

BRITISH

GO

JOURNAL



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EDITORIAL

Jenny Radcliffe

journal@britgo.org

What should you look out for in this issue? Several responses to the "Refereeing" articles in the last issue (see the Letters on page 3, and Jonathan Reece's article on page 36) as well as some exercises set by Geoff Kaniuk to see if you were concentrating last time or not (see page 24).

My favourite aspect of this issue is the contrasting games analyses. We have Dave Ward and Liu Yajie's analysis of a game between and 11k and a 12k during the BGA/KGS online tournament in June (page 6, and Cristian Pop's analysis of the second game (page 49) and Wang Hongjun's analysis of the third game (page 54) from the 2004 British

Championship. These analyses are, of course, interesting and educational, but I'm afraid I am mostly tickled by the humour of them. In both the KGS game analysis and the analysis of the third Championship game, a professional Go player solemnly announces that the game is over in the favour of one player or another. Naturally, in the case of the Championship game, the pro is right and the player who is behind duly resigns. On the other hand, the double-figure-kyus keep playing - and the player who is said to have lost goes on to win not only the game but the whole tournament! I have heard it said that the greatest swordsman in the world doesn't fear the second-greatest; he fears the rank beginner because he never knows what the silly idiot will do. I think we have an excellent illustration right here ...

My other "pet aspect" of this issue is a theme of "odd" applied to photographs: the front cover shows playing Go in an odd place; a picture on page 18 shows Go players doing odd things, and the picture on page 22 shows odd people playing Go.

My apologies again for how long you've waited for this journal; there are not excuses, I can only say I'm sorry. It won't happen again. Regarding the next issue, submissions of all kinds would be wonderful; please remember to let me know if you've taken photos at tournaments, especially the ones I'm not at; if you'd like to proof-read or help me to en-macro-ise the L^AT_EX: journal@britgo.org ! The deadline for the next issue will be determined by how long the printers and postal service take with this issue; keep an eye on www.britgo.org for an announcement, or just send things to me when you're ready.

Jenny Radcliffe

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Journal comments and contributions: journal@britgo.org
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LETTERS

journal@britgo.org

Going to the Bar

Why do we have a bar? More precisely, why do we have to have a bar? There are many tournaments - especially those over two days with a limited entry - that would benefit by not having a bar. It is quite normal for some of the lower graded players to play handicap matches towards the end of a tournament. Why should it not apply to the higher graded players as well? I am well aware that we need a tournament winner, qualifications for the British Championships and to satisfy the demands of the grading lists etc. But this could be catered for in a few select tournaments where the entry is larger and the bar can be set at say 3 dan.

Due to increasing senility and stupidity my grade has gone down but every tournament since (the onset of senility) I have been above the bar. At Barmouth (no pun intended) I played Matthew Macfadyen in the final round. Even game above the bar. I quite enjoyed the game in a way because of Matthew's skill, his exemplary demeanour at the board and his helpful comments at the end. But as a match, as a contest it was nothing. For either of us. I had 2 wins out of 4 and he had 4 out of 4 so that without the bar it would have been a 6 or 7 stone handicap match. That would have been a contest and something to play for.

That is just one example from my own experience and I am sure that lots of players in the shodan - 1kyu range have other examples of games where the result was a foregone conclusion. The recent Mind Sports tournament with a small entry had many mismatches. It could lead to players not entering, even smaller entries and the problem made worse. If there has to be a bar, it should be set no more than 3 grades below the grade of the strongest players. For a shodan let's say to beat a 5 dan is virtually (completely?) impossible. Rather like in golf doing a hole in one on a par 5. Incidentally that is called a miracle. It is the same in go.

Yours sincerely

Bob Bagot

The Rules Of Go: Capturing Stones

Geoff Kaniuk, in BGJ #136, mentions a piece of "folklore", namely that "when capturing 3 or more stones, the clock can be stopped".

I have only ever seen this rule stated explicitly in Lighting Tournaments (and even there I disagree with it). Removing the stones is part of your move, and you should manage your time so that you can do this.

The British Championship Rules (which govern the Candidates' and Challenger's Tournaments and the Title Match), explicitly forbid this practice, stating that "Unless the Event Organiser specifies otherwise, players may not stop the clock themselves during a game except to set the clock for overtime and to repair the position when it has become disorganised".

Toby Manning

Footnotes to the John Barrs article

I didn't join the Go scene until 1965, but I can add a few notes to Bob Hitchens' article on John Barrs, indeed the father of British Go.

If you were wondering about the Union Flag blazer badge shown clearly in John's picture on p. 22 of BGJ #136, that shows his membership of the 1948 British Olympic weightlifting team. By the time I knew him he had abandoned weightlifting for the less vigorous sport of bowls, at which he also excelled.

My memory differs slightly from Bob's; I think John was 59 when he died suddenly in January 1971. That at least was when I got the phone call asking me to become Acting BGA President, at the tender age of 26. I wasn't keen, having a young family, a new job, and being on the point of moving house. But I took it on, and like so many temporary arrangements, it became permanent, for another five years.

The 1965 article by Dr. Good appeared in the "Free Energy" column of "New Scientist". The people Bob describes as a group of students from Oxford University may well have become interested in Go at this time, but we didn't all know each other then. There was no organised Go at Oxford until 1967, two years after I had gone down.

In that year Oxford held what I believe to have been the first ever open Go tournament in Britain, an afternoon event with just two rounds. In the following year the first British Go Congress was held at Jesus College, an all-handicap event with about 30 attendees. There was no particular event on the first Friday evening, so a group of us including John visited a nearby pub. We didn't know that during vacation time the college locked its gates at 11 pm, and I treasure the memory of John climbing in with us over the college wall.

Francis Roads

Rules of Go: A Case Study

The discussion in BGJ #136 on the Rules of Go was very interesting, and on Page 43 it mentioned that there would be future scenarios and case studies in future Journals.

Here is a real case.

At the Lightning at the British Congress this year, both payers ran out of time (i.e. neither player believed they had enough time left on their clock to play all their moves). The game was only half completed and the players had (approximately) 20 seconds and 1 minute left on their clock. Player A therefore passed; Player B also passed, and Player A passed again.

The game being only half completed, it was not feasible to count it or even estimate who was winning.

Should the referee:- a) award the game to the player with most time left on their clock b) award a loss to both players?

I believe the correct answer is to award the game to the player with most time left; if one player's flag falls, he loses irrespective of whether the other player has time to complete the game.

Toby Manning

Letters may be edited for length, content or style, although where possible the original author will be consulted about changes. Please email letters to editor@britgo.org.

BGA/KGS TOURNAMENT GAME

Dave Ward

Gunnar AAstrand Grimnes ("gromgull") hails from Norway and is studying for his PhD in Computer Science at Aberdeen University. Earlier this year he won the BGA/KGS online tournament (see the news article on page 20): a worthy winner, playing some very enterprising games. Below we feature, as his prize, one of those games, where he took black against Hungarian Peter Korossy ("retesz"), with commentary on the opening phase from David "the BGA Analysis service" Ward and from Liu Yajie (2-dan professional).

Black: Gunnar AAstrand Grimnes (*gromgull*), 12k¹

White: Peter Korossy (*retesz*), 11k

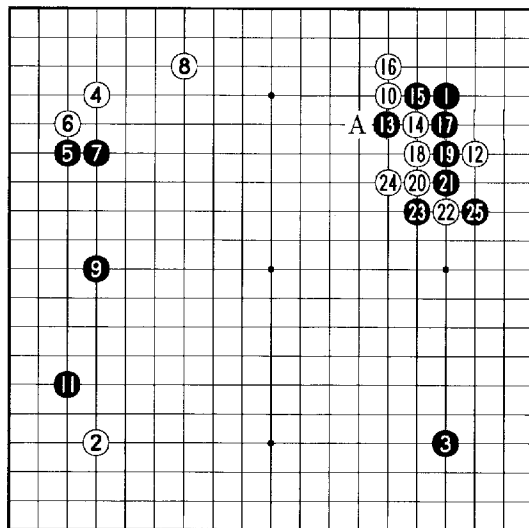
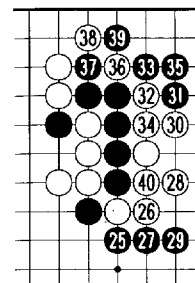


Fig 1: Moves B1 - B25

- ⑧ *Liu Yajie*: This is not a good shape
- ⑨ *Dave*: This should be low
- ⑫ *Dave*: Good moves for both sides, with both players seizing the initiative
- ⑭ *Liu Yajie*: This is an overplay
- ⑰ *Dave*: correct - taking 4th line territory is good enough
- ⑳ *Liu Yajie*: this is overplay; playing at ㉓ is normal
- ㉓ *Dave*: White has 3 groups of stones to look after now, something should give
- ㉔ *Liu Yajie*: severe

㉔ *Liu Yajie*: White can come out with atari at A

㉕ *Dave*: maybe Black can do better here and win the capturing race - see the variation in diag 1



㉔ connects at ㉖
Diag 1: Variation from new move 25

㉔ in diag 1: *Liu Yajie*: White is now dead

㉕ *Dave*: big point but there is unfinished business on the right

㉖ *Dave*: big but not really urgent

㉖ *Liu Yajie*: better to invade at sansan, point B

㉗ *Dave*: better to connect at ㉙ and capture the single white stone cleanly

㉙ *Liu Yajie*: This is an overplay; a better move would have been ㉚ to settle the corner

㉚ *Dave*: This is sharp, but it may be sufficient to settle the stones and leave Black with a weak group as shown in the variation in diag 2

㉚ *Liu Yajie*: However, this would be better with a cut at ㉛, after which ㉜ and C become miai for White

㉛ *Dave*: Black may be able to do better, as shown in the variation in diag 3

㉜ *Liu Yajie*: This move might be better played directly at C, since Black can not kill the three white stones in the corner

㉝ *Liu Yajie*: this is a mistake. Black can kill ㉞ and the two marked (△) stones with a move at ㉟, as shown in the variation in diag 4

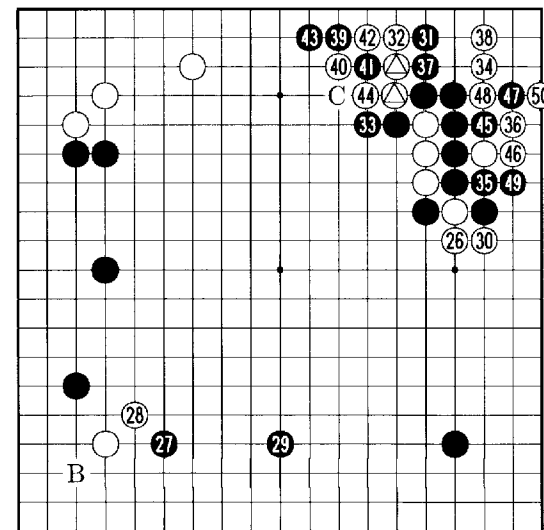


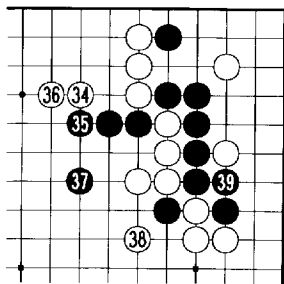
Fig 2: Moves B 25 - W 50

㉝ in diag 4: *Liu Yajie*: The group with marked (△) stones are all dead

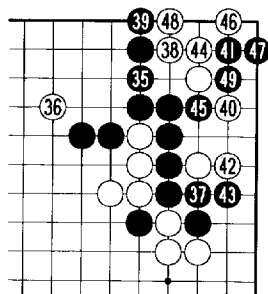
㉞ *Liu Yajie*: This result is too good for White

㉟ *Liu Yajie*: This move is not necessary, playing at ㊱ is enough

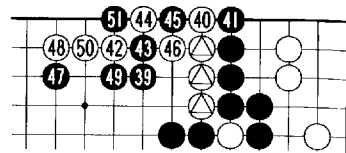
¹Note: these are KGS grades rather than BGA/European grades



Diag 2: Variation from new move 34



Diag 3: Variation from new move 35



Diag 4: Variation from new move 39

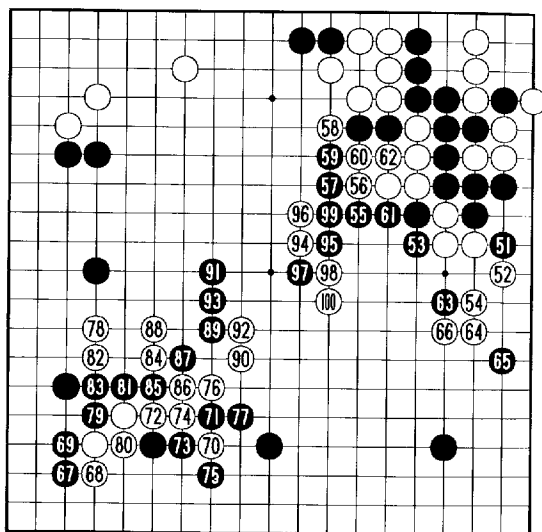


Fig 3: Moves B 51 – W 100

Ⓞ *gromgull*: sigh, this is terrible

Ⓞ *Liu Yajie*: Black has lost the game

Of course, Liu Yajie's comment here is slightly misplaced; Black went on to win by 14 points, thanks mostly to resurrecting the apparently-dead top right group (from ⑤1 and up) by killing the white group around ⑤4. There was a great deal of further fighting and a substantial number of prisoners on both sides.

If you want to see how things progressed, and how black went on to win, the electronic record is available at

http://kgs.kiseido.com/en_US/gameArchives.jsp?user=gromgull - the game was played on 26th June 2005.

US GO CONGRESS 2005

Francis Roads

Francis@jfroards.demon.co.uk

I had a splendid time at the US Go Congress (my seventh) and would recommend it to any go player wanting a change from the European. The organisation is pretty good, most people speak English, and there is a relaxed atmosphere about the place. A handful of Europeans usually attend, as well as the usual detachment of pros, and a visiting party of Japanese amateur players.

Pacific Lutheran University in Washington State, where the 2005 Congress was held, is fairly small, and situated a good 45 minute bus ride south from downtown Tacoma. Apparently Martin Luther opposed drinking alcohol, unlike various people mentioned in the Bible, who seemed to knock the stuff back. It took my fellow Brit Toby Manning and myself two or three days to track down the local pub, where a something like beer was being sold. It was usually chock full of Go players.

The US Congress lasts nine days, including the registration and check-out days. The main rounds happen on six mornings, with Wednesday being taken off for excursions. To this are added lightning, 9x9, 13x13, Pair Go, Crazy Go (rengo kriegspiel, etc.), a self-paired ongoing handicap tournament, and this year the innovation of Midnight Madness, a tournament with a round starting each day at 11 pm. There are also a couple of extra tournaments limited to strong native players.

On the Wednesday, trips to Seattle or Mount Rainier were on offer, or a one-day "Die-hard" tournament for Go junkies. The country trip was my choice. Mount Rainier (named after a British Admiral) is a snow capped volcano which dominates the local scenery. You see it all the while from both Tacoma and Seattle. Serious mountaineers take two days to scale it, but our coach took us just to the foot, where there is spectacular Alpine scenery, and well marked trails.

In the evening there was a party at the Seattle Go Centre. It marked the Centre's tenth anniversary, and also the sixtieth of the famous atomic bomb game between Utao Hashimoto and Kaoru Iwamoto. The game was part of the Honinbo Sen, and was taking place in Hiroshima when the bomb was dropped. Neither player realising the

full extent of the disaster, they rearranged the displaced stones and continued with the game. Later both players felt guilty at having continued in such circumstances, and Iwamoto sensei eventually hit on the idea of doing what he could to promote international friendship and understanding through Go. As a result, he was the founding father of Go centres in New York, Amsterdam and Sao Paolo as well as Seattle.

Jon Bowley, the manager of the Seattle Centre had previously, approached me to ask for some verse or reading suitable for the occasion. He was familiar with my Go songs and Go-related light verse, which have some following in the States, and thought that I was the person for the occasion. I wasn't so sure that I was; serious poetry isn't really my line. But never one to decline a challenge, I wrote the poem on page 37 for him. I read this out as part of the formal ceremonies inevitable on such occasions, with many Far Eastern professionals and other dignitaries present. The poem had some compliments; more than I thought it really deserved, but it seems to have caught the spirit of the occasion.

By Saturday I had won my first five games; think what you will about American gradings. There is a slight misconception prevalent in the U.K. about the way they run the McMahon draw. It is not the case that you only play players within your own initial McMahon band throughout the tournament. What happens is that bands with a large number of players are split into two or even three sections, with everybody starting in the lowest. As a four dan, I was placed in the lower of two bands, the upper one being initially empty. Having won my first game I was then in the upper band, with other four dans who had won, but no losing five dans. Having won a second game, I was in a band with five dans who had lost two, and so on. The effect is to slow down one's movement up or down the draw.

This is all to do with the prizegiving strategy. The Americans like to award first, second and third prizes etc. within each grade, or band of grades for the higher numbered kyu players. In Europe we tend to award prizes on number of wins, regardless of grade. Clearly their system helps to produce prizewinners in each grade. But I think a certain amount of tweaking goes on. In round six, having played five

dans in the previous three rounds, I found myself playing the only other four dan who had won all five, in order to give an overall winner in the four dan band. Yes, I lost; you might think that would place me second in the band, but it didn't; I was fourth on tie-break.

The Americans make a meal of their closing ceremony, quite literally. The final dinner, described as a banquet, took place out of doors in one of the university quads. The total number of awards was well into three figures, and together with speeches this all lasted about 90 minutes, which Toby and I thought was about 30 too many; with so many people coming up to the stage, you can't really applaud each one.

Part of this ceremony was the singing of songs which had won awards in the Bob High Memorial Competition. Whereas at the European Congress we just get together informally somewhere and sing Go songs old and new, here it is all done competitively, with anonymous entries and a panel of judges. There are sections for songs and for poems. One is allowed a maximum of three entries. I found that I had gained first prize for my song "Invasions Raise Awkward Questions"², as well as both first prize for the Iwamoto poem on page 37 and the second for the "Waiting for the Pairings" poem on page 48.

On Sunday it was back to Seattle with Go player Judy Debel. In the evening I found myself acting in the unfamiliar role of interpreter. One of the Japanese pros and his minder were staying with a Go playing couple in Seattle. Usually in these circumstances the minder speaks English. This one's English was even worse than my Japanese, so I had a rather taxing evening at a fine Seattle fish restaurant. Fortunately for me the two Japanese were so tired that they didn't say much in any language.

I had a splendid time in the States, where I have made some wonderful friends, and I heartily recommend their Congress to all adventurous Go players. The 2006 US Go Congress will be taking place from August 12th to 20th at Black Mountain, North Carolina, and you can find more information about it at <http://www.gocongress06.org/>

²Editor's Note: This song will appear in the next issue, when I have persuaded the software to insert it correctly!!

