

BRITISH

GO

JOURNAL



50th Wessex Tournament



The dinner: (L-R) Felicity Manning, Dave Chandler, Paul Atwell, Simon Atwell, Geoff Snelgrove, Jim Clare



The playing room

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EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the 190th British Go Journal.

In This Issue

The decade starts with a new time-slot and new venue for an old tournament: the Welwyn Garden City Tournament became the Harpenden Tournament last year and has now moved to January. Also in January we still have the Maidenhead Hitachi Tournament since Hitachi have not yet relocated their European Headquarters.

Tony Atkins continues to supply the journal with UK and World News as well as his lively articles for the back cover, which this time is all about the history of the London Open.

The Wessex Tournament held its 50th instantiation last year and Richard Hunter, who was instrumental in organising it, has provided us with a full report of the event.

There are also articles by Paul Barnard, Andrew Simons and John Tilley (who are all stalwarts of this august vehicle) which will entertain and inform all those who deign to peruse their contents.

Finally, sometime contributor to our organ the anonymous Mr Stupid regales us with a tale of derring-do which should bring heart to the love-lorn Go player.

Bob Scantlebury

Credits

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

Contributions: Tony Atkins, Paul Barnard, Richard Hunter, Liu Yajie, Toby Manning, Andrew Simons, and John Tilley,

Photographs: *Front cover*, Matthew Macfadyen receiving his gold cup. All other photographs in this edition were provided by the article authors or sourced from the BGA website.

Proofreading: Tony Atkins, Barry Chandler, Mike Cockburn, Brent Cutts, Martin Harvey, Richard Hunter, Pat Ridley, and Nick Wedd.

HOW I MET MY WIFE

Mr Stupid

Decades ago, back when the following events happened, the Central London Go Club met in an upstairs club room in the IVC building in Covent Garden. There was a bar in the basement, the location was superb, and on Friday nights and Saturday afternoons there would be perhaps 20 Go players at the club. I was usually one of them, and one Friday I looked up from my game to see two beautiful young women, one even better looking than the other, standing in the doorway to the club room, looking in with slightly bemused expressions on their faces.

The two women in question had met up that night to see a show in the West End, as they sometimes did, but had not managed to get the tickets they had expected. So, they decided to go to the IVC building and get a drink there, where they could hope not to be pestered by hopeful young men. On their way in to the building, they had looked up at the windows to the club room, and seen lots of men sitting quietly, looking down. Curious, the two women had gone in and got themselves drinks, and with nothing better to do, they had wandered upstairs to see what was going on there. Not surprisingly, the sight that lay before them appeared a little strange – what on Earth were all these men doing on a Friday night in London solemnly and silently gazing at those funny black and white things?

Mindful of the fact that British Go needed more female players, on seeing two potential recruits I immediately resigned my game and leapt over and ushered the two young ladies in. I sat them down at a

vacant board, and in the absence of a convenient chair for myself, I knelt by the board and started teaching them the game. It was soon clear that they were not English, for not only did they have slightly ‘foreign’ accents, they spoke to each other in some other language that I didn’t know. However, I pressed on with a quick explanation of the rules and example moves, showing them enough to get started, and had them play each other, continuing to teach them as best I could.

It was some weeks later that I was told something about the nature of the communications between the women, that had interspersed my enthusiastic exposition of the game. They went something like:

- “What the hell is this stupid game?”
- “How can we get out of here without being rude?”
- “How long is he going to go on for?”
- “Surely to god his knees must be hurting and he’ll be forced to give us a break soon?”
- “I wish I’d bought something stronger than a little glass of wine!”
- “How can he not see that we don’t care?”
- “Can we just stand up and leave?”

Eventually, they escaped my teaching and made their exit, and I went back to playing Go, satisfied that I had done my bit to promote the game

that evening, even if my efforts had not actually resulted in two new enthusiastic BGA members.

The following Friday I was back at the club when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw the door open and someone peer in. I looked up, and to my surprise, the better looking woman from the previous week was standing there! She appeared to be looking my way, and as I started to process the surprising fact that she had come back, she smiled a brilliant smile and waved. So I looked round the other way, curious to see who she was waving at – it obviously couldn't be me; attractive young women just did not wave at me. Ever!

I didn't see anyone responding to her wave, so I just assumed I had missed something. I glanced back at her, and saw that the smile had gone. Perhaps the Go player she had waved at, whoever he was, had made a rude gesture at her? Whatever, it was none of my business, so I turned my attention back to my game, trying to find a ko threat.

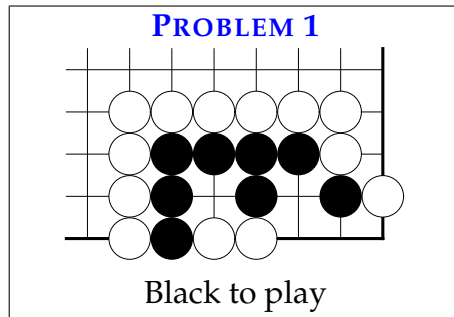
Slowly it dawned on me that it was just possible that she had, in fact, been waving at me! Maybe she wanted another Go lesson? Maybe my efforts

the previous week had actually been successful? I looked back up to see the door closing, and through the glass panel, there was the sight of her heading down the short corridor to the stairs. So I was right; she wasn't interested. Hmm. . . But maybe I had better go and check?

I resigned my game and chased after her, catching up with her just as she left the building. I managed to get out, "Sorry, I. . ." before she informed me, with a considerable degree of animation, that I was an idiot. She went on to review my qualities in respect of that, and described them both in quantitative and qualitative terms. She then pointed out how rude I had been to ignore her, and how embarrassing it had been for her.

I just stood there, totally crestfallen, but still not really understanding. Did she want more lessons or not? After a while, being the wonderful person she was – and is – she took pity on me and told me, to my absolute astonishment, that she had, in fact, come to see me. Apparently she had liked something about the way my hands had manipulated the stones. Weird! We were married within a year.

I never did get her to play Go.



WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

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Chile Match

On 1st September, thanks to Mike Cockburn and a Chilean friend, three young players from Harpenden played an online match against juniors from a club in Punta Arenas. There were wins for Oliver Bardsley (against Santiago Escarate 18k) and Ellis Martin (Pablo Gajardo 21k), but Nick Evans lost his game to Juan Pablo Tafra (21k).

Confucius Cup

Previously sponsoring the Irish Open, the Confucius Institute restarted their support with a new event, held on the last weekend in September at University College in Dublin. Being a European Grand Prix event, several of the 27 players were from overseas. Young-Sam Kim (8d) was unbeaten to win the event, with Pavol Lisy, Dominik Boviz and Benjamin Drean-Guenazia placed next. Romania's Dragos Minjina (5k) was the only player to win four out of five, whilst Matei Garcia (1k) was the top player from Ireland, and UK players Bruno Poltronieri (3d) and Jakub Ziomko (1d) won three.

Pandanet

For the tenth season of the Pandanet Go European Team Championship, the UK team remained in the B-League, the second of four leagues. The first match on 1st October was against a strong Swedish team. Jamie Taylor was our only win by resignation against Lova Wählén (1d). Bruno Poltronieri lost to Charlie Åkerblom (5d) by 18.5, Alex Kent lost to Martin Li (4d) by resignation and

Des Cann lost to Erik Ouchterlony (4d) on time.

Four Tuesdays later saw a match against Turkey, which produced some entertaining games. The British team won three to take their first win of the season. Bruno Poltronieri was the losing player, by resignation to Emre Polat (5d). Andrew Simons beat Denis Karadaban (5d) by a comfy 14.5 points in the end, Jon Diamond managed to win by 5.5 points against Cagdas Yeloglu (2d) and Jamie Taylor was very surprised to win by 1.5 points against Kaan Malçok (2d).

The 19th November match saw the team get a great win against the Netherlands, putting the team up to fifth out of ten. Andrew Simons beat Filip Vander Stappen (5d), Bruno Poltronieri beat Herman Hiddema (4d) and Alex Kent beat Gelmer Bouwman (3d), all by resignation, whereas Jon Diamond lost to Merijn de Jong (3d).

In the fourth match of the season, on 17th December, our team (the same players as the previous match) managed a draw against Finland, after a late substitution of a weaker player by them. First to finish was Jon who had an easy game for a change, this one against Johanna Tuominen. Bruno lost by resignation against Vesa Laatikainen and Alex resigned to Mikko Siukola. The last game to finish, lasting just under three hours, was that between Andrew and Javier-Aleksi Savolainen. Andrew managed to hang on to his lead to win by 7.5 points to make the match a draw, moving the team up to a very

credible fourth place behind Italy, Turkey and leaders Serbia.

Youth Teams

Team captain Alison Bexfield elected to field the strongest members of the youth squad for the first match of the new season on Saturday 16th November. The team of Yeuran Wang (3d), Bill Shen (1d), Edmund Smith (3k), Daniel Yang (1d) and George Han (3k) fought valiantly against top seeds Russia A, but in the end the match went according to grade (although George only lost by 3.5) and the all-dan Russian team won all five games.

On 14th December the team faced Netherlands. The Under-20 game had been played earlier, with Tom Bradbury (2k) beating Yuki de Groot (3k). On the day the team won all remaining boards to win the match. Well done to Scott Cobbold, Caleb Monk, Alexander Timperi and Yanyi Xiong, the closest game was 45.5 points.

European

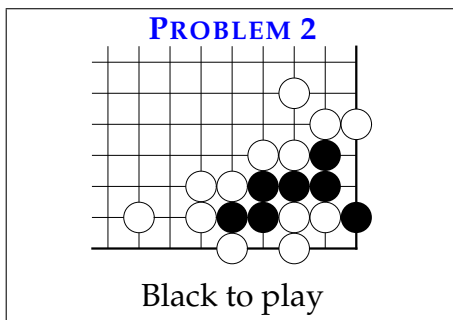
The European Women's Championship was held on the first weekend of September in Trier, Germany, with 36 ladies from eleven countries. Ariane Ougier (3d) of France became the new champion, ahead of the strong Russian players Dina Burdakova and Natalia Kovaleva.

The European Student Championship at the end of September was held at the city hall in Kiev; it was won by Czechia's Lukas Podpera (7d).

Pair Go

The International Amateur Pair Go Championship was held as normal in Tokyo, on the 7th and 8th December. It was won this time by Lee Ru Bi and Hur Young Rak of Korea. Second was a Japan pair and third was the pair from China. The USA's Tina Li and Aaron Ye managed ninth; Elivina Kalsberg and Stepan Trubitsin of Russia took sixteenth.

□



THE 50th WESSEX TOURNAMENT

Richard Hunter



Paul Atwell cutting the cake

The Wessex Tournament celebrated its 50th edition by making 2019 a special two-day event. Sponsorship from the T Mark Hall Foundation allowed us to choose the nice, but expensive, venue of the Bristol Village Hotel, in Patchway just north of Bristol. Fittingly T Mark had been a member of Bristol Go Club, a great fan of lightning Go, and a four-time winner of the Wessex.

The main event on the Saturday was the T Mark Hall Lightning, played with handicaps, with 18 players in two divisions. Each division was all-play-all for nine rounds with one player taking a bye each round because of the odd number. The lightning was won by Peikai Xue, who won 8/8 games and also defeated Carl Roll (also 8/8) in the playoff between

the two division winners. For those not playing in the Lightning, there were kyu-level teaching sessions. I taught the DDKs and Youngjin Noh taught the SDKs. I had prepared material on my iPad, which was mirrored on the wall-mounted TV screen. Participants were seated at a long table that had Go sets for small-group discussions. We had three roughly hour-long sessions with breaks in between. That was the longest Go teaching event I have ever run and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

In 1970, at a meeting in August at the Bristol Omnibus Social Club, Bristol Go Club proposed holding a tournament because there were very few in the UK at that time. The 1st Wessex was a four-round tournament held in Marlborough town hall. The venue was suggested by Dave Chandler, the mayor of Marlborough and a member of BGC. The Wessex trophy was donated by Robnor Paints Ltd of Swindon¹, thanks to Geoff Snelgrove, another member of BGC, who was company secretary and one of the directors. We were delighted to make contact with these two gentlemen, who were our special guests of honour at the Saturday evening meal. How do you re-establish contact with people after several decades? Paul Atwell, who also attended the 1970 meeting as BGC treasurer, asked the town hall, his details were forwarded, and he was contacted by his old friends.

¹Robnor is spelt Radnor (probably a misspelling) in the handwritten AGM minutes dated 10/2/1971. Robnor Resinlab in Swindon, a manufacturer of paints etc, exists today and its year of establishment is given as 1960.

At the dinner, they were presented with folders of printouts and scans of Wessex Memories, including the attendance list for the August meeting and the 1st Wessex Tournament, which they had both signed. Unfortunately, Francis Roads, who had also signed the 1st Wessex attendance list, was unable to travel to the 50th. Dave and Geoff married two sisters. Their wives Jo and Janet did the catering for the first Wessex, and some later ones though Dave was not sure how many. Paul Atwell's wife joined the catering team as the number of attendees grew and later she took over. Sadly, Janet Snelgrove is now deceased, but Jo Chandler is still alive.



Alexander Timperi receiving the youngest player prize

A very special award was presented to Paul Atwell for 50 years of hard

work at the Wessex: a copy of Monkey Jump Workshop, signed by me as the author and president of Bristol Go Club; Toby Manning, BGA president; Dave and Geoff; and several other people involved in organising the Wessex over the years. Paul was involved in the organisation of the first Wessex, but was unable to play in it because he had to work that day. He was also involved in every Wessex thereafter, including organising the catering which was a feature of the tournaments held in Marlborough, as I am sure many of the older readers will remember. I went to Marlborough once only, to the 7th Wessex in 1976, together with some others from Oxford. Also at that tournament was my brother Derek, from Reading. I think that was the only tournament we both attended. Other signatures on the 7th attendance list, to mention just a few notable ones, include Stuart Dowsey, London Go Centre; Toby Manning, Bristol; D. Chandler, Bristol; T Mark Hall of Bristol/LGC/Anyone else who will have me; and John Fairbairn, LGC.

The 50th Wessex Tournament was held on Sunday October 27th after the clocks went back, as usual. This year it was four rounds like all the early editions. 56 players participated, including a ghost, because some players missed one or more rounds. The bar was at 3 dan, and there was a good field of dans, SDKs, and DDKs, including seven under-18s. Games were played using Fischer Time of 30 minutes + 10 seconds per move. As a result, none of the games over-ran, and the tournament kept to the schedule. Nobody above the bar won all four games; the three top players each got three wins. The trophy was awarded to joint winners,

Zheng Li and Zeyu Qiu, with Andrew Simons just missing out in third. In addition, there were special prizes this year, thanks to the TMHF and Guo Juan's Internet Go School. Guo Juan provided credit vouchers for kyu players and the TMHF enabled us to buy more and nicer cups and plaques than usual. There were prizes for all players with four or three wins, with those on four being David King (4k Bath), Eike Mueller (11k Bath), and Joseph Curtis (17k Cheadle Hulme). Additional prizes were:

- Best Performance by a 10 kyu and over: Joseph Curtis and Rahul Surapaneni
- Youngest Player: Alexander Timperi (aged 8)
- Director's Award: Gene Wong

A special award was given to a player who had to leave before the prize giving: Matthew Macfadyen received a gold cup for winning the Wessex the most times (seven).

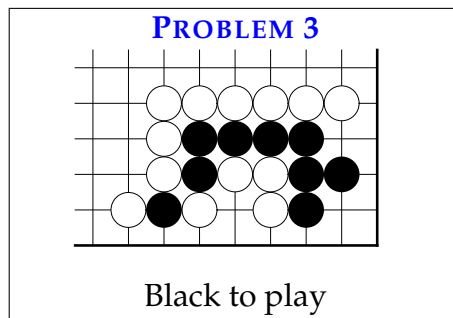
The Wessex Memories on display over the weekend included a photograph

of Paul Atwell cutting a cake at the 21st Wessex². So for the 50th we also had a cake, made and decorated with a Go kanji by Margaret Williams, the wife of organiser Colin Williams. The memories also included many old photographs, featuring faces that several players recognised, and newspaper cuttings.

I think it was a wonderful event and we hope everyone enjoyed it.



Joint winners: Zheng Li and Zeyu Qiu



²See <http://www.britgo.org/bgj/bgj081>

DOUBLE SEKI?

Paul Barnard

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It was late evening at the regular club meet. There was only one game still in progress, and it was in the very final stages. Two club members were standing watching it with interest, albeit waiting to take the board and stones home, for it was close. It was an 8-stone game. Black had played well, and the score was probably slightly in his favour as the end-of-game dame-filling started.

White was frustrated. He hadn't won a game all evening, and couldn't see a way to pull a rabbit out of a hat in this game. But as the top left black group lost a liberty in the dame-filling, White tried a trick and connected some of his 'dead' stones as shown in Diagram 1 with the triangled move. After all, one has to entertain the crowd, no? And just possibly, Black might fluff his response. Just possibly!

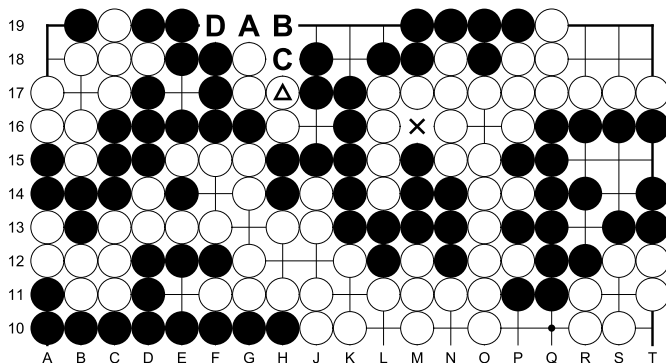


Diagram 1

Black was a cool customer, rarely showing much emotion concerning games of Go. Seeing White's move, however, there was a certain tightening of the shoulders. Not really flinching, but there was something. White looked up at the watchers, and was gratified to see a pair of grins. Or perhaps they were grimaces. But some entertainment was being provided.

The seconds ticked by; Black played at A, muttering something uncomplimentary – not loud enough for anyone to discern the words, but the sentiment was clear. In short, Black was not pleased. White

answered at B and then, after Black C, White took the ko with D, putting the Black stones into atari. With no ko threats big enough, it was all over, and White was markedly happier, though still not thrilled at winning in such a manner; it had, after all, been a trick that didn't really 'work'.

Unkindly rubbing salt into the wound in the guise of providing some valuable tuition, White proceeded to show how a Black response at B would have panned out instead of A. White would have had to play A, and then after Black C the white stones would have only had two liberties and White would have been unable

to put the black stones into atari, whereas Black could continue with an atari from the other side at J16 and thus won the skirmish. In fact, any of B/C/J16 would have done the job. Somehow, Black's dark expression did not lift given the suggestion that almost anything other than the move

played would have worked!

At this point, one of the onlookers suggested that had White waited for the liberty at M16 (marked with a cross) to go, the situation would have been very interesting, and the actual game was forgotten as a bit of collaborative analysis took place.

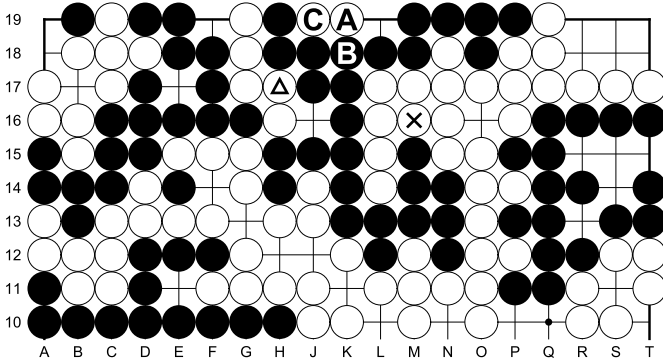


Diagram 2

Diagram 2 shows the conclusion, with the liberty in question filled, and the refutation to White's little trick played out (Black B, White A, Black C in Diagram 1). White can't put the stones on the left into atari due to shortage of liberties, but instead plays A, peeping at the cut. Black can play at J16 to put the five white stones into atari, but then White can cut at K18 and capture seven Black stones. If Black prevents this by connecting at B, White answers at C. This is the position in Diagram 2, and with only two liberties, Black cannot now put the five white stones into atari from the right either. He can capture the two white stones at A and C, but White will just play back in, and Black will still only have two liberties. Seki. (Answering White A with C amounts to the same thing). Normally in a seki there are two groups, either with an eye each or

with neither group possessing an eye. Here there are two black groups, each with an eye, and an eyeless White group separating them. I'm not aware of any special name for this – could you call it a 'double seki'? If it has a name already, I would appreciate being educated accordingly. Not that the terminology would be hugely useful; a normal seki is unusual; I would guess at less that one in ten games. This flavour of seki must be very rare indeed; one in a thousand?

Of course, it didn't quite happen anyway. But what did happen, and the potential for this so-called double seki to have happened, serve to illustrate that dame filling isn't always trivial. As if such a reminder were needed. We have probably all had an 'interesting' experience; I've even written about it before (*Dame Disaster* in BGI 182).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Toby Manning

president@britgo.org



In the last BGJ Bob Scantlebury announced that he would be standing down within the next year as BGJ Editor. While Bob has done a magnificent job over the last 20 issues – his first was #171 – it is time to consider its future.

The British Go Journal was started by Jon Diamond in 1967 when it consisted of a set of back-and-white duplicated sheets; there were no diagrams (games were described in algebraic notation, e.g. B4 D3). It was produced on a manual typewriter and reproduced using a 'Roneo' duplicating machine. But since then it has gone from strength to strength, as the layout, production values and overall quality have improved and colour was introduced. Overall there has been around 20 Editors (and an uncountable number of people who have assisted in its production).

Council has identified three possible ways forward: to continue with the Journal, to convert to a 'Yearbook' and to completely ditch print medium.

Continuing with the Journal would be the simple solution – provided a new

Editor steps forward. Both France (3 times per year) and Germany (6 times per year) produce a regular Journal.

The concept of a 'Yearbook' is that we would produce a document of record each year – containing not only a record of what the BGA has done, but also other issues of note, including the British Championship matches. We would, of course, still need a new Editor, but it may be easier to find one for a Yearbook than for a regular Journal. The Nederlandse Go Bond converted from a regular Journal to a Yearbook a few years ago.

The third option is to completely ditch the idea of using print and to go totally electronic. This is the option adopted by the American Go Association, which produces the 'E-Journal' two or three times a week.

The Journal currently costs around £2.50 per person per issue to produce (this includes postage) so if we stopped producing the Journal then membership subscriptions would be significantly reduced (and we would need to make arrangements for those who have paid subscriptions in advance, probably crediting such people with additional time on their subs).

Council has had preliminary discussions about the Journal's future, but we want to hear your views; I expect there will be a discussion about it at the AGM in April. Meanwhile, if you are interested in taking over as Editor, I would be pleased to hear from you.

□

SOBA GO

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In a recent exchange on the Go website 'Life in 19x19', Knotwilg and John Fairbairn discussed soba Go and John made the following observation:

This not only calls into question the long favoured Japanese style of soba Go (or compromise Go or quid-pro-quo Go), Ohashi believes it is in this area that Japanese players need to make changes in order to challenge Chinese and Korean players.

In fact I recall Wang Xi making this point in a long and detailed article in Weiqi Tiandi long before AI bots were even a gleam in the eye. He specifically trashed the concept of soba Go and specifically said the Chinese and Koreans now went for the percentage play. Recent history seems to have justified that view. It seems that greed is good in Go.

I went looking up <https://senseis.xmp.net/?Souba> to understand the point made here.

To quote that website:

If a player makes a mistake leading to a bad position the pro may correct the mistake and show a natural resulting position and call this souba. There is an implication that this is the best both players can do in the situation.

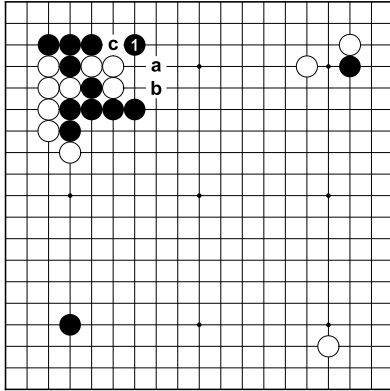
'Soba Go' then means: 'to play the best sequence in each position' and the traditional assumption is that this is also the best thing to do in the situation.

This is not my understanding of soba. I see it more as 'good enough' or 'reasonable' and a fairly standard and equitable exchange. Soba is never going to win move of the year. I think I read some article by John in GoGoD comparing it to accounting; lose a bit

here, gain an equivalent bit there, so the end position is as good as the start position. So you maintain a balance, and then if your opponent makes a mistake you take a lead, and then you keep playing soba to maintain the lead. You are not pushing the boundary of unreasonableness or overplay seeking to proactively take the lead which comes with the risk of getting punished if your move was indeed too much (which you probably don't even know, just have a feeling). The traditional Japanese style is the risk-averse soba, whereas someone like Lee Sedol is the Korean risk-taking trying to win, not just trying not to lose.

I also recall some quote from Hane Naoki about how he tries to play the 80% move (number not guaranteed, but it was a fair bit less than 100), where 80% doesn't refer to a win %. Rather 100% would be the most efficient and totally optimal move (so super-strong-bot win % remains unchanged at whatever it is between 0 and 100), but possibly really complicated with chances to backfire if you make the slightest mistake. Trying to find the boundary of the 100% move, and not trying to get even more (let's call it the 110% move if your opponent doesn't punish it, but actually it is an overplay so it could end up as a 20% move) is very hard. So Hane is content to stay well away from it and play 'good enough', whereas the Korean/Chinese style (and Go Seigen style), and now AI style, is going for more efficiency and getting closer to that 100% line.

There was an interesting example of this on reddit recently, with someone asking for clarification about this position and explanation in Kageyama's *Lessons in the Fundamentals of Go* (taken from one of his games).



Kageyama's position

Kageyama writes:

Quote:

... a stronger amateur would glare at the position and play black 'a', for a larger capture. A professional, however, would find the threat of White 'c' after Black 'a' disquieting, regardless of whether it works immediately or not. To him Black 1 would be the natural and proper move, the only move to make.

1 or Black 'a'? Only an amateur would ask himself this question. A professional would simply dismiss the issue. Neither the intuitive school nor the profit school would give it a second thought. Here we can see another difference between amateur and professional.

Even before you ask an AI and it shreds Kageyama's argument, I find it rather dubious. First of all I now find the endless partition of Go

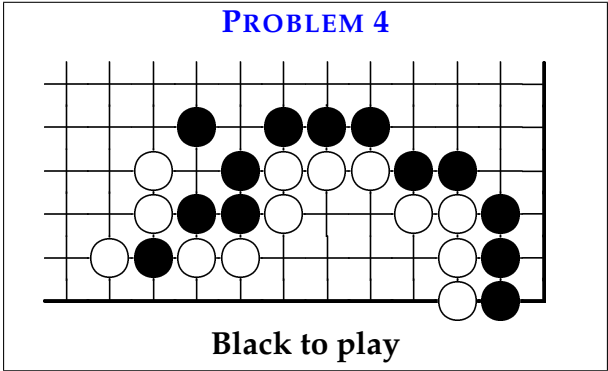
thinking and skill into amateur vs pro a bit tiresome and inaccurate. Many amateurs are stronger than pros (and in thinking not just: 'Oh this pro is old and can't read anymore but has a superior way of thinking to this strong-at-reading crude amateur 7d). But as the book was originally called Ama vs Pro (or whatever) in Japanese it's understandable. I bet there would be some Japanese pros even back in 1978 who wouldn't like **1** and prefer the greedy but bad aji of 'a'; maybe Sakata?

Unsurprisingly, many bots (I asked LZ 234, LZ 15b, MiniGo cormorant, Elf v2) strongly prefer Kageyama's bad 'a' over his 'only move' **1**, and I am strongly inclined to believe them over him, that it is objectively a better move. This seems to me to be a typical example of striving for optimal efficiency, rather than accepting a slightly slack result that minimises bad aji and the chance of you messing up later. If **1** really is the best move, Kageyama-agreeing-pros can smugly say 'I didn't even need to read the bad aji sequences which shows that 'a' is too much. Just based on my experience/intuition and judgement I can discern that the future problems it leaves are not worth the extra points.' (And less good forcing moves! Very important negative of the net is White 'b' next.) However, I suspect a lot of Korean pros would want to play 'a' and the philosophy is 'I want this better result, and I tried reading a way it is bad but couldn't find it, so go on, you have to prove to me it's not good or else I get more.' So Kageyama's net is like Hane's 80%, avoid risk for a result he judges 'good enough'. The bots say it's not good enough because they can detect e.g. a 0.3 points loss on move 40, and want 100% efficiency.

P.S. on a personal note I too like to strive for 100% efficiency, and spend a lot of time thinking about such interesting finer points. So if I am successful in this I'm quite often leading by move 70. But it's tiring and leaves me short of time so I mess up later and lose, as in the first game of the 2015 British Championship. I was very dispirited by that loss, so the next game I played more 'going through the motions', not really trying to win, just play some moves, try not to lose (somewhat soba-ish), and against my

fellow 4d opponent that was good enough to win. So although soba's not going to win any international pro tournaments these days, if us weakies can learn to emulate it it's good enough to win all of the games we play. And rationing your expenditure of mental resources so you can play Hane's 80% all game instead of 100% to start and 0% blunders at the end surely increases your overall chances to win the game.

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GO JOTTINGS 11

John Tilley

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A liberty filled, a life lost

Many years ago the English language Go magazine 'Go Review' coined the phrase 'A liberty filled, a life lost' – which has somehow stuck in my mind for more than half a century.

I never got around to giving the answers to three problems from the last two 'Go Jottings' and as these problems all share a common theme – the title of this column – that seems a very good reason to re-visit them. These problems also all have a 'certain something', they are not your ordinary problems, they are really worthy of study.

This column tries to make them accessible to those kyu players who didn't manage to solve them, perhaps because at first glance they look impossible. I've tried to show the thought processes behind solving each problem.

Once you have read through the problems, I suggest that you set the problems up on a board and play through them. When you have played through them on a board, try and visualise the problems and then play through them in your head.

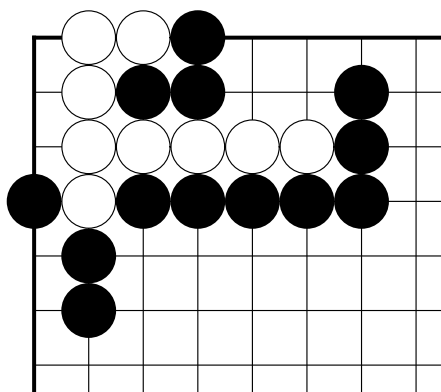


Diagram 1

Black to play. It looks like White has two eyes. There is one in the top left corner, and Black's three stones can't escape capture. So if the problem has a solution, then it has to do with the capture of these three stones.

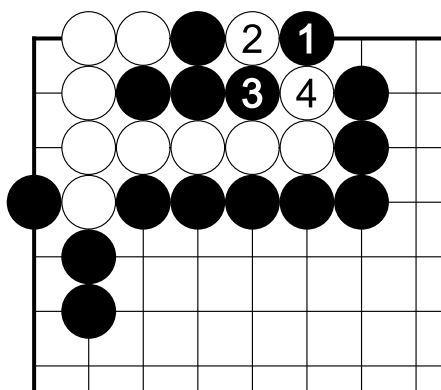


Diagram 2

If Black plays ① then White throws in with ②, Black captures with ③ and White plays atari with ④ to capture. You can try other Black moves on

the top, but the three Black stones can't escape. When White plays ④ his group still has three liberties, so he had enough liberties to play ④.

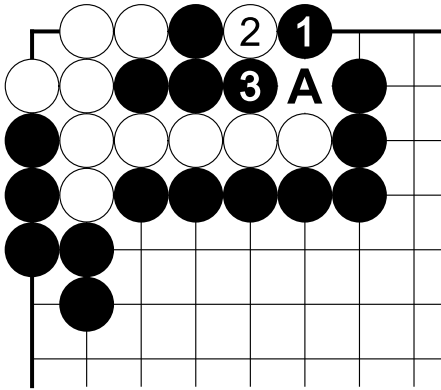


Diagram 3

A first thought might be to play ❶ here, White must answer to keep the eye and the sequence to ❷ follows and now White can't play 'A'. Yes! – but unfortunately Diagram 5 follows.

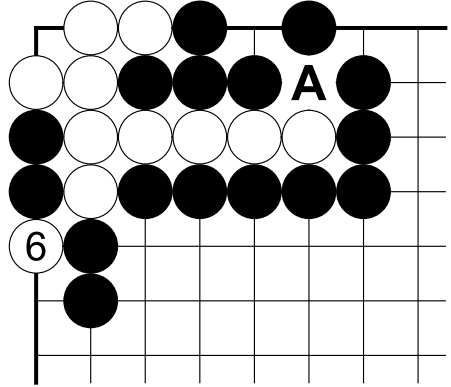


Diagram 5

Now we have changed the problem to reduce the number of White liberties by two, so when Black starts with ❶ here, White can't play at 'A' as he is putting himself in atari.

I am hoping that you can now see that the only possibility of a solution must be to find a move that reduces White's liberties in Diagram 1 by two and Black must do so in sente.

White can capture at ❸, he is now threatening a second eye by either playing just above ❸ or at 'A', which is now possible as he is not short of liberties.

So, ❶ in Diagram 4 is wrong. A little bit of lateral thinking is needed, which is Diagram 6.

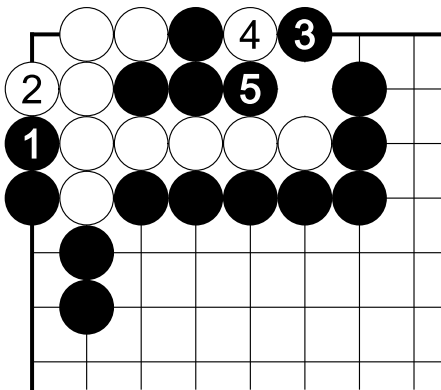


Diagram 4

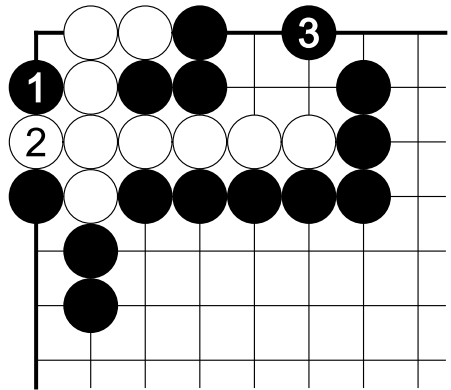


Diagram 6

① here is the key to success. If White were to now capture Black's three stones Black would play at ② and the three stone capture will only be one eye. White's only chance is to cut ① off with ② and Black can now play at ③.

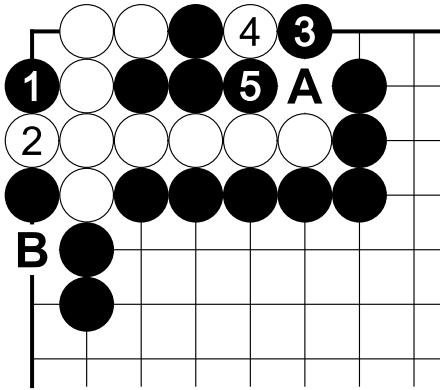


Diagram 7

White can try the throw-in of ④, but after ⑤ White only has two liberties and he can't play at 'A' because of a liberty shortage. The subtle difference between this sequence and that of Diagram 4 is that if White captures at 'B' now then there is no second eye in the corner.

When you play a single stone it reduces the number of liberties your opponent has by just the one. In diagram 6 Black's unlikely move of ① forced White to fill in one of his own liberties with ②, so Black managed to reduce the number of White liberties by two and in sente. Interesting.

Always be aware of how many liberties a string of stones has, if it's five or less then it's worth looking at very carefully.

Problem 2 - Black to play

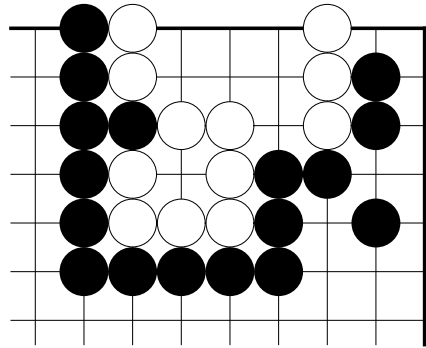


Diagram 1

White has one definite eye and it looks like a potential second eye at the top. This problem needs you to read five moves – there are seven possible Black moves inside White's top territory.

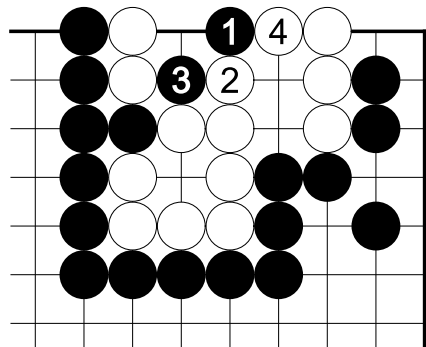


Diagram 2

① looks like the shape move, but ② hits the vital point and after Black's throw-in of ③ White can play the atari of ④ and live.

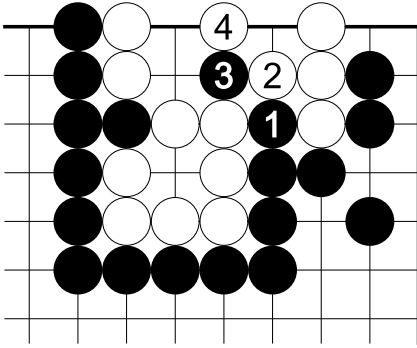


Diagram 3

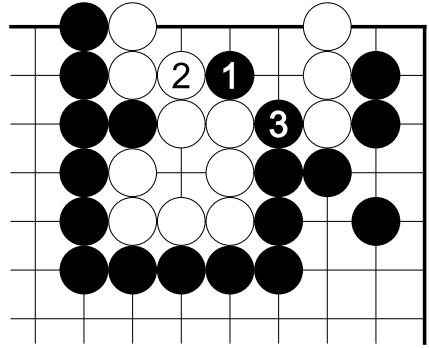


Diagram 5

① looks possible, but White can play ② and if Black cuts with ③, then after White ④ there is nothing Black can do.

① here is correct, White must stop the cut with ②, then Black ③. It might help you now to count the liberties of each string – White’s left string (with the eye) has two liberties, the right-hand one has three.

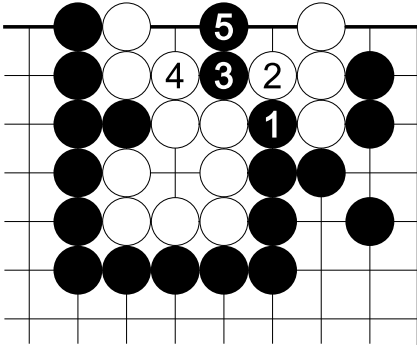


Diagram 4

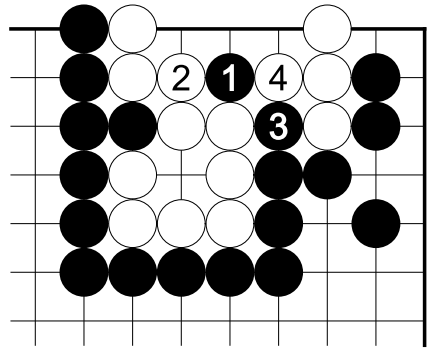


Diagram 6

Note that White musn’t play at ④ here, as Black has the fiendish reply of ⑤ available and White now has both strings in dame zumari. Count the liberties on the two White strings. This is of course the position that Black needs to reach, it is just a question of playing the moves in a different order – which is a valuable problem solving technique – but easier said than done!

White must cut with ④ here, but he is filling in one of his own liberties, so the right hand string has now been reduced to just two liberties. Seeing this is the crux of the problem.

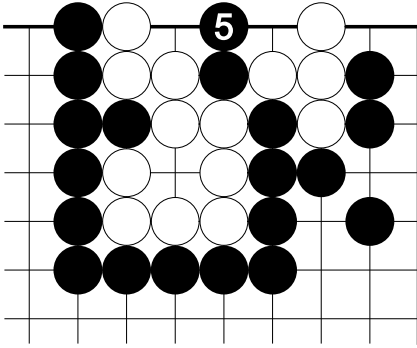


Diagram 7

Finally, Black just descends with ⑤ here and White has a liberty shortage with both his strings, as each string has but two. Go back to the start of this problem, White has three strings with two, four and four liberties.

Problem 3 - Black to play

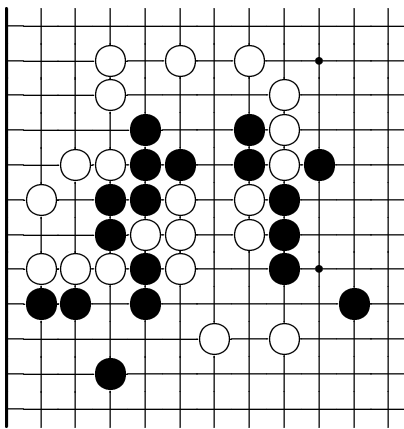


Diagram 1

Black's eight stones have been cut off and White's defensive wall looks quite solid. Personally I would not look at this twice in a game; Black's stones are 'obviously' captured.

There are two hints for this position; first the problem was originally in an article on 'cut at the waist of the knight's move' and second this article is about 'dame zumari'.

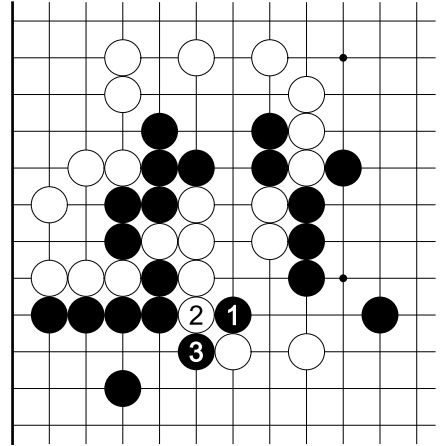


Diagram 2

'Cut at the waist of the knight's move' so ① here looks promising and is actually the only possibility.

White defends with ② and Black cuts with ③. Now count the number of liberties that White's strings have – each of the two inner strings has three.

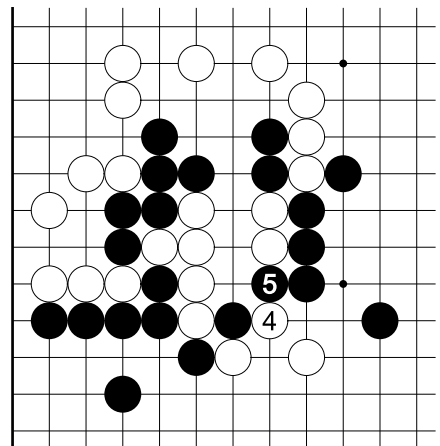


Diagram 3

White must capture one stone with ④, Black can play ⑤ and the scene is now set.

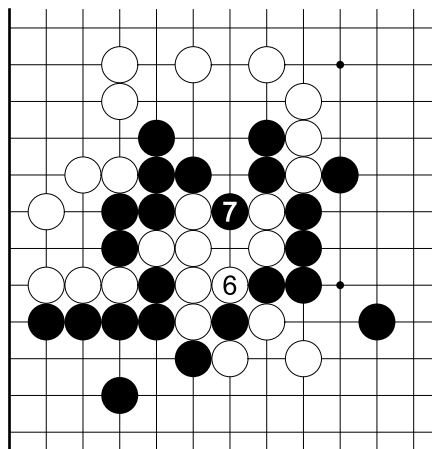


Diagram 4

When White captures at ⑥, Black strikes with ⑦ and White can't connect the two parts of his group due to a shortage of liberties – White's bamboo joint here is the cause of the liberty shortage.

A retrospective

I find these three problems all have a certain beauty; I would never have considered the first two as positions in a game as 'White is obviously alive.' Perhaps this article will encourage

you to look a little bit harder. Ask yourself how many tesuji pass you by in your games as you don't really look?

Problems 1 and 3 have been in my Go cuttings pile for some 50 years, Problem 2 only for a few years. The only one with a rating is Problem 1, which comes from a book by Maeda where he gave it a rating of 4-5 kyu. This does not mean a kyu player is expected to solve it in a game(!); I think only a strong dan player would spot this and solve it. A kyu player should be able to solve it given some minutes of effort; once it is presented as a problem then you know there is a solution, which makes it easier.

Problem 2, is again by Maeda – who was known as 'The God of Tsume-Go.' This problem appears in a collection of his best problems – it is described as a clear or serene or cold or skilful type of tsume-go, the translation is not easy. I still find this problem difficult, even knowing the answer.

Solving lots of easy tesuji or tsume-go problems helps you become stronger, as you learn the shapes and moves involved. These three problems are harder, but hopefully this article might open your eyes and inspire some further studies. With luck it won't frustrate too much.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL

The copy date for the next issue of the Journal is 17th 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.

THE BGA ANALYST

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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

UK NEWS

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

Swindon

The Swindon Tournament on 28th September took place at the now usual Conservative Club venue in Old Town. Peikai Xue (2d) from London was top of the 29 players, winning all three games. Jim Clare (1d Reading) was second on SOS tie-break from Swindon's Tony Putman (1k) and Christian Scarff (1k), with two wins. The only other player to win all three games was the London junior player Scott Cobbold (6k). Both he and Aidan Putman (1k Swindon) went home with 'prestigious' trophies, Aidan's for the 13x13 side event.



Sheffield Winner (R)

Sheffield

The following day, Sheffield Tournament, now in its fifth edition at Greenhill Library, attracted 36 players. Tetsuro Yoshitake (3d) from Nottingham was the winner with three wins. The next three places had to be separated by SOS to give second place to Toby Manning (1d Leicester), third to Richard Wheeldon (2k London) and fourth to Carl Roll (2k Nottingham). Winning all three games were Ashley Lester (7k Nottingham), Daffyd Robinson (13k Lincoln) and four from the Cheadle Hulme School group of eleven: Sam Barnett (13k), Amy Upton (13k), Morgan Pittaway (24k) and Jacob Rubert (29k).

Northern

On a pleasant autumn day, 12th October, Cheadle Hulme School very kindly again hosted the Northern. Of the 32 players, 11 were from the school including some who had only been playing since start of term. Two Chinese students from Sheffield dominated the event with Jingchen Sun (3d) winning and Haolin Cheng (1d) coming second. The Red Rose Shield was awarded for the last time as all space on it is full, to be replaced by a Goban that organiser Chris Kirkham was able to display. Prizes for winning all three games went to Russia's Grigorii Timofeev (6k), now at Manchester University, Lancaster's Frankie Higgs (14k) and local player Abdul-Ghani Farooqi (27k). The 13x13 side tournament saw two local winners: Megan Upton for most games (8) and Rahul Surapaneni for highest winning percentage (3/3).



Northern: Jingchen Sun receives the top prize from Chris Kirkham

Small Board

Twenty-five years ago Paul Smith and some others started the Cambridge Junior Chess and Go Club. In order to celebrate their first quarter century it was decided to run an event that would be attractive to both children and adults and so the UK Go Challenge Final for 2018-2019, whilst normally held in the summer, was combined with the 2019 British Small Board Championship, back after a five year gap. Both are played on 13x13.



Small Board Winner (L)

The venue, on Sunday 13th October, was the modern lofty hall of Storey's Field Centre in the newly constructed district of Eddington, with a separate room for relaxing and eating some of the large variety of cakes kindly provided by Andrea Smith and others in the family.

Having both events on together worked well with juniors able to play some games against adults, the top juniors having the chance of beating some of the top adults. However it was the strong local adults that dominated the championship. Because of the double elimination format, it took three games between the top two players to determine the winner: Tunyang Xie (4d), ahead of Zherui Xu (4d); third was Bruno Poltronieri (3d). Those of the 20 adult players who won four or more out of seven also won a prize.

Challenge

The UK Go Challenge Final included team matches, age group titles, the main title positions and seven rounds in all. Games were mostly against players of the same level, with draw masters Paul Smith and Tony Atkins managing to avoid assigning any handicap games for any of the 36 juniors. The champion school was

Sir John Lawes, Harpenden, and Harpenden Academy was the top primary school. Overall winner was George Han, second Edmund Smith and third Scott Cobbold. Louis Gringras won the Challengers' section.

Section Winners:

U16: Boys - David Baldwin

U14: Boys - Edmund Smith

U12: Boys - Oliver Bardsley

U10: Boys - George Han (Top Boy)

U8: Boys - Alexander Timperi

U16: Girls - Hilary Bexfield

U14: Girls - Julia Volovich

U12: Girls - Zoe Walters (Top Girl)

U10: Girls - Emily Oliviere

U8: Girls - Auden Oliviere



Challenge: Boys Under-16 Final

Wessex

The Wessex Tournament celebrated its 50th edition by making 2019 a special two-day event. Sponsorship from the T Mark Hall Foundation enabled the nice, but expensive, venue of the Bristol Village Hotel, in Patchway just

north of Bristol. Fittingly T Mark had been a member of Bristol Go Club, a great fan of lightning Go and a four-time winner of the Wessex.

The event on the Saturday afternoon was the T Mark Hall Lightning (played with handicaps). It was won by Peikai Xue, who defeated Carl Roll in the playoff between the two division winners; both received cups. There were also kyu-level teaching sessions taught by Richard Hunter and Youngjin Noh. That evening, 35 people enjoyed dinner.

The 50th Wessex itself was held on Sunday 27th, as usual after the clocks went back. This year it was four rounds like all early editions and 56 players participated. The bar was at 3d, with a good field of dans, SDKs, DDKs and seven juniors. Nobody above the bar won all four games; the trophy was awarded to joint winners, Zheng Li and Zeyu Qiu, with Andrew Simons just missing out in third, all on three wins. In addition, there were special prizes this year, thanks to the Foundation and Guo Juan's Internet Go School, going to all players with four or three wins. Those on four were David King (4k Bath), Eike Mueller (11k Bath) and Joseph Curtis (17k Cheadle Hulme). Special prizes were also awarded to youngsters Joseph Curtis and Rahul Surapaneni, Alexander Timperi and Gene Wong.

Guy Fawkes

The London Go Centre held a weekend of events at the start of November. The first, on Saturday 2nd, was the inaugural Guy Fawkes Tournament, with 21 players. There was only one player above the bar, Zeyu Qiu (5d), who won the event. The players winning three out of four

were Scott Cobbold (5k London), Francesco Chiarini (8k West London), Caleb Monk (11k Epsom), Joe Monk (13k Epsom) and Alexander Timperi (15k Imperial College).



Varsity Teams

Varsity Match

Later the same day the London Go Centre provided a neutral venue for this year's Varsity Match between Oxford and Cambridge universities. The three-player teams played three rounds, with Cambridge emerging the winners by six boards to three. Tony Tunyang Xie of Cambridge was the only one to win all three games.

International Teams

The final event of the weekend was the London International Teams on the Sunday. Sadly only four teams of two players took part, with Wanstead A taking the trophy for four games won. Wanstead B and Rest of the World won three and Japan two. Top scorers were Alistair Wall (1d) and Scott Cobbold (5k) who won all three games.

Three Peaks

Adrian Abrahams took over the running of this tournament (held on 2nd and 3rd November), but failure

to confirm the usual Wheatsheaf venue in Ingleton nearly meant it was cancelled. Luckily the more expensive scout hut was available and, despite problems with the computer and lack of trophies, the event went ahead successfully with 28 taking part. London's Peikai Xue (2d) won all five games to take the title. Andrew Morris (1k) from Liverpool came second. Eggert Fruchtenicht (9k) and, from the new Beverley club, Jack Cuffe (15k) each won four games. Naomi Jones (25k) of Beverley, on the other hand, won the Fighting Spirit Prize for propping up the results list.



Three Peaks Winner (R)

Coventry

On Saturday 16th November Warwick University again hosted the Coventry Tournament. This year there were 36 competitors, with local student Zheng Li (5d) winning the event. Youngster Jacob Zhang (3d) was second and Harold Wang (4d) was third. Another youngster Alexander Timperi (14k) was the only other player to win all three games.

Youth

The 2019 British Youth Go Championship was held in the marquee of Brownsover Hall, a hotel near Rugby, on 30th November. The central location attracted 55 competitors, aged from 6 to 17, though train strikes and motorway hold-ups delayed the start a little; ten of the original entries had to withdraw because of illness and other reasons. It was thanks to DeepMind, our youth Go sponsors, that such a good venue was available and all the competitors and adults enjoyed a very good buffet lunch.

Cheadle Hulme School proved they are the top British school for Go by both having the largest team (19) and by winning the Castledine Trophy, beating both Sir John Lawes School from Harpenden and James Gillespie's High School from Edinburgh. The Best Junior School was Harpenden Academy, beating James Gillespie's Primary School.

The Youth Champion was unbeaten Jayden Ng (1d) from Bromsgrove. The runners-up were Gene Wong (open section player) with four wins, Daniel Yang and George Han leading the group on three wins. The Beginners' Section winner was Cheadle Hulme's Ben Levy (34k), who won all five games. Winner of the Fighting Spirit prize was Erin Misselbrook (36k), also from Cheadle Hulme. All players on four wins were also rewarded with sweets. There were Open section winners in under-12 (Zhibo William Wang) and under-10 (Gene Wong).

Section winners (with runners-up in brackets):

U18: Jayden Ng (David Baldwin)

U16: Edmund Smith (Jonah Burnstone-Cresswell)

U14: Scott Cobbold (Alexander Hsieh)

U12: Zoe Walters (Emily Oliviere)

U10: Daniel Yang (George Han)

U8: Alexander Timperi (Yanyi Xiong)

British Championship

The first game of this year's British Championship title match took place in Nuneaton on Saturday 5th October. The match was between Andrew Kay and Andrew Simons, the two top-placed players from the Challenger's League. After an entertaining game for those watching the relay and Matthew Macfadyen's analysis on KGS, Andrew Kay came out on top, winning by resignation. The second game was played on Saturday 9th November in Cambridge.

Andrew Simons benefited from home advantage to win by 8.5. In the deciding game (held on 30th November), which was hosted by Tim Hunt in Milton Keynes, Andrew Kay managed to win by 18.5 to become British Champion for the fourth time, previously winning 2012 to 2014.

Edinburgh Christmas

After five years with attendance of 20 or fewer, this year's Edinburgh Christmas Tournament, at St Columba's by the Castle on 14th December, attracted 24 entrants. There

was a good spread of grades, with seven players above the bar, set at 2k. Winning all four to take the title was Matthew Scott (1d). Six players with three wins were awarded prizes: Joel Barrett (4k Manchester), Josh Gorman (4k Glasgow), Quinlan Morake (5k Glasgow), Yun Lu (8k Edinburgh), Frankie Higgs (11k Lancaster) and a visitor from Belgium, Alexandre Terefenko (6k). Nick Gotts (10k Edinburgh) also got a prize for being the highest DDK.

London Open

On the 28th December, dozens of people assembled in the capital for the London Open (the 46th), held this year for only the second time at the current London Go Centre. Despite the fact that more entrants were allowed this year (one hundred), there were a fair number of 'no-shows' which meant just 87 players actually took part. This was disappointing and unfair to the people on the waiting list who couldn't enter because the entry limit had been reached; organiser Gerry Gavigan will make sure that next year only those who have paid the full entry fee on booking will be guaranteed a place.



Go at LGC

Sixteen countries fielded players with ages ranging 'from seven to seventy-

seven'. The grades ranged from 7d to 16k; both stronger and weaker players were well represented with 28 dan players and 15 Double-digit kyus, six of whom were from Cheadle Hulme School (CHS). This year's professional was Catalin Taranu (5p) from Romania, and new British Champion Andrew Kay was also in attendance and reviewing games as he was not playing in the tournament.

Thirty-six players took part in the Pair-Go on Sunday evening, which is more than in previous years. Winners were Zeyu Qiu and Peikai Xue, who beat Marta and Davide Bernadis from Italy in the final.

Monday evening saw an efficiently run Lightning, featuring a group stage and a three-round knockout finals. London's Scott Cobbold (5k) was the winner. He beat the main event organiser, Gerry Gavigan (10k) in the final.

The last round of the Open was on the Tuesday, New Year's Eve, and two players caused excitement. One of these was unbeaten and, on winning the last round too, Sam Barnett (10k CHS) ended with a perfect seven wins. The other excitement was finding out whether there could be a British winner of the event after a gap of 32 years. Having lost to Lukas Podpera (7d) in round three, Daniel Hu (4d) won his sixth game and placed first to achieve this feat. Coming second by two SOS points was China's Zeyu Qiu (5d). Third was Lucas Neiryneck (5d France) who was rewarded by having his game against Daniel reviewed by Catalin before the prize ceremony.

At this, the best three players (2d) below the bar were recognised: Peikai Xue (London), Davide Bernadis (Italy) and Sandy Taylor (Cambridge).

Also rewarded were all those with five wins: Lukas Podpera (7d Czechia), Joerg Sonnenberger (1k Germany), Mikkel Kragh Mathiesen (1k Denmark), Quentin Rendu (2k France), Scott Cobbold (5k London), Richard Mullens (6k London City), Jan Adamek (7k Czechia), Christopher Loudoux (8k France), and the top DDKs Marek Labos (10k Slovakia) and on four wins Gerold Nicolassen (10k Netherlands).

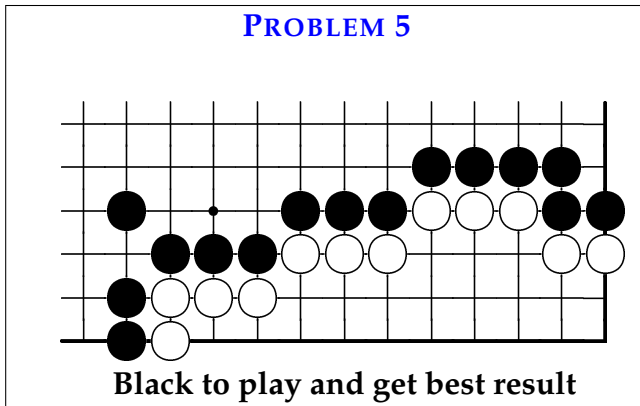
After the prizes there was a Rengo tournament (won by Christopher Loudoux of France, Joerg Sonnenberger of Germany and Alessandro Pace of Italy), before a meal and then a New Year celebration at the Go Centre.

There was general praise for the facilities and the atmosphere compared with the old venue (International Student House), because Go players had dedicated use of the building for the whole of the four days, which everyone enjoyed more. Also there are lots of interesting and cheap restaurants nearby, such as that where some of the CHS Team, with Yichun Zhao and Martin Harvey, are seen celebrating the seven wins of Sam (seated on the right).



CHS meal

□



BGA ANNOUNCEMENTS

FUTURE EVENTS

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

Oxford, Saturday 8th February

Oxford Novices, Saturday 8th February

Irish Go Congress, Dublin, Friday 28th February – Sunday 1st March

Trigantius, Cambridge, Saturday 7th March

European Youth, Croatia, Thursday 12th – Saturday 14th March

Isle of Skye, Portree, Skye, Saturday 14th – Sunday 15th March

Cheshire, Frodsham, Sunday 22nd March

British Go Congress, Eastwood near Nottingham, Friday 17th – Sunday 19th
April

Kyu Players' Weekend, LGC, Saturday 2nd – Sunday 3rd May

Bar-Low, LGC, Sunday 3rd May

Not the London Open, LGC, Saturday 23rd – Monday 25th May

Nottingham Kyu, May

Scottish Open, May

British Pair Go Championships, Hatfield, Saturday 6th June

Durham, Saturday 13th – Sunday 14th June

Welsh Open, Barmouth, Saturday 20th – Sunday 21st June

LGC = London Go Centre

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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/issue190.

Solution to Problem 1

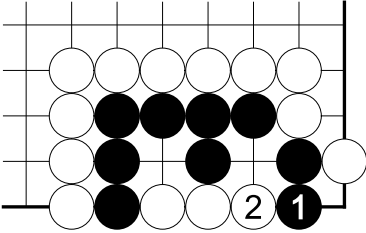


Diagram 1a (failure)

- ❶ This doesn't make the space big enough.
- ❷ Black dies.

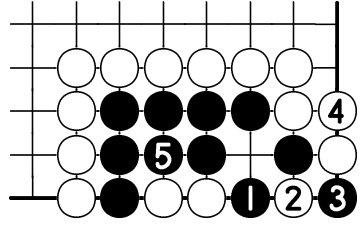


Diagram 1b (correct)

- ❶ This is the best Black can do.
- ❷ White has to play this way.
- ❸ This is a ko and Black has to find the first threat.

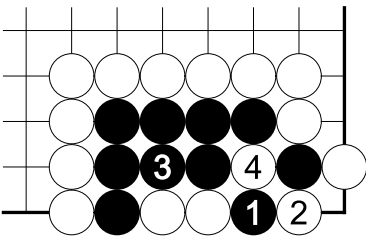


Diagram 1c (inferior for Black)

- ❸ This is also a ko, but Black has to win it twice.

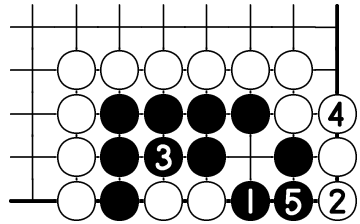


Diagram 1d (mistake by White)

- ❷ If White plays this way...
- ❸ ... Black lives unconditionally.

Solution to Problem 2

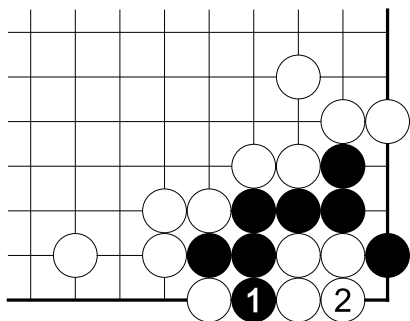


Diagram 2a (failure)

- ❶ To stop the three stones linking out, Black can try this.
- ❷ But White makes a killing shape and there is no eye on the right edge.

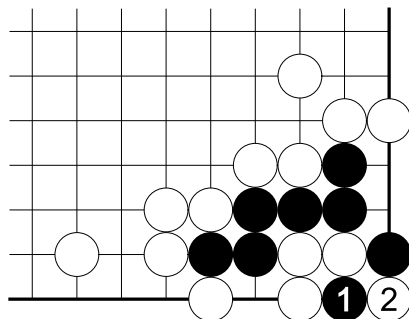


Diagram 2b (correct)

- ❶ So Black must start with this.
- ❷ This is a ko. The only way Black can live is by taking the ko and the three stones.

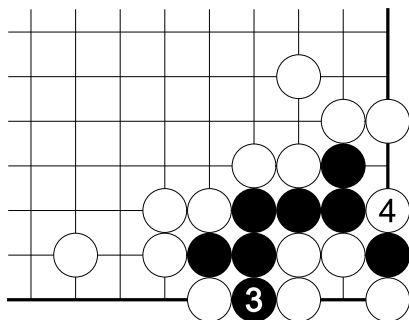


Diagram 2c (mistake by Black)

- ❷ This clearly fails for Black, so it has to be the ko.

Solution to Problem 3

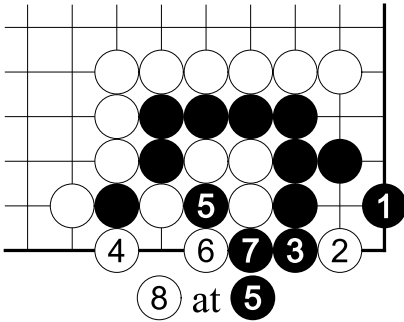


Diagram 3a (failure)

Black needs both 2-1 points or to capture something to live.

- ❶ If Black takes this 2-1...
- ❷ ... then the group dies.

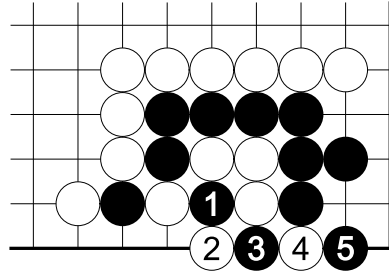


Diagram 3b (correct)

- ❶ Black should start with the throw-in.
- ❷ Black takes the other 2-1 point next.

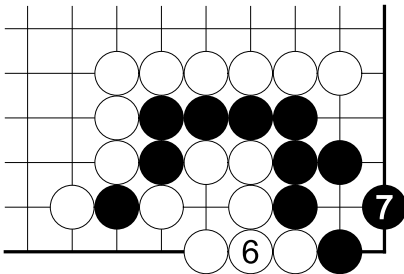


Diagram 3c (one option)

- ❷ Black lives unconditionally.

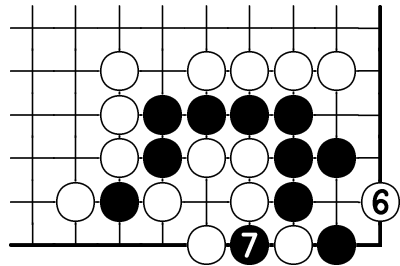


Diagram 3d (another option)

- ❷ It is a ko but White has to make the first ko threat.

Solution to Problem 4

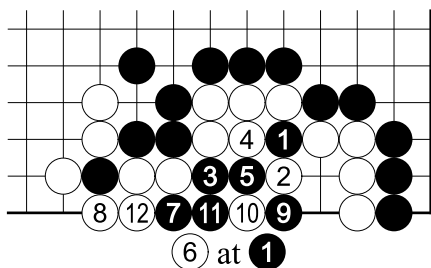


Diagram 4a (failure)

- ❶ This is not the correct cut.
- ❷ Black is out of liberties.

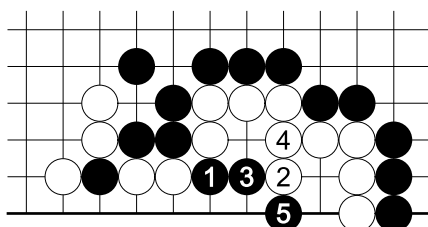


Diagram 4b (correct)

- ❶ This is the correct cut.

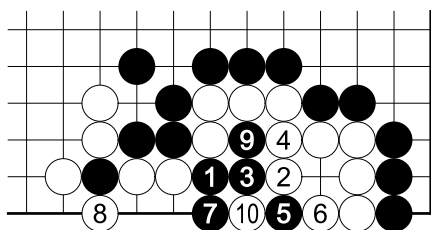


Diagram 4c (correct – continuation)

White can choose to make a seki or fight a ko.

- ❹ White can make an eye.
- ❷ It is a ko.

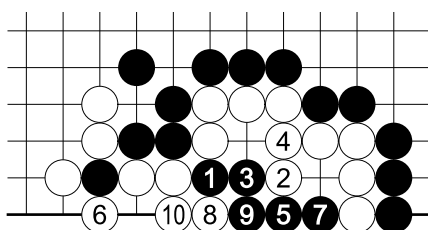


Diagram 4d (correct – variation)

- ❹ Capturing here loses the chance to make the eye.
- ❷ The white stones are alive in seki, but so are the black ones of course.

Solution to Problem 5

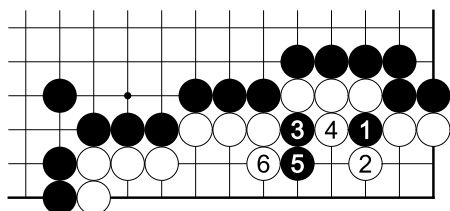


Diagram 5a (failure)

- ❶ This is the wrong cut.
- ❸ Black is going nowhere.

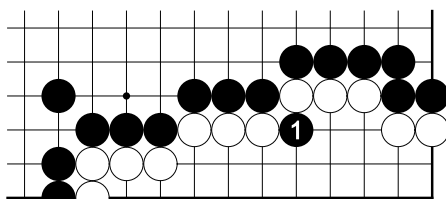


Diagram 5b (correct)

- ❶ This is the correct cut.

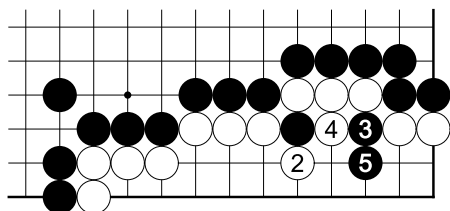


Diagram 5c (safe for White)

- ❷ If this atari, then Black can catch the corner stones, though White saves the bulk of the group.

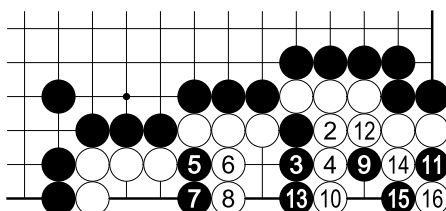


Diagram 5d (risky for White)

- ❷ This is harder to read out.
- ❶ This is the key move.
- ❶ This is a ko; White risks a large number of points by playing this way.

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Follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/britgo

Gotalk general discussion list: gotalk@britgo.org (open to all).

Youth Go discussion list: youth-go@britgo.org, intended for junior players and their parents, Go teachers, people who run junior Go clubs and tournaments, and youth Go organisers.

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

TOURNAMENT HISTORIES III: LONDON OPEN

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Ever since Paul Prescott and others from London founded the London Open Go Congress early in 1975, it has been the largest regular event in the UK, with sometimes more than 150 players, seldom at the hundred mark. It was originally eight rounds over four days of a weekend, at or near the year end, but in the current century has been reduced to seven rounds on the last four days of the year. Because of the year end, the events are numbered now by the old year even if entirely in the new. Three times in the 1990s there was an extra one-day rapid event attached to the weekend. It has always attracted around a third of its players from overseas and has been a regular part of the European circuit for strong players.



Go at IVC

The first event was at Imperial College, but by the second the original London Go Centre had opened and the event was there for the next three years. The event then moved to the three-storey Inter-Varsity Club in Covent Garden, where DDK players have happy memories of playing in the gloom of the basement. It was there for every year but one until 1989. The exception was the 14th, which was held at the Kenilworth Hotel near the British Museum as it was sponsored by Hoskyns Group. Highlights of this period included the visit of pro-level Chinese, who played the top players giving handicaps, and the introduction of the Lightning Tournament (of which the final was once played on a Heathrow-bound underground train).

In 1989 the venue was the Highbury Roundhouse, a community centre, where it remained until the millennium. The venue handily had parking, a house attached for the stay of visitors, and Bill Streeten's daughters selling sandwiches. Players from both the USA and Russia attended in 1989, but the latter caused controversy the following year in a dispute aided by the use of flexible komi. Both Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun and Hitachi were sponsors in this period, the latter thanks to a personal contact by organiser Harold Lee. Notable multiple winners in the 1990s were Shutai Zhang and Guo Juan. A two-round knock-out final was introduced in 1995, which caused complications when in 1998 it became part of the European Grand Prix (it was against their rules). Professionals Nam Chihyoung and Liu Yajie also visited that year.



Highbury Round House

From 2000, a new organising team changed the venue to the International Student House (ISH) and abolished the knockout. ISH stayed the venue for the next 18 editions, until the increasing cost of the venue caused it to move. ISH had the advantage of providing accommodation on site for visitors, but the event had to end before their New Year's Eve party. Sponsorship by Pandanet meant games were broadcast online and Winton Capital Management sponsored for three years. The professional visits became more regular with Guo Juan, Yuki Shigeno and Catalin Taranu all leading the teaching more than once. Since 2002 there has been an evening of Pair Go and the event now ends with an informal Rengo tournament, followed by a meal out and Go-playing party. Since 2014 the David Ward cup has been award to the top Brit.



Harold Lee and prize trove



ISH and JFK

The events at the end of 2018 and 2019 were held at the new London Go Centre and continue to be successful, even though the numbers of players taking part is restricted. All the usual features continue, including: Pair Go, Lightning, Rengo, professionals (such as Ali Jabarin and Catalin Taranu) and the meal.