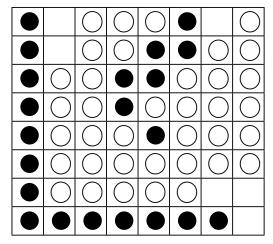
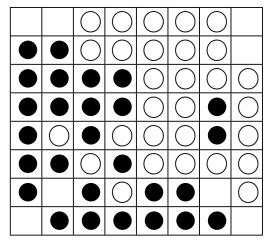
Around the Board in 60 Moves

The Newsletter of the British Othello Federation August 1995



Black to play and draw



Black to play and win

 \dots approximately.

INFORMATION

Othello is manufactured and marketed by Peter Pan Playthings, Swindon.

The British Othello Federation is an independent body. Annual subscription for British residents costs £6 (with the first year's membership including a copy of the instructional book Othello: Brief & Basic). Ten years membership is available for £55. An overseas subscription costs £8 per year, or £75 for ten years. Cheques or postal orders payable to the British Othello Federation should be sent to David Haigh. The price of Othello: Brief & Basic for existing members is £6.

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Contributors: Graham Brightwell, Joel Feinstein, David Haigh, Imre Leader, Aubrey de Grey, Mark Wormley, Phil Marson, Iain Barrass, Eileen Forsyth, Ian Turner, Sid Cox, Karsten Switness, Salvador Rockinghorse, Fido Custard, BYE.

Addresses of Officers.

Chairman and Newsletter Editor: Graham Brightwell, 12A Glenfield Road, Balham, London SW12 0HG. Tel. 0181-675-8873 or 0171-955-7624 (Work).

Secretary: David Haigh, 62, Romsey Road, Winchester, Hants., SO22 5PH. Tel. 01-962-853826.

Treasurer: Phil Marson, 31, Claremont Road, Sherwood Rise, Nottingham, NG5 1BH. Tel. 0115-960-6234

Publicity Officer: Mark Wormley, Flat 45, Rowntree Wharf, Navigation Rd., York. YO1 2XA. Tel. 01-904-656205.

Please note that all British phone numbers have changed recently. Most just have a 1 inserted after the leading 0, others (e.g., Nottingham numbers), are changing completely.

About The Cover by Graham Brightwell.

Two positions extracted from the highly recommended Icare program. Both are quite easy really; you'll get the point after you've solved them. Answers (not that you'll need them) are on p.??. The first position comes from a game between Jeremy Rickard and Eileen Piercy at the 1986 Cambridge Open; the second is from a 1991 Japanese game Ishii v. Murakami.

Forthcoming Event

The 1995 Nationals organised by Ian Turner.

We are pleased to announce that the 1995 British Championship will take place over the weekend of September 23rd-24th in Portsmouth.

Venue: Organiser:

The Lounge Ian Turner
Nuffield Centre 41 Jessie Rd.
University of Portsmouth Southsea
St. Michael's Rd. Portsmouth

Portsmouth Hants.

PO1 2ED. 01705-789435

An information sheet will be sent out to all those who have qualified for the National Final, giving details of how to find the venue, as well as a list of convenient hotels.

The Annual General Meeting of the Federation will take place at 1 p.m. on Saturday 23rd, followed by the first three rounds of play. Play will start at 9 a.m. on Sunday, with six more rounds of Swiss, followed by a one-game Final and a play-off for third place if the third and fourth finishers happen to be level on points.

The Challengers' tournament, open to all those not having qualified for the Nationals, will take place on the Sunday, if there is enough interest to warrant holding the tournament. Several people have already expressed some interest, so it seems likely that the tournament will go ahead, but it is essential that you contact Ian Turner if you are intending to play in this event.

The top three finishers in the Nationals will be eligible to represent Britain in the forthcoming World Championships. As yet, we do not know either the venue or the date of the Worlds; the latest rumour is that they might take place in Sydney, Australia, but even the rumour admits that they might not.

Tournament Reports – A Beginner's Guide by Karsten Switness.

In recent years we have had several complaints, mostly from the Editor, about the non-appearance of reports on key events. In response, I have produced the official B.O.F. guide for tournament report writers. Just follow these simple, straightforward instructions, and create your very own tournament report to amaze your family, delight your friends, and placate the editor.

The 199x xxxxxxxxxx Open/International/Beginner's/ Beginners'/ Junior/Quickplay/Regional Tournament/Championship

by <insert your name, or a witty pseudonym>.

This year's <insert name of tournament> was held on a wet Saturday/in bright conditions/on the day of the Boat Race/ Grand National/F.A.Cup Final, but this did not deter <insert number of players> 1 keen² players from taking part in the tournament. We were particularly pleased to welcome <insert name of any player whatsoever>, who had travelled all the way from <distant place>/was making a comeback after several years away from the game/showed great promise on his/her debut³.

The tournament began well, with a very exciting game between <one of the top players> and <a middle-ranking player>. After a close midgame <middle player> seemed to have chances in the ending, but <top player> eventually emerged as the comfortable winner⁴.

<Player who won their first three games> seemed to be on excellent
form, winning his/her first three games, to be (joint) leader at lunch time, along
with <anybody else on 3/3>, who had a good win over <someone they've
beaten>. For lunch, the players all went to a local pub⁵, where <insert
name of a player you haven't managed to mention yet> told us all about
his latest job/showed his/her skill on the fruit machine/ate an exceptional amount
of chips.

After lunch, there was a key game between <the eventual winner> and <whoever they were playing in round 4>, with <the winner> winning by

¹ If fewer than 4, or more than 20, players turned up, this merits special comment.

² Even if some of them obviously aren't.

³ If they actually scored any points, be even more condescending.

⁴ Any game ending, e.g., 41-23 can safely be described in this way; there is no need to have watched the game.

⁵ If you can think of an alternative here, please let me know.

a score of <whatever the score was $>^6$ – <the winner> was now looking unstoppable.

One of the upsets of the tournament took place in round X, with <underdog> playing particularly well to beat <favourite>. Also in round X, <narrow winner> had a very narrow win over <narrow loser> 7 .

Going into the last round, <give the leading positions>. <Whoever was second> comfortably won his/her game against <opponent>, so the tournament hinged on the game between <winner>, and <the unfortunate low-ranked player who was always certain to lose to them in the last round>. <Winner> emerged victorious after a tough battle, and deservedly won the tournament.

<Player who did slightly better than expected> did extremely well
to finish <wherever>, and <someone else> also had a good tournament.

One amusing incident was \dots ⁸.

All the players greatly enjoyed the tournament and the day out. Thanks are due to the referee, <name>, who was very calm and efficient throughout./The referee, <name> had a trouble-free day, with all the players in good spirits throughout.⁹

⁶ Actually giving the score serves two purposes; it persuades the reader that this really was the key game, and it convinces them that you really were present and taking a keen interest.

⁷ This is just to avoid what would otherwise be a very short paragraph, as there is clearly nothing else to say about the upset victory, which was probably just the sixth ranked player in the tournament beating the fourth, or something equally startling.

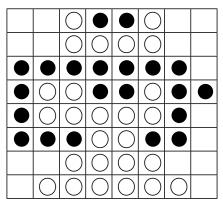
⁸ If there wasn't one, make one up.

⁹ The second alternative is only to be used if the tournament referee is the writer of the article – in neither case need you worry that anyone will believe this.

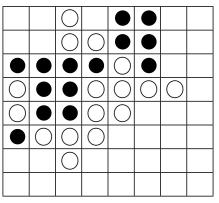
TECHNICAL ARTICLES

Lucky Dip by Mike Handel.

Five real-life Othello positions. More than five answers, no doubt. I am not 100% secure in any of these positions, indeed the hope is to stimulate feedback. So, for each 'puzzle' I want your moves, your plans, your sequences and your justifications. And if your ideas are better than mine, I definitely want to know.



1. White to play.

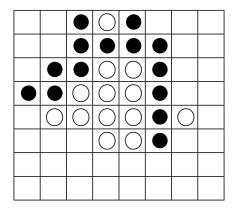


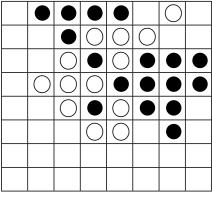
2. Black to play.

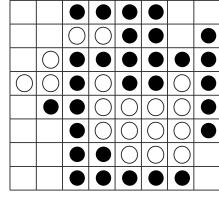
- (1) Anything sensible wins; my approach is more radical. Consider 44b7 45a8 46a7 47h8 48g7. Now Black has 49h6. White is still winning, that is hardly the point. 44g7! This is nice because in isolation it is dreadful, but 45h8 46b7 47a8 48a7, Black does not have h6, he must play b1 or g1, game over. You can get a better disc count with 44h5 g2 h1 h6 b2 g1 h3 h2 g7 a2 a7 a8 b7 b1 a1 h7 h8. Or even 44h3 h2 h6 g7 b2 a1 b1 b7 a8 a2 a7 g2 h7 h8 h5 g1 h1, ..., but I hope you agree that 44g7 is a lot clearer.
- (2) Slightly frustrating, because Black is 'clearly' winning, yet it would be easy to drift, and parity lurks. g4 is the single weirdest disc on the board. So straggly, yet sensibly guarantees access to d1. I would go for 27d1 28g1 myself. Note that b1 is not then a free move for White. Black has a tempo at b2 in response, or even, say, hope to give White the east edge, with the parity effect forcing White into b2 (this last suggestion is not serious, however it is nice to know all the options). I am impressed if you considered and rejected 27d1

28g1 29b7. E.g., 30g3 h5 h4 h3 d7 c8 g2, too late, Black remembers playing better X-squares in his time. The standard run-out 37h2 is horrible. Even if it did not flip diagonally, White has b2 (perfectly acceptable) or playing in the odd SW region. All this demonstrates is that even with radical action White is not running out of moves!

Again, there are few moves I object to at 29, yet it seems to me that there is a way to take advantage of that straggly g4 disc: 29h4! Strange, that White is now under pressure, e.g., 30f5 g3 b1 b2 a1 a2. White has 36g2 or 36h2. Black slightly ahead after either.







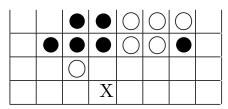
- 3. White to play.
- 4. Black to play.
- 5. White to play.
- (3) Doubtless 24e7 wins handsomely, can you do better? After e7, f1 is off the cards for a while, while a White move to g4 turns e2, so perhaps Black will get to f1 first. So play 24f1, and *oblige* Black to take g1. Now a move to g4 is less damaging, and White can get on with 26e7 as before. Perhaps you do not like to unwedge? I believe the black five is adequate compensation.
- (4) Yes, I am afraid Black is completely dead. You have been outplayed. So, one option is to resign, congratulate your opponent, get a drink, and watch some serious games. Do you roll over and die? No, you play 27g2. It is to be stressed that you have in no way saved yourself, you have simply made it White to play. She has to be very careful. If 28f1 (reasonable at first glance) 29h1, 30h2, play 31b6 pausing only to thank the stars for making g2 sensible. Failing that, 28h2 b3 a3 a5 f6 b5 a4 a2 a6 a7 c6 c7 d7 b6, White has a number of wins, but even assuming she gets that far, it is a constant battle against shell-shock, as she realises that the diagonal won'tbe broken, where are her discs coming from? At least you lost in entertaining fashion!
- (5) White has problems here, oh yes. Black may or may not take b1 for a move, while the NE region may be a sacrifice too far. So 44b2, poisoning b1, grabbing the diagonal, is tempting. Alas for the tempted. 45a5 a6 a1 b1 a2. You can see that White has already given up too much, in exchange for impotent parity: 50g2 b1 g1 h8 h7 (pass) a3 b6 a7 a8 b7 b8 33-31 black. What White needs to do is play 44a5 herself, recognising no need to grab diagonals, but sensibly leaving the threat. 45b1, now 46b2 poisons b6, 47a6 b6 a7 a8 a1 b8 h8 h7 a2 (yes, a swindle, but White gets b8/b7) h1 a3 b7 (pass) g1 g2 30-34 white. White could work the other main diagonal instead: 44a5 b1 b6 b7 g2 h8 h7 a7 a8 b8 a6 a2 a3 g1 a1 b2 h1 also 30-34. What about other Black 45s? 45a6 a7 b6 b2 a3 and 45b6 b2 a6 a7 a3 are virtually the same (losing, though Black does better, after 45a6 a7, to take h8 while he can). 45a6 may be the best try, since White could go wrong with 46b6 a3 b2 b7 g1 a7 b1 g2 b8 a8 (pass) h7 h8 a2 a1 (pass) h1 34-30 black.

Don't You Like My Style by Fido Custard.

Over the years of playing Othello I have discovered that there are many different styles of play whihe various Othello players have adopted. These people have gone on to many successes in this delightful game. Therefore I was debating to myself which style to copy in order to become a better player. Here are just a few of examples of playera and their styles.

Imre Leader.

I have noticed that Imre is a big fan of the flat wall (maybe because he stares at so many before and/or during games). This is a technique where he takes a thin walland forces his opponent to play through to Imre's advantage. This has won him many games in his waddling career.



Black to play.

Another favourite of his is the Inward Taking Edge Move (I.T.E.M.) where he plays a dainty and quiet move onto the edge by a backwards diagonal movement (see Diagram; X marks the I.T.E.M.). Under no circumstances should a beginner try this, because it might involve serious injuries to lowerback parts caused by the severe

backwards diagonal movement involved.

Graham Brightwell.

Graham is definitely an endgame specialist. He seems to look towards the endgame at move one. This style is devastating when he is in form. Many of my compatriots will agree that we are all afraid of Graham in the endgame, and the psychological aspect is already won for him. I have found that the only way to beat him is to have the game won by move 40, or to threaten to show the world the Swedish nightclub photos*. The problem with the first theory is that the opening book of Mr. Brightwell is larger than most Indian elephants, and therefore it's hard to get in front early on.

Guy Plowman.

Guy's style is another unique one. He seems to give his opponents a false sense of security by letting them try to kill him, but hanging on and winning in the endgame just when you thought he was dead and buried. He is one of the best survivors I have played in the game. You can never relax when you are in front or he will destroy you. This chap wears a bullet-proof t-shirt, he just won't die. It also goes without saying that he can destroy you if in he is in front as well.

^{* &}quot;The night ended badly with Graham in a Swedish nightclub" – P.Bhagat's report of the night after the 1990 World Championships. The really embarrassing photos will show David Shaman and me discussing opening theory while others boogied on down – Ed.

Garry Edmead.

Garry likes to go for a quick kill, and likes openings which are very scary for both sides. He loves having a game where an early sacrifice is required, where the opponent is fighting for their lives against one of his deadly pulls. He also likes to play two-wall games where both opponents are trying to pull each other.

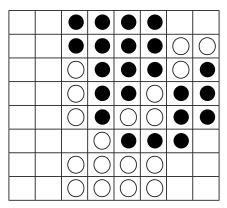
Joel Feinstein.

Expect the unexpected with Joel, who is one of the most unorthodox and exciting players I have had the pleasure to play. You can never have an average run of the mill game with him because he will just play a mind-boggling move to make the game as silly and confusing as possible. This style must work, judging by the way he has won over 900 million British National Championships.

Should I play an opening where I can start pulling my opponent, or should I play safe and set myself up for the endgame. Maybe I should let my opponent try and run me out of moves and come back with a late surprise, or maybe I should play silly X-squares. Maybe I should take up chess. Different people have perfected different styles of play; I have found that none are superior to any other. My advice to you is to perfect the style that you have been using and don't try to change it. These people above have perfected their own natural games – you perfect yours! Hopefully in years to come I will be writing about your style of play. Good luck and, more importantly, practice.

MODOT Strikes Again! by Joel Feinstein.

Well, there is still a lot for me to teach my program MODOT, but here is MODOT teaching me a lesson (another blitz game, of course).



MODOT-Feinstein

Finding myself short of moves out of the opening, I have sacrificed in the North-East to avoid disaster. With MODOT to play, I now thought that my wall in the West was going to disappear rapidly. I had considered the possibility that black might play g1, but noted that this fails to a white reply at h6, depriving black of access to h1; white can play to b1 for access to h1 himself if necessary. Which black move had I overlooked?

Black played g8!!. "Oh no, there's a bug in my program" I thought, and replied immediately

with h8??. Modot then played g1, and proceeded to win easily (h6 is now met by h7). After g8, I could have made it into the endgame alive by playing c6 (b8 h6), but b3 now wins for black.

The moral is the usual one. If the opponent plays a move that is clearly completely stupid, always check that it isn't really a very clever move in disguise.

TOURNAMENT REPORTS – Regionals

The 1995 Regionals compiled by Our Staff.

Here are the full results of this year's regional tournaments. A (Q) indicates a qualifying performance. Imre Leader (National Champion) and Martin Mulvany (winner of last year's Challengers') have also qualified.

1. 2.	Dewsbury – 18/3 Iain Barrass (Q) Phil Marson (Q)	Pts 6/6 4	1. 2.	Retford – 22/4 Iain Barrass Bruce Kyte Phil Marson	(Q)	Pts 7/7 5
3. 4.	Roy Arnold (Q) Ken Stephenson	$\frac{3\frac{1}{2}}{3}$	3. 4.	John Lysons	(Q)	4
5.	Bruce Kyte	3	5.	Iain Forsyth	(Q)	4
6.	Mark Wormley	3	6.	Colin Hands	(&)	2
7.	Eileen Forsyth	3	7.	Mark Wormley		$\frac{2}{2}$
8.	David Haigh	2	8.	Eileen Forsyth		0
9.	Iain Forsyth	$\overline{2}$				Ü
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.	Wellingborough – 6/5 Graham Brightwell (Q) Joel Feinstein (Q) Guy Plowman (Q) Garry Edmead Aubrey de Grey Phil Marson Richard Brand Roy Arnold Myles Harvey Terry Bean Adelaide Carpenter	Pts 6/7 6 5 5 4 4 3 3 3 2 1	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.	Cambridge – 20/5 Imre Leader Guy Plowman Garry Edmead Matthew Selby Aubrey de Grey Ian Turner Myles Harvey Paul Smith Roy Arnold	(Q) (Q) (Q)	7/7 5 5 4 4 4 3 2
	Nottingham - 10/6	Pts		Portsmouth-24/6		
1.	Joel Feinstein	6/6	1.	Phil Marson		2/2
2.	Bruce Kyte	5	2.	Ian Turner	(Q)	1
3.	Phil Marson	4	3.	Ali Turner	(Q)	0
4.	Roy Arnold	3				
5.	Iain Forsyth	3				
6.	Colin Hands (Q)	2				
7.	Myles Harvey (Q)	1				

Eileen Forsyth

8.

 $(Q) \quad 0$

	Doncaster - 8/7		Pts		London - 5/8		
1.	Joel Feinstein		7/7	1.	Joel Feinstein		$6\frac{1}{2}/7$
2.	Mike Handel	(Q)	6	2.	Guy Plowman		6
3.	Ken Stephenson	(Q)	4	3.	Mike Handel		5
4.	Mark Wormley	(Q)	4	4.	Phil Marson		4
5.	Maurice Kent		$3\frac{1}{2}$	5.	Ian Turner		$3_{\overline{2}}$
6.	David Haigh		$3\frac{1}{2}$	6.	Chris Wakelin	(Q)	1
7.	Iain Forsyth		3	7.	John Bass	(Q)	1
8.	Roy Arnold		3	8.	Bruce Kyte		1
9.	Bruce Kyte		3				
10.	Phil Marson		3				
11.	Simon Turner		2				
12.	Wayne Lay		0				

Last year, the Editor moaned about the low number of people playing Regionals, and this year it was even lower. Thirty-one people played in one or more of the tournaments (as compared with 38 last year, though there was one fewer event this year), with a total attendance of 68 (last year: 99). Twenty-three of the thirty-one qualified for the National Final, as did Martin Mulvany. The only person to play in more than one tournament and not qualify was David Haigh. The most common sighting at a Regional was Phil Marson, with seven appearances; this is the third year running that Phil has won this category.

And now a ragtag of reports, a couple of which started life as informal emails, and have been heavily altered, so our apologies to both authors and readers for their style.

Retford - Roy Arnold reports.

The third Bassetlaw Regional attracted eight players, a number that would have been higher if an advert that Mark Wormley produced had actually appeared in *Livewire*, the magazine that is free to all customers of Inter-City East Coast, whose trains serve Retford. Other factors producing the low turn-out could have been the weather (i.e., it rained) and a clash with the Copenhagen Open.

The tournament itself saw a fair number of upsets, with Bruce Kyte beating John Lysons 43-21 in the first, Colin Hands beating Bruce 42-22 in the fifth, and Iain Forsyth beating John, again in the fifth.

The qualifiers were Bruce, John, and Iain. Because of the low turn-out, next year's tournament will be moving back to Worksop, hopefully on a date that doesn't clash with Copenhagen.

Wellingborough – Graham Brightwell reports.

I lost to Garry Edmead, as usual, but somehow the others contrived to let me win the tournament anyway. I beat Joel Feinstein, we both beat Guy Plowman, and both Joel and Guy beat Garry for me. This set of results even left Garry a non-qualifier.

Stalwart organiser Margaret Plowman had a pre-tournament inspiration. Why not actually write to people on the BOF's contact list, advertising the tournament? The result: BOF contact list 1 (Terry Bean), Inter-City East Coast contact list 0 (we apologise for the delay caused by the late arrival of your advert). Welcome back to Terry, who, I can assure you all, is still a dangerous player.

Cambridge – Aubrey de Grey reports.

Imre Leader won, as usual, beating everyone he played. Behind him, Guy Plowman lost to Garry Edmead, but Garry lost to Matthew Selby. The second and third qualifying places were decided on tie-break, with Matthew having one SOS point more than Aubrey de Grey or Ian Turner, and Aubrey having 13 more discs than Ian.

We welcomed back Paul Smith after a long absence, and it was evident that he had lost none of his clock-handling skills; his total time left was under 5 mins. Matthew Selby, on the other hand, managed to lose twice on time to Guy.

Nottingham – Joel Feinstein reports.

I played very badly: Myles Harvey was heard to remark that that was the first time he'd enjoyed a game against me!

There were 8 players in a 6 round Swiss: Phil Marson organised and played. I won with 6/6, but I suspect Colin Hands was winning against me, and I had some problems against Myles too. My easiest game was against Bruce Kyte, who came second with 5/6. There were only three players who hadn't yet qualified, so they all qualified.

Portsmouth - Ian Turner reports.

This year's Portsmouth Regional was not well-attended. In fact, the attendance was not even average. To call the attendance poor would overstate the numbers who arrived.

Congratulations to Phil Marson, who did turn up, and beat both Alison and myself to win his first tournament. I managed to scrape a win against Alison to come second. Let's hope the next tournament held in Portsmouth has a slightly better turnout.

Doncaster - Sue Barrass reports.

First to arrive at this year's competition was an old friend playing in his first tournament this year, Mike Handel, accompanied by Wayne Lay playing in his first ever tournament. Also joining us for the first time at Doncaster was Simon Turner. The remaining players were all familiar with the venue: Roy Arnold, Joel Feinstein, Iain Forsyth, David Haigh, Bruce Kyte, Phil Marson, Ken Stephenson, Mark Wormley and, arriving just as play was starting, Maurice Kent relieved Eileen Forsyth from playing. Unusually for Doncaster, there were more players who had not qualified than those who had; seven chasing three places.

Round one was the first, but not the last, to produce results against the ratings, giving three wins in each half of the table. Round two evened things up slightly, but Phil had managed to lose to both Simon and Bruce, and Maurice achieved wins against newcomer Wayne and old hand Ken.

By lunch-time at the end of round three, four of the seven hopefuls were on two wins each, with Joel and Mike on three. Round four saw Joel still unbeaten, Mike, Maurice and Ken on 3, David, Mark, Roy and Simon on 2.

In round five Joel was still unbeaten, Mike notched up 4, David and Mark drew level with Maurice and Ken, all on 3 points, with a chasing pack of Iain, Phil, Roy and Simon on 2 points.

Round six paired Ken against Joel. This was a very closely fought game with Joel just managing to prevail with a 33-31 result. Wins for Mike and Mark allowed them to edge ahead of the other hopefuls, but Mark still had Joel to face!

Going into the final round Mike was certain to qualify, but the other two places were wide open. Mark looked destined to stay on 4, but with David, Iain, Ken, Maurice and Phil all on 3 there was all to play for. In the event David and Maurice drew, Ken just beat Iain (33-31) and Phil lost to Mike, leaving Ken and Mark both on 4 points to claim the places.

It was a hard fought match with many long, close games and the result undecided until the final round (similar perhaps to the Ladies' final being played at the same time at Wimbledon), but I think everyone enjoyed the day.

London – Graham Brightwell reports.

The London regional was organised at late notice to replace the cancelled East-bourne event. Given the limited publicity, the turnout of eight was fair enough. The tournament was a round robin, which made it very easy for the cheerful and tireless organiser (me).

Ian Turner was very pleased with his round 1 draw with Joel Feinstein, but rather less pleased with his round 2 loss to Phil Marson. At lunch, Ian was dead last with just half a point, with Guy Plowman (3) and Joel $(2\frac{1}{2})$ up front. By coincidence, these two were scheduled to meet in the last round. Each kept on

winning until then, so we were due an exciting climax. The deciding game went the way of many of Joel's earlier victories: Joel got into trouble, then managed to make the position a bit weird, then Guy went totally wrong, and Joel won comfortably.

Down the bottom of the field, Bruce Kyte, Chris Wakelin and John Bass all played much better than their scores of 1 point each suggest. Bruce in particular had Joel more dead than most, but found a very imaginative way to let him off the hook, when routine moves were called for.

Mike Handel also deserves a mention for not having previously been mentioned in this report.

And finally, congratulations to all who qualified, and many thanks to all who organised or helped to run a tournament.

Othello at GEN CON Games Fair by Ian Turner.

Our arrival at GenCon coincided with that of about a 1000 other gamers of all types, nationalities and attire. This resulted in an hour or two of utter chaos while things were sorted out. Consequently, to no one's surprise, there were no tables for the Othello in the room we were expecting to be in, however this all worked to our advantage and we got four tables in another room in a 'quiet' area next to the bar! (Aubrey considered this ideal).

Thursday and Friday we set up demonstration games and showed a steady stream of people how to play the game and the rudimentary tactics. I was joined on Friday by Aubrey who seemed to be impressed by the set up, the amount of interest we were generating and the West Point Future role playing game going on at the next set of tables.

On Saturday I was joined by Graham Brightwell and Roy Arnold, the morning once again giving us chance to do some demonstrations and collect entries for the tournament in the aftenoon. We got a respectable entry of ten players turn up for the tournament with Roy and Spencer Barriball being the pre-tournament favourites. The first round got underway almost on time with an upset on the cards with Spence in a losing position with two moves left in the game, fortunately for him his opponent didn't see that she could have taken both the last moves and won.

In the second round it was Roy's turn to be put under the cosh by Gareth Davidson, once again experience told in the endgame and Roy ran out the winner in a close finish. At the end of this round Roy and Spence were joined on two wins by Steve Penfold. Round three saw the clash of the titans as far as this tournament was concerned with Roy meeting Spence in a game which would probably decide the tournament. Again a close game ensued with Roy getting

the upper hand out of the mid game and holding on for a win by 36-28. With Steve also losing in this round to Dixon Jones, Roy was the clear leader. Round three was probably the highlight of the tournament in terms of the quality of the Othello played with all the games being of an impressive standard, considering that many of the players had only played occasional games of Othello before the weekend.

Rounds four and five saw Roy and Spence collect another two wins apiece to finish first and second respectively and a strong late charge from Phil Burton. Final Results were as follows:- Roy Arnold 5/5, Spencer Barriball 4, Steve Penfold 3, Phil Burton 3, Dixon Jones 3, Helen O'Hara 2, Jane Selenic 2, Gareth Davidson 2, Martin Daulton 1, Jess Wood 0.

The event was completed with Graham playing a simultaneous game against four of the players from the tournament and myself and winning 4-1. This light-hearted finale rounded off what was a successful and enjoyable weekend for all concerned. Many thanks must go to Graham and Aubrey for giving up their time to help out and congratulations to Roy on his tournament win.

News from Around the World by Various People.

Rumours about the venue for the next Worlds have been many and various. Amsterdam was the favourite late last year, but now the leading rumour is Sydney. The latest European Newsletter suggests Austria, but this may be a misprint.

In a bid to jazz up the U.S. National tournament, it was held in conjunction with a games fair this year. Qualifying rounds were held on the Saturday, then 11 players participated in a 7-round Swiss tournament on Sunday. The top 5 places were as follows: 1. David Shaman 6-1, 2. Tatsuya Mine 6-1, 3. David Parsons 5.5-1.5, 4. Patrick Stanton 4-3, 5. Atsuko Mine 3.5-3.5.

Thus David Shaman and Tatsuya Mine are two of the members of the U.S. team for the world championship. The third member of the team will be determined at the U.S. Grand Prix tournament to be played later.

Thanks to Clarence Hewlett (the tournament director) for that report, and thanks to Tetsuya Nakajima for the results of the All-Japan championship, which were: 1. Tamenori Hideshi, 2. Sakaguchi Kazuhiro, 3. Tezuka Hirohisa, 4. Azuma Hideki, 5. Takizawa Masaki, 6. Nakajima Tetsuya, 7. Kaneda Shigeru, 8. Kawate Masayuki. This was Tamenori's fifth title, extending his record.

European Grand Prix

The 1995 Cambridge Open by Karsten Sotherwitness.

Lots of French players came to Cambridge this year "to celebrate the formality of a French victory". The French invasion started on Friday February 24th. The first scouts (two Emmanuels: Caspard and Lazard, Stéphane Nicolet and rookie François Robin) were dropped over Stansted early in the morning. At the beginning of the afternoon, four other French (rookie Marc Aldebert, Bintsa Andriani, Dominique Penloup and Marc Tastet) took Eurostar through the Chunnel and discreetly entered England. Finally, Alexandre Cordy made a diversion by being parachuted over Gatwick in the late afternoon. By some means, they all managed to reach Cambridge in the evening but they couldn't gather before Saturday morning when they met in the famous Cambridge University Centre, scene of many previous hard-fought events. By a strange coincidence, also nine Britons showed up (Roy Arnold, Iain Barrass, Graham Brightwell, Aubrey de Grey, Garry Edmead, Colin Hands, Imre Leader, Phil Marson and Guy Plowman). Two referees were there to watch the fight, Serge Alard, from Belgium, and Hugo Calendar, from Sweden (but also American). As usual, the Danes and Italians didn't dare coming.

In the first round, François took his first scalp by beating Garry 48-16. Meanwhile Guy played a variation of the Inoue which surprised Marc, and he won 36-28. Meanwhile again, Graham left Dominique with only 8 discs. However, both Marc and Dominique recovered and won the other six games of the first day, finishing equal first. Imre had a good start, leading the tournament with four wins in a row, but then he lost to Dominique and Marc in rounds 5 and 6. So, he was equal third with Graham (who had lost to Imre and Marc) and with the surprising Emmanuel "chief referee" Lazard, who managed to avoid the top two and lost only to Graham and Imre.

The traditional "Eraina Tavern" was chosen for the Saturday evening meal. On Sunday, Marc beat Dominique to take the lead of the tournament, while Imre drew with Garry. Then Imre drew again with François on the board, but François lost on time, due to a misunderstanding as to how the clock operated! Despite a heavy loss to Stéphane (56-8) Marc finished the tournament with 9, ahead of Imre $(8\frac{1}{2})$, Dominique (8, having beaten Stéphane in the last round) and Guy $(7\frac{1}{2})$, so that no tie-break was necessary. Garry had beaten Graham in the last round, preventing him from finishing in the top four, and so preserving Graham's record of "not being in the top four in Cambridge except when he wins".

For the France vs. England match, if you consider a team of 4 or 5 players, England is half a point ahead of France, but with any other number of players per team (from 1 to 3, or 6 to 9) France is ahead of Britain. A revenge match will be played next time (in Paris, maybe?).

In the final, Marc chose to start by playing Black. Imre deviated at move 16 from the game he had lost in the Swiss part of the tournament, but he lost again (54-10). The second game was closer: Marc played a game-losing move 48, and Imre won 35-29. Meanwhile, Guy had beaten Dominique 2-0 for third place.

In the third game of the final, Marc chose White, even though Black had won the previous two games. Imre, for a change, chose to play the Inoue, which had been the favorite opening of the tournament, being played 13 times in all! Five of those games followed the same line till move 17 (line due to G&G). In this position, the unluckiest player was Bintsa who managed to lose both games in which he was involved, one as Black and the other as White! To avoid this line, Marc played a different move 8. When Marc played his move 10, Imre thought: "This is going to be a third game of a final". Then Imre played his move 11 and Marc thought: "This is going to be a third game of a final". For the benefit of the younger players, I should point out that silly moves are supposed to be played in the third game of a final, when both players are exhausted after two hard days of tournament play. After some other strange moves, Marc took two edges to try and run Imre out of moves. But it didn't work and when Marc had to open up the game, everybody thought he was going to collapse horribly. However, he managed to stay alive and found a neat swindle at move 48, winning 45-19. Further analysis revealed that Imre missed his last chance at move 41.

In his victory speech, Marc pointed out that he was very happy because it was the first time he had won a tournament in which Imre was playing. Also, it was the most northern tournament this man of the South had ever won. Marc, who was in 1990 the "first player ever to win a trophy in Cambridge" is now the happy owner of three Cambridge trophies: one for first, one for second, and one for third. Of course, other players have had those three rankings before, but the difficult thing is that you have to do the performances exactly in the years when there are trophies in Cambridge, which makes it much harder!

Here are the second and third games of the Final, plus a bonus Plowman win, featuring perfect play from 43 onwards.

55	48	41	45	34	57	58	44
60	52	32	40	30	31	53	35
54	46	33	7	5	14	12	42
47	49	21	\bigcirc		4	11	22
51	50	3			1	15	24
56	23	6	2	9	8	13	16
59	43	21	10	19	17	38	29
39	28	27	26	25	18	37	36

59	49	40	42	44	43	29	54
55	60	36	39	10	16	27	48
41	45	37	15	5	13	21	22
50	34	38	\bigcirc		4	9	23
47	35	3	•		1	14	24
46	30	6	2	7	8	28	25
51	52	19	11	12	33	53	26
57	58	20	18	31	17	32	56

51	56	31	28	26	29	54	53
44	57	27	25	23	24	52	55
39	41	3	4	12	11	18	60
37	30	15	\bigcirc		6	13	22
38	20	10		\bigcirc	1	8	32
46	19	40	2	9	7	17	59
49	$\overline{45}$	33	36	15	14	47	58
48	43	42	21	34	16	35	50

Leader 35 Tastet 29

Leader 19 Tastet 45

Caspard 31 Plowman 33

Peter Bhagat joined all the players to go to the traditional Indian restaurant on Sunday evening. Maybe he'll play next year to try and stop what is becoming a series of French wins in Cambridge? Who knows?

Othellists – No.3. The Copenhagen Open.

This year saw the 10th annual Copenhagen Open, so our popular Othellists feature is expanding into the main Newsletter to give a results digest, in case you missed any of the tournaments.

The 1986 tournament was a modified Swiss, and from then on the normal Swiss system was used. The Final was instituted in 1987, and the 3rd/4th play-off in 1992.

We begin and end our results service with a complete list of those who have finished in the top four. We've decided to cut all the other stuff, in response to criticism, and also to avoid any more Feldborg than is strictly necessary.

Year	1st	2nd	$3\mathrm{rd}$	$4\mathrm{th}$
1986	I. Leader	P. Ralle/JF. P	uget/C. Quist-Je	essen
1987	P. Bhagat	D. Piau	T. Vallund/M.	Γastet
1988	K. Feldborg	C. Quist-Jessen	E. Lazard	H. Vallund/R. Andersson
1989	T. Murakami	K. Feldborg	G. Brightwell	J. Berner/A. Kierulf
1990	K. Feldborg	M. Tastet	E. Jensen/N. Be	erner
1991	K. Feldborg	N. Berner	A. Brusca	M. Tastet/H. Vallund
1992	G. Brightwell	D. Shaman	N. Berner	H. Vallund
1993	J. Feinstein	M. Tastet	D. Shaman	K. Feldborg
1994	E. Jensen	D. Shaman	M. Tastet	D. Penloup
1995	G. Edmead	M. Tastet	K. Feldborg	N. Berner

Rome

In the Rome Open, the third leg of the Grand Prix, Stéphane Nicolet scored 11/11 in the Swiss. A limited amount of memory-trawling suggests that only Takeshi Murakami (Copenhagen, 1989) has scored 100% in the Swiss portion of a Grand Prix tournament before. There was a six-way tie for the second spot in the final, with Dominique Penloup being the lucky winner. Karsten Feldborg beat Erik Jensen for third, and the others on 7/11 were Donato Barnaba, Benedetto Romano and Marc Tastet. Tastet blames his poor tie-break on the pairing program, not an unprecedented excuse. Those even further back included Emmanuel Caspard and Francesco Marconi.

Oh yes, the Final. Well, Nicolet lost, which I guess is hideously predictable. Here is Marc Tastet's version of events:

Stéphane won the first game of the final 38-26, but he lost on time at move 60 and so the score was 31-32 to Dominique! Stéphane won the second game 33-31. After a hard-fought game with a game-losing move 46 by Stéphane, Dominique won the third game.

The 1995 Brussels Open by Magnus Maestro.

The Mannequin Pis is getting smaller each year, but the Brussels Open is still attracting a steady number of participants. This year, there were four British stars (Graham Brightwell, Aubrey de Grey, Garry Edmead and Guy Plowman), four and a half French (Bintsa Andriani, Emmmanuel Caspard, Alexandre Cordy, Dominique Penloup and Marc Tastet), the two canonical Danes (Karsten Feldborg and Erik Jensen), two Germo-Americans (Greg Johnson and Leslie Cagley), and a token Belgian and a half (hard-working organiser Serge Alard, and Alexandre Cordy). Other Belgians do exist, but weren't available to play in the tournament. (Aside: last year Swedish superstar Nils Berner (or someone, if possible, similar) wore a tee-shirt pointing out deficiencies in the various nations of the EU, e.g. "as romantic as a German", and "as efficient as an Italian". (Somehow this was supposed to persuade other Swedes that joining the EU was desirable – I guess it must have worked.) I can't remember exactly which of the many available negative features of the British was stressed, but apparently Belgium is tougher, judging by the rather limp slogan "as available as a Belgian". This caused great merriment at the time, but in fact there does seem to be a tendency for Belgians never to be available when wanted. In fact, we managed to get through the entire weekend without finding any Belgian to serve us beer from the Centre's bar*, which rather takes away much of the point of going to Brussels in the first place.)

^{*} It has been pointed out to the author that this isn't quite strictly accurate, but the Newsletter has standards of truth and fairness to uphold, so it was decided to leave it in anyway.

Brussels resident David Shaman failed to turn up for the event, preferring for some reason to become U.S. Champion for the umpteenth time. So Marc Tastet was the only ex-world-champion in the field, and he proceeded to demonstrate his class by losing the first three games. At the end of the first day, a pack of five had all played each other, and had won all their games against the rest of the field, so it was just a matter of who could keep their heads against the weaker end of the field (Tastet, Feldborg, ...). Brightwell was a half point in front, followed by Caspard, Edmead and Jensen, with Penloup another half-point back.

The following morning, it quickly became clear that a completely different set of players had had a proper night's sleep. Tastet suddenly started to play like a world-beater, and Alard was definitely benefiting from home-bed advantage. The circle of five scored a mammoth 8-7 against the rest of the field in the first three of the morning's four rounds, and now it was Caspard and Edmead half a point ahead of Brightwell and Penloup. In the final round, Caspard beat Cordy to make the final, but Edmead came unstuck against . . . Plowman! This unfraternal gesture pushed Edmead out of the final, out of the 3rd-4th playoff, and out of contention for the European Grand Prix, but it did gain Plowman 2 Grand Prix points, so it may still have been a fix.

Going into the last round, Brightwell had been 1 tiebreak point ahead of Penloup, so a big win was needed. 57-7 (over Johnson) looked like enough, but suddenly Alard's position against Penloup collapsed, and that game was 49-15. In fact, this wasn't enough (the vagaries of the tiebreak are quite hard to predict – it certainly might have been), so it was Brightwell–Caspard in the Final, and Penloup–Jensen for third. Tastet finished on 7/11, and was within a handful of discs of the third-place match.

Penloup finished third after Jensen missed a win in the third game. Mean-while, Brightwell (White) got ahead in the first game, and played "safely". He allowed a diagonalisation, then broke the game open, only to run into a very classy finish from Caspard. The winning line was to panic one move earlier. In the second game, Caspard, in trouble early, made a huge blunder, and resigned at 48 faced with a total massacre.

So to the third game. Although Black had won both the first two, tradition demands one ignore this and choose White anyway. But Brightwell went for Black, muttering something about being more comfortable in the opening; noone was fooled, he was just trying to make sure that the Frenchman would have to play the notoriously fatal move 54. The players more-or-less copied their game from the Swiss, with one or two minor differences, and the later moves made more sense if they were thought of as being played in the other game. By move 46, Brightwell was winning (but this was the third game of a final), when Caspard inexplicably let his flag fall. The game was played out, and in the event

Brightwell's errors weren't quite enough to throw away the game on the board either.

So Graham Brightwell retained his title, and caught Imre Leader in the key "number of Mannequins Pis owned" category. But Leader's are bigger.

Full results:

	Name	Pts]	EGP		Name	Pts	EGP
1.	Graham Brightwell	$7\frac{1}{2}$	+2	200	8.	Karsten Feldborg	5	13
2.	Emmanuel Caspard	8	+1	140		Alexandre Cordy	5	13
3.	Dominique Penloup	$7\frac{1}{2}$	+2	90	10.	Guy Plowman	4	2
4.	Erik Jensen	7	+1	60		Aubrey de Grey	4	2
5.	Marc Tastet	7		35		Bintsa Andriani	4	2
	Garry Edmead	7		35	13.	Greg Johnson	3	
7.	Serge Alard	6		20	14.	Leslie Cagley	2	

With only Paris to go, the European Grand Prix standings are headed, as usual, by Marc Tastet, but any of five players can still win. Tastet has 375 (200 Cambridge, 140 Copenhagen, (30 Rome), 35 Brussels), followed by Penloup 350 (60,(40),200,90), Edmead 270 (35,200,-,35), Brightwell 235 (35,-,-,200), Feldborg 193 (-,90,90,13), Caspard 163, Nicolet 160, Jensen 145, Leader 140, Plowman 100.

Assuming, unwisely, that Tastet doesn't improve his score in Paris, Penloup needs a third place to overtake him, Edmead needs a second, Brightwell needs a first equal (a speciality result for him), and Feldborg an outright win. Remember that only the best three results count.

MISCELLANY

Syncopated Cerebrations by Sid Cox.

No progress on the speed of construction of periphery-seeking ladders on edgeless Othello boards, so I thought I'd tell you about something that I found very interesting, which I read about shortly before I wrote the last article. It's got almost nothing to do with playing Othello, but that doesn't matter because the same can be said about most of the stuff in this column.

It's called Langton's ant.

Chris Langton of the Santa Fe Institute created this curious creature. It inhabits a world of squares, like an enormous Othello board, which initially all have a white Othello disc on them.

When the ant it is placed on one of the squares (facing one of the edges, as opposed to along a diagonal) it starts to perform the following sequence of actions, endlessly:

- 1) It flips the disc on that square.

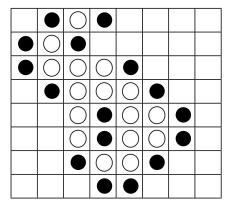
 If the disc is now white it turns to face the adjoining square on its right;

 If the disc is now black it turns to face the adjoining square on its left.
- 2) It walks forward into the adjoining square.
- 3) It flips the disc, as in 1), etc., etc.

So you can see that this ant has a very simple brain indeed. This is all it does. What sort of a pattern do you think it would end up making on the board? Such a low intellect could only produce something simple and boring, wouldn't you think?

What happens is quite amazing. The ant scurries around quite haphazardly. The pattern of black and white discs appears utterly random. It gradually enlarges the area it has visited, tending to stay near the periphery of this area, but now and again making excursions (incursions?) back into the centre. Eventually, after some 10,000 moves, yes, I mean 10⁴ moves, the ant unwittingly constructs a trap for itself and ends up locked into a sequence of moves which makes it do nothing but construct a ladder leading diagonally away to infinity.

Figure 1 below shows the state of a normal-sized Othello board 80 moves after the ant was placed on d4 facing north. It has just walked off the edge of the board from d1. The squares shown as blanks are those it hasn't yet visited.



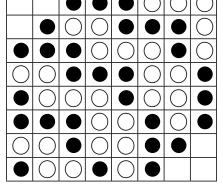


Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 2 is a window on the ant's ladder as it cuts a swathe across an Othello board from north-east to south-west.*

A similar creature, which I have modestly named Sid's spider, lives on a world of triangles. Its behaviour is also apparently unpredictable as it spins its growing web. So far it has managed to avoid being trapped into ladder-building, as far as I can see.

Where does all this complexity come from? I find this sort of phenomenon fascinating, which probably explains why Othello appeals to me, for again here we have a world where complex situations arise from the application of very simple rules.

$$+ + +$$

In the Spring 1995 edition of Fforum, the newsletter of the French Othello Federation, there is an article by Philippe Juhem extolling the virtues of the modified Swiss tournament system (where players can meet a second time in later rounds) over the simple Swiss system (where they can't). Marc Tastet opines, with examples, that the simple Swiss has its advantages, and sums it all up by saying "This is an old debate which reappears periodically, a bit like proportional representation . . . The disadvantages of the previously-used system get forgotten and those of the current system become apparent, so the system is changed, and then history repeats itself."

If a scientist wants to discover which of two processes produces better results, he/she does an experiment or experiments to settle the matter. Well, we now have the technology to do the experiments which could tell us which version of the Swiss system is more likely to produce the "correct" result of a tournament. We simulate lots of tournaments run each way and see if there is any indication as to which version is more accurate in arriving at the correct result.

^{*} Editor's note: the author actually submitted a 14×14 diagram, but I refused the challenge.

I take it as axiomatic that no tournament system is fairer or more likely to discover the best player(s) than the round-robin system, unless it is a double round-robin. Anyway, for the purposes of this exercise I am going to define the outcome of a round-robin tournament as the "correct" result for the particular group of players under consideration.

- 1) Start off by selecting a bunch of players. These could well be players from an actual tournament.
- 2) Simulate a round-robin tournament. How do we decide who wins a game? We use the players' ratings, of course. The outcome is random, but biased so that they win with the appropriate probability. So now we know the correct result for this group of players, playing as they did on the simulated day with all their flashes of genius and their blunders.
- 3) Now they play in a simple Swiss tournament. To simulate this we need a pairing program like that used for the International and Worlds tournaments. The outcome of each game is the same as the corresponding game in the round-robin. The outcome of this tournament is compared with that of the round-robin, and a figure of merit is arrived at.

(The calculation of this figure of merit is probably the most controversial part of this whole idea, and might generate more argument than the original problem. However, I am hoping that the mathematicians may have devised an optimum way of doing just this. I suggest that correctness of the top three places is of paramount importance, and that the other places should not affect the figure of merit. An example of a figure of merit would be 6 times the first player's position in the round-robin plus 3 times the second player's position plus 2 times the third player's position. With this, the lower the figure of merit the better, 18 corresponding to completely correct placing.

There are problems with tie-breakers because we don't have disc counts, and also because the choice of a tie-breaker is itself controversial. Perhaps we need to run the simulation first to determine which is the best tie-breaker out of those available, such as sum-of-opponents'-scores, Sonneborn-Berger, last-to-fall and any others known to mankind, for each version, and then use that in the simulation to find the better version. Or maybe we don't bother with tie-breakers, but I don't yet know what to do if there are say four people in the top three places. I suppose one would have to devise the right multipliers to apply to arrive at a figure of 18 for all the correct placings.)

- 4) The players then play in a modified Swiss tournament, using the same game results from the round-robin. When they meet a second time the outcome of such games must be simulated anew. Again the outcome of this tournament is compared with the round-robin and another figure of merit obtained.
- 5) Repeat from 2) lots of times, accumulating total figures of merit.

6) Repeat from 1) lots of times, totalling accumulated figures of merit.

At the end of all this the figures of merit will hopefully indicate which system is clearly better. On the other hand they might indicate that there's nothing to choose between them. With a bit more work one might discover that with a particular distribution of expertise, such as a cluster of masters and a scattering of also rans as you often get in an International, one version is better, but with a more even spread as you would find in your common or garden Regional, the other version is better. Hey! We could use this program to decide which version to use for a tournament. Simply enter the r*t*ngs of the participants, let it grind away for a few minutes, and out pops the answer. That should put an end to the argument once and for all.[†]

All we need is an energetic programmer to do these experiments. ††

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I wish to make a proposal for a complete change to the system of qualification for the British Championships, based on what was discussed at a meeting of the Doncaster Othello Club in July 1995.

Firstly, I am suggesting that the number of regionals held should be reduced to four 'core' events, these being in Wellingborough, London, Cambridge and Doncaster, these being venues that are evenly spread out geographically and have been known to attract a considerable number of participants.

Secondly, the number of qualifying places available at each of these 'core' regionals should be increased from three to four (these still being taken from those who have not previously qualified), thus making the number of qualifying places available from these regionals sixteen.

Should other people wish to organise and run Othello tournaments (particularly a regional), then let them do so, but the number of qualifying places available should be reduced to one, provided that more than five British players are taking part in that event. This rule would be used too for the British Othello Championship and the Challengers' tournament (if large enough), to ensure that the winners of both events would still gain qualification for the following year's British Championships. Also this rule could be used for other events such as the Cambridge Open and Doncaster Club mini-tournaments. The B.O.F. would reserve the right to decide which tournaments are awarded a qualification place.

The reasons why I am proposing this complete change to the qualifying system are:

 $^{^{\}dagger}$ I presume this is meant as a joke – Ed.

^{††} I fear this too is optinistic – Ed.

- (a) In two regional tournaments held this year, in Nottingham and Portsmouth, players qualified by just turning up, and indeed the event in Portsmouth only attracted three players.
- (b) The number of players who play Othello competitively has dropped considerably over the years, thus making qualification for the British Championships much easier. In the case of just about everyone who plays the game seriously, it is a matter of where rather than if they qualify. Surely it cannot be right that if one person occasionally attends tournaments, he/she has an automatic right to enter a prestigious domestic event (which the British Championships is supposed to be) through what is virtually the back door. If the game keeps going down this track, then it won't be long before my pet can enter a tournament and qualify!

As a major shake-up of the qualification system is required to stop the sport becoming a farce, I am proposing that these changes should come into force in January 1996.

Yours sincerely, Roy Arnold.

Mr. Arnold's proposal will be on the agenda for the AGM in September. Maybe it is worth stressing that the above views are solely those of Mr. Arnold, and do not necessarily reflect those of the B.O.F. committee, or, for that matter, of the Doncaster Othello Club.

Meanwhile, the following letter was passed on to us by a Miss A. V. Dish.

Dear Sirs,

It has come to our attention that the British Othello Federation is responsible for an excessive proliferation of Othello terminology. In accordance with the provisions of European Othello Harmonisation Regulation 1994/H8/64, the BOF is hereby notified that it is currently in violation of European Othello-word regulatory standards. The particular abuse in question concerns the article on page 27 of the most recent BOF newsletter, *Ooh Aah Takizawa!* Unless satisfactory explanation can be presented, providing a valid distinction between the Othello-descriptive terms "Feinsteinesque" and "Feinsteinish", we shall have no choice but to commence legal actions before the European Court of Justice and, via the principle of subsidiarity, directly in the English court system.

Yours sincerely,

The European Commission

DGXXXII (Games of Skill)

Naturally we were concerned on receiving this, and made haste to reply. Our reply, which we enclose below for the benefit of any readers who were similarly troubled, appears to have satisfied the Commission. We thank it for its interest.

Dear Ms.(?) Dgxxxii,

Thank you for your letter inviting the Federation to explain the distinction between the terms "Feinsteinish" and "Feinsteinesque" as applied to Othello moves. Our intention is that "Feinsteinish" is an adjective descriptive of the type of move typically played by Dr. J. Feinstein (a Cambridge player, from Nottingham) or by a clone of the aforementioned Dr. Feinstein. "Feinsteinesque", by contrast, is descriptive of a move that encapsulates the entire style of Dr. Feinstein in one awe-inspiring stroke of genius (or madness, depending principally on the outcome of the game). In every position, at least one move could be described as Feinsteinish (though at, for instance, move 1 or move 60, the information conveyed would be limited), whereas the opportunity to play (or, we generally recommend, avoid at all costs) a Feinsteinesque move arises extremely rarely. We hope that this clarifies the position.

We also received the following letter from Roberto Togneri, of Stirling. Can anyone help him out?

Dear Sir,

As I am a brand new member, I am writing concerning the hand-held computer "Othello Tiny" (Tsukuda, Japan, 1985). Having achieved a wipe-out 64-0 as Black and White (levels 1 and 2) in four distinct non-deviating lines, I am now endeavouring to *lose* 0-64 to the machine, but to no avail.

After three years playing Black at level 1, I have only succeeded in finding a certain non-deviating line to move 20. Thereafter the machine branches out at each subsequent move (120 plus variations), and only a handful of these fail to wipe me out.

The trouble appears to be the machine's limited scanning procedure. Unless I can achieve a fool-proof line conceding the last corner(s) it may choose to give me a corner, or else reach an impossible-to-wipe-out position. The critical point is at 'Computer Thinking' when 7 spaces remain – only then will the machine make the perfect response.

Can any of your members give me advice.

Yours sincerely,

Roberto G. Togneri.

News from Doncaster by Eileen Forsyth.

With Christmas and New Year over, January had us launching ourselves into the fresh session of the Othello year, with Phil Marson emerging as the winner, followed by Iain Barrass, Roy Arnold and Iain Forsyth, each on two wins.

February saw Iain B. "out on top", with Mark Wormley, Bruce Kyte and Phil on two wins each. At the mini-tournament on Saturday, February 18th, Maurice Kent 'did' the pairings for our usual eight players. Phil was the undisputed champion with four wins, ahead of Iain B., Bruce and Roy.

With Phil and Bruce unable to make the trip from Nottingham in March, we were rather thin on the ground. Iain B. won all his games, with Roy second and Iain F. third. However, April gave us a record turnout of ten players, with Mark bringing a new player: Peter Johnson from Selby. The friendly 'seesaw' battle for supremacy between Phil and Iain B. continued, Phil being the winner. Iain B. was second and Iain F. third. In the second round, Iain F. had a 39-25 win over Iain B.

May again saw Phil first, ahead of Iain B., with Mark third this time. But in June the tables were turned, with Iain B. first, and Roy, Bruce and John Beacock on two wins each. Perhaps Phil was wilting after a hard day's work and the strain of doing the pairings.

We do wish Iain B., Colin Hands, and Maurice Kent every success in their exams, and we thank everyone for coming with enthusiasm over such long distances month after month.

Ratings

The Rating List maintained by David Haigh.

These figures reflect the results of the Portsomouth and Doncaster Regionals, but not those at Nottingham or London.

Rating the three-player Portsmouth Regional exposed a few quirks of the rating system. Originally, David only had the results of the two games where Phil Marson beat both Ian and Ali Turner. After including these games, Ali's rating went up! This is very rare for an established player; the explanation is that Phil's rating went up sufficiently for him to generate feedback. Then David discovered the result of the third game: Ian beat Ali. Upon including this game as well, Ian's rating went down! The reason is that, since he had now played two games, his loss was limited to 16 rather than to 8, so his loss to Phil now produced its full effect.

1	Imre Leader	385	1873	25	Robert Stanton	137	1193
2	Graham Brightwell	371	1828	26	David Haigh	326	1181
3	Guy Plowman	243	1765	27	Martin Mulvany	8	1176
4	Joel Feinstein	353	1753	28	John Bass	82	1164
5	Garry Edmead	168	1751	29	Roy Arnold	420	1154
6	Michael Handel	277	1718		Simon Turner	90	1154
7	Peter Bhagat	295	1674	31	Colin Hands	124	1131
8	Iain Barrass	266	1580	32	Richard Brand	24	1117
9	Paul Smith	123	1543	33	Maurice Kent	37	1116
10	John Lysons	193	1534	34	Graham Chappell	41	1087
11	Ian Turner	202	1484	35	Myles Harvey	65	1027
12	Aubrey de Grey	372	1482	36	Neil Cuthbertson	59	1022
13	Jeremy Das	202	1461	37	Simon Nickson	22	1018
14	Terry Bean	50	1423	38	Jim Brewer	86	1017
15	Ken Stephenson	210	1378	39	Adelaide Carpenter	93	1005
16	Phil Marson	309	1369	40	Rodney Hammond	52	1004
17	Matthew Selby	183	1350	41	Ali Turner	92	997
18	Phil Brewer	101	1339	42	Charles McEwan	6	969
	Trevor Fenton	4	1339	43	Spencer Barriball	6	860
20	Michael Trent	11	1333	44	James Preen	2	848
21	Mark Wormley	315	1254	45	Ashley Hammond	32	836
22	Chris Wakelin	30	1251	46	Wayne Lay	7	809
23	Bruce Kyte	66	1247	47	Anne Onymous	2	776
24	Iain Forsyth	298	1198	48	Eileen Forsyth	186	704