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GO

JOURNAL

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## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL**

The copy date for the next issue of the Journal is **1<sup>st</sup> April**.

Contributions are welcome at any time and the earlier the better. Those received after the copy date are likely to be too late for inclusion in the next issue. 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.

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# EDITORIAL

[journal@britgo.org](mailto:journal@britgo.org)

British Go Journal 198

## Juniors

These are exciting times in the development of our junior players and we are very pleased to feature two of them in this edition: Scott Cobbold and Sam Barnett. Both 15 years old, Scott is British Youth Champion and has rapidly reached a rating of 1 dan following his performance at the London Open. We mentioned Sam's remarkable sequence of wins in BGY 194; he was British Youth Champion in 2020 and has a rating of 2 kyu.

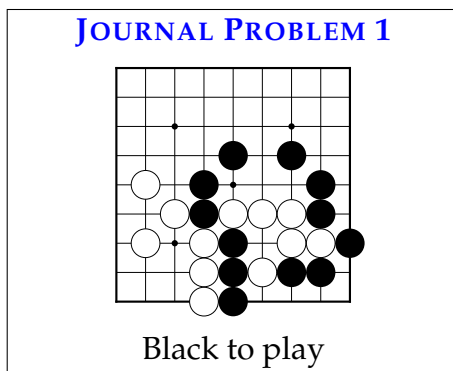
Nor are these our only strong juniors. We get the feeling, seeing the activity reported edition after edition in our Youth News articles, that real progress is being made in our youth development programme. Our Youth Committee and all those helping are to be congratulated on the results of their efforts!

## BGY 200

The summer edition will be BGY 200 and it would be nice to mark this event with some special content. Do you have a favourite article or series of articles, for instance? A favourite author? What was it like producing the Journal years ago? How many members have a complete set of copies? We would be delighted to receive contributions celebrating this landmark.

If you want to refresh your memory, they are all online at [www.britgo.org/bgj/bgj](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/bgj), there is an excellent history of the first 100 written by Francis Roads (somewhat updated at [www.britgo.org/bgj/history](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/history)) and there is an index for numbers 0<sup>1</sup> to 112 at [www.britgo.org/bgj/index/top](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/index/top). (I hope to bring news of an index extending this to 200 soon.)

*Pat Ridley*  
*February 2022*



<sup>1</sup>Issue numbering is considered to start at 0 – see [www.britgo.org/bgj/bgj000](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/bgj000).

# LETTERS

## The Road to Understanding Japanese

I am pleased to announce the release of the first volume in the series *The Road to Understanding Japanese*. For more details, see SmartGo Books

[gobooks.com/books-by-series.html#road-to-understanding-japanese](http://gobooks.com/books-by-series.html#road-to-understanding-japanese).

This ebook is available not only for Apple iOS and macOS devices, but also as an ePub (see [gobooks.com/epub.html](http://gobooks.com/epub.html)) for reader apps on other platforms such as Android and Windows. I have no plans to offer a paper version.

**Richard Hunter**

### Credits

Many thanks to all those who have helped to produce this Journal.

**Contributors:** Tony Atkins, Martin Harvey, Richard Hunter, Toby Manning, Tony Pitchford, Alex Rix, Benjamin Teuber and John Tilley.

**Photographs:** *Front cover*; Scott Cobbold and Sam Barnett at the British Youth Go Championships (see Youth News).

All photographs in this edition were provided by the article authors, or are credited directly in the article.

**Proofreading:** Tony Atkins, Barry Chandler, Mike Cockburn, Brent Cutts, Martin Harvey, Richard Hunter, Bob Scantlebury and Nick Wedd.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Toby Manning

[president@britgo.org](mailto:president@britgo.org)



## Tournaments Restart

I am pleased to say that we have restarted face-to-face tournaments after an 18-month hiatus (our last Tournament was on Skye in mid-March, 2020) with the delayed British Congress, held in Leicester in early October. We had hoped to be able to provide more notice about the event, but our initial venue fell through, resulting in a delay in finalising the arrangements.

Other tournaments are also appearing on the Events Calendar: I hope that I may meet many of you at one of these events.

Just as we thought there was light at the end of the tunnel, the Omicron variant appeared, and as a result, our programme of face-to-face tournaments continues to stutter. The tournaments in London to celebrate the re-opening of the London Go Centre in its new home, the London MindSports Centre, the Ulster Open and the Wessex

had attendance broadly in line with expectation. However, the British Youth, Coventry and the London Open had a significantly reduced attendance, presumably due to a continued worry about Covid, although the requirement to make masks compulsory at the London Open probably did not help. We wait to see what the New Year will bring.

## British Congress and AGM

Following our successful experience using Zoom to hold online meetings, Council intends to make using Zoom for formal meetings such as the AGM permanent. This will enable more members to participate in meetings; it will also free up time at the British Congress for more Go-related activities. We currently hope to hold the British Congress in Lancaster during the second weekend in April, and the AGM will be held a few weeks afterwards.

## Governance

At the 2020 (online) AGM, a motion was passed which agreed in principle to convert the BGA from an Unincorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee and instructed Council to consult with members before bringing forward a motion to the 2022 AGM.

Council has therefore put together a coherent and comprehensive set of proposals, which we hope will be supported by the members at the next AGM.

These proposals, together with a lot of background information, are available on the website at [www.britgo.org/conversion](http://www.britgo.org/conversion).

As far as possible the proposals (if agreed by the AGM) will result in minimal changes to the way we operate. More information about what will change and what will stay the same is available on the website.

However, in researching the proposals we identified what we consider to be a significant hole in our existing constitution: Council has no powers to deal with bad behaviour. While such issues are very rare, they can happen and we believe we need powers to deal with issues such as deliberate cheating or persistent abusive or illegal behaviour.

We have therefore drafted a simple 'Code of Conduct' and a procedure to deal with any alleged breaches of the Code; this procedure involves a 'Disputes Panel' which is independent of Council.

Details are part of the consultation referred to above and can be found at [www.britgo.org/codeofconductproposals](http://www.britgo.org/codeofconductproposals).

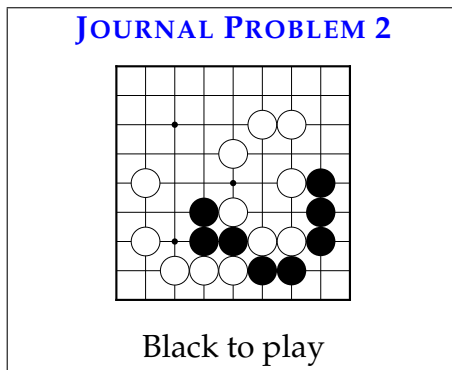
We hope that you will find this to be a balanced way of dealing with what will be very rare events.

### Castledine-Barnes Trust

At the same time the Trustees of the Castledine Barnes Trust, our fund to support youth Go players, are proposing a revamp. The intention is to rename the Trust as the 'Youth Go Trust' and to formally seek charitable status. The Trustees will then seek to make the Trust more visible and to be more active in both seeking and spending funds.

### Scott Cobbold

Finally, I wish to congratulate Scott Cobbold for becoming British Youth Go Champion and for achieving dan-player status. There is more information about Scott on Page 17. □



# GO JOTTINGS 19

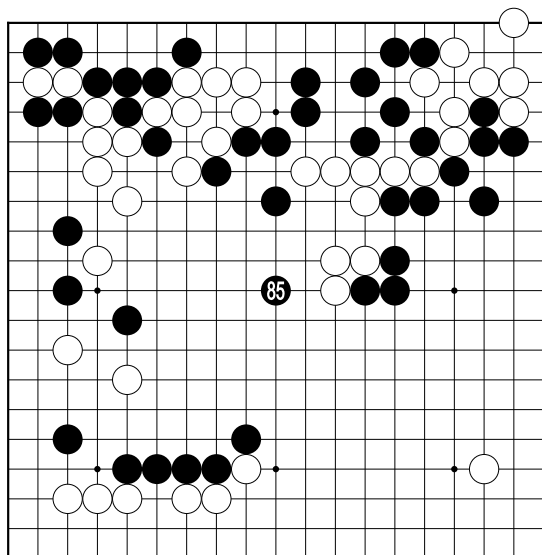
## GLOBAL SACRIFICE: HONINBO SHUEI

John Tilley

[john@jtilley.co.uk](mailto:john@jtilley.co.uk)

I first came across the position in Figure 1 over fifty years ago and it started my jottings collection; it is from a book of problems called *Wonders of Sacrifice* by Kano 9 dan.

What struck me then was the mix of full board and part board problems. It was only very recently that I realised that Kano's book is unusual as the problems are a combination of tactical sacrifice (local) and global sacrifice (strategic); they include examples from professional games, which makes an exciting mix.



**Figure 1: 85**  
White to play

The problem as given by Kano 9 dan.

This game was played on May 13<sup>th</sup> 1896. White is Honinbo Shuei and Black is Ishii Senji.



**Honinbo Shuei**



I think it is instructive to go back a few moves.

Black's press with 73 starts a strong attack.

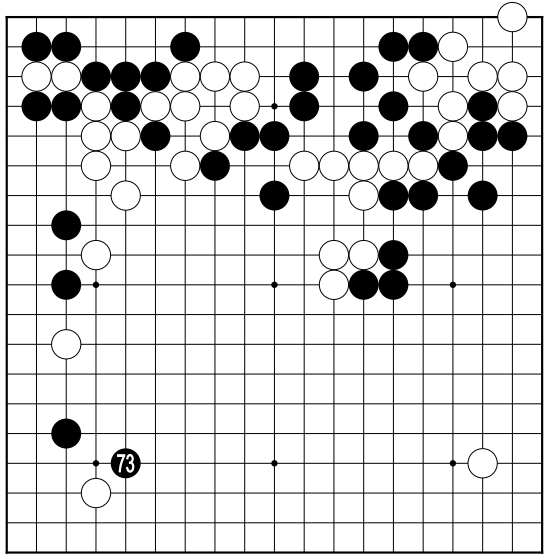


Figure 2: 73

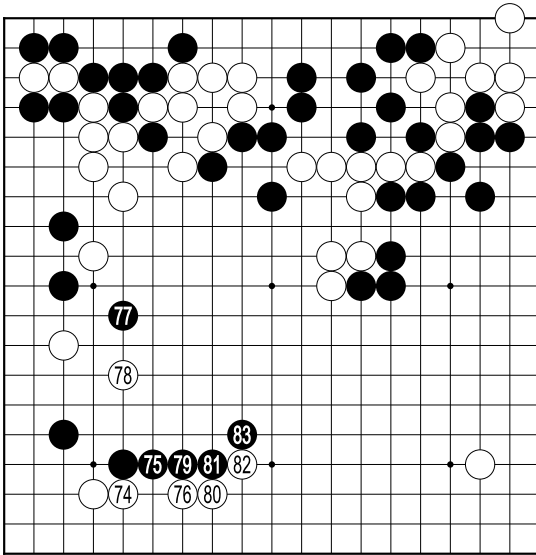


Figure 3: 74-83

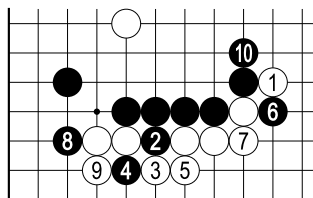
After pressing down at 73 Black continues to build thickness with 75 before pushing White towards it with the knight's move of 77.

This is a textbook way to play.



Please note that White can't afford to play the two-step hane of ①, as in this diagram, at the moment.

This is because Black can strengthen his position with the sequence to ⑧ and Black ⑩ is now a splitting attack on the two White groups above, to the left (two stones) and right (nine stones).



Dia. 1

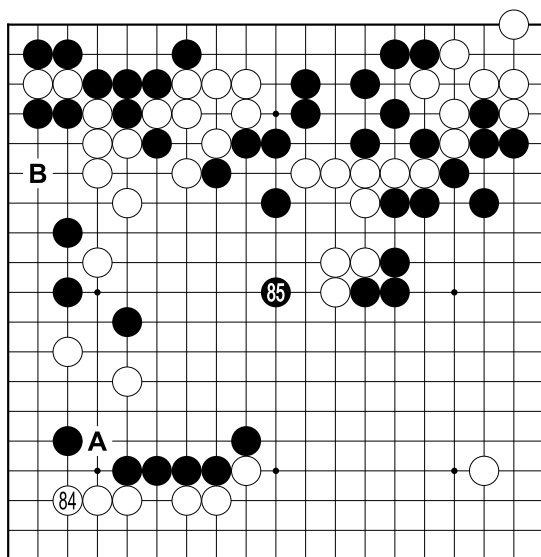


Figure 4: 84-85

This is the position that Kano gives as his problem. How can White weather the storm?

My advice is to start by looking at the whole board and deciding how weak or strong each group is (I try to aim Go Jottings at a mid-ranged SDK player, as this is what you should be doing anyway throughout the course of a game), again easier said than done! My thoughts are:

1. On the left side White has two stones that seem weak.
2. White has a group of 14 stones above that have two eyes.
3. White has a group of nine stones to the right of ⑧5 that seem to be in trouble.
4. White's position in the top right is the L-shaped group with one leg and a stone on the 2-1 point, so it is alive. (If you don't know this instinctively please read pages 94-95 of James Davies' *Life and Death* – the first L+1 group).

So in the game White played ⑧4, a splendid move which is deceptively slow and defensive, but creates aji at A.

I think Black must have been quite excited to play at ⑧5 as now White's nine central stones are in trouble.

5. Black's top left corner is rock solid.
6. Black's three stones on the left side can connect to this Black corner with a move at **B**.
7. Black's 12 stones at the top need to be watched – they seem OK at the moment, though, and ⑥⑤ pulls them out.
8. Black's 10 stones on the right look OK at the moment.

The big surprise is that Shuei decides to sacrifice these 9 central stones. Having previously strengthened his position with ⑧④ he can now afford to play the tough two-step hane of ⑥⑥, which previously didn't work.

It is easy to say, but it is always best to discard stones before they become too much of a burden.

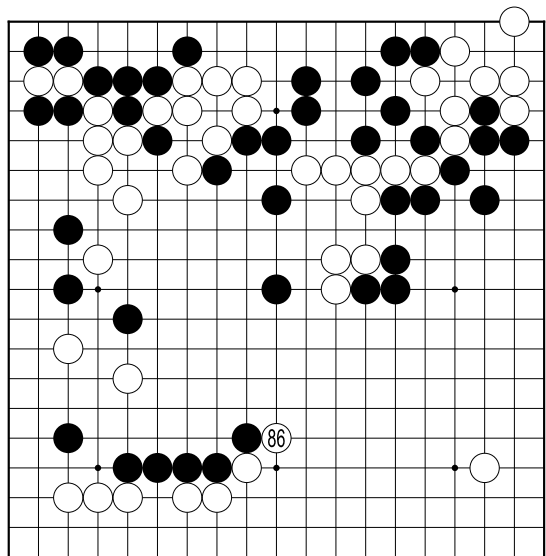


Figure 5: 86

I am aware that Black was a professional 5 dan and that Shuei's sacrifice probably surprised him(!) – but hopefully the beauty of this game will appeal, even though most of us can't aspire to play such moves ourselves.

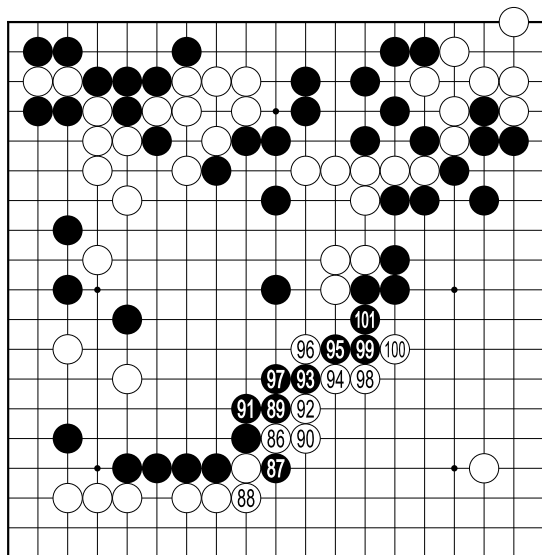


Figure 6: 86-101

Once White plays ⑧⑥, ⑧⑦ starts a pushing and shoving contest. Black has to defend with a vacant triangle at ⑩①, which is always a little painful. You needed to have done some careful calculations before embarking on this strategy(!). White is giving up nine stones (18 points) plus the territory immediately around them, perhaps another 15-20 points. So, White needs 35 or so points in compensation on the lower side and lower right corner.

Just to make it all a bit more exciting the relative strength and weakness of several of the groups changes, just as it always does in every game.

⑩② and ⑩④ help make ⑩⑥ sente, as Black has to defend at ⑩⑦, which is a key part of this game.

I have taken the next two diagrams from Takagawa's book on Honinbo Shuei, as Kano just made a brief reference to ⑩⑦ in his text; he presented the position as a sacrifice problem rather than a game commentary.

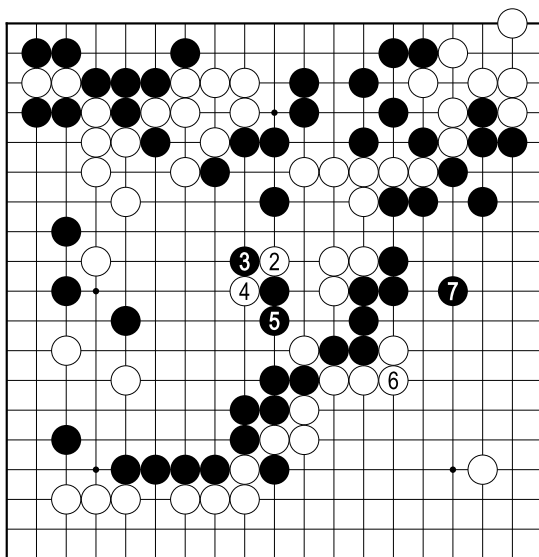
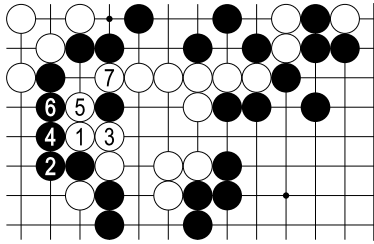


Figure 7: 102-107



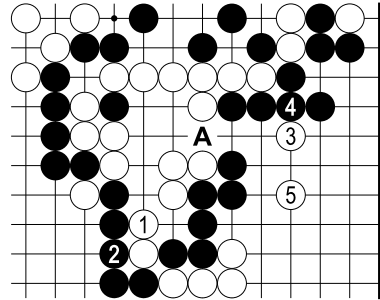
**Dia. 2**

Should Black omit **7** in the previous diagram White has the sequence to **7** up his sleeve, which puts pressure on Black's top group.

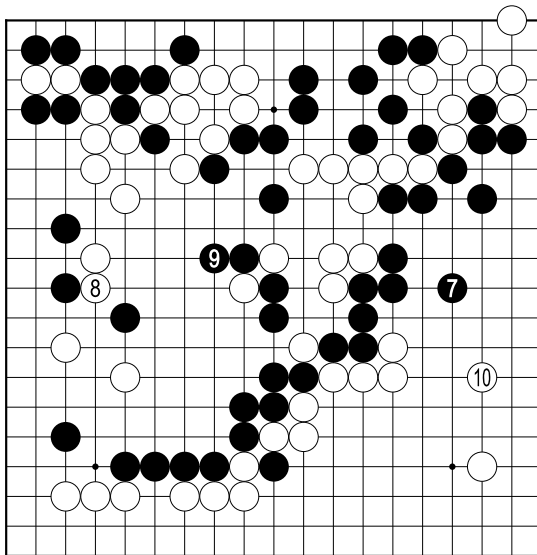
Also, note that Black's right group is now weaker as there is some bad aji.

After the previous variation White now threatens to connect with **1**, **2** is forced and then White can launch an attack with **3** and **5**. White **A** threatens to cut off six Black stones.

It is fascinating to see how White's slow-looking move of **106** threatened Black and how Black was forced to make the gote move of **107**.



**Dia. 3**



**Figure 8: 107-110**

So in the game, Black had to defend with **7** and after the exchange of **8** and **9**, White can play the large move of **10**.

Please note the lower right corner is not all White's territory!

Black played at ⑪ here and ultimately sacrificed these stones to seal off his territory above in sente.

Kano stopped his brief review of this global sacrifice problem, which started at move ⑥5, here.

The game is very close; Shuei won by 4 points.

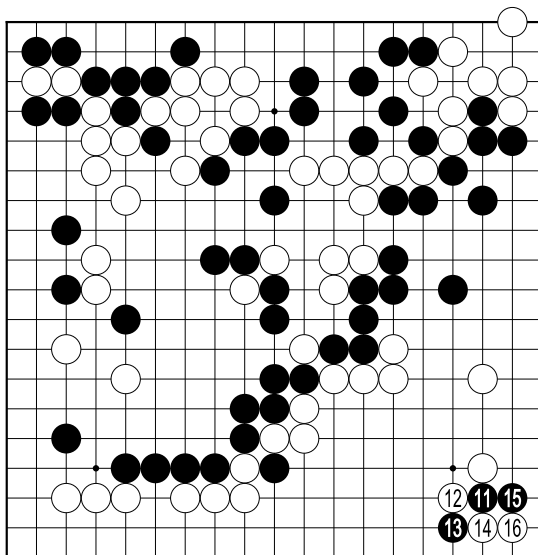


Figure 9: 111-116

This game can now be found in John Fairbairn's latest book – *Games of Shuei* (538 pages and 121 of Shuei's games); the commentary starts on page 212 and is six pages long.<sup>1</sup> It is published by Amazon, a search on "games shuei commentaries" will find it. This book is a paperback edition (March 2020) of four earlier e-books and is some 50% larger. There is a fascinating 39-page appendix titled "Go Wisdom" which covers many Go concepts such as aji, bullying, thickness, shape, shinogi, and many more; references to these concepts are given for the further study of these 121 games. Recommended.

Studying professional games is highly recommended for stronger SDK players who want to improve. Nagahara (then 4 dan pro) told me back in 1970, you will NOT understand all the moves, in fact; a shodan might only understand 10% of them! However finding the moves, playing through the games on a real board, appreciating the flow and the patterns is what is important. Play through the game once with the game record and three times without. This way you will learn good moves and good thinking. The stories and background information in Fairbairn's book help makes it all quite addictive.

There are just over 280 of Shuei's games in the Autumn 2021 GoGoD<sup>2</sup> collection.

A significant number of professionals have said that Shuei is their favourite player to study, not Shusaku, in the classic period of Japanese Go from Honinbo Sansa 1588 to Honinbo Shusai 1940.

<sup>1</sup>The complete game can also be found online at [badukmovies.com/pro\\_games/1952-ishii-senji-honinbo-shuei](http://badukmovies.com/pro_games/1952-ishii-senji-honinbo-shuei).

<sup>2</sup>[gogodonline.co.uk](http://gogodonline.co.uk).

There is some good background on Shuei and his style in Sensei's Library – note Takagawa's comments – at:

[senseis.xmp.net/?HoninboShuei](http://senseis.xmp.net/?HoninboShuei)

There is also an interview with Fujisawa Shuko on page 65 of *Go World*, March-April 1981. He says "I wake up on the dot of four in the morning...and play through games" "all the games from most of the tournaments" and "classic games ... every day" "I've played through his (*Shuei's*) games many times" "No matter how often I go through his games, I always have the feeling that I'd be no match for him". This interview took place after Fujisawa Shuko had just won the 5<sup>th</sup> Kisei Title by beating Otake Hideo 4-0.

Shuko criticised younger players who only studied five or six hours every day – "that's not enough". It is interesting to note that both Shuei and Fujisawa Shuko became stronger in later life, after ages of 44 and 50 respectively.

*An Outline of Japanese Go Volume 17* by Takagawa Kaku 1976 is the book I refer to and it's a highly rated classic.

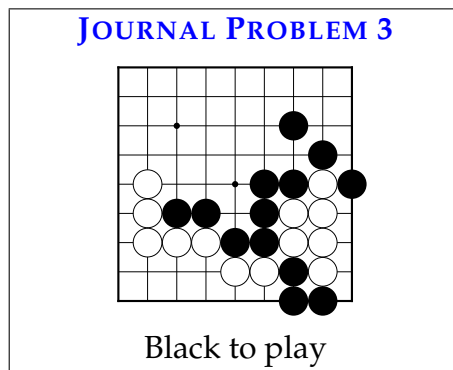
[senseis.xmp.net/?AnOutlineOfJapaneseGo](http://senseis.xmp.net/?AnOutlineOfJapaneseGo)

Somehow I have managed to acquire two other books of Honinbo Shuei's selected games, one by Fukui Masaaki and the other by Takagi Shoichi. This game only appears in Takagawa's book; I think this just goes to show how the authors were spoiled for choice.

Finally, Kano continues a common theme in the introduction to his book – the art of sacrifice is what distinguishes the strong player from the weak player, and if you want to become truly strong then you need to master the art of disposing of stones when considering the whole board.

*Photo Credits: Honinbo Shuei – Sensei's Library.*

□



# YOUTH NEWS

Tony Atkins

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## Anglo-Chinese Youth League

Starting in mid-March, an all-play-all league was played containing seven young UK players and seven players from the Chinese team previously played against in 2020, "Li Ang Yi Tao", organised by Go teacher Li Ang. Unfortunately, time and exam pressures meant that a number of matches, especially those not involving Chinese players, were not played and in the end byes were awarded. Congratulations go to Sam Barnett who was joint top with Li Yuze from China, both with ten points out of thirteen.

## Youth Squad

To decide which young players were suitable to join our squad for the European Youth Go Team Championship, a selection tournament was held on OGS on 10<sup>th</sup> October. There were 42 players and, though some were ineligible for the squad and other squad members were missing, the results helped Alison Bexfield pick the squad.

The winner with three wins, though not eligible for the squad, was Alain Cheung (5d London). Others with three wins were Caleb Monk (9k London), Michael Cheung (10k Bolton), Andrew Volovich (10k Cambridge), Darius Rahmati (13k Aston), August Cai (14k London) and Lawrence Baker (18k Oxford).

## European Youth Go Tournament

This event is normally held face-to-face in the spring, but the 2021

event was postponed and eventually held online over the weekend Friday 15<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October. With games on a school day, the UK representation was limited to six players. In the Under-12 section Andrew Volovich (10k) and Lukasz Kudla (11k) both won four out of six; in the Under-16 section Scott Cobbold (2k) and Hanna Kudla (10k) both achieved two out of five and Jan Kudla (11k) three out of six. In the Under-20 section David Baldwin (10k) won two games.

## BYGC

This year the British Youth Go Championship was able to be played over the board and was held in Leicester, a location that attracted players from all corners: Edinburgh, Cambridge, London, Cornwall and Manchester.



The venue was the County Bridge Club in the New Parks district of the city, a very pleasant building that was until recently a children's nursery. Access to the site was easy by car and lifts were provided from and to the railway station by Peter Fisher, Joe Monk and Toby Manning.



Forty youngsters took part, including some beginners and a good number of players for whom this was their first UK event. There were players from Hong Kong and China, and Mark Kirillin (7k), who had just moved to Cambridge from Russia. As usual, the players battled over five rounds to try to win one of the six age groups, as well as the overall title, winners getting a small trophy to keep marking their achievement. Toby Manning also handed out the cash prizes from the online UK Go Challenge Finals and Alison Bexfield was there to give out grade badges.

The clear Youth Champion was Scott Cobbold (1k) from London, who won all five games, including beating Sam Barnett in round one and London's Gene Wong in the final. Alvina Kwok, one of the new players, was the Top Girl.

Section Winners (runners-up):

- U18: Robbie James (-)
- U16: Scott Cobbold (Sam Barnett)
- U14: Alvina Kwok (Lea Wong)
- U12: Gene Wong (Daniel Yang)
- U10: Lukasz Kudla (Emily Gan)
- U8: Rachel Chik (Yiliang Liu)

Prizes of sweets also went to the winners of four games: Ehsen Shah, Jan Kudla, Zhaoqi Guo, Megan Upton and Mark Kirillin (Open U8 Champion). The best entrants in the Go puzzle competition were Mark Kirillin, Oliver Bardsley, Emily Gan and Emily Li, and the UK Go Challenge caption competition prizes went to Taher Anjari and Daniel Yang. The Castledine Trophy was won jointly by Cheadle Hulme School and James Gillespie High School (Edinburgh) based on McMahon scores, and the top team based on percentage was Ilford.



**U8 Champion Rachel Chik receives her trophies from Tony Atkins and Toby Manning**

### **Euro City**

Following on from the prototype European Youth Team League, the first competition involving more countries was held in autumn 2021. There was only one knockout league as there were seven UK teams of three (from London, Cambridge and Derby) and also a few teams from Germany and Kyrgyzstan. As before, 13x13 games were played on OGS and the players play twice – once on even and once with handicaps. The first round on 9<sup>th</sup> October saw Cambridge the 3Rs, Cambridge 2 and 3 and London Red Giant losing, but Cambridge 1 and Derby Thunder Cats won whilst London 1 got a bye. Two weeks later, both London 1 and Cambridge 1 won, but Derby lost to Wuppertal. In the semi-finals on 6<sup>th</sup> November London 1 won on tie break against Neuss 1 (3-3 with board 3 not played) and Wuppertal beat Bishtek 1 (3-3). ▷

Unfortunately, Cambridge 1 had had to withdraw because of a date clash. In the final on the 13<sup>th</sup>, London 1 beat Wuppertal on even game wins tie-break after the match ended 3-3. Well done to Gene Wong, Isabella Qiu, George Han and reserve Caleb Monk!

### Teams

The UK played France in the first round of the European Youth Go Team Championship played on KGS on 13<sup>th</sup> November. We were seeded in the top half of the draw following our good result last year and so were paired with another strong team. France, who we beat last year, outgraded us on paper this time by between one and four grades on every board, so it was always going to be a tough match.

Unusually, our games were spread across two weekends to accommodate the French team's availability.

Sam Barnett played first as our board 3 in what proved to be an exciting game. Sam had the best of it against the French 2 dan for the first half of the game, but his opponent fought back to claim the win. Jacob Zhang, Isabella Qiu and Derek Duan also lost their games leaving George Han to be our star of the match, as he won against a 1 kyu player. The overall result was 4-1 to France.

In other matches, top teams Russia and Germany demolished Ukraine and Romania respectively. There were also wins for Russia B, Croatia, Czechia and a combined team called Slovanan.

In round 2 on 11<sup>th</sup> December the UK team were drawn against Hungary.

Our team had three of the five players making their debut appearance: Claire Chen, Spike Shamoon and Lukasz Kudla. Daniel Yang, one of our longer standing players, played a day ahead of the other games and took an easy win, setting us up well for the remaining boards. Lukasz's game was a bit of a rollercoaster to watch on board 5, with a large group lacking the required number of eyes for some time. Lukasz held his nerve and capitalised on his opponent's error to save his group. After this he romped home to an easy win. Spike quickly followed with a strong game where he was never in any difficulty. George, on board 4, had the toughest game. His opponent, although a 7 kyu on paper, was playing much stronger than this level. George kept it close to 7 points but could not quite take the win. Claire, debuting on board 1, then finished with another straight forward win to give the UK team a 4-1 victory. Both Russian teams won at the top, as well as Turkey, Ukraine, Poland and Romania.

### Grand Prix

The 2021 Youth Grand Prix concluded with the London Open. Andrew Volovich increased his lead to end in first place with 1322 points. Second was Caleb Monk (1111) and third Scott Cobbold (1047). Also worthy of mention was Oliver Bardsley (914) in fourth. Andrew also won the Double Digit Kyu Grand Prix with 496 points (ahead of Gilles Englebert's 419). The winner 20 kyu and below was also a junior player, Liann Wong.

□

# SCOTT COBBOLD

*Scott Cobbold, one of our most promising juniors, has been making remarkable progress recently. After winning all five of his games at the British Open in October, he won all five again to win the Bar Low in November. He became British Youth Champion later in the month (again winning all five games) and, thanks to five wins out of seven in our premier tournament, the London Open, he has already achieved a rating of 1 dan. We asked him for some brief biographical notes.*



## **Second below the bar at the London Open**

I am not really sure what to write as a biographical note but I would like to say that at the championship getting there it was really good to see everyone again and it was also nice to be going with my friends from school. I was really happy to be able to win the overall tournament, and as well as this I was happy that my friends from school also did really well.

About myself: I am 15 and I like to do maths a lot, I play a bit of piano and some violin but I prefer doing art and painting, which is the subject I took. I enjoy playing Go and I started playing in around 2017.

*What do you like most about playing Go?*  
I really enjoy playing Go because I like the fact that it is very complex and has very interesting abstract concepts despite the quite simple rules.

*You are a member of the Wanstead club - how long have you been going along to that?* I can't really remember how long I have been going to Wanstead club. I think I first went to the Central London Go club on Saturdays at first as it was more convenient. Thankfully the Wanstead club has been able to go on now but of course during the lockdown, sadly not.

*Would you tell us a bit about the EGF Youth Academy?* I did actually write something on the EGF academy for the newsletter previously<sup>1</sup>, it is quite helpful and lectures are given by Alexander Dinerchtein, who mainly looks at tesuji from real games, and Catalin Taranu, who reviews games. There is also a league and your games get reviewed.

*You played in the JIGS Easter Tournament. Are you a member of the JIGS school?*<sup>2</sup> I am not a member of the JIGS school. I attended an online tuition course in the Easter. It was very good and I would be playing Go basically all day for several days.

□

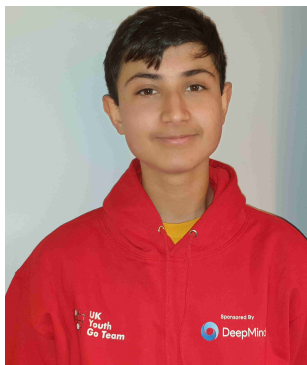
<sup>1</sup>Scott's article is in [www.britgo.org/youthnews/nov20](http://www.britgo.org/youthnews/nov20).

<sup>2</sup>Jenja International Go School, [www.go-jigs.eu](http://www.go-jigs.eu).

# INTERVIEW WITH SAM BARNETT

Martin Harvey

It's nice for everybody to see the progress that British youth players are making, so we're taking the chance to highlight one such player, Sam Barnett (Year 10) and see what he thinks of the game, and how he has improved.



Background: Sam is a student at Cheadle Hulme School (CHS), in South Manchester. In just over three years, Sam has learnt the game and reached 2-kyu, a grade that even most UK adults do not attain. He had no relatives or friends who knew the game.

You can see Sam's progress in the European Go Database.<sup>1</sup>

Sam kindly answered the following questions for us. The 'us' (Q:) are Helen and Martin Harvey, a married couple from the BGA, who are delighted to have been volunteers at CHS throughout Sam's Go-learning (except for Covid lockdowns of course).

Q: Sam, could you tell us how you got into Go, and at what age?

A: Well, when I was in Year 5 [age 9-10], I went to a brief introduction to Go, whilst on a 'taster day' – a co-curricular fair held at CHS. Back home, I told my parents that if I got into CHS, I would like to go to the Go club, and the MUN (Model United Nations) club. And so I did, enjoying both clubs greatly and getting properly into Go when I joined that secondary school. I had such great fun at Go club that I started going to tournaments.

Q: What do you remember about your first tournament?

A: It was really enjoyable; I was in Year 7, and it was the 'Northern' tournament, for all ages, held at my school. I lost two games, then won in round 3. Even though I won just one game, I was assured that it's not a sprint, but a marathon, and often the players who ultimately do best are those who show determination. It's a good life skill, to handle upsets. They say you need to lose hundreds of games, before you become good. It can be better for you to lose as, by spotting what mistakes were made in games, that's a top way to improve. I need to practice and not just rely on spotting good and bad patterns.

As part of my progression I went to the London Open Go Congress (LOGC) with a classmate and have got fond, fun memories from there. We could review our games with experts and indeed a couple of evenings we played some card games. I have continued to enjoy playing Go whenever I can, despite the lockdown, during which my Go grade became

<sup>1</sup>[www.europeangodatabase.eu/EGD/Player.Card.php?&key=18962658](http://www.europeangodatabase.eu/EGD/Player.Card.php?&key=18962658)

rather stuck, as I wasn't able to attend tournaments.

Q: Could you explain how you know what grade you are?

A: You start at the lowest grade, 40 'kyu' (kyu, or k for short, just means grade).<sup>2</sup> Then if you beat a person of your grade three times on the trot, you promote yourself to the next grade (39k) and so on.

Q: Your school was one of several schools where the BGA introduced Go badges, showing your grade, with a badge for every five or so grades from beginner up to 1k, then 1 Dan, 2 Dan, etc.. Did this idea help at your school?

A: It worked really well face-to-face because it motivates you and it shows you're doing well on your 'right of passage' and it gives you confidence, and encourages you to progress to the next badge.

Q: We see that you have played for the national team, representing the BGA. Could you tell us about this?

A: Yes, I played for the UK team, against other youth teams from a dozen European countries. This was in an organised League, where the Divisional tables were updated after each round of games. This included matches during two or three months of lockdown. The team played well and we came second in the competition. I got to know new players, who then became pals.

Q: Do you have a future Go personal ambition, broadly?

A: If I have to dream big, I would say that becoming UK champion would be fantastic, but the main thing is that I keep enjoying the game.

Q: Have you tried teaching Go to your relatives, friends or schoolmates?

A: I have and enjoyed doing so. Because the game's rules are simple, it's not hard to show the basics. But on the other hand, some aspects are more abstract so, as with anything in life, it will take a lot of practice to become a really experienced teacher. Having said that, I have tried to teach in my form and the school Go club. Also, I have demo-ed it sometimes in my free time, when people have asked me questions about what the game is. Like this, I have been able to help others improve, and help them refine their own skills.

Q: Can you think of an example of how players help each other?

A: Well one example is when I was playing at Go club. I was showing somebody a new corner opening, which I thought I knew well. In fact, we both learnt, as they came up with a variation I'd not seen, and they managed to kill my corner stones!

Q: You have mentioned that it's good to get practice against friends and to know patterns to recognise, but what other things would you recommend?

A: Reading books is good. Mrs Harvey has enabled me to get invaluable progress through my double-digit kyu and grades. CHS library has some Go books that I have read. But of course you can't beat playing many games and getting in that practice. I have been lucky to get many of my games reviewed, which is tremendous for learning. Also, as I see my grade go up, it boosts my morale. ▷

<sup>2</sup>The lowest grade (rank) used for the European Go Database is 30 kyu, but 40 kyu is used as the base in UK youth events.

<sup>3</sup>[online-go.com](http://online-go.com)

Playing online helps a lot; I use an online Go server called OGS<sup>3</sup> where there is a school site, and also there is a national site where British youngsters can play. It means I can have lots of games with fellow players and try out infinite game positions and it is all good practice.

Q: The UK press has been keen to talk about the progress made by Artificial Intelligence (AI), in particular its ability to beat professionals at Go. What do you think about AI? Has it helped you?

A: Well to some extent it has, but it is not perfect; for instance you can't ask it questions. Also it is difficult for AI to review your game, as it can show the best move but that is predicated on one having perfect skills, but of course each person has their own grade and really what you want is advice for your particular grade.

Q: Do you use any apps for studying or playing Go?

A: Yes I use SmartGoKifu on an iPad, for 'tsumego' (life+death problems) and on a mobile I use Android apps like WBaduk, which is in Chinese, and Pandanet. I think that they are very useful. I also use Fox Go Server for Android and also on the PC there are lots of different websites which I like, but probably I prefer OGS for its stylistic difference. Also it's nice when I can click and get a game in 10 seconds against another opponent.

Q: Have you used YouTube to study Go?

A: Yes I have used it, and it's good for basic principles. I have watched quite a few YouTube videos on Go and I concentrate on basics, where it's a very useful tool.

Q: The British Go Association runs an annual residential Go camp, organised by PGL. Have you been to that?

A: Yes I have and it was really great fun – not just for the Go workshops but also the outdoor activities like rifle-shooting, zip-trek, kayaking and raft-building. In addition I enjoyed the Go tournament matches in the evenings. The whole four days are very sociable, with the Go and the activities. It is a great chance to meet new players and I've made lots of new friends that way.

Q: You mentioned that when you learnt the game you were given a demo via an experienced player. Have you ever demonstrated Go?

A: Yes; for instance I went to the Manchester Doki Doki Japanese cultural festival, which is held every year. It was very enjoyable; people showed genuine interest in learning the game. It was lots of fun but then there is some time when it's quiet, which means we get to look at some other stalls. Some schoolmates came with me and we tried different Japanese things – for instance the food – and we sampled other Japanese culture.

Q: At the Japanese festival, did you buy any items of Japanese culture?

A: Yes, for instance I bought a fan off a woman at a stall.

Q: Have you done any other Go demo-ing?

A: Yes; at the school open day, when children come to sit their entrance exams in the afternoon, but in the morning they are given a tour of the school and a chance to look at the clubs that the school has on offer. At these, the Go club always hosts a stall all morning, where we give them demos on how to play capture Go. This is very popular with the visiting students and it keeps several of us busy all morning. On another occasion I helped demo Go one

evening, when the Sixth Form Centre was being opened and we were able to demo Go on all sizes of boards, including some nice big boards which were very enticing and well made, and this again brought in genuine interest.



**Lizzy Pollitt and Sam Barnett  
British Pair Go, 2019**

Q: What is the best thing about Go?

A: Well that is a very hard question; everybody likes it for different reasons. I like it because it's intuitive and beautifully creative. If you compare it with chess, you don't have to know all the Go openings; all you need to do is have an understanding of good shape and bad shape, and you just need a memory of those patterns. But not all people have such a good memory and they take a bit longer to learn them; one example of the pattern is an "empty triangle" which is bad shape in Go. Sometimes I find that I am asked 'Why did you play that move (which turned out to be a good move), and my answer is that it just felt right; that's the intuitive side of Go.

Q: At school or indeed at home what other passions do you have other than Go?

A: Well I like French, German, Latin, and Ancient and Modern Greek, but perhaps most of all I like maths (my dad is a maths teacher).

Q: What would your tips be, for other students – youth players or adults?

A: I think the biggest thing is to be able to concentrate. When you play Go you use your maths brain for calculating the amount you are ahead or behind, and you use the intuitive side of your brain to recognise patterns, and you have to read out a lot of variations to choose your best move; if you do, it helps in Go tremendously.

Q: The British Go Association runs one annual Pair Go tournament. Have you been to that?

A: Yes; I have only been once but it was great fun. I partnered Lizzy Pollitt from school and we won the handicap section. I certainly want to play this competition again several times.

Q: Of course in Go the strongest players are referred to as Dan players. Have you been able to speak to many?

A: Yes; I have been able to learn from many strong players during lockdown. I've been practicing with – and having teaching games – for instance with Andrew Simons, and at the London Open Go Congress I received a lot of valuable game-reviews and advice from Dan players.

Q: Do you have any goals for your own Go future?

A: Yes; I would love to go to the World Amateur and various European tournaments.

Q: Before you played Go, were there other games that you liked?

A: I enjoyed indoor games like chequers and poker, and I enjoy cricket for the school. We have one team for our age-group. Sometimes the activities clash and I aim to keep a balance between the various games. It's good that they keep me busy.

□

# UK NEWS

Tony Atkins

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## Wessex

The Wessex Tournament returned to its usual venue, St Mark's Community Centre in Bath, and its usual one-day format on the day the clocks go back, Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October. Eleven of the 25 players were from Bristol Go Club and so, coupled with those from Bath Go Club, over half the participants were local. Winning all three games, to add Wessex to his British Open title, was Yaoling Yang (5d Bristol). The only other player winning all their games was Alison Bexfield (1d Letchworth), who started below the bar.

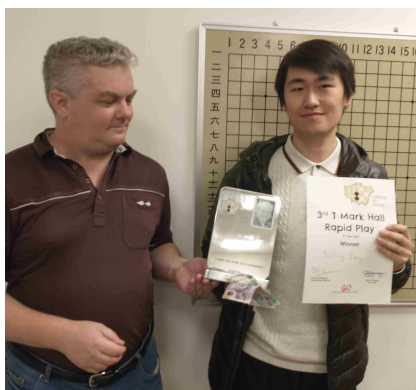
## T Mark Hall Rapid Play



**The T Mark Hall Room**

This event on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> November, the third T Mark Hall Rapid Play Tournament, was the first tournament to be run by the London Go Centre at its new location. This gave entrants a chance to see the layout of the London MindSports Centre, which was bustling with Bridge players

downstairs, playing in league matches, and various builders attaching doors and laying carpets in some unused areas. The T Mark Hall Room was appropriately filled with 32 Go players from 5d to 16k. After the event a small party was held to celebrate this first event.



**Yaoling Yang (right), with Richard Wheeldon**

Yaoling Yang (5d Bristol) won his third event in a row by winning with five straight wins. Finishing second was Peikai Xue (3d Central London) with four wins. John Bamford (5k Oxford) was the other player to win five games, whilst four wins were achieved by Richard Wheeldon (1k South London), Michael Kyle (2k Edinburgh), Tim James (4k Brighton), Gilles Englebort (7k Oxford), Andrew Volovich (9k Cambridge) and Marco Praderio (10k Lancaster). The best players in various categories won cash prizes (£25 for first) and took home certificates as souvenirs.



## Bar Low

The following day the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bar Low was also held in the London Go Centre. The event saw 38 players taking part, including a big group from Tonbridge School, and the day ended with a lecture by Saito Takashi (5d), who is currently studying at Sussex and is a former teacher at Kyoto Go School.



### Scott Cobbold wins the Barlow

Scott Cobbold, a young player from East London, won with a perfect five out of five, whilst second was tournament director Richard Wheeldon with four wins. Both players entered at 1 kyu, the maximum grade allowed for the event. Other players winning four games were James Taylor (7k Oxford University), Gilles Englebert (7k Oxford), Francesco Chiarini (8k LGC), Andrew Volovich (9k Cambridge), Marco Praderio (10k Lancaster), Guy Butler (16k LGC) and Stephen Crampton (22k LGC).

## Ireland

'On the board' events have returned to Ireland, with the second event being the Ulster Tournament. For the first time this was a Northern Irish event not held in Belfast. Held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November, 12 players met at the Lisburn Chess Rooms. Visitors from Newcastle, Tom Coulthard (1k) and Vladimiro Gonzales Zelaya (1d), took first and third, with John Courtney (1d Dublin) in second. Winning three games lower down were Dublin's Eoghan Barry (4k) and Stephen Nulty (6k).

The first event, on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October, had been the October Rip-Off Tournament, when twenty players, all Irish, met up at the Teachers' Club in Dublin. The winner was Xinqun Lu (3d Dublin), with three wins also by Thomas Shanahan (4k Cork) and Niall Tuohy (6k Dublin).

## Coventry

A late confirmation of the event and general unease with meeting up saw only 15 players taking part in the Coventry Tournament on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November. It was held at its usual location of the University of Warwick. Winner was Alistair Wall (2d Wanstead); he beat Toby Manning (1d Leicester) in round two and one of the many students, Tsun Hei Liu (5k Warwick University), in the last round. Greg Cox (10k Dundee) won all three games lower down the ranking.

## British Championship

This year, because there were no events earlier in the year, the top two British players at September's British Open were selected to contest a single game for the title of British Go Champion. The two players were

Daniel Hu (5d), equal second in the Open, and Bruno Poltronieri (3d), equal fourth. The match was arranged for Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November at a private location in Cambridge and the game got under way about 12 minutes after the advertised start time of 10:30.



**Daniel Hu**

Daniel was Black and played an interesting opening style, which was much enjoyed by the fifty or so spectators on the KGS relay provided by Gokul Ramanan Subramanian. Former Champion Andrew Simons also broadcast a spoken analysis of the game on both KGS and YouTube. The players broke for lunch for an hour and then continued into the afternoon, the game this time being played with Fischer time of 100 minutes plus 45 seconds per move.

The game ended at 16:50 with Daniel ahead by 7.5 points to become British

Champion for the second time, the previous time being in 2017.

### **London Open**

It was pleasing to have the London Open back with the 47<sup>th</sup> edition being run on the last four days of December at the new London Go Centre location. With Coronavirus still prevalent it was possible with mask-wearing, ventilation and distancing to hold a reduced size event. In the end only 37 players took part in the Open, plus another four in the side events. This included 12 juniors and a big group of strong Chinese students, but sadly very few overseas visitors because of travel restrictions.

Mateusz Surma (2p) had been arranged to be the resident teacher, but being unable to attend he reviewed all the top board games on the London Go Centre Twitch channel. This was enabled by the live streaming the top board on YouTube and edited versions of his talks appear there also.



**Soon Lik Hang v Tianyi Chen**

As expected the strong Chinese players dominated the top of the draw and Yaoling Yang (5d Bristol) won all seven games and added the London Open title to his impressive list of tournament wins. Zherui Xu (4d Cambridge) took second and Tianyi Chen (5d Liverpool) third,

both with five wins. Several up and coming junior players had a tough time with the strong top group, but Alain Cheung (5d) was top placed junior and was awarded the David Ward Trophy for being the top British player. Alvina Kwok and Scott Cobbold, both 1k juniors, won five games to take the first and second below-the-bar prizes (with Alvina having to play the tournament winner in the last round). Gokul Ramanan Subramanian (1k Cambridge) was third. The only kyu player to win all seven games was also a junior, Caleb Monk (8k).

Other noteworthy results were Paul Smith (2k Cambridge) and Bjorn Eurenus (9k Lancaster), both winning five. Best Double Digit Kyu was Joe Monk (13k Epsom) and second was Guy Butler (15k London Go Centre). Claire Chen (2d Oxford) was awarded the prize for top under-18 and Andrew Volovich (8k Cambridge) the top under-12, both prizes sponsored by Oxford City Go Club. The cost of other prizes and gift certificates were supported by Nippon Club UK, GoMagic and Polgote.

The side events were trimmed back a bit with the post-event Rengo, meal and party cancelled, but a new event was a Continuous 13x13. The idea was that the best two players would play a final, but Andrew Volovich had to abandon the game to get his train home and so John Eacott (9k London Go Centre) was the winner.

The second evening Doubles Rengo (advertised as Pair Go) was won by Yaoling Yang and Jun Su. Runners-up were Gao Wang and Francesco Chiarini. The Lightning Tournament on the third evening was won by Jun Su (4d Cambridge), with Tianyi Chen the runner up.

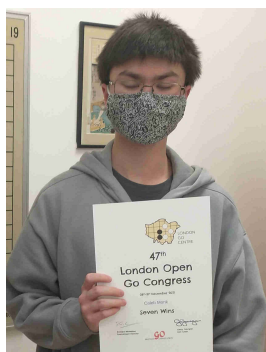
## Juniors at the London Open



**Alain Cheung – Top Placed Junior**



**Alvina Kwok – won five games**



**Caleb Monk – won all seven games**

The players' thanks went to organiser Gerry Gavigan and draw master Richard Wheeldon for running a good congress under difficult circumstances.

# GO AT THE LIVERPOOL WORLD MUSEUM

Tony Pitchford

[pitchtony@gmail.com](mailto:pitchtony@gmail.com)

In October, Chester Go club was invited to demonstrate Go at Liverpool World Museum, which was holding a 'Celebration of the Mind' weekend. This wide-ranging exhibition had a number of items on the development of computers and artificial intelligence, including a mock-up of a Bombe used at Bletchley Park during WWII to decrypt German Enigma codes, videos of the 1997 chess match between Gary Kasparov and the IBM computer Deep Blue and, not least, some very nice videos on the match between Lee Sedol and DeepMind's AlphaGo in 2016.



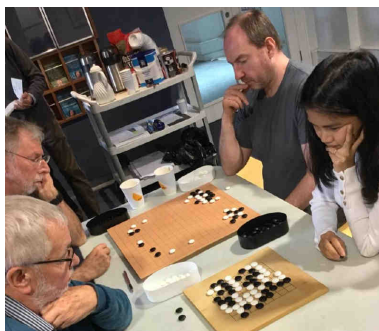
**Dave Horan (l) explains Go to our host**

The event was held over three days; the first two days we were in a side room, which was reasonably busy. On the Sunday we moved to the main hall alongside Liverpool Chess Club, which was even busier, and we were fully occupied in promoting Go.



**Martin Harvey (r) teaching**

Dave Horan, Ryan and Jhet Griffiths, John McAnally, Pat Ridley and Tony Pitchford, in fact our entire active membership, were joined by Martin Harvey (Manchester) and Doug Haynes (Liverpool). We were welcomed and well-looked after by Gary Cleland, their Education Demonstrator.



**Clockwise from the top left: Doug Haynes, Dave Horan, Jhet Griffiths and Tony Pitchford waiting for customers**



**A young customer invents a new game**



**Another game on display**

Adults and children were very keen to learn and we managed to sell a goodly number (37) of starter kits and small wooden boards. We felt the weekend was well worth our effort.

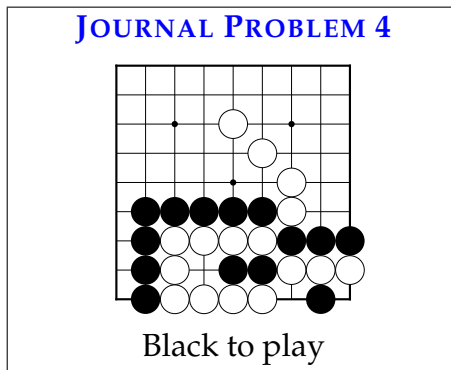


**Ryan Griffiths (l) and Tony Pitchford**

As for the exhibition itself, we were told that it was based on a hireable touring exhibition, *AI: More than Human*, produced by the Barbican Centre in London<sup>1</sup>, so there is a possibility it might appear near you. If so, we can thoroughly recommend a visit – and maybe there will be another opportunity to demonstrate Go!

*Photo credits: Gary Cleland, Liverpool World Museum.*

□



<sup>1</sup>[www.barbican.org.uk/hire/exhibition-hire-bic/ai-more-than-human](http://www.barbican.org.uk/hire/exhibition-hire-bic/ai-more-than-human).

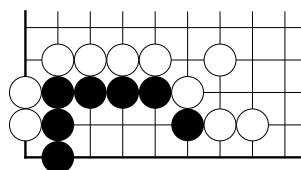
# ADVICE FOR DOING TSUMEGO – PART FIVE

Richard Hunter

Up until now, we have looked only at Black playing to kill White. In this part, I expand the range of life and death to include living with unsettled groups. The same principles apply.

1. When trying to live, think first of enlarging your eye space.
2. Next, consider playing at the vital point.

Here are some simple examples.



Problem 1 – Black to play

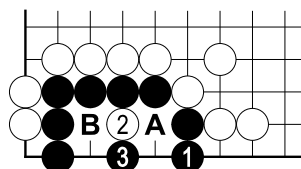


Diagram 1 – correct

The descent of ① maximizes Black's eye space. This is the best move as it ensures that Black can live unconditionally. If White plays ②, then ③ leaves A and B as *miai*. Whichever one White plays next, Black takes the other one and lives. Similarly, if White plays 2 at 3, then Black responds with 3 at 2.

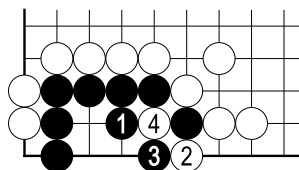


Diagram 2 – failure

① looks like the vital point, but Black only lives in ko.

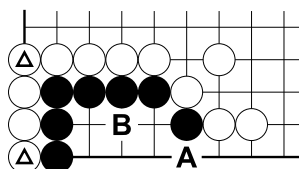


Diagram 3 – reference

If the outside liberties are filled (the  $\Delta$  stones), then the descent at A fails. Can you read that out? In this case, it is better to play B and fight a ko for life than to play A and die unconditionally.

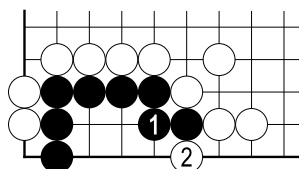
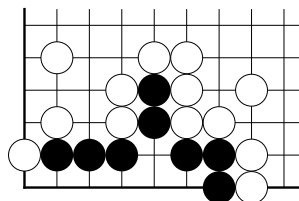


Diagram 4 – failure

Protecting the cut with the solid connection of ① (or with a hanging connection) fails to create a large enough eye space to live.



Problem 2 – Black to play

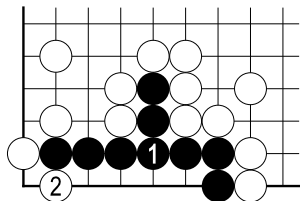
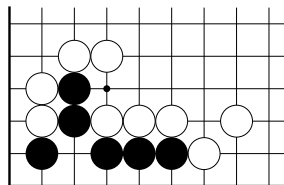


Diagram 5 – failure

The two black stones are in atari. If Black were to widen the eye space with a descent at 2, White would capture the two stones and her move on the second line would be fatal. So you might think that it is necessary to connect. However, ❶ does not create a large enough eye space. After ❷, Black is dead.



Problem 3 – Black to play

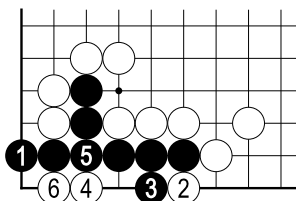


Diagram 8 – failure

When expanding the eye space under a row of stones on the second line, it is usually better to play in the corner rather than on the side because it is easier to make eyes in the corner. However, ❶ fails to make sufficient eye space. ❷ makes 5 and 6 *miai*. If Black plays 5 at 6, then White cuts at 5, giving Black a false eye there.

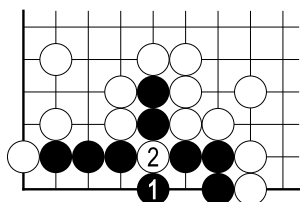


Diagram 6 – correct

❶ is the vital point. Although it does not save the two black stones, ...

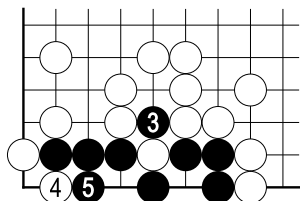


Diagram 7 – correct continuation

... it does allow Black to recapture. It divides the eye space into two, making a real eye on the right and a second eye on the left. The next problem looks somewhat similar, but it is important to consider the implications of the differences.

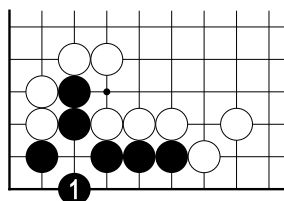
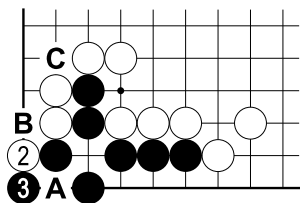


Diagram 9 – failure

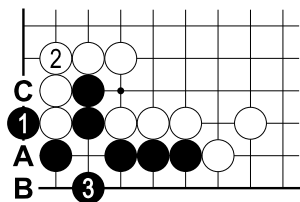
❶ looks like the vital point and indeed it is. However, the position is different from the previous problem. The two black stones are not in atari and the corner stones are also different.





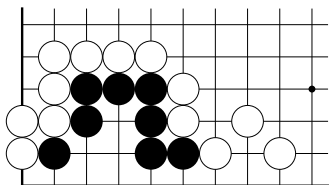
**Diagram 10 – failure continuation**

White can hane in the corner. The only way for Black to make an eye in the corner now is to throw in at ③ and fight the complicated ko. White can capture immediately at A. After Black makes a large enough ko threat and retakes the ko, connecting at B would increase White's stake in the ko because Black can cut at C. The result will depend on the ko threats for each side. However, this line represents a failure for Black.

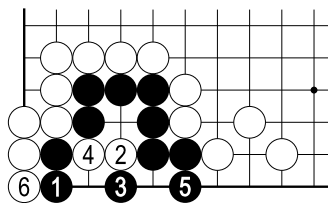


**Diagram 11 – correct**

Black should first widen his eye space and protect against White's corner hane in the previous diagram. ① is sente because it threatens to capture the two white stones. Then Black gets to play the vital point with ③. This divides the eye space into two real eyes. If White plays at A, Black simply captures at B. And if White plays atari from the outside at C, Black connects at A. Black is unconditionally alive.

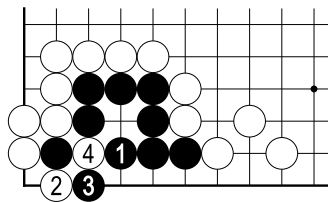


**Problem 4 – Black to play**



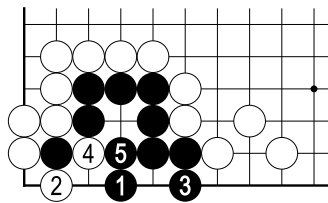
**Diagram 12 – failure**

The descent of ① looks similar to the correct answer to Problem 1. However, this position is different enough that it fails. ② and ④ expose Black's shallow reading. If Black plays ⑤ to try and make a second eye, he loses two stones after ⑥.



**Diagram 13 – failure**

① might look like the vital point, but it only produces a ko. Go proverbs offer likely candidates to consider, but they are never 100% applicable. Here, the opponent's vital point is not your vital point.



**Diagram 14 – correct**

The diagonal move of ① is the vital point that divides the eye space in two. ② is answered with ③ and Black lives.

If White plays the other atari with 2 at 4 on the second line instead, Black simply plays atari at 5 in sente and then makes the second eye. Black must not answer at either 2 or 3. Both



of those are fatal mistakes that allow White to revert to the result shown in Diagram 12.

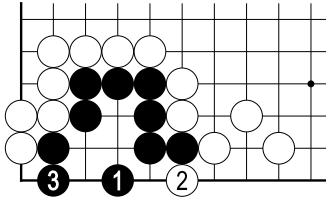
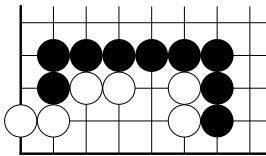


Diagram 15 – correct variation

If White plays ② to break the eye on the right, Black descends at ③. This produces a four-point eye space that is shaped like a zig-zag or dogleg. This is alive, though Black must add a defensive move inside when the corner liberty at the 1-1 point gets filled. It is important to be aware of this requirement now to avoid overlooking it at the end of the game when the dame get filled.

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PROBLEMS FROM PART 4 IN BGJ 197



Problem 5 – Black to play

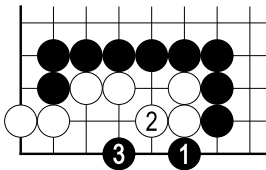


Diagram 16 – mistakes by both sides

It is tempting to start with the hane at ①, reducing the eye space from the outside. That is a move that we have seen before in rather similar-looking positions. However, this position is

different. If White were to turn at ②, then Black could jump to ③, which is indeed the vital point. However, that sequence is shallow reading and wishful thinking (*katte yomi*).

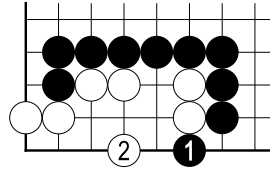


Diagram 17 – White lives

By falling back to ②, White lives in the corner. Please convince yourself of this. One example line is given in the next diagram.

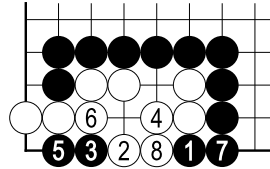


Diagram 18 – White lives

③ is one attempt to kill White, but White expands her eye space with ④ and makes two eyes. All other alternatives for ③ fail too.

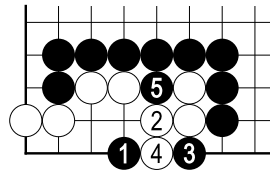
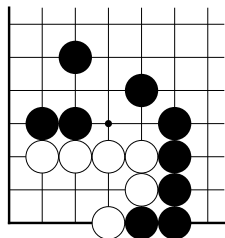


Diagram 19 – correct

Black must play at the vital point immediately. This tesuji makes multiple threats. White has several possible replies, but none of them work. If White plays ②, Black hanes at ③. White must now block at ④ because if Black were to connect there the stone at ① would make White's potential eye into a false eye. After ④, the atari of ⑤ highlights White's shortage of liberties.





Problem 6 – Black to play

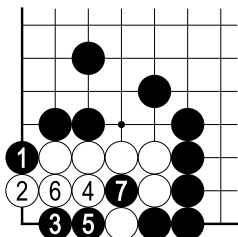


Diagram 20 – failure

The hane of ① is certainly a move to consider, but it only produces a ko. Can Black do better?

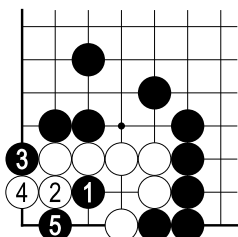


Diagram 21 – correct

① is the vital point that prevents White from making two eyes. White bends at ② to prevent Black from cutting and capturing the stone on the first line. Then, Black plays the hane. White maximizes her eye space with ④, but ⑤ is a tesuji. If Black were to play atari one point to the right, White would play at 5 and capture the two black stones in a snapback. After ⑤, cutting on the first line is self-atari, so White cannot stop Black from building a killing shape.

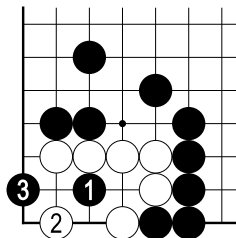


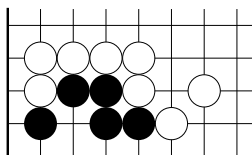
Diagram 22 – correct variation

If White answers ① at the 2-1 point, Black takes the other 2-1 point with ③. Black will either connect out or make a killing shape inside.

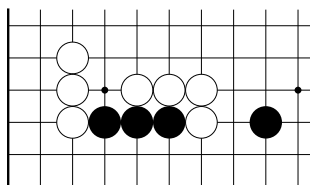
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### PROBLEMS FOR PART 6

Below are two problems that I will discuss in the next part.



Problem 7 – Black to play



Problem 8 – Black to play

### Japanese

アタリ *atari*

Atari is used by all Go players and is never translated into English. It is the noun derived from the verb *ataru* 当たる, which is common in ordinary Japanese and covers a wide range of English meanings. Atari literally means 'a hit, etc'. The dictionary app

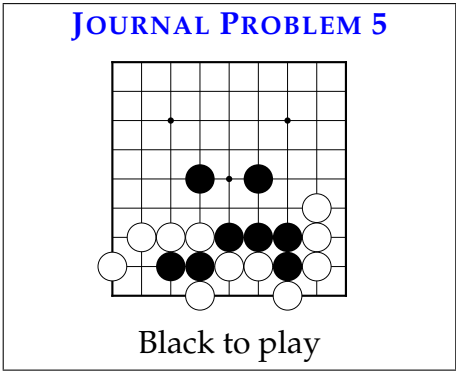
that I use includes 'situation in which a stone or chain of stones may be captured on the next move (in the game of go)'. In modern Japanese Go books, atari is always written in katakana to indicate its special use as a Go term.

dame

This is another term used by many western Go players. It literally means 'no good, useless, hopeless, purposeless, etc.' and is common in ordinary Japanese. My dictionary app lists 'neutral point (in go), intersection

owned by neither player at the end of a game'. However, the word dame is used for two different purposes. At the end of the game, you must fill the dame (neutral points) on the clock under current BGA rules. Dame is also used for the liberties on a group of stones. Having zero, one, or more liberties open has crucial effects on many life and death positions. In modern Japanese Go books, dame is always written in katakana as dame, but in older books, you may see the kanji form 駄目.

□



# WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

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*For summaries and sgf files of the UK matches in the Pandanet Go European Team Championships described below, see [www.britgo.org/events/euroteams2021](http://www.britgo.org/events/euroteams2021).*

## Pandanet Teams

On 13<sup>th</sup> October the UK team lost their first match, against Sweden, in the new season of the B-League of the Pandanet Go European Team Championship, one game to three. Bruno Poltronieri spent too long on a complicated joseki in the first corner against Fredrik Blomback and after a close game fell apart in byoyomi. Sandy Taylor lost to Charlie Åkerblom after a group died and Tim Hunt fell behind against Erik Ouchterlony and ended up resigning. Jon Diamond was the only winner against Weiying Sörlin, when he got ahead and his opponent tried too hard to come back making a mistake in the crucial semeai.

The second match was against Turkey on 9<sup>th</sup> November. Black won all four games by resignation, with the last two games ending within a few seconds of each other. This draw left the UK ninth in the table.

Bruno Poltronieri lost by resignation to Denis Karadaban after not leaving enough time to play a vital fight correctly. Alex Kent won a fighting game against Birand Adal by resignation, but Jon Diamond lost a crucial semeai against Kaan Malçok. Jamie Taylor (a late substitute for Des Cann) won against Mustafa Kürsat Elitok, when he counter-attacked after a weak group got into trouble.

The third match on 14<sup>th</sup> December was against Switzerland. Bruno played his game early, on the Sunday morning before, and outplayed

John Walch to win by resignation. However on the Tuesday night both Alex Kent and Jamie Taylor lost their games.

Alex described his against Fabien Lips as a back-and-forth game, whilst Jamie lost too many groups against Lorenz Trippel. The game between Jon Diamond and Frédéric Schlattner was abandoned after Frédéric lost his connection four times. At time of writing it is not known if the game will be replayed or whether Jon will get a free win, drawing the match.

## European Pairs

The European Pair Go Championship was held in Niš, Serbia, on the weekend of 25<sup>th</sup> September. Only six countries managed to get there, but 15 pairs took part. Winning the title for the seventh time were Russia's Natalia Kovaleva and Dmitrij Surin, on mutual game tie-break from Ajgul Fazulzjanova and Alexander Dinerchtein, also Russia. Germany's Manja Marz and Johannes Obenaus were third, losing only to the two Russian pairs.

## European Championship

Twenty-four of the top European players battled on OGS for the European Go Champion's title, between 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December. Ilya Shikshin (4p) took the title (for the eighth time), ahead of Artem Kachanovskyi (2p), Ali Jabarin (2p) and Pavol Lisy (2p).



**Ilya Shikshin, 4p**  
**European Champion for the eighth time**



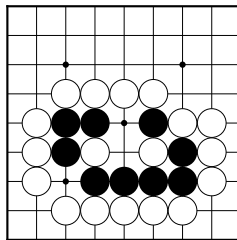
**Stanislaw Frejlak, 1p**

Congratulations also go to Stanislaw Frejlak from Poland for becoming the latest European professional after winning the qualification tournament at the end of October in Leksand, Sweden.

*Photo credits: the photos are copied from the website of the European Go Federation, [eurogofed.org](http://eurogofed.org)*

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### JOURNAL PROBLEM 6



Black to play

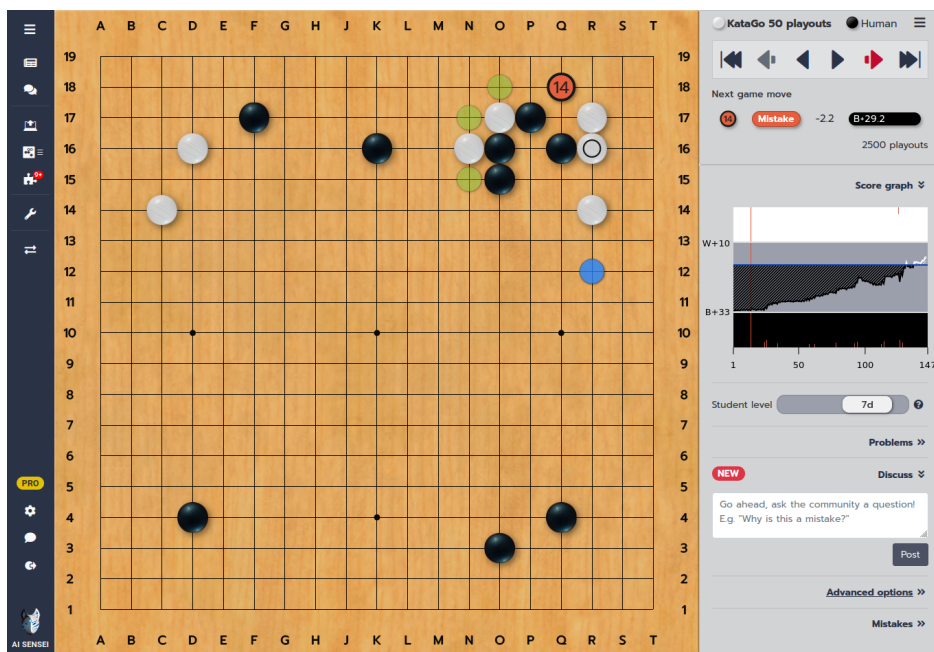
# INTRODUCING AI SENSEI

Benjamin Teuber

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When the AlphaGo revolution happened, I started wondering how this almost divine power could be converted to a tool that would help you efficiently review games by pointing out the biggest mistakes. So, when Leela Zero came out a year and a half later, my friend Erik and I wrote a small tool that would go through an

SGF file, analyse it move by move, and then output another SGF file with comments on mistakes and AI variations added. The result was so amazing that we decided to turn this into a commercial website. AI Sensei was born, with the first official release at the 2018 European Go Congress in Pisa.



AI Sensei screenshot

Since then, the website has matured a lot. Instead of requiring users to download an SGF file, we soon added a board to access the analysis directly in the browser. Unlike other AI tools, we have put a strong focus on deciding moments of a game: all mistakes are listed on the right side, and a red arrow button takes

you forward to the next one. On the board, mistakes are marked red, good moves are green, and the AI one is blue. To try out your own moves, you can just click on the board and get live feedback from the AI. What's considered a mistake depends on the rank: for a 20 kyu, losing five points

isn't such a big deal, but for a 5 dan, it certainly is. You can change the rank with a slider next to the board.

Unfortunately, while AIs are now much stronger than humans, they still can't explain to you why a move is actually good or bad. To help with this, AI Sensei can visualise KataGo's territory predictions and how this prediction changed with a mistake. This can highlight the area where a mistake actually lost something, as well as any of your stones that died or opponent stones that survived because of a mistake – shown as sad or happy smileys on stones. If the visualisations and live analysis aren't enough to understand a position, you can ask questions to the helpful AI Sensei community directly from your game. Our goal is to grow this into something like the Go Teaching Ladder<sup>1</sup>, backed by strong AI.

Once you know your mistakes in a game and what you should have done, it's important to make sure you don't just forget it again. I have seen and participated in a lot of game reviews where every single move was discussed in such detail that once it was over, nobody could remember anything anymore. A better way to study is to focus only on the most important moves and revisit them from time to time. This is exactly what AI Sensei allows you to do. It helps you set up Go problem collections from your own games, and lets

you study them in a structured and systematic way.

We're still adding features and improving the website all the time. Right now, we're beta testing a 'Play vs AI' feature – it might already be out when you read this article. Next, we'll see how we can further improve the community and Go problems aspects of the site.

AI Sensei comes with 50 playouts per move in the completely free version. This already gives superhuman judgement in most positions but could lack some reading accuracy in very complicated fights. If you need that, we also offer paid subscriptions starting at a little over £4 per month. We're currently in talks with the BGA about collaborating to make AI Sensei more accessible, e.g. for tournament participants. You'll probably hear more about this soon. But as a first step, we're now offering one month of free Dan membership to every British Go Journal reader. In order to claim it, just go to

[ai-sensei.com/redeem/BGAI2022](https://ai-sensei.com/redeem/BGAI2022)

and register an account if you haven't already. You can then redeem the voucher and enjoy your premium membership. Afterwards, it will automatically revert to a free account – no strings attached.

I hope AI Sensei can help you improve quickly, and even more that you have a good and healthy year 2022!

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<sup>1</sup>Sadly, no longer active, but a great service while it was: see [gtl.xmp.net](https://gtl.xmp.net) – Ed..

# LONDON MIND SPORTS CENTRE - OPENING PARTY

Alex Rix

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On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November, there was a party to celebrate the opening of the new Mind Sports Centre in Hammersmith, West London.

The shareholder backers of the property purchase, the local MP for Hammersmith & Fulham (Andy Slaughter) and the great and the good from the bridge, chess and Go world attended. This was an opportunity to thank again T Mark Hall for his legacy, to remark on the previous London Go Centre from 1974-78 and to explain the background to T Mark's dan diploma to the audience (see picture).



The cake, with London Mind Sports Centre photo



Alex speaking at the Opening Party

Ian Payn, the Young Chelsea bridge club manager and the chairman of the English Bridge Union, spoke for the bridge players and Chris Skulte for the chess players, remarking that the combination of the mind sports makes a stronger base. A special cake was commissioned (see other picture) for the event.

Below is some wording from John Fairbairn composed for the occasion.

'Mark often used to joke about buying a weekly lottery ticket which, if it won, would be used to open a new London Go Centre. That no doubt sowed the seed for when the time came, tragically far too soon, to decide what to do with his estate. In his will, he chose to follow his dream.

'At times it may have seemed to those who had to deal with actual execution of his wishes that they had, on a whim, been cursed, as the old Chinese proverb has it, to live in "interesting times".

'But that was far from the case. In fact his hopes for a new London Go Centre went back a long way, to the old one, funded by Iwamoto Kaoru. Mark spent a very happy time there, and when he was posted to Tokyo



as part of his Foreign Office service, he was in close contact with people who had made the old London Go Centre happen, including Iwamoto himself, whose dan diploma to Mark is being prominently displayed in the new centre.



**T Mark's dan diploma in situ in the T Mark Hall room**

'I think therefore we should take a moment to express our appreciation – as I'm absolutely certain Mark would have wanted – to Iwamoto, of course, and also to Stuart Dowsey, the founder of the original LGC, his manager David Mitchell, and Richard Bozulich. Mark knew Richard in Tokyo rather than London, but Richard (along with Stuart in his Ishi Press persona) was strongly instrumental in making the old

LGC a very exciting place to be, by producing new books at more than a fair rate of knots. This was where Mark's Go library first took shape. I might have hoped it would have a bigger presence in the centre now than it has, but sadly we are no longer in such a book-loving age and many items have been disposed of.<sup>1</sup> He actually had a far bigger library of non-Go books, and nobody wanted those either. That would have saddened him.

'That change in our way of life, and of how we view Go, is precisely what has made the creation of the new London centre so challenging. Since Mark's death we have seen two major changes that have both had an impact on the face-to-face social encounters that a Go centre symbolises.

'One was the arrival of AI Go. This was such a big change that I felt I could no longer rationally continue as one of the TMH Foundation members. I was not a BGA member and do not actively play Go, which (perhaps usefully) set me apart from the other directors. But I felt I could at least express a reasonable point of view whenever the question "what would Mark have wanted?" came up. After AI entered the scene, and affected every aspect of Go, however, I realised I could no longer do that. I have no idea at all how he would have viewed AI or what he would have wanted to do next. That left me with just the possibility of expressing my own "outsider" views, which did not seem fair to more committed Go players.

'The other big change, obviously, has been the Coronavirus pandemic, and its highly detrimental, and appallingly long, effect on in-person Go. ▷

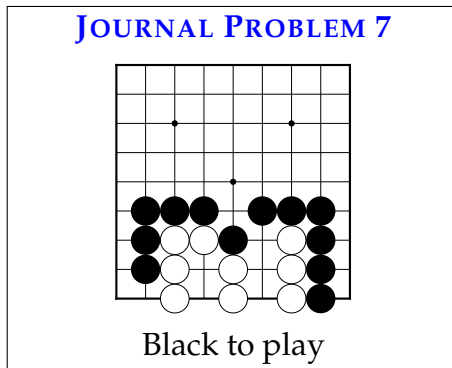
<sup>1</sup>I understand that this was due to a mishap while in store before arriving in the LGC and their condition was too poor for them to be retained. *Ed.*

'Both of these changes have turned what was a highly challenging task for the Foundation into a monumental one. While delighted that they have succeeded, I have to say that I am frankly, but awesomely, surprised. To ask the audience here to pay tribute to the Foundation's directors, the BGA officers and the London Go Centre members who have allowed Mark to "win the lottery" seems such a massively understated wish. But I ask anyway. To give a measure of how much they have achieved, they have, I think, matched Rin Kaiho. Rin, you may recall is the second name on Mark's diploma. Rin was famous for his nimaigoshi attitude to Go. This refers to a sumo stance with both feet firmly anchored to the ground, and by extension to exceptional stubborn tenacity. You see the results around you.

'Naturally, we need to pay tribute to Mark, too. Even he can be said to have been inspired by his diploma. The third co-signee professional there is Shimamura Toshihiro. One of Shimamura's great achievements, which he shares with both Iwamoto and Rin, was his support for the internationalisation of Go. I think we

can safely assert that this was one of Mark's achievements, too, especially through his superhuman transcription of the bulk of the GoGoD<sup>2</sup> database. But Mark had another common feature with Shimamura. He changed his name and left people unsure what to call him. To his mother (and me) he was Mark. To most Go players he was T. Mark with a full stop. Late in life he changed his name by deed poll to T Mark without the full stop. He thus cursed himself with a life of "interesting times" as computer programs did not know what to make of this and he had endless run-ins with utility companies and the like. But he cared not a jot. He liked his new name and that was that. I am therefore pretty sure that while he would have been more than happy to see the old London Go Centre rise again as the new London Go Centre, he would at the same have been delighted to see the new name of London Mind Sports Centre, whatever challenges it may face – challenges that the organisers here have, in a stupendous way, already shown can be overcome.'

□



<sup>2</sup>[gogodonline.co.uk](http://gogodonline.co.uk).

# SOLUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL PROBLEMS

The SGF files for these problems are to be found at [www.britgo.org/bgj/issue198](http://www.britgo.org/bgj/issue198).

## Solution to Problem 1

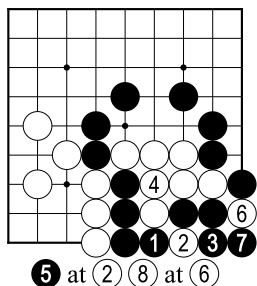


Diagram 1a (failure)

- ❶ Attempting to connect underneath fails.
- ❷ White throws in to give atari.
- ❸ Black captures. Note that the other capture at ❹ would not have worked because of a snapback.
- ❺ Black connects.
- ❻ Another throw in.
- ❼ Capturing ❻ creates only one liberty ...
- ❽ ...so White captures nine stones.

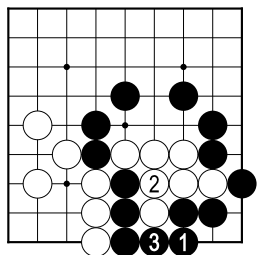


Diagram 1b (correct)

- ❶ This descent is the key move.
- ❷ Descending would lose two stones, so White connects first.
- ❸ After this, White cannot reduce Black's liberties without self-atari.

## Solution to Problem 2

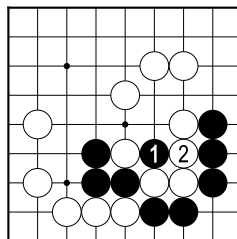


Diagram 2a (failure)

- ❶ Double atari looks promising.
- ❷ But White can afford to lose the stone in the middle. Black will not make two eyes.

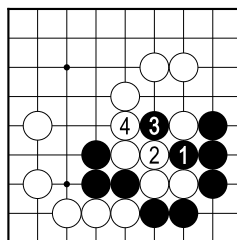


Diagram 2b (failure)

- ❶ Atari from this side can capture a stone but not rescue the stones in the middle.

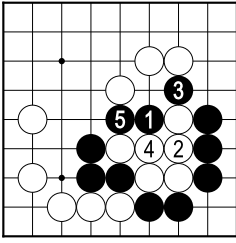


Diagram 2c (correct)

- ❶ This is the move that captures the white stones separating Black.
- ❷ For instance, if White connects here...
- ❸ Black captures the separating stones.

Solution to Problem 3

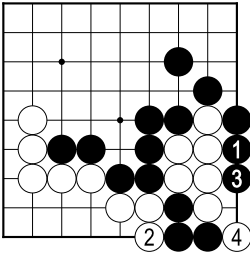


Diagram 3a (failure)

- ❶ Black is behind in the liberty race and this is too slow.

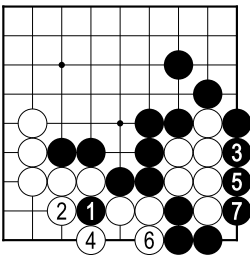


Diagram 3b (correct)

- ❶ This forces White to play an extra move.
- ❷ Black is ahead in the liberty race this time.

Solution to Problem 4

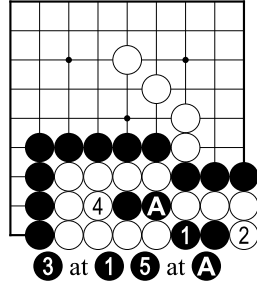


Diagram 4a (correct)

- ❶ Black prevents White from connecting.
- ❷ White has the choice of which pair of stones to capture, but the result will be the same.
- ❸ Black again prevents the connection.
- ❹ Capturing ❸ would immediately fail to a snapback, so White can try capturing the other stones.
- ❺ Black plays in again at A and there is a snapback whichever stone White captures.

Solution to Problem 5

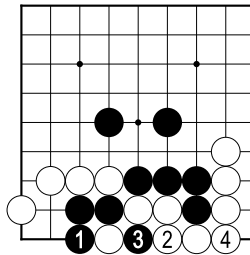


Diagram 5a (failure)

- ❶ Atari here gives White time to connect.
- ❷ The black edge stones are dead.

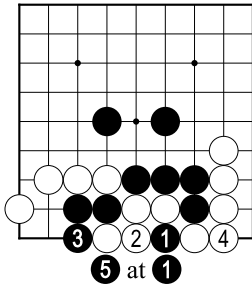


Diagram 5b (correct)

- ❶ This gives White connection problems.
- ❷ The best White can do is connect here (or keep it for a ko threat). Connecting at 5 instead would just lose more stones.

Solution to Problem 6

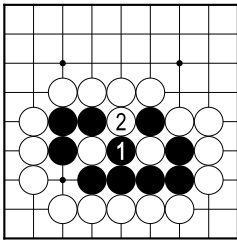


Diagram 6a (failure)

- ❶ Capturing immediately would be a mistake.
- ❷ Now the eye on the right is false.

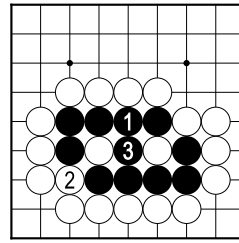


Diagram 6b (correct)

- ❶ Black can connect here instead.
- ❷ It would be illegal for White to connect the two stones.
- ❸ So Black can capture and have two true eyes.

Solution to Problem 7

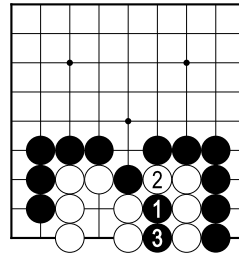


Diagram 7a (correct)

- ❶ This prevents White's second eye.
- ❷ Cutting Black is self-atari.

□

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# TOURNAMENT HISTORIES XI: COVENTRY

Tony Atkins

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Apart from Midland Go League matches, the first Go event in Coventry was the British Go Congress in 1983. This was organised by J. R. Ennis and Des Cann on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup> April at Lanchester Polytechnic (now Coventry University), not far from the cathedrals and a beer festival. Matthew Macfadyen was top of the 96 players taking part, winning the Open.



**Spectator keenly watches Yang Xu's game, 1990**



**Piers against Matthew, 1990  
Alex Rix is in the centre**

The local one-day tournament was initially advertised as the Midlands Go Tournament, but this was changed to Coventry Tournament, though sometimes it was referred to as the Warwick Tournament after its University of Warwick location (which is on the outskirts of Coventry and not Warwick). Mike Lynn ran the first edition on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1988 in the Science Concourse, which, with the library opposite, would provide the venue most years.

In 1990 a special effort was made with Westcott Hall, the Student Union building, the venue; this had a record 98 players. In 1992 the venue changed to the Midland Sports Centre in Tile Hill.

Often Matthew Macfadyen would give a lunchtime lecture and Kirsty Healey kept the event running well on the day, despite it often being the day Summer Time started.

It is wondered how many of the entrants obeyed her order to keep the polystyrene cups she handed out and still have them?



**Matthew Macfadyen gets a prize from Kirsty Healey, 1990**

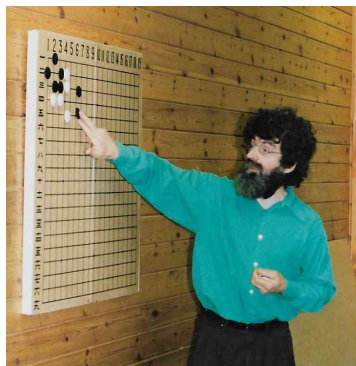


**British Go Congress, 1994**

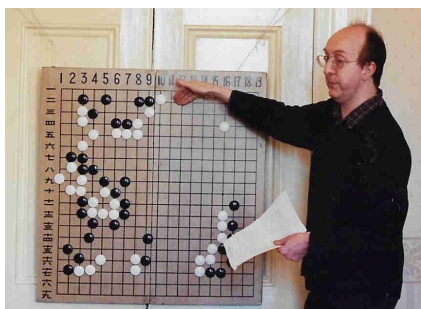
The event was skipped in 1998 and also in 1994 when the British Go Congress was run at Warwick University's Rootes Hall; 111 played in the British Open in the Science Concourse rooms. Matthew Macfadyen won that and also won the one-day event a total of 13 times.

He won every one up to 2001, apart from 1989 when Piers Shepperson won and 2000 when Song-June Kim did, and Matthew also won all later ones from 2008 to 2010.

In 2002 the venue moved to the Odd Fellows Hall in Leamington Spa, with the name changed to Leamington Tournament to match. Des Cann won three of these and Bei Ge one.



**Matthew Macfadyen lecture, 2001**



**Des Cann lecture, 2002**

The Candidates' Tournament was run alongside during three of the years, but the four-round rapid-play tournament was cancelled in 2005 because of a staff shortage. The change of format saw the normal number of around 70 players drop to around 30. After missing 2007, the Coventry Tournament was back at the University of Warwick with a new organiser in Dave Buckley.

In 2010 it moved from the spring to November and was run instead by the student club, a situation that continues (apart from 2020) up until now. Local student Philip Leung from Hong Kong won the event four times between 2014 and 2018, with other local student wins for Bruno Poltronieri (2013), Ruizhu Wu (2015) and Zheng Li (2019). In addition, Andrew Kay and Andrew Simons managed wins, and Alistair Wall won the event in 2021, which had 15 players, unlike the normal 40 or so.