

BRITISH

GO

JOURNAL



Number 212

Summer 2025

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*Front cover: Alistair Wall at the World Amateur Go Championships.
Photo by Gurujet Khalsa and the American Go Association.*

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Credits

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

Contributors: Tony Atkins, Alec Edgington, Richard Hunter, Alistair Wall, Colin Williams and Damen Woo.

Editing: Quintin Connell

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

The photographs in this edition were provided by the article authors, sourced from the BGA website, or are credited directly in the article.

EDITORIAL

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British Go Journal 212

This Edition

In this edition, we have a review of the British Championship match between Yaoling Yang and Lucretiu Calota by Damen Woo, who we hope will be a regular contributor to the Journal. Congratulations to Yaoling on retaining his title.

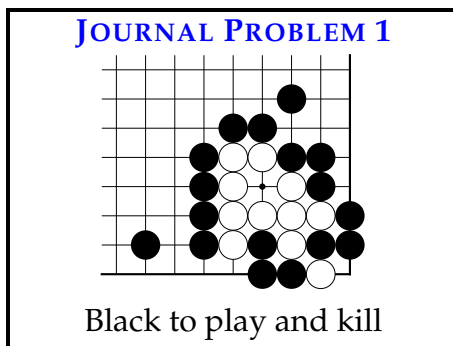
We also have an account by Alistair Wall of his trip to Vancouver for the World Amateur Go Championship. We hope to be able to publish his review of one of his games from the WAGC in the next edition.

Richard Hunter continues his series with part three of 'Fascinating Tsumego', taking us through his thought processes in solving a relatively hard problem

New Editor

I am delighted to announce that Quintin Connell will be taking over as Editor at the end of the year. Quintin has been helping with editing articles over the last year, so he is already somewhat familiar with the process, and we have agreed that he and I will share the role for the next edition, with him taking over fully with the edition following.

Pat Ridley
August 2025



LETTERS

In Favour of Jigo - continued

David Wildgoose (letters, [BGJ 211](#), *In Favour of Jigo*) argues for the use of 7-point komi in BGA tournaments. He has a point. We do not know the value of the 'ideal' komi (i.e. Black's margin of victory assuming perfect play from both sides), but 7 is our current best guess; and it is surely a whole number. (For a counterargument to this seemingly obvious claim, see

www.nordicgodojo.eu/post/182/is-fair-komi-necessarily-an-integer¹, which presents a situation where a 6.5 komi gives a more satisfactory result than either 6 or 7 under Japanese rules. But this relies on the possibility of a 'no result' from triple ko that cannot arise under BGA rules.²)

In knockout or best-of-three matches, it is certainly convenient to have a guaranteed winner, and keeping the 7.5 komi for those games may be reasonable. (However, chess tournaments at all levels do accommodate draws, which are far more common than in Go.)

The EGF rating system can handle jigo perfectly well, so why not allow it in even games? At least in McMahon-style tournaments, this seems worth trying.

Alec Edgington

alec.m.edgington@gmail.com

Figurine

Thanks to being friends with the staff at my local Oxfam shop and Oxfam bookshop, which are adjacent, I have got into the habit of visiting Oxfam wherever I travel, collecting OS maps and novels along the way.

Sometimes the shops have oriental items and I was delighted, on visiting Finchley, to find this figurine of Chinese game players. It looks like they are playing Go, though if you look closely, the board has a river, so maybe it is supposed to be Chinese Chess.



Go or Chinese Chess?

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

¹An interesting read – Ed.

²See www.britgo.org/files/rules/rulesofplay.pdf.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Colin Williams

30th June 2025

president@britgo.org



I have just returned from playing at Barmouth in the Welsh Open this year, where, despite the heatwave hitting the rest of the country, any player going out for a walk had to put their rain gear on! The weather didn't detract from the success of the event though, with well over 40 attending.

The next event is the European Congress in Warsaw, where we are looking to have another good UK turnout. At the moment, 42 from the UK have registered, with some taking up the volunteering options available. We will make sure we learn what lessons we can in preparation for possibly hosting it ourselves in the future.

2025 AGM

Our annual AGM was held online in May, and I would like to thank all those who attended. The papers and minutes are available in the usual place www.britgo.org/history/accounts. If you have not seen them yet, I would especially recommend two very good statistical analyses of UK tournaments from Matt Marsh and Sam Bithell; the links to them are on that page.

New Director

I am pleased to welcome Damen (Ho Yeung Woo) to the Board as a co-opted Director. He will take on responsibility for player development from Sam Bithell, with whom he has already been working on this topic. For those who do not know Damen, he is our only competitor in the 2025 European Championship and is currently 6 dan.

EGF Championships

Due to a mistake by the EGF, the previously confirmed allocation of the 2026 European Pair Go Championship to the London Go Centre was reopened, with Slovakia expressing interest in hosting it. Rather than force a vote at the EGF AGM, the LGC has graciously stood aside in favour of Slovakia.

On the plus side, it has been confirmed that Durham will host the European Student Championship in October.

 	European Student Go Championship 2025 11-12th October – Durham, England Welcome, students, to the historic city of Durham for a fun weekend including a 5 round tournament (and the chance to qualify for the World Students Go OZA Championship in Tokyo), plus a host of tours and other social events https://durhamgo.club/esgc2025/
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EGF Elections

At the time of writing, we do not know who the next EGF President will be. If you want to know more, do have a look at the EGF Discord channel where the various manifestos have been published.

We do expect that, as the only candidate, the new EGF Secretary will be Eren Kurter from Turkey, and that the Appeals Committee will have its quota of five members, one of whom will be Toby Manning. We wish them all well.

New Tournament – Manchester

Interest in local tournaments seems to be continuing to grow, with the latest new event being in Manchester on August 9th. Assuming this Journal reaches you before then, please do support it if you can.

Korea Winter Baduk Camp

The BGA has been contacted by the Korean Baduk Federation with a request that we give our members information about the Korea Winter Baduk Camp 2025. The programme includes advanced lectures, simultaneous games, a league tournament and other fun activities. Lee Chang-Ho and other Korean professionals will attend. Participants taking up the premium option will have the opportunity to play against the professionals, participate in a regional tour and be awarded a Dan or Kyu certification card by the KBF.

It will be held in the city of Incheon from December 13th to December 21st.

Further information, including the schedule, is below. Entries must be received by 26th October. Please contact me if you would like a copy of the registration form.

Korea Winter Baduk Camp 2025 (ver 1.1)

1. **Host & Organizer:** Korea Baduk Federation (=KBF)
2. **Period:** December 13 (Sat.) ~ December 21 (Sun.) *9 *days*
3. **Venue:** Hotel (4 stars) <TBA>, **Incheon**, Republic of Korea
4. **Participation fee** *25% *discount for U15*
 - 400,000 KRW for adults
 - 300,000 KRW for U15 (born in 2010 or later) and his/her guardian
 - ※Free for one team leader to guide more than 10 participants
 - ※Capacity of participants: 80 persons (first come, first served)

 - ※Premium option: **Additional 200,000 KRW**
 - Benefit 1: Special simultaneous games against Korean legendary pros
 - Benefit 2: Free official Dan&Kyu Certification and card awarded by KBF
 - Benefit 3: Regional tour program package on the off-day
5. **Registration**
 - Submit registration form and your photo to email: kaba@kbaduk.or.kr
 - After confirmation, you will be contacted by KBF to ask participation fee payment by online.
 - **Deadline: by October 26 (Sun), 2025** (Korean Standard Time)
6. **How to pay the participation fee**
 - *You should pay the fee since KBF confirms your registration.

 - Way 1) International transfer to bank account
 - The name of remitter should be same as the participant.

 - Way 2) Cash on-site
 - Available only if Go Association or organization of your country which should be related to KBF 'guarantees' you
 - In case of no-show, the responsibility will be asked to the organization.

7. Main contents

- 1) Lectures and daily simultaneous games by Korean professionals and teachers
- 2) Friendly matches against Korean national players (award included)
- 3) League tournament among program participants (award included)

8. Miscellaneous

- 1) Interpreters will be on-site for providing English service.
- 2) A welcoming gift will be given to participants at the venue.
- 3) Night tour on boat may be cancelled following the weather condition.
- 4) The opportunity to have simultaneous games against Korean legendary professionals would be preferred for the participants with premium options.

※Staying fee is responsible for participants themselves.

9. Organizing Committee Office

◇Host & Organization: Korea Baduk Federation (KBF)

◇Organizer: Mr. Geon-hoe KIM (=Arnold KIM)

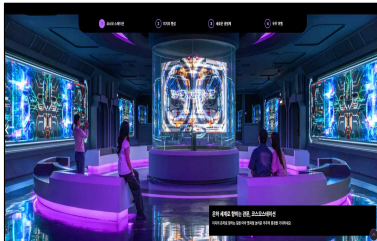
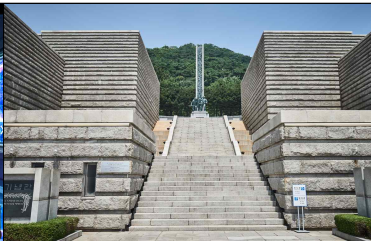
◇Tel.: 82-2-2282-5500

◇Fax : 82-2-2282-5614

◇E-mail : kaba@kbaduk.or.kr

◇Location: Main building 3F(Room 302), Olympic Sports Complex, 424 Olympic-ro, Songpa-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea

10. Regional tour program introduction (premium option)

	
(1) Media Art Exhibition [Le Space INSPIRE]	(2) Historical tour [Memorial Hall & City Museum]
	
(3) Aqua-Leisure [Water taxis on river]	(4) Night tour on river [Moon Boat with night-view photo]

※Services for the tour program

- **Provided** services

- (1) Transfer by a private bus for program participants only
- (2) English interpreters
- (3) Ticket for media art exhibition (=Le Space INSPIRE)
- (4) Tickets for Aqua-Leisure & Night tour (=Water taxis & Moon Boat)
- (5) Photograph files taken by staffs during the tour program

- **Non-provided** services (responsible for oneself)

- (1) Meals (lunch, dinner)
- (2) Private supplies (cf: blanket for night-tour to block cold)

11. Introduction_Korean Professional Players & teachers

	[Korean Legendary Professional Player] Name: Chang-ho LEE (9P) Date: Dec. 13 (Sat.) Language: Korean Introduction: There will be no need to explain the unforgettable legend of legends in Baduk history. He will welcome you on the opening ceremony and provide special simultaneous games!
---	--

	[Korean Legendary Professional Player] Name: Hye-yeon CHO (9P) Date: Dec. 13(Sat.), Dec. 15(Mon.), Dec. 16(Tue.) Language: Korean, English Introduction: Korean female representative for Asian Games Guangzhou 2010 with a gold medal! She, the teacher of PBA, will provide you with special simultaneous games and lectures.
---	--

	[Korean Legendary Professional Player] Name: Jin-seok MOK (9P) Date: Dec. 20 (Sat.) Language: Korean, English, Chinese, Japanese Introduction: The head coach of Korean team of Asian Games Hangzhou 2022. He will award you on the award ceremony and provide special simultaneous games!
--	---

***The members above are confirmed to be invited now. (June 24)**
More professionals will be invited afterwards.

BRITISH GO CHAMPIONSHIP 2025

Damen Woo

lpyhyw@nottingham.ac.uk

This year's British Championship match was contested by reigning champion Yaoling Yang 7d and Lucretiu Calota 4d, who was playing in his first title match. The match format was, as in recent years, 'best-of-three games', however Lucretiu was unable to arrive in time for the second game (see the report in UK News) and he had lost the first game, so Yaoling retained his title after playing just the game reviewed below.

Damen Woo, champion in 2023, provided a live-stream commentary and the video of this is at youtube.com/@BritishGoAssociation. The sgf of the game is at britgo.org/files/bchamp/2025/game_one_2025.sgf.

Yaoling is recognised as one of the top Go players in Europe, having consistently demonstrated his exceptional skill in major competitions. Lucretiu, on the other hand, emerged as a dark horse in the British Go scene, defeating several strong opponents in the Candidates' Tournament to earn his place in the British Championship Final.

Black: Lucretiu Calota 4d

White: Yaoling Yang 7d

Time controls: Fischer, 1hr 40 mins + 45 secs/move.

Date: 31st May.

Venue: London Go Centre.

Result: White won by 12.5 points.

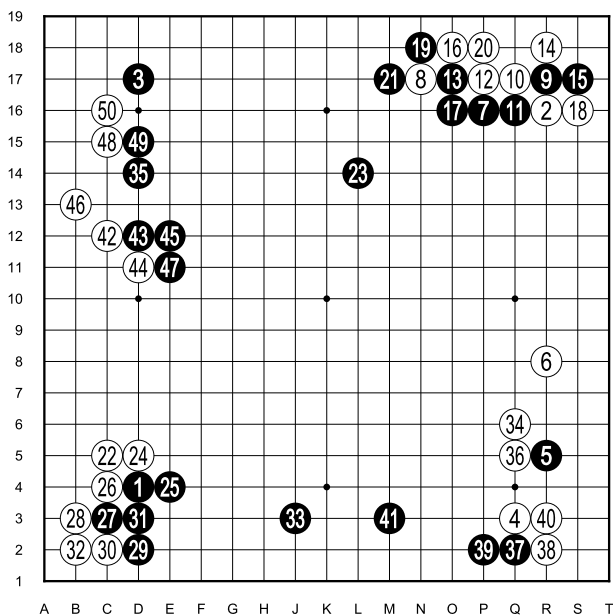


Figure 1: 1-50

⑥: Yaoling loves playing a two-space pincer when his komoku is approached. Every top European player knows that he will 100% play this. So I guess Lucretiu did some study on how to deal with a two-space pincer.

②② is definitely a prepared move — a subtle ladder breaker. Typically, moves like D5 or E4, which are more direct attached ladder breakers, are more common. However, ②② aims to lure Black into investing a move in the bottom-left corner. Lucretiu did not fall into the trap and correctly solved the ladder.

㉓, however, is an inaccuracy.

Capturing at N16 would have been a better choice, as it would make both points **A** and **B** sente in the future (See Diagram 1).

㉓ is very precise, earning eye shapes for black. ㉓ is a nice move; it settled the bottom left group and at the same time aimed to escape ㉓.

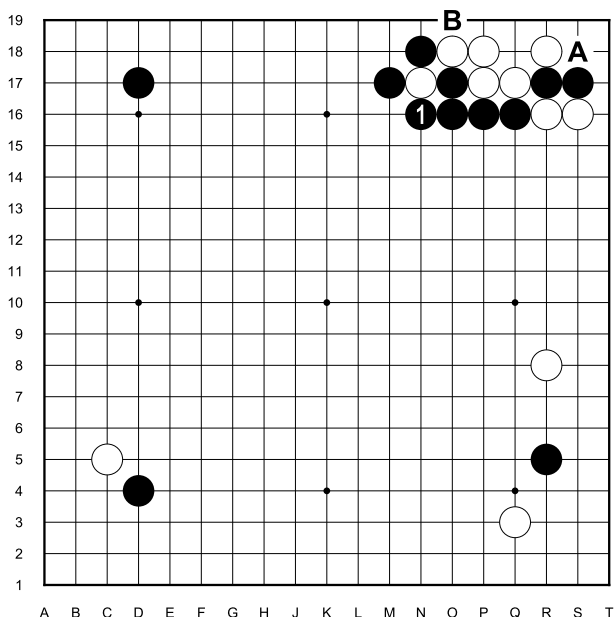


Diagram 1: variation for ㉓

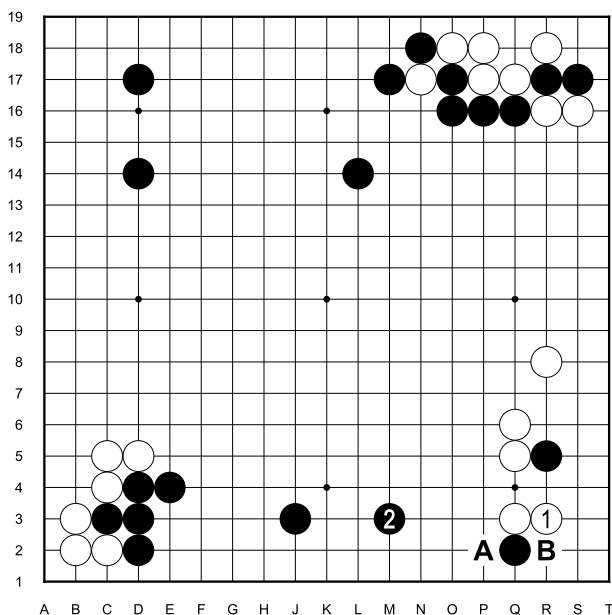


Diagram 2: variation for ㉓

㉓ is a very good asking move. It asked if White would like the corner points or influence, before Black played a two-space extension on M3. This asking move also triggers Yaoling's inaccuracy. ㉓ is careless. R3 is a better choice.

White should have pulled back; see Diagram 2. In the actual game, White played R2, which made **A** a sente move. If White had pulled back instead, Black would probably still play ㉓. In that case, we can see that the exchange Black **A**, White **B** is not optimal for White. If White plays the pullback at R3, they can tenuki if Black plays **A**.

Up to ⑤0, the game remains evenly balanced. Personally, I prefer Black's position — Black has strong influence, while White's territory is more or less fixed.

After ⑤5, the mid-game begins, where close combat is expected to occur.

⑤6 is a deep move, creating a miai between points A and B (see Diagram 3 below). Although it may appear slow at first glance, it puts Black in a difficult position, making it hard to take care of both the top moyo and the bottom territories.

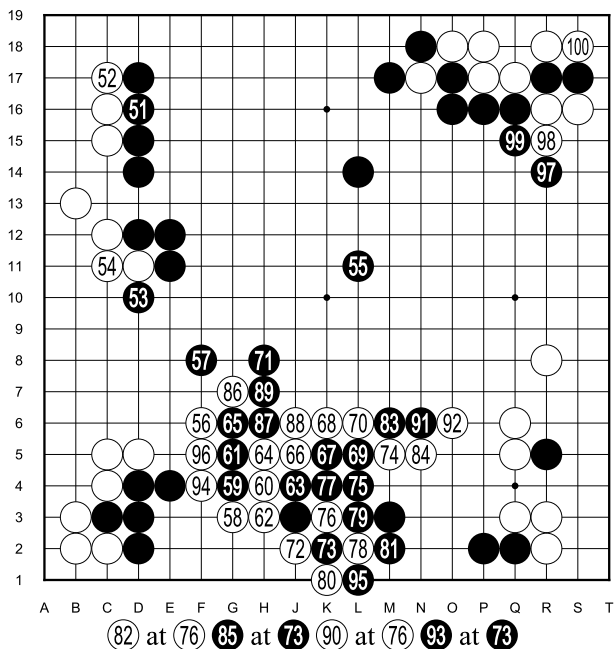


Figure 2: 51-100

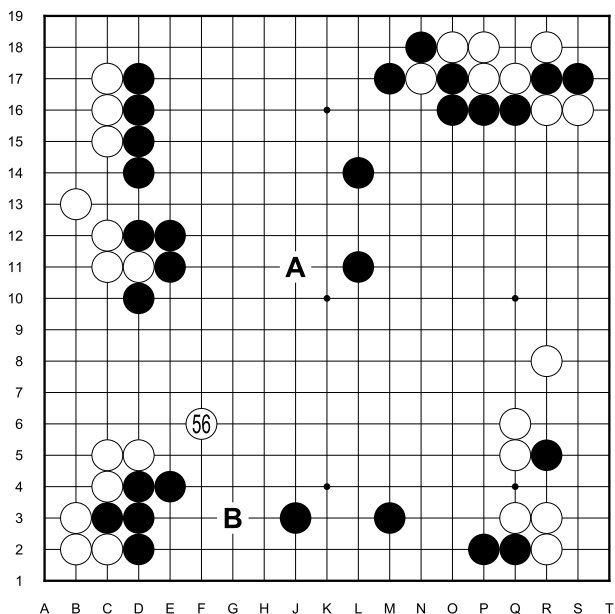


Diagram 3: position after ⑤6

Black decided to protect the top moyo with ⑤⑦, which also prevents the cut at E10 — a solid and reasonable choice.

The invasion at ⑤⑧ marks a turning point in the game.

⑥① is a wise choice — it allows White to escape while maintaining Black's attacking position. Only through continuous attack can the top moyo be converted into solid territory; see Diagram 4.

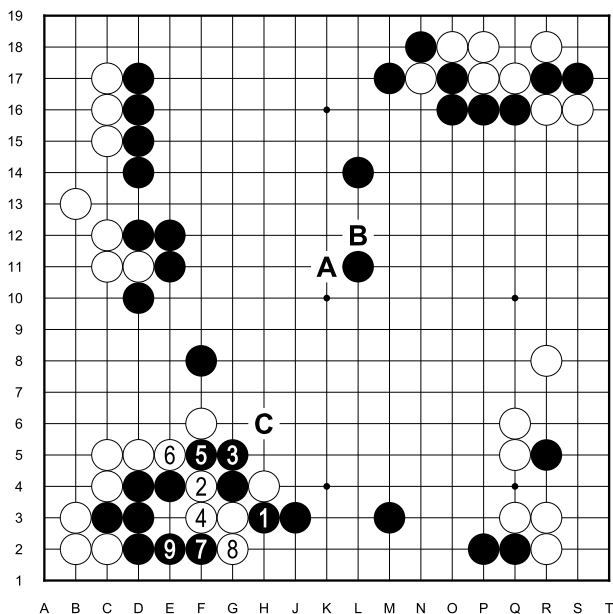
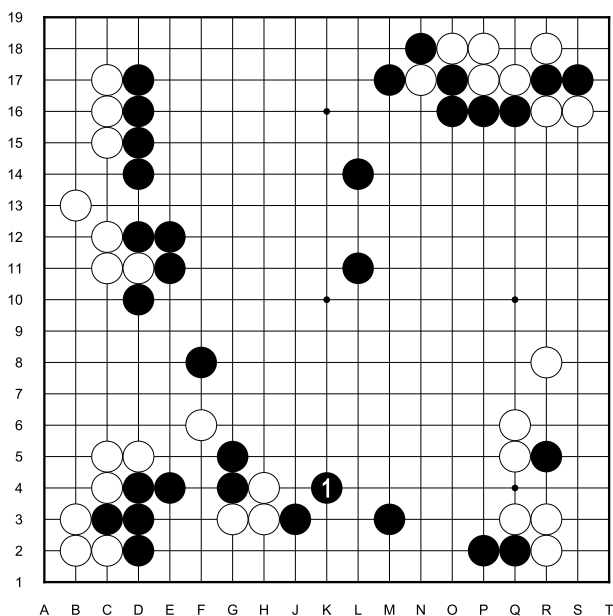
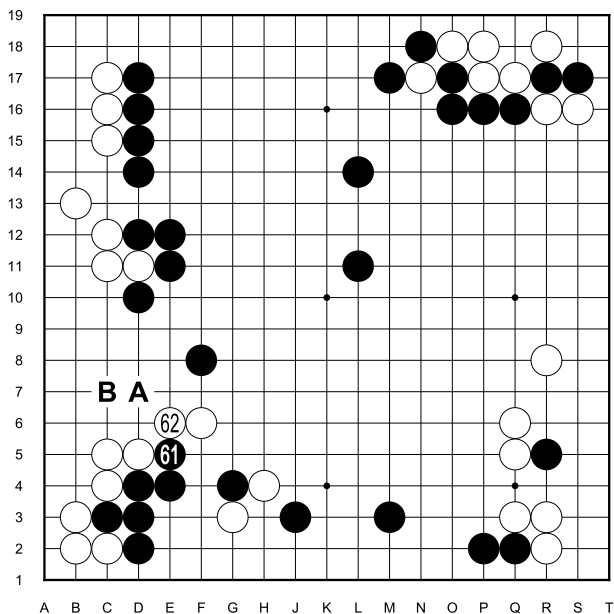


Diagram 4: variation for ⑥①

For many players, instead of playing ⑥①, the cut at H3 is often the first move that comes to mind. Yes, it successfully captures the four stones at F4. However, A and B become somewhat sente, as Black needs to address the ladder around H5.

Furthermore, for a simpler approach, White can play at C to squeeze Black and then comfortably invade the top at J11. So, while H3 is effective in securing the bottom territories, it fails to preserve the top moyo — something Black has heavily invested in throughout this game. I must say, Calota's decision was exceptionally well-judged, a clear sign of his advanced understanding of Go.

The push allows Black to peep at **A** and **B** in the future, potentially earning some points. We'll see later why this push turns out to be so important ...



I didn't understand why Calota played ⑦① when I was streaming the game – it's the losing move – but during offline review, I discovered the reason.

See Diagram 7– if Black plays ①, which feels like a very natural move, ② becomes extremely painful — and this highlights why Black should have pushed earlier. Black is in a very difficult position.

If Black plays A to connect, B becomes sente, giving White a solid eye at the bottom. On the other hand, if Black defends the cut by playing B, the future hane at C becomes very severe.

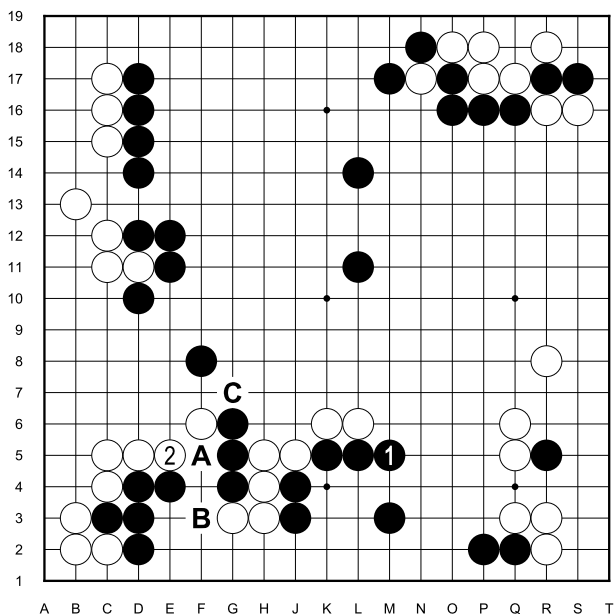


Diagram 7: variation for ⑦①

⑦②, ⑦④, ⑦⑥, and ⑦⑧ are a good combination that Yaoling was never going to miss. After these exchanges, Black's bottom group is in danger. The game is more or less decided at this point — Black, who was the attacker when White invaded at ⑤⑧, now finds himself in a struggle to avoid being captured.

At ⑨⑥, White exchanged the ko for some valuable points at the bottom — and the game basically ended here. Back at ⑤⑦, Black had around 10 to 15 points in the bottom area. Now, White holds more points than Black in that region, which represents a significant loss for Black.

At this level, turning the tables after such a setback is nearly impossible.

Although Calota managed to play a few moves before the end, the result was determined after ⑨⑥.

The remaining moves are shown in the three figures below.

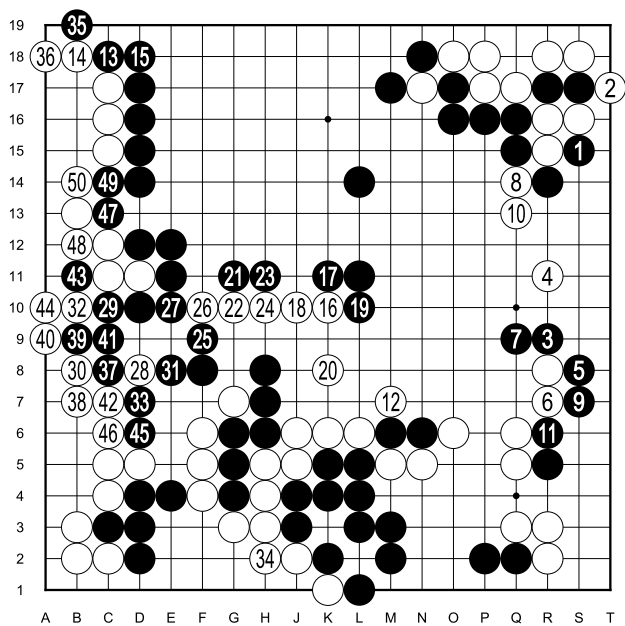


Figure 3: 101-150

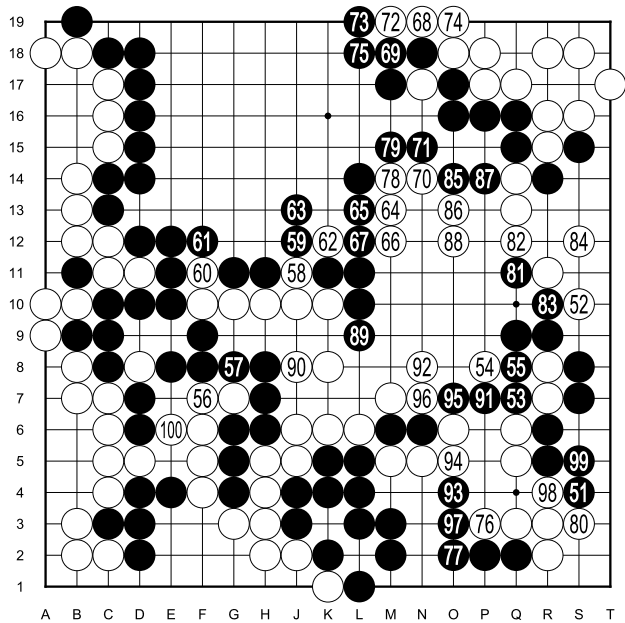


Figure 4: 151-200

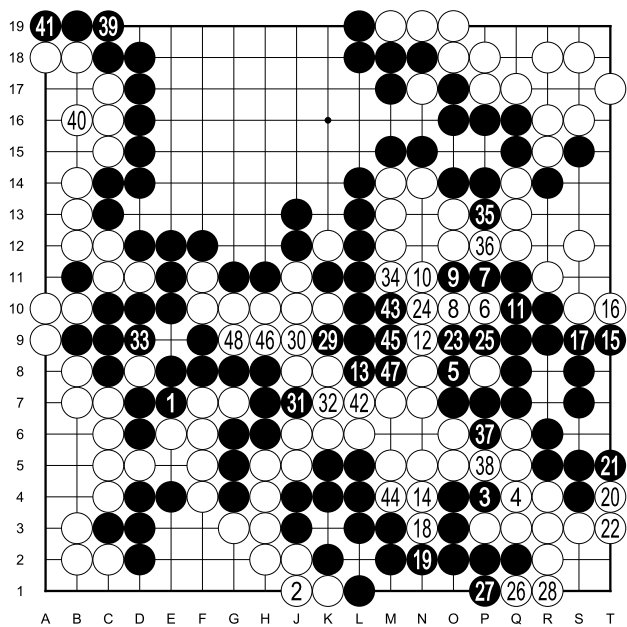
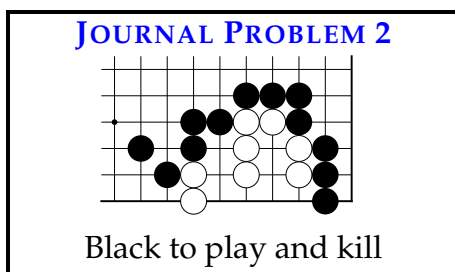


Figure 5: 201-248

□



ERRATUM IN **BGJ 211**

On page 5, we incorrectly stated that Manja Manz (candidate for the EGF Presidency) learned to play Go when she was based in Glasgow. Donald McLeod points out that, actually, it was while she was based in Edinburgh.

Donald recalls "...there was a 5 dan professor from Japan visiting for a year (name escapes me) and he was at the Edinburgh club most weeks, playing many teaching games."

THE BGA ANALYSIS SERVICE

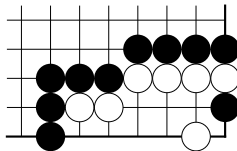
analyst@britgo.org

One of the benefits of being a BGA member is that you can have your games analysed by a stronger player. If you would like to take advantage of this, please send me the game record as an SGF file. (If you don't know how to do that, don't worry. Just get in touch and we can sort out the practicalities.)

For more details, please see
britgo.org/positions/gamereviewservice.

Tim Hunt

JOURNAL PROBLEM 3



Black to play and kill

WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

Paris

The 52nd Paris International Tournament was held again at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris's Latin Quarter; 182 participants from 20k to 8d competed over the Easter weekend as usual. Three UK players ended in the top rankings. Winner by tie-break was Chi-min Oh (8d) and sixth and seventh were Yuhang Xing and Yaoling Yang. Other players doing well were Ukrainian Valerii Krushelnyskyi in second and Iceland's Yixin Yuan in third. French players Benjamin Dréan-Guénaïzia and Junfu Dai took fourth and fifth.

Prague

The 53rd Prague took place over the first weekend in May and was named the Old Hunter's Cup. It also had 182 players. The winner was Lukas Podpera, ahead of Andrii Kravets and Dohyup Kim. The UK's Yuhang Xing took sixth and Marek Labos (5k) won three games out of six.

WAGC Vancouver

The 45th World Amateur Go Championship was held between 18th and 21st May. This year, Vancouver was the venue, giving Canada the honour of being the first to hold it outside of Asia (the previous Russia-held one was in the Far East). Of the 52 players, the UK's Alistair Wall did well, ending 29th with four wins out of eight, beating players from Denmark, Guatemala, Brazil and Sweden, but losing to France, Romania, Lithuania and Austria.¹



Henry Williams, representing Ireland at the WAGC

As none of their top players could attend, Ireland sent Henry Williams (18k), who showed fighting spirit and ended up propping up the results list. The overall winner was Tianfang Ma from China, on tie-break from the players from Japan (Minoru Ozeki) and Korea (Sawoo Kim). The top European was Lukáš Podpěra from Czechia in sixth.

Pairs

The European Pair Go Championship took place from 5th to 7th June. The venue was the beautiful city of Bistrita in Romania. Top of the nine pairs were Lova Wåhlin and Charlie Åkerblom from Sweden, winning after narrowly failing in previous years. The Germans Manja Marz and Johannes Obenaus took second place and third place went to Romania's Laura Avram and Denis Dobranis.

Photo credits: Gurujeet Khalsa and the American Go Association

¹ Alistair's report on his trip is on page 20 of this edition.

WORLD AMATEUR GO CHAMPIONSHIP

2025

Alistair Wall

alistair.j.wall@gmail.com

After 30 years of coming last in the British Championship, I accumulated enough points to represent the UK in WAGC 2025 in Richmond BC (a suburb of Vancouver) on May 16th-23rd.

I had a sleepless night when Canada Airways' web check-in could not find my eTA (electronic visa), but in person at the airport, everything worked smoothly.

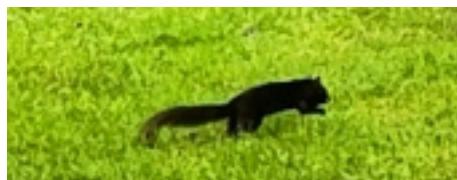
The welcome day started with a pair Go tournament where competitors were paired with local players. The organisation was a bit chaotic; I was standing in the wrong place and did not get paired.

I took the opportunity to go for a walk. Vancouver is not designed for walking – everything is organised to be accessed by car. If you start to cross a main road when the light shows 'walk', the dreaded red hand will appear when you are only halfway across (although it appears that this does not mean 'don't cross').

In the evening, the opening ceremony started with speeches from officials and our sponsors, followed by entertainments and a banquet.



Before breakfast on Day 1, I went for a walk in Minoru Park (named after a racehorse) near the hotel. Richmond has a thriving population of feral rabbits and black squirrels, which I had previously seen after a British Go Congress in Hitchin.



In the first round, I played Mikkel Mathiesen (2d, Norway). After a balanced opening, Mikkel took the lead in the middle game, but resigned when I rescued a dead group.

In the second round, I lost quickly to French Champion Benjamin Dréan-Guénaïzia, in a game not worth recording.

On Day 2, I had two more mismatches against Ioan-Elia Grigoriu (6d, Romania) and Mario Roberto Gómez Flores (5k, Guatemala).

On Day 3, in round 5, I lost to Andrius Petrauskas (4d, Lithuania). This game was recorded by a tournament volunteer, so it is the only one for which I have a complete and accurate record. I will give a commentary in a separate article.

In the afternoon, I narrowly beat Helcio Alexandre Pacheco (3d, Brazil) despite falling for a 70-point rip at the end of the game. In the early stages of the game, Helcio played very flexibly, to the extent that I could not reconstruct the game afterwards.

On Day 4, I started by losing to David He (5d, Australia). I did not attack strongly enough, and ended up 15 points behind.

In the final round, I beat Marc Stoehr (2d, Sweden). After I took the lead in the opening, I just played cautiously and won by about 30 points.

I ended the tournament on 4/8, slightly better than expected. I was very lucky to beat Helcio.

The tournament ended with three players on 7/8. Tianfang Ma (8d, China) won the tie-break by one point of SOS. Ozeki Minoru (7d, Japan) and SaWoo Kim (5d, Korea) had equal SOS, and were split by SOSOS.

On Day 5, we had a coach tour of Vancouver.

The first stop was the Steam Clock in Gas Town (named after a bar owner). This is an upright weight-driven clock, with alarms powered by steam from the district heating system. It is apparently very important.



Next stop was Granville Island, opposite Vancouver Island. This is mostly a former industrial area which is being adapted to a tourist/leisure area – some factories are still active. Then we went to Stanley Park. The British expelled the Squamish inhabitants from this area to make way for an army camp, and later the park. We saw an exhibition of totem poles. The Squamish did not traditionally make totem poles, rather carving the posts of their homes. The former custom was imported from the Haida and Tlingit after the British left.



Then we visited the trail head at Lynn Canyon. The trail leads to mountains north of Vancouver, and starts with a suspension bridge over a gorge leading to a spruce forest. Unfortunately, my phone battery was flat so I have no pictures.

On the Friday, my flight left at 8pm, so I left my luggage at the hotel and took the Sky Train to the city centre. Thanks to a wave of development in the 1980s, it turned out to be about as touristy as Canary Wharf, so I returned to Richmond and walked to a nature reserve. This had a Bog and Farmland Preservation Area: Richmond is about 1 metre below sea level.

Then I revisited Minoru Park before collecting my luggage and returning home.

□

UK NEWS

Tony Atkins

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Full UK tournament results are available at britgo.org/results/12months.

British Open

The British Go Congress returned to Edinburgh after 15 years, this time hosted at the New Melville Bridge Club from 11th to 13th April. With leafy Corstorphine and Edinburgh Zoo as a backdrop, the venue offered a quiet and spacious setting for a long weekend of Go. Including some very strong players, fifty-seven players took part, the same number as in 2024.

As usual, the Congress kicked off on the Friday night with the British Lightning Championship. Twenty-six players were split into six round-robin groups, followed by a knockout section. Congratulations went to Dohyup Kim (8d Seoul), who emerged as champion after a close final. Runner-up was Yaoling Yang (7d Bristol) and third was Haoran Peng (1d Lancaster).



British Go Championships 2025

The tough competition continued throughout the weekend with the British Open bar set at 5d. Winning five games, Quan Wan (7d Manchester) claimed the title of British Open Champion, narrowly beating Yaoling Yang (7d Bristol) on tie-break.

A special mention went to Chenhe Yuan (5d), the reigning British Youth Open Champion, for an impressive victory over Dohyup Kim in the final round to claim fourth place and leave Dohyup in third place. The top seven players split a cash prize pool of around £500.

Also finishing with five wins were Daniele Gentili (5k), John Armitage (9k Lancaster) and William Lindved (11k Edinburgh), each of whom were rewarded with a giant Easter egg for their efforts. Six remaining Easter eggs were raffled off to six more lucky players.

Finally, for the third year running, Peikai Xue was awarded the trophy in the Terry Stacey Grand Prix for achieving the most above-bar wins across the year.

Candidates'

The early May Bank Holiday from 3rd to 5th May saw 20 players gather in the Leicester County Bridge Club for the Candidates' Tournament, the highest turnout in a decade. Some of the top boards were live streamed on the BGA YouTube Channel and Michael Cheung kindly reviewed two Monday games on OGS.

Congratulations went to Yaoling Yang (7d Bristol) who swept first place, winning all six games, and to Lucretiu Calota (4d St Albans) who took second place, losing only to Yaoling Yang. The two would go on to play a best-of-three match to determine the 2025 British Go Champion.

Just missing out were the group on four wins: Bruno Poltronieri, Peikai Xue, Zhan Shi, Jake Game and British Youth Champion Ryan Zhang. Another junior, London Youth Champion Kwun Yin Ng, was eighth.

Aspirants

Alongside the Candidates' Tournament, 23 non-qualifying players played in the inaugural Aspirants' Tournament, similar to previous Not the Candidates' events. With long games and the stronger players alongside, it was easy to get detailed game commentaries. In the end, Conor Hunt (4k Brighton) claimed the tightly contested title of first Aspirants Champion with five wins out of six. Tim James (3k Nottingham) placed second and Florian Pein (3k Lancaster) was third, just ahead of Daniel Guest (3k Cambridge). The top three were awarded cash prizes, along with Leandro Soriano Marcolino (8k Lancaster), the only other player to achieve five wins. Finally, small Go-related prizes were awarded to George Austin-Sydes (5k Nottingham) for being top player below the bar, and to Joshua Sing Ching Fai (21k) for most Double Digit Kyu wins.

Not the London Open

This event was started to relieve pressure on numbers on the regular London Open and provide a second long weekend of high-level Go at the London Go Centre. This year's edition from 24th to 26th May attracted just 32 players, nearly half the previous total. Two top players tied for first with five wins out of six: Michael Cheung (5d) and Yaoling Yang (7d Bristol). Third from America was Wanqi Zhu (4d). As usual, prizes were

awarded in various categories, but noteworthy results were five wins for John Hill (4k Brighton) and Thien Udomsrirungruang (17k), and on four wins Brook Roberts (2k London City) and Haoran Peng (1d Lancaster). Peikai Xue (4d UCL) won the Lightning side event.



Ed Blockley and Florian Pein at Not the London Open

Championship

The British Go Championship match started on Saturday 31st May at the London Go Centre with the usual streaming and YouTube uploads. Yaoling Yang won the first game by 12.5 points. However, for the second game Lucretiu Calota had car trouble and was sadly unable to arrive in time to avoid losing the game by default, hence Yaoling Yang retained the Champion's title for a second year.

Durham

The 2025 edition was held on 6th and 7th June at the usual venue of Elvet Hill House. The 40 players ranged from 7d down to 30k, included several students and youngsters, and came from as far as Edinburgh, Cardiff and London.

A larger side room than normal was available to review games or relax between rounds, with the top board live-streamed therein and on YouTube. Also, new technology allowed live display of results as they came in.



Durham 2025

On the Saturday evening most of the players, together with several non-players, joined the all-you-can-eat barbecue. Unfortunately, traditional barbecue rain forced this to mostly take place under gazebos, but without ruining the eating, playing and socialising. Uniquely this year, a tea ceremony, run by the Durham University Chinese Tea Art Society, was held alongside, providing various types of tea to compare and enjoy.

After another three rounds on a Sunday of mixed weather, the tournament was won by Quan Wan (7d Manchester), taking home the traditional Durham Goat Ornament. Runner-up on five wins was Peikai Xue (5d UCL). Prizes were also given for winning all six to Alex Millington (5k Durham) and Joshua Sing Ching Fai (21k). The Lightning side event was won jointly by Joshua Sing Ching Fai and Rowan Litting (12k Durham); the Small Board side event was won by Caleb Tin Nan Fai (19k).

Welsh Open

The Dragon Theatre in Barmouth was again the venue for the Welsh Open. The weekend of 28th and 29th June was rather drizzly, but this didn't spoil the event and the scenery for the 43 players. This number was a large increase over 2024, helped by a big contingent from Cardiff, and a side room was able to be used for reviews, thanks to this.



**Helen Timmins and Martin Harvey
with winner, Chenye Yuan (5d)**

After a tie-break at the top, the Brian Timmins Plaque was presented to the winner, Chenhe Yuan (5d) by Kathleen Timmins' daughter, Helen. Also receiving monetary prizes were second-placed Jake Game (4d Swindon), third-placed Mingda Li (5d Cardiff), youngster from Leeds Joshua Sing Ching Fai (14k) with five out of six and Cat Maciver (18k) with four out of five.

Pair Go

The British Pair Go Championship moved to Nottingham on 14th June, held at Lady Bay Church like the Nottingham Tournament. The tournament was sponsored by Threedy Printers Limited, meaning the usual selection of bottles and chocolates, but a plastic puzzle for everybody. The top group had just three pairs and a solo ghost (Martin Harvey), with the other 12 pairs playing handicap games. New champions were Ai Guan and Damen Woo; Alison and Simon Bexfield took second place and Lauren Hindmarch

and Bjorn Eurenus took third. In the handicap group, which featured many youngsters from Cheadle Hulme School and several local Nottingham players, three pairs won all three games. The handicap title went to Helen Harvey and Soorena Zarafshani, with Olivia Jenison and Claude Robinson, and Renee Wong and Ryan Wong sharing second place. Brielle Wong won the traditional pair quiz, this time on motorway services, and the best-dressed pairs were the junior siblings Amelia and Leonhard Chapman, and adults Lauren and Bjorn.



British Pair Go Championship 2025

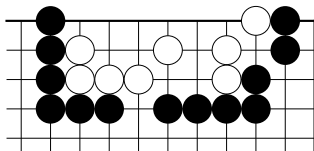
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FASCINATING TSUMEGO: PART THREE

Richard Hunter

The Japanese magazine supplement (*furoku*) has six answer diagrams for this problem, but I have added some more. The *furoku* title means "Reading actual fighting shapes tsumego" and the problem grade is hard (有段 dan level), so don't spend too long struggling; just look at the answers.

Problem



Black to play

Answers

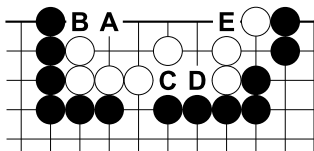


Diagram 1 – my first candidates

The *furoku* answers have four diagrams for the correct line and variations followed by two for incorrect first moves (failures). I considered several candidates for the first move (**A-E** here), considered White's response to each, and read out the lines. They all seemed to fail. Eventually, I put the problem on a board and tried those first moves again and also others. After a lot of effort, I finally found a move that did seem to work. Amazing. It made me think of the famous Sherlock Holmes

quote "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

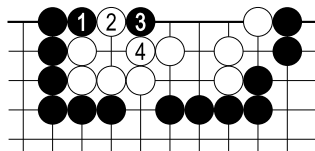


Diagram 2 – failure

Simply pushing in from the outside with ❶ (B in Diagram 1) is the first failure line in the *furoku*. Connecting the white stone in atari instead of playing ❷ would let Black kill unconditionally. So White chooses ❸, which gives her a ko for life. However, that is not the best result that Black can achieve. The first sentence on the problem presentation page says in Japanese that ko is a failure. That led me to spend time trying to find a way to kill unconditionally.

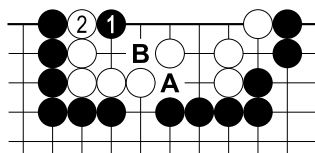


Diagram 3a – failure

The first move that I considered was ①. White can block with ②. Then if Black **A** were to force White to respond on the right, he could cut diagonally at **B**, which is a commonly seen technique. However, that is not the case here.

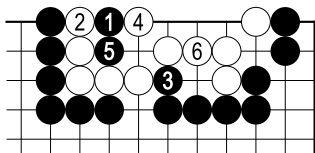


Diagram 3b – failure continuation

White can simply play ④ and make two eyes. If Black plays ⑤, White lives with ⑥. Playing ⑤ at 6 lets White partially live on the left with 6 at 5. Playing 5 anywhere else fails to kill too.

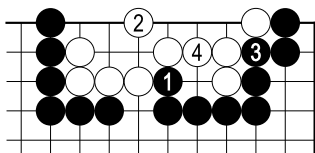


Diagram 4a – failure

Starting with ① here is the other *furoku* failure line. It looks like a vital point, but White lives with ②. The *furoku* continues with ③ and ④.

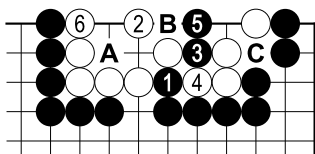


Diagram 4b – failure variation

Playing ③ here is not mentioned. It looks better (more profitable) to me. After ⑤, White can partially live with ⑥. If Black responds with A, White can safely play at B and live with all her stones. Instead, ⑦ at C would capture four white stones, but White would live with A.

Instead of ⑥, playing atari with B would be suicidal. Black could atari from the left and connect out, reducing White to one eye.

Playing ② one point to the left is not mentioned either, but it seems to me that White can partially live in a similar manner.

① is not best, so all its continuations are less important. However, reading how to refute your opponent's mistakes is useful in practice.

After trying various lines (starting with A-E in Diagram 1), I put the position on a Go board and finally found a move that seemed to work. I was surprised that it did.

I eventually convinced myself that I had found the correct answer and checked the *furoku* answer. Yup. So what is the correct first move?

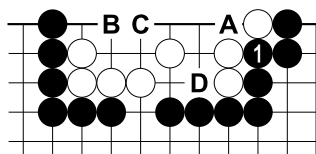


Diagram 5a – correct

①, playing atari from the outside, is the correct first move. This might seem an obvious choice to some people, but stronger players tend to get preoccupied thinking about clever moves.

I spent ages trying to find a vital point or tesuji. Once ① is on the board, it becomes easier to see that White has no successful response (e.g. A-D).

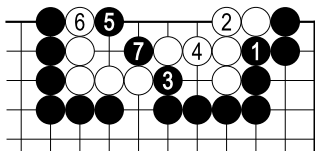


Diagram 5b – correct continuation

If White plays ②, ③ is good. This was the move I looked at in Diagram 4, but it failed there. Move order is so important. ③ threatens to play next at 4, which would reduce White to one eye. After ④, ⑤ and ⑦ work. However, starting with ① at 5 fails, as shown in Diagram 3.

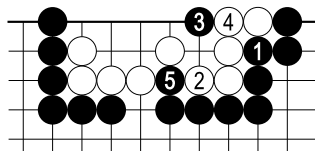


Diagram 5d – correct variation

② here fails. ③ works in conjunction with ① and threatens to reduce the eye space by capturing at 4. But connecting at 4 fails. ⑤ creates an *oiotoshi* (connect and die). White dies.

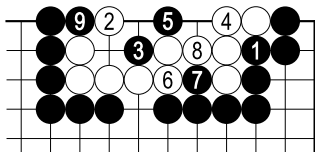


Diagram 5c – correct variation

② is refuted by ③. ⑤ is essential, but it might be hard to spot. Playing ⑤ at 6 would let White live by connecting at 8. ⑨, in combination with ③ and ⑤, prevents White from cutting on the first line, so Black can create a killing shape that reduces White to one eye. Playing ④ at 8 lets Black capture the stone in atari and reduce the eye space. Playing ⑥ at 8 is answered by ⑦ at 9.

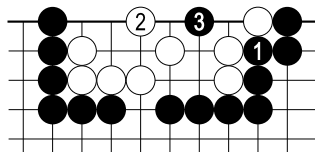
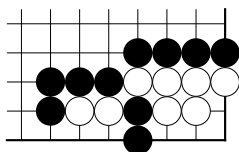


Diagram 5e – correct variation

② here (played as ② in Diagrams 4a and 4b in response to a different ①) is not mentioned in the *furoku*. However, after this ①, ② is easily refuted by ③. White cannot make two eyes.

□

JOURNAL PROBLEM 4



Black to play and kill

YOUTH NEWS

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Pandanet

The UK Youth Team played Croatia in the final round of the Pandanet Youth Go European Team Championship 2025 on 23rd April. Whichever team won would finish third of the six teams in League A. Lukasz Kudla on board 5 was the first to finish, giving the UK an expected win. Yanyi Xiong on board 2 lost to an opponent who was eight grades stronger. Top-board Ryan Zhang had a tough opponent (4d) and lost a fight to also lose by resignation.

On board 3, Andrew Volovich was facing a five-grade stronger opponent, but played really well to take a good position and looked like winning on territory. However, in time pressure, he made a couple of unforced errors, which gave his opponent the game.

Lea Wong's game on board 4 was evenly matched and long. Lea played well to take the win by 10.5 points. So Croatia took third place behind Ukraine and Romania. An added twist to the final round was that France unexpectedly lost to Germany by defaulting on board 1. This meant Germany pushed the UK into fifth place.

Competition

Having ended top of the league stage of the European Youth Team Competition, the UK had to play Romania again in the new knockout stage. In the league stage the UK had won 3-2, but the result could have easily been reversed when the rematch was played on 3rd May, after Romania delayed a week.

Ranks suggested that Daniel Yang, Sung Hee Lim and Blake Shamoon would win, which they did, with Daniel only winning by 3.5 points. Ryan Zhang was able to defeat his opponent (4d). However Alvina Kwok, playing the following morning, was the only loss as she unfortunately lost a group to her opponent (3d).

The final on 17th May was against Germany, who had beaten Ukraine. The teams were fairly evenly matched with the UK having a very slight edge on paper. Ryan played first on board 1, losing to Yuze Xing (6d). Sung Hee took a good win on board 4 against an opponent one grade weaker.

As expected, Lukasz Kudla outgraded his opponent and won easily, so the UK needed to win one of the two remaining evenly matched boards. Daniel lost an exciting game on board 3 with groups on both sides dying, but Alvina played well to take a win on board 2, leaving the UK the victors 3-2.

This was the UK Youth Team's first major win, helped by having both strong females and under-12 players. All our team got to play at least one match in this or the Pandanet Championship. Alvina was our star player, playing five out of six matches. Special mentions also go to new team member Sung Hee, long-time member Daniel and Under-12 player Blake. All four won three games this year.

Saint Mary's

The 1st Saint Mary's School Go Tournament was held at the school in Cambridge on the evening of Wednesday 21st May. There were 24 players, ranking from 6k to beginner level, from a variety of local schools such as Milton Primary, Saint Faith's and the Leys School, and also the Go robot was present. The top players played on 19x19 boards and the others on 13x13.

Prizes went to the overall winner, Andrew Volovich, intermediate section winner Tomasz Kedzior and lower section winner Oliver Trowell. Prizes also went to Fane Dhamari and Max Volovich who, despite both being

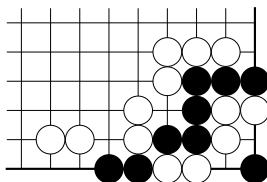
only eight, put in strong performances in the top section of the tournament, and to Agustin Besa, who was the youngest player.

UK Go Challenge

There were two heats of the UK Go Challenge in Cambridge. The one in the North branch of the Cambridge Junior Chess and Go Club was won by Charly Vander Linden and the one in the South branch was won by Angus Ku. Unfortunately, the UK Go Challenge Finals on 7th June, planned to be at Abingdon School, were cancelled through lack of entries, being still in exam time.

□

JOURNAL PROBLEM 5



Black to play and live

TOURNAMENT HISTORIES XXV:

BRITISH EUROPEANS

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The annual European Go Congress started in the 1950s and 2025 will see the 67th edition. In 2024 (Toulouse), 972 Go fans attended, and the largest gathering so far was in Pisa (2018), which had 999. Back in August 1966, when Britain hosted the Congress for the first time, the numbers were a lot lower, with just 62 participants. John and Ethel Barrs, together with Bob Hitchens, ran the event at Avery Hill College in south-east London. Jürgen Mattern was the winner.

With only five countries on rotation, it was our turn again at the end of August 1971. Badock Hall of Bristol University was the venue and the Lord Mayor opened the event. It was described as the strongest championship so far and Zoran Mutabzija was best of the 41 players.

After the 1976 event at St Catharine's Cambridge, the organisers produced a booklet that described how Patrick Merisert was the winner (beating Tony Goddard in a play-off) and noted the visit of professionals such as Iwamoto and Hane. It was reported that some of the 130 players slept on the floor of the Maths Department.

More countries started joining the list of hosts, so 1983 was the next UK year, with the Congress at Pollock Halls of Edinburgh University. Janusz Kraszek was the best of the 139 competitors, the event now played by the McMahon system. After the main organiser suddenly became

unavailable just before the event, BGA President Richard Granville, with Andrew Grant and some locals led by Jim Cook, stepped up to successfully run it.

The main pro was Nakayama and two Koreans came with a tour party, but it was three unexpected Chinese pros that meant additional problems for Harold Lee, who looked after finding cheap accommodation. Their attendance broke the budget and the loss of just over £1000 nearly wiped out the BGA!

The year 1992 saw the last Congress in the UK so far, being held at the University of Kent in Canterbury from 25th July to 8th August. The events were centred on the modern Grimond Building and adjacent Drama Barn, and the fine weather allowed much to take place outside, including pro events, barbecues, song parties and so on.

Unfortunately, the local MEP (actually a Go player) was away, but the Lord Mayor attended the barbecue and invited the Chinese pros, led by Feng Yun¹, and others to his parlour.

It was the biggest UK event that far, with over 350 attendees in total and 276 in the main event (winner Alexei Lazarev) and 234 in the weekend tournament. As well, there were lots of side events such as Lightning, Team and Computer Go, and for the first time, Pair Go.

¹See senseis.xmp.net/?FengYun.

PHOTOS FROM THE 1992 EGC AT CANTERBURY



Pair Go prizegiving



Mayor and Mayoress with Nakayama and others



Shirae simul



Nakayama lecture

Mrs Taki, the originator of Pair Go, attended the event. Also, there was the pro Shirae² whose speciality was playing over 50 players at once, and Nakayama, who taught almost non-stop.

Before the event, limited support had been obtained from JAL, Asahi Shimbun and Japan Pair Go Association. The event was also part of the Fujitsu Grand Prix. However, about two weeks before the event, a chance meeting with a top Hitachi executive saw them come on as the

main sponsor. This gave financial security, but the challenge of spending it! One attempt at spending it was to get a film company to make a film, but in the end, they wanted more money to edit it, so it was abandoned. More was spent on producing a booklet covering the event with game reviews and reports; however, this took two years to produce.

Part of the success of the event was from the hard work of the committee, who had worked on the event for three years and worked tirelessly

²Shirae Haruhiko – senseis.xmp.net/?ShiraeHaruhiko.

during it. The team included Alex Rix, Harold Lee, Tony Atkins, Alison Jones (Bexfield), Andrew Jones, Geoff Kaniuk (draw), Brian Timmins (journal) and Bob Bagot (books). A trick to ease their workload during the event was to allocate each side event to a different club; for example, Furze Platt ran the Weekend Tournament. Another trick was to host the British Go Congress there in 1991 to get used to the venue.

The BGA ran the Go events at the 2001 Congress hosted in Dublin by the Irish Go Association, led by President Noel Mitchell, Secretary John Gibson and other locals. Whereas Canterbury accommodation was booked for players in university rooms and flats (at the BGA's risk), Dublin just used hotels, guest houses and dormitories. All this was helped by the fact that John personally knew all the accommodation providers

through his business. The venue was the central Teachers' Club, as used by the regular Irish Open.

The event was the same size as Canterbury with 350 attendees, and the combined BGA/IGA team ran the usual side events, music, sightseeing and pro teaching, including non-stop teaching from Saijo. Main BGA staff members were Tony Atkins, Geoff Kaniuk (draw), Francis Roads (referee) and Gerry Mills (books), but many others helped out too.

After 2001, the BGA adopted a policy on running each of the smaller European events; the Students' Championship in Durham this October will complete the set. The BGA is currently looking at whether it can run the EGC again later this decade, with Stirling University currently the preferred venue.



Dublin Pair Go Fans 2001

Sadly, a number of the people mentioned above are no longer with us. There are obituaries for John Barrs in [BGJ 13](#) and [BGJ 136](#), Andrew Grant in [BGJ 150](#), Nakayama Noriyuki in [BGJ 152](#), Brian Timmins in [BGJ 173](#), Bob Bagot in [BGJ 199](#), John Gibson in [BGJ 199](#), Saijo Masataka in [BGJ 197](#) and Gerry Mills in [BGJ 158](#).

Contemporaneous reports on EGCs held in The British Isles are to be found in early editions of the BGJ (except for 1966, which predated the Journal; however, see the account by Bob Hitchens in [BGJ 154](#) – 'A Go Player for 50 Years'): 1971, [BGJ 15](#); 1976, [BGJ 34](#); 1983, [BGJ 60](#); 1992, [BGJ 88](#); 2001, [BGJ 124](#) ('View from the Touchline', page 58).

– Ed.

SOLUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL PROBLEMS

The SGF files for these problems are to be found at britgo.org/bgj/issue212.

Solution to Problem 1

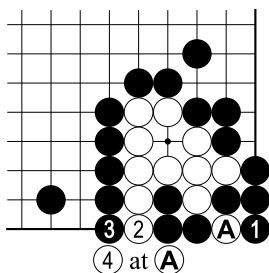


Diagram 1a – failure

- ❶ This fails – White lives.

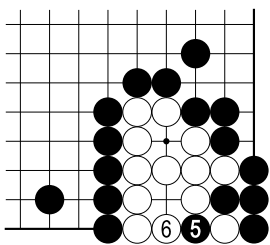


Diagram 1b – failure, continued

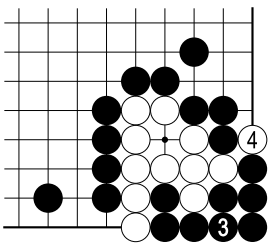
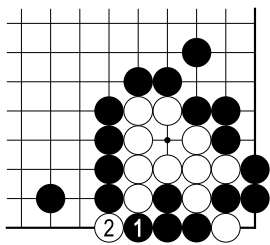


Diagram 1c – failure

- ❸ This doesn't work either.



Solution to Problem 2

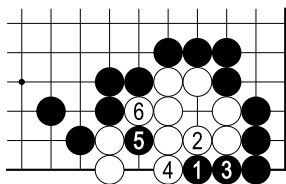


Diagram 2a – failure

- ❶ This is incorrect.
- ❸ White lives.

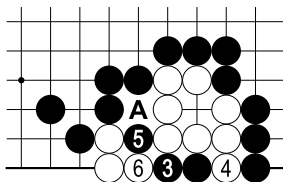


Diagram 2b – failure, variation

- ❸ White lives. It leaves **A** and ❸ as miai, so whichever one Black plays with 7, White replies at the other.

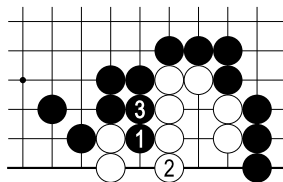


Diagram 2c – correct

- ❶ This is the correct first play.
- ❷ This way White quickly dies.

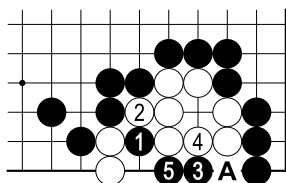


Diagram 2d – correct, variation

- ❸ White dies. White cannot stop Black from connecting because 6 at **A** would be self-atari.

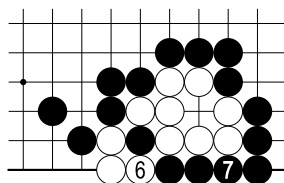


Diagram 2e – correct, continued

- ❷ White dies, having one real eye but one false eye.

Solution to Problem 3

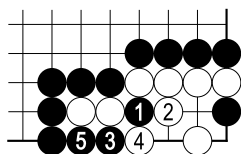


Diagram 3a – failure

- ❶ This is often a good start.
- ❸ However White lives.

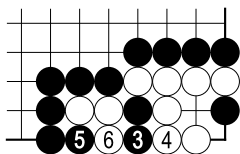


Diagram 3b – failure, variation

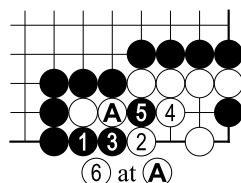


Diagram 3c – failure, variation

- ❶ This fails for Black too.
- ❸ White lives.

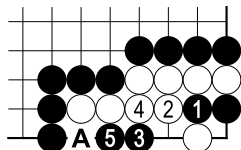


Diagram 3d – correct

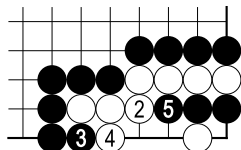


Diagram 3e – correct, variation

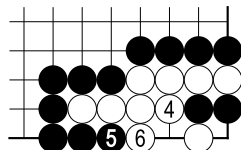


Diagram 3f – correct, variation

❶ This is the correct first play.

❷ White dies. Blocking at A next would be self-atari for White.

❸ White is in atari.

❹ Self-atari.

Solution to Problem 4

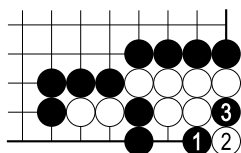


Diagram 4a – failure

❶ One of the 2-1 points must be the correct play.

❷ However, this one ends in ko.

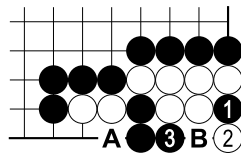


Diagram 4b – correct

❶ This is the correct first play.

❷ White dies. White A or B would be self-atari.

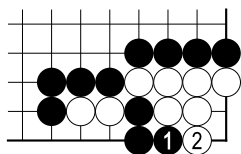


Diagram 4c – failure

❶ This fails as White lives easily.

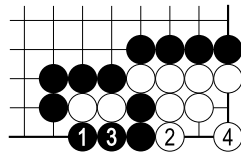


Diagram 4d – failure

❶ This is not fast enough – White lives.

Solution to Problem 5

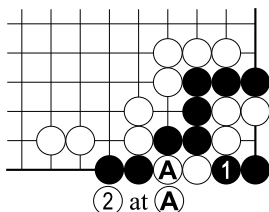


Diagram 5a – failure

- ❶ This is incorrect.
- ❷ This kills Black.

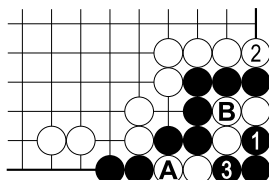


Diagram 5b – correct

- ❶ This is the correct first play.
- ❷ This is atari, but Black lives easily.
- ❸ A and B are miai to live.

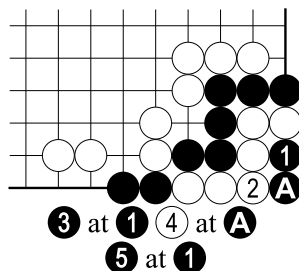


Diagram 5c – correct, variation

- ❷ This is White's best response.
- ❸ Black plays inside at the 2-1 point, which is atari on White's six stones.
- ❺ Now Black has good eye-shape and lives.

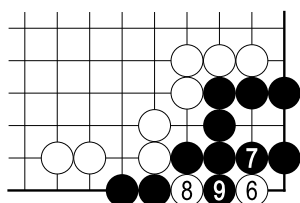


Diagram 5d – correct, variation continued

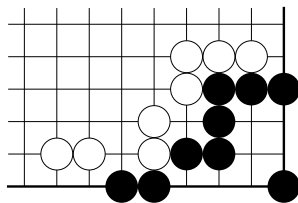


Diagram 5e – Black mistake

Instead of playing 3 on the 2-1 point in Diagram 5c, what if Black plays inside on the 1-1 point?

It's a fatal mistake. This is the position after ❺. White can kill.

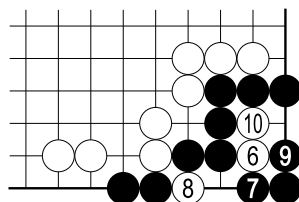


Diagram 5f – Black mistake, continued

- ❻ This is the vital point.
- ❽ This is essential. Playing atari with 8 at 9 would let Black live.

If Black plays 7 at 9, White must push up with 10 – playing atari at 7 would let Black live.

Black 7 at 8 fails to live.

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The copy date for the next issue of the Journal is **1st October**.

Contributions are welcome at any time and the earlier the better, please. 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. The Editor will be glad to discuss the suitability of any material you may have in mind.



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