

Answers to puzzles on page 6

(1) 46c8 cuts Black's diagonal and wins, though Black can wriggle for a bit. Caspard played 46f8?, which looks even more tempting, since Black wants to respond into the odd SW region, but the move deprives him of access to the strategically essential move at b7. But not really, as Black has 47a2! 48a1 49b7, after which White can never cut back on to the diagonal and loses horribly. In fact 48a1 is not the best, but nothing else wins.

(2) Black's strategy has been set for a while: play out the two Northern regions for parity, then White will have either to unwedge or pass, in either case allowing me a very strong sequence at the finish. Now how to execute it? I chose 49g2?, allowing White the remarkable resource of 50b2!, after which Black just cannot take two of the three moves in the North-West, while all the sequences Black might want to play in the South-West allow the swindle at h1. Bizarrely, and very fortunately for me, Marc didn't even look at this, and selected 50a2 instead. Curiously, most of the observers had missed this too. Even more curiously, I had seen the resource myself before playing 49g2, but lazily assumed that, well, something was bound to work for me. Had I been on form, I hope I would have realised I had to play 49g1 instead: this wins straightforwardly, according to the master plan.

(3) The sequence I played was 53g8-b2-h1-h8-g7, and then I took the last three moves and got 43 discs. Nothing much wrong with that. The alternative was the so much prettier sequence 53d8 54g8 55b2 (P) 56g7, ending the game with four corners empty! But that only got me 41 discs, and I'm a cold-hearted ruthless tie-break-monster, so I turned down this opportunity, which probably won't come along again this lifetime. Only I'm not a very accomplished cold-hearted ruthless tie-break monster, as I'd neglected to count the empty squares for the winner!

Answers to puzzles on pages 28-29

{1} c3, d3, e3, c4, d5. {2} (a) 33, (b) 32, (c) 32. {3} a1. The point is to get both e8 and g8; after 1a1 2b2, the removal of the black disc at b3 means that 3g8 does not flip diagonally, so White passes and Black finishes with 4e8. {4} (a) 1a7. There is nothing White can do to prevent Black playing 3h5 and then 5h1. (b) 1h2. White has to flip the g2 disc to prevent Black playing to a8: if White plays 2h1 then Black plays 3g1 -- now there is no way to flip g2 again -- while if White plays 2g1 then Black plays 3f1. 1c7 is met by 2b6. (c) 1c7. Now 2b6 is met by 3e1, cutting the key diagonal at e4. If White plays 2e1 then Black has 3f1, while the only way to prevent 3e1 is to play 2b8, but then White has 3f7, cutting the diagonal at f3. (d) 1c2. This threatens both 3g6 (cutting at e4) and 3h5 (cutting at f3). The only way to prevent both is to play 2b2, but of course this allows 3a1. Note that 1c7 does not work (after 2b8 3f7, the f1 disc allows 4f8). 1c2 does not work in (a)-(c): after 2b1 3h5, White has 4f1 to flip back f3.

Othello in Europe by *Graham Brightwell*

The balance of power in European Othello is shifting. I've written this kind of thing before, but this time I'm not referring to some trifling matter such as the top French players outperforming the top British players for a season or ten. No, there is something more fundamental going on.

It's possible to understand the scene by looking at the recent rapid changes to the European Grand Prix. First, a brief history lesson for any newcomer who might happen upon this article.

Back in the good old days (the early 1980s), the leading European players were improving rapidly but they were just not in the same league as the top Japanese players (although the French genius Paul Ralle became the first European to win the World Championship in 1984). One thing that Japan had that Europe didn't was a regular diet of competitive tournaments, and this at least could be put right. So "International" tournaments were established in Paris and in Cambridge (both starting in 1984). These were an instant success, especially when Japanese superstar Takeshi Murakami came to the 1985 Paris tournament, beating compatriot Kawazoe in the final. Then the idea emerged of linking the great tournaments of Europe into a circuit, and the European Grand Prix was born.

Initially there were four events in the Grand Prix: Milan, Cambridge, Copenhagen, and the finale in Paris. The winner of the first Grand Prix in 1986 was Imre Leader, and British players won the Grand Prix in six of the first seven years, up to 1992. Surely these were the greatest days of British Othello? So far.

Isn't it remarkable that each one of these four classic events has run every year since the start? Sure, the Italian leg moved around the country after the first few years and moved around the calendar a little as well. And one year the Copenhagen event was reduced to one day because of lack of interest. But the Grand Prix was a total success, and the constituent tournaments became important events in the Othello calendar. The cunning French decided that winning a European Grand Prix tournament would count towards their qualification process for the World Championship team, and ambitious French players travelled around Europe tirelessly, dominating the Grand Prix during the 1990s. (It would be churlish not to mention that, in the 11 years since 1992, French players have won 10 times.) The addition of Brussels to the circuit in 1991 met with mixed fortunes: the tournament itself was frequently of a very high standard, but Othello in Belgium never took off, and there have rarely been many local players.

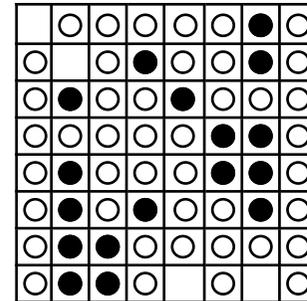
And so it stayed. Until 2001, when the claims of Amsterdam to be a Grand Prix venue became impossible to resist. Why? Because attendance

at regular Dutch events put the rest of Europe to shame. Something like 50 players were turning up frequently to events, and while initially none were especially good (three time World Champion David Shaman excepted, of course), they were all improving together, and we've now reached the point where the top players are very dangerous indeed. Just ask Imre Leader, who lost to several rising stars at one 2003 event. The Amsterdam Open became a European Grand Prix tournament and was immediately the best attended of all, not just by the Dutch but also by the visiting foreigners.

And after Amsterdam came Stockholm, with the same story. Here was a rapid surge of interest in the game, with massive attendance at tournaments, so how about a prestigious international event? where the prestige comes from endorsement as a leg of the European Grand Prix. The first Stockholm Grand Prix took place in 2003, and again it was a tremendous success in terms of numbers and of quality. Now here come the Poles, with the same story again. If there are 50 plus local players, how can Poland not be permitted a Grand Prix tournament? So next year the Grand Prix will stretch to eight events, incorporating a new one in Gdansk. And we'd be deluding ourselves to think that the traditional four are in any way superior to the bright and brash newcomers.

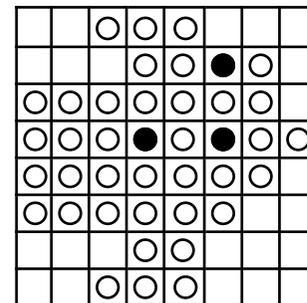
Of course, the Grand Prix as a competition will never be the same again. In 2003, the best five scores out of seven counted, but the final standings told an interesting story. Takuji Kashiwabara won it for the third straight year, and he had been to all seven tournaments! He won two of them, and had middling results in the rest, which put him way ahead of Andreas Hoehne, who had been to five events with mixed success. After that, obviously no one else was trying: David Shaman took third place with one win and one third place, just ahead of my pair of second places. Then came several players with a 100% record: one tournament attended and one win. Actually it was ever thus: in any year there were two or three players at the most who were really chasing the Grand Prix -- the minor places were won almost by accident. This year, in an effort to make winning the Grand Prix a plausible proposition to more players, only the best 4 scores (out of eight tournaments) will count toward the Grand Prix standings.

Moving on is no bad thing. The European Grand Prix is evidently relevant to these new communities of eager young players, and after all it is the players who are vastly more important than the competitions. Still, please permit us old-timers to mourn the passing of what we fondly (though in truth falsely) remember to be the best of times. When there was so little European Othello history that several of us carried it all around in our heads. When giants such as Puget, Bhagat and Ghirardato bestrode the stage. When the impassioned debates about the Swiss system, or tie-breaking,

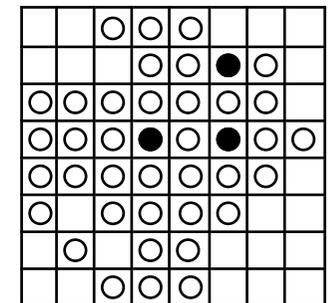


{3.} Which move wins for Black? (12pts)

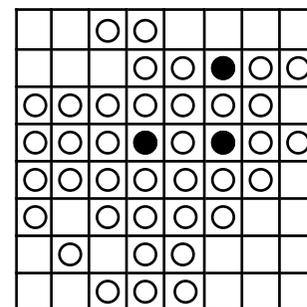
{4.} In each of the following four positions, which move for Black guarantees that he can play to a corner on or before his third move? (10pts each)



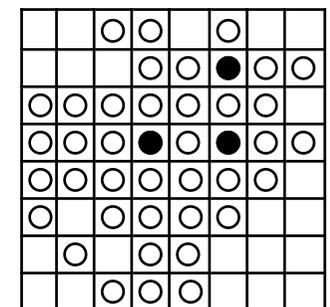
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Killer Bees, January 1993) exploits this, although his main intention was to investigate how soon certain things can occur; the puzzle aspect was secondary.

My two puzzles involve lots of "indeterminates:" squares that might be occupied by either colour or empty. That's not a necessary feature: for instance I could have presented this puzzle by giving you the final position and asking you what the last one or two (or twelve) moves were. The only way to solve it would surely have been to repeat the analysis given, more or less. The fact that you have the whole final position should help the solver, but then again the main clues would be somewhat hidden. Do you think it would have been a better puzzle?

I would very much like to hear opinions, from both Othello experts and others, and also to learn of any other Othello retro-analysis puzzles in existence.

Decamentathlon Puzzles *by Graham Brightwell*
Answers on page 30.

				2	○				
	3	●	○	○	○	○			
	○	●	●	●	●	●	1		
	●	○	●	●	○	○			
		●	●	○					

{1.} White plays to h4, Black to e2, and White to b3 (as shown); list all the discs flipped by the move to b3. (12pts)

	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
		●	●	○	○	●	○
●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○
●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○
●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

{2.} In the position shown, there are 21 White discs. How many discs does White have after each of the following sequences? (12pts each)

- (a) 1a2 2a1 3b2;
- (b) 1a1 (Pass) 2a2 3b2;
- (c) 1b2 2a2 3a1.

or time default rules, or which colour was better, were fresh and new.

So why is it boom time in Amsterdam, Stockholm, and Gdansk but not in London, Brussels, or Copenhagen? I don't have the answer to that. I am sure one factor is that we, the established British players, are far too good at the game: a beginner turning up to a British tournament has a long apprenticeship to serve before they can threaten to win anything. But in other countries, players are arriving at tournaments with extensive experience in internet play, and some of these players have already served their apprenticeships and arrive ready to compete. Why not here? I don't know. I'm sure another critical feature is the presence in all the new communities of one or two energetic and passionate organisers, who put all of themselves into promotion of the game, most notably Jan de Graaf in the Netherlands.

Anyway, the main message I want to get over to anyone reading this is: go to these tournaments. If you have ambitions to improve your game, or if you just fancy a convivial weekend break, then I can heartily recommend any of the European Grand Prix events. The next tournament is our home leg, in Cambridge, the weekend of February 28-29. Dates of subsequent tournaments will appear on <http://www.britishothello.org.uk/> and doubtless other places as well. It's about time we had a new British player burst on to the European scene: why not you?

Changes *by Aubrey de Grey*

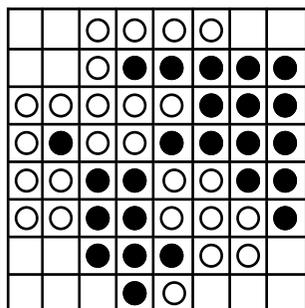
Ben Pridmore was duly elected Treasurer at the AGM; welcome, Ben, and thank you, Mark Wormley, for your much-appreciated years of service to the Federation. Roy Arnold has taken over as Webmaster of the Federation's Web page (<http://www.britishothello.org.uk/>); thanks to him for taking on this task and so nobly getting the pages up and running so swiftly, to Geoff Hubbard for thinking to check the original new site's Google™ rating, and to Ian Turner for his help with web space and Googling. Thanks to retiring Webmaster Phil Marson for having got the Web page going in the first place. Have a look, everyone, and if you have a web site yourself, link to it and boost its Google™ rating yet further!

You Need a Little Luck by Graham Brightwell

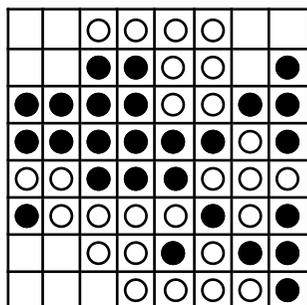
In other words, you need your opponents to make mistakes at critical moments. Here are some puzzle positions from my games in the 2003 Paris Open, where I scored a very lucky 9 out of 11 (as you'll see) but then lost the final 2-1 to Takuji Kashiwabara. All three final games could have gone either way but didn't: the third game was particularly awful.

I'm sorry to report that I was the only British representative in Paris this year. I'm also sorry to report that the EGP points I won here were the sole points won by a British player at any overseas event.

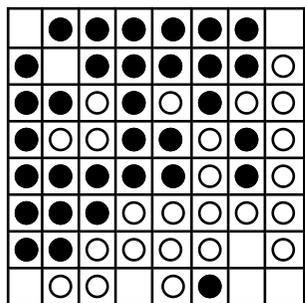
The first two problems come from games that I should have lost, which would have kept me out of the final. In both cases, the key is to spot your opponent's resource.



Brightwell vs Caspard
1) White (Caspard) to play; is the winning move 46c8 or 46f8?



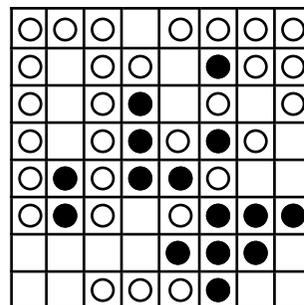
Brightwell vs Tastet
2) Black (Brightwell) to play; is the winning move 49g1 or 49g2?



Brightwell vs Kashiwabara

(3) And, as a more light-hearted problem, what is the right move in this position? I am Black against Takuji Kashiwabara (in the Swiss), and I have a choice of two winning lines. Tie-break might be critical, so I look carefully at both of them and play the move that gets me more discs. Why did Emmanuel Lazard accuse me of having no sense of humour, and why did he then laugh loudly at me a few minutes later?

Answers on page 30.



and Wh3. The only two squares that are not accounted for are f8 and h6, and f8 must come first to give access to h6. So, from the previous diagram, the final moves of the sequence are: Wg6-Bd2-We1-Bf8-Wg1-Bh6-Wh3.

The final position is shown to the left.

Acknowledgements and Musings

I'm extremely grateful to Aubrey de Grey and Adelaide Carpenter for road-testing an earlier version of the puzzle. Aubrey took 3 hours to find a solution, which unfortunately was one I hadn't known was there! I reckon you're doing well if your solution time is best measured in hours, but that's very hard for the composer to judge.

The undoubted master of retrograde analysis ("here is a legal position: tell me something about the game so far") for chess is Raymond Smullyan, who wrote two books full of puzzles: *The Chess Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Chess Mysteries of the Arabian Nights*. Last time I looked, the first of these was in print and the second not. Highly recommended, if you like that sort of thing. I've always thought the rules of Othello are at least as well suited to this genre as are the rules of chess: you are watching my attempt to prove that.

Garry Edmead's puzzles in *York, New York* (July 1991) illustrate one common retro-analysis theme: sometimes you can discover what the very last move was by looking at the position and analysing backwards a few moves to eliminate all but one possibility. I have a mild objection to that puzzle, which I'll mention some other time. My first puzzle in *Spodgy Words* (July 2002) was different, in that what could be detected was something that had taken place at some point in the course of the game, not necessarily recently. Smullyan's books have both types and also some puzzles where you need to look at both the recent and the distant past.

One thing that chess doesn't have is a natural pace to the game: if you want to waste time, pieces can be shuffled back and forth endlessly. Smullyan has one or two puzzles where you need to think about how the game started, but these require him to set some very artificial side-conditions. With Othello, if there are 16 discs on the board, then there have only been 12 moves! Aubrey de Grey's "reconstruct the game" puzzle (*The*

We8), f8 (after Bg7-We8-Bd8) and one of h2 and h3 (provided these weren't played during the opening). So Bg7 is one of the two moves, and it must come before We8. The other waiting move before Bf5 is one of d8, h2 or h3. It could be that Black plays a third move before f5 in the main sequence, but then White would have to play another move too. If Black's third move is f8, there is no move available for White. If Black plays h2 or h3 as well as d8, White can play to c8 or (after h2) to h3.

(25) In principle, after Bf5, White has waiting moves available at f8 and at h3 (flipping g4). However, either of these would flip the f5 disc to white, and there is no way to return this disc to black so that Wg6 can flip all the way from b1.

(26) The only remaining options for the two waiting moves between Bf5 and Bc2 are Wa2 and (if Black has played d8) Wc8. So Black's second waiting move before Bf5 is indeed Bd8, and White's two waiting moves are indeed Wa2 and Wc8 (which deprives Black of access to f8). It is still possible for Bh2-Wh3 to happen during the main sequence before Bf5, or for Wh2-Bh3 to happen during the opening.

(27) But if h2 and h3 are filled in, Black has no waiting move to play between Wa1 and Wg6. Therefore these moves are not played off during the opening or as extra moves during the main sequence.

(28) Furthermore, the main sequence must be played out with no unnecessary delays. So Bb5 must come immediately after Wh1 and be followed immediately by Wc6. Then comes the first waiting move Bg7, and then there is a section where the moves played are Wa4-Ba5-Ba3/Wc4 (the last two in either order) and We8-Bd8. The pair We8-Bd8 can be inserted at the front, middle or end of Wa4-Ba5-Wc4-Ba3, or they can be split by Ba3-Wc4. Then comes Wa6-Bf5, then one of the two White waiting moves (Wa2 or Wc8), then Bd3-Wc3-Bb6, then the other White waiting move, then Bc2-Wc1-Bb1-Wa1. This leads to the position below, just before Black's final waiting move, to h2 or h3.

○	○	○			●		○
○		●			●	○	
○		○	●		○		
○		○	●	●	●	●	
○	●	○	●	●	●		
○	●	○		○	●		
				●	●	●	
		○	○				

(29) When Black plays h2 or h3, the g2 disc is flipped to black. The only way for it to return to white is for Black to play h2 and then later Wh3 flips g2.

(30) In order to flip g2 back to white, f1 must be flipped to white, which requires White to get to both e1 and g1: as remarked in (23), this implies that Bd2 must occur some time after Wg6, so we have the (late-game) sequence Wg6-Bd2-We1-Wg1-Wh3.

(31) Black plays two moves between We1

Correspondence

On 17 July David Haigh wrote:

Hi, Adelaide. Lares and Penates! Ye Gods, I didn't think I was the keeper of them too! The Sibylline books are enough!

My optician used to say that he had noticed that short-sighted people have a tendency to be interested in details, as evidenced by their jobs or hobbies. Maybe that's why I'm cut out to be a Sibyllist. So of course I found your long article about cheating both amusing and interesting (*July 2003 "Looks like Things are finally going my way," pp 22-31*). Some comments: (BTW, what exactly was Mathias's original crime?) *I was never able to figure this out either; this was what I found "confusing!" Ed.*

1) In our case, I think the existence of various parrots, foxes *etc.* have established a precedence for allowing such things on the table.

2) My view is that if a player wants to use his time poring over his transcript sheet, drawing elaborate diagrams, or performing calculations, he should be allowed to do so. So, you may say, where does this stop? The key thing is that the items that go onto the paper come solely out of his own brain, are the result of his own observations, during the games of the tournament. (Can't be just the current game; we've got to let him look at the transcript sheet and it would be impossible to do the policing to stop him from looking at a previous game -- we have to be practical here.) This desirably rules out referral to notes made before the tournament or between games of a tournament and the use of computers.

The BOF has a rule which stops players moving a disc around the board or even holding a disc over the board. But we don't stop players pointing at squares on the board as is often done when they are endgame counting. Quite right too! If the rules police had their way we would have to sit rigidly in our seats, only moving a muscle when actually making a move. So I say that these brain-aiding activities are OK, provided they are not distracting to other players. Garry can come out of his cave.

I suppose that looking at the opponent's transcript sheet could be thought of as cheating (the marks on it came from someone else's brain). So, too, would be looking at the game on another board to see what a player there is going to play in the same situation. But again, if he wants to waste time scanning through his opponent's games, trying to read upside-down writing, or if he wants to waste time waiting for a player on another table to make a move, let him! Such "cheating" would be very difficult to police, and given its dubious usefulness, I say forget about it. The player should be allowed to look at anything on his table or any other table and write what he likes on his own transcript sheet.

3) On the subject of general misbehaviour, our rules only forbid undue conversation or unreasonably leaving the table. I'm surprised we don't have a general rule empowering the referee to rule on all such matters on a case-by-case basis, but we don't.

Forwarding to you,
Adelaide, as
requested.
David.

49 Balmoral Rd
DONCASTER
DN2 5BZ
23/9/03

To The Secretary
British Billie Federation.

Dear David.

Could you convey, please,
in the next newsletter my thanks

for the Plant Arrangement, the Ball
resses and the signed card with the

accompanying photographs which were kindly
delivered.

I was very touched with your concern.

Now, I was very pleased that it
was such a successful tournament and
send our best wishes to the representatives
at the International in Sweden.

My kind regards, many thanks,

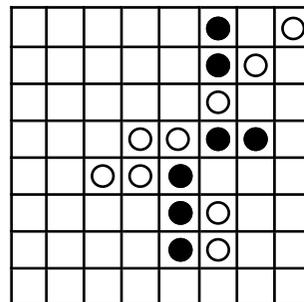
Eileen Forsyth

possible in this region until and unless Wh1 becomes playable. So, in order for Black to play three more moves than White into this region, either (a) Black plays all of g4, g2 and f1, without White replying, or (b) White plays h2 after g2, and Black plays three of the four moves at g4, f1, h1 and h3.

(19) After Black has gained three moves in the Northeast, and White has played f6, c5 and f7, it is Black's move. In sequence (18b), Black has a move to the North, but then White has no move. So the move after Wf7 is Be7.

(20) As before, it is not possible for a White move to g7 to flip e5 prior to Bf5, so White must play to e8 at some stage, flipping all the way from e4. One consequence is that White does not play d8, since this would irretrievably flip the e7 disc.

(21) The next White move after Be7 is therefore in the Northeast, and the only possibility is a move to h1. This implies that, if (18b) is what happens, then Black plays g4, f1 and h3, not h1. Therefore either (a) Black has played g4, g2 and f1, in some order (with g2 before f1), at moves 5, 7 and 9, while White has played 6f6, 8c5, 10f7, and then we have 11e7 12h1, or (b) we have had the same sequence except that White has played to h2 and Black to h3 along the way. So, after Wh1, there are only two possible positions. One is shown below; the other is identical except that there is a white disc at h2 and a black one at h3.



(22) After this "opening sequence." the main sequence can continue with Bb5. While the main sequence is being played out in the West, there need to be some "waiting moves" in the East. Specifically, between Wc6 and Bf5 we know of four White moves (three in the main sequence and We8) and just two Black moves in the main sequence, so there must be another two Black moves. Between Bf5 and Bc2, there are two White moves other than those in the main sequence, although one of these can be Wa2. Finally there is a Black move between Wa1 and

Wg6.

(23) Note that d2 is only ever accessible vertically. After Bd3, all of d3, d4 and d5 are black, and they remain so until Wg6. So neither player has access to d2 until after Wg6. This also means that neither player has access to e1 or g1 until after Wg6.

(24) The only moves in the East that can be accessed by Black before Bf5 in the main sequence are g7 (before We8), d8 (after both Bg7 and

So the sequence is Wc5-Bb5-Wc6.

(12) In summary, the Western region (along with f5 and g6) is played out in the following order: Wc5-Bb5-Wc6-Wa4-Ba5-Wc4/Ba3-Wa6-Bf5-Bd3-Wc3-Bb6-Bc2-Wc1-Bb1-Wa1-Wg6. Wa2 comes some time after Wa6, while Wc4 and Ba3 could potentially be in either order. Call this the "main sequence."

(13) The first move of the game is e6, because all other contenders are empty until later. Move 2 is to f4, since 2f6 leaves Black no third move. Move 3 is f3. If move 4 is f6, then again the game cannot continue without playing to a square that it is known to stay empty: Black would have to play 5g4 and then either 6c5 or 6e7 7e8 halts the game. So move 4 is to f2, leading to this position.

y	y	y	x				
y	x	y		x	○		
y	x	y	y	x	○	x	
y	x	y	○	●	○		x
y	y		●	●	y	x	x
y	y	y	x	●		y	
x	x	x	x				x
x	x					x	x

Here xs mark squares that are never played in; ys mark squares not played until Bb5 or later in the main sequence.

(14) The next move into the Southern or Western region is a White move to f6. That opens up a White move to c5 but no other move in the South or West is possible until White plays to e7 or (after c5) to f7.

(15) After Wc5, both d5 and e5 are white, so one of these must be flipped from white to black before Bb5. Neither d4 nor d5 can be turned black, so the only possibility is for the e5 disc to be flipped vertically downwards from a black disc at e4. In particular, this rules out a White move to g2 or h1, flipping diagonally, before the e5 disc has been flipped to black.

(16) If White plays e7, then the Black move flipping e5 is to e8. Later, the e5 disc must be flipped to white before Bf5, since this move flips all the way from a5. The only move that can accomplish this is Wg7, but this is not possible since the f6 disc cannot be flipped from white to black except by Black playing to g7. Therefore White does not play e7; instead he plays three successive moves to the South and West: f6, c5 and f7.

(17) Before Black plays into the South or West (his next move there is e7), he must play three more moves than White into the Northeastern region. Note also that Wh1 is not possible until after Be7.

(18) After move 4, possible moves for Black in the Northeast are g4, g2 and later f1. The move to g2 opens up a possible White move to h2, which in turn opens up Black moves to h1 and h3. This is the only play that is

Strategy & Tactics: The "Suekuni trap" by George Ortiz

Newly crowned Othello world champion Ben Seeley recently wrote on the internet: "[...] Ironically, the trick he (Makoto Suekuni) used to win our game in the preliminary rounds, I have for 3 years now been calling the Suekuni trap, when I was showing it to people. Quite amazing how it happened in our game... and I saw it coming but couldn't find a way around it (that was a very tragic experience, in a nice sort of way)."

The "Suekuni trap" ??? (No, it's not in *Othello: Brief & Basic.*)

I was probably one of the first victims of this "trap" at the world championships because Makoto Suekuni played it against me in Athens back in 1997. At the time I didn't fully understand what had happened except that, after what seemed like a bit of "midgame wizardry," I was dead before the endgame started.

Then, two and a half years ago, I "bumped into" Ben on VOG when he was preparing for his first world championship tournament in New York. Ben had been studying the games of all the top Japanese players, including of course Makoto Suekuni. Ben explained to me that Makoto had used one of his trademark tactics in our game in Athens to set up a winning endgame.

This trap (or tactic) is so subtle that even Ben, who obviously knew about it, still fell for it in Stockholm this year in his tenth round game against Makoto. OK, I can see you're all dying to know what it is by now... :o)

Basically it's a tactic that enables Black to gain parity (and often a winning endgame) by exploiting a simple edge configuration. Of course that doesn't tell you much, so let's have a closer look at the actual game in question between Makoto and Ben.

		●	●	○			
		●	●	○	○		
○	○	○	●	●	○	●	●
	○	●	●	●	●	○	
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
		●	○	○			

Figure A

Ben playing White has just moved to h5 (Figure A). Most players in this situation would immediately respond with h4, to get the last move on the edge and force White to play elsewhere. Or you could consider f1, which takes away White's access to h4 and save h4 for yourself for later.

But Makoto completely ignores the situation on the east edge and plays c8, and so of course Ben immediately plays h4 winning a tempo (Figure B). Ben has now fallen into the "Suekuni trap" and there's no escape!

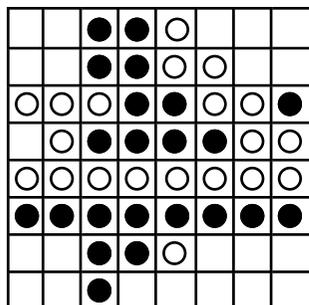


Figure B

What? Where? How?? OK, calm down people... Have a better look at the position (Figure B) and in particular the north-east region of empty squares (f1, g1, h1, g2, h2).

Now, imagine for a moment that the rest of the board has been filled in and that this north-east region is the only empty part of the board remaining. Since there are an odd number of squares in that region and assuming nobody passed, it's White's turn to play (Brian Rose once wrote, "I'll leave the task of explaining parity to someone else," but in this case it's dead simple,

and if you're not convinced just count all the empty squares on the rest of the board). So it's White's turn to play, and the only move left is the disastrous h2!! (We need also to assume that Black managed to keep at least one disc on h6, h7 or h8 but this shouldn't be hard.) Disastrous, because after White's move to h2, Black simply consolidates the eastern edge by taking the corner h1, but wait, there's more... White then needs to pass (no access to the remaining f1, g1 or g2) so Black will get three moves out of the last five, the final move and a lot of stable discs! Game over!

So coming back to reality (or Stockholm), after Ben's move to h4, Makoto had a simple game-plan for victory: play out the rest of the board (avoid the north-east region), make sure nobody passes (avoid swindles), and make sure there's at least one black disc on the south end of the eastern edge (sacrificing h8 to insert in h7 if necessary). After that Ben was eventually forced to play first in that deadly region with h2 and Makoto won 37-27.

Can this trap also work when played by White? Well, yes, but since its main strength is "reversing parity" (Black plays the last move of the game) it wouldn't be as interesting with White (who "naturally" plays the last move).

And, as you can see, this "trap" requires quite a number of prerequisites (inserted edge next to a region of an odd number of empty squares, White's only possible move to that region should be on the edge and must give away the corner, etc...). This is why I prefer to think of it as a tactic rather than a trap: you would rarely be able to set up the necessary configuration from scratch but you should be able to recognise that particular configuration -- if only to avoid being the victim.

In conclusion, this should at least demonstrate that to be a good endgame player you don't necessarily need to have the freakish ability to "compute" perfect moves but simply need to be able to recognise and exploit winning patterns and configurations early in the midgame.

also by the move to a4. Since a6 and c6 are always white, it is never flipped from white to black in either diagonal direction. For the disc to be black now, it must have been played by Black and flipped from white to black by the moves to a5 and (later) f5. So the history of b5 is: played by Black, flipped white by the move to a4, black by the move to a5, white by the move to a6, then finally black by the move to f5. In particular, the moves on the a-file are as in (1a), not (1b). Note also that White's move to c6 precedes the move to a4, giving us the sequence Wc6-Wa4-Ba5-Ba3-Wa6-Bf5, with Wa2 also coming after Wa6.

(4) After a5 is played, the c5 disc is black. It is flipped from white to black at least twice after that, by the moves to b6 and to f5. For the disc to be white now, it must be flipped from black to white three times subsequent to the a5 move. The only moves that can accomplish this are on the c-file, using the c6 disc that is already in place.

(5) Once the c3 disc is played, it can only be flipped vertically. So it is not possible for moves to both c3 and c2 to flip c5 from black to white, nor is this possible for moves to both c2 and c1. So c5 is flipped from black to white by the moves to c4, c3 and c1, while c2 is played by Black, after the c3 move and before the c1 move. After the a5 move, the sequence of moves flipping the c5 disc is: Wc4, Bb6 or Bf5, Wc3, Bf5 or Bb6, Wc1.

(6) White moves to c4, and subsequently Wc3 flips the c5 disc, so in the meantime the c4 disc is flipped to black. The only possibility is a Black move to d3, while b5 is black, which it is only after Bf5. So the sequence is: Ba5-Wc4-Bf5-Bd3-Wc3-Bb6-Wc1.

(7) Wa6 comes after Wc4 but before Bf5.

(8) After Wc3, all of c3, c4, c5 and c6 are White. For Bc2 to flip vertically, one of the discs at c4, c5 and c6 must be flipped to Black after Wc3. The c4 disc cannot be flipped again, so Bb6 (flipping c5) precedes Bc2. This gives us the sequence Ba5-Wc4-Wa6-Bf5-Bd3-Wc3-Bb6-Bc2-Wc1.

(9) Since it is White who plays c1, it must be Black who plays to b1 and then White to a1, otherwise a1 cannot be occupied. The move to b1 comes after the move to c1, since c2 is played by Black and not flipped to white until the move to c1.

(10) For c2 to be white now, it must have been flipped black to white away from a white disc at b1. So, after Wa1, White plays g6 (note that f5 is played before that) flipping all the way from b1.

(11) The first three moves played into the Western region are b5, c5 and c6: all other moves into that region come after the move to a4. It is White who plays to c5, giving Black access to b5. Both Wc5 and Wc6 flip the d5 disc, so Bb5 must come between these, flipping the d5 disc back to black.

Meanwhile, Back In That Other Universe: Answers by Graham Brightwell

First, a reminder of the puzzle itself, which appeared in the July 2003 issue:

?			x				
○	x	○		x		○	
	x			x		x	
	x						x
	●	○				x	x
	●		x				
x	x	x	x				x
x	x					x	x

Squares marked x are unoccupied; the six discs shown are of the specified colours; ? is a disc of an unspecified colour; and empty squares could be occupied or not.

Problem:

Find a game sequence leading to a position consistent with the conditions shown.

Answer: 1e6 2f4 3f3 4f2 5g4 6f6 7g2 8c5 9f1 10f7 11e7 12h1 13b5 14c6 15g7 16a4 17a5 18c4 19a3 20e8 21d8 22a6 23f5 24a2 25d3 26c3 27b6 28c8 29c2 30c1 31b1 32a1 33h2 34g6 35d2 36e1 37f8 38g1 39h6 40h3

Variations: (a) Moves 5, 7 and 9 can alternatively be played 5g2 7g4 9f1 or 5g2 7f1 9g4.

(b) The moves 16 through 21 can alternatively be played a4-a5-e8-d8-c4-a3, e8-d8-a4-a5-c4-a3, or a4-a5-e8-a3-c4-d8.

(c) The moves 24a2 and 28c8 can be swapped.

The total number of solutions is $3 \times 4 \times 2 = 24$.

Proof that the only variations are those mentioned above:

(1) When a2 is played, the disc at a3 must be flipped. When, before that, a3 is played by Black, a4 is flipped and then a3, a4, and a5 are all black. Therefore it is a white disc at a6 that gives access to a2. Either (a) a5 is played by Black and a4 by White, then Black plays a3, then White plays a6, and finally White plays a2, or (b) White plays a4 and a6, Black plays a5 and then a3, and finally White plays a2. (Either way, the move to a1 does not flip along the a-file.)

(2) The c6 disc is never flipped, and it must be white so that White has access to a4. Since a6 and c6 are both always white, the only way that b6 can be black is for a Black move to b6 (flipping c5) to come after the White moves to a6 and c6.

(3) The b5 disc is flipped from black to white by the move to a6, and

Upcoming Regional Tournaments compiled by Roy Arnold

!!! Prize money!!! 50GBP per tournament to be distributed to winner categories of the tournament director's choosing (choices and amounts to be announced before play begins). Praise and thank Character Games -- and attend as many Regionals as you can!

March 13th. Leicester. Venue: Oadby Trinity Methodist Church, Harborough Road, Oadby. Contact: Steve Rowe, 66 Briar Meads, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5WD. Tel 0116-256 8517 (work, 1400-2200 M-F). email: immac.oadby@virgin.net

May 1st. Cambridge. The Cambridge regional is currently scheduled to take place, as for the past three years, on the first Saturday in May as part of a Cambridge Mind Sports Olympiad. However, at this point details of the Cambridge MSO have not been finalised. The Cambridge Regional will almost certainly happen on that day even if the Cambridge MSO is cancelled, so mark your diaries! -- but please also check the BOF website for the latest information. Contact Adelaide Carpenter, email atc12@mole.bio.cam.ac.uk

June 5th. Ashford (Kent) Venue TBA. Contact Jeremy Dyer, Tel 01233-660 563 (h) 07950 858 391 (m) email jeremyatchb@hotmail.com

July 17th. Doncaster. Venue: St John Ambulance Headquarters, St Sepulchre Gate West, Doncaster. Contact: Sue Barrass, 17 Newhall Road, Kirk Sandall, Doncaster DN3 1QQ. Tel 01302-882476 email S.Barrass@shu.ac.uk

Further information with links to maps and transportation information can be found on the BOF website <http://www.britishothello.org.uk> then click on Tournaments.

At press time one more event is planned for London. When details are known they will be announced on the BOF website, the Yahoo! Group British_Othello (visit http://groups.yahoo.com/group/British_Othello/ to join) and the BOF email mailing list (if you are not on this list and want to be, email [Aubrey ag24@gen.cam.ac.uk](mailto:Aubrey_ag24@gen.cam.ac.uk)).

Grand Prix Schedule:

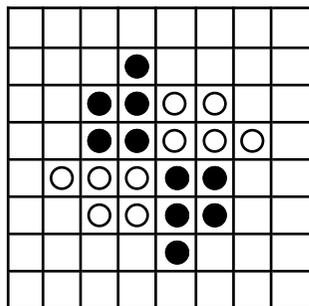
February 28th-29th Cambridge International (EGP) Contact Aubrey de Grey **200GBP in prize money to be won in various categories, thanks to the generous support of Character Games**
 March 27th-28th (PROVISIONAL) Amsterdam International (EGP) Contact Jan de Graaf
 June 26th-27th Gdansk International (EGP) Contact Krzysztof Szyszko
 July some time (PROVISIONAL) Brussels Contact - no idea
 August 28th-29th (PROVISIONAL) Paris (EGP) Contact Marc Tastet probably

More information including organisers' email addresses at the BOF web site www.britishohello.org.uk

The 2004's MSO is at the Manchester Conference Centre, UMIST, Manchester, on August 21-30. The Othello schedule will probably be the same as in 2003 (except that we may move the EC -- see page 14); full details will be posted on the MSO website and the BOF website as they become available. See you there! And remember there is prize money to be won.

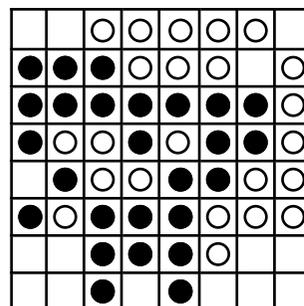
Fearful symmetry by David Haigh

Here is something pretty that Jeremy Dyer and I found while playing on the seashore of the great ocean of Othello:



1F5, 2D6; 3C3, 4D3; 5C4, 6F3; 7C5, 8E6; 9D2, 10C6; 11F4, 12E3; 13F6, 14B5; 15E7, 16G4

More prosaically, it is the opening of the game we played in this year's Nationals. I was pleased when I discovered that it starts off as the Tiger opening, thus making the title of this note even more appropriate.



After 45e8

for me of 46d8 at the time, 47a5-f8-g8 etc, but nevertheless I opted for 46f8. This move was quiet, "looked good," and still denies Black access to d8.

saw that as a good quiet move and hope Aubrey will take up residence at a5. Black's 45e8 puts me +28 ahead if we can just end the game here please.

By chance this bad move 45e8 (45g8 at -20 is best) could have proved a match winner for Aubrey since my move 46 offers me a -2 choice on the South edge at d8. I still avoid a5 and b8 looks terrible, but d8 has a certain naïve appeal because it wedges me in between two black disks. I did not see the disastrous consequences

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

de Grey 21 Dyer 43

Move 48 is another critical point. Back at the Cambridge International in February I might have taken a1 here (well it's a corner isn't it, so it must be good), especially if I had been in time trouble, leaving me with a draw at best. But now I go for a5 knowing Aubrey can't take d8 and leaving him rotten moves. The rest of the game was perfect play, apart from my 54b8 which cuts my lead to +22 from +24. I had some parity advantages in the end game which helped me. Black 21 - White 43, a White Christmas, and I'm dreaming of a rating increase.

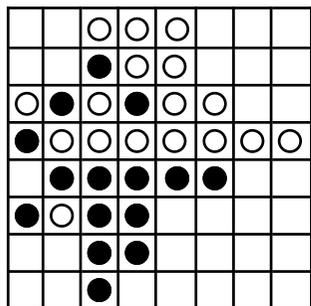
As for my other six games: a very close win over Roy Arnold and Stephen Rowe swindled himself out of the loot in a corner, X and C-square palaver. My four other games were good experience against very strong players. **A total of 50 GBP was awarded in prize money, the generous gift of Character Games.**

2003 Cambridge Christmas Friendly by *Jeremy Dyer*

The Cambridge Christmas tournament attracted eight participants this year and took place in the Junior Parlour of Trinity College. This tournament has been going since 1988, according to last year's report, but it was my first. I had hoped that an even more inexperienced player than I would turn up: but no. Imre Leader won the tournament with 7/7 including a 50-14 win against Graham Brightwell. I was very happy with my results, lack of beginners notwithstanding, and as for the others it's difficult for me to judge who will be happy with how they did. High expectations and all. Stephen Rowe's tournament seemed to get lost somewhere (perhaps on the way back from lunch, when the two of us got physically lost!), but I'm sure he will find his route back to winning ways in 2004.

Full results: Imre Leader 7/7, Geoff Hubbard and Graham Brightwell 5, Iain Barrass 4, Aubrey de Grey and Jeremy Dyer 3, Roy Arnold 1, Stephen Rowe 0.

I rank my game with Aubrey as my best Othello win so far on strength of opponent and a great game to round the year off. Aubrey played the Snake/ Peasant, an opening I can play, just about. Somehow we got to something called the Pyramid/ Checkerboarding Peasant which I don't know at all but by fluke I was still playing book moves. So many of my games against strong players collapse in the opening that I think holding my own at the start was a significant factor in my subsequent win. A good New Year's resolution would be to learn more openings.



After 28h4

The next few moves see me establish a bit of a lead but nothing significant until move 29. Zebra tells me this is not good, preferring 29a5 (at -7) to Aubrey's chosen 29f1 (-21). Black takes the b2 X-square at move 31, Zebra ranking this as best. My unbalanced North edge is a pain for me but I know enough not to go for the a1 corner ASAP.

a5 at move 33 by Black would be nice but Aubrey doesn't make things that easy. 34f6 is a minor error by me at +20 with two +26 choices available. I want to restrict Black's moves as much as possible and get a corner without being swindled *etc.* I take an unbalanced East edge trying not to play to the South unless forced. By chance I take the best move at 42e7 but still don't want a5 at 44, although this is best. Instead of the quiet move a5 (at +24) I plump for 44f7 because I

Report on the Mind Sports Olympiad 2003, August 16-25, Manchester by *Aubrey de Grey*

The seventh annual Mind Sports Olympiad took place in a new venue, as on all previous years -- but this time there is real confidence that the venue will be permanent, since it is based on a five-year contract. Our hosts were UMIST (University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology), who sponsored the event jointly with Manchester City Council. The dates for the 2004 MSO have already been announced as August 21-30.

One welcome consequence of the new sponsorship deal was a return to the 10-day format that was used for MSO 3, 4 and 5 but was halved in 2002. This meant that we scheduled a total of nine Othello events, including four beginners' tournaments (though only one of these was in fact held, due to lack of players). The turnout for the whole MSO was quite disappointing, but this was perhaps no surprise given that it was not announced until quite late. **However, we were very fortunate that, a few days before the event, the new UK distributor (Character Games) committed to a very generous £1000.00 donation to the BOF to support tournaments over the next 12 months. I allocated a total of £375 to MSO events, to add to the £750 supplied by the MSO themselves. Next year we expect to increase this prize fund, so there's no longer any excuse for the top foreign players to stay away!**

The only event with a truly inadequate number of players was the 10x10 quickplay, with just three -- Jan Kristian Haugland of Norway and our own Ben Pridmore and Jeremy Dyer. (If the Paris International is set for August 28 and 29 this year, we will move the European Championship to the 21st and 22nd and probably not hold the 10x10 quickplay; see the MSO web site, <<http://www.msoworld.com/>>, for the latest news nearer the time.) Jeremy, playing in his first ever tournament, played very well to beat Ben. Results: Jan Kristian 3, Jeremy 2, Ben 1. This poor turnout was more than compensated for, however, when eight players turned up to play in the main 10x10 tournament. This was originally scheduled to have six rounds (two each on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons), but the turnout dictated that we squeeze in a total of seven rounds so that the event could be a round robin. Stéphane Nicolet won all his games to take the title. Full results:

Stéphane Nicolet	7	Dennis Owen (England)	3
Jan Kristian Haugland	6	Alexander Baron (Eng)	2
Solrun Stokke (Norway)	5	Ronnie Cohen (England)	1
Jeremy Dyer	4	Csabas Bogнар (Hungary)	0

That wasn't the best turnout of the year, however -- we got nine for the 8x8 quickplay on the Thursday and Friday, again necessitating a change in format to nine founds. This time it was another French player, Marc Tastet, who swept all before him. Results:

Marc Tastet (France)	9	Martin Hamer (England)	6
Geoff Hubbard (Eng)	6	Tony Wilkinson (England)	4.5
Solrun Stokke	6	Alexander Baron	4
Jeremy Dyer	6	Neil Jerzynek (England)	2.5
		Alex Wilkinson (England)	1

I almost forgot to mention the blitz championship, which occurred on the first Sunday. Nicolet arrived just in time to wipe the floor with everyone except Jan Kristian, against whom he went 1-1. Jan Kristian also lost no other games; Stéphane won the tie-break with Jeremy Dyer third. There were three other players, to whom my apologies for losing my record of their names!

Finally there was the flagship event, the European Championship. Not much of a flagship, with only five players. Results:

Marc Tastet	10 + 2-0	Jeremy Dyer	3
Graham Brightwell (Eng)	8 + 0-2	Solrun Stokke	3
Geoff Hubbard	6		

The final was worth it, though, with Marc beating Graham 33-31 in both games.

So, a rather low-key MSO all round -- but as I said, that's no reason to avoid coming this year. The venue is just across the street from Manchester's main train station, Piccadilly, and you can get to it very cheaply from either Manchester or Liverpool airports using very frequent buses. The accommodation is also nice -- student rooms, but twin rooms are available -- and it's reasonably priced, as are the local food and beer. Oh, and I mustn't forget the splendid Manchester nightlife. The Norwegians were in their element....

Reminder: this year's MSO is at the Manchester Conference Centre, UMIST, Manchester, on August 21-30. The Othello schedule will probably be the same as in 2003 (except that we may move the EC -- see above); full details will be posted on the MSO website and the BOF website as they become available. See you there! And remember there is prize money to be won.

behind him by beating Suekuni 42-22, 35-29 to claim his first title. In the 3rd/4th playoff Goto lost to Hoehne.

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

Seeley 35 - 29 Suekuni

After the tournament it was the victory meal -- which included THAT speech by the newly crowned World Champion -- then flights back to the UK, sleeping rough at Heathrow airport, promising not to play the game for a week (which was broken after an hour). So on to the 2004 Worlds -- hopefully in London.

Covers In a courtyard near where we work is a very old and beautiful sundial, designed to be usable all year 'round this far North; it has not only the traditional large gnomon on its top but also smaller, shaped gnomons all around its sides, on the East, North and West for telling time during the Summer when the Sun rises and sets in the North, on the South for telling time during the Winter, when the Sun hardly rises at all. Unfortunately, over the years the University has built buildings all around this courtyard, so the only time the Sun hits this sundial is when it is overhead --

Apologies to those Readers who have already seen this drawing in another context.

a not unexpected victory against Luo.

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

Corio 30 - 34 Das

This was probably Jeremy's best result of the day, but the times when he almost fell asleep are rather evident. The structure in the NE created by move 20 is so awful that it is sometimes called a "Bhagat corner;" Marc rather takes his time to exploit it, but Jeremy's predicament after move 31 is the result. Then at 34 Jeremy proceeds to turn a weak but un-attackable East edge into a much weaker one without even a tempo to show for it, when 34c1 would have left him still in with a good chance. However, he gets away with it by virtue of Marc's move 41, which

essentially throws away most of the South when 41f1 would have more or less ended the game. (After 41f1 Jeremy can probably arrange a swindle in the NE by controlling the second row, but only at game-losing cost.) Marc tries his best to rescue the South but to no avail, since Jeremy just plays the whole endgame sensibly.

Selected standings at the end of the Swiss:

1 Ben Seeley USA (10, 1140), 2 Makoto Suekuni JPN (10, 1113), 3 Hiroshi Goto JPN (10,1103), 4 Andreas Hoehne GER (9.5, 1147), 5 Emmanuel Caspard FRA (9.5, 1078), 6 Tim Krzywonos CAN (9, 1059), 7 Roberto Sperandio ITA (8.5, 1064), 8 Taejoon Jung KOR (8.5, 1029), 9 Edmund Yiu USA (8, 1021), 10 Matthias Berg GER (8, 999), 15 David Shaman NLD (8, 951), 26 Geoff Hubbard AUS (7, 904), 28 Iain Barrass GBR (6.5, 857), 41 Jeremy Das GBR (5.5, 773), 48 Roy Arnold GBR (4.5, 819) out of a total of 54 participants. Japan claimed the team championships; "us Brits" could only manage joint 12th.

The semi-finals saw Seeley win a thrilling match against Germany's Hoehne to reach his second successive Final. Seeley won the first game 46-18 but made a late error in the second game to turn a 33-31 win into a 32-32 draw. Hoehne had to go for broke and did so by playing the snake and duly won 33-31, but it wasn't enough. The other semi-final was an all-Japanese affair in which 1997 World Champion Makoto Suekuni beat his compatriot Hiroshi Goto 46-18, 33-31.

The Final gave Seeley the chance to put last year's Final disappointment

Doncaster: 2003 National Championship Tournament by Iain Barrass

2003 was Doncaster's turn for the Nationals with the usual September timing. The turnout of twelve was small but there was a certain degree of quality about the players with Garry Edmead, Imre Leader and Graham Brightwell all turning up, with a handful of others who we'll come to presently. Sadly missing, though, were Iain and Eileen Forsyth who were both unable to make it this year.

Round One was not the archetypal quiet start since Garry lost to Jeremy Das (a later winner of a something-or-other-prize-related-to-being-a-non-expert) and Graham lost to Roy Arnold. The second round saw Jeremy Das again winning, this time against Geoff Hubbard, and Iain Barrass beating Imre. This put these two, together with Roy who had a win against the returning Phil Marson, on two points. Trailing at this stage were six on one point and three more -- Jeremy Dyer in his debut appearance in the Nationals, Ben Pridmore and David Haigh -- on zero.

The final round on Saturday saw Iain and Roy play with a win for the former. Jeremy Das also notched up a win against Phil to pave the way for an exciting match the following morning. Roy, on two points, was caught up in this round by the top three seeds, while Ben beat David at the lower end.

At the end of the first day, then: Iain, Jeremy Das on 3; Garry, Imre, Graham, Roy on 2; Geoff, Phil, Mark Wormley and Ben on 1; Jeremy Dyer and David on 0.

Food and drink next. This was managed quite successfully in Doncaster with a visit to a new-ish place. Lots of good cheap food but no belly-dancer.

Sunday morning was an early start to allow four rounds to be played before lunch. The first round, Round Four, featured the key game between Iain and Jeremy Das. Jeremy continued his run with a comfortable win, the transcript of which is shown to the right. This round also saw Garry and Imre making moves toward the lead with wins against Graham and Roy.

Having put himself clearly in the lead, Jeremy Das had to continue to win against those close behind him. Round Five saw him drawing against Imre while Iain

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

Jeremy 35 - Iain 29

slowed Garry down with a hard-worked for win.

By lunch after Round Seven Jeremy Das still had dropped only a half-point, beating Roy and Graham. With Iain losing games to Graham and Mark, Jeremy was left 1.5 points clear of Garry and 2 points ahead of Imre. The large pack on 4/7 -- Graham, Phil, Iain, Mark and Roy -- were left to fight amongst themselves for the middle placings.

The final two rounds saw Imre and Garry gaining full points to put some nominal pressure on Jeremy Das. Even a loss to Mark didn't prevent Jeremy from finishing at the top of the Swiss with 7.5/9. Round Nine also had Graham lose to Geoff, who had managed to rally with a couple of wins after lunch.

Iain also managed to score 2 more wins, the last against Phil, to finish fourth. A last round win for Jeremy Dyer against Roy concluded a creditable tournament against tough competition.

The final, Jeremy Das against Garry, should have been written up by someone (*it wasn't, Ed*). It did, however, see Garry winning his second consecutive title.

So, final placings: Garry 7 (+1), Jeremy Das 7.5 (+0), Imre 6.5, Iain 6, Graham and Mark 5, Geoff, Phil, and Roy 4, Ben 3, Jeremy Dyer and David 1.

Which all meant that Garry, Jeremy Das and Imre walked off with cheques in line with the new "prize money" regime: **a total of 125GBP, generously donated by Character Games. Next year's Nationals will be similarly endowed.**

And finally we have a selection of two more games from the Swiss.

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

Imre 32 - Jeremy Das 32

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

Graham 25 - Garry 39

Seeley Does It: Report on the XXIII World Championships, Stockholm, Sweden by Roy Arnold (with commentary by Aubrey de Grey)

The 2003 World Championship took place October 29-November 1 in Stockholm, Sweden; the British team consisted of Iain Barrass, Jeremy Das, and Roy Arnold. The first two rounds of the tournament saw all three of the British team lose their games so any chance of regaining former world team championship glory evaporated. If this wasn't bad enough, the third round pairings looked very ominous with ex-finalist Emmanuel Caspard versus Roy, Jeremy versus ex-semi-finalist Matthias Berg, and Marc Corio versus Iain. However it proved to be the turning point for both Roy and Jeremy since Roy drew and Jeremy won.

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

Caspard 32 - 32 Arnold

Another victim of the presumption that Roy's opening book predicts the quality of his endgame. Manu gets waaaay ahead by move 26 but then gets over-clever at 27 (where the alternative of c6 is totally and almost instantly killing) and by 40 seems only somewhat ahead, having given Roy two bad edges but at the cost of a horrid region of his own in the NW, which is what finally deprives him of a win. Roy's choice at 42 is outstanding, making parity and the resulting avalanche of discs in the West and North a certainty; Manu does all he can to frustrate this, but in vain.

By the end of day 1 (round 7), Roy had three wins (against Miroslav Voracek, Holger Braun and Caspar Larsen) as well as the above draw, Iain had two wins (against Tomas Douda and Robert Berg) and Jeremy the one against Matthias; in addition, Jeremy and Iain had drawn against each other in round 5 (scores 3.5, 2.5, and 1.5, respectively).

On the second day Jeremy arrived late and assumed he had lost his first game on time, but Roy was waiting outside for him; "Hurry up, you still have five minutes on the clock." Luckily for Jeremy, his opponent was the only beginner in the tournament (Xiaolong Luo), and he won easily. The day also saw better fortunes for Iain and Jeremy (both beating Kim Nielsen) with Iain also beating Riku Huhtamäki and Jeremy also beating Roy and Marc Corio despite his almost falling asleep during the latter game. However a return to winning ways for Roy only happened in the final round,