

BRITISH

GO

JOURNAL



Number 172

Summer 2015

Price £6.00



The Durham Tournament in full swing



Regional prizes at Durham including the 'goat ornament'

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	2
FESTIVALASIA	Tony Atkins 4
WORLD NEWS	Tony Atkins 6
VIEW FROM THE TOP	Jon Diamond 9
JOSEKI	Paul Barnard 10
BGA ANNOUNCEMENTS	13
NEIL STEIN	Tony Atkins 14
JOHN RENBOURN	Tony Atkins 15
JOHN FORBES NASH	Tony Atkins 16
BRITISH CHALLENGERS' LEAGUE	Andrew Simons 17
HAIKU	18
DURHAM	Andrew Ambrose-Thurman 19
BOOK REVIEWS	Roger Huyshe 20
UK NEWS	Tony Atkins 23
SOLUTIONS TO THE NUMBERED PROBLEMS	27
ASSOCIATION CONTACT INFORMATION	32
COLLECTING GO XXV: GO BOWLS	Tony Atkins – Rear Cover

Copyright © 2015 British Go Association.

Articles may be reproduced for the purpose of promoting Go and *not for profit*, providing that the British Go Journal is attributed as the source and the permission of the Editor and author(s) have been sought and obtained in writing, in advance.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the BGA, nor of the Editor.

EDITORIAL

journal@britgo.org

Welcome to the 172nd British Go Journal.

In This Issue

As this is my second edition of the journal, I was much more relaxed about producing it, so apologies in advance if this 'laxness' has caused any errors to creep in; I notice there were no adverse comments on the last issue so maybe I did something right!

This issue has articles on FestivalAsia, which was a great success by all accounts, and how to study joseki, as well as a few obituaries for late British and American Go players. I have also included more about the Durham tournament, which I think is a really good weekend experience and deserves to be better attended; needless to say I went both this year and last. Unusually, perhaps, I have included a Haiku about Go this time – thanks to the contributor who remains anonymous.

Our game review is the game played between Andrew Kay and Andrew Simons which effectively decided who won the Challengers' League this year. I think you'll find it an interesting game.

Finally, many thanks to Tony Atkins who seems to have written nearly all of the articles in this edition! Where would British Go be without his tireless endeavours?

As we went to press I heard about the very sad death of Brian Timmins, and he will be remembered in the next edition of this journal. Jon Diamond's View herein contains a tribute to Brian.

Bob Scantlebury

Credits

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

Contributions: Andrew Ambrose-Thurman, Andrew Simons, Tony Atkins, Paul Barnard, Jon Diamond, Roger Huyshe, Ian Marsh, and Liu Yajie.

Photographs: *Front cover*, (Go room at FestivalAsia) Roger Huyshe and Maria Tabor, *Inside front cover*, Andrew Ambrose-Thurman. All the other photographs in this edition were provided by the article authors or sourced from the BGA website.

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

THE JOURNAL ONLINE

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

SGF Files

The SGF files for problems and games printed in this journal appear at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue172.

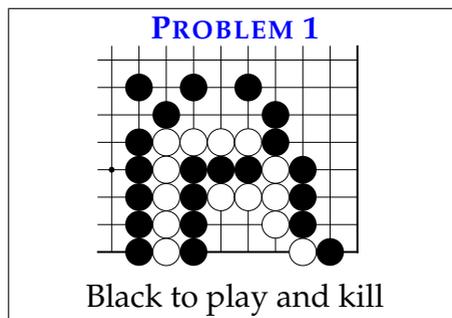
Online Journals

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

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

Active Links and Colour

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



FESTIVALASIA

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk



Maria (foreground) and Roger (at the back) teaching

Over the years the British Go Association has been able to demonstrate Go at festivals and exhibitions connected to Japan, China or Korea. However never before has there been a chance for cultural aspects of all Asian countries to come together in London at one large event. FestivalAsia was a new event set up to fill this hole. One of the main organisers was Li Li, a Chinese-born opera singer, who is very enthusiastic about spreading Asian culture here in the UK.

The venue chosen was the historic Tobacco Dock exhibition centre in London, which is appropriately out East near Wapping. The old warehouse building, which was built in 1811, has been delightfully restored, with glass-enclosed rooms of various sizes, a central atrium and an outside dock area containing two old sailing ships. It has fine iron roof trusses, original doors and odd things like a statue of a small boy with a tiger. This commemorates a beast that escaped from an exotic pet shop

located nearby in the late 19th century and carried off a small boy; the small boy was rescued unharmed.

FestivalAsia was held over three days from Friday 15th May. There was a wide Eastern mix of various music, dance, food, fashion and martial arts stalls and events, but only one mind sport. The music and dance performances were out in the atrium, and the sound of Bollywood, belly or Thai dancers, or Japanese drummers, Chinese singers and so on was constantly echoing around the halls. On another stage there were non-stop martial arts displays. Several large rooms had things for sale and there were rooms giving language tuition, yoga and relaxation techniques, Asian travel advice and so on. Another large room, designated the cultural room, was reserved for hourly lectures on a wide range of subjects. There were some refreshment stalls in the atrium, but outside by the ships there was a long line of delightfully smelling food stalls where you could eat your way around the continent at reasonable prices and, as the weather was nice, sit out and enjoy the atmosphere as you ate.

Luckily the BGA had been invited to take part and we managed to acquire the use of a large room for demonstration, rather than the small stand that we were at first offered, when another exhibitor withdrew. The challenge then was to fill the space and ensure there were enough volunteers to help teach Go to the many expected visitors. Thankfully under Roger Huyshe and Maria Tabor's direction we managed to get

several tables lined up for teaching, a sales table, a demonstration game table and lots of posters around the walls. Enough players did kindly give up their time to provide the teaching, so every visitor who wanted to could get a lesson.

One problem with being inside a room is that shy people will not enter to find out what was happening, so Francis Roads dragged a table into the wide corridor outside. Passers-by could then see a game in progress and be offered a leaflet without the pressure of having a lesson.



The entrance to the Go room

Roger brought along the new BGA starter set and some of the 13x13 pizza box sets and some beginners' books. Forty-two Go sets were sold in total over the weekend. Such sales are important as it is hoped that people who invested in such will be inspired

to explore the game further, especially to visit a local Go club, more than those just taking a leaflet or having a lesson. Customers also signed up to receive later a 'digital pack' in the form of a brief electronic newsletter; this included links to software to play against, other useful links to follow up and an electronic copy of the British Go Journal.

As usual lots of interesting contacts were made and there was a constant stream of people wanting to learn, though sometimes the stream was only a trickle. It is hoped the organisers were not too disappointed with the attendance, which was definitely low on the Friday, and it never seemed crowded, even on the Saturday. Two of the contacts were teachers interested in promoting Go at their schools, who of course have been offered support from the BGA. There was also the usual mix of people who had heard of the game and had always wanted to learn, and those who were bemused by how they had never heard about something so old and amazing.

One aspect of the weekend, however, that was not so successful was the lecture Roger and Maria had been asked to put on in the cultural room as part of the lecture series. Despite a lot of effort collecting films and photographs to show, and extensive work on a script, there was a disappointing attendance which is best described as minimal.

In all, the weekend was a great way to promote Go and a pleasant and fun way to experience a broad selection of Asian culture and cuisine.

□

WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

Pandant Go European Team Championship

On the 17th March, the UK team dropped their first point of the season with a draw against Portugal. Chris Bryant admitted to having played badly in his loss against Pedro Carmona, but Toby Manning won his game against Francisco Pereira by resignation. The top two boards were closer with Sandy Taylor beating Pedro Pereira, but Des Cann losing to Cristovão Neto. The team stayed two points clear at the top of C League as second-placed Bulgaria drew with Croatia. South Africa beat Greece to close the gap to one point in third.

Four weeks later on 14th April, the team beat Cyprus by three boards to one. Des Cann, Paul Taylor and Chris Bryant won their games by resignation (against Sotiris Ioannides, Argyris Fellas and Nicholas Roussos); Jonathan Gallimore was outgunned by another 6k, Alexandros Hadjixenophontos, on board four. Rivals Bulgaria lost four-nil to third place South Africa, who moved up to second place, three points behind the UK.

The match on 12th May was against Iceland. Jonathan Gallimore quickly forced Benedikt Birgisson to resign, but Chris Bryant lost by resignation to Thorbergur Olafsson and then Sandy Taylor lost to Olafur Siguroarson by 3.5. Des Cann was the last to finish after a long game against Hallbjorn Gudmundsson, but won by 16.5 to tie the match. This was enough to earn promotion to the B League, as second placed South Africa only managed a draw too, against Lithuania. Bulgaria

beat Portugal to be placed just behind South Africa on boards-won tie-break. Also vying for the play-off place were Croatia and Lithuania who were only one match point behind the other two.

The UK's last match was against Kazakhstan and all games were won by resignation. It looked for a while like the match was to be played early on the Sunday, but in the end only Tim Hunt's game was, the others (Andrew Simons, Sandy Taylor and Toby Manning) playing their games on the normal Tuesday evening. This meant the UK team remained unbeaten at the end of the 2014-2015 season. They ended clear top of the C League on 20 match points after 9 wins and 2 draws, and won 33 out of 44 games.

In the battle for second place, both South Africa and Bulgaria killed the hopes of Croatia and Lithuania by winning their matches against Portugal and Cyprus respectively, both by four games to nil. This meant South Africa would be in the promotion play-off against B League's Switzerland, but they lost it 4-1.

During the spring Ireland drew with Cyprus, and beat Iceland and Kazakhstan to get up to ninth. They then won their last match against Greece to end a respectable seventh place in the C-League. James Hutchinson won in all four of those matches, John Gibson in three, Tiberiu Gociu in two, and Ian Davis and Tom Shanahan in one.

In the A-League, for the first time Russia did not end in the top four, after they drew to Netherlands in the last round. Despite losing their last

match Ukraine took fourth. Romania and France took third and second behind Czechia. The top four proceed to the over-the-board finals at the European Go Congress in Liberec. Poland was the team demoted to the B League, and Sweden had to play off against Hungary, the B League runners up, which they won 3-2. Germany was the Winner of the B League and Slovenia was the team relegated.

Galway

The Galway Tournament was held at St. Mary's College on 25th and 26th April and kept up the tradition of having an annual event in each of the Irish provinces. This year only nine players took part. Local player and event organiser Philippe Renaut (2d) won with three wins out of four. Also winning three reduced handicap games were Geoffrey Crespino (3k France) and Piotr Gawron (6k Poland).

New European Pros

In 2015 the European Go Federation ran the second European Pro Qualification Tournament. Held from 6th to 8th March in Pisa, 16 players took part in a six-round double-elimination tournament. The first player with four wins would be the third European professional, the remaining players continuing to find the fourth professional. Mateusz Surma won his first four games to become the third pro and Ilya Shikshin ended on five out of six to be the fourth, joining Pavol Lisy and Ali Jabarin who qualified in 2014.

European Grand Slam

Ten thousand euros as a first prize attracted twelve top players including pros and qualifiers to the first European Grand Slam. This was held

in the Chinese Cultural Centre in Berlin over the Easter weekend. The newest professionals met in the final and Ilya Shikshin beat Mateusz Surma to take the top prize. Ali Jabarin took third place beating Cristian Pop.

European Pair Go

This year the European Pair Go Championships were held at the Hotel Alfa in Moscow on the weekend of 16th May. On the Friday evening players were taken for a nighttime tour of the sights, pavements glistening from recent rain. No fewer than forty pairs took part, representing eight countries other than Russia. The large home team had many junior players amongst its number. Professional player Alexandr Dinerchtein gave a lecture and also played some simultaneous games.

Winning all six games to take the title was the professional brother-sister pairing of Ilya Shikshin and Svetlana Shikshina. Alexandr Dinerchtein playing with Elvina Kalsberg came second and Hungary's Pal Balogh and Rita Pocsai were third. Russia's Dmitrij Surin and Natalia Kovaleva were fourth and Germany's Michael Palant and Manja Marz were fifth.

World Amateur Go Championships

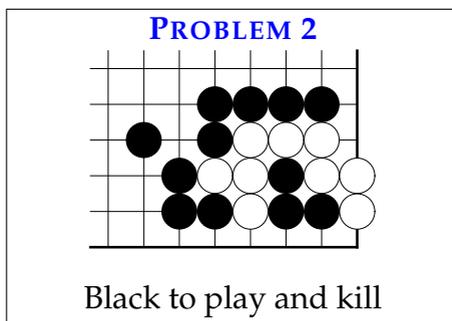
Many times has the World Amateur been held in Japan and occasionally in China or Korea, but the 36th edition broke with tradition and was held in Thailand. The event took place in the Montien Riverside Hotel from 7th June to 10th June. As usual the oriental countries dominated the event, helped this year by a McMahon draw keeping the kyu players out of their way. Unbeaten winner was Kim Changhun of Korea. Hu Aohua of China was second and twelve-year-

old Lai Jyun-Fu of Chinese Taipei was third.

The UK's player was Des Cann who had a disappointing start with losses to Papazoglou of France, Chang of Malaysia and Almrot of Sweden. He won his fourth game against Samelis of Spain, but then lost to Laatikainen of Finland and Regginos of Cyprus. He beat Chen of New Zealand in

round seven, before losing to Egeberg of Norway in round eight.

James Hutchinson, representing Ireland, beat Azerbaijan and Belarus, before losses to Switzerland and Cyprus. He then beat Carmona of Portugal and Cajiao of Costa Rica, before a loss to Mongolia and to Lithuania.



EXPLANATION OF JAPANESE TERMS

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

www.britgo.org/general/definitions

www.britgo.org/bgj/glossary

or search senseis.xmp.net/?GoTerms.

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

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Jon Diamond

president@britgo.org



Our new Council is now bedding in, as you can see from our Council minutes currently available on our website. I must apologise for the lack of these minutes for a significant time, as our Secretary has been under extraordinary pressure at work, doing the jobs of several people!

I hope the influx of new blood will generate some new initiatives to help spread Go in the UK and also increase our membership - for the first time for some years our membership has increased over the last 12 months! I hope our University activities, thanks to Colin Maclennan, will continue to increase this in future years.

Our participation in the FestivalAsia show in London took a large amount of effort. I'd like to thank all the volunteers who helped, but especial thanks must go to Roger Huyshe as the main organiser and an extra special thanks to Maria Tabor for

the effort she put into creating all the marketing materials, including very low cost sets, and creating a high quality presentation. I hope we'll all be able to see that sometime. Don't forget that all our marketing material is available to you if you can find the right opportunity to demonstrate Go and spread the word.

I'm pleased to see so many UK players registered for the European Go Congress in the Czech Republic - I have very fond memories of my attendance at the first one there (50 years ago in 1965 - ouch!). I'd wish them well, but by the time you read this it will all be over. Why don't you plan to go to next year's Congress in St Petersburg? I'm sure the sightseeing will be unparalleled there, even if your playing can't quite match that.

As I write this I've just heard that Brian Timmins has died after a short illness following a scheduled operation. Brian was a very regular tournament-goer, attending the European Go Congress many times, and a great servant to the Association. He was already Membership Secretary in 1988 when he stepped up to become editor of the British Go Journal as well; as our website states "for a while fulfilled both responsibilities with unparalleled conscientiousness" and was awarded a Life Membership as a recognition of his services. We will miss him as I'm sure will his wife Kathleen, who took over as Membership Secretary from Brian, and his family. I'm grateful to have been able to have an extended conversation with him at the British Congress in Shrewsbury earlier this year.

JOSEKI

Paul Barnard

paul@psaa.me.uk

What is a joseki? A known standard sequence that has been examined by multiple professionals for a considerable time, in which no better moves have been found for either player, and which is considered to give an even result for both sides – all other things being equal.

How to study joseki? Follow the rules – all of them. Then consider the guidelines.

RULE 1

Enjoy your studies.

RULE 2

There is no rule 2, or any other rule. Refer to rule 1. Any other rules may detract from it. One thing professionals often say is that they envy amateurs the ability to just enjoy the game, free from the pressures of earning a living from it. Take advantage of this! Yes, it is nice to get stronger for all sorts of obvious (and not so obvious) reasons. But don't torture yourself to do it.

GUIDELINES

1 – Don't learn joseki.

There is a famous proverb: "Learn joseki and get two stones weaker." Note that this is often misquoted and misunderstood. Misquoted as, "Study joseki and..." There is all the difference in the world between rote learning and studying. When a dan player talks about "knowing" a joseki, he doesn't mean blindly following a sequence, he means knowing it in much more intimate manner and being familiar with likely outcomes.

Rote learning is bad, and not fun – see rule 1.

2 – When you don't feel you got a fair result in a corner sequence (or any other joseki position) look it up afterwards to see where you/your opponent departed from the joseki, and try and understand. Don't try and learn. Try and remember what you were thinking in the game.

3 – When you are studying a joseki, play it often, against different people. Try variations. Not such that you do the wrong thing for the board position, but try to experiment. Check with the book afterwards.

4 – Work through the main line of the joseki, and try to understand why the standard moves are standard. You might need more than one book – there are online resources like eidogo.com/#kjd and others. Or ask a stronger player. Then ask a different stronger player. If you don't get it, try playing a different move and see what happens.

5 – Start exploring the branch lines. This can lead to fun in real games, since there is a much better chance that your opponent is unfamiliar and (i) can then foul up, and (ii) might spend a lot of his time on it.

6 – Don't study like problem solving, where the challenge is to work it out in your head. Joseki are too complex for that. Feel free to put stones on the board to explore the lines (but don't get carried away, remember what you are trying to do in putting them down!).

7 – Try to use a board and stones whenever possible to study – it’s just not the same on the printed page.

8 – Don’t try and “get” the whole joseki in one session. If all you manage is to understand one move, you will have gained skill. Remember, the reasons for joseki moves are valid all over the board in other situations too - studying joseki sharpens your abilities in other situations because you have, somewhere in your brain, a memory of having seen a move that might just work...

9 – Play it out left handed and upside down (not you, the stones!).

10 – Never forget rule 1. If you really don’t like studying joseki at all, in any way, just accept that it will become a weakness in your game, and carry on enjoying playing go anyway.

11 – OK, there is a rule 2 – enjoy playing them too. When I play a game and do something my opponent hasn’t seen before, I can enjoy the look of consternation on his face, secure in the knowledge that he’s much more likely to screw up than me, because I’ve thought about this position before.

Diagram 1

This is a very well known joseki, and it is played often. The moves seem to flow naturally, so most players stronger than say 12 kyu think they know it and understand it. But what happens if ⑤ is played at A? What happens if Black omits ⑦ to play somewhere around ⑧ because it supports his top left position - does his corner get shut in? What is White’s best response?

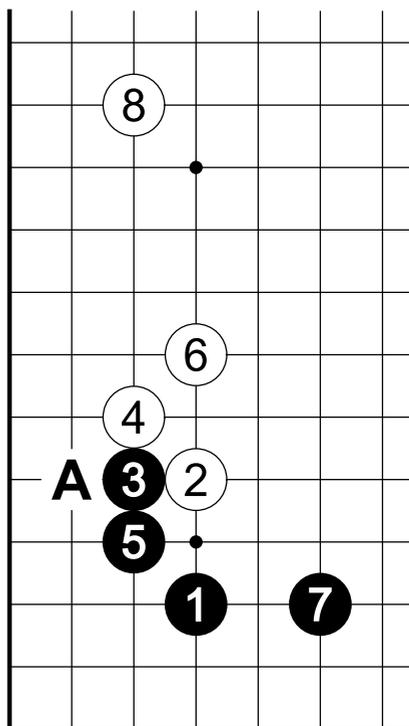


Diagram 1

When to learn joseki? 20 kyu? 10 kyu? 5 kyu? Dan level? Never – were you paying attention to guideline 1? Study when you want to - see rule 1 above – don’t ever learn them.

Which joseki to choose to study? Best choice is one you’ve just seen in a game. But otherwise, it’s a good idea to assemble a toolkit of joseki. A spanner for territory, a hammer for influence this way, a drill for influence that way... The stronger you get, the more tools you’ll need, but always keep a reasonably balanced tool kit, no point in having 100 drill bits and no spanner.

Which joseki to choose in a game? That is hard! Of course, it depends on the board position, but that’s not

all. It also depends on what you are trying to do. Right from the first moves in a game, you should have a plan. You might change that plan as the game proceeds, but you should always have a plan. So choose a joseki that supports your plan. The same board position might support different plans, so different joseki might be equally good choices even in the same board position. But, do try (hard) to relate your joseki choices to what's on the board and what you are trying to achieve.

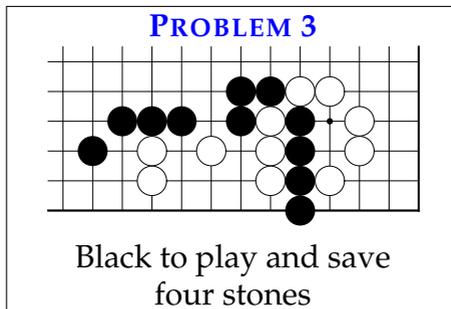
Other reasons for making a choice – you might want to practise a particular line, you might have a

strong preference for influence (or territory) because that's your style of play, you might not be sure of the variations and want a simple line, you might want to start/avoid a fight, it might be Saturday.

Last point – so long as you play according to your overall plan, joseki mistakes very rarely lose games, so if you don't really understand what's going on, don't panic, **JUST KEEP YOUR PLAN IN MIND**. Remember, you never studied joseki to win games in the first 50 moves anyway, you did it because it enhances your overall game. And because it was fun.

□

~ ~ ~



BGA ANNOUNCEMENTS

FUTURE EVENTS

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

Belfast, Saturday 8th – Sunday 9th August

Arundel, Saturday 15th August

Isle of Man Go Festival, Port Erin, Sunday 23rd – Friday 28th August

Mind Sports Olympiad, London, Sunday 23rd – Monday 31st August

Northern, Manchester, Sunday 6th September

Cornwall, Penzance, Saturday 12th – Sunday 13th September

Sheffield, Sunday 11th October

Wessex, Bath, Sunday 25th October

Three Peaks, Grange-over-Sands, Saturday 14th – Sunday 15th November

South London, Saturday 28th November

London Open, Monday 28th – Thursday 31st December

OFFICIAL VACANCIES: CAN YOU HELP?

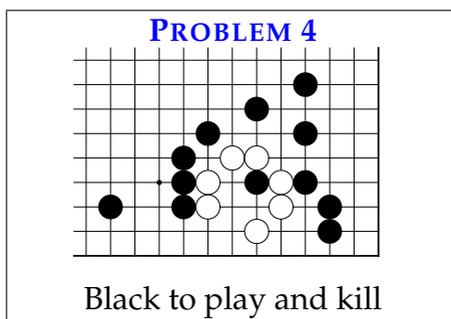
Vacant posts are listed at www.britgo.org/positions/vacancies.

We need volunteers for:

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

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

□





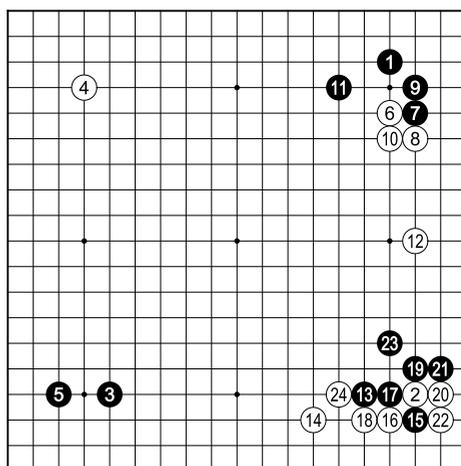
Neil Stein was one of the founding members of the BGA and one of the strongest British players of the early 1960s. He vied with John Barrs for the top British player title and was nominally graded at one kyu – behind John’s one dan – though John’s was really an honorary grade awarded by the Japanese. Both Neil and John formed the team at the first International Go Tournament in Tokyo, starting 1st October 1963, but with John’s one win they came last. John promised to do better next time but when they returned on 30th November 1964, they lost all their games.

Bob Hitchens accompanied them as team captain at that event and it was Bob whom Neil’s daughter, Kate, contacted to tell us of Neil’s death from cancer on 11th of May this year.

Neil had moved away from Go and was last known to play seriously at the European Go Congress in Krems in 1975, when he was graded as a 3 kyu. His later interest was Scrabble and he was a player in the London Scrabble League for more than thirty years. It was through Scrabble that he met his later partner Gloria at a club in Kent. His word skills meant he was good at crosswords, being a Times finalist, and he appeared on television shows Countdown, Catchword, Crossword on 2 and Fifteen-to-One.

His career was spent lecturing and writing on accountancy. His financial expertise helped create the BGA’s first bank balance of any size when he recognised the possibility of compensation from University College London for cancelling our booking for the first European Congress to be held in Britain. He was also an expert in cookery, food and fine wines. He lived latterly in Purley and his funeral was in Croydon, the town of his birth, on 21st May.

Below are the first 24 moves of Neil playing black, against Günter Cieszow of West Germany, in 1963. It illustrates the level of play in those years when there was very little teaching material available. Black should have played 23 at 24, and this disadvantage continued throughout the game and Black resigned eventually¹.



Tony Atkins

¹Full game record at www.britgo.org/files/bgjgames/172-stein-cieszow.sgf

JOHN RENBOURN

1944-2015

John Renbourn was a guitarist, singer and song writer, who was variously part of the group Pentangle, a soloist and part of the duo Bert and John, with Bert Jansch (1943-2011). The cover of the eponymous 1966 album "Bert and John" showed the two playing Go in a domestic setting. A bonus track from the 1996 re-release of the album (lyrics below by Bert Jansch) seems to make references to Go. The game also appeared on the reworking "After the Dance" in 1992. The booklet issued with the remastered CD version of "Bert and John" features more scenes from the Go game between the two performers (photos by Brian Shuel). According to their friend Billy Connolly, the two still used to play between takes when making the 1992 biopic "Acoustic Routes". When visited by a journalist in 2013 Renbourn still had a Go set, amongst other games, and described the game as being "like the most complicated version of Noughts and Crosses you ever played in your life". Renbourn died of a heart attack in his home in Hawick in Scotland.

In this game

Oh the lonesome night and the mornin' of sleep
Does make me feel lazy and bored with my life
Each minute I think of what to do
In this game, in this game

Come tell to me the truth if the black crow's angered
And then flies from the chatter of home, does it matter?
Does it render his thoughts just to enquire
In this game, in this game?

Each step and turn I take, in my life, in my life
Is captured in its turn, one by one it goes down
Like the pieces of stone carelessly played
From my hand, from my hand

Woman, woman, why must you suffer my sins?
Woman, woman, why does your anger begin?
Does it matter what you do, do without me by your side
In this game, in this game

I'm drinkin' like a fish, on the rocks, on the rocks
I got a vision of my mother, asking son won't you stop?
And yet this drink is killing me and I never shall be free
From this game, from this game

Each step and turn I take, in my life, in my life
Is captured in its turn, one by one it goes down
Like the pieces of stone carelessly played from my hand
In this game, in this game

Tony Atkins

JOHN FORBES NASH

1928-2015

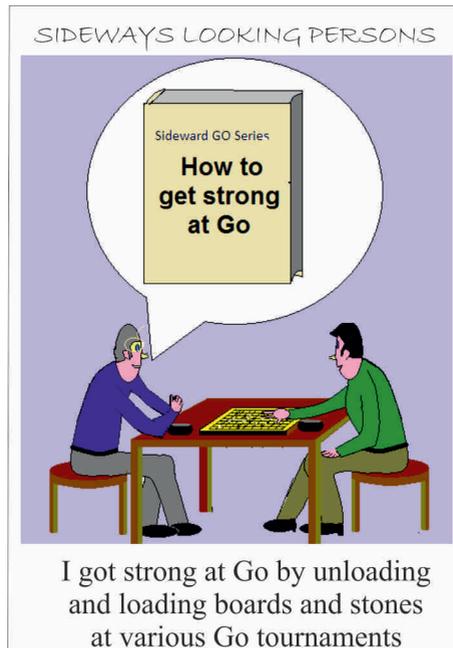
Eminent mathematician and winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, John Forbes Nash was a Go player. In the film "A Beautiful Mind" (where he is played by Russell Crowe), Nash plays Go at Princeton. He claims the game is flawed as he played a perfect game yet lost. He goes on to overcome mental illness to win the Nobel Prize in 1994. The sound track to the film has a track called "Playing a Game

of Go" and features vocal sounds by Charlotte Church.

Nash was killed with his wife Alicia on the New Jersey Turnpike when their taxi crashed. They were returning from Norway where he had received yet another award, the Abel Prize, from King Harald V.

Tony Atkins

~ ~ ~



BRITISH CHALLENGERS' LEAGUE

Andrew Simons

ajcsimons@gmail.com

This is the game¹ between the two highest rated players, Andrew Simons and Andrew Kay, in the Challengers' this year. Andrew Kay (4d) is Black and Andrew Simons (4d) is White.

I was drawn to play my friend and rival Andrew Kay in the first round, which was rather unfortunate because it was expected to be the deciding game for first place.

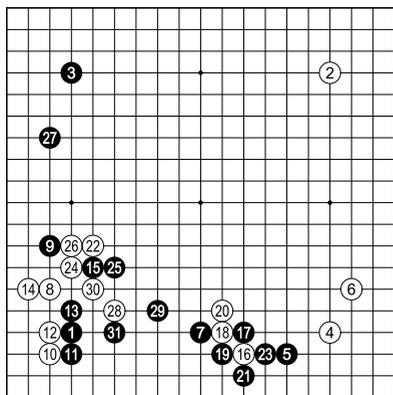


Diagram 1 (1-31)

Andrew Kay viewed 33 as pure sente gain, but it was making additional points near thickness and giving me 36 so I wasn't convinced it was urgent. If I had played 32 at 47 as I retrospectively prefer, I think 33 would be bad. The 3-3 invasion at 37 made 36 less good for me.

42 was probably too showy. Perhaps I should have blocked the other side and played double hane. That would have been better for staying strong and making use of 36, but I thought he would take sente after capturing and play at A, which would make my B okay but not so amazing.

Andrew thought 64 was trying too hard, but I wanted him to avoid letting him have a clean net so I could use the thickness around 26.

The opening was the same as we have played a few times before, notably in the 2nd game of the title match two years ago, but then I extended [at 19] rather than wedging in [at 18] and playing Go Seigen's ladder breaker. When we did this before Jeff Chang 6d (who has taught both of us) said it was better for Black, but I still did it for fun, and if Go Seigen suggests it then it can't be so bad.

28 I was happy that this sequence gave me a sente reduction and caused Black's two stones to be poorly placed; he was happy to solidify the territory. Perhaps the result was the best that each player could expect from this situation.

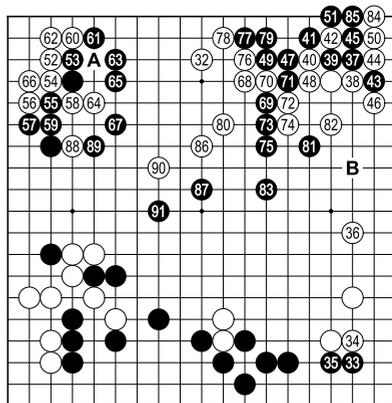
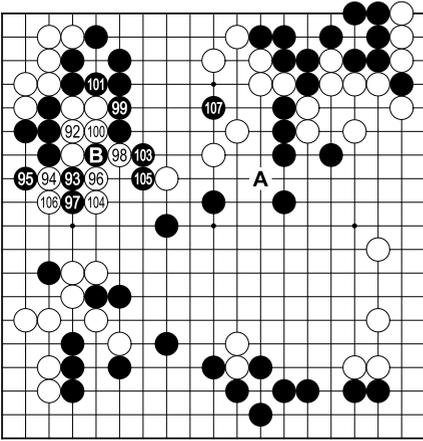


Diagram 2 (32-91)

¹The sgf file is at www.britgo.org/files/bgjgames/172-challengers.sgf.



102 at B.

Diagram 3 (92-107)

92 is probably the losing move. It's too early. I should fix middle group first. Moreover, Black can easily sacrifice the four stones.

104 maybe should block [at 105] even if it is ugly. If I wanted to trade I should have got A in first.

124 is not good because 125 leaves Black with a ko to kill the corner.

140 Trading is good enough for Black; I lost more than if I had just settled the group immediately. Now the game is over.

164 The last recorded move.

Black wins by resignation.

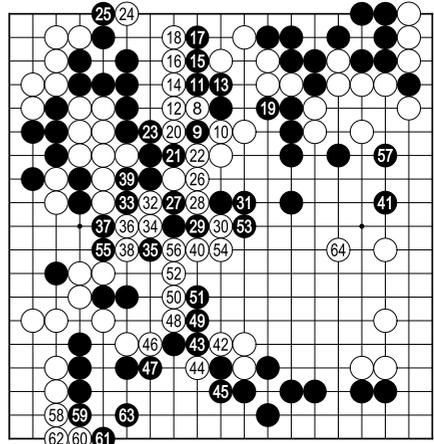


Diagram 4 (108-164)

~ ~ ~

HAIKU

Black to Play
 white blossom petal
 falling lands on the go board –
 how can black reply?

Emzi Zimisiyu
 April 2015

DURHAM

Andrew Ambrose-Thurman

andrew@ambrose.thurman.org.uk



Alex Kent and Sandy Taylor

Durham Go Tournament 2015 started with a fascinating two hour teaching event on the Friday night from Chi-min Oh (7d), who talked for an hour about trick plays and then logged into KGS to analyse and review some people's games at random while they were playing them – demonstrating in some cases that it's not just kyu players who make silly mistakes! It was especially good of Chi-min to run this, as it was his last day in Durham before travelling back to Korea.

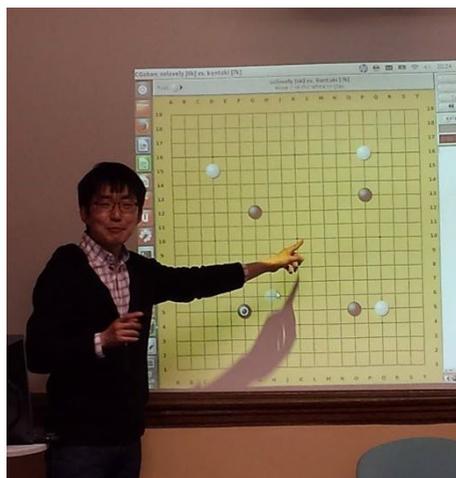
The tournament itself had 29 entrants, ranging in strength from 3d to over 20k, and was held again in the Pemberton Rooms. This building is in the heart of Durham on Palace Green, overlooked by both the Cathedral and Castle.

In the late afternoon a number of players headed for a local house for a Go BBQ, along with various people who weren't able to play in the tournament itself. After a week of sunshine the rain started about half an hour in, but the Go players continued undaunted – eating and playing Go variously under a gazebo, in a large canvas tent, and in a greenhouse.

The party continued late into the night, which might explain why

Round 4 the next morning had slightly fewer entrants. The last three rounds went without much incident, and at the end Alex Kent retained the title and won his third Goat Ornament (as well as a 6-month subscription to Baduk TV English, kindly sponsored by Go Game Guru). Appropriately named Alan Go (10k Durham) also won all six of his games. Various prizes were given, including to the winners of the Lightning and Small Board side events (Chris Muse and Sam Bithell), and to Robert Scantlebury, who won the prize that we've been wanting to give for years – for two wins, two losses, and two jigos.

After the tournament we went to a local pub for a meal while people waited for their trains. Thanks to everyone for coming along!



Chi-Min Oh

BOOK REVIEWS

Roger Huyshe

roger.huyshe@btinternet.com



Roger Huyshe (3k)

BOOK REVIEWS (2)

Moyo/invasion books

The choice of reduction or invasion is a difficult decision, to be taken in the context of the whole board. These are often the plays which change the course of a game and it is really worth taking time and care over the decision on the initial move. While many of us tend to like a fight, some of these books have given me more respect for the superficially less dynamic reduction technique. For example Fujisawa's book sets out no less than a dozen secondary benefits of a reduction, whereas an invasion often carries the downside of a weak group to manage.

None of these books are direct competitors against each other. A lot depends on how you like to learn.

Reducing Territorial Frameworks; Kiseido/Shuko Fujisawa

There is more to this slim 1980 volume of 200 pages of A5 than meets the eye. The book starts with a section expounding and illustrating principles and side benefits of reduction. The middle half of the book goes systematically through a large number of middle-game joseki for reducing the side, the corner and the Chinese formation. This may not be exciting reading but for those with the perseverance to examine these formations, it is possibly more useful than studying a similar number of corner joseki. And to be fair, the various formations are examined in the context of the surroundings. There follows examples from professional games and 30 fairly challenging problems, all of which address the choices in a full board context. The beginning is readable from 6 or 8 kyu, but there is also material to interest many dan players.

Invasions; Slate and Shell/Iwamoto Kaoru Reductions; Slate and Shell /Iwamoto Kaoru

Published in 2014, these two books are a rewrite of a single earlier book on the same subjects. They are presented as an encyclopedia of some 20 common formations, typically based on a corner with one or more extending stones. This encyclopedia approach put me off initially, but on reading a bit further I saw certain key points and tesuji being repeated and began to see some useful learning points.

There is no full board discussion in either of these books, but alternative

lines are discussed, both from the point of view of reading and in relation to nearby stones.

Attacking and Defending Moyos; Kiseido/von Zeist and Bozulich

This is Volume 7 of the Mastering the Basics series and is further confirmation that the word 'basics' is not to be taken too literally. The book starts with an interesting discussion of general principles then gives examples from professional games which focus on the decisions on how to handle moyos. The bulk of the book is taken up with 151 problems in the usual Kiseido format. These I found quite eye-opening in the variety of techniques and ideas discussed. We move beyond the simple binary choices of: invade — to live or run out; versus reduce – and build an outside position. Many problems address the messy situation where there are more than two areas of interest and the flow of moves needs careful evaluation. While the ideas would likely give 8-10 kyu players a greater awareness, most of the text and problems would be challenging to low SDK and probably low dan too.

Get Strong Series; Vol 5 - Get Strong at Invading; Richard Bozulich

This is a volume consisting of 171 problems about invading. It's divided up into sections on invasions on the side, invasions in the corner, and invading large territories, which is a lot to cover in a single volume. Complicated situations are often broken up into multiple problems on consecutive pages, so a systematic approach to study is needed.

This 3 kyu found many of the problems quite difficult and would disagree with the statement in the preface that the first two parts are accessible to 20-kyu players. In fact dan players may well benefit. [Review adapted from David Carlton's bibliography]

Vital Points and Skilful Finesse for Sabaki; Hinoki Press/Yoda Norimoto

Only when you have understood the meaning of light and heavy formations, is it time to move on to the more subtle concept of sabaki. Sabaki is the result where weak or invading stones emerge with some eyeshape or a palatable position from an unpromising base line. It may be much easier to appreciate than to implement.

This is in essence a problem book. Seventy-eight problems, each presented in a nice clear diagram. The reader is asked to select between two or three given choices. In the following two to six pages, the correct answer is shown, with a full explanation of why it is right, and the other choices wrong. The early problems are pitched at high SDK and they get harder through the book. Few of the problems relate directly to moyos, but many of them could have arisen from an invasion and counterattack by the opponent. The book brings together various ideas and tesuji for handling weak stones, and should help to broaden your understanding of sabaki.

□

THE BGA ANALYST

paul@psaa.me.uk

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

Would it be helpful to have your games analysed?

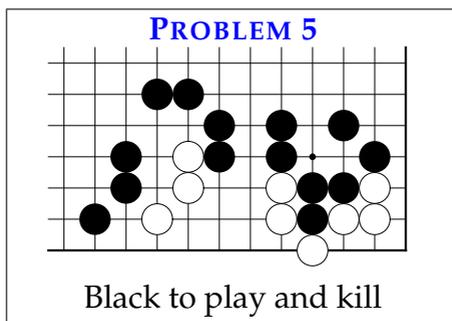
If you think it might, just send me an `.sgf` file of a representative game by email; I usually return the annotated game within a week.

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

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

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

Paul Barnard



UK NEWS

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

Trigantius

Saturday 7th March, the opening day of the Trigantius tournament, was a gloriously sunny day. It was a splendid debut for its new venue in the bar of Cambridge University Social Club in Mill Lane on the bank of the Cam. The 52 players who took part ranged from 4d to 16k. They were able to browse books for sale or review games in a separate room.



Action at Cambridge Trigantius

Taking the Trigantius Trophy, and his second title since starting tournament Go at the start of 2015, was London's Charles Hibbert (3d) with three straight wins. Andrew Simons and Alex Rix were equal second after Alex beat Andrew, but then lost to Charles in the last round.

Other prize-winners on three wins were Alison Bexfield (1d Letchworth), Yuji Tanaka (3k Japan), Martin Harvey (4k Manchester), Philip Smith (5k), Richard Mullens (6k London City), Fred Zhu (7k Cambridge) and Ben Murphy (10k Billericay).

Special prizes were awarded to those on two wins in categories of best Single Digit Kyu and best Double Digit Kyu. Best SDKs were Daniel Hu (1k Cambridge University) and Johannes Siven (1k Central London), but the organiser omitted to give the latter his prize, so it would have to be delivered later. Best DDK was Charlotte Bexfield (10k Letchworth).

British Go Congress

The British Go Congress was hosted this year by Roger Huyshe at the Prince Rupert Hotel in the centre of Shrewsbury. As the weekend weather was described as inclement, there was little encouragement to explore the old streets and riverside of the town, which was a pity. The whole event was sponsored by Pentangle Puzzles and Games and apart from the weather was very successful.

The weekend started on the Friday afternoon, 27th March, with tuition by Oh Chi Min (7d), who was then at Durham University. He contributed much to the weekend with many players' games reviewed.

As usual, the British Lightning was held on the Friday evening. Twenty-eight players occupied seven tables of four for the first three rounds, then were paired Swiss-style for two more rounds to determine the winner. This was Alex Rix (3d Central London) with five wins out of five. The runner-up was Alex Kent (3d Bristol) with four wins, on SOS tie-break from Matt

Marsh (7k Sheffield), Junnan Jiang (4d Oxford City), Kalle Timperi (2d Helsinki) and Juho Pennanen (1d Helsinki).

The British Open, with 68 players, was played on Saturday and Sunday, with the BGA AGM held on the Saturday evening in-between. The British Open Champion was Junnan Jiang winning all six games. Runner-up was Alex Kent with five wins.

Prizes went to all players with four or more wins and special grading-band prizes went to: Alistair Wall (2d Wanstead), Atta Chui (4k Cambridge), Brian Timmins (8k Shrewsbury), David Crabtree (9k Manchester), Daniel Huysne (17k Birmingham).

Noteworthy were Daniel Huysne and Manchester's Alan Stokes (17k), getting prizes in their first tournament, and Gerry Gavigan (12k South London) who won five and narrowly missed out on a grading-band prize.



Junnan Jiang receives Open trophy from Roger Huyshe

Welwyn Garden City

Alistair Wall made an early start in the new season of the Stacey Grand Prix by winning the 2015 Welwyn Garden City Tournament on Saturday 18th April. Coming first at this four round event, held at the Red Lion in Hatfield, meant he started in the lead. This made it look like he had a good chance of retaining the trophy he collected at the British for winning the previous 2014-2015 season, which he did with 45 points (to Toby Manning's 28 in second).

Others of the 24 players, who won prizes for three wins out of four, were: Ngoc-Trang Cao (2d Strasbourg), Tim Hunt (2d Milton Keynes), Karim Secker (5k), Melchior Chui (9k Cambridge), Ben Murphy (10k Billericay) and Alex Terry (10k Bungay). Grimsby's Daffyd Robinson (11k) won the fighting spirit prize.

Candidates' Tournament

The Candidates' Tournament, the first stage of the British Championship, was held this year at The Fulbourn Centre near to Cambridge thanks to organiser Geoff Kaniuk. There were 24 players in this six round event, played over the Bank Holiday weekend of 2nd to 4th May, although not all played every round. Players with British or residential status qualified based on tournament results in the twelve months up to the end of March.

Andrew Simons won all his games to win. The other qualifiers to join him and British Champion Andrew Kay in the Challengers' League would be: Charles Hibbert and Desmond Cann (on 5 wins), Tim Hunt, Richard Hunter, James Hutchinson and Francis Roads (but see the report on the Challengers' League below).

Bar-Low

Starting a tradition of German winners, the winner of the Cambridge Bar-Low this year was Tobias Ungerer, following last year's winner Chris Volk. Tobias (3K) is from Cambridge University, and won four out of five games. His only loss was to Bogdan Ghica, who came second on tie break from Richard Mullens and James Murray.

The tournament was generously sponsored by an anonymous benefactor, who wishes to support the Bar-Low as a great way to encourage and benefit developing players. The winner went home with a splendid prize of £30. The second biggest prize was awarded to young Alex Terry (10k), who also won four games. Bob Dryden had estimated his grade at 10k, but won all his games and generously declined a cash prize. Seven other players won cash prizes, and everyone took home some chocolate.

As often in the past, the event was held at the Junior Parlour in Whewell's Court, Trinity Street, right opposite the main gateway to Trinity College. Players could gaze at it through the window and, as it was 3rd May, think of the Candidates' Tournament on elsewhere in Cambridge, to gain inspiration.

Bracknell

As usual the Bracknell Tournament was held in the Woosehill Community Centre in neighbouring Wokingham, this year on 17th May. Des Cann won the tournament for the first time, with the reward of seeing his name engraved on the Clive Hendrie Trophy. This was hopefully good preparation for his trip to the World

Amateur in June. Others of the 26 players winning all three games were Roger Daniel (5k London) and David Storkey (7k Exeter). As usual there were some distractions and side events, such as a paper-folding puzzle from organiser Ian Marsh and the Rush Hour game brought by Arundel club, who also won the team prize. Francis Roads won the 13x13 side tournament on a tie break, Jil Segerman the Go problem-solving competition and Pauline Bailey the caption contest (as the original winner had already gone home).

FestivalAsia

Clashing with Bracknell, but also on the previous two days, was FestivalAsia at London's Tobacco Dock. The BGA team, organised by Roger Huyshe and Maria Tabor, had a room to themselves to demonstrate and teach the game to several hundred people. They also sold £450 of starter Go sets and books, collected 57 email addresses of those of were taught, and made contact with two interested school teachers.

Challengers' League

This year's Challengers' League, played between the champion plus the top seven available players coming out of the Candidates' Tournament, took place at the Goddard Arms in Swindon's old town on the second May Bank Holiday weekend, 23rd to 26th May. Paul Barnard and Nick Wedd kindly officiated at the event.

As it turned out, Des Cann was unable to play because of a clash with the World Amateur (where he was UK rep), so his place was deferred for one year. Also, neither Francis Roads nor reserve Toby Manning could play,

so the next placed, Alistair Wall and Harry Fearnley, took part.

Andrew Kay (the reigning British Champion) won all seven of his games to lead the field, followed by Andrew Simons who won all of his games except for his game against Andrew Kay. Charles Hibbert, playing in his first Challengers' League, finished with four wins in third place. Tim Hunt and Alistair Wall were next, with three wins each, followed by Richard Hunter and Harry Fearnley on two wins each. James Hutchinson completed the field with one win, getting in some practice before going to represent Ireland at the World Amateur.

The top two players at the end of the League, Andrew Kay and Andrew Simons, will now go on to play for the year's British Championship title (as they did in 2013).

Scottish Open

The third consecutive Scottish Open in Glasgow saw 23 players converge on Glasgow University on the 30th and 31st May. It was also the second sponsored by the local Confucius Institute. The experiment of moving to the weekend after the bank holiday resulted in a slight drop in numbers, however, so it will probably move back to the normal weekend next time.

After the dust had settled, Tongzhou (Joe) Cai (3d Glasgow) remained undefeated on six wins to take custody of the cup, plus £50 cash and chocolate truffles. Below the bar, the 4k to 8k division saw a tussle for the prize between local club mates Niall Paterson (5k) and Joseph Thomas (8k). The latter prevailed on five wins to take £40 cash and a Go book. The

9k and below division produced a clear winner in Alasdair Clarke (9k Edinburgh), on four wins, also receiving £40 cash and a Go book.

Everyone else on three wins or more received a bottle (wine or beer) or chocolates: on five wins the tournament runner-up Alistair Wall (2d Wanstead), on four wins Niall Paterson (5k Glasgow), and on three wins Matthew Scott (2d Glasgow), Rab Fulton (1k Glasgow), Toby Manning (2d Leicester), Jurriaan Dijkman (3k Skye), Roger Daniel (4k London), Phil Smith (5k) and Greg Cox (10k Dundee).

British Pair Go Championship

The silver jubilee edition of the British Pair Go Championships on 6th June was held, like last year, at the Red Lion in Hatfield. In order to make the top group up to eight, a non-qualifying pair was added as ghosts, but then another all male pair had to be added as further ghosts as one pair failed to arrive. This did not affect the results as the winners, like last year, were Natasha Regan and Matthew Cocke. The next three places were the same pairs as last year too (but in a slightly different order) and the fighting spirit Prize was won this time by Anna Griffiths and Tony Atkins.

In the Handicap Section the new winners were youngsters Charlotte Bexfield and Alex Terry. Second and third place was as last year and the fighting spirit prize went to the youngest pair, Sophie Ellis and Oscar Selby. Ingrid Jendrzewski and Alex Selby won the drama quiz and Alison and Simon Bexfield were the winners of the Best Dressed Prize in their Japanese kimono.

□

SOLUTIONS TO THE NUMBERED PROBLEMS

The SGF files for these problems, showing a fuller set of lines, are to be found at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue172.

Solution to Problem 1

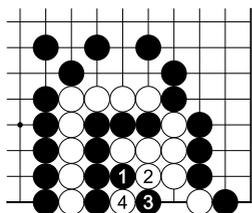


Diagram 1a (failure)

Black has only two liberties to White's three, so filling a liberty will not work.

❶ This fails.

Playing ❶ at ❷ or ❹ similarly fails.

And playing ❶ so as to attack the outer white string also fails.

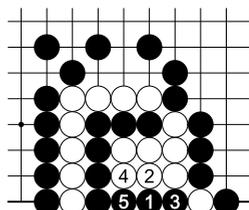


Diagram 1b (correct)

❶ This is the correct move, a tesuji that takes aim at White's bad shape.

❷ If White answers here, the sequence to ❺ captures the white stones.

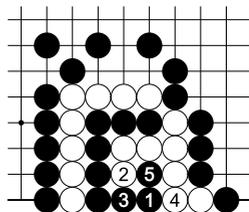


Diagram 1c (correct)

❷ Or if White answers here, the sequence to ❺ works.

MANY SLATE & SHELL PUBLICATIONS

ARE AVAILABLE
AT A DISCOUNT TO
BGA MEMBERS FROM

www.britgo.org/books/members.html

VIEW SAMPLE PAGES AT WWW.SLATEANDSHELL.COM



&



Solution to Problem 2

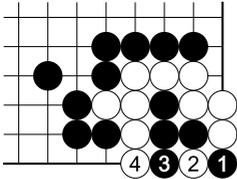


Diagram 2a (failure)

White has more liberties than Black, so filling a liberty is no good.

- ❶ This, for example, fails.

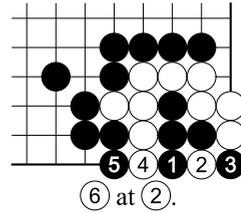


Diagram 2b (failure)

- ❶ This move threatens to escape or make a killing shape.
- ❷ This is the correct response.
- ❸ Black is not allowed to connect to make a six-stone shape and anyway it would not be a killing shape.

White must not play ❷ at ❸ or Black will make the killing shape (see below).

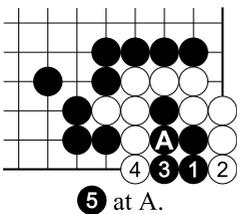


Diagram 2c (correct)

- ❶ So this must be the correct move to kill.
- ❷ This placement in the killing shape kills White.

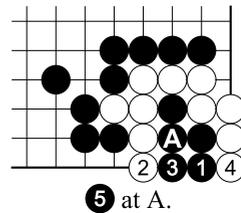


Diagram 2d (correct)

- ❷ This response by White does not work.
- ❸ This is the killing shape again.

Solution to Problem 3

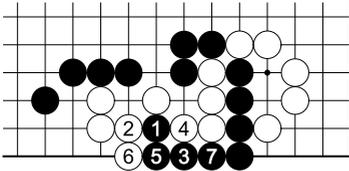


Diagram 3a (correct)

Black can do nothing to the right so has to capture the stones to the left. Black needs to find their weak spot.

- ① This is the correct move that aims at White's bad shape.
- ② This fills a liberty.
- ③ This is the correct response which makes good shape.
- ④ If White continues here ...
- ⑤ ... then Black calmly connects.
- ⑦ White cannot defend both cuts.

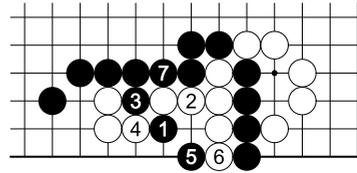


Diagram 3b (variation)

- ② If White connects here ...
- ③ ... then Black cuts the five white stones off.
- ④ If White cuts back ...
- ⑤ ... then this move again wins the position for Black.

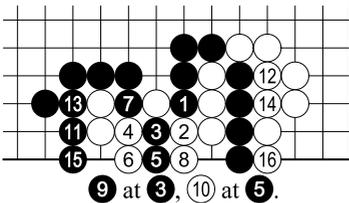


Diagram 3c (failure)

Pushing through is a good way to reduce liberties on White, especially when followed up by a cut and sacrifice.

- ⑤ Always sacrifice two stones when reducing liberties.
- ⑪ However White has more liberties and Black cannot win the race.

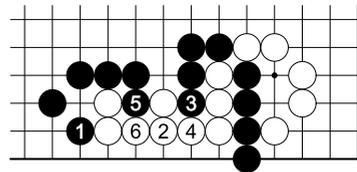


Diagram 3d (failure)

- ① Playing on the outside isn't fast enough.
- ② This move is the best defence and White clearly has more liberties.

Solution to Problem 4

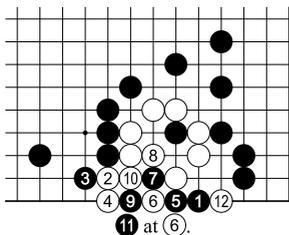


Diagram 4a (failure)

- ❶ Black could try from this side.
- ❷ Black gets nowhere.

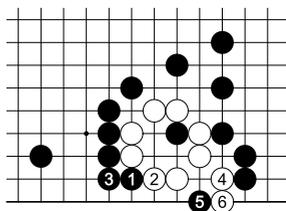


Diagram 4b (failure)

- ❶ Sometimes the hane reduces the eye space but this makes living easy for White.
- ❷ Two eyes.

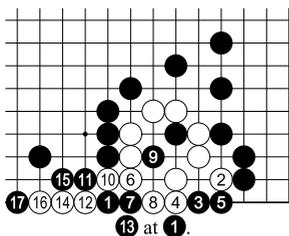


Diagram 4c (correct)

- ❶ This is the correct move that stops White making two eyes.
- ❷ This is White's strongest response.
- ❸ This stops the eye shape.
- ❹ White is threatening to make a large eye space.
- ❺ This has to be here to stop two eyes.
- ❻ It looks like White can get an eye on the edge, but the lone black stone to the left stops it.
- ❼ The eye is false and White is dead.

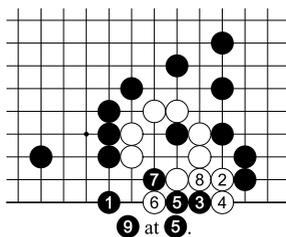


Diagram 4d (variation)

- ❺ This threatens to link to the black stone played on the edge.
- ❻ There is no eye here for White.

Solution to Problem 5

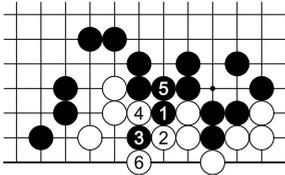


Diagram 5a (failure)

- ❶ Black needs to disrupt White's shape around here. Note White only has one eye in the corner.
- ❸ This is two eyes.

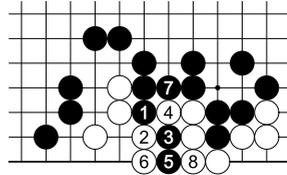


Diagram 5b (failure)

- ❸ Also two eyes.

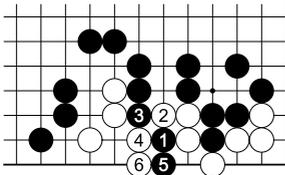


Diagram 5c (failure)

- ❶ This looks tricky.
- ❸ However White can easily handle it and live.

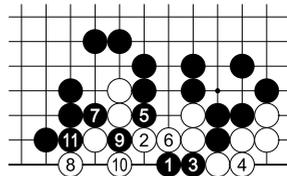


Diagram 5d (correct)

- ❶ This is the correct move that looks at punishing White's bad shape.
- ❷ This is a strong response.
- ❸ This and the next Black move are vital moves to keep White's eye to the left false.
- ❹ This expands White's eye space.
- ❺ Nothing works for White and the white group is dead.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL

The copy date for the next issue of the Journal may be found on the front page of our website, at www.britgo.org.

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

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

ASSOCIATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Association contact page: britgo.org/contact

Email for general BGA enquiries: bga@britgo.org

President: Jon Diamond 01892 663 837 president@britgo.org

Secretary: Jonathan Chin secretary@britgo.org

Membership Secretary: Paul Barnard, 16 Braemar Close,
Swindon SN3 1HY; 01793 692 408 mem@britgo.org

Newsletter Editor: newsletter@britgo.org

Journal comments and contributions: journal@britgo.org

Our Facebook page: facebook.com/BritishGoAssociation

Follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/britgo

Association internet message board: fora.britgo.org,
for general discussion about Go in the UK (open to all).

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

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

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

COLLECTING GO XXV: GO BOWLS

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

Most new players dream of the day when they have a proper Goban and traditional Go stones held in elegant turned wooden bowls with lids. Such a set of bowls might be traditionally made of mulberry or cherry, but other woods, some exotic such as Japanese Zelkova and Persimmon, are used. Bowls are also made of more common woods, such as chestnut and maple; though some give a brittle bowl and others can stain the stones. As with the Goban, the type of grain pattern is important too and the shape of the bowl can vary, but generally turned wood bowls are a delight to handle.



Turned wood bowls



Basketwork bowls

Instead of turned wood, oriental containers for stones can sometimes be made out of porcelain, woven bamboo or basketwork. The British Go Association sold for a while some very practical Chinese basketwork containers. The shape of containers, however, does not have to be round and many of the sets assembled in this country have used kidney-shaped plastic containers which were easily sourced here. The latest sets from China have black and white round plastic bowls with lids.

If you cannot afford the luxury of wooden bowls, and need something easy to carry or store, then using plastic tubs is the quick and easy solution.



Chinese black and white bowls

(Collecting Go XXV: Go Bowls ... continued from inside rear cover)

The BGA's sets in normal tournament use have, for forty year or more, been held in such containers. Not all are round, square containers often fit together better for storage and transport, but they usually come with a click-on lid to stop the stones from spilling easily. To get a large number of identical tubs can be quite hard as often they are sold in sets of various sizes for food storage, but pound shops and hardware stores usually have something that can be used.



Tins and jars

To save money then it is often possible to improvise. Golden syrup tins or jars are usually about the right size and already have the letters to spell out Go on them! For a 9x9 set yoghurt pots and similar are the right size, as are tubs for mini packs of Pringles (which come with a click-on lid).

In the days before plastic tubs were readily available, a suitable container for stones was the metal canister that came with cine film, which, though cold to the touch, had a secure lid.



Pots and canister

Ing measuring bowls, which are designed to hold exactly 180 stones, have come in at least three different designs over the years. There were attempts to improve the design of the tube mechanism that held the stones inside the bowl and also the method of attaching the lid, but none were very successful. If broken, one design could end up with a sharp point where you put your finger to unlock the lid. The second version was illustrated in Collecting Go XIII in BGJ160¹.

¹<http://www.britgo.org/files/bgj/bgj160.pdf>