

The early 2-back pioneer by Chris Dent

- **What is it?**
 - Placing a pioneer at 2-back after 5. When approaching 6, there will therefore be pioneers waiting at 1-back and 2-back.
- **Why do it?**
 - To gain a more accurate 2-back pioneer (important for lift leaves.)
 - Playing a traditional break with pioneers at the next and next-but-one hoops, it's common to end up with a bad 2-back pioneer.
- **Why not do it?**
 - Having a pivot can be handy if the hoop 6 pioneer is poor.
 - Failure to gain a good northward rush after placing the early pioneer results in a nasty $\frac{3}{4}$ or full roll.
- **How to do it (if everything goes right)**
 - Suppose you are playing Red and wish to place partner (Yellow) as the early pioneer. You want to make 6 off blUe and 1-back off black.
 - Make 4 off U with K as pivot. After 4, place U SW or W of 6 going to K.
 - Send K 'somewhere' W of 5 going to Y. After 5, split Y to 2-back getting a northward rush on K.
 - Place K as the 1-back pioneer going to U.
- **Why was U placed W of 6?**
 - It makes the northward rush and split shot after putting the early pioneer in place much shorter and easier.
 - If it's E of the hoop and you play a bad rush then it might not be possible to place a pioneer near 1-back at all!
- **What did you mean by 'somewhere' W of 5?**
 - The safest place is about a yard or so NW of 5. It's then unnecessary to get a rush out of 5.
 - For a tighter 2-back pioneer push K nearer to 2-back and rush SE of it after 5. Doing this there's more danger of not getting a northward rush on K, and the split shot which would result from not getting the northward rush is that bit nastier.
- **How to gain the desired polarity for the break**
 - If Y is at 5, 4 is made off K and U is the pivot, split K 'W' of 5 gaining a rush on U to S of 5. Split U to 6 going to Y.
 - If making 4 off Y, place it as the escape ball from 5 (i.e. just NW of 5) getting a rush on the pivot to S of 5 etc.
- **Do what the balls tell you!**
 - Don't endanger the break for the sake of placing an early pioneer.
 - If the hoop 6 pioneer is bad, then having a conventional pivot after 5 might be helpful (see caveat above about positioning the hoop 6 pioneer.)
 - If you had been intending to play a 'traditional' break but the pivot is displaced southward after 5, then it might be convenient to place an early pioneer (alternatively you might wish to swap the pivot.)
- **Other lines of play**
 - Another way of placing an accurate 2-back pioneer is to position the pivot SW of the peg going to 6. It should be possible to rush towards it after 6.
 - With an early pioneer in place, it's possible to change the polarity after 6 by rushing the escape ball from 6 just SE of 2-back.