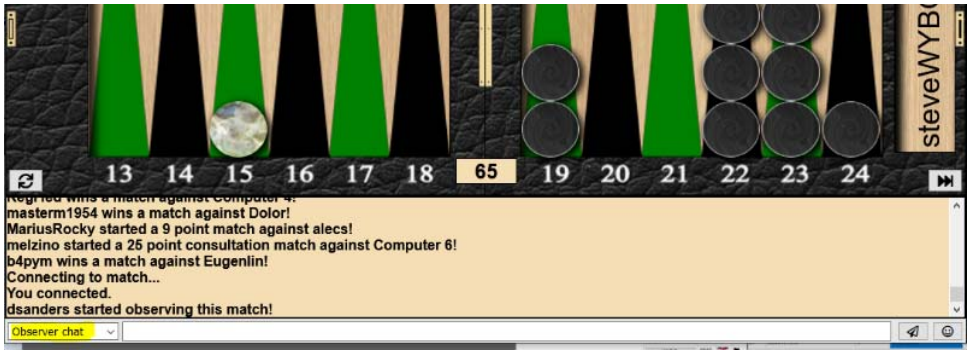
The Status flag in the right-hand column shows the status of a player (such as Looking for any match, Busy, Tournament ready etc.).

If the icon in the right-hand column is solid black, this indicates the player is currently playing a match. If the icon is greyed-out, this indicates the player has been idle for more than 5 minutes and may be away from their computer.

If you hover over the name of a player who is currently playing a match, as shown below, the list of Live matches will scroll to highlight the match they are playing. You can click on the eye icon to the right of the live match to join as an observer.



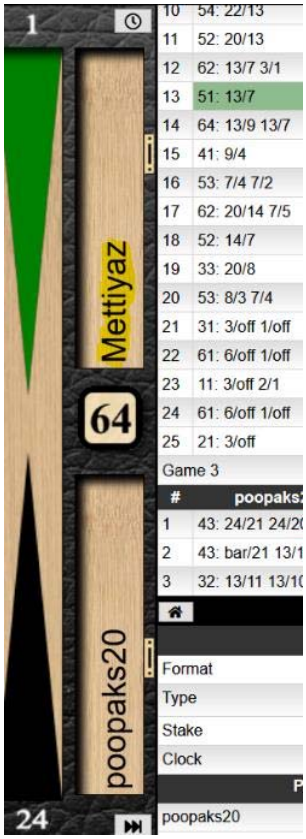
When you are watching a match, by default you are placed in Observer chat. This is chat between observers of the match, and is not visible to the players. Change the drop-down menu from Observer chat to Match chat to message the players of the match.

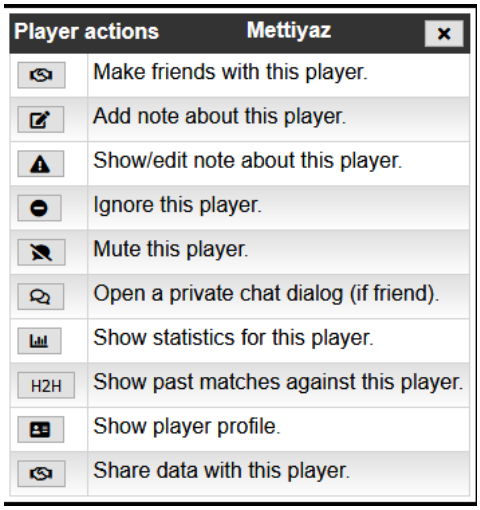


Some of the matches in the list are shown as Tournament in a button. Click the button to view the bracket for the knockout tournament. You can also watch matches from the bracket by clicking on the eye icon next to any currently being played matches.

Making Friends

One of the easiest ways to make friends is from when you are observing or participating in a match:



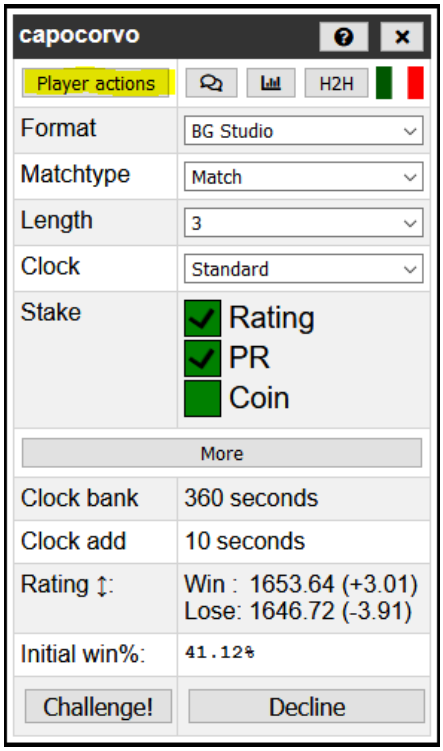


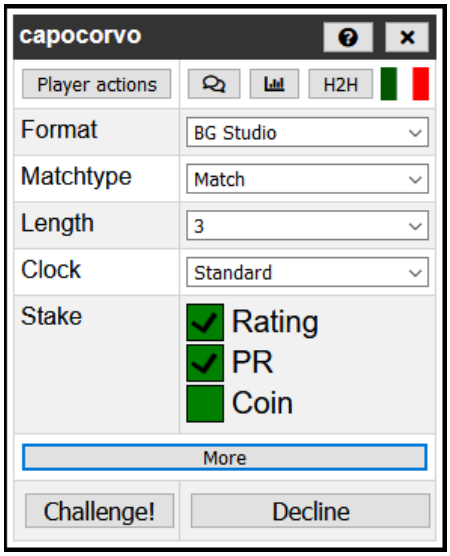
Click on the player's name in the bear-off area of the board. The Player actions dialog opens where you can issue a friend request or take other actions as shown.

Once you are friends with another player, you can easily locate them in your Friends list, and by default you get a notification in the chat section when the log in, together with an icon to launch chat with them.

Starting a new match

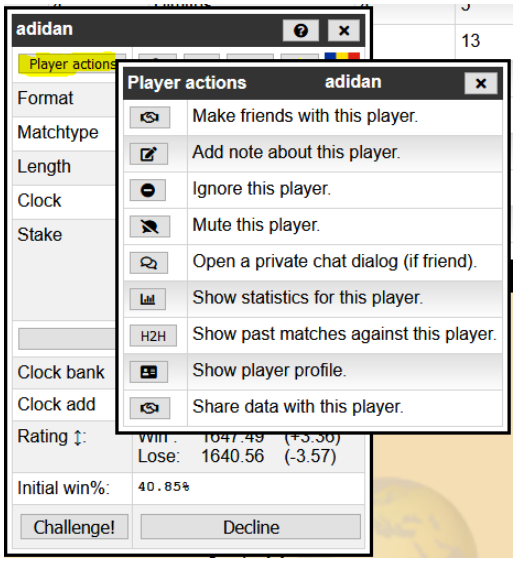
On Heroes, you start a new match by challenging another player to a match. Click on a player in the list of players. The Challenge dialog opens. Try to respect their Status, so don't challenge them if they're set to busy.





Clicking the More button shows or hides extra information as shown.

Click the highlighted Player actions button to interact with the player. You can send a friend request from the Player actions form. Marking someone as a friend makes them easier to find as they will appear in the Friends list under the main list filtering menu.



The player actions dialog can also be found by clicking on the player's name on the match board. While playing, this dialog can be used to mute your opponent if your opponent starts to use abusive language in the chat. Some players can't handle bad rolls very well.

The other buttons in the Challenge dialog to the right of the Player actions button are Chat, Stats (including PR), Head2Head statistics between you and the player, and their User Profile.

To issue a challenge set the options, Format, Matchtype, Length, Clock, Stake then click the Challenge button.

- Format – Competition or BG Studio: Setting to BG Studio changes some of the features on the following selections. BG Studio highlights errors and provides commentary on your moves which may be useful (or not!) for training purposes. Competition removes a lot of these aids and gives a purer match experience.
- Matchtype – the 3 main ones are Match, Consultation Match and Tournament Match. Consultation gives the maximum analysis and feedback, while Tournament match gives the minimum.
- Clock – Choose Tournament clock for standard 12 secs delay and 2 minutes per point. Other clock settings are available, some of which are more appropriate to the speed of online matches.
- Stake – use the checkboxes to select whether the match will affect your Rating and or PR. If neither is checked, the match is a 'friendly' and will not affect your rating.

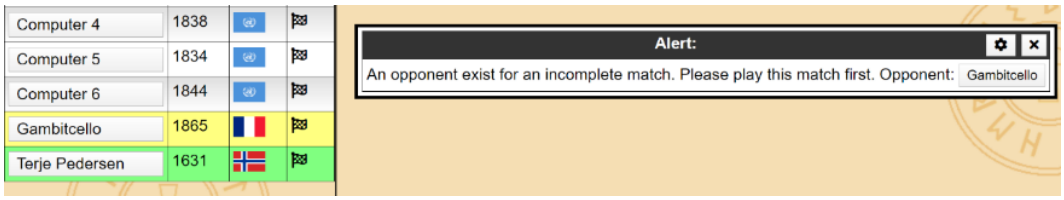
A typical set of match settings for a serious competition match might be:

- Format: Competition
- Matchtype: Tournament
- Clock: Tournament
- Stake: PR and Rating

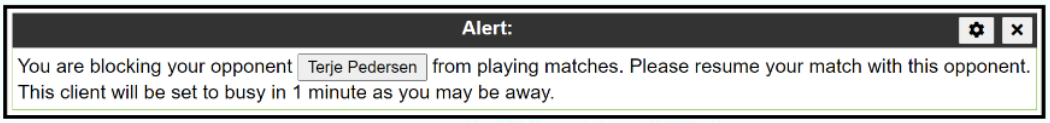
For a friendly or training match, typically you would use settings like:

- Format: BG Studio
- Matchtype: Consultation
- Clock: Standard
- Stake: PR and Rating, or nothing

Note that if you are in a tournament or have incomplete matches, the system will prompt you to complete these matches before starting new matches.



Clicking on the buttoned name in the message will launch the challenge to resume. The opponent will be notified like this:



If the opponent doesn't respond this player will be set to busy and you are free to play other matches.

When opponents for incomplete matches logs in you will be notified like this:

This is a perfect opportunity to get the match completed or if you are busy talk to the player to arrange a time to play the match.

Knockout Tournaments

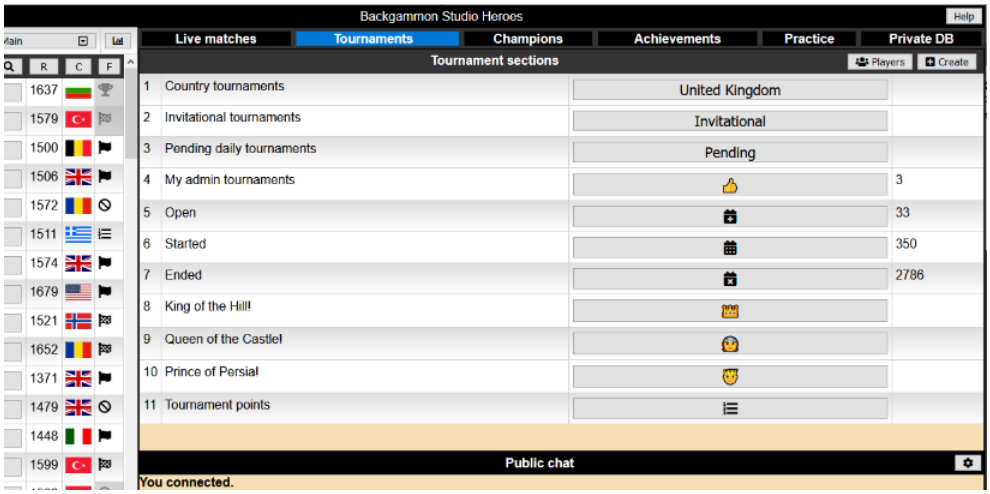
If you are enrolled in a tournament, there are some additional ways to start your matches.

Enrolling in a Tournament

There are different types of tournaments, but all are knockout bracket based. Some tournaments are open, meaning anyone can join. Some are restricted, meaning you have to be in the correct Country or City to join, whilst some are Invitational tournaments (which are used for the club evening) where the organizer selects who will be in the tournament.

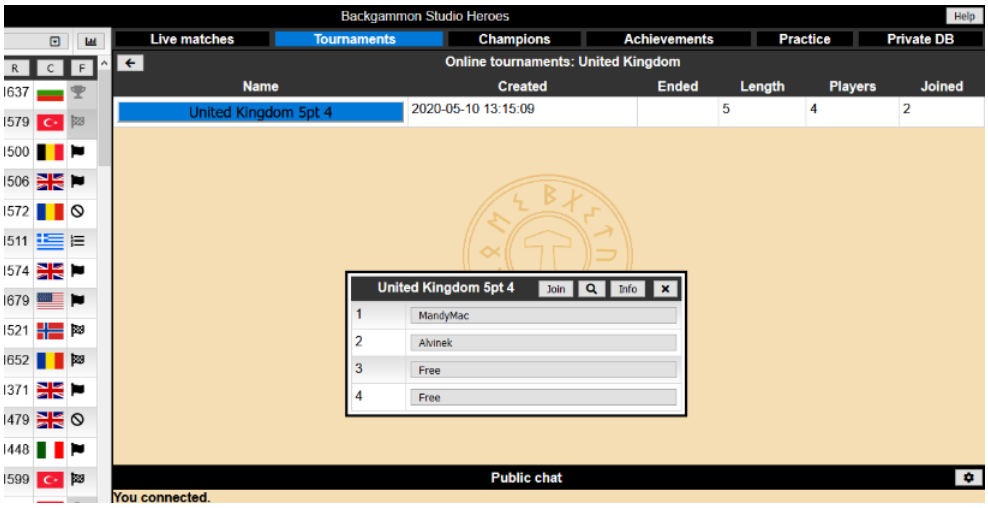
For Invitational tournaments, contact the organizer and request to be entered into the tournament.

For Open or Restricted tournaments, locate the tournament you are interested in on the Tournaments tab.



Your screen may look slightly different to this with a different list of sections, such as My Tournaments instead of My admin tournaments.

Click on the relevant section, such as Country Tournaments, Invitational Tournaments, or Pending Daily Tournaments.

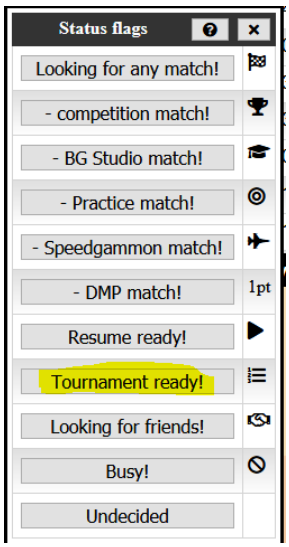


Click the tournament you are interested in joining, and if there are free places, you can click the Join button. Many open tournaments will start when they have filled all the free slots.

Invitational tournaments will normally have a scheduled start time. Once you have joined a tournament it should be listed under the My Tournaments section of the Tournaments tab.

Setting your Status for Tournaments

IMPORTANT: Once you are involved in a tournament that has started, you should set you Status to **Tournament ready**. Click on your name in the Player list and choose the appropriate status.



Setting this status will prevent people not in the tournament from challenging you to games, making sure you remain available for the tournament matches as they become ready. **Do not forget to change your status back to something else after the tournament ends, or you won't get many more matches !**

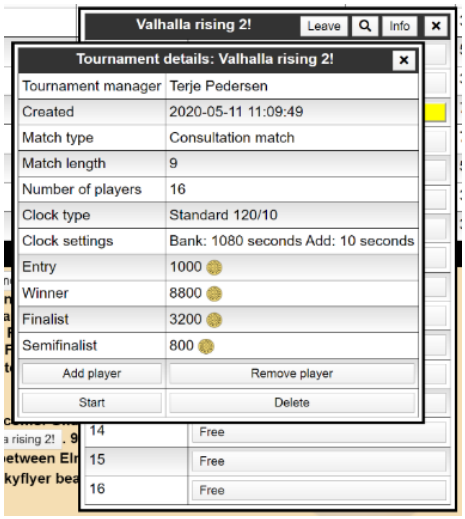
Playing the Tournament

Once the tournament has started, opening the tournament from My tournaments will then display the bracket giving you the draw of who you are to play and a button to launch the match if your match is ready. Clicking on your opponent's name will also start the match.

Tournament action is often displayed in the chat (muted by default when playing a match):

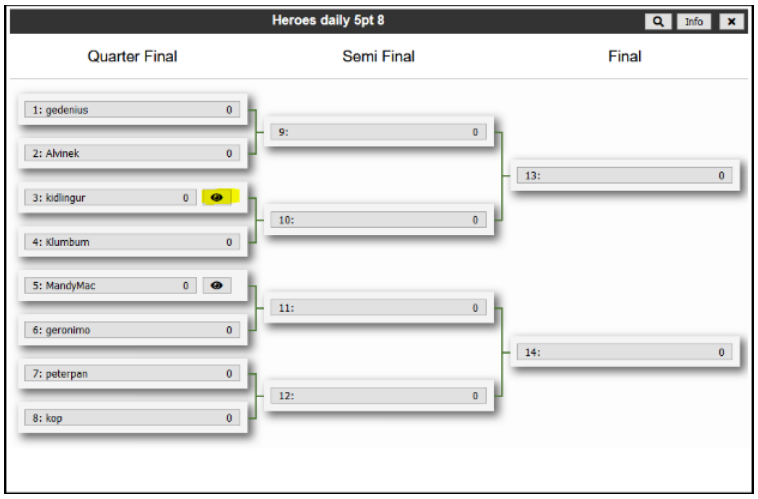
Here you can see a tournament that just started announcing the matchups. Another tournament is filling up with players and it has a join button at the end. Click on these to join the tournament directly.

You can also click on the tournament buttons to check on the tournament progress or look at tournament details. The info button in the tournament dialog reveals more details:



When you start the match, the dialog is the same as that to challenge someone to a normal match, but the settings are as predefined for the tournament, so you cannot alter them. You cannot change the match length or the clock used for example.

You can also look at a tournament that you are not involved in, which will open the bracket.



There will be an eye icon by any matches currently being played to allow you to watch the match as an observer. You can obviously also access the match from the list on the Live Matches tab. If you are in the tournament, your entry will be highlighted in yellow. Winners of completed matches are highlighted in green.

If you are playing a tournament match and win the final game, if your next match is ready (your next opponent has already finished their previous match), there will be a pop-up message with a button to allow you to proceed directly to starting the next match. The tournament matches can be launched by either player.

If your next opponent is not yet ready, you will see a message in the General chat when they complete their match and become available, but you can also watch their match for progress, either from the bracket as shown above, or from the list of matches on the Live matches tab.

Playing a Match

Whether you are playing a match in a tournament, or just with a fellow player, here are a few tips to help you get the most out of Backgammon Studio Heroes.

- **WARNING: Do not use the browser back button or refresh button during a match or you will exit the site and have to log back in to resume your match**

Match Preferences

When you are playing a match and the playing board is displayed, the Menu in the top left should give you the following choices.

Note that you can turn autoroll, sound etc. on or off, resign a game or exit the match from here, as well as a few other actions.

Swapping the dice

When you have rolled the dice, you can make your move by either clicking on the checker to move or dragging it to an appropriate position. If you click on the checker, it will move by the value on the first dice, if a legal move, or the second dice if that is the only legal move. So if you rolled a 5-3, clicking on a checker will move it 5 places if that is legal.

If you click on the dice, their positions will swap to 3-5. Then clicking on a checker will move it 3 places rather than 5, if that move is legal.

Using the target to move checkers

Alternatively, you can move checkers by clicking on the 'target' to move a checker to. So if you roll, for example, a 3-3 to move from the 13 point to the 7 point, just click on the 7pt point on the board. Make sure you click on the board surface, not a checker that is already on the target point.

In this way you have moved a checker 2 moves of 3 with a single click. Note that this behaviour can sometimes give unexpected results and you should always check that the moves are as you want before confirming them. For example, in the above example, if there are checkers on the 10pt, they will be the ones to move to the 7pt, rather than the checkers from the 13pt.

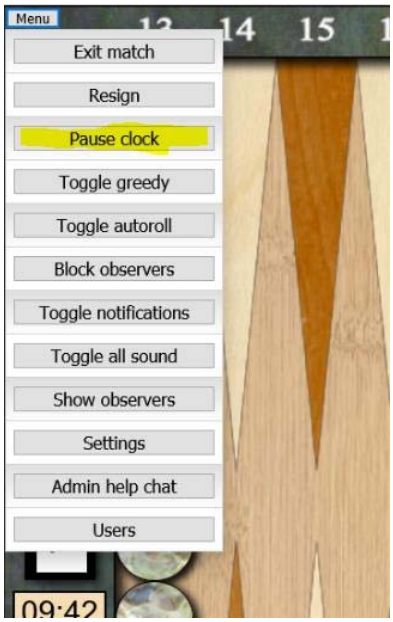
This technique can also move a single checker using both dice. For example, rolling a 6-2, you can move a checker from the 13pt to the 5pt by clicking on the 5pt chevron (assuming that move is not blocked and that there are no closer checkers that could move to that position, such as from the 11pt or the 7pt).

Click to make a point

If you for instance get 3-1 and you click on your 5 point it will make this point with both die. Check that the action you wish to occur is correct before confirming your move.

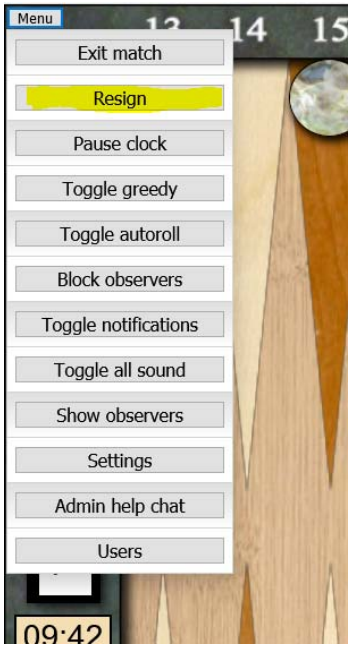
Pausing the Clock

You can pause the match clock from the Match Menu, The clock will resume when both players have made a move.



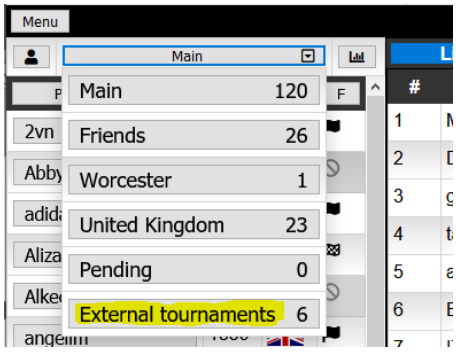
Resigning the Game

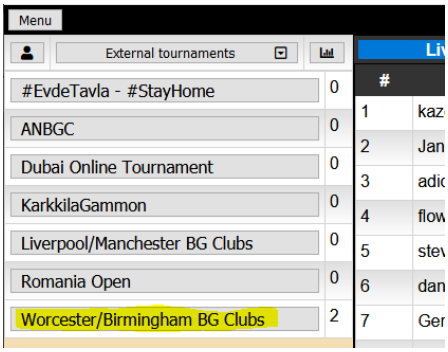
You can resign the current game from the Match Menu as shown.



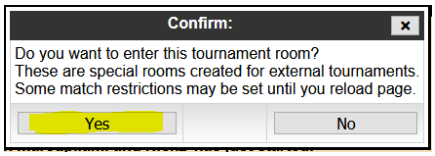
External Tournaments and Private Rooms

Event organizers can have private rooms set up where they can host external tournaments. These can be accessed from the filter on the list of players, and are under the heading External tournaments.

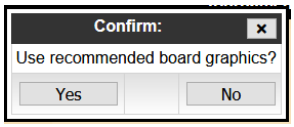




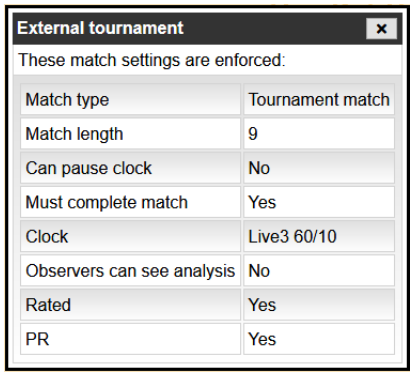
Some of these rooms are open and anyone can join, while others will be invitational, where the event organizer needs to invite you to the room. The following confirmation will show:

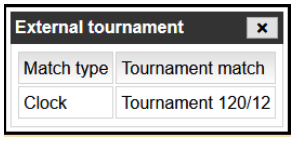


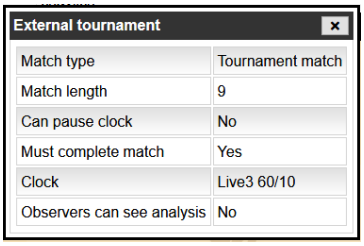
Answer yes to this question to join the room. You may optionally also be offered special board graphics which you can accept or decline.



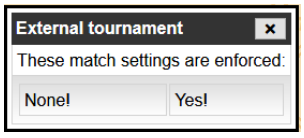
Once you enter an external tournament room, certain restrictions may be set to ensure that all matches are played under the same conditions. These restrictions will remain in place for you until you log back in to the system, or refresh your browser window. Some typical examples are shown below.







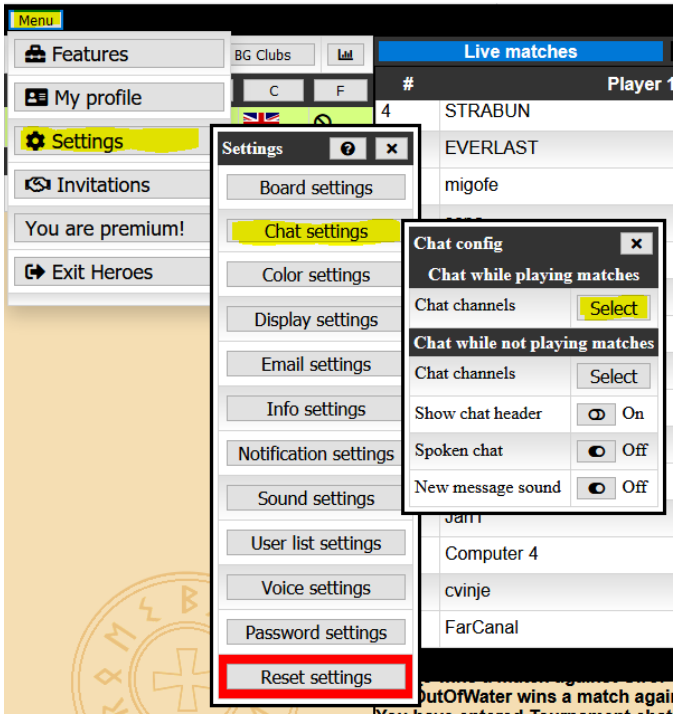
Other External tournament rooms do not enforce any restrictions and are just a convenient way of grouping several players into one list to make them easier to find, and to be able to use Tournament chat for the group, such as for club meetings.



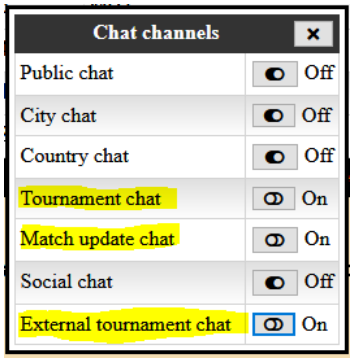
Currently, when you play a match and complete it, you are returned to the Main Room listing all players, rather than returned to the External Tournament room you were in. You may find it easier to manually return to the Tournament Room for clarity. However, you are still in the Room as far as match restrictions are concerned until you log back in to the system, and other players will still see you listed in the Tournament room.

External Tournament Chat

If you are currently in an External Tournament room, you may wish to configure your chat so you only see messages related to your tournament. Go to the main Menu and navigate to chat settings as shown:

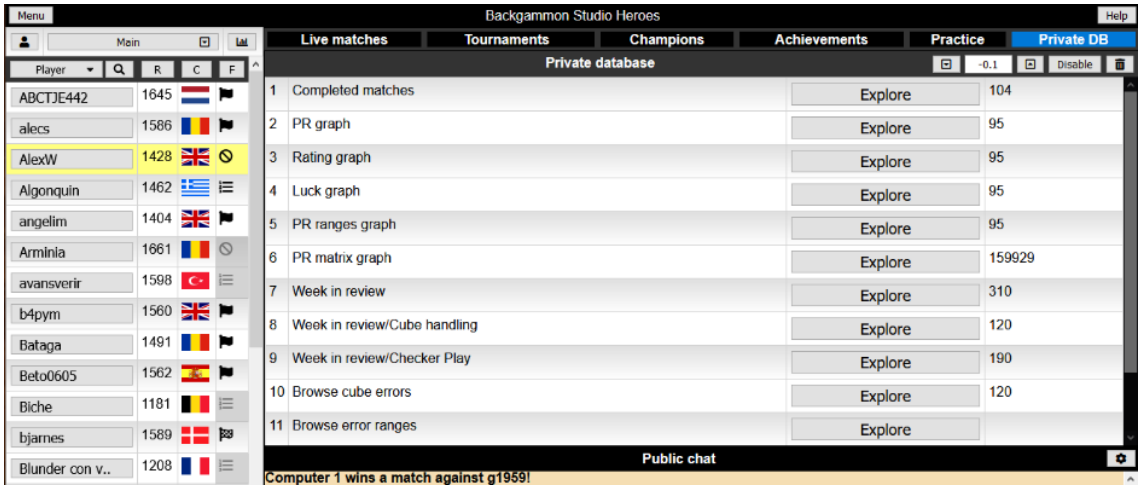


Choose which chat channels you wish to be active.

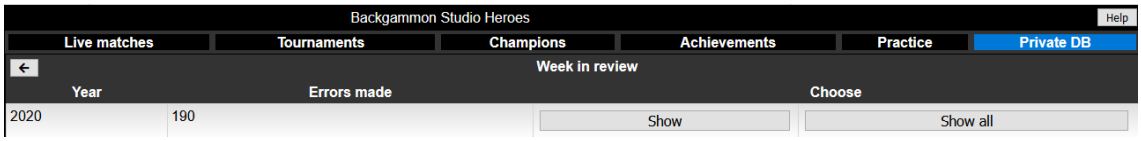


Private DB

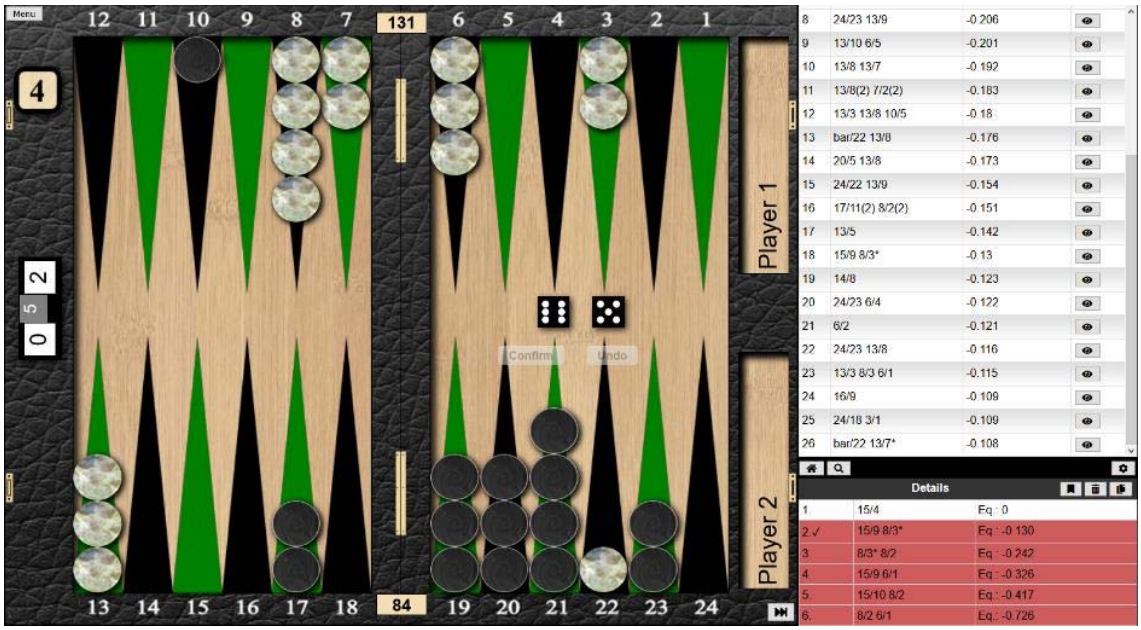
The Private DB tab gives access to a private database of your performance and match history. You need to enable this feature initially.



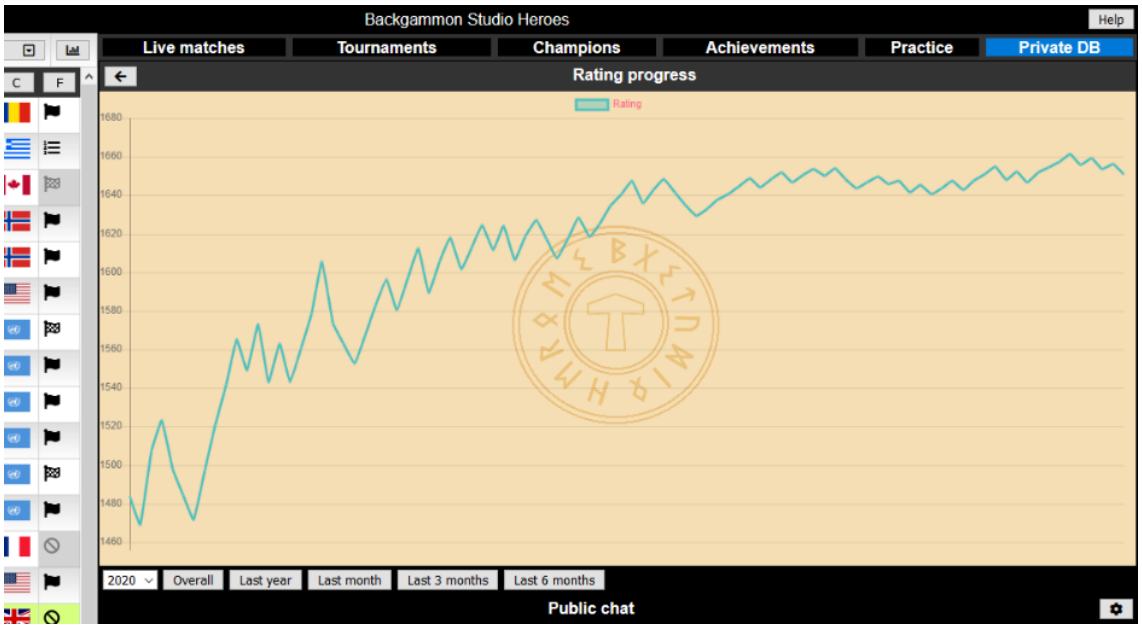
Exploring these sections allows you to review your performance. For example, clicking the Week in review/Checker play button gives:



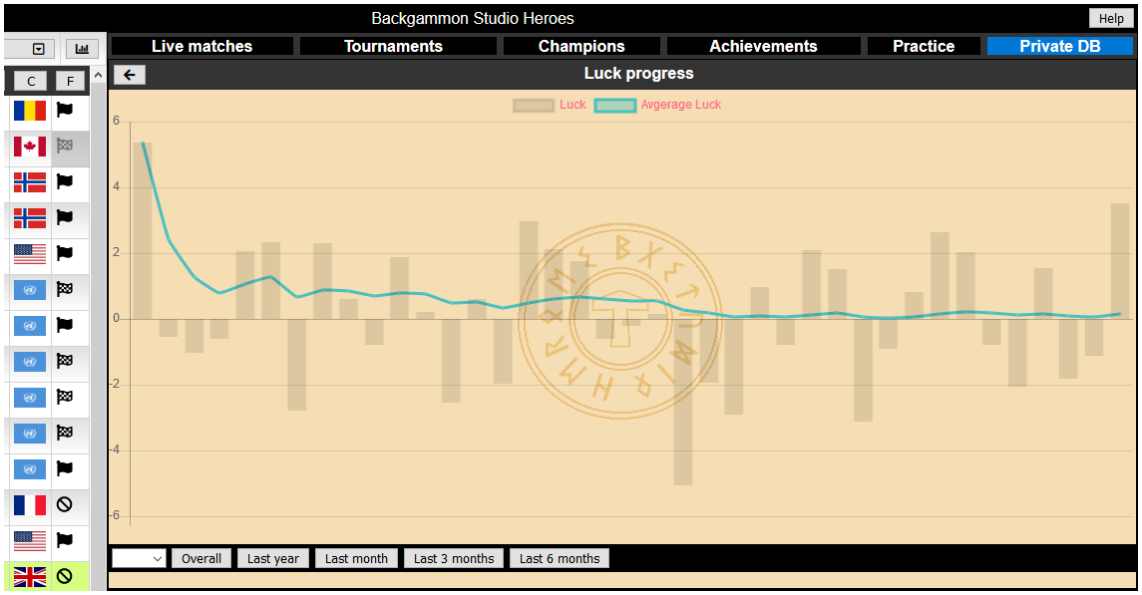
Click the Show button to open a list of your blunders. Browse the list in the right hand column to review your blunders and errors as shown. If you click the eye icon next to the blunder, it opens up the entire match for you to review. You will see what you played originally ('o') against what you just played (checkmark):



Other sections provide an overview of trends, such as your progression with Rating:

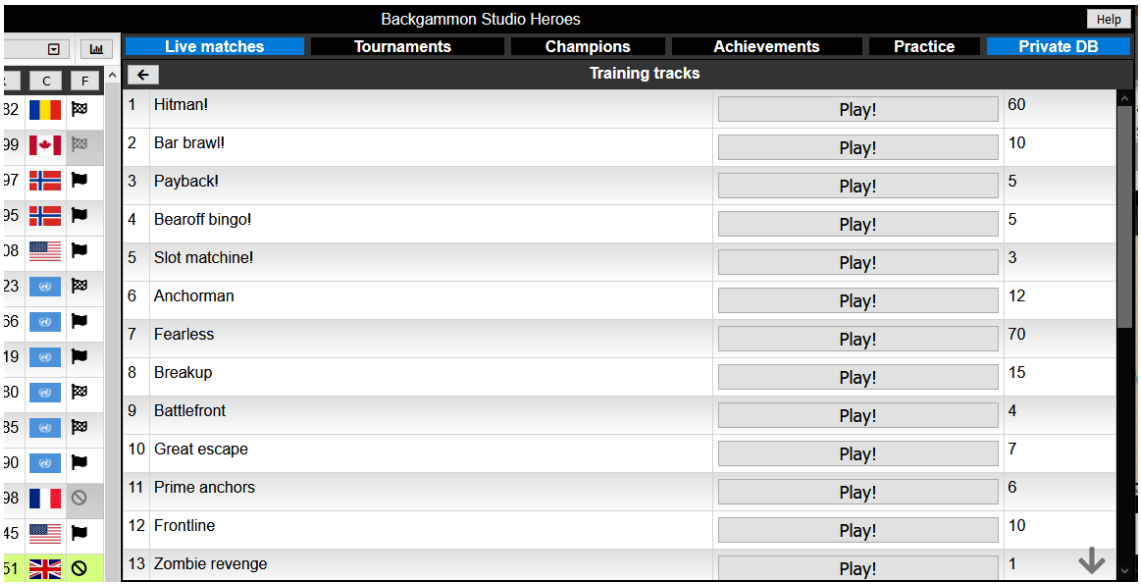


… or luck

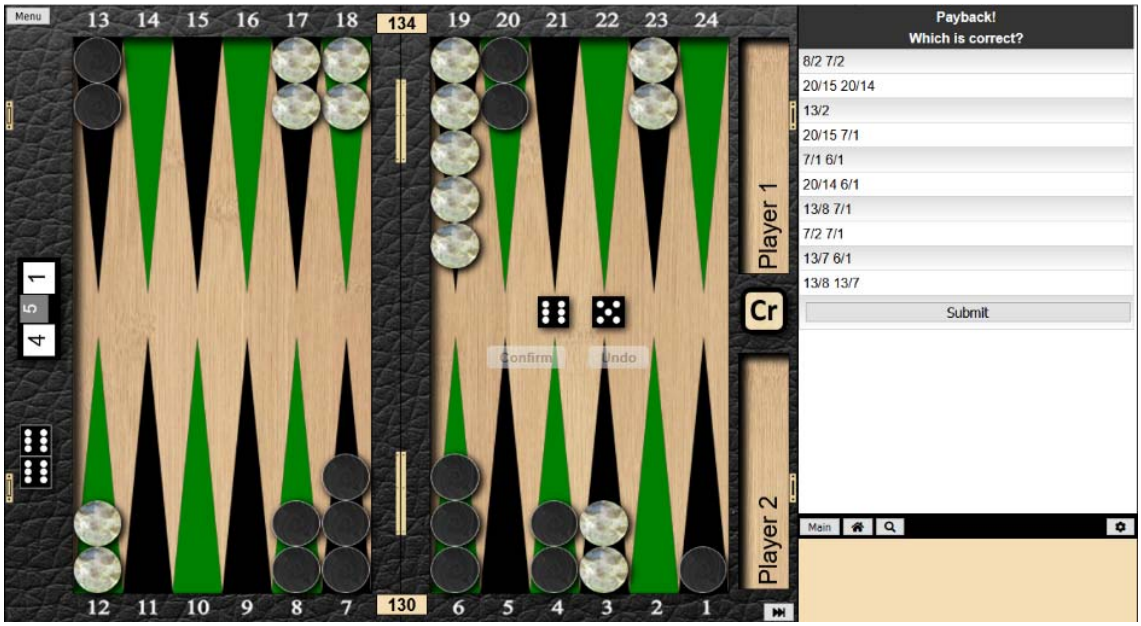


Reviewing and analysing your performance helps you to identify areas of your game that you should concentrate on improving.

There are also resources here to allow you to practice for particular situations. Clicking on the Training tracks section shows this choice:

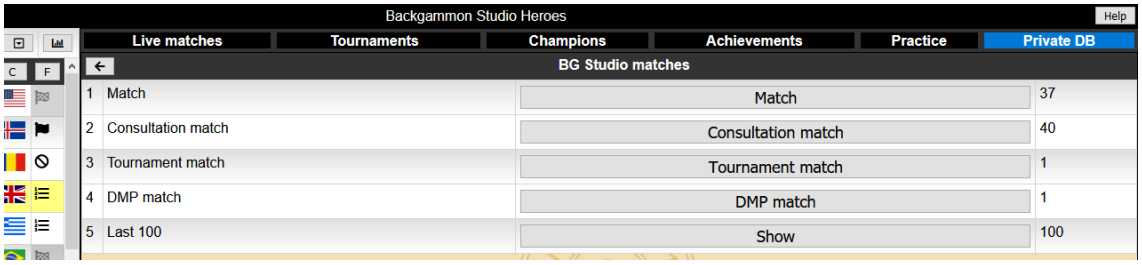


This gives access to a collection of quiz-type backgammon scenarios for you to pit your experience against.

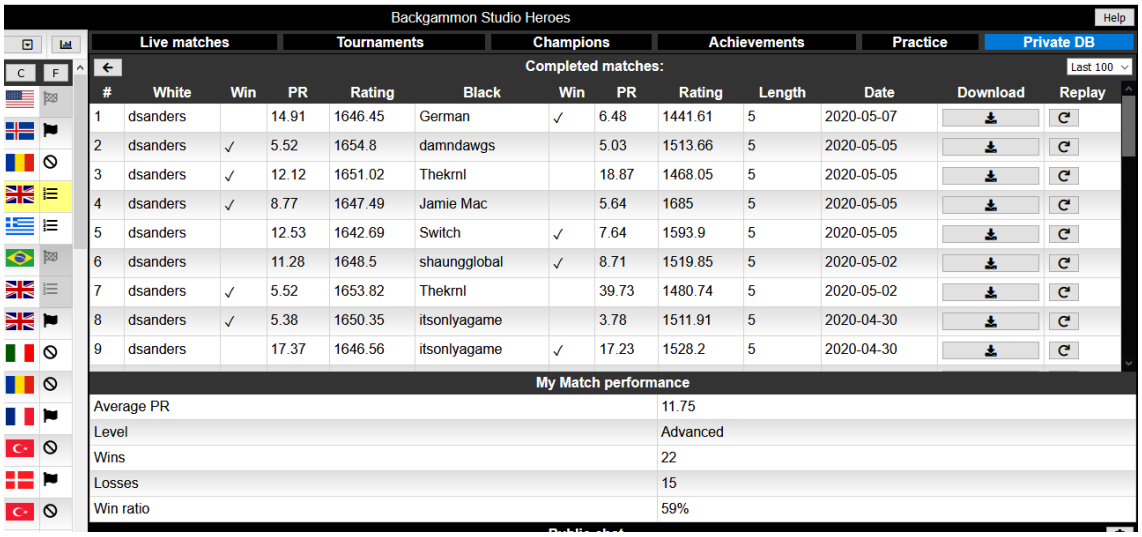


Reviewing or download completed matches

Going to the Completed matches section of the Private DB allows you to review, replay or download transcripts of your recent matches. The records are sorted by match type.



Click on the match type you wish to review and a list of your recent matches is displayed showing who won, PRs etc. The buttons in the right-hand columns allow you to review or replay the match, or to download the match transcript for further review in external programs like XG.



Appendix

Match types described

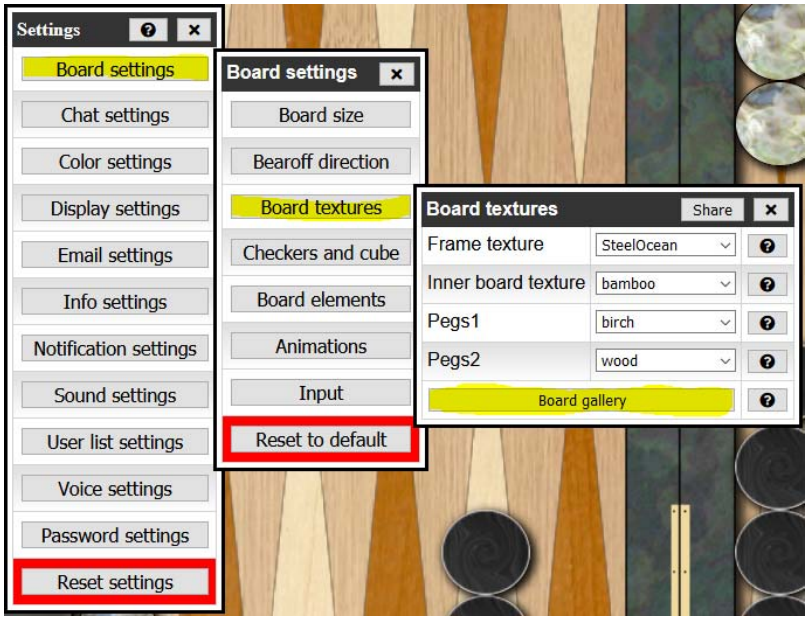
Match types	
Match	A normal online match without the running PR or error highlighting.
Consultation match	Here you will see a running PR value and errors are highlighted with different colors.
PR Match	A special kind of online match where the player that plays on the lowest PR wins.
Blundergammon	A special type of match where first blunder loses!
Unlimited games	A match with unlimited number of games.
Unlimited consultation	As unlimited games and also with error highlighting and running PR.
DMP Match	A one point match.
Speedgammon	A fast online match with match clocks. Each player get 120 seconds in the bank and 6 seconds add for each more.
Blitzgammon	A very fast online match with match clocks. Each player get 12 seconds in the bank and 4 seconds add for each more.
DC Match	Two player teams play againts each other.
Unrated match	A normal online match without the running PR or error highlighting and no rating adjustment.
Tournament Match	This is also without running PR and error higlighting and also without pip count.
Nackgammon	The opening position is different with 4 checkers on the last two pegs.
Hypergammon	A special type of match starting with only 3 checkers for each player.
Hitgammon	A special type of match where first hit wins!
Nohitgammon	A special type of match where first hit loses!
Paskogammon	A special type of match with a backgame starting position for one of the players. More

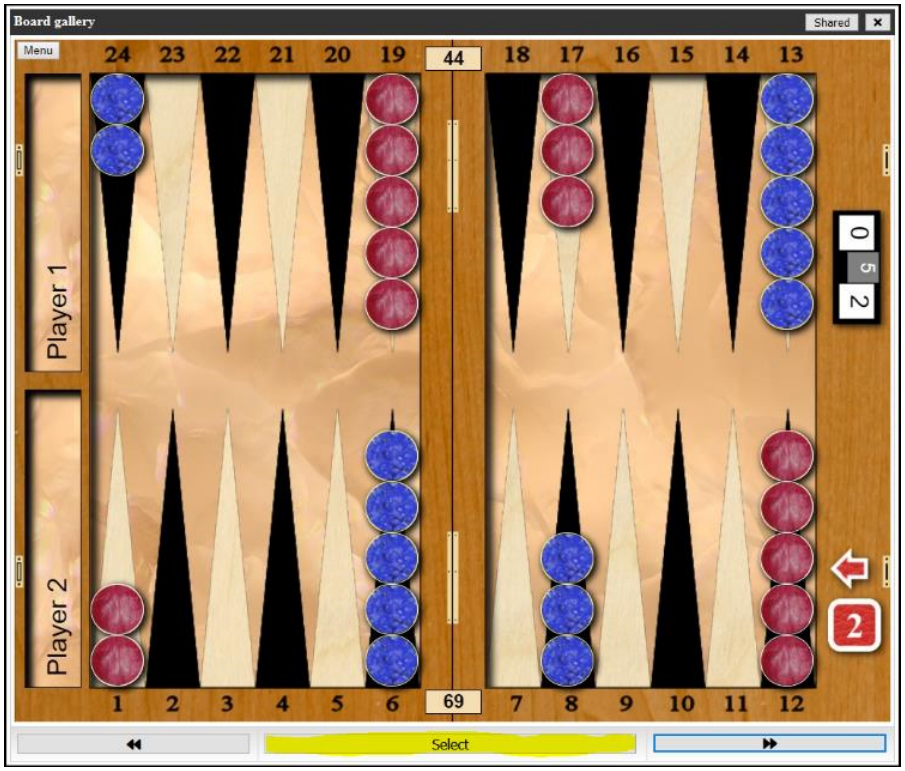
Clock types described

Info config			
Clock	**Bank**	**Add**	**Special property**
Standard	120	10	
Tournament	120	12	No computer feedback.
ABT	120	12	
Wbif	60	8	
Live1	60	12	No pipcount
Live2	120	8	No pipcount
Live3	60	10	Observers can't see computer feedback
Live4	90	10	No pipcount
Speed	24	7	
Speed2	24	7	Observers can't see computer feedback
Blitz	12	4	
Combinations of matchtypes and clocktypes can also have different effects:			
Tournament match+	Tournament clock =		No pipcount

Board Settings Gallery

There is a gallery of board designed and settings that are shared from other users of the site to help you get a look and feel that you prefer. Use





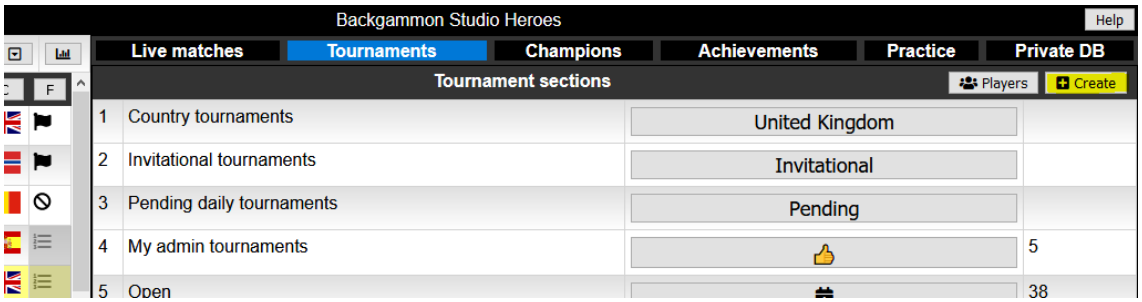
Use the arrows buttons to scroll though the shared designs, and the Select button to apply it. Once you have selected a board design, you can tweak it to your satisfaction as required from the Board settings menu.

Administration tasks

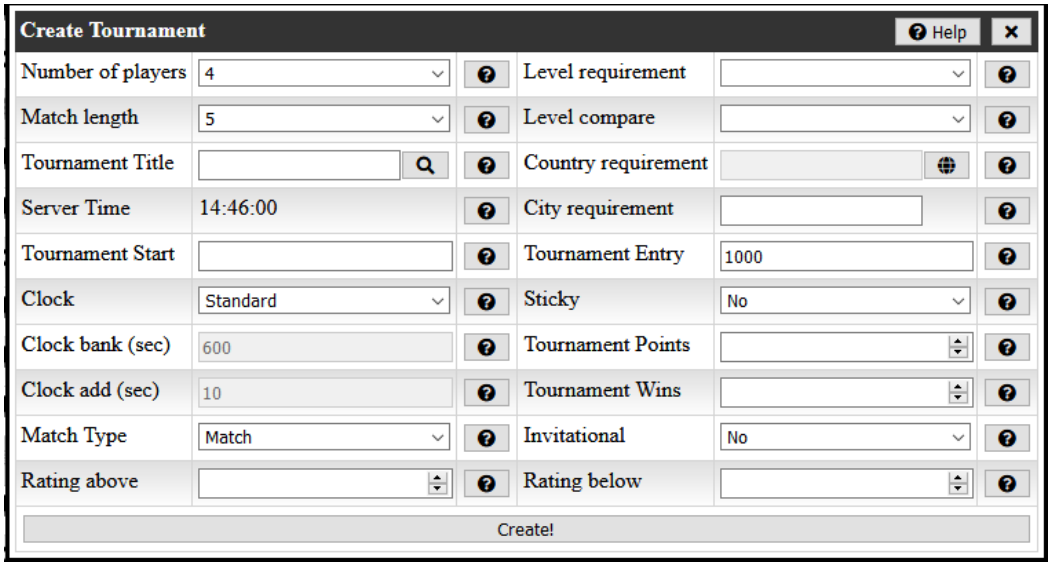
You need to be set up as the appropriate type of administrator to be able to perform these tasks. Contact the system owner if you need these rights adding to your account.

Creating a Tournament

From the Tournaments tab click on the +Create button:



The following dialog opens for you to enter the tournament details:



Note that you do not need to put values in all of these fields – only the ones that you wish to use. For example, if the Tournament Start (time) field is filled in, it will automatically launch the tournament at the given time. If left blank the tournament must be launched manually by the administrator.

The help buttons give further information about many of these configuration fields.

The key fields to complete are

- Number of players
- Match length
- Tournament Title (text description)
- Tournament Start – the time to automatically start the knockout. If left blank you must start it manually. You can only schedule an automatic start on the same day, and should enter it in the server timezone (see Server Time above which gives the current server time)
- Clock – choose from list of selections
- Match type – choose from list of selections, such as tournament match, consultation match etc.

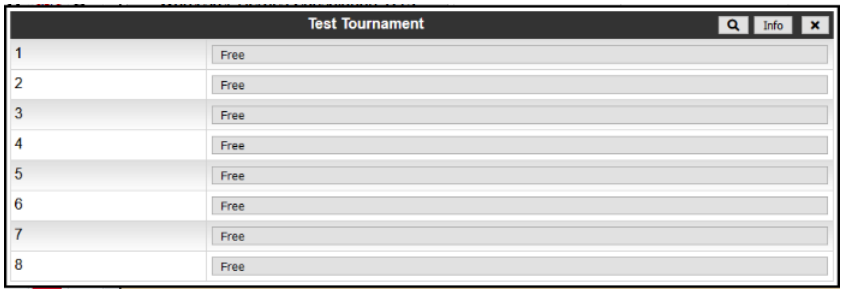
- Invitational – if set to No, it is an Open tournament and players will need to find and register for the tournament themselves. If set to Yes, the tournament administrator is responsible for adding players to the tournament

- Other fields are largely used to optionally limit the type of players that can register for an open tournament, such as players from a particular country or city, players above or below a particular PR etc. Leaving these fields empty means that there is no such restriction.
- Tournament Entry is set to 1000 by default and refers to the in-built system coins. Reduce to 0 if you do not wish to use coins

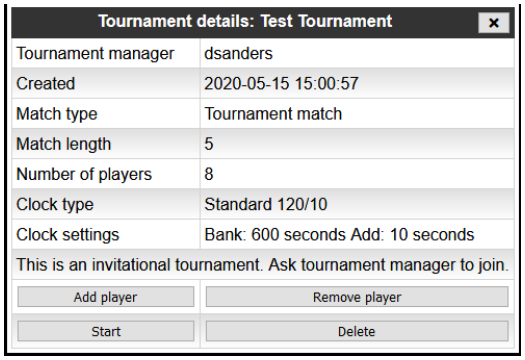
When you have completed the configuration to your satisfaction, click the Create! Button to create the tournament.

The tournament will then be accessible to you under the My admin tournaments section on the Tournaments tab.

For Invitational tournaments, open the tournament from this list:



Click the Info button in the dialog header.

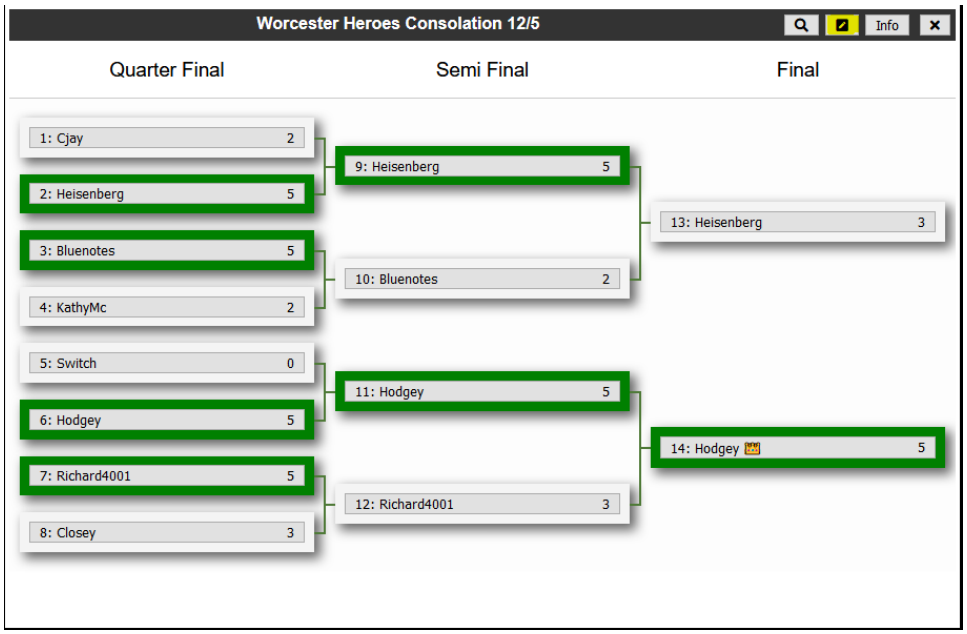


You can use the Add and Remove player buttons to fill up the free slots in the tournament. If you have not set a time to start automatically, you can manually start the tournament after you have added the players from the Start button here. The Delete button will delete the entire tournament event.

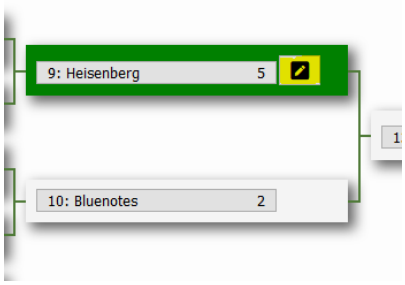
Manually Updating a Tournament

Scores for fixtures are automatically updated in the bracket as matches are completed, but there may be situations, for example when a player in the draw loses connectivity for a long time or fails to turn up, when you need to manually enter the scores to allow the tournament to progress.

As tournament admin, when you view the bracket you have an extra button in the dialog header to allow you to edit scores:



Clicking the highlighted button will add the extra controls to edit match results:



Note: Once you click the edit button, you must enter the scores or you will set both scores to 0 by cancelling out.