

BRITISH

GO

JOURNAL



Nottingham 2012



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PHOTOGRAPH AND SCAN CREDITS

Front Cover

The first Go set sold in the UK (see article) — Theo van Ees

Above

Nottingham 2012 — Tony Atkins.

The photograph of Harold Pullein-Thompson in 'The First Go Set...' is from the Pullein-Thompson family album, with the kind permission of Diana Farr and Josephine Pullein-Thompson.

Tiberiu Gociu kindly provided the photograph from the Confucius Cup (in World News).

All other photographs were provided by the article authors.

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EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the 159th British Go Journal.

In This Issue

David Ward starts a new series, "Considering the Position". The positions in his and Andrew Simon's articles are far from easy and I hope they will provide a challenge to the stronger players among our readership: but we also urgently need articles that are accessible and useful to the less experienced among us. I would be very grateful for contributions of such material for future editions.

Toby Manning provides an article on BGA finances; this is important background for the BGA AGM, which will take place during the British Congress at Durham (20th-22nd April).

Errata

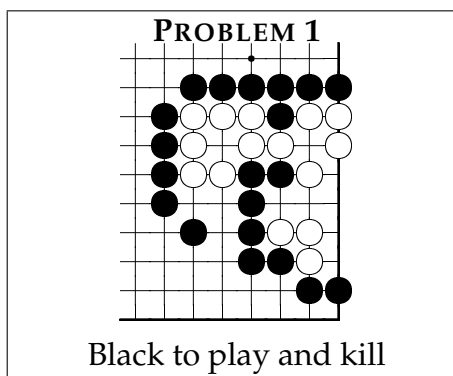
In BGJ 158, the entry for Reading in the UK Clubs List should have said that it meets on Mondays *except* for Bank Holidays.

Also Sin Voon Chin should have been credited for photographs taken at the Coventry tournament and used in UK News, and Justyna Kleczar should likewise have been credited with the photograph from Cork used in World News: my apologies to them.

Credits

My grateful thanks to the many people who have helped to produce this Journal, including the authors of the articles and letters: Tony Atkins, Bob Bagot, Bill Brakes, Jon Diamond, Theo van Ees, Roger Huyshe, Toby Manning, Neil Moffatt, Francis Roads, Ian Sharpe, Edmund Shaw, Andrew Simons, David Ward and our anonymous cartoonist; and our hard-working proof-readers: Tony Atkins, Barry Chandler, Martin Harvey, Neil Moffatt, Isobel Ridley, Edmund Stephen-Smith and Nick Wedd.

Pat Ridley



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gerry Mills

I was saddened to hear of the death of Gerry Mills in the last journal. I knew Gerry well, partly because he took over from me as BGA book and equipment distributor and also because we were similar grades and played many tournament and friendly games together. I always thought he knew far more about the game than I did but he played very quickly and was prone to blunders in the late middle game. He might well have risen much further than 1d but for this. His son, Quentin, is of course a very strong player. Gerry usually crushed me for most of the game but, if I hung on, there might be a blunder!

There were no blunders in his handling of the books and equipment. The job changed out of all recognition in the years Gerry was doing it. In 1994 I had no — that's right — *no* online business. I had a price list of one page. Kisedo, Yutopian and Shell and Slate were non-existent. Gerry handled the huge increase in publishers and books with aplomb, not to mention his knowledge of the books, his efficiency and his charming manner at the many tournaments he attended. Tournament numbers were much higher in my day, but Gerry managed the change to more postal sales, and sensibly changed the pricing policy at the same time.

There is one regret. Gerry was a keen walker and often tried to persuade me to climb some Munro's with him. Unfortunately it never quite happened. I have to say though, that it was usually my infirmities or my injuries that stopped us, even though he was giving me 20 years start. On

one occasion, sheer cowardice on my part prevented the trip. Aonach Eagach above Glencoe was a ridge too far for me. Gerry was all for it. Not bad for (as he then was) a bloke in his late 70s.

As the book distributor, we know he is irreplaceable. As a Go player, he had style and never played boring games. But mostly he will be missed as a gentleman.

Bob Bagot

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The KGS Rating System

In [BGJ 155](#) I made some comments about the KGS Rating System, to the effect that the KGS rating system is too slow to respond to the wins of rapidly improving players; Ian Davis helpfully responded with a letter in [BGJ 156](#).

Ian suggested that the system is better tuned to those playing one game a day than to those playing five to fifteen. I decided to conduct an experiment. I played one, and only one, rated game a day for 95+% of the days from 4th August until 1st February.

The delta from a win or loss necessarily decreased in size. For the last month, I estimated the average loss delta and average win delta from the ratings graph and came up with a figure below 3% of a kyu rating (the figure I got was 2.7%).

If my calculations are right, this means that about 33 wins separate each 3-4 kyu boundary and the 2-3 kyu boundary.

Assuming that a 3k playing at 3k level would be expected to win 50% of his

games at the right handicap/komi levels, then I would suggest that a 2k starting at 3k level would probably win 75% of his games.

So to move up from the bottom of 3k to the bottom of 2k would require 33 net wins, which would mean that at a 75% success rate, there would have been approximately 50 wins, 17 losses and a total of 67 games.

That represents over nine straight weeks playing at a 75% win rate to move up to the correct rating level. With reference to Ian's letter in BGJ 156, his claim that 10 straight wins playing one rated games a day would probably be enough to go up one rank is very much short of the mark, as far as the results of my experiment show.

This is not fair — and it is much worse when more than one rated game is

played each day.

My measurements are limited, but I can supply the graphs and game statistics to back them up.

I won 12 and lost 18 games in January (one game was at the wrong handicap I later realised). My net win/loss record was six defeats, yet my net movement was about only 6% of a kyu. Obviously, earlier results were affecting this, but it does illustrate the scale of the problem — the rating system is simply too unresponsive, holding players back from a meaningful rating and causing quite a few to open new accounts to get back on track.

Neil Moffatt

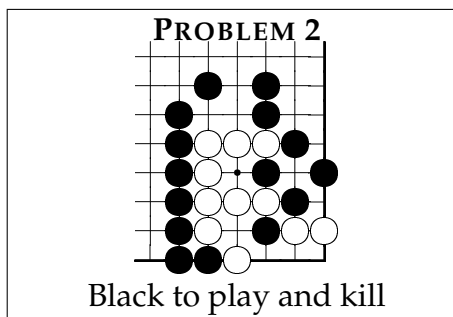
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The .sgf files for problems and games printed in this journal appear on

www.britgo.org/bgj/current

Links to electronic versions of past issues of the British Go Journal, associated files, guidelines for submitting articles and information about other BGA publications appear on the BGA website at

www.britgo.org/pubs



THE BGA NEWSLETTER

Francis Roads

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Jon Diamond's recent announcement of the demise of the BGA Newsletter prompts me to describe its origin. When the British Go Journal became professionally printed it suffered from the problem of a long lead time for news and events. The problem was exacerbated on occasions when some editors had difficulty in producing editions on time. One year, just two editions of this supposedly quarterly journal appeared.

In its earliest days, from 1967, the Journal had consisted of duplicated sheets stapled together, and was produced and distributed quite quickly. In those days there was little news to report. The first British Go Congress wasn't until 1968, and it was only in the early '70s that clubs started running annual tournaments. News of these was often stale and notice of them short.

During the life of the London Go Centre (1975-78) an attempt was made to rectify the problem with a telephone information service, based there. A script giving news and forthcoming events was recorded by the alternate voices of Alison Cross and Stuart Dowsey, the LGC's manager, and updated weekly. This worked reasonably well, but was unpopular with members outside London, for whom in those days telephone charges were high by today's standards. The service died with the LGC itself.

The Newsletter was my idea in 1982; a bi-monthly single sheet of information, with no technical material, that could be typed, duplicated and sent out with a lead time of only a few days. The then

BGA Council took the view, "You suggest; you do", so I became the Newsletter's first editor. People telephoned information to me, sometimes after a little prompting. I then entered the data with my state-of-the-art word processor: an electric typewriter. My state-of-the-art editing facility was a pair of scissors and a pot of paste.

The finished sheet was taken to a professional typist who typed it onto Gestetner skins and ran it off on a duplicator. This was far cheaper than photocopying. The main means of communicating with members was through club secretaries, so envelopes were suitably stuffed and sent out. There was sometimes a hiccup with secretaries who were dilatory in distributing the sheets, but sending the Newsletters out individually was undesirable for reasons of both cost and labour.

On one occasion I had forgotten to include details of a forthcoming tournament. In order to add these to the duplicated sheets, I bought a John Bull printing set from a toyshop, set up the details and stamped them onto each Newsletter. It was that or write the details on each sheet by hand.

After I had done the job for two years I felt that the Newsletter was sufficiently well established to pass on to another editor, and it has continued to appear regularly under a succession of editors ever since. But in these days when email and the Internet are available to all free of charge at local libraries, its original reason for existence has gone, and the Council is quite right to discontinue it. Farewell, Newsletter!

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Jon Diamond

president@britgo.org



After a miserable start to our Pandanet European Team Championship year, we've finally managed to win a couple of matches (the last one 4-0), so it looks like we'll be mid-table again. Must try harder next season. . .

As I write it has just been announced that the next World Mind Sports Games will take place in Lille from 9th to 23rd August this year. No more details are available currently, but we'll let you know as soon as possible what's happening. We'll be using the published rating list for selection, so if you'd like to be considered, make sure you're on this and also let me know that you're interested.

Are things changing? The early signs this year show a significant increase in tournament attendance, especially at Oxford and Cambridge, with the total up by more than 25% from last year. If this continues then we'll be back to

the numbers we had in 2006/7 — not quite where we were in the peak of 1999, but a start. So continue to go out and play in the real world and visit a club from time to time too.

Colin Maclennan has spoken to most of our club secretaries and gained some significant feedback as to good practice and what's actually happening in the clubs, which he's shared with Council and the clubs. This survey is also being used to set up some new initiatives and especially a recruitment drive this Autumn, focussed on increasing the number of University clubs and students playing Go. If you'd like to help with this, please contact him. We've also reviewed our regional representative role to make it more active — there's now a [job description](#) and a revised [list of reps](#). Please see our website for details.

Hopefully these initiatives will also lead to an increase in BGA membership, despite the likely increase in our subscription rates.

With our AGM about to take place and these increased rates in prospect, it seems timely to remind members of the benefits of membership — please see page 14.

Finally, I'd like to thank Jenny Radcliffe for her time on Council and Phil Beck for his exemplary service as Membership Secretary, which is finishing at the end of April; we welcome Paul Barnard on board as his replacement (mem@britgo.org is still the email address you should use for membership matters).

BGA FINANCES

Toby Manning — Treasurer

treasurer@britgo.org

During 2010 and 2011, BGA finances have deteriorated. Although much of the significant sponsorship from Winton Capital Management in 2008 and 2009 was spent on specific projects, some of that expenditure has been taken up by general funds; then at the end of 2010, with the retirement of Gerry Mills, BGA Books (which made a big contribution to the BGA's income) was closed.

As a consequence, in 2011 we made a loss of £2,700 — and this would have been £1,000 greater if we had not received a windfall income from selling a non-exclusive licence to a games manufacturer for using our "How to play Go" text. This loss was nearly 30% of our total income of £9,500. Fortunately the BGA has substantial reserves (over £20,000), but this level of financial loss is unsustainable in the long term; we are therefore taking steps to "balance the books". In doing this we are mindful of two significant adverse effects on our finances: firstly postage rates are predicted to rise considerably, and secondly the move to on-line payments is giving us some additional costs. We believe the move to on-line payments is beneficial for the majority of members, but it does mean that the BGA is paying commission (between 3 and 4%) on the payments instead of members paying for postage.

Council are taking a number of steps to resolve the position:-

- a) We are discontinuing the Newsletter. Many members already receive this electronically (and the electronic version will continue), but this will save us around £1,100 per year
- b) We are seeking to improve the finances of BGA-run tournaments, in particular the London Open
- c) We are proposing a significant increase in subscription rates. This is to be debated at the forthcoming AGM on April 20th: we are planning for this Journal to get to you before then. Subscription rates were last increased in 2006; since then the RPI has increased by nearly 25%. We are proposing increases of around 33%, so that the basic subscription would increase from £18 to £24 and the concession rate from £11 to £15.
- d) The Tournament Levy will increase by around 30% from 1st September.

We are also consulting on the concessions we give. Reduced subscription rates are currently offered to those under 18 (under 26 if in full-time education), and we are not suggesting any change in these categories. However, concessionary rates are also offered to those receiving an unemployment or disability benefit, and to those over the State Pension age, and we are considering if these concessions remain appropriate.

Even with these changes I am predicting a substantial loss for 2012, as subscriptions will already have been paid; furthermore the increase in levies will also only come into force towards the end of the year. However, I believe these proposals, if agreed, will put the Association's finances on a sustainable basis for the medium-term.

CONSIDERING THE POSITION: PART 1

David Ward

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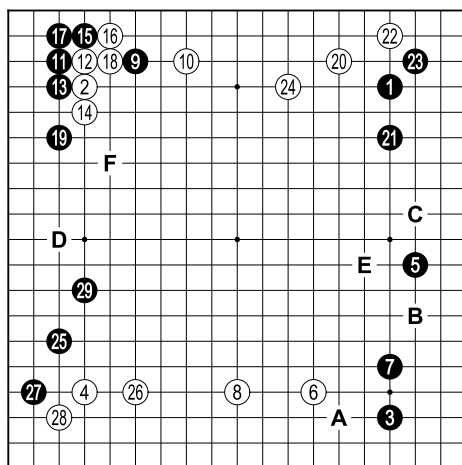
This is the first in a series of articles entitled "Considering the Position". The series is loosely based upon a Chinese translation of a Korean text of Cho Hun Hyun's games, played in the early 1990s. The example diagrams show a number of possible choices and lead to a conclusion as to the correct line of play in the early middle game.

The text assumes a certain level of understanding, and for some of the diagrams given as bad you might (as I did) think, why is this bad? In that case it might be helpful to discuss it with other BGA members. This is not easy study material, but with some new middle game joseki and the right direction of play, it does cover an area where there are not so many books in English. Any mistakes in the translation from Chinese to

English are mine; sometimes the exact meanings seem hard to encapsulate in English (or so my wife tells me!).

Cho Hun Hyun is perhaps a little overlooked in the West, but as Nei Weiping ('the Iron Goal Keeper') was the hero for China in the early 1980s against the Japanese, so Cho in the late 1980s became the dominant player in world Go. The golden age of Korean Go is in no small part due to Cho who, together with his pupil Li Chang Ho, dominated international tournaments for the rest of the millennium. (By way of an aside, when Cho visited London in 1998 for the first Mind Sports Olympics at the Festival Hall, he played 12 games simultaneously. All games were on handicap plus two stones and he won 11, his only loss was by one point, to a shodan where he gave nine stones!)

The starting position



Consider the possibilities A to F: what are the whole board considerations and how should White play? The answers are on page 38.

HISTORY OF TOURNAMENTS: NOTTINGHAM

Tony Atkins

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When I arrived at the University of Nottingham in the Autumn of 1981, the Secretary of the Nottingham University Go Society (NUGS) gave me his folder and promptly dropped out of college. In his folder was a letter from Toby Manning, arranging a dan player visit, with a footnote saying "The 1982 British Go Congress is at Nottingham; you are helping, aren't you?" It was in Willoughby Hall, where I was living, and I and the NUGS treasurer, Robert Loughrey, helped run a successful British with 112 players, Jon Diamond being the winner.

A year later, former NUGS player Mike Harvey returned to Nottingham and suggested that I should help him run a one-day tournament. We booked a room in the main Student Union building, the Portland Building, and sent out press releases. One of these was picked up by the local BBC radio station, so the day of the tournament saw Mike Harvey and former NUGS member Mike Brandt being interviewed on Radio Nottingham; however it was the protests and bomb scares caused by the visit of the South African ambassador that hit the headlines that weekend. The tournament passed without incident, and the best of the 34 players that paid the £2.50 entry fee was Brian Chandler, who won all four games.

Clive Wright ran the event in November 1984 and, as I had left the University by then, I was able to play, as was Mike Harvey. John Smith became the second winner from Manchester Club, topping a list of 32 names. I helped Clive in 1985 and did the pairings for a 48-player

event. J-Y. Lee, a Korean 5d who was at the University for a while, was the winner. He was also the winner in 1986, when 54 players took part.

The event grew to its largest in 1987 when, thanks to Furze Platt School, there were 66 players. It was cut down to the more usual three rounds and Edmund Shaw was the winner. Not much is known about the 1988 event as it was organised at very short notice, and I opted to play Bracknell Shogi Tournament instead. The winner is, however, known to be Piers Shepperson, who was studying for his doctorate at Nottingham at the time.

The tournament then lapsed, but Clive Wright hosted the British Go Congress in Nottingham, at Derby Hall, in 1992. There were 99 players, including some from overseas, the winner being Mark Willems from the Netherlands.

After 21 years, Maria Tabor and the other NUGS members restarted the tournament in 2010. It was held in the Portland Building twice, before moving to the neighbouring Trent Building in 2012. The three recent winners were Alex Selby, Chong Han and Sin Voon Chin, with attendances of 42, 41 and 34. A trophy was purchased to be held annually by the winner and this was engraved with all the winners from the past. From the restart in 2010, a quiz sheet has been available during the day to keep fast players amused, with questions mostly by Robert Harman.

It is not known if there will be an organiser to run the 30th anniversary event in 2013, but I for one will be hoping it will take place. More details of past Nottingham Tournaments are at www.kisekigo.com/notts.

THE BGA ANALYST

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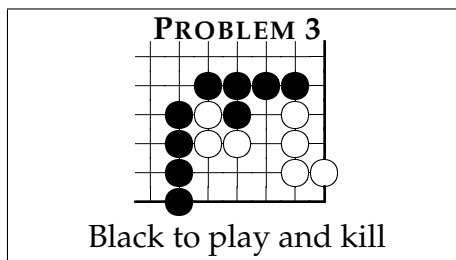
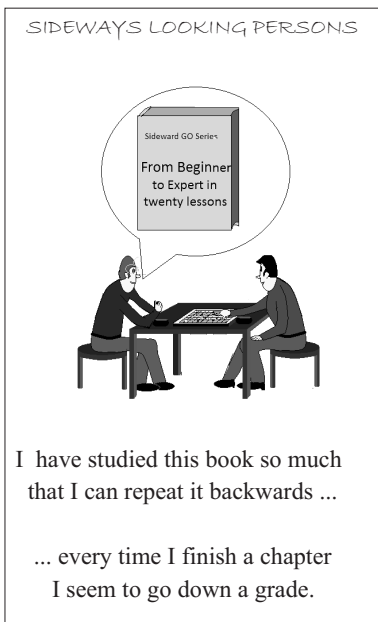
David Ward would like to remind BGA members about the Analysis Service.

Would it be helpful to have your games analysed?

The Shodan Challenge is a great idea and enables mentors to help weaker players improve. However, the BGA Analysis Service is still available. Should you wish to use it, just email an .sgf file of a representative game to me; 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”.



BOOK REVIEW

HOW NOT TO PLAY GO

Roger Huyshe

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Author: Yuan Zhou (8d)

Publisher: Slate & Shell¹

ISBN: 1-932001-52-2

The title of this book appealed to me immediately, reminiscent of the Bridge classic by SJ Simon “Why you lose at Bridge”. How much easier it is to improve by eliminating a few bad habits than by studying a thousand tsumego problems or joseki. This, then, is a mandatory read for every kyu player, as we will improve significantly just by reading and digesting a 32-page booklet.

I wrote the above before receiving the book for review and, as a player in the middle of the target market, looked forward to reading the tips that would enable a step forward in my own game. So it was with some surprise that I read that I should not “follow the opponent round the board” — an idea that I had worked out for myself on about my second game ever. The other eight points were not quite as

obvious, but would mostly be well known to 10k and certainly to low kyu. So it rankled somewhat when the author referred to these points as “misunderstandings”.

And yet... Yuan Zhou is not only an experienced professional but an experienced teacher too, familiar with the ways of kyu players, so I worked through the three games in the book — first one between 8k, then 4k, then 1k players. He ignores subtle move choices and focuses simply on the occasions where the nine “misunderstandings” or “bad habits” about the game still occur. And he proves his point that this is where Single Digit Kyu games are lost, even close to dan level.

So what can you learn from the book? Double Digit Kyu players should certainly benefit. Lower than that, I have to wonder why we make these mistakes; if it's not through misunderstanding or technical weakness, then presumably the reason is emotional control, a situation that is well known in sport, aviation, investing and other fields. Hence it should pay readers to be more aware of where they might have an inbuilt tendency to do the wrong thing.

This is not a book that I would read twice, but it was good to borrow and functions as a sharp and useful reminder about one's bad habits.

The review copy was kindly provided by Slate & Shell.

¹www.slateandshell.com

MY EXPERIENCE WITH YUNZI STONES

Ian Sharpe

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Despite playing Go for 30 years, until recently I had seen only stones made of plastic, glass or slate and shell.

I hadn't heard of yunzi before an accidental discovery made me curious to read various web pages and buy a set.

Yunzi comes from China where, it is said, the material has been used to make Weiqi stones for a thousand years. That could be a literal value but in Eastern cultures, a thousand can just mean "an impressively large number".

The exact recipe is secret, and indeed was lost for a while before being re-invented. It is reported to include crushed agate and other stone, fused by heat into a glass-like substance.

The yunzi contamination scare

Alarming stories about yunzi containing high levels of lead are countered by later reports that the factory has addressed this. I cannot test either claim, but in any case the lead would be bound into a vitreous material and unlikely to harm adults in normal use.

An easy way to distinguish yunzi from normal glass is to hold a black piece up to bright light. It is slightly translucent dark green. White stones may show a greenish halo round the edges.

One state-run factory in Yunnan is authorised to make the stones, and it produces them in numerous grades, sizes and shapes.

I have seen mixed reviews of yunzi sets in general. The negatives mostly

relate to erratic shapes in the cheapest ones, and stones being too wide. I have also seen talk of the best yunzis being so fine that they are valued for their aesthetic quality. Queen Elizabeth II was presented with a set by the Chinese government.

The stones used by most British players are the Japanese pattern. They are lenticular and, naturally, precisely fit Japanese boards. Traditional Chinese boards are slightly larger, so their stones may overcrowd a Japanese board.

Chinese stones have flat bottoms that may be useful when playing through variations, because positions can be marked by turning them over. I have handled one of these stones on one occasion. It did not awkwardly clump down on the board as I thought it would, but taking it off seemed fiddlier because it did not tilt when depressed.

In the video at tinyurl.com/7fpnno7 a worker is seen making flat yunzis by dropping blobs of molten material on to a surface, which might have shallow depressions to confine it to a circular shape. The stones cool quickly enough to retain a domed upper surface.

Hand manufacture probably explains excessive irregularity in cheap sets. Although the process is simple, execution clearly requires skill.

Anyway, although I had become interested in yunzi, I want lenticular stones that are not too diverse in size or shape, and they must be compatible with our Japanese-size boards.

Such sets are available from a few UK outlets. The best value I found at the

time of writing was on Amazon UK, which fulfils orders for a limited range of products sold by a US company, Yellow Mountain Imports.



Left: Japanese glass stone. Centre and right: yunzi stones.

Note the rounder profile and slightly smaller diameter of the yunzi stones.

Their 9.2mm bi-convex stones for £35 delivered were tempting. Although the UK site lacked reviews, customers on Amazon USA lead me to expect stones not of the finest quality, but not disappointingly erratic either.

My set arrived in serviceable cardboard boxes that will need upgrading if carried around much. I counted 194 white, 191 black. I am sure packs vary, but having a good few to spare is nice.

None have significant chips, scratches or bubbles. A few white stones have a sub-surface black speck. Some stones are noticeably out of round or have a minor flat. Defects are few, though, and the extra stones make up for them.

The irregularities make me think that casting bi-convex stones is as manual a process as making flats. The slight lack of refinement adds a human dimension that I find appealing.

Black stones have a matt texture, similar to ordinary glass. We are used to white stones being glossy. I suppose this imitates polished shell which, not being a traditional material for Weiqi pieces, may explain why these yunzi whites are matt. I find them pleasantly pebble-like and tactile, and less prone to slipping from my fingers.

The green exhibited by blacks when backlit is only noticeable in play when bright light brings out subtle hints at the edges. White stones do not have the opaque brilliance of their glass counterparts, but are slightly creamy and softer, with some depth. They could seem understated on a very pale board.

Preparing for first use

I washed the stones in soapy water — you will see why when you open the bags. After rinsing and drying, many people apply oil to produce a pleasing sheen and depth. It is definitely worth the effort.

Do not use a vegetable oil, which can go waxy and rancid. I added a dozen drops of light petroleum-based lubricating oil to each colour in a plastic bag. The stones were gently agitated and left for a few hours in a warm place to let the oil spread. After more agitation, a final wipe had them ready for battle.

These Chinese pieces fit my standard board perfectly. I cannot see a difference in diameters between the colours. Black stones are often slightly wider than white to compensate for the illusion of dark-coloured objects appearing smaller. Heights vary more than is apparent during play, but average around 9mm.

Whether the differences add up to something you like or dislike is a matter of taste. Somehow, yunzi has more soul than glass. The stones handle well and I find them pleasing. Even so, it is hard to imagine the finest examples trumping slate and shell as the ultimate Go stones — but of course that luxury carries quite a price tag.

BGA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Remember, membership entitles you to:

- a subscription to the printed [British Go Journal](#)
- reduced entry fees for [tournaments](#), often even more for [your first one](#)
- [discounts on Go books and equipment](#)
- the right to play in the [British Championship](#) and [represent the UK internationally](#)
- play in our [Online Individual League](#)
- play in our [Online Team League](#) at a reduced entry fee
- receive contact details of other members in your area with a view to playing each other or forming a Go club
- receive the AGA's ejournal member edition ([separate online application](#) required)
- join in the BGA's [training activities](#) (such as the [Shodan Challenge](#))
- dan recognition (dan certificates)
- use other available BGA services

Your money also goes towards the following other activities:

- affiliation fees to the [European Go Federation](#) and the [International Go Federation](#)
- support of the [rating system](#)

- our promotional activities, especially for children and other young players
- [materials](#) and other help for your own promotional activities
- subsidising teaching activities for our members
- representation of Go to government organisations
- public liability and loss/damage insurance for BGA events

Clubs are entitled to

- have a free entry in our [online directory](#) and [map](#)
- have their own free pages hosted on our website
- free quantities of our [promotional literature](#)
- free loans of boards and stones for start-up clubs
- subsidised visits for teaching purposes by dan players
- loans of sets, clocks, draw computer and mobile phone for tournaments
- public liability and loss/damage insurance for tournaments
- publicity for tournaments and events through the website and the [British Go Journal](#)

If you have any queries about membership please contact our Membership Secretary.

UK NEWS

Tony Atkins

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Online Leagues

The third season of the online team league and the first season of the online Individual League concluded in December. After some adjustments (awarding draws in unplayed games), the winner of the league was Central London Go Club A Team, taking the GoGoD shield. The winners of Divisions 2 to 4 were St Albans Go Club, Chester A and South London.

The individual league prizes were named the "Xinyi Lu Prizes" in honour of Xinyi Lu, who tragically died in October 2011 and who was clear leader in Division 2. Division 1 winner was Andrew Simons from Cambridge, and John Collins from the St Albans Go Club won Division 3.

London Open

The London Open is the BGA's most prestigious event, being truly international and the largest event in the calendar. This year's tournament on the last four days of 2011 was part of the European Cup at the highest level. It kicked off with more than 100 players from 23 countries in round one and more than 120 players in total. The venue was again held in the comfort of the International Students House near Regent's Park.

On hand to teach was Korean professional Miss Ko Juyeong, and she entertained with a lecture one evening, as well as reviewing many games. She managed to play as well and even won a prize, as on the second evening she won the 16-team London Pair Go, partnering Chong Han; they beat Irina Sucia and Ian Davis in the final. Chu Lu

and Andrew Simons lost only to the winners, in round 3; Sari Kohenen and Vesa Laatikainen, and Julia Woedwodskaya and Sandy Taylor were equal fourth. Noteworthy was the first participation of an Icelandic player at Pair Go, though unfortunately he did not win any games.

The rounds all proceeded on time, thanks to sharp organisation by Jenny Radcliffe and her band of helpers. After five rounds, Korean 7d Young-Sam Kim was unbeaten, but close behind were Yunlong Liu from China and British players Chong Han and Andrew Kay. In the end, nobody could beat Young-Sam Kim, who took first place. Five players ended on five wins in the next positions: Lingjun Miao (4d China), Yunlong Liu (3d China) were tied in second-third positions, Chong Han (5d Loughborough) and Andrew Kay (4d South London) were tied in fourth-fifth positions, and Ching-Nung Lin (6d Taiwan) was sixth. Players winning six games were Rafael Mello (11k Durham), Carl Roll (7k Nottingham) and Martha McGill (2k Edinburgh). All players with five wins received a prize selected from the prize table and all with four wins received a certificate.

Young-Sam Kim also proved he could play fast as well as slow by winning the Lightning, beating David Lee in the final. He continued undefeated in winning the Rengo, taking Sandro Poldrugo and Yoshiho Ikuta with him. They beat Tom Urasoe, Wen Hao Goh and Yunlong Liu in the final. ►

Maidenhead

Xinyi Lu, a former organiser, was remembered at the 2012 Maidenhead Hitachi Tournament on 21st January. The tournament was honoured by the presence of both Xinyi's parents and several family friends. Forty-nine players took part in the tournament and it was fitting that it was a Chinese player, Chu Lu (5d Warwick), who was the winner. She beat Bei Ge (5d) in the final. Also winning three were Mike Charles (2k St Albans), and David Storkey (8k Exeter). As usual, thanks to Hitachi who provided lunch as well as the venue, all players with two wins won a prize. Alistair Wall (2d) won the 13x13 with three wins and one loss, and Awesome Epsom won the team prize with eight out of twelve.

British Small Board

The next day, Andrew Simons (3d Cambridge) won the slightly delayed 2011 British Small Board Championship to hold on to the title he won in 2010. He finished ahead of Tim Hunt (2d Milton Keynes) despite losing to him in their first game. Unfortunately, though, Andrew still has not received the trophy, as the delay in passing it on last time was repeated when the organiser brought along the wrong trophy. Nevertheless all else was organised well in the Junior Parlour at Whewell's Court, Trinity College, Cambridge, including the cooking by Paul Smith's family. Youth prize winner was Melchior Chui (13k Cambridge), who won all eight games. Best Junior was Anthony Ghica (20k Newmarket) with six wins, and best under-8 player was Edmund Smith (28k Milton). Other junior prizes went to Peran Truscott (13k) and David Robson (18k) from the local

junior club. Also winning prizes were local players Andrea Smith (16k) and Stanislaw Klajn (14k).

London City

Andrew Kay (4d South London) won the first ever City of London Winter Go Tournament on 4th February, by winning all three of his games. He played Alex Rix (2d Central London), Paul Taylor (1d St Albans) and Andrew Simons (3d Cambridge). Also on three wins was Phil Smith (5k) from Alton. Andrew Kay also had time to play an unbeaten six games in the new Xinyi Lu 13x13 Cup, winning that in a close finish with Jonathan Turner (1k Central London). Andrew also won the City club's Blitz Shield last October, making him somewhat a "Grand Slam" winner of all the competitions they have run in the past few months! The event was well attended, with 37 players braving the cold weather and threats of snow. The hospitality of the Melton Mowbray pub and the kindness of the staff helped to blow away any winter blues.

Cheshire

This year's Cheshire on 11th February, the fourteenth, was held as usual alongside the Frodsham Chess Congress, organised by local Go and Chess player Pat Ridley. Kath Timmins (13k) became the oldest winner of a Cheshire tournament when she won the eight-player Cheshire Handicap with four out of five. She beat John Herman (5k Manchester) in the last round, but he also won a prize for three wins. Also on three out of five were Joe Stephenson (5 kyu Bolton), Matt Marsh (6 kyu Sheffield),

Tony Pitchford (9 kyu Chester) and Brian Timmins (10 kyu Shropshire). Brian received a special prize for long attendance, being the founder of the Cheshire Tournament 28 years before. Best of the eight players in the top group was event organiser, Tony Atkins (2d Reading), winning the Open title. Baron Allday (1d West Wales) won the prize for second and Michael Vidler (Abergele) was also awarded a prize for winning two at 3k.

Oxford

This year's Oxford, on 18th February, was the largest UK tournament apart from the London Open for four years. It was again held in the Wolfson Hall dining room and Pontigny Room at St Edmund Hall. Eighty-seven players of all strengths took part, including a large contingent from Cambridge, who would play the varsity match the following day, and many young players were encouraged by the included novices' event. Winner in a Cambridge-Oxford final was Lingjun Miao (4d), who beat Korean player Yousang Baik (4d). Players on three wins receiving book token prizes, thanks to sponsor Hoyle's Games who manned the bookshop stall, were: Paul Barnard (1k Swindon), Bogdan Ghica (3k Newmarket), Julia Woewodskaya (8k London), David Crabtree (9k Chester), Yvonne Margetts (15k Epsom), Pauline Bailey (16k West Surrey) and Edmund Smith (28k Milton). Junior prizes were awarded, thanks to GoGoD (Games of Go on Disk) who donated three CDs; to Adán Mordcovich and Roella Smith in the U18 section, Anthony Ghica, Kelda Smith and Hammod Munir in the U15, Edmund Smith and Rebecca Margetts in U12, and Isabelle Margetts in U9. The novices' event was won by

Kelda Smith (19k), ahead of Anthony Ghica (19k), Rebecca Margetts (35k), and Edmund Smith (28k). The main tournament winner also received free entry as he won the early-entry lottery.

Varsity Match

The annual match between Oxford and Cambridge, this year played on 19th February, has been run since the 1960s and usually goes in Cambridge's favour. In 2011 they impressively won six games to nil. However this year Oxford fancied their chances, with a 5d undergraduate, a 4d Chinese chef and a 4d visiting professor from Korea on the team. Indeed, despite a well-known 2d on their team misreading a ladder, after one round they were tied at four all. Their expectations came true in the second round, four games to three to them, and so Oxford won the match by just one game.

Nottingham

The ninth Nottingham Tournament was held on a very sunny 25th February in the magnificent Trent Building on the main University of Nottingham campus. Glimpses of the lake through the windows did not distract the 34 players too much. It was the student from Brunei, Sin Voon Chin (3d Birmingham), who won the tournament by beating Toby Manning in an exciting last-round game. The others winning all three were Laurence Ogden (4k Manchester), David Wildgoose (11k Sheffield), and local players Carl Roll (5k) and Brent Cutts (8k). Jonathan Green received a special mention for entering the Countdown quiz (anagrams of Go terms and sums with target 361, of course). □

IF...

... (YOU PLAY GO)

Bill Brakes

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(See below for a glossary of Go terms that may be unfamiliar.)

If you can keep your eyes when all about you
Opposing stones are blocking your escape;
When all looks bleak, if you can figure how to
Make unconditional life, with solid shape;
If you can choose appropriate joseki
Whilst paying due regard to all the board;
If, when the fight turns bad, you try for seki,
And learn next time to dodge the 'magic sword';

If you can dream — of getting better faster;
If you can think — 'Go's more than just a game';
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can pick the right time to tenuki;
If you can read a ladder to its end;
If you can feel the power of a ponnuki
And know when to attack, when to defend;

If you can start a semeai (never rashly:
Aware furikawari might be made);
If you can differentiate kikashi
From amiragatachi (best not played);
If you can play a cross-cut and not fear it;
If you can relish fights that lead to ko;
If you can handle thickness: don't go near it,
Whether it's yours or whether it's of your foe;

If you can give a handicap, or take it,
But still maintain the essence of the game;
If you can hurt to lose and yet still fake it:
Pretend the loss is just; accept the blame;
If you can fill up overtime's last minute
With sixty seconds' worth of profit won —
Yours is the prize, and you deserve to win it.
And — what is more — you'll be a Dan, my son!

[Apologies for the sexism in the final line, but the bias is Kipling's, not mine!]

Aji: Latent possibilities left behind in a position.

Amarigatachi: Play where one feels one has made good moves, but one has accomplished little.

Furikawari: A trade of territory or groups.

Kikashi: A move which creates aji (*see above*) while forcing a submissive reply.

Ponnuki: The diamond shape left behind after a single stone has been captured.

Semeai: A race to capture between two adjacent groups that cannot both live.

BOOK REVIEW

UNDERSTANDING DAN LEVEL PLAY

Neil Moffatt

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Author: Yuan Zhou (8d)

Publisher: Slate & Shell¹

ISBN: 1-932001-53-0

This book covers the seven games the author played in the 2009 Korea Prime Minister's Cup. As representative for the US, he finished 5th, a best yet for his country. Yuan Zhou is becoming a prolific author of Go books. I hoped that this offering could compare with the excellent 'How Not To Play Go', which was as insightful as it was brief. 'Understanding Dan Level Play' is a longer book, but I feel that it does not quite succeed as well.

Obviously the subject matter is much more complex, and he does help explain the thinking behind dan player decisions and strategies, but I feel that it lacks a dimension. There is not enough explanation of why moves that would appear more obvious to kyu players are rejected. I feel that focusing on fewer games with a broader emphasis would have been a better idea. As it stands, it is more a set of dan game commentaries than it is an exposé of dan methodologies. I would also like to have seen some

use of graphics to mark out the flow of play — which areas are being affected by various sequences of play, for example. So my overall feeling is that there was an economy of effort in this publication, but there is probably still enough to glean from the book to reward the single digit kyu player.

In game seven, for example, he clearly explains that it is strategically correct to invade the corner since the wall White will get on the outside is already limited in scope by the Black stone in the middle of the side. Many kyu players take corners without full regard for outside consequences. In game three, a joseki is started in the lower right corner, but left incomplete so that a large moyo move could be played. He explains the thinking behind this and why neither player directly deals with this incompleteness. This kind of whole board explanation is where the book works well.

However, many of the book's messages are buried, to a degree, in detailed discussions of precise move placements. Whilst this is, of course, a vital part of the comprehension of dan level play, the messages are too diffuse and lack overall coherence. If a player is looking for dan game commentaries, he will enjoy the book. For those looking for more generalised understanding, they will find it less useful.

The review copy was kindly provided by Slate & Shell.

¹www.slateandshell.com

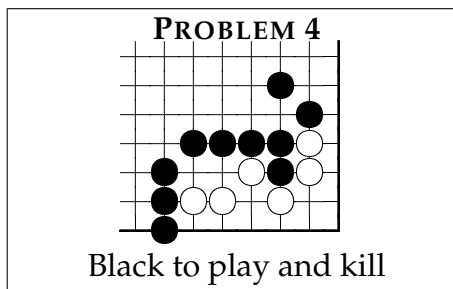
HOW TO GET TO 1K. FROM 1K

Edmund Shaw

1. Always invade, never play a junction point or surround territory yourself. After all, your opponent's territory is much more important than your own.
2. If you spot a tesuji, always play it at once.
3. If discussing the game with a high dan player, always remember, he's not a pro, and you're almost as strong as he is, so argue with everything he says, he's probably wrong. And he'll respect you for it.
4. Shape is for wusses.
5. Never study professional games. They're boring and incomprehensible. Like most joseki, really.
6. If you're not quickly sure of the right move, guess. It's easier than working it out.
7. The endgame is boring. If you kill enough stones you won't need to bother with it.
8. If you see an enemy weak group, attack it at once, or it might go away.
9. If you see a weak group of your own, ignore it. Maybe your opponent will not notice; and anyway, something always turns up.
10. Don't always answer your opponents' moves, that's for weak kyus. Instead, ignore a few at random to show you are beyond that. But always answer atari, even if it's just one stone, it might be important. Or not. Better not to take the risk.
11. Fuseki is for wusses.
12. Centre territory is impossible to make. So don't try. And let your opponent make as much as he pleases.
13. Never sacrifice a group of more than two stones. They might be cutting stones, or important or something. Or not. Better not to take the risk.
14. Always hit the vital point. When you remember. If you can find it. Or something that looks like one anyway. You can read out the continuation later.
15. (Reserved.)
16. Counting is for accountants. If you kill enough stones you won't need to bother with it. :-)
17. The concept of heavy stones is for wusses. If there are more than three stones, losing them is too much to bear; who cares what they weigh?
18. What is furikawari again? I think it involves losing some stones. Must be for wusses.
19. What the bleedin' heck is an inducing move? Something to do with pregnancy I think... likely for the wuss type again. A detail at best.
20. Probes are fun and high level. Probe away to your heart's content. Be free, be imaginative,

scatter them around with abandon. When you think of it, they are like extra forcing moves anyway, can't lose anything, eh? And look at your opponent's face, and his clock tick-tick-ticking along. Pure fun.

21. If you can see a move to live, play it. There might be another, but so what? One is enough.
22. If you can see a move to connect, play it. There might be another, but so what? How many do you need?
23. If you can see a move to kill, etc., etc.. You get the idea. Keep things simple or they might get complicated.
24. Kikashi before life, connection, attack, ko or anything else is just fine for high dan players. But for some strange reason there are never any in kyu games, so... nothing to worry about there.
25. If you see anything that is a forcing move, it's a kikashi, so play it at once, especially if there is a choice. Makes reading so much easier.
26. Counting liberties is impossible after you get past three. Four on a good day. Play out a semeai till it gets to around that number. Then count. If you think you're losing it, play out another move or two to make absolutely sure.
27. Kos are impossible to work out. Avoid them like the plague. Or if you cannot, win them whatever the cost. But better avoid; the opponent usually seems to have more ko threats anyway. (If you can see a connection with points 20 to 26 by the bye, you are thinking too hard. Relax.)
28. Never, ever, double hane. bloody hell, *TWO* cutting points? (Triple hane, of course, doesn't actually exist in nature.)
29. Light play is thin play. Don't.
30. If you're caught in a ladder, play a ladder block at once. Makes you feel a whole lot better.
31. Only do life and death or tesuji problems once a quarter, when you read your favourite magazine. You can always work it out over the board anyway.
32. If you play a "proper" move, you must be a proper wuss. Never be a wuss. Being a wuss is for wusses. If you're a female, this is even more vital; kill everything you can, you'll foster fear and respect. Never, ever, be wussey in a game of Go once you get past 5k.



PULLEIN-THOMPSON AND THE FIRST GO SET IN THE UK

Theo van Ees

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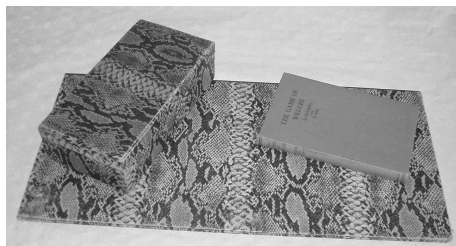
In earlier articles we wrote about 1929 as an important year in the history of Go in Britain. In that year 'The Game of Wei-chi' by Pecorini and Tong Shu was published by Longmans, Green and Co. in London. In the same period, Mr. Liu of the Chinese embassy in London taught Commandant Lancelin a better way to play the game¹.

Also in 1929, a certain John Barrs learned about the game and started a small club which lasted a few years. He later, of course, founded the British Go Association. In 1965 he wrote an article on the 'UK History of Go' in the Go Review. He says: "I myself learnt of Go in 1929, when there was an attempt to sell commercial sets through the big London stores and sport shops. It was published under its Chinese name of Wei-chi. Although I had virtually no instruction material, I became very interested in the game and on the 1st March 1930 founded the Linton House Wei-chi Club. This had about 15 members and continued until 1936." The club was short-lived and I haven't found any information on its members.

I often wondered about the game set and its possible relation with Pecorini's book, but the set was very hard to find, so I had to leave it until I could recently buy it.

The set I found consists of a playing board and a separate box, with two blue cups containing black and red counters to complete the game. The outside of the box has a black and

white snakeskin print. The playing board measures 50 x52 cm and the box with the stones 24x12x7 cm.

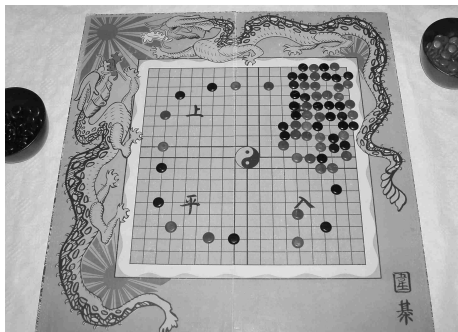


The playing board has a wide margin in which two dragons surround the actual game board of 31x31 cm. Its layout has a clear relation with Pecorini's book. Both the Italian and English edition have a dust jacket with the same illustration of dragons.

The board has heavier lines that divide the board into four squares, and coincide with those Pecorini and Xu use for notation. The squares have the Chinese characters for East, South, West and North on them. The centre point is a yin-yang sign. The small print on the board says that it is published by Pullein Thompson & Co. Ltd., Aldwych House, Aldwych, London, WC2.

Included are two leaflets: one is short, a four-page description of the rules; the other is a four-page advertisement for Pecorini's book. The rules leaflet with the title "Wei-ch'i (Way-chee)" is the more interesting and written by the publisher of the game, H.J. Pullein-Thompson.

¹See [BGJ 155](#)



It was quite easy to find more information about Mr. Pullein-Thompson. On searching on his name, I found that his wife, and even more so his daughters, were well-known writers.

His full name is Harold James Pullein-Thompson (1885-1957). He studied in Oxford and taught at King's College School in Wimbledon. In the first World War he served as an Infantry Captain.

He married Joanna Cannan² (1898-1961) in 1918, a daughter of the Dean of Trinity College. She was a writer, and since marrying produced one book every year, 49 in total. The family obtained most of their income through her books.

They had four children; Denis (1919-2011), Josephine (1924), Diana (1925) and Christine (1925-2005). The girls³ became world famous in the UK in the 50's and 60's, especially with girls, for their books about ponies and horses. They produced easily more than 150 books between them.

The daughters wrote an intriguing autobiography about their youth and upbringing. In this book⁴, I found information about their father's working life and his leisure activities.



'Cappy', as his children called him, was wounded in the War. His shoulders and arms were injured and he had shrapnel in his hip that could not be removed. Later in life, this caused him great pain and gave him a limp and a dependency on painkillers.

After the army he got a job with a film company, where he wrote scripts for silent films. When the company failed, he took various jobs and wrote plays in his spare time. Those plays were neither published nor played.

The family was reasonably well to do; they had a live-in maid, a cleaning woman and a gardener. The upbringing of the children was a bit unorthodox, in an artistic environment with writers and poets. Most of the family investments were lost in the Depression and they had difficulties adjusting to the new circumstances.

They moved to the country to Peppard, near Reading, where the girls taught themselves to ride and train ponies and horses. Pullein-Thompson then worked for Chad

²en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joanna_Cannan

³en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pullein-Thompson_sisters

⁴"Fair Girls and Grey Horses: memories of a country childhood", Josephine, Diana and Christine Pullein-Thompson, London: Allison & Busby, 1996.

Valley⁵. The girls remember they had some dolls, which Cappy probably gave them while working there. Chad Valley is a long-established brand of toys in the United Kingdom. They produced bears, dolls, cast iron toys and also board games. This was probably at the end of the twenties. (Though the book is written in chronological order, dates are not abundant.)



Mamma and Cappy soon after their marriage

Harold Pullein-Thompson and his wife, Joanna Cannan

He also worked for Frigidaire⁶, probably selling refrigerators, which were a novelty at that time. The name 'Frigidaire' became synonymous with any kind of refrigerator, and is probably the origin of the term 'fridge'. In 1926 he was managing director of Vultex Products, Ltd. Vultex is vulcanised latex or rubber.

The London branch made 'Vulpro waterproof sheeting' for surgical purposes⁷ and provided the Vulpro rubber tissue used for balloons made for the India Meteorological Department⁸.

In 1928 he acted as the liquidator for this firm in voluntary liquidation, using the same Aldwych House address as for the game of wei-chi. In 1928 he also obtained a patent for a board game simulating the game of golf⁹. In the 1930s, Pullein-Thompson was running the Public Schools' Employment Bureau. In this capacity he drove across the country, staying with careers teachers or headmasters, and lecturing to pupils about their career possibilities.

It is clear from the book that 'Cappy' was fond of sports and games. He played rugby in his youth, had two centre court seats at Wimbledon during the tournament and often watched the Oxford-Cambridge boat race with the family. Upon marrying he had to give up playing bridge. "Cappy kept his pre-marriage promise to Mamma to give up bridge, but he taught us to play vingt-et-un and poker".

However I found no mention of the game of Go in 'Fair Girls...'. It would have been so nice if they had written about huge stacks of unsold games somewhere in an attic, but unfortunately this was not the case.

It is still something of an enigma how this game came to be put on

⁵en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chad_Valley

⁶en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frigidaire

⁷British Medical Journal, March 28 1925, p. 610,

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2226354/pdf/brmedj05702-0026b.pdf

⁸Nature, Volume 124, Issue 3134, pp. 793-794 (1929),

adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/1929Natur.124R.793C

⁹patent.ipexl.com/GB/GB322221.html

the market. In 1929 there were no Go players whatsoever in Britain. The famous Professor of Chinese at Cambridge, Herbert Giles, had published about the game around 1890 in a scientific magazine, and Horace Cheshire from Hastings had published a book about it in 1911. But these publications had little or no success.

We know nothing about the game being played in the 1920s, so it is quite a surprise that, out of the blue and on the eve of the Great Depression, suddenly this game was being sold in London shops.

So in 1929 we find a book and a game set being sold more or less together. Who persuaded the publishers that this could be a profitable investment?

'The Game of Wei-chi' had been published earlier in Italian and translated in English. (See: 'A Milestone from Far Abroad', Franco Pratesi, BGJ 129, Winter 2002, p. 30-32¹⁰.) Who was the translator? No translator is mentioned as such in the book.

Probably Pecorini was responsible. He had, after all, been in the English Diplomatic Service between 1897 and 1910, and we must assume that his command of the English language was more than adequate. Pecorini's novel 'Japanese Maple' was earlier first published in English, then in Italian, so he must have had connections in the publishing world.

The foreword in the book is by Giles, which also contains Giles' article on Wei-chi, published in Temple Bar in 1877. So there may be a connection

between Giles and Pecorini or Tong Shu. Pecorini probably had to sit courses in Chinese before being sent to China, and the only university professor in Chinese was Giles.

Was Giles involved in the publishing of the book? Was he asked by the publisher if a book on the game was worth publishing? If so, he could have added the foreword and his own earlier article as a good way to sell the book, thinking that his name would act as a stamp of quality on these things Chinese. Another possibility is that Pecorini knew him and asked him to write the foreword.

The relationship between the book and the game set is clear; the game is based on the description in the book. It is unclear, however, how a family man with four small children and a modest income was persuaded to invest his money in an unknown, albeit an intriguing, game.

It seems likely that someone taught him the game and that he was convinced of its depth, its potential for growth and its profitability. It seems possible that he knew the publishers, Longmans and Green, through his wife. Maybe through his relationship with Chad Valley (where he might have worked in precisely that period), he could produce the game set in an economical way. Anyway, this whole project must have cost him lots of money.

I feel we have to honour this early wei-chi entrepreneur; maybe not for his commercial insights but for his courage in producing this very attractive and beautifully made game.

¹⁰www.britgo.org/bgj/bgj129.html

ALLAN ARTHUR COLIN SCARFF

Pioneer of Computer Go

1946-2011



Allan was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, the only child of Arthur and Lillian Scarff. He was artistically talented and could have had a career in Fine Art, though his first love was Physics.

Arthur taught him to play chess though he soon surpassed his father's talent. Allan attended the local King Edward IV Grammar School. The family then moved to Coventry and considered emigrating to Australia. Allan, worried about his upcoming exams, said he wasn't going with his parents, so the plans fell through.

In 1965, Allan was accepted on to a Pure Science degree course at Dundee University. A year later he met his future wife Liz. Allan dropped out of the course to become a computer programmer with NCR in Dundee and start a family.

One evening in 1969, a Pure Science student friend, Phil Bristow, visited and introduced Allan to the Oriental board game Go. This immediately captured his interest and Allan was soon teaching it to anybody who dropped by.

In 1970, with a wife and three children to support, he decided it was time

to further his career, joining ICL in Reading. At ICL Allan found an existing Go club. Later, he ran the club for some years, and all three children were taught to play Go.

Allan showed his artistic flair by creating a fitted carpet for the family home, made from carpet samples collected by Liz. The pieces were cut into different sized and shaped triangles, and the carpet resembled Joseph's coat of many colours.

Allan was with ICL until 1983, becoming Project Manager and Chief Designer. Deciding that microcomputers (PCs) were the future, rather than the large mainframes made by ICL, he left to run his own company, Edge Computers, with one or two interested colleagues.

Allan also began contributing articles on Go to a computer and video games magazine.

Allan had an idea, using a 'cellular automaton' to produce a Go program which could run on a small PC, such as the BBC Acorn. Microgo1 was on the market in 1984. Microgo2 followed, entering various competitions from 1985 to 1989 and acquitting itself well. In 1985, it took 3rd place at the Ing Cup World Computer Go Championship; in 1987 (Grenoble, France) it came joint 1st in the 9x9 section, 2nd in the 19x19, and 3rd in the 9x9 section of the Ing Cup Championship held in Taiwan. In 1989 it took 2nd place in the European Computer Go Championship in Nis, Yugoslavia, and 2nd place in the 19x19 at the North American Championship.

Allan began work on MicroGo3, but this remained in embryonic form.

In the late 1980s Allan was headhunted by Bullet Proof Software, Japan, to develop Go for a Nintendo Games Machine. BPS IGO sold 140,000 copies. Allan was fascinated by Japanese culture.

In 1990, Allan and family moved to Newcastle upon Tyne. The Go club was then run by the late John Hall, a friend of the late Gerry Mills. Allan now spent most of his time playing Go and researching and developing his theories of the game and artificial intelligence.

For Go, he developed Global Connectivity Strategy (written as an e-Book for Edge Computers in 2000)¹. The strategy has only a few simple rules: it doesn't tell players where to move, but it tells them what to do. The basic idea is to connect stones efficiently, which is the Prime Directive. This may seem mundane, but it means doing nothing else (and all competing strategies do something else). The Global part of the name refers to the attention paid to frameworks. The guidelines enable a Go player to play consistent moves to good effect, no matter how strong the opponent.

In the book, Allan compares and contrasts his strategy with 11 alternative strategies, including the one he used to play himself in the early 1970s — Multiple Weak Group Strategy (British Club Style). He conceded that the general idea was not unique to him, but thought that his version was the most ordered.

Through his interest in Go and his experience in software development,

Allan was fascinated by the concept of Artificial Intelligence in the form of neural net technology. He devised an Acolyte Artificial Neural Net System (AANNS) as a step beyond standard neural net systems. Allan wrote that if a person knows how to break down the many features of the game of Go into a comprehensive set of fundamental key concepts (such as how to connect stones and how to make eyes), AANNS can, given the relevant examples, automatically synthesize these into a strong playing algorithm. Allan was working on the specification when he was struck down with the cancer which was to terminate his life all too early. He felt it was his most ambitious and important project to date.

Allan enjoyed argument and debate and liked people who were not afraid to hold controversial views and who were logical and original. He especially enjoyed cooking and trying out new dishes, and had a lifelong fascination with fungi. He often cooked and ate the fungi he picked, and so did the family, often with a little trepidation. At other times the house smelt like a brewery when he took to making his own beer; rather yeasty tasting, but very palatable. His work in the kitchen will be sadly missed.

He is survived by his wife Liz, his three grownup children, Julia, Sean and Christian, and a granddaughter, Jasmine. Julia, Sean and Jasmine have been blessed with his artistic talent. Sean inherited his technical skills, his love of gadgets and interest in fungi. Christian has inherited his enthusiasm for Go.

Liz Scarff

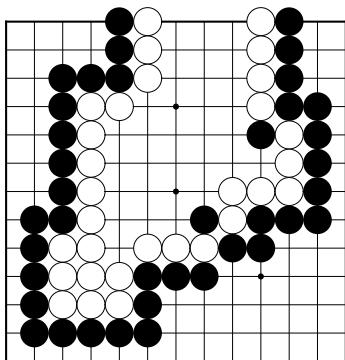
¹For more detail, see the documents describing this strategy and the AANNS approach at www.britgo.org/scarff/legacy.

AN EXCITING PROBLEM TO DECIDE A GAME

Andrew Simons

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The following problem is adapted from a recent game of mine¹ (n.b. the actual game was on a 19x19 board, but the 13x13 grid used below is sufficient for the problem).



It is Black to play. White could have played a defensive move to fix the bad aji as the dame were being filled, but then he would have lost by half a point (the game was played under Japanese rules). Therefore any gain counts as a success for Black: capturing some stones, seki or ko.

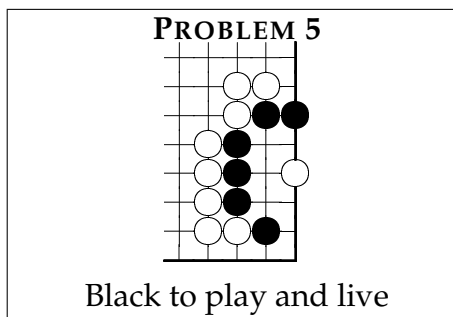
This problem is rather difficult: you probably need to be a high dan player to solve it in your head. However, I suggest that you try for a while, and then explore variations on a board before looking at the answers: there are many beautiful tesujis, snapbacks, and connect-and-dies hidden within as rewards for the determined traveller.

A few hints:

1. Add a second stone and sacrifice both.
2. My solution relied on the dango in the lower left not being an eye, but someone else found another solution that works regardless.

Incidentally, this demonstrates an aspect of Japanese rules I prefer over AGA; it is much more satisfying for a game to be decided by a problem like this than the randomness of dame parity.

For the solutions, turn to page 31.



¹www.online-go.com/games/board.php?boardID=271713

WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

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PGETC

The UK team continued to have mixed fortunes in The Pandanet Go European Team Championship. The 13th December match was against the strong team from Israel. Bei Ge lost a very close game on the first board against the top Israeli, Ali Jabarin, actually playing from Korea where he is studying Go. David Ward also lost his opening game for the team on board four. Jon Diamond lost by first clicking the wrong point and later missing an obvious snapback when in a good position. Andrew Simons won his game but was unable to recover the situation on his own, so the result was a loss, as in the previous year's match.

The 24th January match looked a good chance for a win as it was against Switzerland, who had been promoted from C-League. Chong Han was a new team member for Britain on board one, but lost a very complex game by a few points. However on board two Des Cann started powerfully and managed to hang on for a win, despite losing some key cutting stones. Alex Selby also won his relatively peaceful game, but Andrew Simons forgot to kill an opponent's group and so lost, drawing the match. The Swiss team kindly let the Brits join reviews of the games the next evening with their trainer, Hwang In-Seong.

The round six game on 21st February was expected to be a tough one, as Finland were relegated from the A-League and are a strong team. Chong Han led off with a speedy victory on board one, but Des Cann had a

tough game and let a few stones too many die in the middle game, losing by 8.5 in the end. Jon Diamond on board three was always in charge and eventually his opponent resigned in time trouble. So it all hinged on the last game to finish, that of team captain Andrew Simons. Despite lots of errors in overtime, he won narrowly, by 1.5 points. So Britain got its first win of the season, with hopes of climbing higher than the then seventh place.

Gavin Rooney and Ian Davis won both their games for Ireland in their next three matches in the C-League, drawing against Italy on 10th January and Norway on 21st February. On 31st January, James Hutchinson also won, to give a win by three games to one against Bulgaria. After this, Ireland were in fourth place.

SportAccord World Mind Games

SportAccord (formerly known as IMSA) ran their first World Mind Games in Beijing in December. In the Team Go, China was unbeaten in all five matches to win the event. They won all five games in their matches against Europe, Taiwan and America; in round two they beat Korea three to two and only dropped one game against Japan in round four. Second place went to Korea, who only lost to China and beat Japan in the last round, forcing them to take the third place. Fourth was Chinese Taipei on two wins, and fifth was America and sixth Europe.

Both USA and Europe won games only in the match against each other. For Europe, Cristian Pop

and Jan Simara won, whilst Catalin Taranu, Cornel Burzo and Vanessa Wong lost in the clash between the bottom teams in round three.

After the Teams, the other Go event was the Pairs. Vanessa Wong and Catalin Taranu played together for Europe, but lost in round one against pros Mukai Chiaki and Yamashita Keigo from Japan, and in the play-off for fifth place lost to Feng Yun and Jie Li of America. The winners were China's Li He and Piao Wenyao, with Korea second, Japan third and Chinese Taipei fourth.

European Cup

The European Cup season continued with London (see UK News) and then Barcelona, where Korean player Hwang In-Seong won all five and Csaba Mero was top European in second place. This put him on 45 points, 24 ahead of Martin Lee. Chong Han and Andrew Kay's points from London placed them third with 15.

World Student Oza

The tenth World Student Oza took place in Tokyo on the last two days in February. Western players had earned their places in an online tournament on Pandanet. Ondrej Silt (Czechia), Frederick Blomback (Sweden) and Laura Avram (Romania) represented Europe and won two games, two games and one game out of four respectively. The winner was Xu Jin of China, who beat Seo Yutae of Korea in the final.

Dublin

Csaba Mero (6d Hungary) won the European Cup event in (largely) sunny Dublin. This year the Irish Open was the Confucius Cup because of a new sponsor, but it was held on the first weekend in March, in the

Teachers' Club, as ever. Second with four wins out of five was Guochen Xie (6d China) who flew in from Boston to take part. Kim Ouweleen (3d Amsterdam) was third and Chu Lu (4d Warwick) was fourth, both on three wins. Taking the fifth place and final Grand Prix place was Vit Brunner (4d Brno). Winning four games were Diana Blaszczyk (4k Warsaw), Frank Tan (9k Dublin), Marek Gutkowski (9k Warsaw) and Paul Kelly (11k Belfast). None of the British players won four, but Dave Horan (9k Chester) and Pat Ridley (10k Chester) both won three.



Csaba Mero receives the Confucius Cup from Dr. Liming Wang

Prior to the main event, on the Friday evening was the Irish Rapid, played with handicaps and progressively shortening thinking time. It was won this time by Julien Renaud (1d France), a former Dublin resident, with five wins. He beat Roman Pszonka (3d Dublin) in the last, fastest, round. Also winning four were Gavin Rooney (2d Cork) and Thomas Shanahan (11k Galway).

The prizes were awarded by Dr. Liming Wang, Director of the UCD Confucius Institute For Ireland and a 2d Go player, who had actually played in the first ever Irish Go Congress.

AN EXCITING PROBLEM: SOLUTIONS

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Here are the solutions to the problem posed on page 28.

If Black is to accomplish anything, it should be clear it will be by utilising his two cutting stones, White's marked cutting point and trying to capture White's four stones in the top right. The first move to consider would be simply extending as in Diagram 1. Once White defends at ②, Black can try capturing White's four stones at the top (for example with A), but nothing quite works (White answers at B).

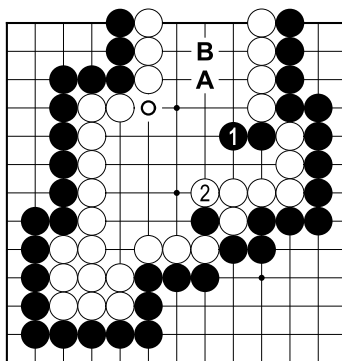


Diagram 1

If Black is to be successful in his assault on the top, he will need more than a single stone in sente to help him. Therefore he pulls out his other cutting stone first, intending to sacrifice it to get additional forcing moves before attacking the top. White has to make the empty triangle at ②: if she plays atari on the other cutting stone, Black gets a snapback. Next, ③ makes a net from which White has two ways to escape.

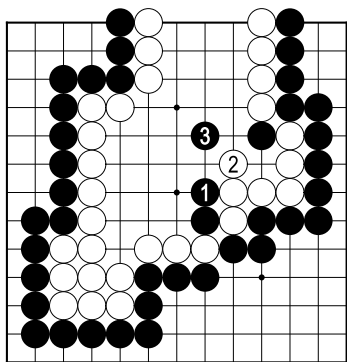


Diagram 2

If White captures the single stone, Black cuts again, aiming to squeeze White. If White simply captures the single stone to avoid snapback, Black squeezes and then pushes down at A, and White is captured (if White jumps to B, Black throws in at C).

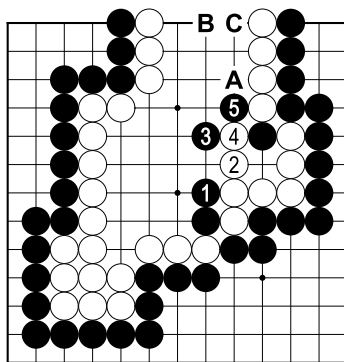


Diagram 3

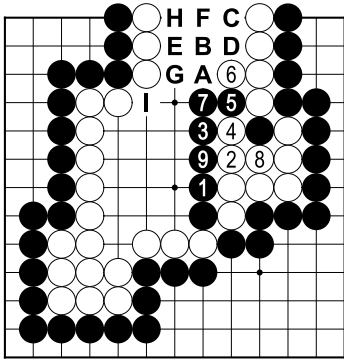


Diagram 4

White might try putting in the atari of ⑥ first, but Black still squeezes and with A to I, White is on a one-way street to death.

After Black's cut of ⑤, White might try breaking out with two ataris. Black doesn't save the second stone but instead catches White in a lovely connect-and-die.

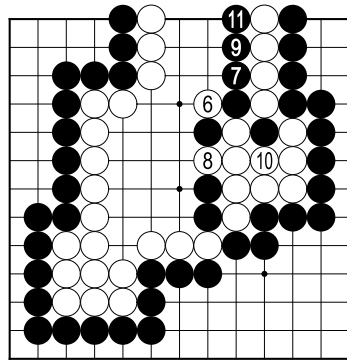


Diagram 5

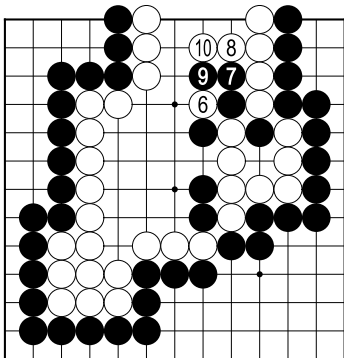
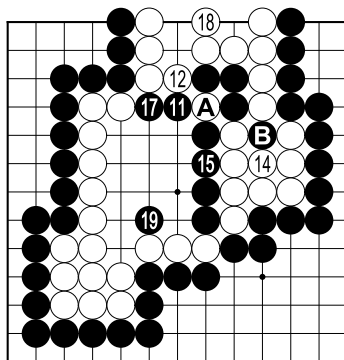


Diagram 6

Given that the above succeeds for Black, White can try as in Diagram 6, which looks better for a while as White manages to connect along the top...

... and then captures to avoid snapback. However, Black again squeezes, and then cuts. White has to live at ⑱ (or Black plays there and White dies very quickly), which allows Black to play ⑲ to take away White's eyes of the group that he has cut off in sente. Black doesn't have an eye either, though, so this is a seki (verification left to the reader). This is why I mentioned earlier that White's dango in the lower left was relevant: if she had an eye then Black would be dead.



⑬ at A, ⑰ at B.

Diagram 7

So from these variations, we can conclude that ④, capturing the single stone, fails. So instead play must continue as in Diagram 8. Black keeps playing as many forcing moves as possible by blocking at ⑤ (White can't answer at ⑦ or else Black plays one above for the now familiar snapback). White captures two stones, but we can now see that Black has vastly improved upon the first diagram since he has two extra stones at ③ and ⑤ as support for the attack on the top.

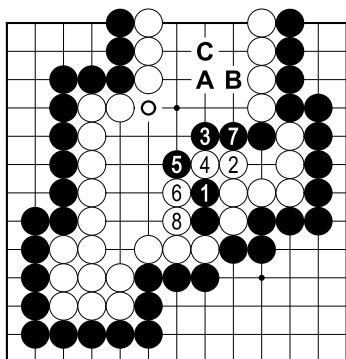


Diagram 8

So now Black has to try to capture the four White stones, or at least harass them to reduce their eye space and liberties so that the marked cut then works. Moves at A or B were my first ideas, but neither of these come to much when White connects at C in the previous diagram (⑩ in Diagram 9), for example. (Once Black connects at A, White takes a liberty at B and Black can't atari due to his lack of an eye, whilst White does have one.)

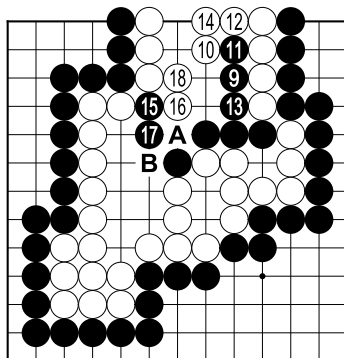


Diagram 9

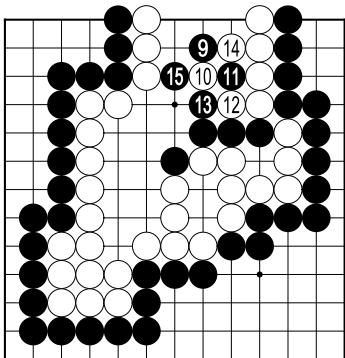


Diagram 10

“Your opponent’s key point is your key point” suggests 9 at C in Diagram 8 (10 in Diagram 9). If White tries to cut this off, Black succeeds in getting a ko.

As White can’t connect on top, he connects underneath. 11 threatens to throw-in and capture in a connect-and-die. White can defend against this by connecting to either side, so Black must be able to win against both. The variations are similar; to stop this rather long solution getting longer, I will only show one.

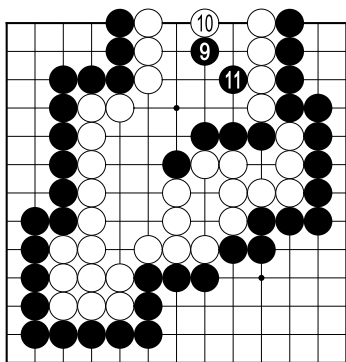


Diagram 11

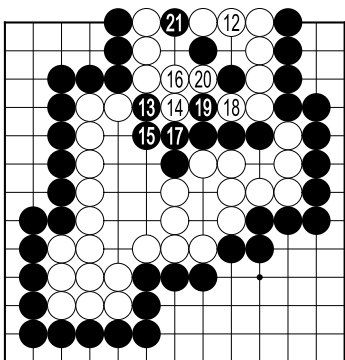


Diagram 12

Having squished White against the edge without an eye, Black cuts, and if White connects with 16, Black gets an exquisite double snapback (my favourite variation of this problem).

And if White cuts with ⑩, Black cuts and throws in.

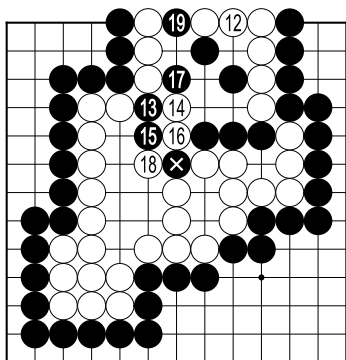


Diagram 13

As an aside, notice the importance of the marked Black stone in Diagram 13 above taking a liberty, which allows this sequence to work. This is why the net of ③ way back at the start was key; if Black simply plays as in Diagram 14 then this sequence doesn't work (of course the net does give White the option of playing ④, breaking out above, but we've shown Black wins that way too).

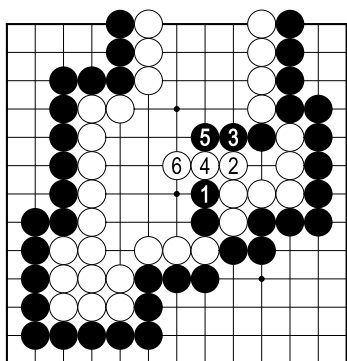
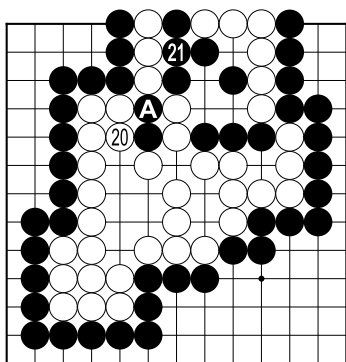


Diagram 14

To continue, White can't capture ⑩ or it's a snapback, so Black is able to capture the White stones on the right (in sente!).



②② at A.

Diagram 15

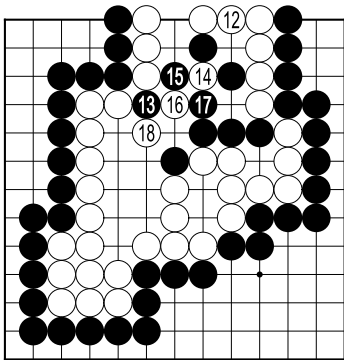


Diagram 16

There are a few other resistances for White to try, such as the fancy wedge at ⑭ in Diagram 16. If Black falls for the bait and ataris, White wins as Black only has one eye inside and White is safely connected.

Instead Black must calmly connect. Even though it looks like White's wedge fixed the cutting point in sente, Black still can force a shortage of liberties by throwing-in there for another connect-and-die.

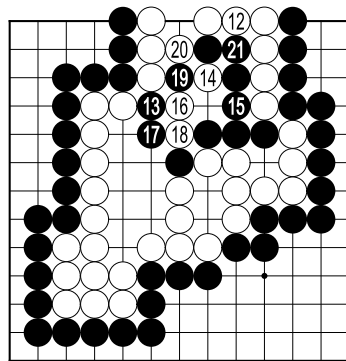


Diagram 17

But that's not the end of it! When I posted this problem online, someone found an alternative solution. It is better in that it works even if White has an eye in the lower left, and is elegant in its simplicity, but is worse in that its denouement is not a double snapback!

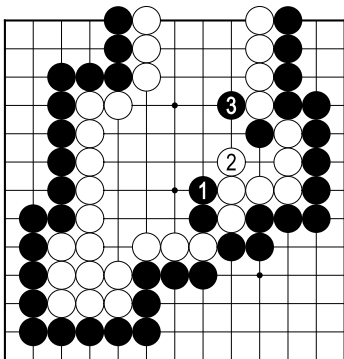


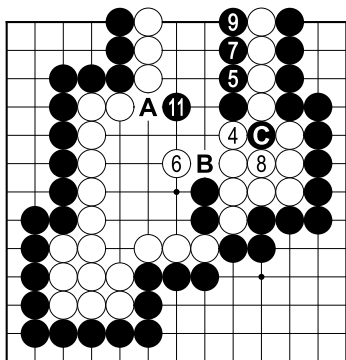
Diagram 18

Rather than playing the net for ③, he takes a liberty as in Diagram 18, which is the key shape point for setting up the squeeze.

If White cuts, Black pushes down and White has to capture the two stones somehow, such as with ⑥. But Black continues squeezing and then plays 11, making miai of A and B.

④ at B ends up very similar, with ⑪ being the key point for creating miai to capture some stones.

④ blocking at ⑤ is answered at B and ends up as the one-way road to death of the Diagram 4.



⑩ at C.

Diagram 19

White's strongest resistance is the rather silly-looking empty triangle of ⑥ in Diagram 20, but again A and B end up as miai.

This variation reveals why this alternative ③ is better than the net: with the net, Black had already made the exchange of ⑨ for ⑩ before White played at ⑥, which meant ⑥ was atari and he was able to connect underneath with ⑦. Black only won because of the seki that resulted later.

By keeping the ⑨-⑩ exchange in reserve until it is needed, White is denied this opportunity, so is dead even with an eye instead of with a dango in the lower left.

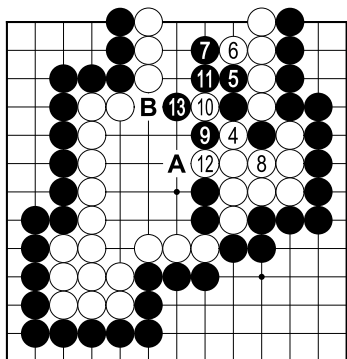


Diagram 20

In conclusion, Black has many beautiful ways to win. I hope you enjoyed this problem as much as I did. I find it remarkable that such an exquisite problem arose naturally in a game.

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CONSIDERING THE POSITION: ANSWERS

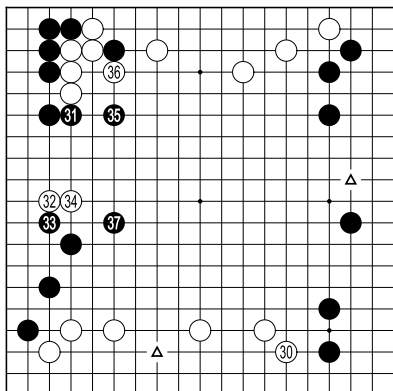
David Ward

dward1957@msn.com

Here are the answers to the questions posed in Considering the Position on page 8.

'(DW)' indicates a comment by me rather than one translated from the book.

Variation A: a big point to defend the bottom side?



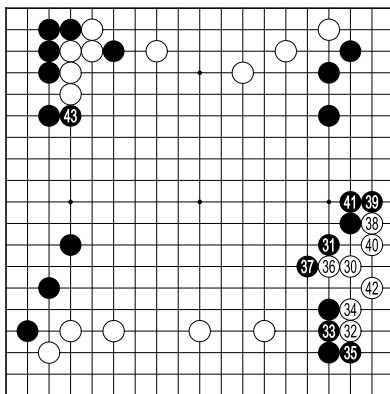
③⑩ is too slow.

(DW) After ③① White should invade the left side, otherwise it will become too big. ③② is the best try, but the follow up to ③⑦ shows White under severe attack, so ③⑩ is rejected. Note the forcing exchange of ③⑤ for ③⑥, correctly timed to add potency to attacking the real target of ③② and ③④.

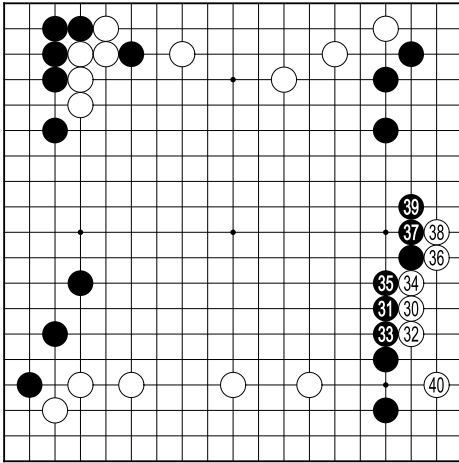
The key points triangled remain. Presumably if the white group does escape, Black will be able to build up sufficient influence to gain from the attack, but this is not made explicit in the text.

Variation B1: cut the RHS position straight away?

This is a failure for White. Black has profited and retains sente to play at ④③.



Variation B2: cut the RHS position straight away?

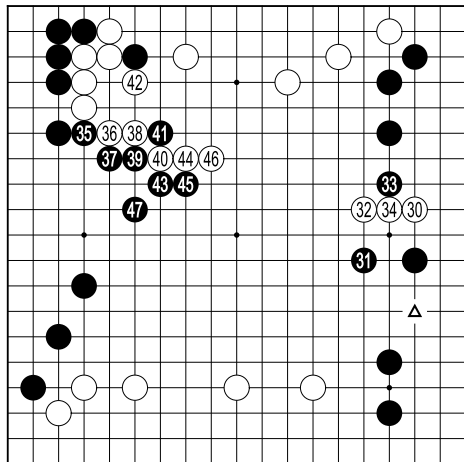


31 Black must not play here.

This is a failure for Black.

(DW) If you compare with the previous diagram, White makes a lot more points. The black wall is perfect but has little value in this position.

Variation C: cut the RHS position here?



34 (DW) A middle game joseki.

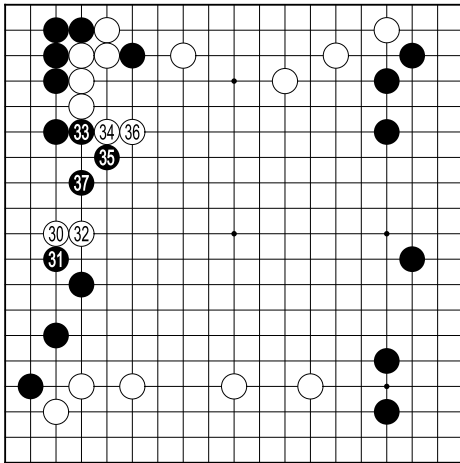
35 The three stones are weak but not that weak, so Black has to consider how to attack profitably. A direct attack on the three stones could backfire, so Black plays the big point.

47 This is given as a success for Black; the move is “Hou” in Chinese, translated to “thick” in English and “Atsui” in Japanese. Some of you may recall the lecture by John Fairbairn about 10 years ago at the Open University on the subtle meaning of Atsui. To outrageously paraphrase, the position has “good aji” — (a bit like the effects of eating porridge, the goodness is a slow burner and lingers for longer!).

Also note that 31 protects against a White invasion at the triangled point.

(DW) Discussing this position with Jasper (Lingjun Miao), it is not clear how both players are to proceed. Territorially, the game is not bad for White; it is not obvious how Black can profit by attacking the three stones and it is White to play. It is left to the reader to fill in the gaps. As Jasper said, to really understand this book you will be close to professional strength!

Variation D: cut the LHS position?

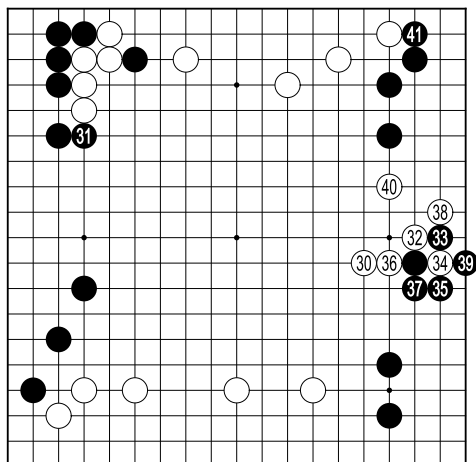


White is under attack so, for much the same reasons as the first diagram, this is rejected.

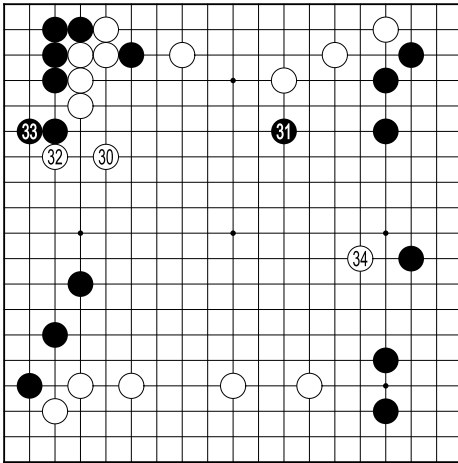
Variation E: erase the right side?

The text says "Not bad, but not good enough!" for White.

(DW) The reader has to accept the verdict: that the left side is bigger than the right side.



Variation F1: left side erasure



The left side is the focus and White has a good position after

③④

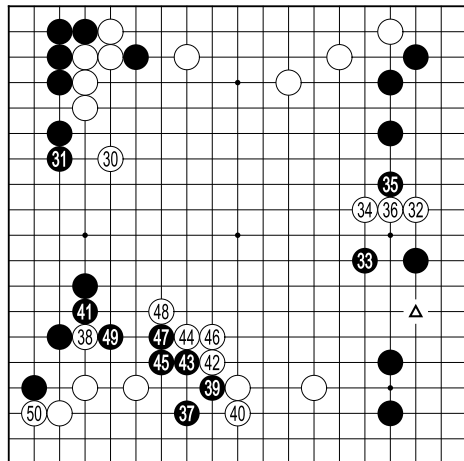
(DW) Again the continuations are left for the reader to sort out.

Variation F2: left side erasure

- ③⑤ Protecting against an invasion at the triangled point.
- ③⑥ This is the correct order of moves. White keeps the left side in check and plays first on the right side.
- ③⑦ Black naturally plays the other invasion point.

This is the game continuation. White went on to win by 5 points.

(DW) The thickness White builds on the bottom is indirectly helping the three stones on the RHS.



SOLUTIONS TO THE NUMBERED PROBLEMS

The .sgf files for these problems, showing a fuller set of lines and including failures, are to be found at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue159.

Solution to Problem 1

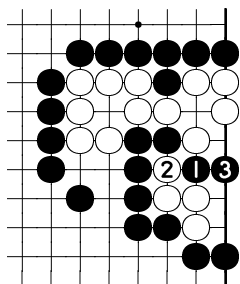


Diagram 1

In Diagram 1, the wedge is often the tesuji and indeed it is the correct move here. It may look like White can play at ② and end up capturing ①, but Black drops to the edge and White cannot atari without playing self-atari.

Solution to Problem 3

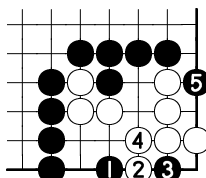


Diagram 3

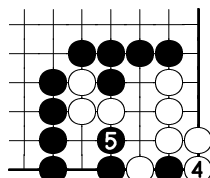


Diagram 4

In Diagram 3, this ① is the killing move, however after ②, ③ is hard to see. If White connects the stone in atari, then Black takes away the edge eye leaving White dead.

If White takes the throw-in stone, as in Diagram 4, Black just stands up and White cannot live. If Black incorrectly starts with his first move at ②, then there is no way to kill White.

Solution to Problem 2

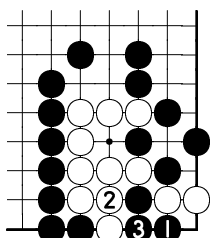


Diagram 2

It may look like White will capture Black and make easy eyes if Black starts at ① in Diagram 2. However ② is the only local move that is not self-atari, so Black can connect with ③ and leave White with a dead shape.

Solution to Problem 4

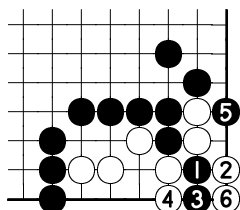


Diagram 5

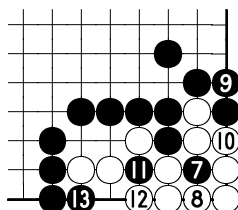


Diagram 6

Playing the 2-2 point as in Diagram 5, to make use of the special property of the corner, is the tesuji here.

The next moves are forced and Black throws in as in Diagram 6. There is no way White can make two eyes, even if he plays ⑩ elsewhere.

Solution to Problem 5

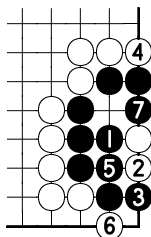


Diagram 7

Playing ① in Diagram 7 is the only way to live. If Black starts at ②, White plays the diagonal move that cuts Black apart, but if Black plays like this he easily lives.

If White plays ② at ③, then Black must not play next at ⑤, but at ⑦, else he dies.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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BGA website: www.britgo.org

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

BGA policy discussion list: bga-policy@britgo.org (open to BGA members only).

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

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COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT JOURNAL

The copy date for the Summer issue of the Journal is **14th May**.

Please send your contributions to journal@britgo.org.

The Editor will be glad to discuss the suitability of any material you may have in mind.



SECOND CALL FOR PAPERS/PARTICIPANTS AT THE 2012 INTERNATIONAL GO SYMPOSIUM

An International Go Symposium, with Nolan Bushnell (founder of Atari) as the keynote speaker, will take place August 4th and 5th 2012. The conference, sponsored by the International Go Federation and the American Go Association, will be held at the beginning of the U.S. Go Congress in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Presentations can include educational, cultural, historical, literary, artistic, scientific and other interesting aspects of the game. Depending on the number and nature of the talks, suggested timing is a half-hour presentation with a 15-minute question and answer period. Translators and editing can be provided, and additional opportunities for questions and answers afterwards will be available.

For those unable to attend, we will augment the usual methods of presenting papers by using Skype and possibly other Internet forms of communication that would enable audience participation. To alleviate problems with the differences in international times, we may also include pre-prepared talks on DVDs or with other pre-recorded means. Pending the amounts of sponsorship and costs, honorariums may be offered.

For those who wish to publish, presentations can be included in an e-publication connected with the American Go Association web site and e-Journal (www.usgo.org). Publication in other forms will be allowed. Another change from the usual proceedings of a conference is that (again for those who wish to) papers and presentations can be put up before the Symposium on our website. This will enable better audience participation and the ability to include more than what is possible during the talk.

Please contact: Peter Shotwell pshotwell@gmail.com

For reference, the website for the Symposium is at www.gosymposium.org where participants and their subjects will be listed. The records of a similar 2003 ICOB Conference in Korea is at www.usgo.org/yearbook/2003ICOB.html, while a Symposium in Sweden during the 2008 European Go Congress is at egc2008.eu/en/events/symposium.php. The website for the US Congress is at www.gocongress.org. For ideas and reference, research papers in these fields can be found at www.usgo.org/bobhighlibrary.

COLLECTING GO XII: JOURNALS

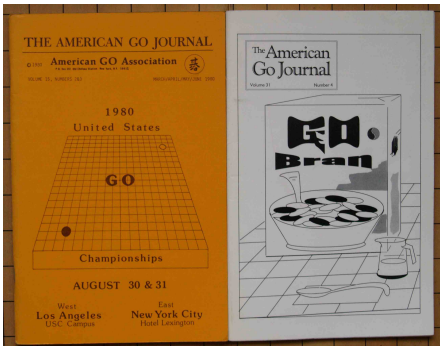
Tony Atkins

ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk



A lot of long established British Go players will have a sizeable collection of British Go Journals. If you have all of them since they became A5 sized (number 20, in July 1973), you will need nearly 20 inches of shelf space. Often collections can be built up from second hand or unissued stock, many of which the BGA makes available in return for donations to support youth Go. Scans and electronic versions of all editions are available on our website (apart from those from the last year). Illustrated are numbers 22 (Jan 1974, the first with a cover picture), 50 (Nov 1980), 100 (Autumn 1995, the last with coloured card cover) and 158.

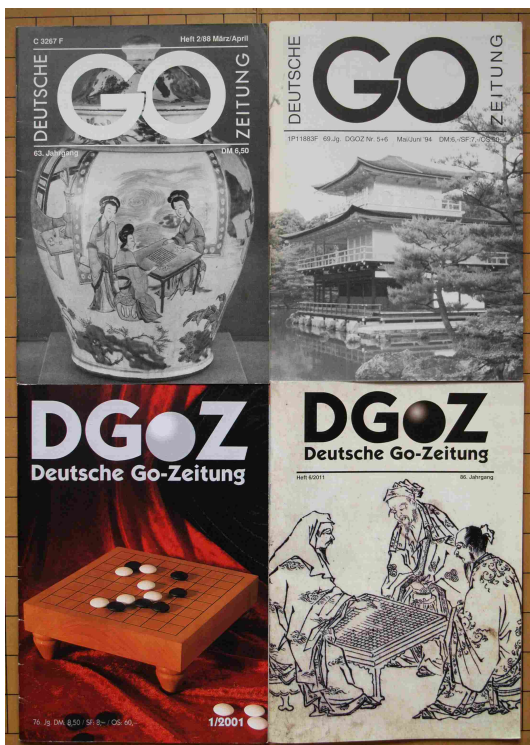
The American Go Journal stopped in 2003. It was replaced by a yearbook, but after a few editions even that went electronic. Illustrated are one of the original 8.5 by 11 inch journals from 1980 and the Go Bran cover from 1997, the last small edition. The size doubled in 1998 and the first and penultimate such editions (from 1998 and 2003) are shown.



(continued overleaf)

(Collecting Go XII: Journals ... continued from inside cover)

The German journal, Deutsche Go-Zeitung (DGoZ), has remained in A5 size to this day. In 2001 it went full colour and the first such issue is illustrated, along with editions from 1988, 1994 and the last from 2011. It is the best quality Go magazine produced in Europe, supported by the size of Germany's membership (being well over 2000). It contains lots of game records, photographs and reports, as well as a regular problem competition and also junior pages.



The Dutch journal used to be A5 but went up to 166x240 mm in 1996. Its noteworthy feature is the glossy cover, where the photograph wraps round to the back page as well as the front. The French journal, Revue Francaise de Go, also went through a size increase and looks a lot like the final American form. There are several other countries that produce, or have produced, journals including Belgium, Canada, Russia, and Australia. Their quality is varied, but, if you can read the language, most are worth looking out for.