

BRITISH

GO

JOURNAL



Number 174

Winter 2015 - 2016

Price £6.00



North London A Team (London International Teams)



Tournament Game (South London)

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EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the 174th British Go Journal.

In This Issue

As we went to press, the news of a computer program that could beat a professional at Go was announced, and Jon Diamond and Toby Manning have put together a set of articles about it which I have slotted into this special bumper edition at the last minute – exciting times!

We seem to have gone from relative poverty (of material) to an embarrassment of riches here at the BGJ, with far more articles to put in for this edition than there is room for! So apologies if you don't see your contribution this time around – it will be in the next issue.

Apologies are also due to Francis Roads whose Song for Europe should have appeared in the last issue but which was omitted due to an oversight.

I think you'll agree there is a pretty good variety this time around, with copy for DDKs from yours truly (again!), some for beginners, a view from a Go Widow and some yose problems from Toby.

The Game Review is from the 2014 British Championship; it is by a professional (Wang Hongjun 7p), so I think you'll find it interesting.

As we went to press, the sad news was released about the loss of Bill Streeten; there will be a proper tribute to him in the next issue.

Finally a big thank you to all who have sent or promised articles for the journal – keep them coming – the BGJ only exists because of you.

Bob Scantlebury

Credits

My thanks to the many people who have helped to produce this Journal:

Contributions: Tony Atkins, Paul Barnard, Jon Diamond, Richard Hunter, Roger Huyshe, Liu Yajie, Toby Manning, Ian Marsh, Irene McKendry, Francis Roads, Bob Scantlebury, Wang Hongjun, and David Wildgoose

Photographs: *Front cover*, courtesy of Google DeepMind (Fan Hui is on the right). All other photographs in this edition were provided by the article authors or sourced from the BGA website apart from second Brit Champ (Matt Marsh) and South London Teaching (South London).

Proofreading: Tony Atkins, Barry Chandler, Martin Harvey, Richard Hunter, Neil Moffatt, Chris Oliver, Pat Ridley, Edmund Stephen-Smith and Nick Wedd.

INTRODUCTION

Jon Diamond

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This special insert into the British Go Journal celebrates quite an achievement – the first win by a computer program (AlphaGo produced by the company Google DeepMind) in a match against a Go professional, the current European Champion Fan Hui.

Although the British Go Association wasn't officially involved in this event, our Treasurer, Toby Manning, was appointed as the independent Referee for this match. His report with the games and comments by various of the team involved and Fan Hui, in addition to Korean professional Hajin Lee subsequently, is the main feature of this issue. [These games are also published in SGF format on our website - see

<http://www.britgo.org/deepmind2016.>]

To round out this issue we've put together some background to the history of Go-playing programs.

For those technically minded, there's a peer-reviewed article in the scientific publication Nature, written by Google DeepMind, about the software. The article states that AlphaGo uses Convoluted Neural Networks to suggest moves and Monte Carlo Tree Search playouts to decide on the actual move to make. DeepMind has used millions of games from KGS (and possibly elsewhere), adjusting the game weightings according to the grades of the players, to train the CNN, with little Go knowledge specifically embedded in the program.

THE HISTORY OF GO-PLAYING PROGRAMS

Jon Diamond

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This article has been synthesised from a number of online sources (referenced at the end), with some additions, mostly from my files. It is published online¹, where you can see the earliest program's game.

Go has long been considered a difficult challenge in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and is considerably more difficult to solve than chess. Mathematician I. J. Good wrote in 1965:

Go on a computer? In order to programme a computer to play a reasonable game of

Go, rather than merely a legal game, it is necessary to formalise the principles of good strategy, or to design a learning programme. The principles are more qualitative and mysterious than in chess, and depend more on judgment. So I think it will be even more difficult to programme a computer to play a reasonable game of Go than of chess².

The first Go program was probably written by Albert Zobrist in 1968 as part of his thesis on pattern recognition. It introduced an Influence function to estimate territory and

¹<http://www.britgo.org/computergo/history>

²<http://www.chilton-computing.org.uk/acl/literature/reports/p019.htm>

Zobrist hashing to detect ko. It could just beat a beginner. [There are references to Go playing programs by H Remus (partially complete only in 1962) and D Lefkovitz in 1960 but no more information about them is known.]

Jon Ryder produced a program in 1971, which lost to a novice, so was probably no stronger.

The first computer-computer match was between the programs written by Jon Diamond (Institute of Computer Science, London University) and Jack Davies (University of Cambridge) in 1973 - the game was unfinished and no record of it has been found. Jon's program was probably the first to use the alpha-beta search algorithm and also beat a beginner. In strength it was about 20-25 kyu.

In 1978, Walter Reitman and Bruce Wilcox reported on their Interim.2 program, having started on it in 1972. It beat a 22 kyu player and used lookahead which was not full-board, rather it was a selective, goal-driven process.

Jonathan K Millen published an article in Byte in April 1981 discussing **Wally**, a Go program with a 15x15 board that would fit within the KIM-1 microcomputer's 1K RAM. Bruce F Webster published an article in the magazine in November 1984 discussing a Go program he had written for the Apple Macintosh and included the MacFORTH source.

The first computer tournament that we know of, the *Acornsoft Computer Go Tournament*³, was held in London in 1984 with the British Go Association as organiser. It was sponsored by Acornsoft, and the programs all

used their popular **BBC Micro** microcomputers on 13x13 boards. The name of the winning program is not recorded; its programmer was Bronyslaw Przybyla.

Later that year, the Unix user group Usenix sponsored the first of a series of Computer Go tournaments. You can read about these and many more on the *Computer Go - Past Events*⁴ page. This 1984 event was won by Bruce Wilcox's **Nemesis**, which later evolved into the commercial product **Ego**.

The first time a computer competed in a human Go tournament was in the 1980s, **Nemesis** at the Massachusetts Go Club.

In 1987 the Ing Foundation of Taiwan sponsored the first of a series of annual Computer Go tournaments. They provided generous sponsorship, with the winner of each annual tournament competing, using handicap stones, against inseis (trainee professional players, with strengths around amateur 6-dan) for further prizes. The fewer the handicap stones needed by the program, the bigger the prize it could win, on a progressive scale with a maximum of 40,000,000 Taiwanese dollars (worth over US \$1,000,000) for a program able to win against the inseis with no handicap. This "million-dollar prize" was never won, the sponsorship from the Ing Foundation ended after the 2001 tournament, and only the prizes for handicaps of 11 stones and more were ever claimed.

GNU Go was published in 1989 as the first open source program.

Very strong players were still able to beat programs in 1998, while giving

³<http://www.computer-go.info/events/acorn/1984/index.html>

⁴<http://www.computer-go.info/events/index.html>

handicaps of 25-30 stones. There was also a case in the 1994 World Computer Go Championship where the winning program, **Go Intellect**, lost all 3 games against the youth players while receiving a 15-stone handicap. In general, players who understood and exploited a program's weaknesses could win even when giving much larger handicaps than typical players.

The Computer Go Olympiad, organised by the International Computer Games Association, was started in 1989 for 9x9 and in 2000 for 19x19, with the initial tournaments both being held in London and won by **Dragon Go** (9x9) and **Goemate** (19x19).

In 2003, **Go++** beat a 5-kyu amateur in a 9-stone-handicap 19x19 game.

WinHonte in 2005 appears to be the first program using neural networks.

In 2006, advances in the strength of Go programs were still being made, though the rate of advance had slowed. Processor speeds were continuing to double every two years in accordance with Moore's Law, but this did not help, as the algorithms used by the best programs did not scale well, if at all. However, in this year Kocsis and Szepesvari published their seminal paper Bandit based 'Monte-Carlo Planning'. This describes a Monte-Carlo based algorithm that was effective for computer Go (in fact a French team was working on a closely-related algorithm at the same time). This not only led to a rapid advance in the strength of Go programs over the next few years, it allowed them to use a method that did scale well, so now Moore's Law was working with the programmers again.

MoGo, developed by the French team mentioned above, beat an 8-dan professional in a 9-stone-handicap 19x19 game in 2008. It was running on an 800-node supercomputer. He estimated the playing strength of Mogo as being in the range of 2-3 amateur dan. In the same year the program **Crazy Stone** running on an 8-core personal computer won against a 4-dan professional, receiving a handicap of eight stones.

In 2009 **Zen** playing on the KGS Go server achieved a rating of 3-dan, playing 19x19 games against human opponents. [The KGS rating scale is slightly weaker than the European rating scale, close to the American scale, and rather stronger than the Japanese scale.] **MoGo** and **Many Faces of Go** beat professionals taking a 7 stone handicap.

Through 2010 and 2011 programs showed steady improvement with **Zen** beating a professional with 6 stones. In July 2010 **MoGoTW** won an even 9x9 game as white against a top professional. However, at the end of 2010 John Tromp, approximately 1 dan, beat **Zen** in a \$1000 challenge in a best of 5 match; he lost a rematch in early 2012 comprehensively.

In March 2012 **Zen** beat top professional Takemiya Masaki 9p at 5 stones by eleven points, followed by a stunning twenty point win at a 4 stone handicap. Takemiya remarked "I had no idea that computer go had come this far." It also reached the rank of 6 dan on the KGS Go Server playing games of 15 seconds per move. However, it's not clear how seriously professionals have been taking these exhibition matches.

At the 27th Annual Conference of the Japanese Society for Artificial Intelligence in June 2013, **Zen** defeated

another top professional with a 3 stone handicap with a time setting of 60 minutes plus 30 seconds byoyomi. In March **Crazy Stone** beat Yoshio Ishida with four handicap stones.

In 2014, for the *codecentric go challenge*, a best of five match was played between **Crazy Stone** and eleven times German Go champion Franz-Jozef Dickhut, 6 dan amateur, without a handicap. Dickhut won as was expected by most observers and the contender himself before the match. However **Crazy Stone** won the first game by 1.5 points, which was a resounding mark that the top programs have reached top amateur level.

This was reprised in October 2015, this time with **Zen** playing and Dickhut won again 3-1 with **Zen** winning the first game, again by 1.5 points.

Zen has been champion of the Computer Olympiad from 2011 to 2015 in all board sizes, but it should be noted that **Crazy Stone** did not take part.

In November 2015 there were published articles indicating that Facebook as well as Google were developing Go-playing programs, with Facebook's available for play on KGS.

See the Computer Go pages on Wikipedia ⁵, *Sensei's Library* ⁶, *Jay Burmeister and Janet Wiles Technical report* ⁷ (good for historic stuff up to about 1996) and *computer-go.info* ⁸ for more details, the references and discussion of the problems and techniques involved in programming Go.

ALPHAGO

Toby Manning

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It was while I was travelling to the Isle of Man Go Tournament that I received a strange telephone call from Jon Diamond "Are you free for the week of October 5-9?" I responded Yes, and my request for more details was met with "I can't tell you".

I was then contacted by Google DeepMind, who asked me to sign a Non-disclosure Agreement; it was only after signing it that they would tell me what it was all about.

DeepMind, a British Artificial Intelligence Company acquired by Google in 2014, had been developing

an AI computer program to play Go. They reckoned that their program **AlphaGo** could beat any other software that was publicly available, and they wanted to test it against a professional Go player.

They were arranging a match against Fan Hui from Bordeaux, who is one of the strongest players living in Europe; he won the European Championship for the third successive time at Liberec this year. They wanted someone from the British Go Association to see "fair play" and Jon Diamond had "volunteered" me!

⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_Go

⁶<http://senseis.xmp.net/?ComputerGo>

⁷<http://staff.itee.uq.edu.au/janetw/Computer%20Go/CS-TR-339.html>

⁸<http://www.computer-go.info>

They wanted me to remain independent, so instead of payment they agreed to sponsor the London Open in 2016. This resulted in an arrangement that satisfied all parties.

I had a chance to play AlphaGo as part of the preliminary discussions – I lost by about 17 points. It was clearly of dan-strength, but I was not convinced it was of professional strength (it seemed to make a couple of elementary errors, but I was not strong enough to take advantage of them). However, it may be that it knew it was ahead and was simply playing conservatively.

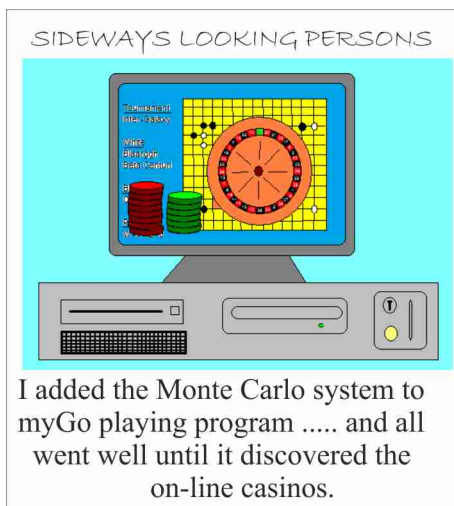
So in early October I went down to London to act as referee. In order to make the playing conditions as natural as possible – we all know that playing on a computer is not the same as playing on a board – the game was played on a normal Goban. Aja Huang (5 dan) who works for DeepMind placed the computer's moves on the board, and then communicated Fan Hui's moves

to the computer. A representative of DeepMind pressed the clock.

There were two separate matches, each of five games. During the mornings the time limits were 1 hour, with 3 periods of 30 seconds byoyomi; the afternoon games were played completely in byoyomi (also 3 periods, 30 seconds).

The commentary below deals with the five games played in the morning, which are the ones included in the scientific publication **Nature**: Silver D. et al. Mastering the game of Go with deep neural networks and tree search. Volume 529, issue 7587, pp 484-489: <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v529/n7587/full/nature16961.html>.

Comments are by me, following a discussion with Fan Hui and Aja Huang, supplemented by some subsequent ones from Hajin Lee (a Korean professional). Unfortunately, since I didn't record all the details at the time there might be some errors though...



Game 1: 5 October 2015
 Black: Fan Hui
 White: AlphaGo
 Result: White wins by 1.5 points

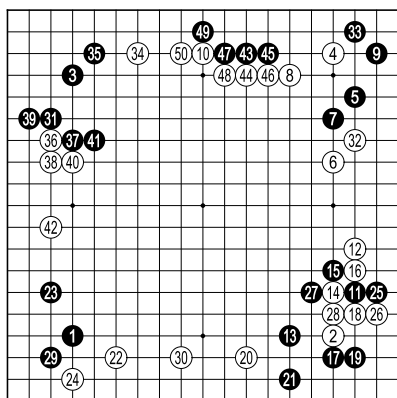


Diagram 1 (1-50)

However, Fan then relaxed a bit, and when White played the sequence (28)-(34) to get the large yose in that corner in sente; the game was close.

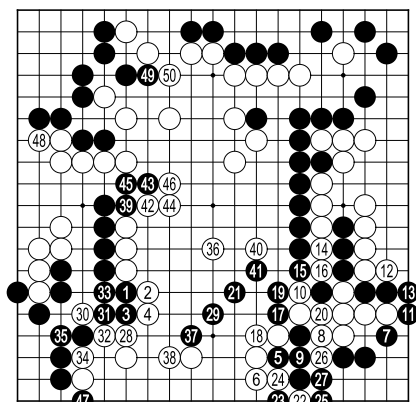


Diagram 3 (101-150)

The first game is shown here. It was a very quiet game, with very little fighting; I think Fan was trying to get the measure of AlphaGo. The crucial part came when Fan invaded at 43 and AlphaGo let him connect out; this seemed to result in White getting a wall that was not doing much. Indeed, this seemed to represent AlphaGo's style: it is not very aggressive as long as it's not behind.

A tight yose resulted in AlphaGo winning by 1.5 points.

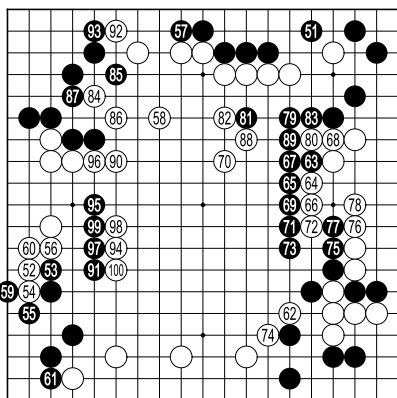


Diagram 2 (51-100)

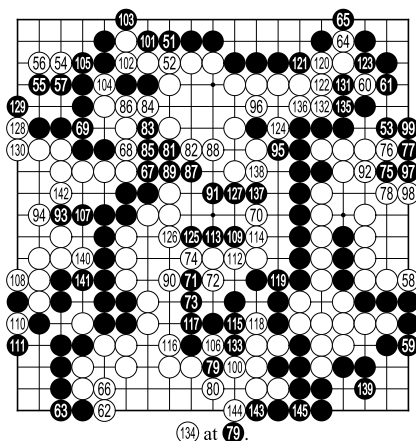


Diagram 4 (151-245), White fills ko

Fan Hui used all his time and went into the third period of byoyomi; Alpha Go used about 45 minutes.

Game 2: 6 October 2015

Black: AlphaGo

White: Fan Hui

Result: Black wins by Resignation

On the second day AlphaGo took Black, and played the onadare ④-⑫. It used to be considered joseki, but according to Michael Redmond is now thought to favour White (i.e. Fan Hui). I was told that AlphaGo did NOT have a joseki dictionary: it was working it out from first principles (although it has used a lot of professional games for training purposes).

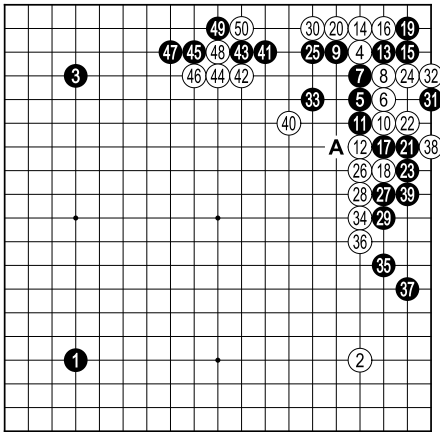


Figure 1, Moves 1-50

⑩ was, according to Ishida, invented by Go Seigen and was a "revolutionary move". ⑳ was considered an overplay (the old joseki is at A in Figure 1, according to Ishida, but the analysis is complex and beyond this article), however it's now the new joseki played by many professionals.

④ was a mistake, but Fan failed to take advantage of this: ⑥, instead of being a push along the top, should

have been the push and cut shown in Diagram 1, where White captures the 6 black stones and has enormous thickness. If Black captures ③ by playing at A, White plays at ④ then at B and gets a good result, the ladder being good for him.

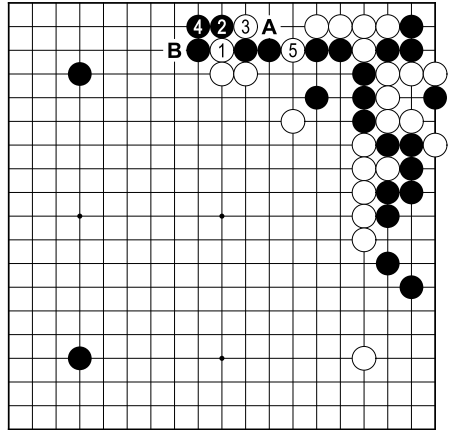


Diagram 1

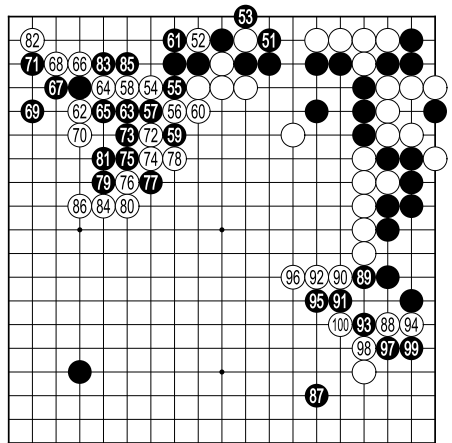


Figure 2, Moves 51-100

Fan then compounded this mistake by playing tsuke with ⑥2. If he had played at ⑥5 the game may have been easy. But with ⑦0 (over which Fan took a long time) he had a choice: to

live in the corner and give Black a lot of thickness which would nullify his own strength in the centre, or to sacrifice the corner and increase his dominance in the centre.

Ⓒ2 should have been at Ⓒ4 immediately to seal off the side in sente. In fact analysis afterwards showed that he could live in the corner with ko, but the analysis is complicated.

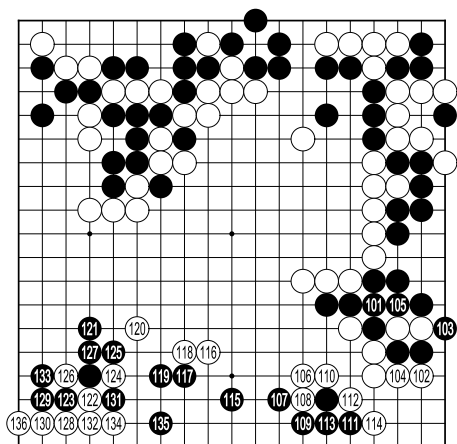


Figure 3, Moves 101-136

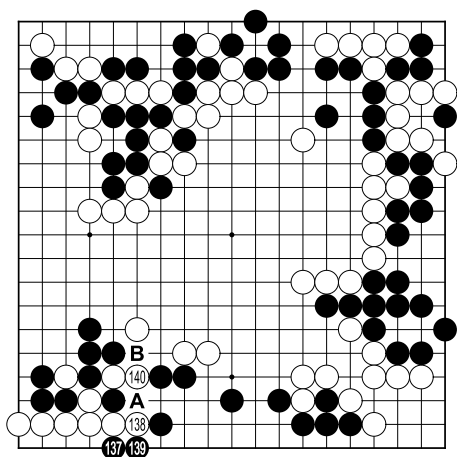
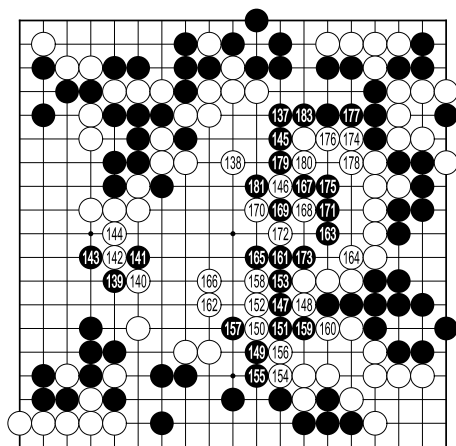


Diagram 2

After Ⓒ136 the White group is alive (see Diagram 2). If Black tries to kill with Ⓒ137, the sequence to Ⓒ140 results, after which A and B are miai.



Ⓒ182 at Ⓒ169.

Figure 4, Moves 137-182

The game proceeded and with Ⓒ147 Black attempted to prevent White making a large territory in the centre. Black did this successfully and when it created the seki in the middle White had no hope and resigned.

So after two days the score was 2-0 in AlphaGo's favour.

In discussion, Fan thought he would do better if the time limits were longer. In particular, AlphaGo was playing relatively quickly which further reduced the time available to Fan for thinking.

Game 3: 7 October 2015

Black: Fan Hui

White: AlphaGo

Result: White wins by Resignation

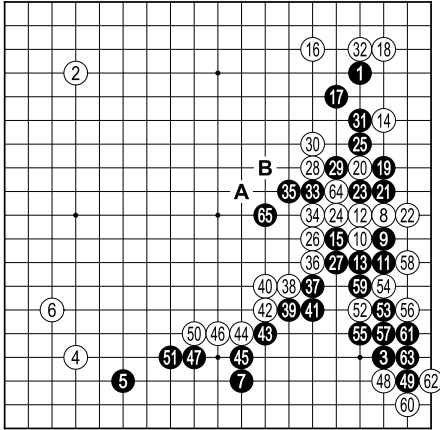


Figure 1, Moves 1-65

Fan took Black in this game, and a complex position rapidly developed on the right hand side (professionals often play immediately at 20 rather than at 18 to solidify the White group).

The conclusion was that this position was bad for AlphaGo, which gave away a very large corner without gaining sufficient compensation. It could only win the game if it could use its thickness to attack, and in particular capture the two stones 33 and 35 in the centre.

60 was particularly crass (and one of the few times where AlphaGo seemed to make a particularly bad move); White cannot live in the corner and the response at 61 is a significant gain for Black.

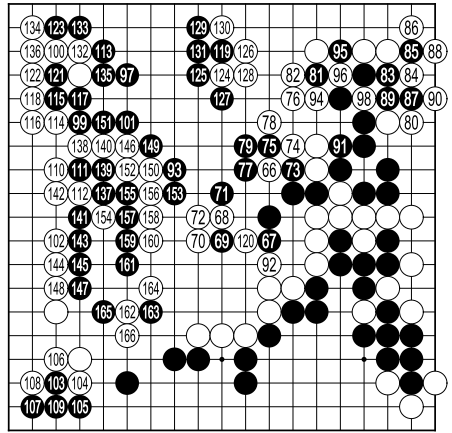


Figure 2, Moves 66-166

But then Fan made a catastrophic overplay when he played the kosumi (diagonal move) at 65, which AlphaGo duly punished. A one-point jump at A or kosumi at B should have sewn up the game for him.

Fan then compounded his mistake with 67 and by failing to make his group on the top right live unconditionally. Instead he allowed White to play atari at 94 and, although he salvaged a ko, the game was effectively over.

Fan was extremely upset with himself over these blunders, and had to go out for a walk to compose himself.

Game 4: 8 October 2015

Black: AlphaGo

White: Fan Hui

Result: Black wins by Resignation

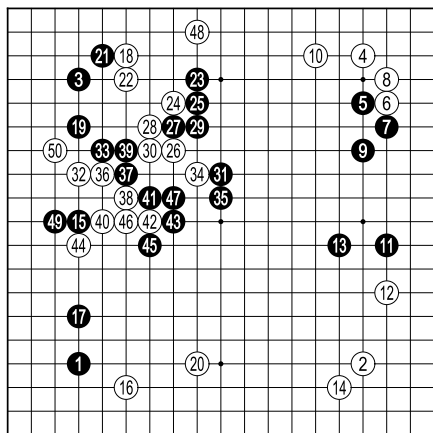


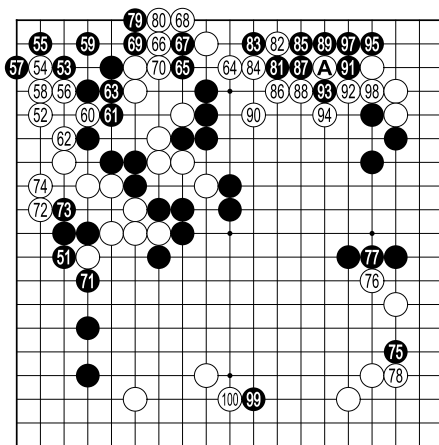
Figure 1, Moves 1-50

This morning Fan took White. The fuseki ①-⑬ had been played in one of the afternoon games, but Fan played ⑭ in the lower right corner to see what AlphaGo would do. It immediately made a san-ren-sei, but then tried to turn the moyo into territory; Fan afterwards suggested that ⑰ should be an attachment above ⑯ to further expand the moyo (and keep White to a low position on the bottom).

The attack with ⑳ and ㉓ may be good locally, but is meaningless in a global sense, because the resultant Black wall ㉔-㉑ is nullified by White's strength in the upper right hand corner. If Fan had simply run away by jumping to ㉗ then Black would have achieved nothing from his attack.

The invasion at ㉒ was an overplay, giving White two groups to look after. He made both of them live, but

Black ㉕ was painful, and both White groups are in poor shape. However, when AlphaGo played at ㉕ and threatened play ㉖ or one point to the left of ㉒, White should sacrifice his group (at least temporarily), playing at ㉔ instead.



⑨⑥ at A.

Figure 2, Moves 51-100

The capture of these stones is worth about 25 points, but a continuation at ⑨⑥ would be worth nearly as much: more importantly, saving the left hand group leaves a weakness behind at ㉕ which Black later exploited mercilessly.

When AlphaGo sought to exploit this weakness, Fan made a mistake: ⑦⑩ should be atari at ⑦⑨; for Black to start a ko is very dangerous, as White can win the ko in sente, threatening to cut one point below ③⑩ and kill the entire corner.

Subsequently then White could possibly play ⑨⑥ at ⑨⑦. This position seems to be yose ko (a ko that AlphaGo has to win twice). Fan could then get adequate compensation even if he lost the ko.

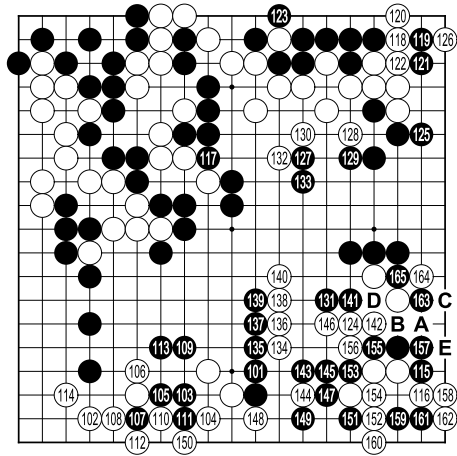
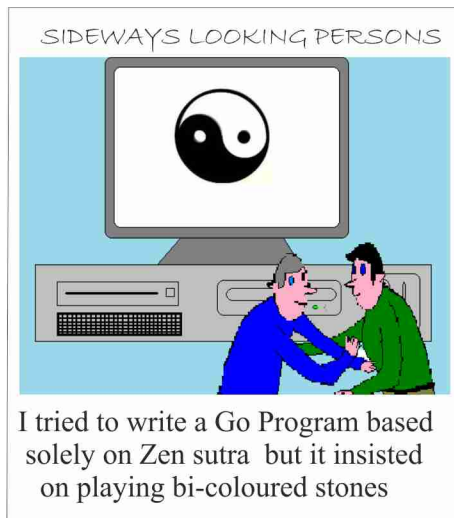


Figure 3, Moves 101-165

The game continued, but after 165 a ko in the lower right hand corner develops (White at **A**, Black at **B** etc.) Fan recognised that he could not win the ko: not only does he have fewer ko threats, but if Black wins the ko it is in sente as AlphaGo then threatens to kill the corner by playing on the 1-2 point.



Game 5: 9 October 2015
 Black: Fan Hui
 White: AlphaGo
 Result: White wins by Resignation

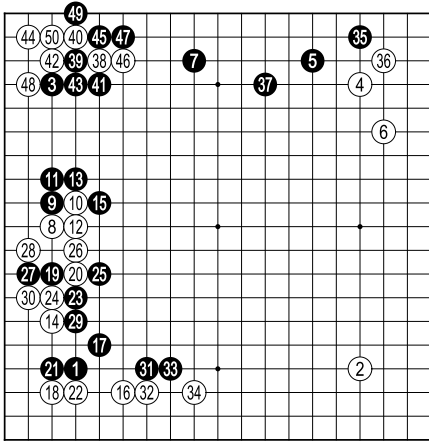
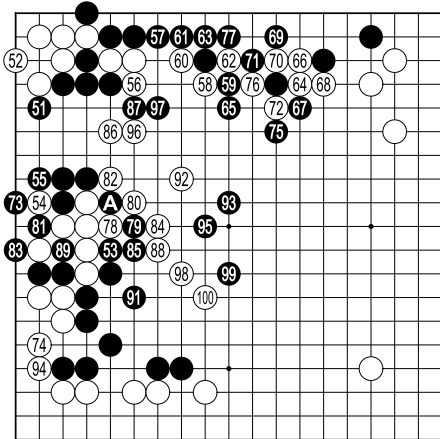


Figure 1, Moves 1-50

The fuseki in this game had previously been played in the afternoon games on Monday and Wednesday. 41 was mistake. It was better to block at 50, since White pulling out with 46 created many problems.

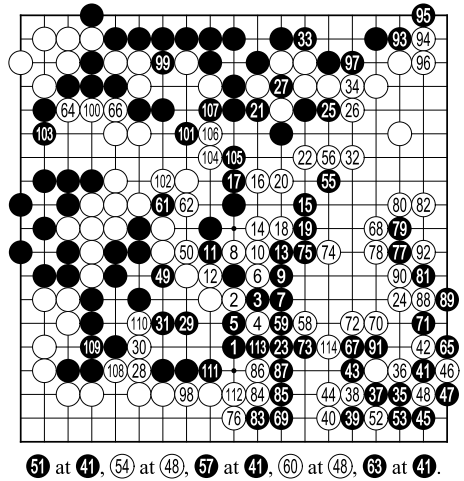


(90) at A.

Figure 2, Moves 51-100

The game proceeded until 78 when AlphaGo threatened to break out through the Black wall. Fan afterwards thought he should have played simply, answering the ataris; however he played at 81 instead, but this was a total waste of a move - a catastrophic mistake: it should have been directly at 33.

93 started an attack on the White central group, but White had time to *take the money* with 94 before defending. Black should have played there himself, before attacking, as 94 weakened the Black group on the lower left and made it easier for White to escape with his central stones.



51 at 41, 54 at 48, 57 at 41, 60 at 48, 63 at 41.

Figure 3, Moves 101-207

It was always going to be difficult for Black to attack this central White group successfully, and when the attack petered out Fan knew he was well behind. He struggled on for a while, hoping to salvage something from the wreckage, but eventually resigned: he was over 20 points behind.

CONCLUSIONS

Jon Diamond

president@britgo.org

Hajin Lee, who commented on the first 4 games, said *AlphaGo's strength is truly impressive! I was surprised enough when I heard Fan Hui lost, but it feels more real to see the game records.*

My overall impression was that AlphaGo seemed stronger than Fan, but I couldn't tell by how much. I still doubt that it's strong enough to play the world's top pros, but maybe it becomes stronger when it faces a stronger opponent.

I agree, it's an impressive achievement and it looks like a human player – when I first played through the games I didn't know which side was AlphaGo and couldn't tell. In retrospect this isn't too surprising as AlphaGo has been training using human games.

I've got two conclusions based on these games – it seems to play unnecessary sentes on occasion and it definitely plays conservatively when it's very confident it's ahead and aggressively if it's definitely behind. Apart from that I can't see any obvious weaknesses... but maybe these issues will be fixed by now!

One significant aspect of this match was that AlphaGo analysed orders of magnitude fewer positions than IBM's Deep Blue did in the Chess match in 1996 against Gary Kasparov. Deep Blue also had a handcrafted evaluation function, which AlphaGo does not. These indicate the general improvements in AI techniques that

Google DeepMind have achieved. I think the techniques used, which include Convolutional Neural Networks and MCTS, are definitely applicable in other artificial intelligence application areas, such as Facial Recognition and perhaps autonomous cars, but that's another story...

The technical article is **Nature**: Silver D. et al. Mastering the game of Go with deep neural networks and tree search. Volume 529, issue 7587, pp 484-489: www.nature.com/nature/journal/v529/n7587/full/nature16961.html

If you're interested you can read the abstract free of charge, but you'll have to subscribe to read the rest... There's not much Go stuff and it's quite heavy going, but that is only to be expected of a scientific article.

Finally, how does this affect humans playing Go? Well, I think not very much. The loss by Kasparov against Big Blue in 1996 didn't really affect Chess, although there are programs that help Chess players with databases of games and analysis, and I think the same will apply to Go.

It doesn't feel like we need to worry too much about how this technology will affect face-to-face games though, since, apart from anything else, the gain from the improvement of an odd move isn't as high as in Chess.

So keep on playing!

I would like to remind BGA members about the Analysis Service.

Would it be helpful to have your games analysed?

If you think it might, just send me an `.sgf` file of a representative game by email; I usually return the annotated game within a week.

Many Go players become stuck at one particular level and end up playing essentially the same type of game over and over again. That is fine if you are happy to just enjoy playing, but if you have the desire to improve, then you will probably need to learn to “see” the game in a different way.

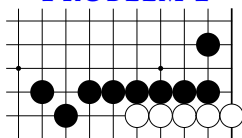
I try to pitch my comments to the level of the player; never too technical, because there are many reference guides available for joseki and life and death. I pick out two or three positions where I feel the individual player would benefit from looking at the game slightly differently.

Hopefully, one day this leads to a eureka moment, “Ah, I get it”.

Paul Barnard

~ ~ ~

PROBLEM 1



Black to play and kill

A COURSE IN GO - 1

Bob Scantlebury

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This is the first of eight articles I shall write aimed at Double Digit Kyu players (DDKs). I am only about 6 or 7 kyu myself so they are necessarily pretty basic. The aim is to give Go players who have passed the stage of being raw beginners (and so are between 10 kyu and 20 kyu) an idea of what they should be thinking about as they try to improve and areas in which they can practice and study. In this first piece I have chosen five aspects of the game to describe and the other seven instalments will be similar.

Strategy

Go is a game of strategy. Ideally, this means you should start the game with a broad plan of what you want to achieve and how you intend to achieve it (though in practice few but strong players do this). The first thing to decide is whether to aim for territory or for influence. If aiming for territory you would play mostly on the third line in the opening where it is easier to make settled groups and you would place the stones to sketch out 'boxes' (moyos) which can create many points for you. If going for influence you would play mostly on the fourth line in the opening and build thick walls which could be easily turned into living groups but may not initially have any eyes. Whatever you decide, you should keep to a consistent strategy in all your moves.

When your opponent is playing a territorial game, remember the proverb 'don't let them solidify their moyo' - step in just before it gets too hard to do so.

You also need to decide if you are going to fight a lot or be passive, though this is often a matter of temperament. Going for influence rather than territory will help in the fighting, or you can calmly create big moyos with safe moves, always remembering that you risk being invaded.

How many groups should you have? Some games end with one side having a single group; all their stones are connected. But usually the groups get separated - indeed your opponent will try to do this following the maxim 'divide and conquer'. It is generally considered safe to have up to five separate groups but six is considered one too many; one of them is going to die - there isn't time to defend them all.

And depending upon who is ahead in the game (see Counting below), you might have to switch strategy and start taking risks. This would be the case if you were behind. Taking risks might mean invading and trying to live inside your opponent's territory or going all out to kill a group. Or if the game is close, you would just go for reducing moves. And if you were ahead you would play a safer, more defensive game, and take no risks.

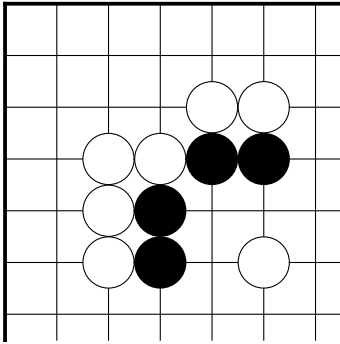


Fig. 1: The eye-stealing tesuji

Tactics

Tactics is about achieving short term objectives; kill a group, save a group, attack a group, connect your stones and so on. It is largely a matter of reading i.e. looking several moves ahead (the more moves ahead you can read the stronger you will become). There are standard patterns and plays called tesuji which need to be spotted and executed. And then there is the light style of play called sabaki where you develop quickly and flexibly and make your stones work together to reduce or invade. By 'light play' I mean avoiding the need to save all your stones (which weaker players often feel they must). A major tactical decision is when and what to attack. You should attack your opponent's weak groups preferably from a position of relative strength. When attacking it is best to play at a distance and avoid making contact plays.

When defending, make contact moves because it may set up a sacrifice which the defender can afford. The attacker avoids contact moves because they cannot afford a sacrifice; and besides, playing contact moves allows the

defender to push back. Another decision is whether to reduce or to invade and which point to start with. In this it is useful to employ whatever aji (potential) exists in your opponent's position such as possible cuts, peeps and wedges.

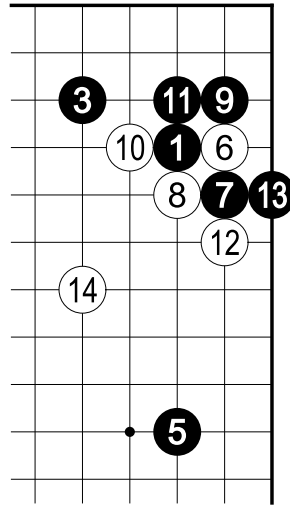


Fig. 2: ② and ④ elsewhere
An example of White playing lightly (sabaki). ⑭ is light, allowing Black to chop off a stone or two. White will counter-atari and get stronger while retaining sente

Counting

As was touched on earlier, it is wise to have at least some idea of who is ahead in the game. In other words it is a good idea to count – possibly several times throughout the game. Only if you know that you are behind will you be justified in playing risky moves or trying to invade apparently safe areas. It is often not necessary to have a very accurate count; if you are within five points or so it should be good enough to see if the game is

close (less than five) or you are well ahead (more than ten) or well behind. And it is important to be honest when counting; don't be either overly optimistic or overly pessimistic; just get it more or less right.

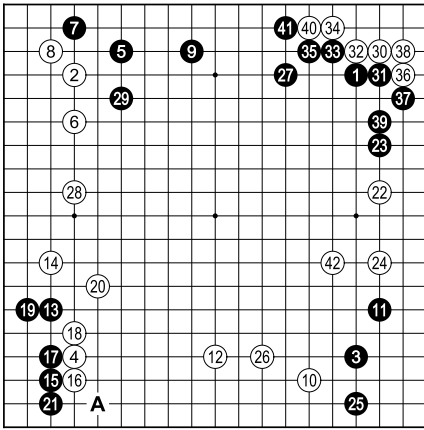


Fig. 3: Illustrative game to show how to count (see text for details)

There are various techniques of counting. A quick way is just 'guesstimate' the comparative sizes of the black and white groups; this black group is about the same size as that white one, but this black group is much bigger than that white one (etc.) so it looks like: it is close/I am well ahead/I am well behind. Another slower way which is more accurate is to count in pairs of points, treating each prisoner on the board as a pair of points (which it is), and then double the tally to get the total point score. Do this for Black and White and compare the final numbers. Prisoners already removed from the board only count one point of course.

In the illustrative game in Fig. 3, a quick count would go like this: Black's bottom left corner group is about the

same size as White's top right corner; White has two moyos – on the left and on the bottom; Black has a moyo at the top; Black's moyo is about the same size as White's two moyos combined, especially considering White's bottom moyo is open on the left (Black can easily push into the white territory at A). So even-stevens so far. The black corner group in the bottom right is larger than the white group on the right (by 15 points to 10 say). So Black is slightly ahead as you'd expect since he started first and there have been an equal number of moves. It is Black's turn. Maybe Black will decide to play A.

Balance of territory

As the excellent Ishi Press book 'Attack and Defense' (still available) says, the middle game of Go is all about two balances; the balance of territory and the balance of power. It is obviously vital to be ahead in the balance of territory at the end of the game, since that is how you win. But you don't have to win by a landslide; a few points is enough. So by all means let your opponent have some territory; don't jealously invade every single time.

In general, play begins in the corners because that is where it is easiest to make a live group, but there is not much territory in the corner; most of the territory is along the sides which is why we see big extensions, thick walls and boxlike moyos along the sides. There is also little territory to be had in the centre of the board. However, it often happens that after the fuseki (opening moves), Black and White are evenly balanced with regard to territory in the corners and along the sides; the game is close. In this case, barring a successful invasion of one of your opponent's moyos, it will be

whoever grabs most of the centre that wins the game. Having more power and influence (see later) than your opponent will help to secure more centre ground.

In the fuseki, you increase your territory by quickly building safe groups, initially in the corners. Playing on the 3-3 point virtually guarantees a live group in one move. If you start on a different point in the corner you will need to add another stone and make a shimari (corner enclosure) to secure the points. The next order of priority will be to make extensions from the corner stones along the sides, usually on the third line as such stones are harder to attack.

Good shape (a topic I will cover in the next article) is important when claiming territory in order not to leave aji (potential weakness) or actual weaknesses that your opponent can exploit. There are standard patterns of stones that are difficult to attack and that will hang on to the points they enclose until the end of the game. Improving in Go is largely a matter of learning these patterns and using them at the right time.

Balance of power/influence

Having stones on the fourth line and thick walls generates power which radiates over the whole board. It gives you friendly stones for your under-attack weak groups to run to and provides ladder breakers. And strong groups (ones which are definitely alive) are your biggest ally – you can play around and from them with impunity. The corollary is that the

fewer *weak* groups you have the more power you have.

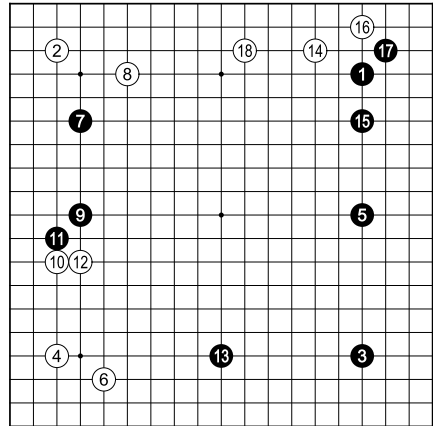


Fig. 4: Example fuseki with Black playing for influence and White playing for territory

Even if a group does not yet have two definite eyes, it should have a resilient shape such that it can make two eyes if need be. As stated above, learning more of the standard resilient shapes is how you get stronger. But it is not enough to simply be alive. If the group is to influence the game it must not be totally enclosed by your opponent's stones but connected out into the centre.

It is vital that your stones should work together and be as efficient as possible, which means not being over-concentrated and not being heavy, which turns stones into a liability rather than an asset. This is the big topic of 'bad shape' which I will cover next time.

□

WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

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European Teams (online)

Following on from their loss to Hungary, the UK team continued to find it was tough going in the European B League. On 6th October they were matched with a strong team from Israel consisting of three 4d and a 1d. The team went down four games to nil: Chong Han to Ofer Zivony by resignation, Andrew Simons to Maayan Blum on time, Bruno Poltronieri to Reem Ben David by 9.5 and Alex Kent to Yahel Or by resignation.

The Austrian team on 27th October was even stronger with three 5d and a 1k. Bruno Poltronieri lost to Viktor Lin by resignation, Charles Hibbert lost to Lothar Spiegel by resignation, Des Cann lost to Schayan Hamrah on time and Sandy Taylor lost to Micahael Forstenlehner by 8.5, to again lose four games to nil.

The November game was played six days earlier than the normal Tuesday at the request of the opponents, Denmark. This seemed to work in the UK's favour as Bruno beat Uffe Rasmussen by 17.5, Charles beat Torben Pedersen through resignation and Jamie Taylor beat Mathis Isaksen by 6.5. The only team member to lose was Jon Diamond, who lost to the strong 4d Jannik Rasmussen by resignation. This left the UK in 11th place with one win going into the Christmas break.

Meanwhile in the C League, Ireland was 7th going into the Christmas break. They did not start well, against Spain on 22nd September, with all of James Hutchinson, John Gibson,

Tiberiu Gociu and Graham Ramsey losing by resignation.

However they beat Greece by three games to one on 13th October, with wins for Ian Davis, James and Tiberiu; only Graham lost. On 3rd November James, Peter Kasko, John and Tiberiu demolished Cyprus, four games to nil. However they lost to Iceland three games to one on 1st December, with losses for Ian, James (by half a point) and John, but a win by resignation for Graham.

European Youth Teams

For a second year our youth squad is taking part in this online event, which has games split by age group. The first match was against Poland and pleasingly our team won by three games to two. Laurence Turner had a tough game on the first (under-20) board against a strong dan player. However our strength in the under-16s paid off with both Oscar Selby and Alex Terry winning their games. Both under-12 boards were evenly matched on paper. Aidan Wong had a close defeat, but Alexander Hsieh gained an easy win to clinch the match.

The second match against Czechia was played over two days. After the first we were two boards to one down, with a win for Edmund Smith and losses for Alex and Dylan Zhu-Dong. Aidan managed to win his game to tie the match, despite a scare in the late yose, but Laurence got into a difficult fight, which he lost by a liberty, so regrettably we lost the match three games to two.

The third match on 12th December was an exciting encounter with the

combined team of Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia. First to finish was Aidan who played a solid game and claimed a straightforward win. We then lost on the top board where Elom Willson had a tough game against a stronger opponent. With the score at one win each, we needed a win on one of the two under-16 boards. Both Charlotte Bexfield and Edmund Smith had exciting games which looked to be going their way after the opening, but they could not hold onto the advantage in either game. This left us losers at three games to one, with game five postponed because of connection problems.

KPMC

The 10th Korea Prime Minister Cup International Baduk Championship was held in Seoul, Korea, from 23rd to 25th November. Unfortunately the UK did not receive an invitation because of communication issues, but 53 countries did take part, including 27 participants from Europe.

Hu Yuching of China, after four times in second place, finally won the event ahead of Kim Hee-Soo of Korea. Especially noteworthy was Romania's Cristian Pop taking third (only losing to the Korean player), ahead of Eric Lui from the US and Osawa Shinichiro of Japan, the best a European has ever done in this event.

Pair Go

The 26th International Amateur Pair Go Championship was held over the first weekend in December at its usual Tokyo location, the Hotel Metropolitan Edmont. Also as usual, the winners of the event were the Korean pair, Jeon Yujin and Song

Hongsuk. Second to fifth places were all Japanese pairs on four wins. China took sixth place, also on four wins.

Both the European Championship pair (Rita Pocsai and Pal Balogh) and the Russian pair (Natalia Kovaleva and Dmitry Surin) won three games to take 8th and 14th place respectively. The USA also won three. Other European pairs were from France, Finland, Czechia, Netherlands, Turkey, Croatia and Belarus.

Cork

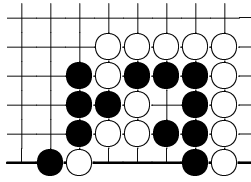
There has been a tournament held in Cork since 2008 when it was started so people could play strong Chinese player Wei Wang, who was a student at University College Cork (UCC) at the time. It has attracted over 30 players, but recently has been a lot smaller and is currently a handicap tournament. This has not stopped the strong players from winning as the eleven-player 2015 edition at UCC's Mardyke Pavilion on the weekend of 22nd November was won by French player Geoffrey Crespino, who was the strongest entrant (3k) to play in all five rounds. Piotr Gawron (6k) from Poland was second.

New Professional

Antti Tormanen from Finland will be familiar to some from his appearances at the London Open which he won in 2010. He has been studying as an insei towards becoming a professional in Japan and has been rewarded by the appointment from April, by special recommendation, as a professional at the Nihon Ki-in.

□

PROBLEM 2



Black to play and rescue
seven stones

~ ~ ~

EXPLANATION OF JAPANESE TERMS

Where space permits, less-common terms are explained in footnotes.
If no explanation is provided then take a look at:

www.britgo.org/general/definitions
www.britgo.org/bgj/glossary
or search senseis.xmp.net/?GoTerms.

Please let the Editor know if the term is still not found. One of the
experts can then write an article to explain it ☺

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Jon Diamond

president@britgo.org



As I said previously I'm retiring in April, so I thought in my final View from the Top I'd take the opportunity to review some of the things that have changed during this time.

The move to an online world has affected us significantly in many areas.

Our website is our main focus and is now more comprehensive with a much improved introduction to Go and the BGA, whilst involving less technical administration. The archive now includes every British Go Journal and even more tournament results than ever.

Our News delivery has completely transmogrified! The Newsletter used to be printed and posted to you, but just cost too much. The new electronic version is now monthly and supplements the News feeds from the website, so you should be receiving all the latest information on a regular basis.

Almost all new memberships and renewals are now being handled online, with Direct Debits the final piece in our jigsaw, and our new Members Area.

The British Go Journal has changed Editors successfully twice and unlike many other organisations I hope we'll continue to deliver a worthwhile publication to your doorstep.

My main disappointment is that our membership is still dropping at about 2% per annum. This is no worse than other Go Associations in the USA and Europe and definitely better than general sporting participation in the UK. On the other hand we're now seeing a growing schools involvement again, especially in the North West.

The growing move to online play has been affecting our membership. There's now so much free information, teaching and play online, that it's difficult for us to provide a value proposition that people will be attracted to. So it's over to you: recruit more Go players and then get them to join our community!

But what about the Go playing: we've introduced an Online Clubs Team league, but I'm disappointed by the lack of up and coming youngsters passing me on the ratings list.

However, I'm pleased that Martha McGill became our 200th dan player and Vanessa Wong became 6 dan after her stellar performance at the World Mind Sport Games in Lille. We've also recovered our position with promotion in the Pandanet European Go Team Championship, so that's good too.

Finally, I've enjoyed my seven years as President and I'd like to thank everyone who's been involved in all these activities. Without them the Association would not be what it is today.

□

ON BEING A GO WIDOW

Irene McKendry

paul@psaa.me.uk

We were a happily married couple. The kinds of problems we had, would, I am sure, be recognised by your women readers - partner a lazy so and so, me the ideas person, who grapples with the complexities of getting him to do those endless 'little jobs around the house and garden', as well as having a paid job outside of the home. Yes, all in all, a sound relationship. Little did we know that our lives were about to change!

It all started quite innocently about two and a half years ago. Our multi-talented neighbour asked us if we wanted to play a game - a board game - called Go. Well, that was it. He loved it; I couldn't understand it. I was immune to its siren call, but he was hooked. Three in the marriage? So tell me about it, Di!

Soon, he was being introduced to others who were also in the game. With weekly club exposure and tournaments too, he developed full blown SWINGOP Syndrome - Swindon Increasing to National Go Playing Syndrome, which manifested itself in excessive reading and tendencies to mutter to himself about Komi and Joseki. A second manifestation came through his opponents. When he started in the game, all his opponents were young people! Acculturating them into the game is a strategically clever move, as it gives them opportunities to compete at their level not their age, an empowering division which most other adults overlook.

Slowly but surely, my partner's efforts paid off. Down his Kyu went, until now he's within reach of SFK. He's as

pleased as punch, and me, I'm happy for him. But, I must confess, I am still no nearer to understanding this fascination with the game.

Once, in a spirit of inquiry, I asked him, "Why do you enjoy Go?" He looked at me quizzically, and echoed amusingly, "Enjoy? Patterns." That was the point at which I realised he had full blown SWINGOP Syndrome.

This exchange also encapsulated one of my pet hates about the game.

When a person who is usually articulate becomes Bhudda-esque and incomprehensible, I feel excluded.

So, I tried another tack. "There are a lot of nice people in Swindon Go, so I can understand the social side of playing, but, what is it about Go that motivates you?" I asked in my best (contorted) counselling style.

"Patterns," he responded.

"Patterns?" I queried, looking askance. "Patterns are what you enjoy?" "Yes," he responded, "patterns, beautiful patterns which we develop while we are playing Go. In each game, different patterns are produced." Then he leaned forward towards me, took a deep breath, and continued. "It's the game itself. The purpose of playing is to uncover the most perfect game. When we compete, that's what we are trying to do. Competing is about playing the game of Go, not about beating the other person." With such a statement of beliefs, what could one say?

My first thought was, "Sounds like mystical bullshit to me." Then, on reflection, I began to understand for the first time what this game means to him and why it won't go away. For

him, this game is competitive while being co-operative. One is competing with others and with oneself, to play the best one can. This is heaven to my partner who is essentially not competitive against others. Reading is encouraged through the regular BGA journal. Co-operation is built into the system, with expert players acting as mentors. Learning is actively encouraged, and our dining room table is the site of many matches, where strategies are considered and previous games reviewed over a glass of wine. His mistakes or failures, therefore, become opportunities for learning under the expert tutelage of our talented neighbour.

What I've learned over these past two and a half years is that the full blown SWINGOP Syndrome is now part of our relationship. Sometimes, it feels difficult. He has an increasing commitment to the game, and so wants to take opportunities for participating, in as many tournaments as possible. There are times he spends playing when I want his company. There is also the expense involved in attending and entering tournaments. I find all of these can be hard to live with.

I have gone through a number of phases in this threesome relationship. Initially, I was all for it. Women readers may understand the phenomenon of 'getting him out of the house' and 'having a hobby'. The next phase for me was a (silent) feeling of panic and increasing resentment as the full blown SWINGOP Syndrome emerged. I remember tournament dates lovingly marked on the calendar by him, while I was worrying about all those little jobs needing to be done. I struggled in silence for a while, but, not being the martyr type, I soon got fed up with that and moved into

my third phase, that of verbalising my resentment. Essentially, what annoyed me was his incomprehension of how hard this was for me and for our relationship, but also his uncompromising attitude. If he wanted to play Go, he would. Grrh!

In this fourth, current phase, it feels as though we are in a different 'place'. This began when I realised that I needed to 'do my own thing', and use the time when he is not here, for me and the sorts of things I enjoy. That is what I now do. I have started a course, and use the time when he is not here for studying and, for example, writing this article. When he comes home from a tournament, I am happy to hear about what he has been doing and vice versa.

And the jobs? Well, we work on them together during the game's close season. I want to get the plumbing sorted out, so I have given us a year's notice, planning time and saving time. This is an approach which suits us.

On reflection, Go playing has influenced our relationship. We are each more independent, and as the amount of time we spend separately increases, so our time together is more precious. I think we are probably less spontaneous, as nice events are planned well in advance.

Our lives are by no means perfect, and yes, I sometimes still get lonely and bored. But every decision made opens up some options and closes others down. (I, too, could find myself talking mystical bullshit one of these days.)

And, finally, no, I still do not play Go. I continue to be immune to that particular virus, I guess. For me, it's more fun watching you Martians than learning to be one. I'm a Venusian, you see. □

THE JOURNAL ONLINE

To access the full range of features, read the Journal online.

SGF Files

The SGF files for problems and games printed in this journal appear at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue174.

Online Journals

Online copies of this and the preceding three journals are available in the BGA Members Area at www.britgo.org/membersarea. Log in to see these recent editions.

Links to electronic copies of earlier issues, associated files, guidelines for submitting articles and information about other BGA publications appear on the BGA website at www.britgo.org/pubs (no login required).

Active Links and Colour

Online copies from [BGJ 158](#) onwards contain active links to related information, including SGF files for the games and problems. The links are identified by blue text – clicking on these will open the selected links on your computer (this feature may not be supported by some older PDF file browsers). Original photographs in colour are reproduced in colour in these issues.

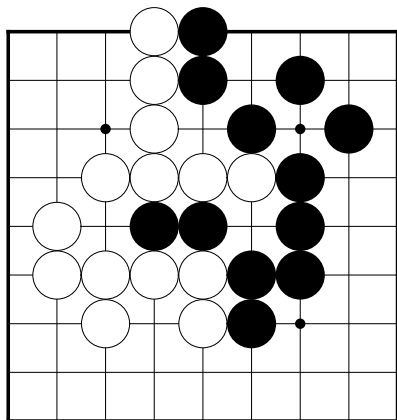
YOSE PROBLEMS

Toby Manning

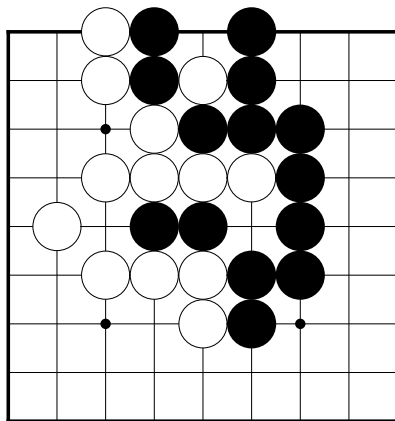
toby.manning@dsl.pipex.com

Black to play (Japanese rules, i.e. without pass stones. There are no captures, no komi. What is the best sequence for both players?)

Then turn to Page [42](#)



Problem 1



Problem 2

~ ~ ~

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL

The copy date for the next issue of the Journal is **29th February**.

Contributions are welcome at any time. Please send them to journal@britgo.org. The Editor will be glad to discuss the suitability of any material you may have in mind.

The BGA website has guidelines at www.britgo.org/bgj/guidelines for those wishing to contribute material.

BGA ANNOUNCEMENTS

FUTURE EVENTS

For the next six months, the Tournament Calendar (www.britgo.org/tournaments) features:

Isle of Skye, Portree, Isle of Skye, Saturday 5th – Sunday 6th March

Trigantius, Cambridge, Saturday 12th March

British Go Congress, Sheffield, Friday 1st – Sunday 3rd April

Welwyn Garden City, Saturday 23rd April

Candidates' Tournament, May

Bar-Low, May

Bracknell, Wokingham, Sunday 22nd May

Challengers' League, May

Scottish Open, Saturday 28th – Sunday 29th May

British Pair Go Championships, Hatfield, Saturday 4th June

Durham, Saturday 11th – Sunday 12th June

Welsh Open, Barmouth, Saturday 18th – Sunday 19th June

Milton Keynes, July

UK Go Challenge Finals, July

OFFICIAL VACANCIES: CAN YOU HELP?

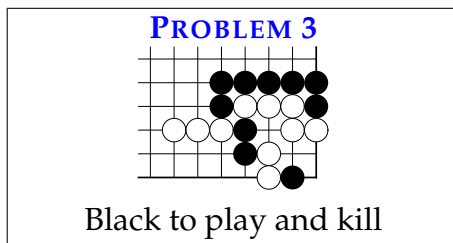
Vacant posts are listed at www.britgo.org/positions/vacancies.

We need volunteers for:

- Championships Organiser
- Exhibitions
- GoTalk Moderator
- Regional Youth Representatives (three vacancies)

If you are interested in any of these, please contact our President, Jon Diamond (president@britgo.org), or any member of Council.

~ ~ ~



BEGINNER'S CORNER

David Wildgoose

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A lot of good Go advice has been bound up into the form of proverbs, one of which is "Learn Joseki, Lose Two Stones (of strength)". To someone starting out with Go, this seems counter-intuitive. How can learning good moves make you become weaker? The answer of course, is that you should not blindly memorise joseki, but rather understand why those moves are good moves and how they are affected by the position elsewhere on the board.

Even if you understand this advice, you may nonetheless still fall into the trap that the proverb warns about simply by virtue of naturally learning some commonly seen series of moves.

Consider the sequence of moves in Diagram 1.

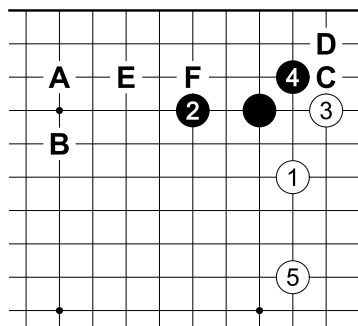


Diagram 1

Black will then probably not tenuki (play elsewhere), but complete the joseki by playing at A; otherwise White has a strong knight's move approach at E. If Black wanted to come out of this joseki with sente, they would play ② on the third line instead (at F).

If Black plays at A, then later (but not necessarily right now) White may cap at B because allowing Black to play at B would begin the creation of a large moyo.

Later in the game, C will become a large endgame move for whomever plays it first.

The game of Go is all about sharing the board, unequally. At its simplest, you do this by sketching out your territory using fewer stones than your opponent. This is why the order the moves are played in is important.

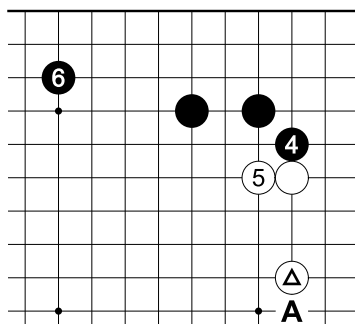


Diagram 2

If White were to first make the 2-point extension to the triangled stone in Diagram 2 then Black would "kick" with ④, protecting the corner and forcing White to play ⑤. Look how much territory each player is sketching out after Black ⑥. White is over-concentrated. The ideal extension from White's two stone group would have been to A rather than the marked stone.

Returning to Diagram 1, why is playing at C the proper move for White? Why not jump further to D? (See Diagram 3).

The fact that C is joseki should give you the clue that D doesn't work, but why not?

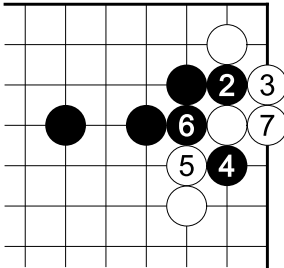


Diagram 3

Before reading on further, think about how Black should play.

The tesuji (skillful play) of the throw-in in Diagram 5 is the answer. White has to capture the throw-in stone with ⑨, Black then ataris with ⑩, forcing White to connect with ⑪. When Black plays ⑫, White's stones are cut off and killed. This shows that D in Diagram 1 doesn't work and this is why C is the proper move.

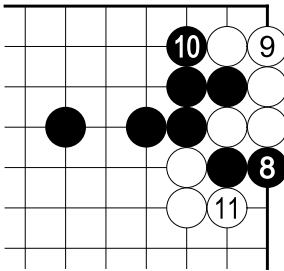


Diagram 4

As can be seen in Diagram 4, simply playing atari does not work.

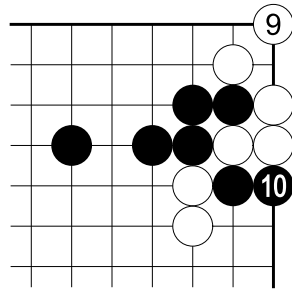


Diagram 6

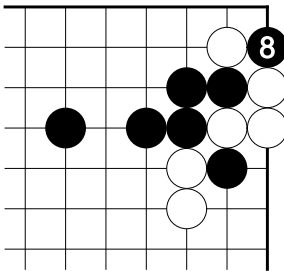


Diagram 5

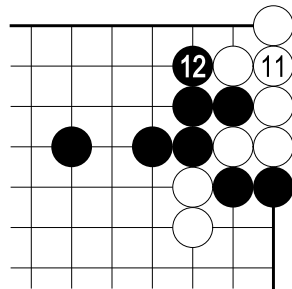


Diagram 7

□

GAME REVIEW

Wang Hongjun

This is the final game¹ of the British Championship of 2014 between Andrew Kay and Alex Kent. Comments are by Wang Hongjun (7p), husband of Liu Yajie who provided the translation. Andrew Kay (4d) is Black and Alex Kent (3d) is White.

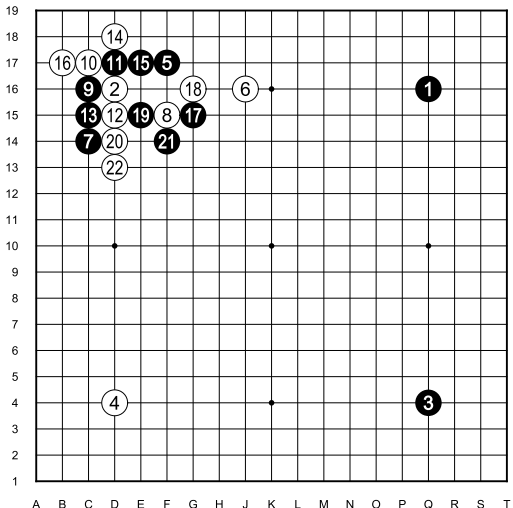
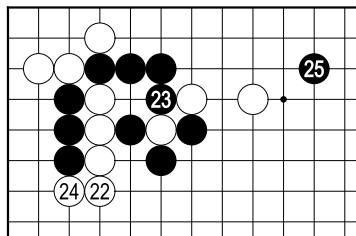


Diagram 1: moves 1 - 22

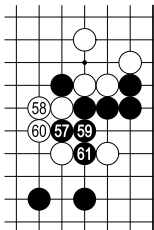
22 After this, capturing 8 would be a good way for Black to simplify the situation. See Variation 1.



Variation 1

25 This result is not bad for Black.

57 Black should play at A to come out. See Variation 2.



Variation 2

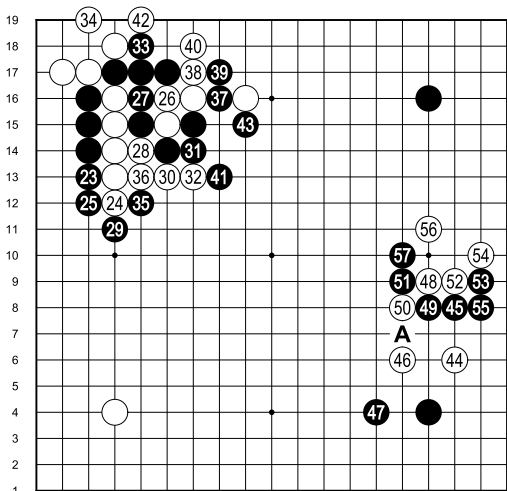


Diagram 2: moves 23 - 57

¹The sgf file is at www.britgo.org/files/bgjgames/174-kay.sgf.

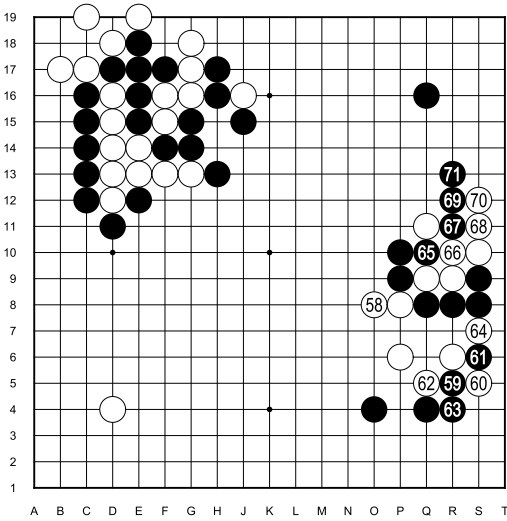
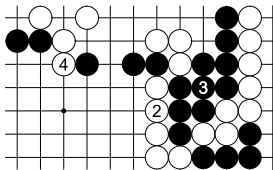


Diagram 3: moves 58 - 71

⑦ Perhaps Black's strategy is to give up a few stones to build a moyo. But Black does not have a strong shape.

⑩ White should play the atari now. There is no reason to save it. See Variation 3.



Variation 3

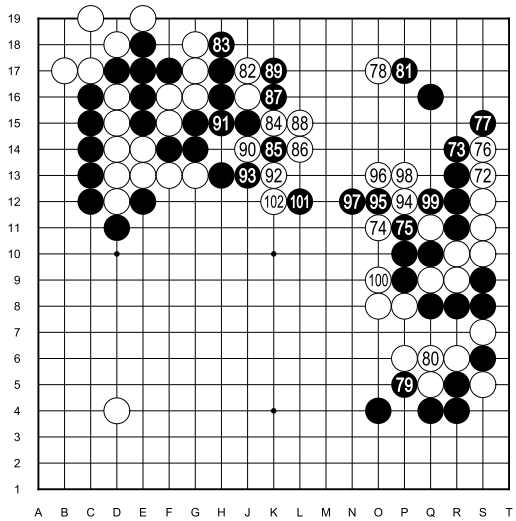


Diagram 4: moves 72 - 102

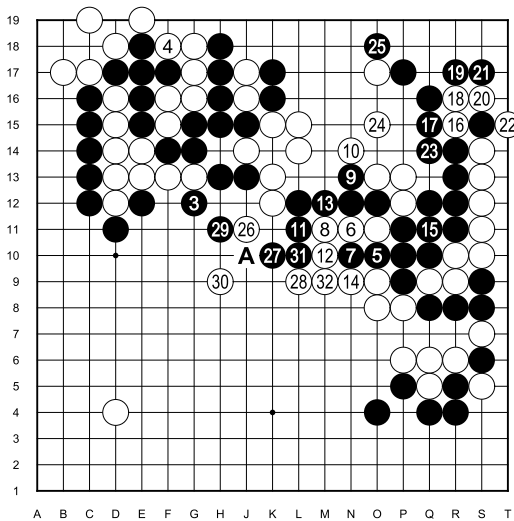
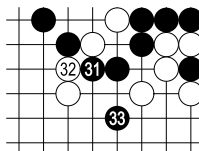


Diagram 5: moves 103 - 132

⑬ Black should play directly at ⑬ in Diagram 6. See Variation 4.

⑭ The exchange of ⑬ for ⑭ is good for White.



Variation 4

⑭ White should play at ⑭ to put Black under more pressure, and to protect the cutting point.

⑮ If ⑭ were at ⑮, that would be different.

⑯ A good point for White would be A.

⑰ White should play at ⑰ to kill the corner.

⑱ White's strategy is not very clear.

Black won by resignation.

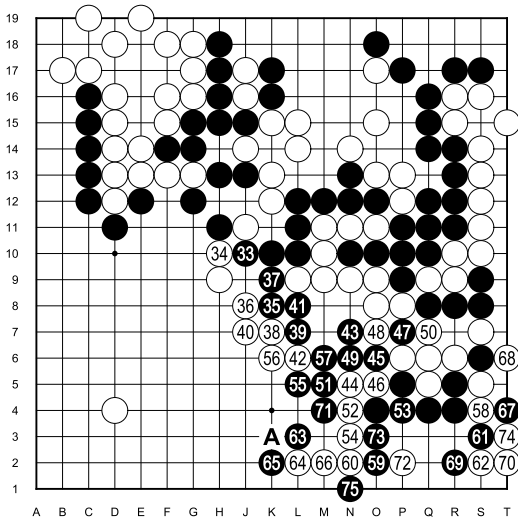


Diagram 6: moves 133 - 175

Come to Czechia

2015 European Go Congress Song

Francis Roads

Pockey, zastav malý formánecku
Czech traditional song

CHORUS:

[♩=100] Dmi Dmi Dmi Dmi Dmi Gmi A Dmi

Come to Cze - chia, Cze - chia's where we're play - ing,

Dmi Dmi Dmi Dmi Dmi Gmi A Dmi

Ho - tel Ba - by - lon is where we're stay - ing.

Dmi C Dmi C F Gmi A Dmi

1. Players of go are ve - ry bright, they need to be re - si - lient.
2. *In King's Gar - den peo - ple play in dark - ness ev - 'ry night there,*
3. You must be most care - ful when you choose your e - le - va - tor,
4. *Wednes - day four - teen peo - ple learn the way to do glass - blow - ing,*

Dmi C Dmi C F Gmi A Dmi

If you've not been lost in all the cor - ri - dors you're bril - liant.
Some - one comes at half past nine and turns off ev - 'ry light there.
If you choose the wrong one you'll turn up for go much la - ter.
One by one, how long it's going to take there is no know - ing.

5. Hajin Lee takes on a robot, handicap is five stones.
In the mid-game she resigns with insufficient live stones.
6. Pairing lists are hard to read, they use a very small font,
Quickly find our partner, start the game is what we all want.
7. Pair go playing needs much patience; this is how they teach us:
We must sit and wait one hour before the pairings reach us.
8. 2018 has no venue; here is my suggestion,
Czechia is the place to choose, of that there is no question.

A PAIR OF RIPS

Paul Barnard

paul@psaa.me.uk

The Germans have a word meaning something along the lines of "the enjoyment of somebody else's misery"; it is "schadenfreude", as you may already know. Watching games of Go is definitely an option for those who delight in schadenfreude, because you can watch the misery come into being without the effort of creating it.

In this article, the game in question occurred some time back at the Three Peaks tournament, and the ripper was Simon Shiu. The one who was ripped had better remain anonymous in deference to his status as a past President of the Association, so I'll just call him "Francis". The quality of the schadenfreude enjoyed by the many observers was all the greater because of the strength of the players - Francis was 4 dan at the time, and it is all the nicer to see a strong player suffer.

This (Diagram 1) was the start of the rip. Simon, playing black, had played the hane under the end of White's corner group, as marked.

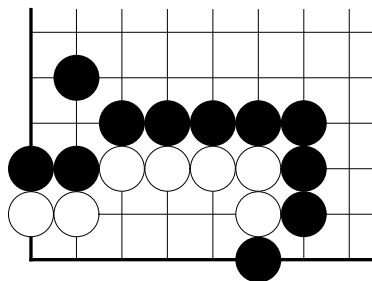


Diagram 1

At this point Francis stared at the position for a long time, after which

he pronounced, "It's one of them, isn't it?" The audience was impressed, not having a clue what "one of them" was, but were persuaded that Francis was in command of the situation, and the growing crowd awaited the refutation of Simon's pesky move. Francis thought quite a bit longer, and then finally played at ① in Diagram 2. Moves ②, ③ and ④ swiftly followed, and then there was a very pregnant pause before Francis uttered the immortal, "Oh shit!" (on realising that capturing the original hane to save his five white stones from the atari would give black time to throw in left of ③ and capture the corner two stones). The crowd was delighted, with the exception of the author who, of course, was only sympathetic.

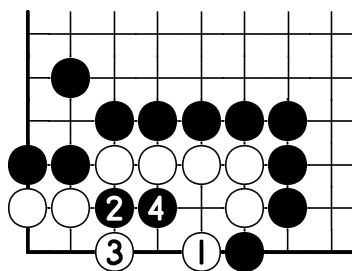


Diagram 2

Of course, the question is, "What should Francis have done instead of playing at ①?" Note that once ② is on the board, White is helpless, since if ③ is played at ④, Black simply descends to ③ and White cannot put the two stones in atari without first capturing the original hane, so Black has time to capture the two white stones in the corner. The answer is at the end of this article.

The second rip occurred in a past Candidates' Tournament, and this time both players will remain anonymous, rather than just Francis. White has pushed at the bottom right in Diagram 3 and connected, and Black has decided that no further defence is necessary. How does White rip him off?

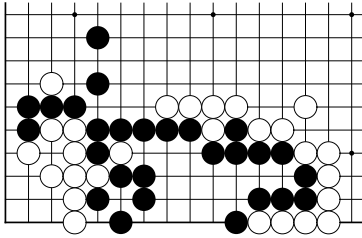


Diagram 3

Clearly the single black stone cannot be captured, because although White can run it along the bottom, it will be able to connect to the ponnuki. White can get some stones in there, but a simple chase is still not good enough.

The answer is to turn up, as shown in Diagram 4. White can play atari twice with A and C, and then E threatens to play atari left of D and capture 3 stones, so Black has to save them with F. Then a simple atari followed by a cut inflicts misery.

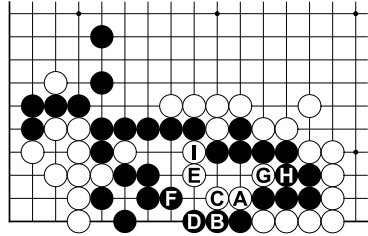


Diagram 4

With regards to the first rip (Diagram 2), Francis should have played ① below ④. Then in response to the cut at ②, white can play at ④. Or if Black plays at ①, White plays at ②. Either way, Black cannot prevent White getting two eyes.

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PROBLEM 4

Black to play and kill

T MARK HALL FOUNDATION

Toby Manning

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Investing in the future of British Go

Members will recall that T Mark Hall left a large legacy to the Go Community, with a primary objective to promote the playing of Go in the UK, and specific objectives of maintaining and storing the T Mark Hall library; undertaking research to find a permanent London Go Centre which would be open most afternoons and /or evenings; and providing financial grants to young members of the BGA to enable them to study Go in the Far East for periods of up to two years.

His legacy is managed through the T Mark Hall Foundation, a Company Limited by Guarantee. This is separate from the BGA, though managed by the BGA's Officers. Anyone over 18, resident in the UK and who has been a member of the BGA for 5 years can be a member (shareholder) of the Company. If you wish to become a member of the Foundation please email secretary@tmhallfoundation.org.uk;

Of the three specific objectives, the Library is currently in the safe care of Barry Chandler, and we regret that we have yet to receive any applications for support to study Go in the Far East. To apply for a grant please email finance@tmhallfoundation.org.uk.

However, we have made progress on the third objective.

Jonathan Chin and Toby Manning have visited the European Go Cultural Centre in Amsterdam to discuss its operation and finances.

While we currently believe that a specific Go centre is not viable, a Mind Sports Centre might be feasible, and Toby Manning has been to visit "Casual Chess" in the British Film Institute (BFI) lounge, 21 Stephen St, W1T 1LN, close to Tottenham Court Road Underground Station. This acts as a "drop in" chess café open Mon – Sat from 15:30 until 22:00 (although the Saturday sessions may soon finish). He discussed the possibility of developing this into a Mind Sports café/centre with the organiser, Amanda Ross, and she is going to undertake a feasibility study, to include a detailed budget. We hope to have the results of this by the AGM.

The AGM of the Foundation will be held immediately prior to the AGM of the British Go Association at the British Go Congress at the Holiday Inn, Victoria Station Road, Sheffield, S4 7YE on Saturday 2nd April 2016. The Directors' Report and Accounts will be emailed to all Foundation members at least 14 days before the meeting.

□

SMARTGO KIFU — TIPS AND SOME FEATURES

Richard Hunter

This article is aimed at present owners and potential users of SmartGo Kifu, which is a versatile tool for Go players that runs on Apple iOS devices:

iPad, iPhone, and iPod Touch¹. Kifu lets you record your games as sgf (smart game format) files and import/export sgf files, play through professional games in the bundled GoGoD database, analyse joseki and fuseki, study Go problems in the bundled problem set, and play Go against the computer. It also includes some annotated games, a function for guessing the next move when replaying game records, and a Go tutorial. It does have Program Help, but how many people read that in depth? In this article, I would like to present some tips and explain some features that I know from personal experience are often overlooked by users. I have demonstrated some of these to people and a frequent response is, "Oh, I didn't know it could do that. That's useful."

The developer (Anders Kierulf) is actively improving the app and constantly adding new features. This article describes version 4.0.1, but some of these features exist in older versions too, so try looking for them if you have older hardware that prevents you updating to the latest version. The exact appearance and text on your screen will depend on the screen size, orientation, and user settings.

Joseki and Fuseki Analysis

This is one of the most powerful and useful features. It was initially introduced in version 2.0 in October 2012 and has subsequently been improved and enhanced. I use it in professional games and also in my own games. When you have a game record on the screen, you can tap the menu icon in the bottom left and select Joseki or Fuseki at the bottom of the popup list of functions. Fuseki matches the whole board. Joseki offers you the choice of any corner or any side. The side matching, which is new in October 2015, lets you analyse openings such as Chinese or Sanrensei without specifying the other half of the board. Kifu will search the GoGoD database and display the results. This takes a little time and the spinning icon shows that processing is in progress. When it finishes, there will be purple lines at the edge of the board to indicate the search region. In the footer, there will be a black-and-white pie chart, a number, and a little orange arrow head. Below that are some letters and percentages. The pie chart shows the winning ratios for the matching games from the current position. The number is the number of games in the database matching your selection. The letters A, B, C, ... and percentages show the statistics for the next move alternatives labelled A, B, C, ... on the board. A star * represents a play elsewhere (tenuki). Many people overlook the orange arrow head. Tap on it to go to Matching

¹<http://smartgo.com>

games. The matching games are, by default, sorted by next move: A, B, C, You can change the sorting to Date, Player Name, etc. You can play through the matching games and return by tapping Done (iPad landscape) or the orange back arrow and then Done (iPad portrait). Tap the menu list and select Replay to return to normal game replay mode.

Views

Imagine you are looking at one of your games in My Games. Tap the menu list in the bottom left of the footer bar and look at the top menu item View. Here you can show/hide the game tree and comments. Another way to show/hide these panes is to drag their handles (little grey boxes with three horizontal lines) up or down. The tree view handle is just above the menu box bottom left, and the comments handle is just below the black stone icon top right.

Adding Variations

Adding a variation is simply a matter of adding a different move at any point in the game tree. Say, for example, you are at move Black 51 in the game tree and you want to add a variation for White 4. Navigate back down the game tree using the slider in the footer bar or the black back arrow in the replay bar until you reach Black 3. Then, you can add a variation for White 4 by tapping at a different point to the existing White 4.

You can also go directly to Black 3 from the position at move 51 by pressing on that stone, which invokes a popup 'Go to Move'. However, it is rather hard to select a particular stone when your finger is blocking your view. This direct method works best if you have Show Crosshairs

and Magnify set under the Move Input Setting (gear wheel in the top right). Then, when you touch the board in an empty region, you get a ghost white stone with a black dot in it. This would normally be the next move (White 52). However, while still pressing, slide it over an already played stone: the black dot turns into a diamond and the crosshairs change colour. Lift your finger and you should see a label 'Go to Move'. Tapping it takes you to that move in the tree. Now you can create a variation for the next move by playing it at an alternative point on the board.

Inserting Moves

When you record a game after the end, you may, like me, forget to record a pair of moves such as a forcing move and its response. Kifu lets you insert either one or two moves into the game record without you having to delete backwards and re-enter the rest of the game. Navigate to the point in the game tree. Tap the menu list (bottom left) and look at the third menu item Edit. To the right are five icons, which mean: delete node, insert one move, insert two moves, delete variation, and make a variation into the main line. To insert two moves, tap the third icon and simply play two moves on the board. Instead of being added as a new variation, they will be inserted after the current move and the game record will then continue as before.

Correcting Moves

While recording a game, have you ever discovered that an earlier move is on the wrong point? How would you change it? The crude method would be to delete back to the move and re-enter all the following moves. Wouldn't it be nice to have a better way? Well, there is. There is no need

to delete any moves at all. You can just reposition the misplaced stone. Say, for example, you are at move Black 51 and you realise that Black 3 is misplaced. Again, this is easier if you have Crosshairs and Magnify set. Navigate back to Black 3, touch the board, and slide the ghost white stone until it is on top of Black 3. This time, because Black 3 is the current move, the ghost white stone changes into a black stone with a dot and the crosshairs change colour. Move the ghost black stone to the correct location and lift your finger. The result is that instead of adding a variation for White 4, you have moved Black 3. The rest of the game tree is unaffected. Hardly anyone I have met knows about this feature.

Setting New Game Defaults

When I want to record a game after I have finished playing it, I go to the

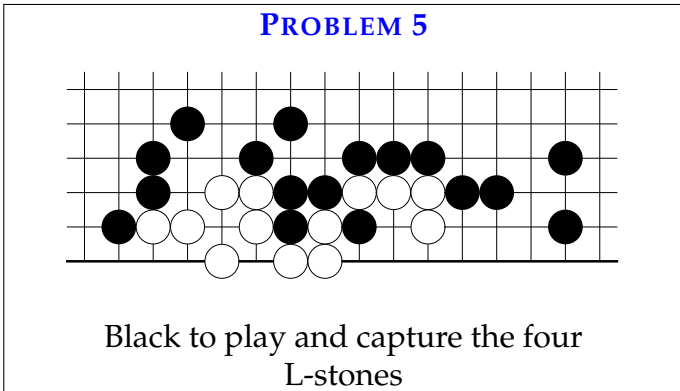
main menu and tap New Game. You can edit game information such as komi and rules later if you want to start recording immediately, but if you change them before starting, they become the new defaults for all new games. For example, tap Handicap, Even game, and the orange circled 'i' (for information). Here you can select 7.5 komi, which is now usual under BGA rules. To look at and edit the game information later, tap the orange 'i' next to the date in the centre of the header bar.

This orange 'i' will also display information about professional games. And you can view player biographies, provided by GoGoD, by tapping a player's name.

I hope these few tips will enable you to get more out of SmartGo Kifu.

□

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YOSE PROBLEMS – SOLUTIONS

Toby Manning

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Here are answers to the yose problems on page 28.

When we look at yose, there are two important issues to consider: those of size of move, and sente/gote relationship.

Answer to Problem 1

For problem 1, Black clearly has four possible moves, shown as A to D in Diagram 1. A is the easiest to analyse; it is worth five points in gote.

After the sequence shown in Diagram 2 (there are no sensible alternatives) White wins by three points.

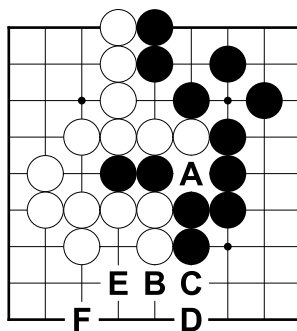


Diagram 1

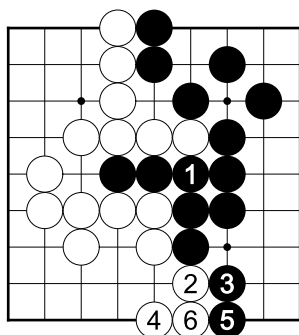


Diagram 2

For the moves on the bottom side, Black has the choice of playing at B in Diagram 1, which is gote (after White E, Black D), or at C, which is smaller but sente. We can see it is sente because after Black plays at C, the monkey jump at F (worth six points) is bigger than the capture at A (five points), so White will answer C.

In this particular position, it is important for Black to get a share of both possible positions; i.e. he must play the sente move at C, rather than claim the big gote point at A.

So how should White answer C? To play the 'obvious' response at B invites the sequence shown in Diagram 3. After ⑤, a White move at A is now worth five points, but to connect at B is worth six and so is correct.

After Black plays at A he wins by two points.

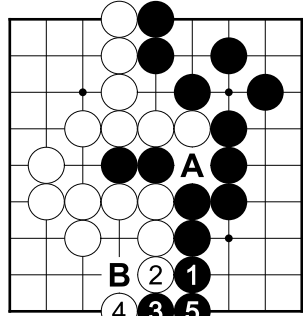


Diagram 3

Correct is for White to play tesuji at ② in Diagram 4. Black pushes at ③, which is sente (threatening to play at F), then connects at ⑤.

After White plays ⑥ to ⑨, the result is jigo.

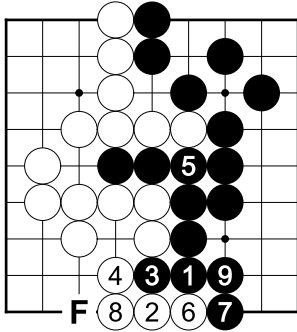


Diagram 4

Answer to Problem 2

In the second problem, the capture at the top (A in Diagram 5) is worth six points and the capture in the centre (B) five points, both in gote, so they are effectively miai (i.e. Black will get one of them, White will get the other).

What is important is who gets the large yose on the bottom; Black should take this, and needs the maximum points from it. He therefore plays the sequence ① to ③ in Diagram 5. Should White answer at A, B or C?

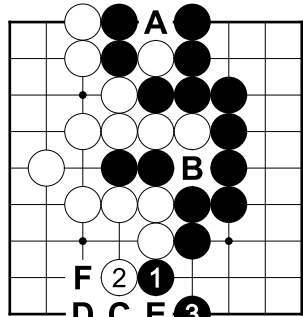


Diagram 5

Clearly B (five points) is smaller than A (six points) and can be ruled out. If White plays at A then Black will play the sente sequence C, D, E, and F (Black cannot fight the potential ko) before coming back to answer at B; the result is jigo.

So correct is for White to answer at C. After Black A, White B and Black E White wins by two points, and this is the best sequence for both players.

□

BOOK REVIEWS - 4

Roger Huyshe

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Special Topic Books

These books don't fit into Alice's usual categories of beginning/middle/end but they do cover (except for the last one) key situations that can be game-winning (or -losing) and are not addressed very much in other books.

Cross-Cut Workshop; Richard Hunter

This book is one that I recommend to most SDK with the line 'think how expensive a cross-cut is when you get it wrong'. It's remarkable that this is the only book that covers a vital situation that crops up in nearly every game. The author quickly shows that there is more to think about than the proverb "Cross-cut? Extend!" and proceeds to examine the various options for the first two moves with examples and problems. Further guidelines from professional players are given. Ultimately it still comes down to reading, although a greater awareness of possible patterns should be helpful.

Slate and Shell SSRH001, 70pp

Mastering the Basics Vol 6 - All about Ko

Kos can be fun, yet many players seem scared of them. The book starts with seventeen short chapters on various aspects of the theory of ko, including the value of a ko and of ko threats, and special situations. It also describes the common mistake of invalid kos, in which one player wins the ko in sente so the ignored ko threat cannot actually be exercised. After reading this book you should

be able to enter a ko fight with more confidence. The basics are accessible to 10k players yet there is plenty of more advanced material to interest low kyu and low dan players, such as maximising ko threats, creating a ko situation or indeed a double ko, making preparations for a ko fight and examples from professional games. There follow 122 problems and example games. This is a thorough explanation of an important topic. The sections on rare multiple and superkos were written for Japanese rules and need to be read with caution for British tournaments using AGA rules. This reviewer believes it is a topic that many players could benefit from looking at a bit more deeply.
Kiseido ref K76, 250pp

Counting Liberties and Winning Capturing Races; Richard Hunter

The book starts by analysing the different types of capturing race, according to the presence of eyes or large eyes, ko, mutual liberties and seki situations, then develops guidelines for all such situations. Problems are included through the book and there are examples from professional games towards the end. There's also a discussion of how to tilt the crude liberty count (no it's not just 'counting' liberties!) in one's favour. One reviewer found the book a tad overanalysed, another 2-dan says "This book has changed my approach to Go. Highly recommended, for anyone out of the DDK range". There's no denying the importance of the topic.

Slate and Shell SSRH003 232pp

**Theory and Practice of Semeai;
Valery Shikshin**

Shikshin takes a very similar approach to Hunter in his classification of capturing races. The style and examples are of course individual.

I may be chauvinistic in giving preference to the British author; then again, Shikshin is tutor to the Russian team and the book is more recent.
Hinoki Press. H-16

Magic on the First Line; Nakayama Noriyuki

The book is primarily a problem book, divided into sections 15k to 5k, 5k to 1k and dan level. There follows excerpts from four professional games where edge plays were instrumental in deciding the game. The book may be too specialised to make much difference to your game, but it's definitely a fun read with some surprising formations. It was reviewed in BGJ 152.
Slate and Shell Ref SL-70 120pp □



UK NEWS

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**Andrew Kay v Andrew Simons
(Game 1)**

British Championship Game 1

There was a very exciting start to the British Championship Title Match when game one was held on Saturday 26th September. As usual the match was between the top two players from the Challengers' League: Andrew Kay (5d), the defending champion, and Andrew Simons (4d). The game was played in Cambridge, thanks to Geoff Kaniuk, with help of others from Cambridge Go Club, and it was broadcast live on KGS.

By lunchtime, most people watching felt that Andrew Simons (playing black after winning the nigiri) was comfortably ahead. However it was a quite remarkable game, with big exchanges and ko fights continuing right up to move 300. After eight hours, several overtime periods and a total of 352 moves (including passes), it was Andrew Kay who came out ahead by 2.5 points.

Sheffield

The first Sheffield Go Tournament was held in the city suburbs at Greenhill Library on Sunday 11th October.

It was surprisingly well attended (by 39 players), which meant the organisers could afford to award modest cash prizes to the winner and runner-up. Continuing his run of recent wins, the winner was Alistair Wall (2d) from Wanstead. The runner up was Cambridge's Paul Smith (1d). On three wins were local player Matt Marsh (5k), Colin MacLennan (9k Twickenham) and youth player Zaki Betesh (15k Cheadle Hulme School). Members of the large group of youth players from Cheadle Hume School were also awarded prizes for two wins (Jacob Haynes (15k), Daniel Gascoyne (18k), Tom Bradbury (19k) and Adam Powell (22k)). Lily Danson also won a prize for being the youngest female player in the tournament. In a 13 by 13 side tournament, the overall winner was 10-year-old Edmund Smith (8k) and 10-year-old Yusuf Hussain (22k) played the most games – both won small cash prizes.

London International Teams

The twice-yearly London International Teams match was back, on 17th October, after a break in the spring. This time it was held at the venue of the new West London Go Club, the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, near to Goldhawk Road underground station in Shepherd's Bush.

North London Go Club was the run-away winner, their A-team only dropping one game. This meant they had won the last three such team tournaments. Cambridge was second by virtue of their team captain having more wins than that of the North London B-team, whilst a fierce battle

for last place was won by Nippon; Wanstead had to settle for fifth behind Central London in fourth. Individuals on three wins were Aja Huang, Michael Webster, Dan Sanduleac and Lawrence Ogden.

Wessex

Ngoc-Trang Cao (3d), the strong French player from Leamington Club, won the 47th Wessex Tournament on Sunday 25th October. She beat Jim Clare, Sandy Taylor and Richard Hunter to take the title. The only other player of the 34 entrants to win all three games was Roella Smith (9k) from Cambridge Juniors.

As before, the venue was St Mark's Community Centre in Bath and the day was very sunny, with a chance at lunch time to explore the city centre, with its baths and abbey, or watch the marathon runners on their arrival from Bristol.

Three Peaks

The Three Peaks went very well at its current location of the Commodore in Grange-over-Sands, though it was a very wet and windy weekend thanks to newly-named storm Abigail. Thirty-two players took part in the two day event on 14th and 15th November. However as the organiser, Bob Bagot, is moving away from the town, next year will either have a new organiser or a new venue.

Jitka Bartova (2d Leamington) won the tournament with five wins out of five. Richard Hunter (2d Bristol) came second with four wins. Other prizes were awarded to Eggert Fruchtenicht (10k) for five wins, Dave Horan (7k Chester) for four wins and Anthony Pitchford (10k Chester) for three out of four. Roger Daniel gallantly declined

the wine or chocolates offered to him for being the first to enter.



Marieke Ahlborn v Yueran Wang at BYGC

British Youth

Thanks to Andrew Russell, who is now teaching there, the 2015 British Youth Go Championship was held again at King Edward VI (Aston) School, Birmingham. However four smaller class rooms were used, instead of a bigger room and common room, so there was a different feel to the event, with the organiser's table in a different room to those used for playing. Also different was the change from the spring to the autumn (22nd November), thus missing a school year. This time, 34 competitors took part, aged from 6 to 17 and graded from 2d to 35k. This included two foreign players currently resident in the UK who could take part but not win the closed titles.

After five rounds four players were unbeaten. Marieke Ahlborn (2d), from Germany but living in Biddulph for a year, became the Handicap Champion. Jack Nolan (19k) from Cheadle Hulme declined to play an even game against Oscar Selby (6k) and settled for under-14 runner up. Oscar Selby had to play and beat Alex Terry (9k) in a rapid play-off game to determine the overall winner. Oscar was also winner in the under-14 and Alex in the under-16

section. Alex Benton won the under-18 section after winning a crucial game on the clock.

In a match in round 4, the top players from Cheadle Hulme School beat a team from Milton School, Cambridge, by two games to one to claim the Castledine Trophy, but Milton were recognised as the best junior school.

Also winning prizes for four wins in the handicap section were Zichen He, Zaki Betesh and Jason Brown. Daniel Atkinson and Andreas Ghica were awarded fighting spirit prizes. Alina Wolowczyk and Charlotte Bexfield won prizes for solving puzzles.

Section Winners (Runners Up)

- Youth Champion: Oscar Selby (Alex Terry)
- U18: Alex Benton (Kapriel Chiarini)
- U16: Alex Terry (Hasan Nisar)
- U14: Oscar Selby (Jack Nolan)
- U12: Edmund Smith (Aidan Wong)
- U10: Alexander Hsieh
- U8: Jianzhou Mei (Andreas Ghica)



Tim Hunt teaching (South London)

South London

The Bexfield family managed to have the winner in each of the two sections at the South London Tournament on 28th November. Alison (1d) won the four-player teachers' section and Charlotte (10k) won the 16-player handicap section. Both wins were awarded by the lowest grade tie-break, Alison from Alex Rix and Tim Hunt, and Charlotte from Paolo Capriotti (5k Nottingham). The lowest graded players on two wins, who also won prizes, were David Siegwart, Ben Murphy, Francesco Chiarini and Ryan Nguyen. Like the International Teams, the event was held at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club and hence was more strictly a West London event, especially as West London Go Club generously donated some of the prizes. As in previous years the morning was spent with teaching sessions for the 16 students led by four dan players, including Nick Krempel who was replaced in the tournament by top-graded student Bruce Tinton.



Ruizhu Wu v Guoqiang Sun (Coventry)

Coventry

Local club player Ruizhu Wu (5d) won the Coventry Tournament at Warwick University on 5th December. He beat Guoqiang Sun (5d), also

from Warwick, into second place by winning their game in the final round. Former club organiser Bruno Poltronieri (4d Cambridge) took third place. Andre Cockburn (6k Nottingham) won all three games, as did Simon Andre (8k Leicester). Edmund Smith (8k Cambridge) took the junior prize.

Thanks to storm Desmond it was a rather windy but fine day. There had been a late start, due to the car delivering sets getting stuck in road works on the A45. However the time table was caught up and the 38 players were able to leave by the advertised 19:00, even if they stayed for the prize-giving.

British Championship Game 2

The second game in this year's Title Match, between Andrew Kay and Andrew Simons, was played at Andrew Simon's house in Milton near Cambridge on Saturday 12th December. As usual there was a live relay on KGS thanks to Matt Marsh and live online game analysis by Matthew Macfadyen using a clone of the broadcast.

The game started off rather steadily at 10:00, Andrew Kay dressed in a suit and Andrew Simons less formally. There was a break for pork belly lunch at a local restaurant, before continuing up to an 18:00 finish. Matthew Macfadyen confidently predicted that Andrew Simons, as White, did not need the komi to win, despite several of the 80 or so onlookers thinking Black was winning. In the last moves four white stones were captured after a ko and it ended up that Andrew

Simons did need the komi to win by 2.5, the same margin as in the first game.

Because of difficulties scheduling the games, the match has been cut to best of three not five, so the next game will be the decider.

Edinburgh Christmas

This year Edinburgh held their tournament very near in date to the festival it is named after. It was held on Saturday 19th December as their proposed earlier date fell foul to a problem with the availability of their new venue. This was St Columba's by the Castle Episcopal Church Hall, which, as its name implies, is not far from Edinburgh Castle.

Tied at the top on three wins out of four and equal SOS were Henry (Hongyi) Chen (2d) from Glasgow and Polish player Jakub Ziomko (1d) from Aberdeen. Others of the 16 players getting prizes for three wins were Ben Lloyd (3k Edinburgh) and Ron Bell (5k Borders).



**Andrew Kay v Andrew Simons
(Game 2)**

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ISLE OF MAN GO FESTIVAL

Toby Manning

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The Isle of Man Go Festival is Dead: Long Live the Isle of Man Go Festival?

Many Go players will have heard with regret that the 2015 Isle of Man Go Festival was to be the last. The IOM Go Society have made it clear that they do not wish to be included in any further such arrangements, and it would be difficult to arrange such an event from the UK. In any case, attendance had been dropping, and accommodation becoming more difficult to book.

Toby Manning and Francis Roads would both like to keep the tradition alive, but in different forms.

Francis writes "My idea is to organise an informal Go holiday on the island. I have already sent a proposal along these lines to previous attendees at the festivals, and received about 40 expressions of interest. What I have in mind is for a group of Go players to choose to spend a week, or some lesser time, on the island, playing Go informally in evenings and on wet days, and enjoying the island at other times. Enthusiasts could of course play during the day if they wished. A self-paired continuous tournament with time limits could be included for those who value rated tournaments.

"The replies that I have received so far suggest holding such a holiday in June or July 2017 during term time, and away from any motor bike race times, when accommodation would be easier. This would not therefore be a family event. A Wednesday-to-Wednesday week would have the advantage that those who could not

spare a whole week could attend for a long or short weekend.

"I have travelled all over the island, but cannot think of a better venue than Port Erin, where recent festivals have been held. However, on this matter, and all others related to my proposal, I am open to suggestions. I intend to make such a visit to the island regardless of how many or how few players want to come as well. It would only require half a dozen to make the venture a success."

Toby Manning writes: "The Festival format seems to be good: a week-long festival, in a holiday resort, with lots of opportunities for non-Go-related activities, family-friendly, etc. However much we love the Isle of Man, it does have its drawbacks – namely accommodation issues, and the expense of getting there.

"I am therefore considering continuing the tradition, but on the mainland of Britain. My initial thoughts concerning a location are to select a British sea-side resort such as Scarborough, Llandudno or on the Isle of Wight where there is a reasonable hinterland for non-Go-playing activities, and to keep the date as late August: but nothing is definite, and all options are on the table.

"The main problem will be finding a suitable venue, and identifying an organiser who would then recruit a team.

"Please would anyone interested in moving these ideas forward get in touch."

□

SOLUTIONS TO THE NUMBERED PROBLEMS

The SGF files for these problems, showing a fuller set of lines, are to be found at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue174.

Solution to Problem 1

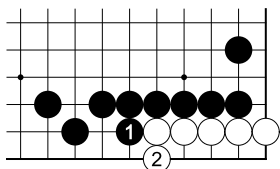


Diagram 1a (failure)

- ① If Black just plays on the end, the white group gets a live shape.

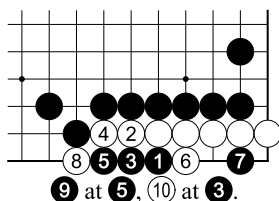


Diagram 1b (failure)

- ① This play sometimes works because if White blocks to its right there is not enough room for two eyes.

- ② However, this move lives.

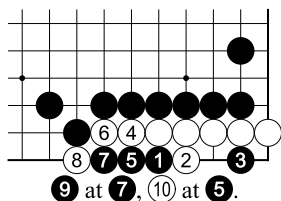


Diagram 1c (failure)

- ② to ⑩ As does this sequence.

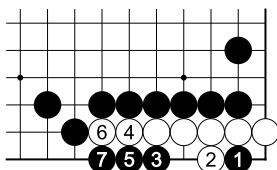


Diagram 1d (correct)

- ① The correct play in this classic problem is the point where White needs to play for two eyes.

- ② This answer is only one eye.

Solution to Problem 2

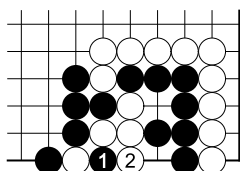


Diagram 2a (failure)

- ❶ Taking the one stone fails.
- ❷ The result is seki. Black can do better.

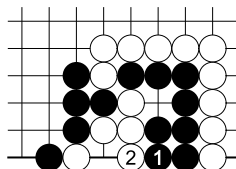


Diagram 2b (failure)

- ❶ This fails.

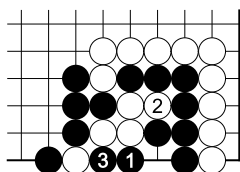


Diagram 2c (correct)

- ❶ This is the play that uses White's bad shape. All White's plays here are now self-atari.
- ❷ Like here.

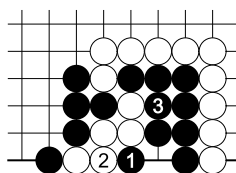


Diagram 2d (correct)

- ❷ And here.

Solution to Problem 3

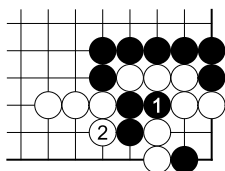


Diagram 3a (failure)

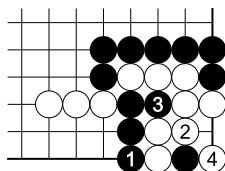


Diagram 3b (failure)

- ❶ It looks like all plays fail to capture. ❶ Or this play...
- ❷ Like so, for example. ❷ ... like so.

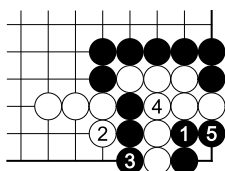


Diagram 3c (correct)

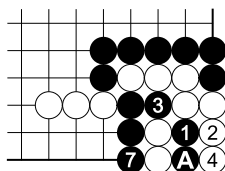


Diagram 3d (correct)

- ❶ However this is the play that catches White short of liberties.
- ❷ Or if White tries this atari...
- ❸ Captures the white stones. ❸ ... this throw-in kills the white group.

Solution to Problem 4

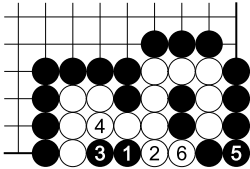


Diagram 4a (failure)

- ❶ Often the play that threatens the snap-back is correct.
- ❷ But this reply stops the snap-back and traps two stones too.
- ❸ White lives.

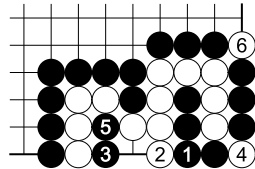


Diagram 4b (failure)

- ❶ Connecting here does not kill either.
- ❷ Capturing just four stones is not enough.
- ❸ Again White lives.

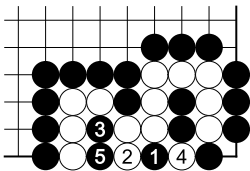


Diagram 4c (failure)

- ❶ This is sometimes a good shape.
- ❷ Again capturing four stones is not enough.

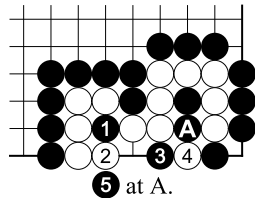


Diagram 4d (correct)

- ❶ The self-atari is the play that kills.
- ❷ Now this stops the second eye.

Solution to Problem 5

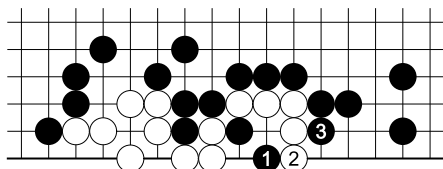


Diagram 5a (correct)

- ❶ This is the right first play, but it is Black's next play that is harder to see.
- ❷ If White descends the white stones quickly run out of liberties.
- ❸ It will be self-atari for White to play atari on the two black stones.

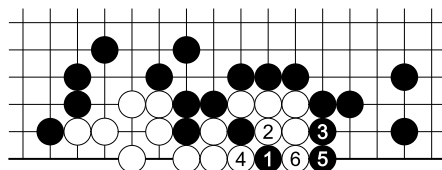


Diagram 5b (failure)

- ❷ This is where Black needs a good play...
- ❸ ... as this play fails.

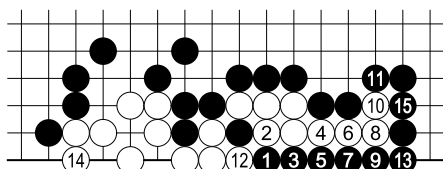


Diagram 5c (correct)

- ❸ So Black has to play here and chase White out.
- ❶ White has play here to ensure two eyes.
- ❷ White is short of liberties.

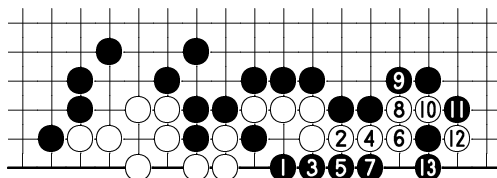


Diagram 5d (correct)

- ❷ White can try this.
- ❸ Again Black has to play along the edge.
- ❶ White is short of liberties but Black is not.

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for general discussion about Go in the UK (open to all).

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Use the links on the Help page of our website to join these lists.

COLLECTING GO XXVII: BOARDS

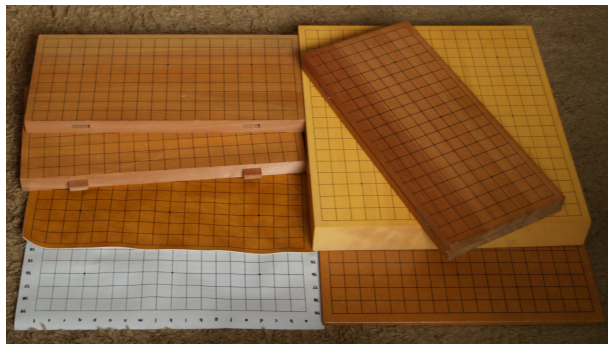
Tony Atkins

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Most British Go players own at least one Go board (or Goban – the Japanese word for a Go board). Maybe they have one for best, one for use in dirty places and one for travelling. Also, they may have ones with different numbers of lines for small board games or teaching.

Boards are usually wood, but can be in many other materials such as paper, cloth, vinyl, hardboard or mdf. Some can be rolled up, folded on hinges or come in two halves that can be joined using joints or magnets. Historically, very early Gobans were stone. For best use, most players would choose a pleasant-coloured wood board and maybe even a thick table board, say 58mm thick.

The photograph shows a variety of boards: cloth, vinyl, mdf, folding, jointed and a hiba wood table board.



What most Go players can only dream of is a proper floor Goban. Their prices are usually in three or four figures, depending on the wood used. In fact, two of the BGA trophies are floor Gobans: “The John Barrs Goban” for the British Champion and “The Eva Wilson Goban” awarded at the Women’s Weekend (which is sometimes held).

A lady at such a Goban is shown as one of four illustrations on a calendar produced for the 20th anniversary of the European Go and Cultural Centre. The artist is the young Slovakian woman known as Chidori.

(Collecting Go XXVII: Boards . . . continued from inside rear cover)

Some very special Gobans have been made over the years. One that was on display in a glass case at the World Amateur in Fukuoka, Japan in 1993 is shown. It has sides decorated in gold leaf, with golden Go bowls to match. It was too valuable for even a professional to play on.



Historically, some Gobans have also been decorated in other ways. The treasures of the Shoso-in at Nara in Japan are from the 8th Century and mostly from China. One of the treasures is a black lacquered wood Goban, with birds and other symbols of nature along the openwork sides. It has drawers for stones, which, unusually, are black and red and decorated with birds. It is shown here from a set of stamps, issued in Japan on 2nd November 2014, depicting some of the treasures.

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