

BRITISH

GO

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**Youth Match versus China: British player Yanyi Xiong**

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# EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the 192<sup>nd</sup> British Go Journal.

## In This Issue

Coronavirus and social distancing continues to affect the playing of Go in the UK, as it will presumably for some time to come. Most face-to-face Go tournaments have been cancelled and the AGM of the BGA has had to be held using Zoom this year for the first time. There is a report of what transpired in the President's Message.

One item of business was the election of a new Secretary, Colin Williams, who writes two articles in this issue. He takes over from Jonathan Chin who has done sterling service in the post for the past ten years.

We have a verse from Francis Roads about digital clocks which was written some time ago but is topical given the BGA has replaced all its analogue clocks. Charles Leedham-Green has unearthed what might be the first ever reference to Go in Latin; a translation is provided. And Tony Atkins has provided some photos of popular venues which we all missed this year due to lockdown!

Tony has also written about throw-ins in a didactic article to complement the by now familiar Go Jottings of John Tilley, who this time looks at the 'net' tesuji, which we all think we know well though his article delves a little deeper.

Finally, a word about the problems in this issue, which are a bit different this time around. They have mostly been taken from actual games played recently online and so are more complicated (though not necessarily harder) than the usual book tsumego that we feature. Whilst we are pretty confident that they are good problems from which you can learn, we can't guarantee we have analysed every possible variation; so a note of caution.

*Bob Scantlebury*

## Credits

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

**Contributions:** Tony Atkins, Richard Hunter, Charles Leedham-Green, Toby Manning, Francis Roads, John Tilley, and Colin Williams

**Photographs:** *Front cover*, Japanese Goban. 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.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It was nice to see articles from new writers in BGJ 191. I enjoyed reading the one on Harry Parkes. Unfortunately, there is an egregious error on page 11 that should be corrected for the record.

According to the text, the two players in the famous photograph are Wu Qingyuan and Lin Hai Feng. Those names might be unfamiliar to most readers because the players are better known by the Japanese versions of their names: Go Seigen and Rin Kaiho. However, they are not the players in the photograph.

When I read the article, I was taken aback because the players do not look much like Go Seigen and Rin. Indeed two other names came to mind. Some time later, I opened a Japanese book about the Kitani dojo, which features interviews and recollections of the students and household members. The first chapter concerns Otake Hideo, who entered the Kitani dojo in 1951, just after the initial publication (in serial form in a magazine) of what later became the famous novel 'Meijin' by Kawabata Yasunari. That novel is a fictional account of Honinbo Shusai's retirement game played in 1938 against the younger Kitani Minoru, though Kawabata gives the Master's opponent the fictional name Otake 7 dan. A couple of pages further into the Otake chapter, which is entitled 'The strange coincidence of Otake Hideo and Kitani Minoru', I came across the identical photograph to the one in BGJ 191. This famous photograph shows Shusai's retirement game and the two players are Kitani Minoru (left) and Honinbo Shusai Meijin (right). I also looked in *The Meijin's Retirement Game* by John Fairbairn (Slate and Shell), a book that I recommend to anyone interested in Go history. This shows the same photograph on page 55 with the caption 'The Great Wall of Kitani is clearly visible in this famous photo of the game'. That photo is larger and indeed clearer than the one in the Go journal.

So in summary, the players in the photograph on page 11 of BGJ 191 are Kitani and Shusai.

**Richard Hunter**

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL

The copy date for the next issue of the Journal is **24<sup>th</sup> August**.

Contributions are welcome at any time. Please send them to [journal@britgo.org](mailto: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](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/guidelines) for those wishing to contribute material.

# UK / EUROPEAN GRADE EQUALITY?

Colin Williams

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In March to May of this year Lukáš Podpera, a Czech 7d, ran an online tournament on KGS to ensure there was some Go available during the lockdown. In his own slightly abridged words:

“The idea was to run an online tournament, originally planned only for Czechia, maybe Central Europe. I thought it would be amazing to gather about 100 participants. However, some players started to share the tournament’s announcement on Facebook, so it started to grow. Eventually I also sent invitations to all EGF associations. Here we are now with more than 350 participants.”

This was a six round MacMahon tournament with one game a week and was EGF graded (rated ‘D’ as an on-line tournament). Included in the 350+ participants were 17 who registered as UK players. Given the numbers involved there were many players at each grade, so no-handicap games were pretty much the order of the day for everybody.

I thought this would provide an interesting check on where UK grades stand in respect of other European players, i.e. are we over-graded,

under-graded, or about right. I am not drawing any conclusions myself but just presenting my analysis and leaving the rest to you.

You should be aware of some caveats when considering this:

- This was online Go – results may not have been the same in a face-to-face situation
- One of the UK games had a one stone handicap, so I adjusted the opponent’s GoR by 100 to allow for that
- One of the UK games may have been lost by default, I am not certain – but I took the official result from the tournament site and used that

I have broken the analysis into two groups, split by grade, to reflect the fact that double-digit kyu players generally improve faster than others, and as such the grading systems can sometimes struggle to keep up. In the analysis ‘stronger’ means someone with the same or greater EGF GoR, and weaker means someone with a lower EGF GoR.

## Group A – 5 kyu and higher

The group contained nine UK players whose results from 54 games were

Wins	21/54(39%)	Wins against stronger opponents Wins against weaker opponents	4 17
Losses	33/54(61%)	Losses to stronger opponents Losses to weaker opponents	17 16

On average their opponents were rated 21 GoR points *below* the UK player.

## Group B – 9 kyu and lower

The group contained eight UK players whose results from 48 games were

Wins	20/48(42%)	Wins against stronger opponents Wins against weaker opponents	10 10
Losses	28/48(58%)	Losses to stronger opponents Losses to weaker opponents	15 13

On average their opponents were rated 21 GoR points *above* the UK player.

Regardless of what you take from the above stats, it is certainly true that the more games UK players have with European opponents then the better the grading system will work, bringing or keeping our grades in line with those across Europe.

□

## 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/issue192](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/issue192).

### ***Online Journals***

Online copies of this and the preceding three journals are available in the BGA Members Area at [www.britgo.org/membersarea](http://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](http://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 (according to your browser's set-up) – 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.

# WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

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## Euro Teams

In their eighth match of the season the UK played against Italy on 7<sup>th</sup> April. The first three games to finish went Italy's way, but the last game ended with a win for Andrew Simons against Matias Pankoke after nearly three hours of play. Alex Kent lost to Alessandro Pace, Jon Diamond to Carlo Metta and Sandy Taylor to Davide Bernardis. This result moved the team down to sixth place out of ten, with just the final round to go.

Our team's last match of the season was against Belgium on 19<sup>th</sup> May. If we had won then we would jump above them into fifth, but a loss would move us down near, but just above, the relegation zone. Andrew Simons lost to Lucas Neiryck. Jon Diamond finished quickly, losing to Jan Ramon, and Des Cann finished slowly, being the last game of the B-League season to end. His game against Lucman Bounoider was a win, which went with Jamie Taylor's win against Gabriel Mercier, to make the match a draw. The team stayed in sixth place (on tie-break from Switzerland) to end the B-League comfortably in the middle.

In the C-League Ireland won their last match on 5<sup>th</sup> May against Norway. The team of Karl Irwin, Philippe Renaut, James Hutchinson and Kevin Farrell all won to take their only four-nil win of the season. Unfortunately Croatia also won with same margin (against Slovenia), so that Ireland stayed second place behind them on tie-break.

To get promotion they then had to beat the B-League's ninth placed team, Sweden, on 16<sup>th</sup> May. Board one was played early on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May and Karl Irwin lost to Sweden's Charlie Åkerblom by resignation. The other four boards were played on the Tuesday. Philippe Renaut beat Martin Li, also by resignation, to make the match one all. Matei Garcia's game ended when Tiger Hillarp lost on time in a complicated game with huge territories and dead groups, but James Hutchison struggled against Robin Nilsson, eventually resigning. This meant it was all down to the last game between Ian Davis and Anton Silfver. This was a very close and long game, but unfortunately an error in the small yose saw Ian lose a point and the game by half a point.

In each of the other two play-offs again the higher team dominated: Israel beat Italy and Greece beat Bulgaria. The top placed teams that were automatically promoted were Spain from D to C (replacing Slovenia), Croatia C to B (replacing Lithuania), Serbia B to A (replacing Germany). The top four teams of the A-League were Russia, France, Czechia and Ukraine.

## Youth Match

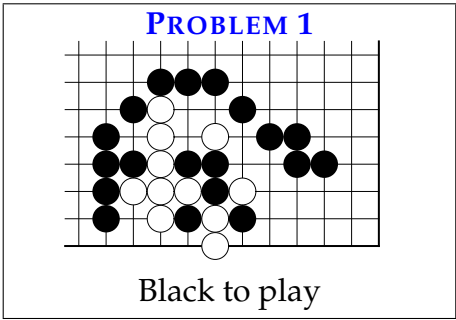
On 7<sup>th</sup> June we started a match on KGS between twelve British youth players and a team of twelve Chinese children, organised by Go teacher Li Ang in China. This would carry on for several weeks with one or two games each weekend. The format was that of last team standing, like the former



China-Japan Supergo Matches, with the winner of each game staying on. The games were played online in the British Room, with Chinese Rules and 40 minutes basic time. The British team was selected from our list of young players, taking those who are currently active, settled in the UK and who replied to the invitation. The match started with Lea Wong doing

well for us with three big wins, before she lost to Zhang Zhexuan. Zhexuan then beat our Caleb Monk, but lost to Yanyi Xiong. Yanyi then won the next two, one only by 9.5 points, and the following weekend remarkably won both games by a large margin, leaving us seven games to two in the lead.

□



# ANALOGUE FOR ME

Francis Roads

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*This verse won first prize in the 2009 Bob High Memorial Competition at the US Go Congress in Fairfax, Virginia.*

Ing clock! Ing clock! Purple thing-clock,  
Every year the one they bring-clock,  
I can't understand one thing-clock,  
Give me a clockface, hands and spring-clock.

\*

Every year I learn to set it,  
Come next year, and I'll forget it,  
BT, RS, Reset, Mode,  
Still can't crack that Ing clock code.  
Black has two hours, White has one,  
That won't do, so can't press "run."  
Turn that clock off, start once more,  
Fifth attempt. This clock's some bore.  
Now it's working, still no choice,  
Can't turn off that woman's voice.  
One more "Black time count begin,"  
This clock may end up in some bin.

\*

Ing clock, makes me think I'm thick-clock,  
Easy set clock, that I'll pick-clock,  
Turn those hands and set it quick-clock,  
Give me a tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-clock.

# WHAT YOU MISSED IN LOCKDOWN

Tony Atkins

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Since March, when lockdown started, all the UK over-the-board tournaments have naturally been cancelled. Here are some reminders of what you have missed if you had gone to the events and had time to see the local sights. I will leave it to your imagination to picture the delights of Milton Keynes, venue for the Candidates' Tournament, and Eastwood in Nottinghamshire, where the British would have been.

Go Centre; here is the entrance from Goldhawk Road.



The Cheshire would have again been in Frodsham and this is the view from the venue toward the war memorial on Frodsham Hill.



If you had attended the Nottingham Tournament you could have caught the tram, seen here, from "Slab Square" to the venue in West Bridgford.



The Kyu Players Weekend with Bar-Low was planned for the London



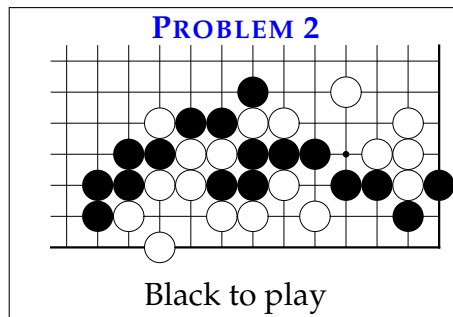
The Pair Go venue is in Hatfield, not far from the grandeur of Hatfield House, seen here, dating from 1608.



The Durham Tournament would have allowed you to stroll along the River Wear and visit the cathedral as seen here.

The Welsh Open in Barmouth would allow you to walk on its expansive beach, but hopefully with better summer weather than seen here!

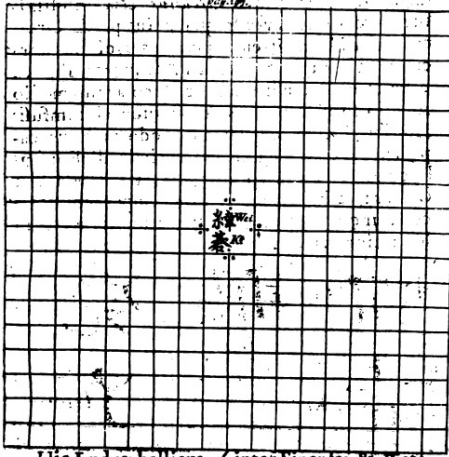
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# A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY REFERENCE TO Go

Charles Leedham-Green

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Original depiction of a Goban

This is a translation of those paragraphs of a book on oriental games by Thomas Hyde, published in 1694, that refer to Go. His informant, Michael Shen Fu-Tsung, was a Jesuit priest, who taught him Mandarin. Hyde was the second professor of Arabic at Oxford after Edward Pococke, and mastered many oriental languages, as he demonstrates in this book. The book is a trilogy, the parts having very long and disparate names. The short title of the paragraphs translated come under 'Two books on Oriental games'. He writes in a simple Latin style, with contemporary usages, rather than imitating Cicero.

The translation would be improved if I had taken the trouble to read the rest of the book, or at least as much as is in Latin, to acquaint myself better with his style and usages. I apologise for translating *Orbiculus* as 'Disk'.

I cannot think of a better noun that covers the shape of a Go stone.

I cannot tell if Yunze stones are intended (so flat on one side). Of more interest is the suggestion that the game started with two black and two white stones on the board. In his diagram Hyde has these stones placed half way down the sides rather than at the 4-4 points. This would be a relatively minor misunderstanding. Starting with four stones on the board would have been about 50 years out of date in Japan; but perhaps not in China.

I have reproduced the diagrams. Photographic copies of the original text are to be found on the web; look up 'De Ludis Orientalibus'.

The two figures add charm rather than information. One shows a Go ban that is empty apart from some Chinese Kanji round Tengen, and the other shows a miniaturised Go ban with the four misplaced starting stones, and a diagram to show how an eye is created by capturing an opponent's stone. This figure is dominated by the Kanji for Go, for an eye, and for 'It is finished', with transcriptions 'Hoi Kî', 'yèn', and 'huan leáo'. The Kanji for an eye is accompanied by a beautifully drawn hand pointing to the wrong intersection. Hyde points out that the Kanji for Go is not the same as the Kanji for Backgammon. He also makes obscure grammatical remarks about 'huan leáo' for which the characters taken from the book are also rendered below.

# 完了

These two characters together have two different pronunciations and meanings which are represented in pinyin as wánliǎo and wánle. Wánliǎo is a verb which means to come to an end, be over. Wánle means 1) to be finished, 2) to be done for, 3) ruined, 4) gone to the dogs, 5) oh no.

I am grateful to Jaap Blom, David Cantrell, John Fairbairn, Gerry Gavigan, Geoff Kaniuk, and Richard Mullens for valuable input and encouragement.

## THE HISTORY OF THE CHINESE SURROUNDING GAME

We first heard imperfect and mutually inconsistent Descriptions of this Game from the Jesuits. And later a truer and more perfect Description was given to me by the Chinese.

On this subject Mr./Dr. Semedo writes as follows. [A few lines of Italian follow. I omit them because I am incompetent in Italian, and they are simply a loose translation of the text by Trigantius that now follows. Nicolaus Trigantius (1577–1628) was a Jesuit who visited and wrote about China. I have not traced Hyde's version back to the writings of Trigantius.]

Mr. Trigantius gives the following (equally imperfect) description in his Book on China: *The most Serious type of Game amongst them is as follows. They compete on a Board of two hundred cells [three hundred in Semedo's version] using more than two hundred Stones, of which some are white and some are black. With these stones each player alternately plays in the middle of the board to make a capture, in order to dominate later with the remaining Stones. At the end, he*

*who controls most Cells on the Board is proclaimed the Winner. Officials play this game with great enthusiasm, and they often spend the greater part of the day playing. For amongst those who are skilled at playing, a single game can take a whole hour. He who is skilled at this game, even if he is not distinguished at anything else, is respected by others, and is praised. Indeed, Officials are not infrequently chosen solely on the strength of this skill, so that they can teach people to play this game well.*

From the Dutch embassy to China one reads *There is a Game of high Status, in which two hundred Disks, some black and some white, are played on a Board that has been cut out, with three hundred little houses side by side. The player who occupies more of the little Houses is the Winner. The officials themselves spend whole days at this Game, and he who excels at it is received with glory and honour amongst the rest.*

[This is an abbreviated extract from the report of the embassy, led by Pieter de Goyer and Jacob de Keizer of the Dutch East India Company, to the emperor of China. It was published in Dutch by Johannes Nieuhof, and translated into English by John Ogilby in 1673. The report became very influential in Europe, and was translated into various languages. To what extent these translations were translated from the Dutch or from other translations I do not know. I reproduce Ogilby's translation below. The idea, in his translation, of cutting a hole in the centre of the goban and trying to push your opponent's stones through it is intriguing. Above, 'a Board that has been cut out' translates 'Tabulam excavatam'. You might translate this as 'A board that has had a hole cut in the middle.'

This is what Ogilby writes:

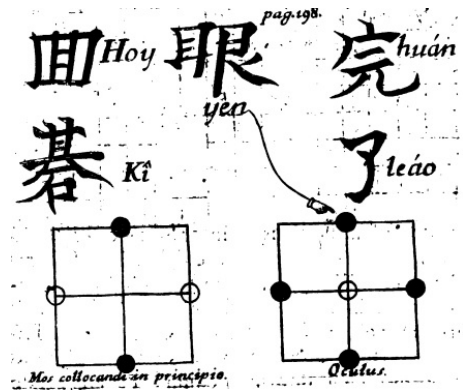
*Neither is there among the better sort any form of Gaming; but among the Vulgar, Cards and Dice are sometimes us'd. The Nobles and other Great Persons divert themselves with this Recreation: They play upon a Board which has a Hole in middle, and three hundred little Houses circularly plac'd around it, with two hundred Pegs, the one half whereof is white, and the other black; which being divided betwixt the Play-mates, each strive to force the others Pegs into the Hole, and to get to himself all the Houses; for herein consists the winning or losing of the Game; but although he cannot attain all, yet if he can get the most Houses, he still wins the Game. With this sportive Diversion the Magistrates themselves are much taken, and spend much time at it; and if they play with Judgment, sometimes they spend a whole hour or more before they make an end of one Sett. And such is the Humor of this People, that whosoever are very skilful herein, are highly honor'd and respected, though they're excellent in nothing else. ]*

But when these Descriptions had been sent [to me] Mr. Shen Fu-Tsung, a learned native of China, drew a diagram for me like this, and explained the Game as follows.

This war Game (representing War between the Chinese and the Tartars, whose Board represents a Battle Field) is wont to be played by many important Personages of China with round glass Disks, 360 in number, on a Board (with Rows and Columns consisting of 18 small Squares) whose Sides are of length two feet, and sometimes of a smaller size.

This Chinese game is called *Hoi Kî*, i.e. *The Game of Circles*, or *The Circle Game*; or alternatively *Wei Kî*, with the same meaning: for *Wei* means *Around*, or *Circle*, or *Circuit* etc. This

is to be understood, moreover, as the *Surrounding* by which a glass Disk or Soldier of one side, having been surrounded by many Enemies, is captured, as can be seen in the Etching below, where a Disk placed at the central Angle of four small Squares is surrounded by four Enemies placed around it, and having been surrounded in this way is captured. This shape or rule of surrounding in a square is called in Chinese *Yen*, i.e. an *Eye* or *Little Eye*: and any Player desirous of Victory always tries to make *Eyes* in this way, since by this device he will win.



Kanji and diagrams

Initially then the said Board is set up for play with only a limited number of Disks or Soldiers from each side, for there are not enough small Squares for them all to fight at the same time, nor is that wont to happen. Now the Players, alternately and in turn, place their Soldiers one at a time, as you see in the other square Etching, where two Soldiers of the two sides are seen standing in battle array at the Corners of 4 small Squares. Now playing in turn they aim (as far as possible) to make an *Eye* as depicted in the above Diagram, as this is always the Goal



of either party: and with every *Eye* made in this way he can confine and surround one enemy Soldier with 4 of his Soldiers, (as in the above mentioned Etching the method of capturing a surrounded Enemy is taught and illustrated) so he captures it and leads it into Captivity, as a Chinese would a Tartar, or *vice versa*.

Now in order for me to be able to teach the nature of this Game, and the method of playing, in greater detail, each Player should have at least 180 Disks or Soldiers, which he takes out of a small Vessel as needed: for (as I have mentioned) it is not necessary to put them all in the middle at once. It is customary for a player to begin round the middle: for the greatest Skill lies in the initial arrangement of the Soldiers, and later in advancing them, so that they are well placed to capture one of the Opponents by surrounding it. To achieve this the two sides have equal rights to lay an ambush, and to create an opportunity to make a capture, for each at his turn places, one at time, just one Soldier, which is carried out as far as possible to lay an ambush.

Now amongst these plays, others capture others, and it [the ambush?] is not to be looked for until all have been played on the Battle Field. For this Game represents two Armies, or Hosts of Men, contending for some Region, with the enemies, both together and as individuals, seeking an opportunity to surround. And for this reason, with Military Men standing in battle array, battle is joined, as, for example, an Enemy is captured when surrounded by four Opponents (forming what is called an *Eye*), and by the rules becomes a Captive, since he will not be able to leave, or to flee from the place, for they are all restrained to move in a straight line through the vertices or intersections of lines

(and not otherwise), from Vertex to Vertex along these straight lines: nor can it break out or escape, unless some Vertex is empty, and remains unoccupied. And so those that seek to surround others must eliminate and occupy Exits.

Now when an *Eye* is to be formed, if someone does not have [stones] on the *Board* to complete it, he takes new [stones] from his little Vessel, and if one part of the Board, or Battle Field, is excessively occupied by Enemies, he then plays his in another part: but then the Enemy follows him, placing his [stones] wherever it pleases him, by playing in turn, in such a way that he can capture the Soldiers of his opponent either openly or by an ambush. And moreover, when many parts of the Field are occupied by the other party to the battle, the soldiers of this party having been routed and diminished, so that there no longer remains any hope of victory or escape then (if the other does not wish to play) the game being over the Victor calls out *Huan léáo*, *i.e. It is Finished*; for these words mean *the end, finished, to finish, etc.* when a distinction of meaning can be discerned from their position and grammatical context in the sentence in the same way that is taught (above) in the use of the word *Wei*. And *léáo* is in general a Term denoting completion in Time past.

Now when this has been done each Player counts how many parts of the Field he then possesses, because he has soldiers at its edges. But if the other player undoubtedly possesses some large or larger part of the field it is necessary to count his soldiers since there is no doubt concerning the Field. And he who occupies and holds more parts of the Field states: I possess so many parts; you possess

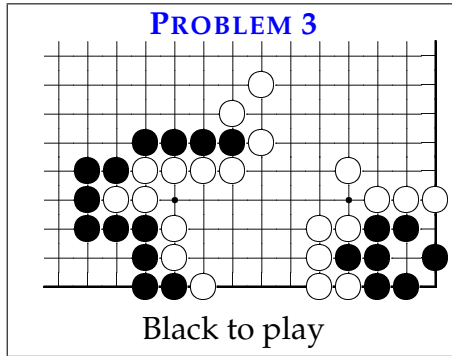


fewer, and fewer Soldiers, therefore *I win*. But whoever holds fewer parts of the Field, if he has more Soldiers on the edges then he wins.

From all this it follows that this Game is not subject to Chance and Fortune, but is ruled by pure skill; and so there is no doubt that everyone considers it to be lawful. [Was gambling illegal?]. Moreover it is to be observed that the

Kanji for Game is written differently by my Chinese [informer], as can be seen by comparing it with that which is used in the Game of the Table [Backgammon]; I have set this forth for the purposes of instruction, lest anyone should suppose that the discrepancy that I have mentioned arose from my carelessness.

□



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Toby Manning

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I write this the day after our delayed AGM, held online with 32 members: apart from a problem with my own video feed so that members were largely unable to see my face, it all went surprisingly well.

Richard Wheeldon and I were re-elected as Treasurer and President respectively, and we elected Colin Williams as our new Secretary, Jonathan Chin having stood down after 10 years of service. I would like to thank Jonathan for all the hard work he has contributed. An article introducing Colin is elsewhere in this Journal.

As well as his secretarial duties, Jonathan also managed a lot of "behind the scenes" activity on our web-site (managing issues such as back-ups and security updates) and I am pleased that Jonathan has agreed to continue his work in this area. Colin will replace Jonathan as a Director of the T Mark Hall Foundation, as required in its Articles.

The AGM also agreed an amendment to our Constitution, to introduce proxy voting – a concept that will be well known to those members who own shares in publicly listed companies. It means that members will be able to vote on important issues affecting the Association without having to travel to a General Meeting.

## Coronavirus

As I write the government has partially lifted the lockdown, but in

terms that do not permit face-to-face play. In normal conditions the two players are less than 1m apart, and facing each other for a considerable length of time, conditions that will give a high risk of transmission (if either player is infected). Gatherings of more than 30 people are also banned. It appears that it will be well into the autumn, perhaps even later, before it will be "business as usual", and I expect that the restrictions that make face-to-face Go tournaments impracticable will be almost the last item to be removed.

These restrictions are world-wide: virtually all European Tournaments have been cancelled or have gone on-line, while the World Amateur has been cancelled and the Korean Prime Minister's Cup is being played on-line (we have appointed Bruno Poltronieri, of Cambridge, to represent the UK).

## On-Line

Meanwhile we can still play on-line. Matt Marsh arranged an on-line tournament in May, with 42 entries, and another one will take place at the end of July. Our Youth Squad (players stronger than 20 kyu) had a successful tournament on July 5<sup>th</sup>, with 30 participants, and, after a couple of hiccups, the on-line league is being resuscitated.

Please enjoy your on-line go as we look forward to a return to normality.

□

# GO JOTTINGS 13

John Tilley

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## The “Net” Tesuji in action

A number of recent posts on LifeIn19x19 reminded me of the importance of the “net” tesuji (geta in Japanese). Sakata, 9p and one of the all time greats of Japanese Go, introduced this tesuji in just 2 pages in his book “Tesuji and Anti-Suji of Go”, where it was translated as the “fencing-in” tesuji.

I highly recommend this book to SDK players who want to become stronger. I like the style, it is easy to read and to re-read. It was published in English in 1995 by Yutopian and is now available as EPUB for \$9.99<sup>1</sup>.

Sakata described the net tesuji as “one of the most interesting of tesuji”, and those words and the fact that Sakata’s reading skills were second to none were the catalyst for this article.

Diagram 1 shows a text book example of a net - Black can capture White’s cutting stone with 1.

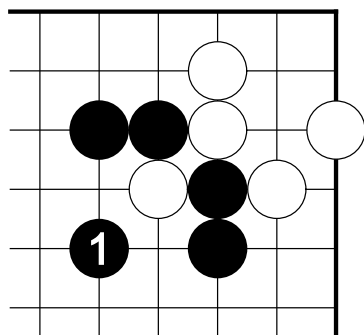
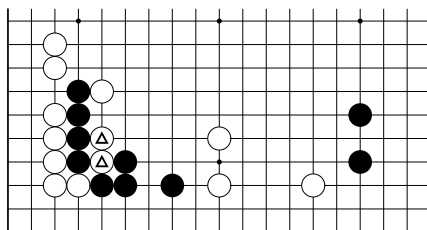


Diagram 1

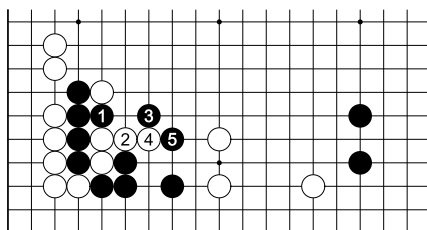
I think most Go players have read Kageyama’s “Lessons in the Fundamentals of Go” and his advice on how to capture a stone always makes me smile “hold up two fingers, can you capture it in a ladder, can you capture it in a net?” Play the net – it does the job with one move, as playing a ladder leaves behind the possibility of a ladder breaker and a second move is required.

I have carefully selected five problems for this article, not from Sakata’s book I quickly add. They get progressively harder, illustrating the wide variety of uses for this beautiful tesuji.



Problem 1 - Black to play

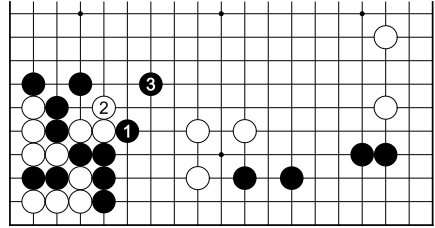
White’s two marked stones cut Black in two. What can Black do?



Problem 1 - Answer

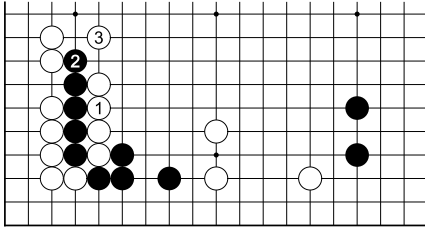
<sup>1</sup><https://gobooks.com/index.html>

The simple atari at ① followed by the net at ③ does the trick. You might find this a little hard to visualise at first, but it usually helps to count the liberties. To start with, Black's four stones have three liberties; White's two stones have just two liberties.



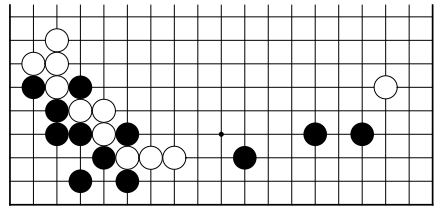
**Problem 2 - Answer**

Black ① is the only move and White must play the empty triangle of ②. Black can now play the net tesuji of ③, which is a small knight's move. It is worth remembering that the net can be a one-skip jump, a small knight or even a large knight's move. Sakata gives some good examples.



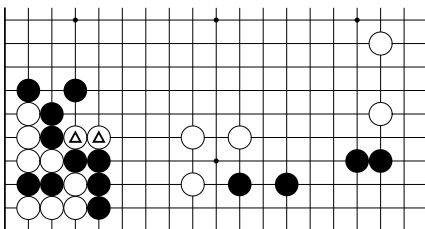
**Problem 1 - Another way of looking at the problem - what if White plays first?**

A good way of deciding where to play is to consider where the opponent would play, if it were their move – White ① here would increase his liberties to four, leaving Black with just two. Now the net tesuji of ③ would do the trick. White ① is the vital point so as the proverb says that is where Black should play – if it were only that easy in an actual game!



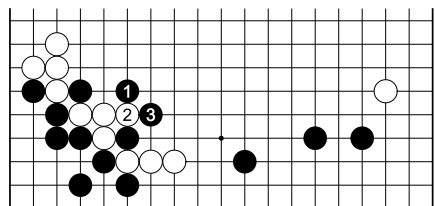
**Problem 3 - Black to play**

Black has two cutting stones so White's position is a bit thin. What can Black do?



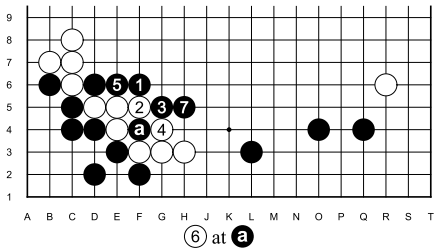
**Problem 2 - Black to play**

White's two marked stones cut Black into two.



**Problem 3 - Answer**

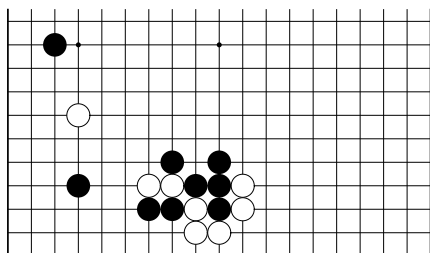
Black plays the net tesuji of ① here. If White plays ② here, then Black ③ sets up a squeeze. Note that in this problem the net doesn't capture the cutting stones.



**Problem 3 - answer continued**

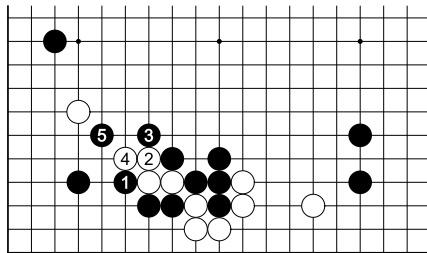
White must capture with ④, Black ⑤ is atari and after White connects at ⑥, Black ⑦ leaves White with a somewhat hopeless shape. White's nine stones form a floating eyeless clump of stones – in Japanese a “dango”. This is a good example of the net being used to squeeze the opponent's stones into bad shape, rather than capture them, which is perhaps why it is sometimes translated as the fencing-in tesuji.

It is possible for White to play ② at E6 in this problem, I hope you can see that would just lead to another squeeze and another dango for White.



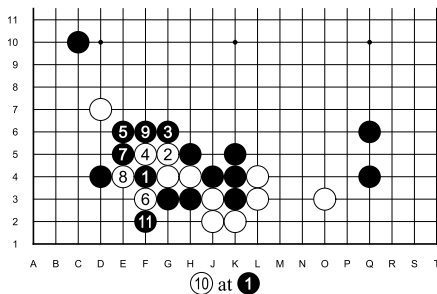
**Problem 4 - Black to play**

Black can't capture White's two stones in a ladder as there is a ladder breaker. Hint – hopefully you can hear Kageyama shouting out then it must be a net!



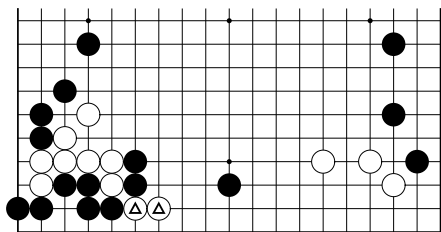
**Problem 4 - answer**

Black plays the first two moves of the ladder and then the net tesuji of ⑤. Black's net might look a bit thin, but note that White has just two liberties.



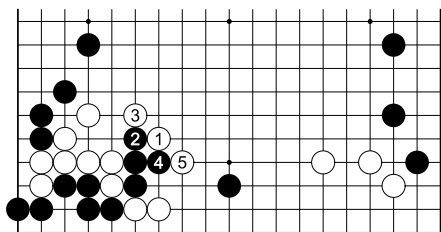
**Problem 4 - answer continued**

White must cut at ⑥, but Black can now squeeze with ⑦ and ⑨ and then start a ladder with ⑪. Should White try to escape by playing ⑥ at H6 then Black just plays at F6, which keeps White down to one liberty. Should White then try the capture at J5, the Black atari at E5 leads to a ladder going in the opposite direction to the one in the diagram. This is a good example of the net being a squeezing move that ends up as a ladder.



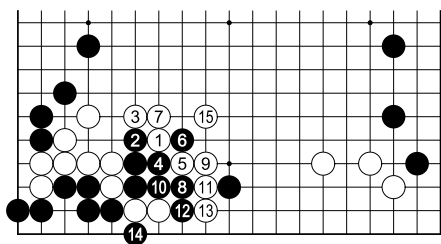
### Problem 5 - White to play

White is cut into two – what can be done about the two marked White stones? This is the hardest problem, but don't let that put you off.



### Problem 5 - answer

White ① here could be called a large net but it leaves Black with three liberties. After White plays ⑤ note that Black has just two liberties and a empty triangle. You might still find it hard to read out the moves of the next diagram.



### Problem 5 - answer continued

Black can wriggle with ⑥ and ⑧ but the liberty shortage eventually

forces the connection at ⑩. White can continue to squeeze Black and then play the second net of this problem with ⑮. A remarkable transformation has taken place from the problem diagram. This is a textbook example of the “net” or “fencing-in” tesuji being used to squeeze and sacrifice to build thickness.

This is the hardest of the five problems in this article, however if you can master this and play it in a game think of the satisfaction! You might want to set this problem up on a board and try and visualise the squeeze sequence.

I spent a couple of years in Winchester tutoring an SDK player, in the days of face-to-face meetings. He would suggest and prepare one of the chapters from “Tesuji and Anti-Suji of Go” and explain that month’s tesuji to me. We found this a good way to learn and the book is highly recommended.

The classification of tesuji is quite fascinating and there are several different approaches and a number of loose ends, which surprises me - but never a dull moment, even for something as basic as the “net”.

It is interesting that Sakata introduces the “fencing-in suji” in two pages in an early section of his book and then goes on to show four more examples in other sections, each with different terminology in English, although in each case a “net” tesuji is being used.

Segoe and Go Seigen published their two-volume Tesuji Dictionary in 1971. There are 53 examples of the net or “geta” there, covering all of Sakata’s categories. Segoe and Go Seigen also have a chapter on the ladder, which sometimes involves a squeeze and a loose ladder.

Surprisingly the net tesuji does not feature in the The Nihon Ki-in’s

Great Tesuji Encyclopaedia, of 1117 pages, published in 1992, which I had thought was the tesuji bible. I am not sure why and despite having “some” free time during the Covid-19 lockdown, I haven’t managed to resolve this. The “net” tesuji is also not one of the basic tesuji in Kiseido’s “A Survey of the Basic Tesujis” published in 2015.

Many years ago, at the time The Ishi Press published their first book, the Nihon Ki-in advertised a small number of books in Japanese in their English language magazine “Go Monthly Review”. They recommended an eight-volume set in Japanese on “Key Fundamentals”, which I bought.

I have always been intrigued that there was no volume on tesuji, as I would have assumed tesuji were fundamental. There was one volume on sacrifice technique and another volume on squeezing (primarily the “net”). Perhaps the editor found sacrifice and squeezing more interesting to write about, or perhaps he felt sacrifice and squeezing to be key areas for amateurs.

Those books cost 470 Yen each and allowing for postage the set cost some \$10 or £4.20; mind you a thirsty student in 1968 could buy some eight pints of beer for £1. It was all a question of priorities.

□

## THE BGA ANALYST

[paul@psaa.me.uk](mailto:paul@psaa.me.uk)

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’.

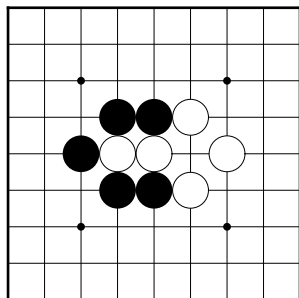
**Paul Barnard**

# THROW-INS

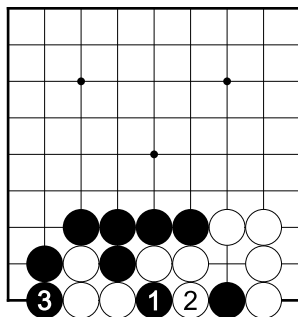
Tony Atkins

[ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk)

To make a throw-in, that is to place a single stone so that it is in atari and can be taken on the opponent's next move, can be a skillful tesuji. However it can also be a mistake. The simplest useful throw-in is the capture-recapture shown here:



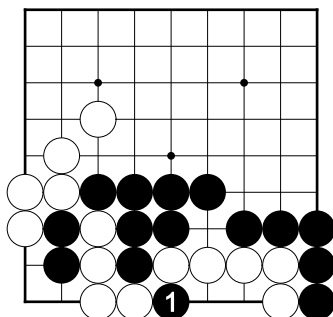
- As a ko threat
- To gain yose
- To ensure a vital point is playable
- To turn direction on a ladder when it hits other stones



Here is a list of the reasons why you might consider playing a throw-in, followed by examples of some of the most interesting, and lastly some examples of bad throw-ins:

- To catch in snap-back
- To reduce liberties
- To make shortage of liberties
- To gain tempo (keep sente)
- To link up by starting a ko
- To cut by starting a ko
- To live by making eye-shape
- To avoid dead shape
- To kill by stopping eye-shape
- To live or kill by starting a ko

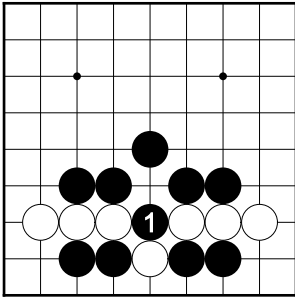
This is the classic throw-in tesuji. After ③ if White connects, black can capture seven stones. This is called connect-and-die (oio-toshi in Japanese).



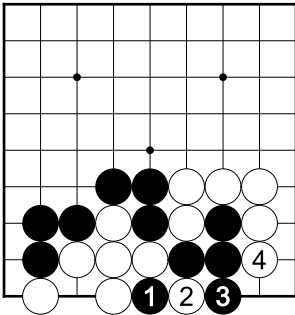
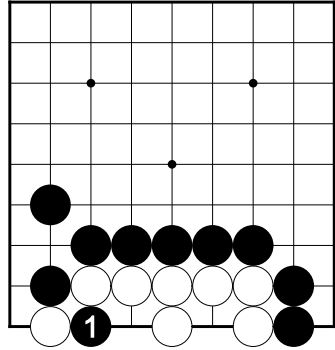
This is a similar throw-in that leads to winning a race to capture (semeai). After the throw-in, whatever White does they are a move behind in the race to capture, unlike if they get to play there instead.



here), but make sure it does not lose a point.

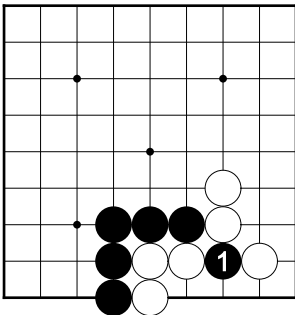
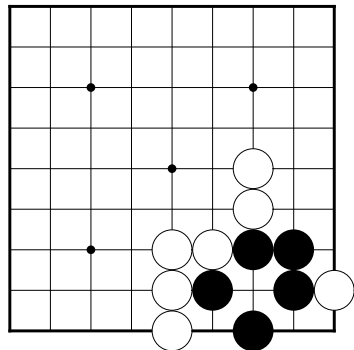


Here is a throw-in that starts a ko for an important connection.



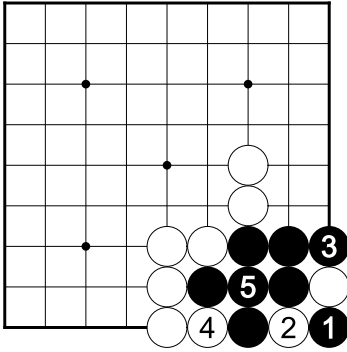
Again one that should be easily recognisable is reducing the eye-space with a throw-in.

Here the throw-in allows black to set up a ko to capture White before White can get Black.

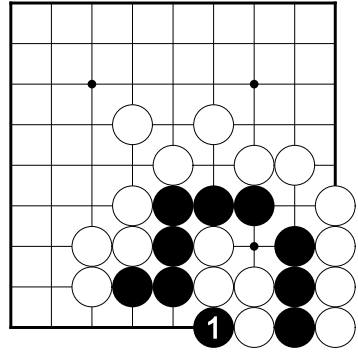


**Start position**

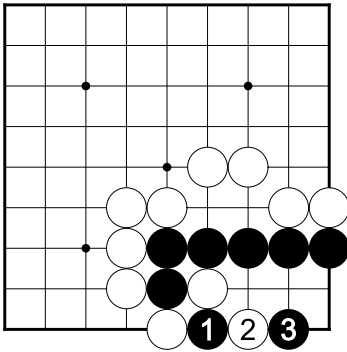
Most Go players are familiar with the concept of a throw-in as a ko threat (as



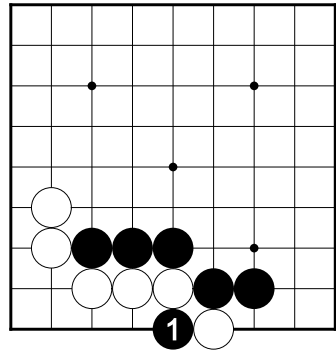
Here when White captures the throw-in stone, after Black's next play White can never play the 1-1 point. Often in corner shapes there is a ko fight, often multi-stage, but the follow-up to this throw-in avoids a ko.



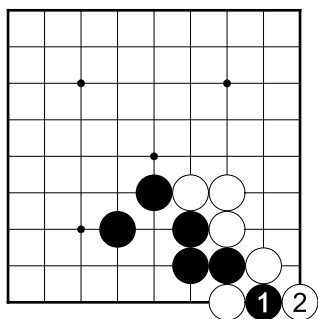
Here the throw-in is the only move that avoids White making the dead bulky-five shape and killing Black.



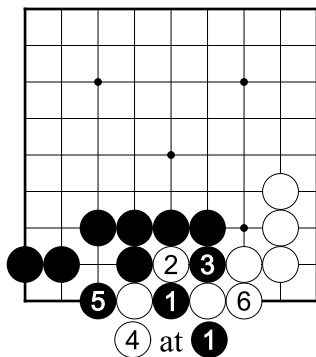
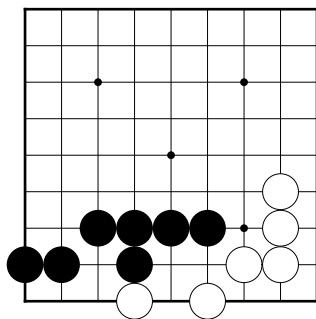
Here the throw-in enables Black to be sure of getting the correct points for two eyes in the corner, whilst White is connecting back.



After capturing the throw-in White will have to play twice inside to connect up all the stones, whereas a White stone here gets three points of territory. Black loses one to gain three and probably gets to seal the Black area too.



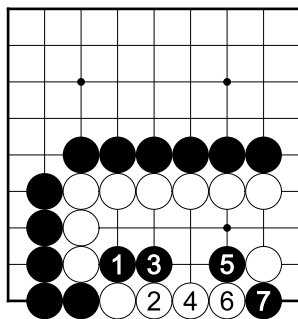
Here White now has to connect back, several times or fight a ko for the bottom edge stone for the price of one Black stone captured.



This throw-in is a case where to avoid any loss White has to respond, so Black ends in sente. Note that a

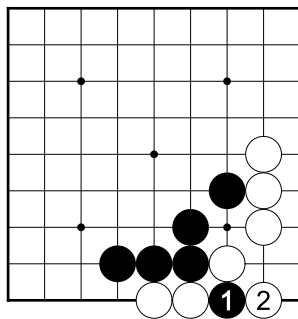
second throw-in to the right (at ⑥) would be wrong as White would extend into Black's corner before capturing.

If black just plays atari or peep from the outside, it would be gote for Black to stop White making a point of territory on the edge. White can elect to fight a ko after ③ but losing it would be bad for White.



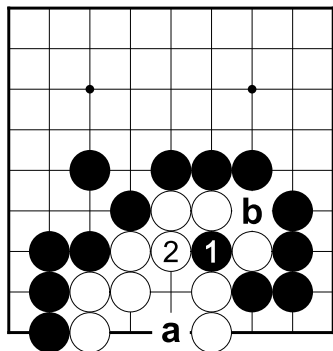
Finally an edge position where it looks like the cut is protected by the stone on 2-2. However a throw-in at ⑦ in the cutting sequence makes use of the liberty shortage, caused by reaching the corner, to kill all the White stones.

Now some bad throw-ins:

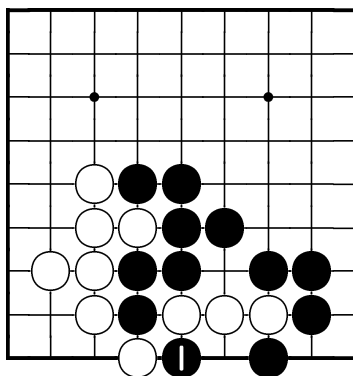


Here the throw-in forces White to take a point that could be forced by Black at 3-3 and so Black loses a point.

Any throw-in where the opponent can ignore the single stone in atari and play elsewhere, without loss, is also a bad throw-in. When capturing the throw-in stone, capturing another stone as well means it is usually a bad throw-in.

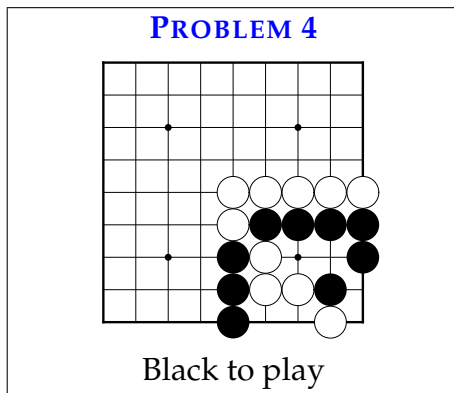


Here is an example where the capture of the throw-in leaves White with a choice of moves A and B (miai) to make two eyes. Black should just have played A, which leaves the throw-in as a way to remove the second eye.



In this position there is nothing to gain by playing the throw-in. In the game it is taken from, there were no more gainful points left, only dame and inside moves (te-ire). If Black just calmly connects the edge stone back instead, this now threatens a throw-in leading to shortage of liberties and White has to connect back. Giving up a throw-in stone is a one point loss (which caused the game to be lost by half a point). Pushing in from the Black stone is also point-neutral but ends in gote.

□



# WORDS FROM A NEW BGA SECRETARY

Colin Williams

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At the 2020 AGM I was confirmed as the new BGA Secretary and would like to take the opportunity to write a few words of introduction.

Firstly, I would like to recognise my predecessor's considerable efforts. Jonathan Chin is standing down after ten years as Secretary, the longest continuous term of service of any current officer or council member.

Like so many others I started playing Go at school, but from university onwards was only a sporadic player. In the 80s and 90s I was a member of the West Surrey club, and I recall many happy evenings at Steve Bailey's house. For many years, the club (mainly Steve) organised a successful handicap tournament. We also played as a club in the Thames Valley League.

Then young children and work took up all my time, and after a move to Bristol I effectively stopped playing Go for over two decades. I took it up again late in 2018 after my retirement, and I was pleasantly shocked by the amount of material that is now available online. Whilst

my progress has been halted by this year's lockdown, I am currently playing at around the 6kyu/5kyu level. My probably hopeless ambition is, as it has been for over 30 years, to eventually make 1 dan.

I mentioned to Toby at the Cambridge tournament this year that I had some spare time and would be happy to help the BGA with anything that might need doing. Toby knew that Jonathan was looking to move on, so that led to my initially joining the Council, and later being put forward for Secretary.

Under our constitution the role of Secretary is simply defined by "The Secretary keeps minutes of all meetings, General and Council". Elsewhere on the website it says, "The Secretary maintains the day-to-day communications of the Council".

As well as performing those tasks I am keen to assist on BGA communications more generally, both with clubs and members in the UK, and with colleagues in Europe and beyond. I am also beginning to suspect that there may be suitable uses for the process and business analysis skills I picked up in nearly 40 years in IT.

When face to face tournaments restart I hope to get round to as many as I can, and look forward to meeting many of you there. If anyone wants to raise anything at all with me please don't hesitate to mail me at [colin.williams@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:colin.williams@blueyonder.co.uk)

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# UK NEWS

Tony Atkins

[ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk)



**May Online: Sandy Taylor (second)**

## May Online

To replace the events cancelled because of coronavirus lockdown, the BGA held its first real time online tournament on the 2020 VE Day Bank Holiday weekend, 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> May. The event attracted 42 players to play in a three-round McMahon tournament on OGS, with one game per day. Zherui Xu (4d Cambridge) came out the eventual winner with three wins. Sandy Taylor (2d Cambridge) took second place and Mark Baoliang Zhang (1k Manchester) was third. All three received Amazon vouchers as prizes. Also picking up vouchers for three wins were Dan

Whiteley (11k Birmingham) and Callum Urwin (10k No Club); Callum also took the Highest Placed Double Digit Kyu prize. Gokul Ramanan Subramanian (2k Cambridge) took the prize for being the highest placed below the bar. It was hoped this would be the first of several such events over the summer, with the online Mind Sports Olympiad Go events also added to the calendar.

## Stacey

The Stacey Trophy is awarded to the player who, over a twelve month period, wins the most games above the McMahon bar. The period usually ends with the British Open, but with that cancelled the last event turned out to be Skye. Not that an extra possible six points mattered as Toby Manning had an unassailable lead with 24 points, eight more than second, to take the trophy for the third time. Peikai Xue was second on 16, followed by Sandy Taylor (14), Tetsuro Yoshitake (13), Zeyu Qiu (12) and a group on 11 that included previous winner Alistair Wall, Richard Wheeldon and Chao Zhang.

## Juniors

Each week more than twenty youngsters, and some parents, have been meeting up on a Sunday afternoon on OGS, thanks to Paul Smith and the Cambridge youth. On 1<sup>st</sup> June some of the young players played friendly games against Dutch youth, organised by Dave de Vos; our youngsters won six out of eight games played. Two weeks later England youth took on Scotland youth, with

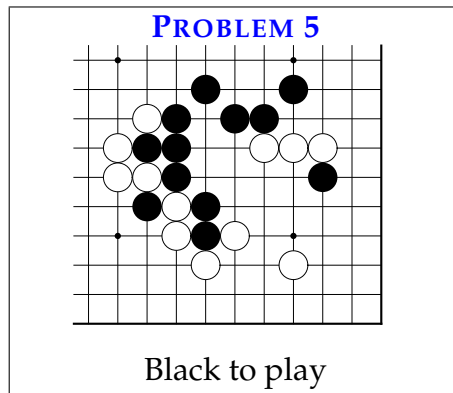
the result being nine games to seven after closely matched games, thanks to a much improved Edinburgh team. Star of Edinburgh-based Greg Kudla's players was a six-year old 15 kyu who won both games.

### Chile Match

Whilst most clubs have been meeting online amongst themselves, Newcastle Go Club got adventurous and played against Santiago Club Tengen. Tom Coulthard writes: "We put some information about our recent on-line Go meetings on social media and one of our followers is a Brit-in-exile in Chile, playing with Club Tengen. He spotted our post and suggested arranging a club match. We had about ten players in all and used the Discord app to chat and review

the games which were played on the IGS. Needless to say, the Chileans mostly had great English, although we do have one Mexican player and the rest of us did attempt some broken Spanglish! All in all, the event seemed a great success and it was great way to make some new Go connections. One of the Chilean players has since done some game analyses and shared those with us, which was very kind and much appreciated. And while it wasn't really the point, I'm pleased to report that the Geordies kept up national pride with a good performance – even though the eight hour time difference meant we were drinking evening beers while they were having lunchtime coffees!"

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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/issue192](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/issue192).

## Solution to Problem 1

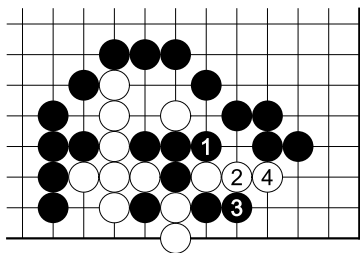


Diagram 1a (correct)

- ❶ This might be obvious but does it end in the capture of the white stone?

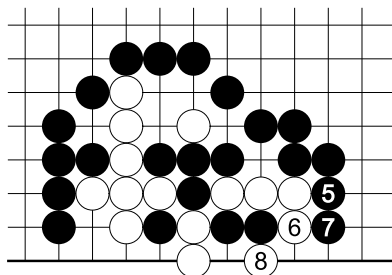


Diagram 1b (mistake by Black)

- ❷ Now Black loses the race.
- ❸ White is alive.

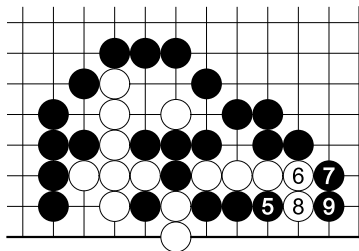


Diagram 1c (correct – continuation)

- ❹ Black must push again here before turning.
- ❺ Black wins three liberties to two. The white group is dead.



## Solution to Problem 2

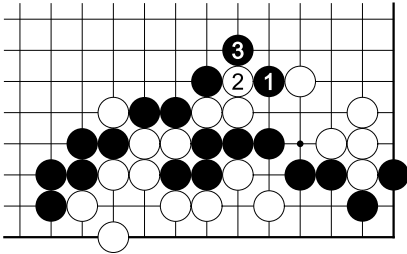


Diagram 2a (correct)

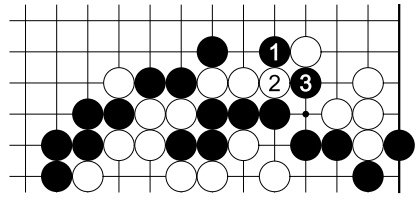


Diagram 2b (correct – variation)

- ❶ This net should be easy to see but do all White's options fail?
- ❷ This fails.

- ❷ So does this.

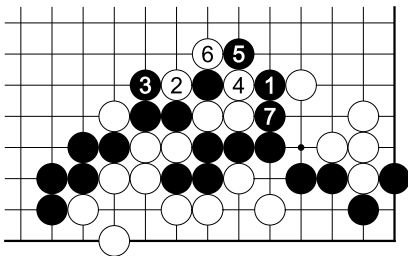


Diagram 2c (correct – variation)

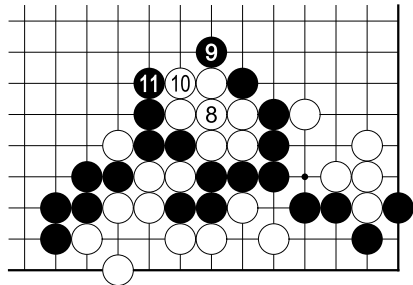


Diagram 2d (correct – continuation)

- ❷ This is the hardest one to read out.
- ❷ White is now in a ladder.

- ❶ Even if the ladder doesn't work Black has broken out.

## Solution to Problem 3

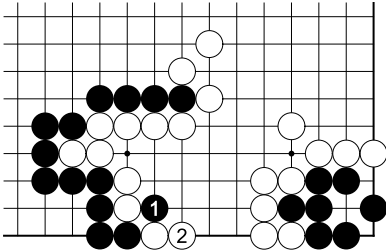


Diagram 3a (correct)

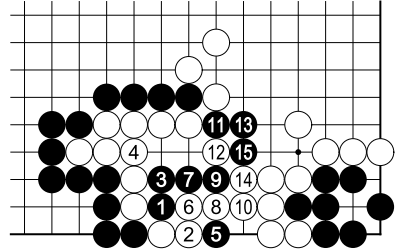


Diagram 3b (correct – variation)

① Black can cut, but is White safe or not?

③ This simple atari is one of the moves that works.

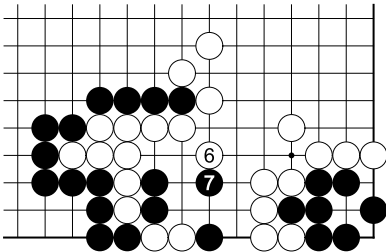


Diagram 3c (correct – variation)

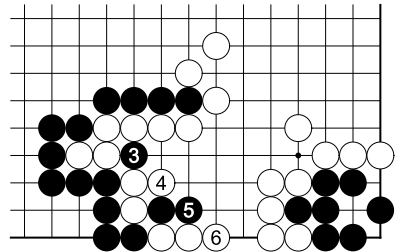


Diagram 3d (mistake by Black)

⑥ White should defend the cut.

⑦ Black can capture the two stones in gote at the appropriate stage of the endgame.

③ Black can try this.

④ However, White can play here and stay safe.

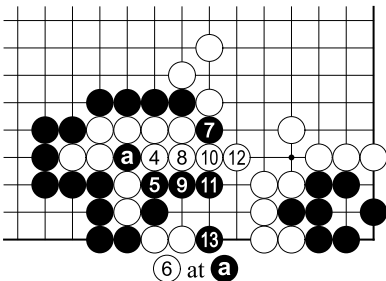


Diagram 3e (mistake by White)

④ If White captures then Black can escape.

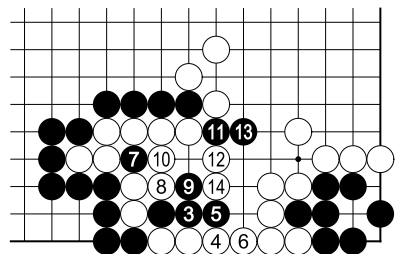


Diagram 3f (mistake by Black)

③ Forcing here first does not help Black.

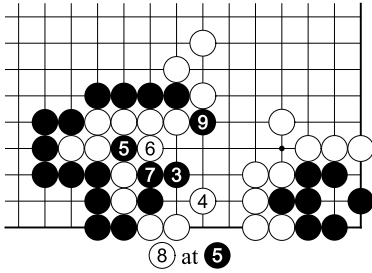


Diagram 3g (correct – continuation)

- ③ This is a tesuji and White cannot stop Black from getting away.
- ⑥ White has to take as the other choice runs out of liberties.
- ⑨ White loses big.

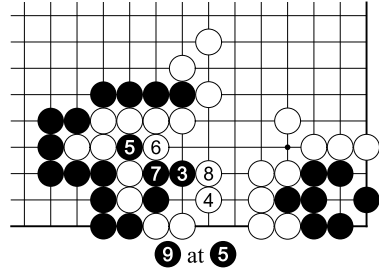


Diagram 3h (correct – variation)

- ⑨ Black doesn't need to capture just yet but it is sente,

### Solution to Problem 4

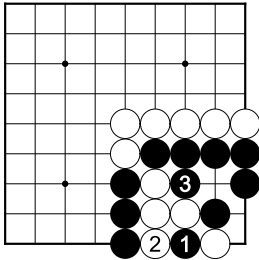


Diagram 4a (correct)

- ① This throw-in is the correct way to win the fight cleanly.

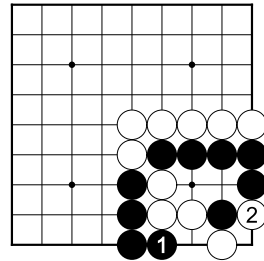


Diagram 4b (mistake by Black)

- ① If Black tries this then White can start a ko.

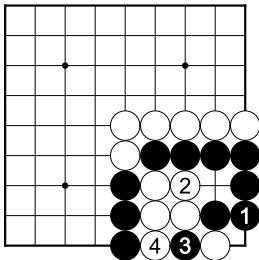


Diagram 4c (failure)

- ④ This is seki, assuming all the outside stones can live.

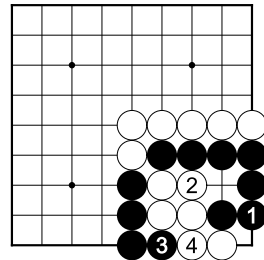


Diagram 4d (failure)

- ④ Also seki without a wasted throw-in.

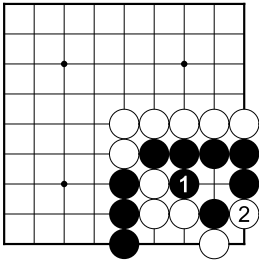


Diagram 4e (mistake by Black)

② This is ko, with White to find the first threat.

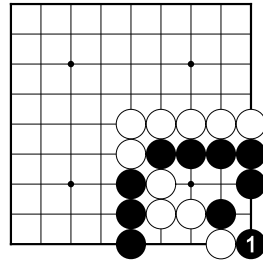


Diagram 4f (mistake by Black)

① This is ko, with Black to find the first threat.

### Solution to Problem 5

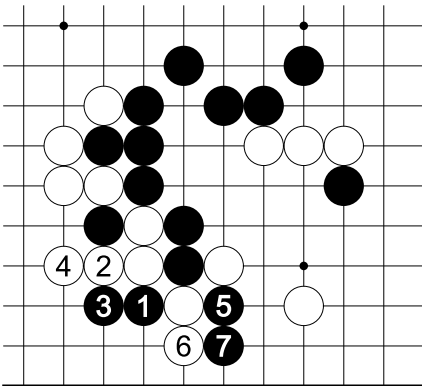


Diagram 5a (correct)

- ① This atari should be easy to spot as the first play and is correct.
- ⑦ White's two stones are cut off.

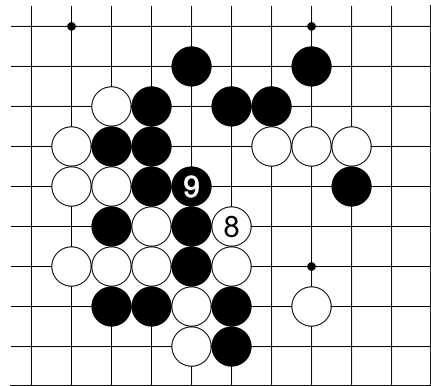


Diagram 5b (mistake by White)

⑧ This doesn't help White.

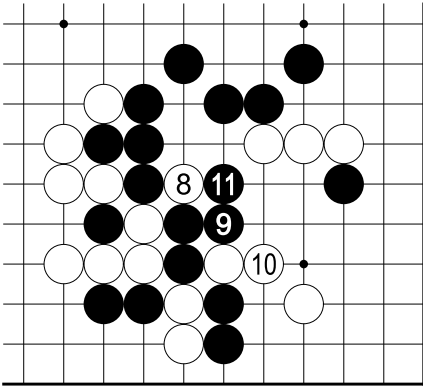


Diagram 5c (correct – mistake by White)

- ⑧ This doesn't help either.
- ⑨ Black escapes.

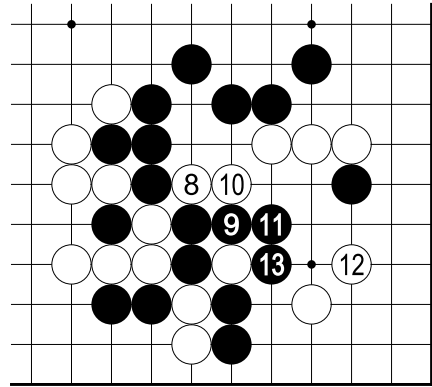


Diagram 5d (correct – continuation)

- ⑬ Black has two eyes.

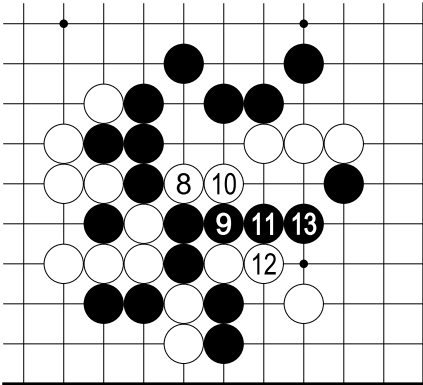


Diagram 5e (mistake by White)

- ⑬ Black is cut off, but one of White's groups will come to grief first.

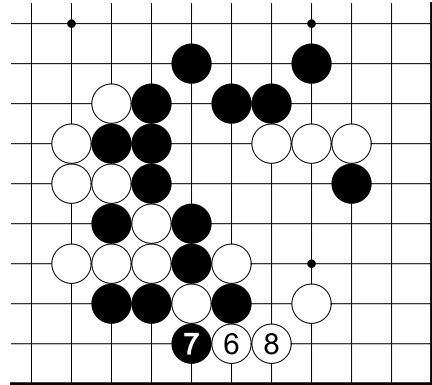


Diagram 5f (White's best move?)

- ⑥ So where should White back off? This is one option.

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

# TOURNAMENT HISTORIES V: BARMOUTH

Tony Atkins

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In 1993 the small group of players living in Barmouth, on the west coast of Wales, decided the best way to meet other players was to run their own tournament. They chose June as being early summer, but not school holidays, which hopefully gave nice weather for a weekend break for those visiting. The first event was billed as the West Wales Tournament and was held over just three rounds at the community centre attached to the Dragon Theatre. The weather did prove nice enough to play outside, as shown, and twenty players took part, including one who drove the round trip from Reading in the day!



Welsh Open

The following year the event was extended to five rounds over two days and was billed as the Barmouth Tournament. The extra day made it more attractive for weekenders and the attendance more than doubled; the highest number was 52 in 1995, when the venue changed to the Youth centre, near the station and opposite the Dolphin Chip Shop. A room was made available in the Tal-Y-Don pub for playing in the evenings. This event was declared to be the third Welsh Open and the event remains with this title and, unlike other Opens, does not change location.

In 2004 Chester Go Club took on all of the organisation from the locals (Jo Hampton, Baron Allday and Philip Ward-Ackland), whereas previously Tony and Sue Pitchford and Martin and Helen Harvey had been helping run the tournament. The following year the event changed to the Min-Y-Mor Hotel on the beach side of the railway, seven minutes walk from the station. This allowed the introduction of a Saturday evening meal. In 2015 the event went up to six rounds from five.



Prizes

Nowadays there is a variety of title winners (including a tie in 2011), but remarkably Matthew Macfadyen won every year between 1993 and 2008, amassing a total of 79 games unbeaten, before finally losing to two-time winner Yohei Negi in 2009. Prizes have varied over the years, but have included cuddly Welsh dragons and the figurines shown here from 1997. The winner now gets to hold the Brian Timmins Plaque, first awarded in 2016 in memory of one of the event's most loyal supporters.