

8x8 Ratings

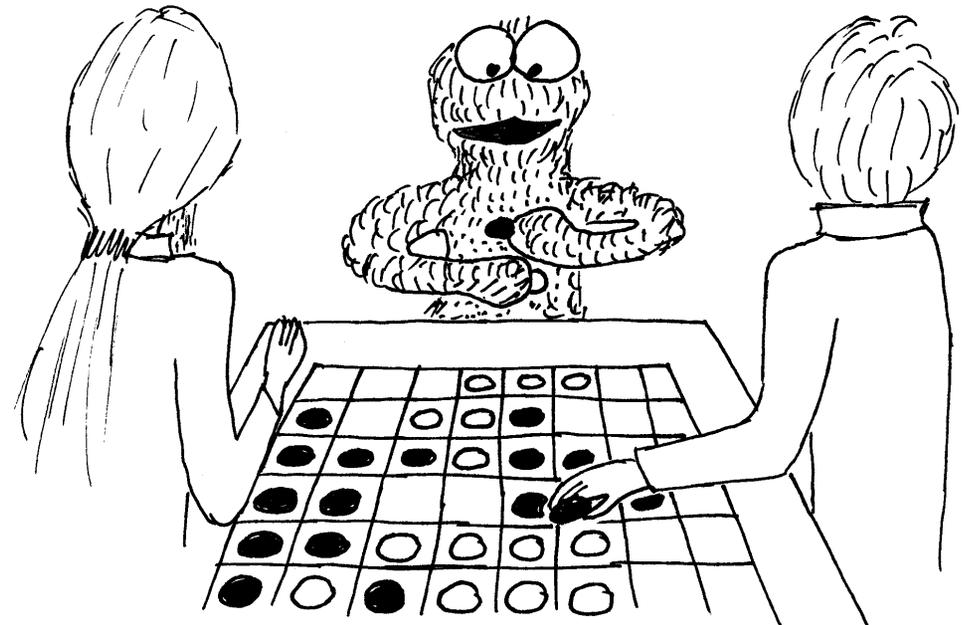
The Newsletter of the British Othello Federation

The British 8x8 Rating List *maintained by David Haigh*

January 2001

Current British players' ratings after the 2000 Cambridge Friendly tournament

	games	rating		games	rating		
1	Garry Edmead	269	1863	30	Ben Pridmore	20	1165
2	Graham Brightwell	665	1789	31	Brett Frendo	5	1164
3	Imre Leader	497	1788	32	David Haigh	487	1152
4	Guy Plowman	367	1696	33	Gareth Thomas	24	1151
5	Joel Feinstein	447	1693	34	Simon Turner	96	1150
6	Ian Turner	482	1619	35	Carolyn Lysons	26	1141
7	Phil Marson	654	1553	36	Margaret Plowman	29	1118
8	Aubrey de Grey	594	1550	37	Josef Kollar	24	1106
9	Christopher Swaby	6	1531	38	Scott Frendo	11	1088
10	Geoff Hubbard	87	1499	39	Alexander Baron	23	1081
11	Demis Hassabis	5	1497	40	Mark Stretch	14	1060
12	Iain Barrass	457	1493	41	Adelaide Carpenter	180	1055
13	E. Leung	6	1478	42	John Horton	9	1029
14	Mark Wormley	482	1448	43	Stephen Rowe	12	1025
15	David Summers	46	1427	44	Sean Haffey	6	986
16	Mark Richards	6	1404	45	Rajit Gholap	28	981
17	?? Holloway	6	1396		?? Somekh	6	981
18	Jeremy Das	273	1390	47	George Lane	12	954
19	Matthew Selby	240	1382	48	?? Twitchell	6	952
20	?? Tuddenham	6	1326	49	Roger Peck	6	880
21	Mark McCready	6	1314	50	Andrew Havery	11	867
22	M. Isaac	6	1306	51	?? Luksan	5	857
23	Darren Bartlett	6	1299	52	Harold Lee	5	848
24	Roy Arnold	750	1277	53	Leanne Lysons	20	796
25	Iain Forsyth	443	1230	54	Bharat	5	697
26	David Kotin	22	1220	55	Eileen Forsyth	263	663
27	?? Horlock	6	1193	56	Ben Player	8	479
28	Josiah Lutton	30	1191	57	Kali Turner	5	175
29	Julian Richens	15	1174	58	Wishful Thinking	27	6



INFORMATION

Othello is manufactured and marketed by Spears Games, a subsidiary of Mattel, Inc. See <http://www.mattelothello.com/> for more information.

The British Othello Federation is an independent body. An annual subscription for a British resident costs £6 (with the first year's membership including a copy of the instructional book *Othello: Brief and Basic*). A ten year 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 Aubrey de Grey (address below). The price of *Othello: Brief and Basic* for existing members is £6.

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See page 38.

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10x10 Ratings

10x 10 Rating Lists *maintained by David Haigh*

10x10 British players' ratings after the 2000 Olympiad World Championship tournament

	games	rating
1 Ian Turner	6	1790
2 Graham Brightwell	6	1627
3 Geoff Hubbard	9	1420
4 John Horton	12	1326
5 Jeremy Das	8	1285
6 Josiah Lutton	6	1245
7 Alexander Baron	3	1230
8 Paul Smith	3	1174
9 David Kotin	7	1099
10 Ezra Lutton	5	1064
11 Rajit Gholap	5	944

10x10 Foreign players' ratings after the 2000 Olympiad World Championship tournament

	games	rating	country
1 Stéphane Nicolet	6	1876	France
2 Makoto Suekuni	6	1861	Japan
3 Tim Krzywonos	12	1686	Canada
4 Marc Tastet	6	1617	France
5 Goran Andersson	7	1588	Sweden
6 Kim Kwan Soo	13	1492	Korea
7 Jakub Tesinsky	6	1426	Czech Republic
8 Benjamin Koenig	6	1356	USA
9 Marc Corio	5	1163	Canada
10 Werner Dupont	3	1139	Belgium

instead their 8x8 ratings were again used for their initial, notional ratings. The results of this second rating exercise were deemed to be the 10x10 ratings of all the players.

For the second 10x10 tournament not all the players were unrated, some of them having played in the first 10x10 tournament. Therefore the normal rating procedure could be and was used for this tournament. I will only use the special procedure again if there is another 10x10 tournament where all the players are unrated from the 10x10 point of view.

In summary, the 10x10 rating process is fundamentally the same as that for 8x8 tournaments. The only thing different is that a reasonable estimate (I hope you agree that it was reasonable) was used for the initial, notional ratings rather than the arbitrary figure of 1400.

It will be interesting to see how a player's 10x10 rating compares with his/her 8x8 rating, so I would like to encourage people to play more 10x10 games and thereby make the comparisons a bit more numerous and meaningful.

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A few useful Web sites:

<http://www.maths.nott.ac.uk/othello/othello.html>
<http://homepages.shu.ac.uk/~rcarnold/othello.html>
<http://www.msoworld.com/>

Editorial *by Adelaide Carpenter*

Well, Gentle Readers, the Editorship has changed yet once again; the Newsletter has yet another appearance, reflecting both the software available to the Editor and her inexperience at this sort of thing; yet it is *still* like pulling hens' teeth to get articles -- on time. (Aubrey had promised to do the chasing if I would do the typesetting, and indeed he did -- but who do you think had to chase Aubrey himself?) Many, many thanks to all who did contribute, with special thanks to Stephen Rowe: who not only wrote us a nifty, interesting article but also got it to me two days after Aubrey's call for articles early in December!

Yet another change, of course, is that this Editor lacks the expertise to fill out otherwise empty issues with insightful game analyses herself. So please, please keep those contributions coming in! If you have an idea, or host a tournament, write it up *then* and send it to me. I have a safe place to keep such until the time for putting the next issue together comes around.

And yet another one is that I have absolutely minimal software for setting things up. All the transcript diagrams in this issue I typed in by hand; all the board-position diagrams I laboriously pasted in little white or black circles. I don't even have an Othello-playing program; insofar as games were checked by me they were played out on a real board. I certainly welcome transcripts and diagrams, but the earlier your submission is the more likely it will be that I will have time to do all of them! I also have only minimal abilities for handling email attachments; I was able to capture all such that were sent to me for this issue but only as plain text. If anyone's careful formatting was therefore lost, I apologise, and I hope that my formatting is not too different from what you had envisioned. For future submissions: the easiest format for me is a simple text email message, but if you absolutely have to send yours as an attachment bear in mind that all formatting will be lost, and if you really care about presenting me with that formatting (which I will consider but not promise to follow), send me the text as an email message and fax me a copy of what you think it should look like. Of course, please do submit even if you lack email access; I can type.

This explains the title of this issue.

The title and the cartoon bear no relationship to each other.

2001 REGIONALS *by Roy Arnold*

We welcome Nottingham back to the tournament circuit and we also have a new venue for the North East Regional, held alongside the 7th Hartlepool Weekend Chess Congress. They have even named a nearby chippy after a former top player.

Further information (including maps) can be found at:
<http://homepages.shu.ac.uk/~rcarnold/othello.html>

EAST MIDLANDS: 17th February

Venue: Victoria Centre, Palk Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire
Contact: Margaret Plowman, 137 Torrington Crescent, Hatton Heights, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 5ET. Tel. 01933-678886
E-mail racialeq@aol.com

EAST ANGLIA: 5th May

Venue: Junior Parlour, Trinity College, Cambridge.
Contact: Aubrey de Grey, 1 Beaconsfield Terrace, Victoria Road, Cambridge CB4 3BP. Tel 01223-366197 (h), 01223-333963 (w). E-mail: ag24@gen.cam.ac.uk

NORTH EAST: 19th May

Venue: Borough Hall, Headland, Hartlepool, Cleveland.
Contact: Graham Marshall, 27 Bruntoft Avenue, West View, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS24 9NE. Tel 01429-426 374

SOUTH: 16th June

Venue: 24 Buckhurst Road, Frimley Green, Surrey
Contact: Ian Turner, 24 Buckhurst Road, Frimley Green, Surrey GU16 6LH. Tel 01252-692893. E-mail: ian.turner@romseyassoc.com

WHITE ROSE: 14th July

Venue: St John Ambulance Brigade, St Sepulchregate West, Doncaster, South Yorkshire.
Contact: Eileen Forysth, 49 Balmoral Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN2 5BZ. Tel 01302-364626.

The European Grand Prix Schedule is on page 27. Don't forget to come to the Cambridge leg of it!

- 5) Set the unrated players' current ratings equal to their new ratings.
- 6) Repeat from 3) until none of the unrated players' new ratings change.
- 7) The unrated players' ratings are the values of their current ratings as calculated above.

Provisional players' ratings are calculated as in steps 1) to 3) above, substituting "provisional" for "unrated". There is no iteration. Their ratings become the weighted average of their current and new ratings, weighted according to the number of games that contributed to the current and new ratings.

Established players' ratings are calculated quite differently. Initially set his new rating equal to his current rating. For each game played by an established player, from the current rating difference look up the probability p of the player winning. The established player's new rating is increased by k times $(w - p)$, where w is 1 if he won the game, 0.5 if he drew, and 0 if he lost. k is 32 if his opponent was established, 16 if he was provisional, and 8 if he was unrated.

Note that an established player's rating will not change if he is beaten by a player whose rating is 600+ more than his, nor will the rating of an established winner of such a game change.

That's the end of the recap. There are a few minor details I haven't mentioned, but I think that is enough basis to understand the mechanics of the 10x10 ratings. I will refer to players who did not have an 8x8 rating as "totally unrated", to distinguish them from those who had an 8x8 rating, the "quasi unrated".

For the first 10x10 tournament all the players were of course unrated from the 10x10 point of view, so their ratings would be based on the initial, notional ratings supplied. Rather than base their ratings on 1400 I thought it would be a good idea to base them in some way on the 8x8 ratings of the quasi unrated players. We can use the 8x8 rating of the quasi unrated players for their initial, notional rating, but what can we use for the totally unrated players?

What I decided to do was to perform a preliminary rating of the first 10x10 tournament, in which the totally unrated players were in the unrated category, but the quasi unrated players were moved into the provisional category. This generated rating figures for the totally unrated players that were based on the 8x8 ratings of the quasi unrated players.

I then re-rated the first 10x10 tournament with every player in the unrated category, where they should be. For the initial, notional rating of the totally unrated players I used their ratings from the preliminary rating exercise described above. The ratings of the quasi unrated players produced by the preliminary exercise were ignored;

- 1) unrated players, i.e. those who have not yet got a rating;
- 2) provisionally rated players, i.e. those whose rating is based on fewer than 30 games;
- 3) established rated players, i.e. those whose rating is based on 30 games or more.

The ratings of the unrated players are calculated first, so that their ratings may be used when calculating the new ratings of the other players. Next the provisionally rated players' new ratings are calculated, and their new ratings are used when calculating the established players' new ratings, which is done last.

Nowadays there are never more than a few unrated players in an 8x8 tournament, so when their ratings are calculated the results are dependent on and relative to the ratings of their rated opponents. In this situation the initial, notional ratings of the unrated players are ignored by the rating algorithm and do not influence the value of the rating of these players. However, when the first few 8x8 tournaments were rated all the players were unrated, so a slightly different procedure had to be used. The algorithm can work out the relative ratings of the players, but there is no absolute figure on which to base them. In this situation an absolute figure is supplied by making the sum of the calculated ratings equal to the sum of the initial, notional ratings supplied for these unrated players.

This initial, notional rating was arbitrarily chosen to be 1000; it is after all a nice round number. After a few years it was necessary to add 400 to everyone's rating, however, to avoid the lowest ratings going negative. This boost also brought our top players' ratings more into line with the ratings of the top US players (the rating system I use is very similar to that of the USA). The ratings nowadays are such that the initial, notional rating was effectively 1400 rather than 1000.

Unrated players' ratings are calculated as follows:

- 1) Work out the proportion of games won by each unrated player in the tournament. This is then taken to be the probability of the player winning when playing a player whose ability is the average of all the player's opponents.
- 2) Using the probability table, obtain the values for the rating difference corresponding to those probabilities. If any players won or lost all their games the difference is taken to be +/- 400 (not 600).
- 3) Set each unrated player's new rating equal to the average of his opponents' current ratings plus the relevant rating difference from the table.
- 4) If there are no rated opponents adjust all the new ratings equally so that their sum is the same as the initial sum of the current ratings.

My First Tournament *by Stephen Rowe*

I was one of three newcomers at the Cambridge Christmas Tournament. I played Leigh Eastman in the first game and beat him 54-10. It was nice to win a game. In round two I played Roy Arnold. I was very surprised to lose only 26-38. Round three was more like the standard I was expecting. I lost 58-6 to Geoff Hubbard.

After lunch at the Cambridge Arms I got a bye. In round five I played David Haigh. This was the game I most enjoyed and is the main substance of this article.

Haigh - Rowe Cambridge 25.11.2000

1 C4	2 E3	
3 F4	4 C5	
5 D6	6 F3	
7 C6	This is a move I am not familiar with. I am now thinking for myself.
.....	8 E6	
9 F5	10 G4	This move was a mistake. I expected to take F4, but I failed to notice that I also took F5.
11 F6	12 F7	
13 D3	14 E7	
15 G5	16 H6	
17 D7	18 G6	
19 F8	At this point I had the better position.
.....	20 D8	
21 E8	22 G8	I don't like to take C squares, but in this case I thought I could take C8 and later B8.
23 E2	24 C8	Here I actually thought I might win the game. Black has no moves in the West and no good moves in the North.
25 H4	26 G3	
27 H3	28 F2	
29 F1	I now thought I definitely had a win. Black now has very few moves.
.....	30 C2	Trying to disturb the Black wall as little as possible.
31 C3	32 D2	
33 E1	34 C1	
35 C7	36 B8?	I've finally got B8!
37 D1		Having just balanced one edge I'm now faced with the prospect of another unbalanced edge. I don't want to break into the Black wall so I don't have much choice. I later found that Zebra agreed with this move.

..... 38 G1
 39 H5 40 H2
 41 G7 If C7 were black I would have an easy win. Perhaps I shouldn't have gone to B8; perhaps I shouldn't have taken the east and north edges. Too late now though. I have to cut into Black's wall now. I have an idea, I could take the 7 row one at a time with a series of diagonal moves. It will never work. It's worth a try though, if I can go to h7 safely I've won the game.

..... 42 B6
 43 A6 44 A5
 45 A4 46 B5
 47 B4 It's working just as planned.
 48 A3 Here I made a flipping error; I only turned over B4 which ruins my plan completely.

49 A2 50 B3
 51 B2 I hadn't considered this move; I've no access to H8.
 52 G2
 53 A7 54 B7
 Pass! 55 H7 The game is all over now.
 56 H8 57 B1
 58 A1 Pass
 59 H1 Pass
 60 A8

47-17

Both of my mistakes at moves 36 and 50 were due to jumping in without thinking. One thing I have learned from this game is to look before I leap.

In round six I played Aubrey de Grey. I only made two mistakes in the game, which he kindly pointed out to me afterwards. I lost 48-16. In round seven I played Paul Hubbard losing 47-17.

I coped better in the tournament than I thought I would. If I had looked further ahead I might have won more games. I intend to come to all the 2001 regionals if I can. In the meantime I will study my games, spend many hours on Zebra, and try to improve my play as much as I can.

Overall results (Ed): Graham Brightwell, 7/7; Paul Hubbard, 6; Aubrey de Grey, 5; Geoff Hubbard, 4; Roy Arnold, 3; David Haigh, 3; Darren Bartlett, 3; Steve Rowe, 2; Leigh Easden, 1

The New 10x10 Ratings by David Haigh

We decided that the 10x10 games played at last year's Mind Sports Olympiad should be rated, and that this should be the makings of a new rating list, separate from the current 8x8 ratings. Assuming that a player's 8x8 ability is likely to be some indication of his 10x10 ability, it seemed a good idea to seed the 10x10 ratings from the 8x8 ratings, rather than start completely from scratch, as had to be done when the British 8x8 ratings were started some 15 years ago. This article explains how this seeding was done. First, though, a recap of what the ratings mean and how they are calculated may be helpful.

The key idea behind the rating numbers is that they aim to indicate the probability of the outcome when two players play. If two players with the same rating play several games with each other, then each player would be expected to win half the games. In other words, the probability of each player winning is 0.5. If their ratings are different, then the difference between their ratings indicates the probability that the higher rated player will win, as given in the following table:

rating difference	win probability	rating difference	win probability
+550	0.98	-50	0.43
+500	0.96	-100	0.36
+450	0.94	-150	0.30
+400	0.91	-200	0.24
+350	0.88	-250	0.19
+300	0.85	-300	0.15
+250	0.81	-350	0.12
+200	0.76	-400	0.09
+150	0.70	-450	0.06
+100	0.64	-500	0.04
+50	0.57	-550	0.02
0	0.50		

In theory the probability of winning will never be 1 or 0 whatever the rating difference, but for the purpose of calculating the ratings the probability is deemed to reach these extremes for rating differences of 600 or more. This probability table is the fundamental basis of all the ratings calculations.

The ratings are calculated one tournament at a time. In each tournament the players are grouped into three categories:

37: d1	d2	+14	24	38: d2	d2a7c2c1b2	-14	23
39: a7	a7c2c1b2g3	+14	22	40: c2	c2c1b2g3h2	-14	21
41: c1	c1b2g3h2h3	+14	20	42: b2	b2g3h2h3h4	-14	19
43: h3	g3h2h3h4	+14	18	44: h4	g2h7g3a2a6	-12	17
45: g3	g3h2	+14	16	46: f3	h2	-14	15
47: a1	g2g1a1a2b1	+20	14	48: h2	h2h6g7h8a6	-10	13
49: h5	h6g7h8a6a2	+10	12	50: h7	h7g7h6b1	+0	11>
51: h1	g7h6b1	+0	10	52: h6	a6g7	+2	9
53: h8	h8	-2	8	54: a6	b1	+2	7
55: a2	g2	+0	6	56: b1	b1	+8	5
57: g7	g7	-8	4	58: g1	g1	+8	3
59: g2	g2	-8	2	60: g8	g8	+8	1

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From Aubrey: The British Nationals happened September 23-24. Nine-round Swiss:

Imre Leader	8/9	Iain Barrass	4
Graham Brightwell	7	Iain Forsyth	4
Ian Turner	6	Mark Wormley	4
Phil Marson	6	Roy Arnold	4
Joel Feinstein	5.5	David Haigh	2
Aubrey de Grey	5.5	Julian Richens	1
Geoff Hubbard	5	John Horton	1

following which there was a one-game playoff for third place:

Turner 30-34 Marson

and a one-game final:

Brightwell 36-28 Leader

From Adelaide: My nifty, fail-safe system for guaranteeing that at least the top players will give no colour troubles in the first several rounds of pairings was blown out of the water by some large proportion of them losing their first games. The only possible strategy thenceforth was to give colour history last weighting in the succeeding rounds of pairings. I nevertheless managed to end the tournament with all players on 5:4 colour ratios, a major achievement from my perspective!

The 2000 World Championships

by Graham Brightwell with WZebra

There is no such thing as a weak World Championships. But some are even stronger than usual, and Copenhagen 2000 was one such. The tournament featured two top Japanese players (the policy now is to select both the National Champion and the Meijin, so we can expect more Japanese wins over the next few years too) plus Brian Rose (who has recently returned to the U.S. after a stint as a top Japanese player), plus the reigning Champion David Shaman, another past winner in Marc Tastet, assorted other ex-finalists, and a string of "Internet players" who had gained most of their experience on-line -- the most feared of this younger generation was Canada's Tim Krzywonos, who had been very impressive at the MSO. The quantity was also high, with 46 players from 20 countries -- both records. There were full teams from the Netherlands and the Czech Republic and a debut appearance from Kenya. All the continents except Antarctica were represented. The Danish organisational team, headed by Henrik Vallund, coped splendidly throughout.

The Swiss portion of the tournament was dominated by Brian Rose, who dropped only one draw and one last-round defeat. Takeshi Murakami was also on reasonable form, but behind them anyone could beat anyone. Romy Hidayat of Indonesia lay second after the first day, having beaten Murakami and Kazuhiro Sakaguchi in successive rounds. Imre Leader was in the running until the second afternoon when he fell away a little. I had my bad afternoon on the first day and then recovered to be an undeserved 6th. Another surprise package was Matthias Berg of Germany, who beat Tastet, among others, on his way to 7.5/13. Phil Marson scored a disappointing 5/13 and the U.K. was a disappointing 6th in the team championship, with the U.S. winning comfortably ahead of Japan, the pre-tournament favourites.

In the end, Takeshi Murakami beat Brian Rose 2-0 in the Final to record his third victory. He described his win as "a miracle": more to the point he simply played better than anybody else and had just a little bit of fortune at the key moments.

There was a ridiculous amount of exciting Othello played. Alas, not so much in my games, so here are some comments on the tournament as experienced by other people. In fact, there are so many good games that we can forget the first eleven rounds and start in Round 12. Firstly, we join Stéphane Nicolet on the verge of elimination against Tatsuya Mine.

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

The game follows a previously-travelled path until move 21, where Black turns down the opportunity to play 21a5: this looks wild but it's worth it to get to g3 -- play typically goes 21a5-c3-g3-d6-c4, and Black's solid mass, with at least one more free move coming at h7, gives him the advantage. After Mine's 21h7, it's a close game. At 28, the move to play is g7! The point is that Black won't be able to cut the diagonal without also putting a piece on the g-file, so White can play e8 at the appropriate moment: WZebra tells me that the

Mine 30 Nicolet 34

perfect-play score is 33-31 to Black, but there's a lot of complicated play in it. The problem with Nicolet's choice is that it allows Black to extract all White's discs with c8 and d6, setting up a very solid block. After a few more inaccuracies (White should play f1 at some stage to combat the extraction) the first position below was reached.

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

Black to play at 43

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

Black to play at 51

Here Black starts to go wrong. One very straightforward win is 43a3 44b3 (none of the sacrifices achieves much) 45b2, after which White is very dead. But Black is seduced by the apparent kill 43b7. No doubt he calculated 44g7 45a4 46a3 47h8 48b3 49a2 50a1, reaching the second diagram above. Surely this is an easy Black win? He'll keep the mass of discs in the South-East, nothing terrible is happening in the North, and White is no closer to access to a8. Yet there is only one winning sequence!

```
> 53: a4 a4 +12 8 54: a7 a7 -12 7
> 55: a8 a8 +12 6 56: h2 h2 -12 5
> 57: h1 h1 +12 4 58: -- - 1
> 59: g2 f1 +12 3 60: f1 f1 -12 2
> 61: g1 g1 +12 1
> Copyright: Gunnar Andersson & Lars Ivansson.
```

> -----
> Generated by WZebra 2.02 Mon Sep 25 17:52:04 2000

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

28:36

```
>
> History: <move> [<principal variation> <evaluation> <lookahead>]
```

```
>
1: f5 f5d6c3d3c4 -0.16 (book) 1 2: f6 d6c3d3c4f4 +0.16 (book) 1
3: e6 e6f4g5e7e3 +0.79 (book) 1 4: d6 f4g5e7e3f3 -0.79 (book) 1
5: e7 e7g5c5c6e3 +0.79 (book) 1 6: f4 g5c5c6e3 -0.79 (book) 1
7: g5 g4g5c6c7c5 +1.25 (book) 1 8: d7 g6c5c4f3 -0.99 (book) 1
9: c6 c6e8c5f7 +2.03 (book) 1 10: e8 e8c5f7 -2.03 (book) 1
11: c5 c5f7 +2.03 (book) 1 12: c4 f7 -2.03 (book) 1
13: c8 g3g6 +3.89 (book) 1 14: d8 d8f8g4c7 -2.12 (book) 1
15: f8 f8g4c7 +2.12 (book) 1 16: g4 g4c7 -2.12 (book) 1
17: d3 c7 +2.12 (book) 1 18: f7 f7c3 -0.85 (book) 1
19: c3 c3 +0.85 (book) 1 20: b7 c7e3g3g8d2 -3.32 24
21: c7 b6d2g8c7a8 +11.72 24 22: b6 h5g8b6b5e3 -4.78 24
23: b5 b5e3b4a4f2 +9.84 24 24: e3 e3b4a4f2e2 -9.44 24
25: b4 b4a4f2e2b3 +9.84 24 26: a4 a4f2e2b3a5 -9.84 24
27: f2 f2e2b3a5a8 +9.84 24 28: e2 e2b3a5a8d2 -8.88 24
29: a8 b3a5a8d2a3 +10.64 24 30: b8 a5h3g6h6d2 -7.31 24
31: a5 g6h5a5a7a6 +15.22 24 32: a3 a7a6c2h3b3 -12.13 24
33: b3 b3g6a7c2g3 Win 28 34: g6 g6a7c2g3f3 Loss 27
35: f1 a7c2g3f3g2 Win 26 36: e1 d2e1a7a6b2 -12 25
```

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

38:26

>
 > History: <move> [<principal variation> <evaluation> <lookahead>]
 >
 1: f5 d3c5f6f5e6 -0.16 (book) 1 2: f6 d6c3d3c4f4 +0.16 (book) 1
 3: e6 e6f4g5e7e3 +0.79 (book) 1 4: d6 f4g5e7e3f3 -0.79 (book) 1
 5: e7 e7g5c5c6e3 +0.79 (book) 1 6: f4 g5c5c6e3 -0.79 (book) 1
 7: g5 g4g5c6c7c5 +1.25 (book) 1 8: d7 g6c5c4f3 -0.99 (book) 1
 9: c6 c6e8c5f7 +2.03 (book) 1 10: e8 e8c5f7 -2.03 (book) 1
 11: c5 c5f7 +2.03 (book) 1 12: c4 f7 -2.03 (book) 1
 13: c8 g3g6 +3.89 (book) 1 14: d8 d8f8g4c7 -2.12 (book) 1
 15: f8 f8g4c7 +2.12 (book) 1 16: g4 g4c7 -2.12 (book) 1
 17: d3 c7 +2.12 (book) 1 18: f7 f7c3 -0.85 (book) 1
 19: c3 c3 +0.85 (book) 1 20: g6 c7e3g3g8d2 -3.38 24>
 21: g8 g8c7e3e2h6 +8.96 24 22: c7 c7e3e2h6d2 -7.51 24
 23: e3 e3e2h6d2b6 +8.64 24 24: b5 e2h6d2b6b3 -7.65 24
 25: b4 b4f3b8g7a5 +13.65 24 26: f3 f3b8g7a5b7 -13.65 24
 27: a5 b8g7a5b7h7 +15.03 24 28: e2 e2h6b6b8g7 -12.55 24
 29: b8 h6 +6.65 32 30: b6 b6h6g7h8d2 -12 31
 31: a6 h6 +12 30 32: d2 g7h8h7h6h5 -8 29
 33: h6 h6c2h5b7b2 +10 28 34: g7 c2h5b7b2a4 -10 27
 35: h3 h8c2h3h7h4 +12 26 36: h4 g3c2a3a4a7 -10 25
 37: c2 c2b1d1b3e1 +14 24 38: b3 b1d1b3e1f2 -14 23
 39: d1 a4b2 +18 22 40: e1 a4f1a7h8 -8 21
 41: a2 a4a3a2 +16 20 42: c1 b7 -8 19
 43: h8 h8h7h5b7b2 +20 18 44: h7 h7h5b7b2a1 -20 17
 45: h5 h5b7b2a1a7 +20 16 46: b7 b7b2a1a7a3 -20 15
 47: f2 b2a1a7a3a4 +20 14 48: g3 g3b2a1b1a3 -12 13
 49: b2 b2a1b1a3a4 +12 12 50: a1 a1b1a3a4 -12 11
 51: b1 b1a3a4 +12 10 52: a3 a3a4 -12 9

Play out the game to see one terrible thing that can happen in the North; another is (e.g.) 51b2-b1-e1-e2-f1-a8-c1-g2-g1-h1, 31--33. What Black has to do is play the second of the two moves on the e-file, while keeping some discs in the North-West. The only way is 51c1-e2-e1-f1 (this is the only way to get Black to play g1) 55g1-b1-b2; White gets the last three moves still, but only 28 discs. Tough.

On to Round 13. Rose and Murakami had already sealed their spots in the semi-finals, but there were five players on 8/12 who were looking to join them. Krzywonos beat Mine to reach the magic 9 points, leaving these two games as eliminators.

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

Nicolet 38 Sakaguchi 26

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

White to play at 38

This is a standard opening to about move 20, and the game is well-played and close until White goes wrong at 38. He should play 38h3, leading to a close endgame, but instead he plays 38g6 allowing 39b3. The problem with this is that White now has no access to c7, and pairs like a4-a6, a6-c7 or b2-a1 gain him nothing. The best sequence is in fact b2-a1-a4-a6-a2, which at least gets access to h3, but leaves Black with a free move to c7 and a fairly straightforward win. Sakaguchi complicates matters by playing the highly unpromising-looking b7 sacrifice, but Nicolet finds a comfortable winning sequence.

Not making the semi-finals can be a shattering blow. Sakaguchi had waited eight years for a chance to make up for his poor showing in Barcelona. This year he won both the Meijin title and the Jap-anese Championship; he is now unquestionably one of the strongest players in the world, but he didn't

play to his best form in Copenhagen and missed out again. Another disappointed player was Raphael Schreiber of the USA. Raphael was maybe the only person at the Worlds who fits the stereotype of an internet player: he has a vast opening knowledge, coupled with

verified perfect-play sequences and scores down lots of lines. He's not bad at the second half of the game either. But in the last round he came up against Israel's Benyamin Shifman, another of the game's rising stars.

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

Shifman 34 Schreiber 30

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

White to play at 20

or f2 leaves White comfortably ahead.

Schreiber's 26g6, allowing c6 quietly, is not attractive, but what else is there? The answer is that White should play 26e1-f1-g1 with e2 to follow, one point of which is that the diagonal is controlled so that White would then be threatening g6 without allowing c6 (so Black should play c6 himself, perhaps even at 27, to avoid this).

WZebra is also not impressed by 29b8, even though it does seem to gain a tempo in the region; it prefers the simpler 29d7-c8-e8-g8-h2, after which Black is indeed narrowly winning (34b3-a4-f1-g1-h1-h4 is just good enough for Black). However, after 29b8, White should simply let Black have the tempo and play 30e1-f1-g1-d7-e2. Now any attempt to

Some games are more complicated than others. This one needs the whole newsletter to do it justice, but I'll see what I can do in the space available.

The more standard line is 16e2 but WZebra says 16c7 is better, and I don't suppose it's a coincidence that Schreiber prefers it. The move recommended by my Wstripy friend is 17c6, and it thinks White is a long way ahead at~19 but that 20g3 is an enormous blunder: I must confess I find that very difficult to understand. The problem seems to be that Black can avoid the tempting 21h6-h7-f2, which puts him back behind again, and go for the centre-control move c6 instead. For instance, 21c6-e2-e1-f7-g6 is very promising for Black; the West edge will still play well somehow or other. Meanwhile far and away the best move at 20 seems to be 20h4, after which 21c6-g6 is unpalatable, so Black has nothing better than 21h6, after which any of 22g3, c6

The 2000 UK National Championship *by various* (in order of receipt)

From Imre:

PPS. I can remember NOTHING AT ALL about the Nationals. Why not just put in the final scores, plus the playoff game (or Grand Final, as I think it is called officially). If you want to insert some games from the Swiss, all of the three games between me and Graham and Joel were interesting.

PPPS. Oh, wait a minute. It is not good to have the champion (ie Graham) having more losses than wins shown (he beat me in the final, but lost to me and Joel in the Swiss). So pick some other Graham win and include it.

From Graham:

Sorry, I really haven't got time in the next day or so. If WZebra's analyses of two key games are any use to anyone, then here they are.

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Tue, 26 Sep 2000 11:23:59 +0100 (BST)
From: Graham Brightwell <graham@tutte.lse.ac.uk>
To: Imre Leader <i.leader@ucl.ac.uk>, Joel Feinstein <jff@maths.nott.ac.uk>
Cc: Graham Brightwell <graham@tutte.lse.ac.uk>
Subject: Re: WZebra's analysis

I mean b2-a1-a7, but you realised that.

On Tue, 26 Sep 2000, Graham Brightwell wrote:

- > Imre, Joel,
- > Here are ZEBRA's opinions on (a) the final game, (b) my game with Joel.
- > Points to note:
- > (a) * the even-better sequence b1-a2-a7 at 47 (but even if I miss both this and what I played, I am still winning narrowly),
- > * 42b7 doesn't work as such, since after h7-a5, Black just plays h5, leaving a4, and getting to h8 with what seems to me to be a comfortable win.
- > (b) * I was winning!
- > (c) You should both give up this opening and find something else!
- > Graham

> Generated by WZebra 2.02 Mon Sep 25 12:11:37 2000

able to control the c6-f3 diagonal as well, which will be his final tempo.

42. This move is not as good as d8. With the move played, 42e7, we have 43f8 44d8 43b8, which ends White's play in the South but allows Black, if he wishes, a move to f7. Of course, that f7 may well be met with a White reply of g7, but the point is that it is an extra option for Black -- something that may help him to control or cut a diagonal, for example. Contrast this with what happens after 42d8: we have 43b8 44e7 45f8 46f7 47g8, which has the squares at f7 and g8 filled in. In general, a reply like 42e7 is almost always a little too passive.

Actually, in the above lines it is better for White to insert the pair h3 g2 at some point, to avoid an evil Black move to h3 (with White h2 being met by Black g2), but the above points still apply.

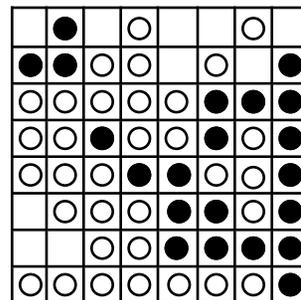
48. Many spectators thought that 48g2 would have been much better, with a sequence like 49h1 50h2 51h5 giving White access to a8. However, Black can play move 51 to g7 instead, flipping the g2 disc. Even worse, while White can certainly take the h8 corner, he cannot get to h7 after that.

The following was received with the body of the above text See notes on page 19: below are the positions where Dylan Boggler wishes you to pause and think while you are playing out this game.

Please could you put in the transcript (with scores) and the diagrams of positions after moves 12, 16, 19, 25, 34, 41, 47. If that is too many, remove the 47.

sacrifice the h1 corner is doomed, since the follow-up move to h4 flips f6 and allows White to sacrifice at g7; also, the power to play off the pair in the South whenever it suits him gives White extra control, and finally White has b7 available as a last gain of tempo. I don't find that at all obvious, and I wouldn't criticise Schreiber's choice of 30a5, the point being that 31d7 now turns the g4 disc. Schreiber decided to take advantage of this immediately, playing 32h4-h8 thus securing the South edge; but this does not really gain a tempo and still leaves Black a move at h2. This turns out to have been the last game-loser: a correct sequence was 32b6-a3-c2-b3-a4-a6-g8 (only win) h8-h4-c1-g2-g7-g1-a2-d2-d1-b7-e2-e1-f1-b1-b2-e8-a8-a7-c8-a1-h2-h1, 31--33, and as ever there are many other paths the game could go down. One thing to note though is that there was no real hurry to play out h4-h8, while that sequence demonstrates another use for the access to h4.

As the game goes, White indeed secures the South edge, but Black stores up the h2 move, and taking a8 leaves White with an odd region. Shifman's 43b1 is excellent, but after Schreiber finally takes the a8 corner he does better to play out the South-West region and leave the North-West for parity (47b7-a6-a7-e2-e1-f1 and Black has a choice of easy wins). The tempting 47b2 makes it much tougher, 48 and 49 are not the best, and after move 50 it is not clear what Black can do.



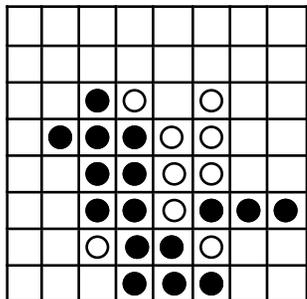
Black to play at 51

A move to e2 is out, since White will get both a1 and c1. Playing into the a7 region will lose parity and not be good enough. So the plan has to be to play c1! But neither 51c1-e2-f1-a1 nor 51f1-e1-c1-a1-e2-g2 works, so it has to be 51e1!-f1-c1!-a1-e2-g2-h1-(P)-b7-a6-a7 winning 33-31. Schreiber presumably counted this, and played the parity-at-all-costs plan of giving up the North edge, but that loses too. Wow!

After a close vote and a recount, it was Nicolet who was spared the agony of a play-off, so Krzywonos and Shifman had one more game to play that day. Tim Krzywonos won another exciting game and won the right to play Brian Rose in the semi-finals. Here is the first game of that match.

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

Rose 38 Krzywonos 26



White to play at 22

audience was expecting g8, seeing it as

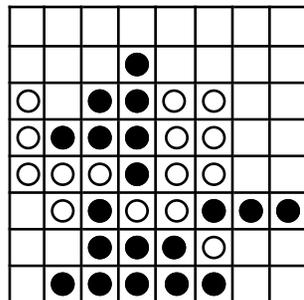
effectively a kill: in fact White can thrash about a bit

after either 32d1-a6-a7-g5-b3-b2 or 32b3-a7-a6-a2-c/d/e1-g5, but surely this was the best approach. Rose preferred to hang on to his free move, but he would have regretted this decision had White replied with (31e2) 32c2 33b3 34a2, when access to g8 is very hard to arrange. After that sequence Black wins 33-31 with perfect play, but 32b3 leaves Black more securely ahead again.

Rose's sequence 37a6-a7-b2 is neat (though not optimal); Black's access to g8 is restored and White has no option but to take the corner.

A better way to meet the currently slightly-fashionable opening starting with 11c6 is probably 16c5, meeting either b6 or b4 with b5, aiming at e3 and simply leaving e8 for Black. A big improvement for White is 22b5-c8-e3, although Black is still ahead after 25e2; the sequence played leaves White desperately short of moves - exactly the theme of the opening.

At move 31, everyone in the



Black to play at 31

14. As planned, White plays to f6. He will follow with moves to d2 and/or e1.

16. This loud move allows a quiet Black reply of d2, but it sets up a great move to c6, with Black having no access to c5. It also threatens g4.

17. This is a fantastic move. It eliminates the threat of c6, but in addition it accomplishes something rather more subtle: it gains a move to the East. By playing g6, Black can now treat g4 and g5 as a pair. So it is no longer the case that a White move to g4 is a bonus move for White!

18. White sensibly plays g4 straight away, while it does not flip the f4 disc; Black must either reply g5 or play d2, which then would allow White to play to c6.

20. White plays d2, to stop Black playing there. It seems 'obvious' that White has to do this, since otherwise he has to find two tempos elsewhere, but the program Zebra finds an amazing alternative: 20c5! The point is that 21d2 is then met with 22c6, then Black's discs to the West and East poison all of his later play -- exactly true to the philosophy of the opening. This c5 move is particularly useful because c5 is the square where Black would like to play if White plays d2 -- after 20c5 Black really does have to play d2, because otherwise d2 has become a quiet move for White!

22. An aggressive pull to the edge. White is desperate, of course, to make Black play to the East, to get rid of the large White wall there. And this move does accomplish that, for if Black tries to play to the South then he will soon be forced to flip the f5 disc, allowing White to play h3 (and, in any case, Black has no particularly nice move to the South).

24. An alternative is g1. The idea of 24b4 is to give Black the North edge. This will put White under great pressure now, but the hope is that it will hurt Black later on. However, White really is short of moves now.

26. This is an amazing move. It seems that White is in real trouble, but Benny finds a way to get two tempos on the East edge! None of the crowd of onlookers had predicted that move, but it puts White right back in the game.

35. A very well-thought-out move. Black is willing to take a 5 on the West edge to run White very short of moves. He has seen that he will be

Krzywonos vs. Shifman by Dylan Boggler (see note at end: Ed)

Here are some notes on the 4th-5th playoff game at the recent World Championships. It featured two of the rising 'young terrors' of Othello, Benny Shifman of Israel and Tim Krzywonos of Canada. Although still in their teens, they have progressed extremely rapidly over the past year or two -- so much so that it was no surprise to see them reaching this playoff.

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

Krzywonos 45-19 B. Shifman

1-10. Tiger opening, with the Tamenori move 10. This opening has remained extremely popular over the past decade. The point is that Black cannot play the obvious-looking 11d2, since 12c6 13c5 14b5 leaves Black without access to b4.

12. The usual move is 12d2 (followed by 13e2 14b4). This move 12 to f2 is a 'Shifman special'. The idea is that White makes a wall to the East and South (the follow-up being 14f6), with Black having moves but those moves tending to poison each other. Benny has played this move 12 several times, with notable success (he had beaten Murakami with it a few rounds earlier, for example). The White position always looks awful around 14-16, but then the idea is that things improve as the Black discs hurt each other.

13. Most people play 13d2, but Tim was worried that Benny would be too familiar with that line.

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

Black to play at 45

The killing sequence now is 45g7-h8-g8-h7-h5-h4-c1, with a "sweep" finish similar to what happened in the real game. Alternatively, there is no harm in playing 45d1 at this point, forcing a response to c1 and then getting on with it. But Rose's 45c1 allows White to make use of the access to g5, and Krzywonos has another opportunity. The next two moves, 46g5 and 47g8, are correct, but then White needs to play 48g7 to avoid the sweep. It looks like Black is bound to have enough discs after 48g7, but parity is strong, and in fact both 49h8 and 49h7 (don't these seem the most tempting?) draw, while 49g1 and 49h4 win 33-31.

One perfect-play sequence after 49h8 is 50h7-h4-h5-g4-g3-g1-d1-h3-h1-(P)-h2-g2, and one win is to start 49h4-h5-h8-h7, which is better than the other line simply because it gets the e7 disc. Meanwhile Krzywonos played 48d1 and got swept. Then he opted for a disastrous X-square at 27 in the second game, and Rose won easily to reach his first final since 1981.

In the other semi-final, Nicolet took on Murakami and was threatening an upset when he won the first game.

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

Murakami 28 Nicolet 36

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

Black to play at 27

At 20 it is better to play h3 before e2 to remove the d3 response. Nicolet's sequence e2-d3-c2 is asking to be met by either a5 or e1.

Black is now ahead, until he makes what WZebra assures me is a big error at 27. The problem with

allowing White to play b3 is that Black can't then gain tempo on the West, while h3-h4-h5 is always available as a tempo for White in the East, and this is enough to put Black in trouble. The only good move is 27b3, and then 28d2-c7 or 28a4-a3, gaining tempo either way. It doesn't look like a position where a tactical point like this is going to make such a big difference, but it seems to be so. Nicolet's play for the rest of the game was impressive.

Murakami won the second game, and got well ahead in the third. But Nicolet hung on determinedly, and Murakami made a few minor errors, then a big one, and suddenly here is Stéphane with a chance to reach the final!

White has just surrendered parity by playing to a1 (there were reasons, but still this was clearly wrong). Of course 51a2-b7 is not right; 51g2-g1-b7 works nicely, but after 51g2-b7! Black is dead. So it's 51g1 or 51b7. Both will keep parity: the two sequences will start 51g1-h1-g2-h8-b7 and 51b7-a8-a2-g8-g1. Somehow the sequence starting b7 works out much better: one key feature is that the second sequence will keep the g-file. Of course, at this level one should be able to count it, but Stéphane didn't have time and plumped for the wrong one. Tant pis. Or a miracle, depending on your point of view.

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

Black to play at 51

I would have liked to show you the 3rd-4th playoff game, or the Final, or even the Leader-Murakami game, but I'm out of time and space. All the games from the tournament can be found on the Danish Othello Federation's website <http://www.othello.dk> or in the Thor database, available via <http://www.multimania.com/othello>. The first of these (the Danish site) also has some photos from the event.

or f1 at some stage. At 31 he should have played f1, rather than flipping the f6 disc and leaving me a quiet move to b6. At this point I am winning. The thematic sacrifice 40-44 is called the Landau manoeuvre, after 1984 U.S. Champion Ted Landau, who wrote an excellent article featuring the sacrifice in Othello Quarterly.

After 46, it looks very good for White. All I have to do is get Black to take an unbalanced four on the south edge, then play g8, and parity will do the rest. The right move is 46c7, after which play might, for example, go 47b8-g8-b7-g7-h8-f8-d8-a8 with an easy white win. Or Black might try 47c8, but then for instance 48d8-f8-g7 is fine. However, why not simplify things by playing 46c8-d8 before going to c7? It was only after Suekuni played 47d8 that it dawned on me that (46c8-d8) 48c7-b8-g8-f8! would trap me with ... a Landau manoeuvre! So reluctantly I took the edge with 48f8. The winning move for him now is 49g7, followed by 50c7-b8 with the same theme. However, the natural 49c7 gave me one last chance. It looked to me as though 50b8-g7 was terminal, so I played the parity move 50g7, even though I didn't seriously expect to get enough discs. After 50b8-g7, I can draw with 52b2-a1-a2 (getting access to h8) b1-b7-a7-a8-(P)-h8-g8.

-----2001 European Grand Prix Tournament Schedule *via Aubrey*

March 17-18: Cambridge **NOTE DATE CHANGE!**
 contact Aubrey de Grey ag24@gen.cam.ac.uk
 Venue: Lubbock Room, Peterhouse

April 21st-22nd: Naples
 contact Pierluigi Stanzione stanzione@planet1.it

May 19th-20th: Copenhagen
 contact Henrik Vallund info@othello.dk

July 28th-29th: Brussels
 contact Fabrice Doignie fabrice.doignie@club.worldonline.be

September 1st-2nd: Paris
 contact Emmanuel Lazard Emmanuel.lazard@dauphine.fr

There will probably be a new one this year too, in Holland, but the date hasn't yet been fixed.

Paris International 2000 by Graham Brightwell

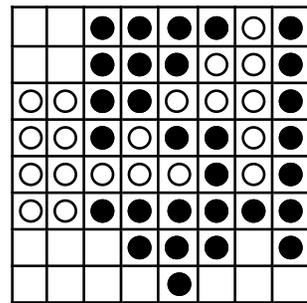
This year's Paris Open featured Makoto Suekuni, fresh from winning all the tournaments he entered in the Mind Sports Olympiad. But lying in wait were all the top French players, most of whom had skipped the MSO, plus an assortment of other nationalities. British representation was doubled by counting UK resident Geoff Hubbard. Geoff and I stayed chez Tastet, and we are both grateful for the hospitality.

As it happened, Suekuni was on tremendous form, and he achieved the rare feat of a perfect score of 11/11 in the Swiss. Behind him it was frantic. Philippe Juhem lay second overnight but fell away on the second day. I lost a crucial game to Romy Hidayat (an Indonesian based in Germany) which left Emmanuel Caspard in control. However, he lost in the last round to Fred Collay, and two one-sided wins in the last two rounds just sufficed to get me into the final ahead of Emmanuel and Fred on tiebreak. We all scored 8/11; we were followed by Tastet, Hidayat, Juhem and Nicolet on 7. Geoff scored 5.5/11. Alex Cordy's failure to reach the final left Stéphane Nicolet as the winner of the European Grand Prix, while I sneaked into third place. (Among the records I hold must be 'most 3rd places in the European Grand Prix'.)

Suekuni beat me 2-0 in the final, rarifying his feat further, while Caspard beat Collay 2-0 for third place. Here is the second game of the final, where I missed my chance.

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

Suekuni 36 Brightwell 28



White to play at 46

I played some poor moves in the opening (12c3 is much better, as is 18a6), and 26g3 was partly desperation, but it seems to be good -- the point is that he has no access to a3 or h3 and will have to play the loud c1

The 2000 World Final by Dylan Boggler (see notes at the end: Ed)

Here are some brief notes on the two games of the Final from the 2000 World Championships. The first game was very exciting and close, featuring some very unusual positions and leading to a win for Murakami. In the second game, Murakami gradually built up an advantage, which he kept to the end. He thus becomes only the second person (Tamenori being the first) to win the World Championships more than twice!

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

Rose 29 Murakami 35

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

Murakami 45 Rose 19

Rose-Murakami:

1-7. A Heath Bat. This has gone out of fashion in Europe but has always remained one of the favourites in Japan. Both Rose and Murakami are of course highly up-to-date on this opening (Rose having lived in Japan for several years, only returning to America last Summer), and in fact the opening they play here has been played by them before (with the same colours) into the 20s.

8. This is now the most common move 8, replacing one-time favourites like f4, d7 and c6. It is really a waiting move. It might seem that Black has an excellent quiet move to f4, but after 9f4 White has 10d3, and then 11e3 can be met by the checkerboarding 12e2 -- this seems to leave a very close position.

14. A waiting move. White's discs are scattered, but actually it is Black who has to play carefully to avoid getting into a mess: because White is threatening a move to c8, as well as f3, with perhaps c7 to come as well.

15-17. Black needs to play g4 before White plays f3 to make the discs at e4 and f5 end up White. Note how important it is to play 17c7 instead of 17f8 -- only 17c7 will ensure that the d7 disc is White after Black has played to c7 and f8 and White has played to c8.

21. If Black plays the inviting 21c3 then 22b4 takes away his access to g8. But if Black does not play 21c3 then White would love to play 22b3. So the move played, removing White's access to b3, is clearly sensible.

22. Similarly, this move removes Black's access to a square he would now like to play to, namely c3. It also removes Black's access to g3, but this is less important, as a Black move to g3 (now or earlier) would simply be met with a White move to h4.

23. Black pulls to the edge, to gain a tempo. Note that it is very dangerous for White to fight for a tempo with 24h3 25g3 26h4, since this flips the e7 disc which may become important when a8 or h8 is sacrificed later in the game. This move 23 also regains access to c3, but curiously this is pretty irrelevant, since a Black move to c3 is simply met by a White move to c2 -- because Black's move to g1 had made all of d3-g1 Black!

What is actually going on now? From a distance, it looks as though White ought to be ahead, since the Black discs to the West and East will poison later play to the North. But where should White be playing? To the East he cannot gain a tempo (without wrecking his position by removing the poisoning Black Eastern discs, that is). So he will soon have to play to the West. And, thanks to the lack of White access to b3, he does not have any nice moves there. Except, that is, for the corner sacrifice b7. And after b7 will come Black b6. So in fact White is barely hanging on.

25. Not 25h6, which would be met by 26h3.

28. As mentioned above, if White wants to get one more move in the East he would have to unpoison Black with 28h3. Also, of course, 28h3 would leave White with the East edge, which could then be sacrificed against -- for example, Black might later play to g2, possibly followed by e8 as well if White did not respond h8 straightaway. That would be a huge tempo loss for White. So 28b7 is pretty forced.

30. White keeps Black away from e8. There is an elegant alternative, which is to sacrifice the South edge with 30e8 31a8 32g7 (note that it is only now that this works -- any earlier and e8 a8 does not seal Black off

and ended with a tie -- in the latter event, a four-way tie. Also, at last Ian Turner had some British company on the Othello medals table. Final results were:

Stephen Rowe (UK)	5/6
Carolyn Lysons (UK)	5
George Lane (UK)	4
Roger Peck (UK)	4/6
Keiko Suwa (JP)	4
Andriy Shcherbatyuk (UKR)	4

In total, the Othello events had 112 participants, up from 102 last year. The beginners' events had 35 (31 if players in more than one event are only counted once), which was nearly up to the 37 we had in 1999.

Whew! That's it. We had a "Victory Dinner" as usual at the end of the European Championship (except that it wasn't at the end, it was on the Sunday night before the final), but I had to miss it to attend an organisational meeting, so someone else will have to tell you how splendid the Chinese food was. The venue, Alexandra Palace, was undoubtedly the best yet, both from my point of view (the Cambridge side of London, good beer all day right next to the games) and from that of the players (good lighting, not too noisy, and even some small and genuinely quiet rooms for special events -- we used one for the EC final). Also, it's close enough to central London to be very easy to get to but not so close as to be really expensive to stay. There's no firm news about the 2001 event yet, but last I heard the intention was to stay at Alexandra Palace. I can't overstate how much fun it is, and I strongly recommend all readers to come along to MSO 5. I haven't described the MSO concept here -- see previous spring newsletters for that -- but you can find out all about it on their web site:

<http://www.msoworld.com/>

which also describes the many satellite events that the MSO are now arranging all over the world, has news about all sorts of games in their "Mindzine", and has extensive support for online play of many games including Othello. MSO 5 will of course be announced on that site as soon as details are confirmed. I hope to see you there!

of tournament play, but this has to be the most catastrophic. It was especially extraordinary in view of Imre's performance at the 1999 Olympiad, in which he played in three tournaments, didn't lose a single game to anyone non-Japanese, and walked away with 500 pounds for third spot in the EC.

Perhaps one reason for Imre's poor form was that he was unsure of being able to attend the second day's play, because it required arranging childcare. Sure enough, he didn't show up on the Sunday morning, and Stastna also withdrew (having played well below form on the first day). The result was that we had to decide whether to persevere with the round-robin format or to condense the remaining play into fewer rounds. Unfortunately there was no way to do both (i.e. to rearrange the order of the remaining round-robin games to take place in fewer than eight rounds), because Kwan Soo Kim still had eight of the remaining participants to play, having already had his bye and having played both Imre and Jan. We decided to stick to the round-robin system, even though that meant that in some rounds three people would have byes. It also meant, for example, that Stéphane Nicolet had only one game in the final four-round session.

In the end it was very tight at the top. Makoto put his loss against Phil behind him to win all his games until round 12, but then went down to Marc Tastet. Tim Krzywonos had won everything on the first day, but on the Sunday he lost two games, to Makoto and to Geoff Hubbard. That

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

Suekuni 36-28 Krzywonos
First game of the final

wasn't Geoff's only big success: he also took half a point off Stéphane and beat

Marc, but these were offset by a couple of against-form losses. The other anticipated contender, Graham, wasn't on his best form and finished equal sixth with Marc. Stéphane's draw with Geoff cost him a chance to play in the final, which took place on the following morning between Makoto and Tim, Makoto winning 2-0. Final standings were:

- Makoto Suekuni (Japan) 13/15 + 2/2
- Tim Krzywonos (Canada) 13 + 0/2
- Stéphane Nicolet (France) 12.5

We also had two beginners' events during the second weekend, each with a reasonable attendance (11 and 9). Both were extremely closely fought

from the West). This looks good for White, since he will soon have complete control. He has to be a little careful how he plays in the West, because if Black gets to a5 (for example with 33d2 34b5 35a5) then it is hard for White to ensure that Black ends up with access into the a6-a7 doublet, which is important for White's parity win. But 30e8 would have swung the game heavily in White's favour.

32. Of course, White must not play 32h2, because of 33c3. In fact, there is no time when it is good for White to play to h2, because not only will Black then have sacrifice chances at g7 but, more importantly, it hugely weakens White's sacrifice of the a8 corner, since when White then gets to h8 Black will get to h1.

33-37. Black ruthlessly forces White to form a long wall to the West. 38. If White plays 38e1 then Black has 39d1 40c1 41d2, with c2 to come. So what should White do here? He looks in real trouble. But Murakami found an absolutely amazing move: 38e8. He is giving up the South and West edges, with no compensation at all in terms of edge-discs -- he is doing it just to make it Black's turn to move. In other words, one could view it as an enormous sacrifice to gain 1 tempo, which in this case amounts (as Murakami has seen) to complete control. This is a move that is staggeringly brave -- the kind of move that only a superstar like Murakami would play. Just to consider, let alone play, this move demonstrates a remarkable whole-board awareness. White has to have seen all the way to move 44 and even beyond. Indeed, he needs to have seen that after 49a3 he can leave a2 and play to e1 (before Black has played to d1) -- playing 50a2 would allow 51d1, which of course makes e1 much worse.

Before the game, Rose had said, "The one thing I don't want to do is get into a counting battle with Murakami." And that is exactly what has happened!

55. Neither player has seen a curious feature of this position. If Black plays 55g7, then the obvious response is 56h1, but then 57h3 denies White access to g1! This would have led to a 34-30 Black win. It is hard to spot, because before move 55 there are two separate White discs (d4 and e3) giving access to g1. It is worth mentioning that if White had seen this coming he could have played to h1 at move 54 -- this yields a draw.

Murakami-Rose:

1-7. A Tiger opening.

8. At one time, this move 8 was by far the most popular, but in recent years the Rose-Bill move 8b3 has overtaken it. However, Rose has always been a champion of this move 8.

9-11. Move 9 to b3 (as opposed to the more standard b5) is gradually becoming popular. Although 10c2 seems to leave Black in difficulties, the strange 11d7, at first sight very ugly, is actually a rather effective waiting move!

17-19. It does not matter too much that 17a5 flips the c3 disc, since 19a2 does not flip b6, so that Black retains access to c7.

20. Of course, White does not want to lose a tempo by allowing 21a3. It looks like there is an alternative to 20a2, namely the checkerboarding 20b6, leaving Black with no access to a3 or e7: but there is an annoying reply to 20b6 in 21e2. This not only removes White's access to a2 (and it is costly for White to regain access!), but also sets up threats of c8 and e3, either of which would uncheckerboard Black. So 20a2 is sensible.

21-23. The whole point of this opening. Black gets a move to g3, followed by a guaranteed move to f3 and even a later move to e3. In the Swiss part of the tournament, these players had played down the same line, with Rose playing 22c7 instead. Although he had won that game, he had gotten into some difficulties during it, so he varied here.

24. Although Black has a large wall, it is hard for White to break through it nicely -- particularly when one remembers the Black free move at e3. However, the move chosen, 24e2, seems to leave the North too full of 'holes' where Black has quiet moves (exactly the squares near e3). It may be that a better move is 24c7, with at least some threats, namely e8 and then e7.

25. To make sure that White's moves to the East involve taking the edge, which should hurt White later on.

31. Even though White has d8 to come, with Black not having access to f8, White is still in trouble since Black has so many moves to the North.

34. White's last chance was to play 34d1. Note that Black cannot try anything like 35h2 (denying White access to e2 and using the fact that row 2 is all White) 36h1 37g2, because then 38h4 39e2 40d1 41f8 is met

top two spots. The format last year involved three sessions (nine rounds) of Swiss, a one-game playoff between the second -and third-placed players if they were on the same number of points (similar to what is done at the Worlds to decide the fourth semifinal place) and a best-of-three final. The only difficulty with that format was in getting all the games in before the prize giving, but this year we had the luxury of an extra day, the August Bank Holiday, so we stretched the Swiss part to four sessions and held the final on the closing morning.

The tournament began on the Saturday morning with a rather disappointing turnout of only 14 players. This had the redeeming feature, however, that we could play the tournament as a round-robin with 13 rounds. The great thing about a round-robin for the arbiter is that the pairings for the entire event can be determined in advance, leaving time to do all the other things I absolutely need to do during games (have a beer, book the restaurant for dinner, have a beer, get the previous event's results posted on the MSO web site, and last but not least have a beer). In this tournament there was also the small matter of running the third Beginners' tournament during the second session of the EC. During round one, however, Jan Stastna joined the tournament, ruining my plan. Well, maybe. After consultation with the players it was decided that we could just about get fifteen rounds in, so we stayed with the round-robin format after all, and I issued dire warnings about being more than a second late for the start of each round. (A session at the MSO is four hours, which sounds like plenty to play four games with 25-minute time limits, but I'm telling you, that's not how it works out in practice.) (Yes, I know -- Ed.)

The first day passed off without further incident. For me, anyway. A number of rather remarkable incidents befell some of the players. In round one, Makoto lost to Phil Marson! This was an event worthy of more publicity than merely the score (33-31), so here goes:

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

This was nothing, however, compared to what followed: having won his first game, Imre Leader contrived to lose all six remaining games in the day! Granted that some of his opposition was of top quality, including Tastet and Suekuni, but none of his other opponents would have been rated to beat him. Phil was again a beneficiary. I've witnessed a lot of collapses of form in my 17 years

94	84	49	50	61	38	63	83	82	78
92	93	36	32	23	80	81	79	77	66
89	33	26	9	12	29	28	35	56	59
88	31	30	24	4	7	8	16	54	65
45	19	25	3	○	●	6	13	52	60
44	18	15	5	●	○	1	27	55	62
37	42	14	10	2	11	39	48	53	71
43	41	20	17	21	46	34	58	51	72
91	87	57	22	67	40	70	47	95	64
90	76	75	74	85	69	68	73	86	96

Nicolet 34--66 Suekuni

least well-attended, beginners' tournament with only five participants. I intend to use essentially the same tournament schedule in 2001, but this particular fixture may be dropped. Results were:

Enrico Colangiolo (Italy)	7/7
Mathias Kegelmann (Germany)	5
Chee-wei Chan (Malaysia)	3.5

In past years we have held a four- or five-day 8x8 tournament with standard time limits (25 minutes) through the week, but the participation in it has fallen each year, so this year we dropped it in favour of the 10x10 event. That still left the Thursday and Friday free, so we held a quick-play 8x8 tournament with 15 minute time limits. Again this was expertly run by Dan Glimne in my absence. That means I don't know much about it, of course, but sixteen people showed up, the usual person won, and everyone seemed to have had good practice for ...

Makoto Suekuni (Japan)	9/10
Marc Tastet (France)	9
Tim Krzywonos (Canada)	7

...The showcase event, the European Championship. When the EC was begun at the second MSO (in 1998), we didn't let non-Europeans win, but last year we relented and got what we deserved, with Japanese taking the

Whew. I should say at this point that Nicolet is also a naughty boy, since he completed his transcript of the above game but only succeeded in getting to move 90. Suekuni got to 92, so he obviously deserved to win. It took me marginally less time to get the above transcript right than for the players to get the game right. Top places were:

Makoto Suekuni (Japan) 5/6
Stéphane Nicolet (France) 5
Tim Krzywonos (Canada) 4

On the Wednesday we also saw the second, and the

by 42d8. So 34d1 35d2, which at least gives White some play to the North.

35. White can grab this edge because he is running Black out of moves. Note that he will have a nice move to g2 as well, controlling the diagonal.

39-41. This sequence ends the game. Note that White cannot try 42d1 43c1 44b2 (gaining access to g6, to cut the c6-g2 diagonal), because Black gets both of a1 and a3.

The following was received with the body of the above text (Ed in Italics)

I presume you (and/or Aubrey) have the transcripts for all the Worlds games

No, but Graham kindly transmitted them. Let's just hope that I extracted the correct games from the welter of information!

as well as the exciting macros to print positions etc

Again, no. See Editorial. I don't even have an Othello-playing program; I would have had to play the game to move x on a board, make a replica of that position by hand, move to position y etc - - and then end the game, 10 diagrams on, to find that I'd made a flipping error at move 6. We do want this newsletter out before next Christmas!

(I have no idea how to do that, sorry sorry). *Typed or even drawn versions would have been fine!*

Please could you include in the article the two transcripts, with their scores, and also the following diagrams:

Game 1: position after move 8, 14, 20, 23, 27, 29, 37, 44, 49, 54. Plus after hypothetical 30e8 31a8 32g7. If that is too many pix, then get rid of 44, 8, 20 (in that order).

Game 2: position after move 11, 19, 23, 30, 33, 41.

So, Gentle Readers, as you play out these games yourselves, those are the places where Dylan Boggler wants your respectful attention!

The Fourth Mind Sports Olympiad *by Aubrey de Grey*

It took David Levy over 20 years to get the Mind Sports Olympiad off the ground, but now, after four successive (and successful) years, it is in genuine danger of becoming an institution. This year there was a last-minute crisis when the expected source of funding pulled out due to stock market losses, but the organisers successfully pulled together enough resources to save the event, and upwards of 5,000 players descended on Alexandra Palace in North London for the ten days 19th-28th August. No funds were available for prize money, unfortunately (except for a few events that managed to arrange their own), but the number of players still broke last year's record.

Othello had a greater presence this year than ever before, with events on all ten days. This was made possible because of two innovations: firstly, in response to the overwhelming popularity of the 1999 MSO beginners' tournament we expanded the number of beginners' events to four, and secondly, we held the first ever 10x10 tournaments, a quick-play (25 minutes on the clock) and a World Championship with a time limit of 50 minutes.

The opening Othello event was the two day 10x10 quick-play, which was run as a round-robin since there were only eight participants. I had had some boards screen-printed onto PVC, with the traditional colouring and spots, and of course we used discs from the 8x8 sets. Luckily for the rest of us Makoto Suekuni, the perennial winner of anything he enters at the MSO, hadn't yet arrived from Italy, so someone else got a chance at a gold medal. However, one of the most feared newcomers to Othello, Tim Krzywonos, was present and revealed that he'd been playing quite a lot of 10x10 online, so he was the clear pre-tournament favourite. He duly won all his games in the first six rounds, leaving him unbeaten with only one round remaining. However, our own Ian Turner was in almost as good a position, having dropped only half a point (to the sole Korean representative, Kim Kwan Soo), and as luck would have it they met in that last round. Ian vanquished the Canadian foe to become the first ever winner of a 10x10 Othello tournament. Medals went to the top three competitors:

Ian Turner (UK)	6.5/7
Tim Krzywonos (Canada)	6
Goran Andersson (Sweden)	5

By the end of this 10x10 event it was 2pm on the second day and we'd also had the first beginners' event (during the Saturday afternoon

session). Last year we had been decidedly ad hoc regarding who qualified as a beginner and who didn't, and this year with four events it was clear that an explicit rule was called for. I ordained that one could be counted as a beginner if one had never come in the top three in any over-the-board tournament. This allowed really rather good players in the first beginners' event, especially the aforementioned Kim Kwan Soo who is well-known online, but it also meant that the later events were weak enough to suit all standards of play. Kim indeed won the event, followed by the Czech Jan Stastna and then the Austrian Gert Schnider.

Kwan Soo Kim (Korea)	9/9
Jan Stastna (Czech Rep)	7
Gert Schnider (Austria)	7

Suekuni arrived just in time for the blitz World Championship on the Sunday afternoon. You may wonder why it was called "World Championship" when it hadn't been in previous years: well, that is for a very good reason, namely in previous years I hadn't thought of it. We had a very respectable turnout of 20 players, and, inexplicably, Makoto won.

Makoto Suekuni (Japan)	9/9
Stéphane Nicolet (France)	7
Tim Krzywonos (Canada)	7

The next three afternoons were dedicated to the first 10x10 Othello World Championship. The significance of the event was perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that it was enough to bring Paul Smith out of retirement. Well, perhaps not. Anyway, it was a great success, both in terms of participation (it attracted numerous top 8x8 players, including Suekuni, Tastet, Nicolet, Krzywonos and our own Graham Brightwell) but also because all the top players agreed that it was extremely playable, with a lot more strategy than 8x8 but also very rich tactics. Thanks are due to Dan Glimne, the MSO Supreme Ruler (sorry, Chief Arbiter), for standing in as arbiter for this tournament on the Tuesday when I was unable to be away from Cambridge. It seems only right to include a transcript from this historic event, even though I haven't the slightest idea what's going on in it, so here is Nicolet-Suekuni (Suekuni won the tournament, by the way) in Round 3. (I would have preferred to put in Suekuni's one loss, to Tim Krzywonos in the final round, but the naughty boy only took a transcript up to move 36, and the other naughty boy didn't take one at all.) This was Nicolet's only loss, so the tournament was decided on tie-break.